



Ontario Home Economics Association

C O M M U N I Q U É

Ask A Professional Home Economist

For Immediate Release

Survival of the Fastest – Short-Order Recipes from the Pros

Statistics tell us that when it comes to what's really cooking in the kitchen, most have 10 to 15 recipes in their repertoire and rotate them ad nauseum. While this research may infer there is boredom in the kitchen, there's more to it than meets the frypan.

Finding recipes all the family will enjoy is one challenge, what with individual preferences, downright fussy eaters, vegetarian teens, and yes, let's not forget healthy and tasty. Then there is the issue of time - or rather the lack of it. According to those same statisticians the average time spent preparing and cooking dinner is 30 minutes or less.

Organizational specialists suggest stocking the pantry and the freezer with a Y2K-like hoarding mentality. The reality is staring at shelves bulging with packages of rice, pasta and beans, or frozen hunks of chicken or stewing beef -often in a Zen-like trance after a wild day at the office. While you may wish you had Captain Picard and his replicator to "make it so", what's needed are some short-order supper survival tips that offer variety with few ingredients and minimal time and effort.

Well, here to the rescue are the culinary cavalry, so to speak, fighting kitchen boredom with little-time, no-whine recipes. These busy professional home economists, with culinary skills at their very capable fingertips, face the same stresses as the typical Canadian family - juggling jobs, kids, and the family's car pool pick up schedule.

(more)

Barb Holland, P.H.Ec. is a freelance Professional Home Economist and food writer from Markham, Ontario. While many envy her home office - the kitchen is steps away and commuting non-existent, variable schedules are her personal juggling act. Holland finds it disconcerting how many people take the route of fast food, take-away and restaurant meals. All can be tough on the waistline and the wallet. Her super-quick recipe is based on that hoarded pasta and a jar of pesto.

Barb's Warm Pesto Pasta Salad

When summer tomatoes are at their best, toss a quick meal together with a jar of prepared pesto. While this pasta salad can be made with the more traditional basil pesto, arugula pesto with fresh arugula adds a very peppery kick..

12 oz. (375 g) rotini pasta
½ cup arugula pesto (or more to taste)
1 bunch fresh arugula
1 large ripe tomato, chopped or 8 cherry tomatoes, quartered

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and cook pasta until tender.
Wash arugula, spin dry and remove stems.
Drain pasta (don't rinse) and place in large bowl. Toss with pesto. Add arugula leaves and tomato, toss again and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Ellie Topp, P.H.Ec. is the co-author of several cookbooks including "Put a Lid on It", "More Put a Lid on It" and the latest release "The Complete Book of Year-Round Small Batch Preserving" by Ellie Topp and Margaret Howard, Firefly Books, 2001.

Ellie's Barbecued Pork Tenderloin with Soy-Mustard Sauce

Lean pork tenderloin grills to perfection in short order for an easy meal. If the grill is not handy, simply roast it in the oven. Serve with couscous and steamed broccoli for quick dishes to round out the meal.

1 lb. (500 g) pork tenderloin(s), 1 or 2
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup grainy Dijon mustard
1/4 cup honey
1 clove garlic, minced

Trim any visible fat and membrane from meat.
Combine remaining ingredients. Pour over meat, turning to coat thoroughly. Set aside.
Preheat barbecue to high and lightly oil the grill. Place meat on grill and reduce heat to medium-high. Turn meat and brush with sauce frequently until outside is caramelized but

inside still pink, about 10-12 minutes. Alternatively, bake in 375⁰ F oven for 40 minutes or until meat has just a hint of pink remaining. Slice and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

Couscous with Lemon and Fresh Herbs

Couscous with a hint of lemon and fresh herbs is a perfect accompaniment to pork. Garnish with currants or sunflower seeds if you desire.

In small saucepan heat 2 tsp. vegetable oil over medium heat; cook 1 minced shallot until soft, about 2 minutes. Add 1-1/2 cups chicken broth and bring to a boil. Stir in 1 cup couscous and grated rind of 1 lemon. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 5 minutes. Stir in 2 tbsp. chopped fresh herbs such as basil, oregano, thyme or rosemary or 1 tsp. dried.

Mary Bewick Clowater, P.H.Ec. is a Professional Home Economist working as a product manager on Bick's pickles and relishes at Robin Hood Multifoods Inc. Mary has a busy schedule working at a full-time job during the day and a Gourmet Candy business, called Mary's Gourmet, with her husband at night and weekends.

Mary's Wonderful Ginger Tomato Chicken

Easy, delicious and low in fat, it's also ready to eat in less than 30 minutes. Serve with rice or pasta and green vegetable or salad.

1 tbsp. chopped fresh ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 large tomatoes, sliced
1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
Pinch salt
1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
1 tsp. each minced fresh parsley and rosemary leaves

Preheat oven to 400⁰ F.

In small bowl, combine ginger, garlic and mustard mix together to form a paste. Place chicken in a baking dish and coat with paste mixture. Top with tomato slices. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, bread crumbs, parsley and rosemary. Bake in preheated oven until chicken is tender, about 20 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Diane O'Shea, P.H.Ec. is a professional home economist and secondary school teacher who lives on a busy family farm in Granton, Ontario. Managing a career, family life with four active children, O'Shea's Farm Fresh Vegetable and Berries

and many volunteer activities requires terrific organizational skills. Just one of O'Shea's volunteer activities is as the Chair of the Family Lifestyles Committee for the 2002 International Plowing Match in her community of Middlesex County. Here she shares her favourite topping for seasonal fruit.

Diane's Strawberries 'N' Cream

O'Shea fell in love with strawberries and Devonshire cream during a trip to England many years ago. This is her yogurt-based alternative. While similar to Devonshire cream in consistency, this recipe provides a delicious richness with the bonus of being low in fat. Enjoy the berries and all the seasonal Ontario fruits coming to the markets with this simple topping. And, it's short order, too!

2 cups fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced or other seasonal fruit

Topping: 2 cups low fat, natural yogurt
 3 tbsp. granulated sugar
 1 tbsp. lemon juice or 1 tsp. almond extract

Line a sieve with cheesecloth and set over a bowl. Pour yogurt into a sieve. Cover. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight, allowing liquid to drain. Discard excess liquid. Combine yogurt, sugar and lemon juice or almond extract. Spoon over fresh berries or fruit. Garnish as desired. Makes 4 servings.

The Ontario Home Economics Association, a self-regulated body of Professional Home Economists, promotes high professional standards among its members so that they may assist families and individuals to achieve and maintain a desirable quality of life.

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