



WHEN YOU HAVE LEMONS...

Macheesmo Meals



You've probably heard the saying "If x gives you lemons, make lemonade." Well, I say if "x" gives you lemons you should give "x" a hearty THANKS. Lemons are some of the most versatile things in the cooking world and I use them all the time to brighten flavors and round out a dish.

This meal plan has some of my favorite dishes including a sandwich that will rock your world and a risotto (don't get scared) that's perfect for the winter.

This is a great meal plan to bring some lemon into your life.

Helpful Equipment:

- Cast Iron Skillet
- Panini Press
- Microplane Zester
- Salad spinner
- Stand Mixer



You can click on these to zap you to Amazon and see my recommendation for each.

MEAL 1

- Lemon Chicken Pasta

MEAL 2

- Chopped Chicken Panini
- Lemon Kale Salad

MEAL 3

- Persimmon Risotto

FROZEN BFAST!

- Meyer Lemon Coffee Cake

#macheesmomeals: If you make anything in the meal plan, I would love it if you snapped a quick photo and shared it on Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag #macheesmomeals ! Thanks!



MEAL 1 | Lemon Chicken Pasta Toss

The lemon in this dish completely takes it from average to outstanding. Without it, the dish would be bland by far. Whatever you do, don't skimp on the lemon... use a heavy hand with it.

Lemon Chicken Pasta Toss

Yield: Serves 4-6 | **Time:** 40 min.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. penne pasta, cooked
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. chicken (thighs or breasts)
- 2 shallots, minced
- 1 teas. herbs de provence
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup heavy cream or whole milk
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 cup frozen sweet peas
- Fresh parsley, garnish
- Salt and pepper

Directions:

1) Cook pasta in a large pot of heavily salted water until it's tender, but still has a slight bite to it, about 9-10 minutes.

2) Cube your chicken into 1-inch pieces and season them with salt, pepper, and herbs de provence. Heat olive oil in a large, heavy skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Then add chicken and cook until it's lightly browned and cooked through, about 8 minutes.

3) Remove chicken from the pan and add chicken stock. Use the liquid or scrape up any bits stuck to the pan. Add in cream (or milk), lemon zest and juice, and a pinch of cayenne. Simmer the sauce for 6-7 minutes until it starts to thicken.

4) Stir in pasta and chicken and season the mixture with salt and pepper. Stir in peas and let heat through. Serve the pasta garnished with extra lemon zest and fresh parsley.

Make Ahead for Meal Two

If you are making meal two, cook an extra chicken breast or two extra thighs for the paninis in meal two. Don't season them with the herbs de provence, but cook them with the rest of the chicken and store them in the fridge so they are ready to go for the sandwiches!



Vegetarian Option

The chicken adds some protein to this dish, but it's far from necessary. Feel free to leave it out or fold in some wilted spinach or kale to the dish.

I would probably add some sort of green to it if I didn't include the poached chicken.



MEAL 2 | Chopped Chicken Panini with Salad

I call this a panini but you do NOT need a panini press to make it. Sure, it helps, but you can easily just make the sandwich in any skillet you have on hand. I definitely don't own a panini press and I make sandwiches like this on the regular.

Chopped Chicken Panini

Yield: 2 large sandwiches | Time: 30 min.

Ingredients:

- 6-8 ounces chopped chicken
- 1 Granny smith apple, sliced thin
- 1/2 lemon, juice only
- 1 cup Gruyere cheese, grated
- 1/4 cup raspberry jam
- 4 slices sourdough bread
- Unsalted butter

Directions:

- 1) Roughly chop leftover chicken. Grate cheese, slice the apple thin and squeeze lemon juice over the apples.
- 2) Preheat a cast iron skillet over medium heat.
- 3) Take four large slices of thick sourdough bread and lightly butter one side of each piece. Divide the chicken and cheese between two pieces of bread with buttered side down.
- 4) Top cheese with apple slices and slather the extra pieces of bread with raspberry jam on the non-buttered side. Top the sandwiches so the jam and apples are together.
- 5) Place sandwiches in skillet and add some weight to the top of the sandwich if you can (this can be as simple as an extra pot with foil on the bottom).
- 6) If you're using the panini press, cook sandwich according to press instructions.

Cook sandwiches until they are melted and well browned on the crusts (about 4 minutes per side). If you are cooking in a skillet, you'll have to flip them obviously. Remove sandwiches and slice each sandwich into 2-3 even sections. Serve immediately!

Bab's Kale Salad

Yield: 6-8 servings | Time: 15 min.

Ingredients:

- 1 big bunch kale, chopped and washed
- 1 ripe pear, diced
- 1 avocado, diced
- 2 cups green seedless grapes, halved
- 4 ounces feta cheese, cubed
- 1 cup raspberries

Lemon Vinaigrette:

- 1 lemon, juice only
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Pinch of salt and pepper

Directions:

- 1) For dressing, whisk ingredients in a small bowl. Set aside until needed.
- 2) Using hands, rip kale into pieces and remove from large stems. Rip into bite-sized pieces and rinse well with cold water. Use a salad spinner to dry kale or pat dry with paper towels.
- 3) Dice pear and halve grapes. Dice avocado and cube feta into small cubes.
- 4) Toss all ingredients together and top with fresh raspberries (I actually used thawed ones). Drizzle with lemon dressing and serve immediately.

Leftover salad will keep for a day or two in the fridge.



Vegetarian Option

If you leave the chicken out of the panini, it's no big deal. The apple, gruyere, and raspberry jam makes for an excellent grilled cheese on its own.





MEAL 3 | Persimmon Risotto

OK. Calm down. I know risotto seems impossible, but it's completely doable on a weeknight. Ignore all you hear about it being hard. It's rice, slowly cooked for half an hour. You don't even need to stir it constantly like all the snooty chefs say! I would serve this with leftover salad from Meal 2. PS. This is Betsy's favorite risotto I've ever made, so it's worth the work.

Persimmon Risotto

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 45 min.

Ingredients:

- 2 persimmons, peeled and chopped
- 1/4 cup shallots
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups arborio rice
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 1 1/2 quarts chicken stock
- 1/2 lemon, juice only
- Pomegranate seeds
- Salt and pepper

Directions:

- 1) Peel and dice persimmons. Dice shallots.
- 2) Heat chicken stock in a large pot until it's steaming.
- 3) In a large, high-sided pan, add a drizzle of olive oil over medium heat. Once it's hot, add the shallots. Cook for a minute or two over medium high heat until shallots soften.
- 6) Add rice and continue to cook for a minute or two.
- 7) Add white wine and continue to cook. Scrape up any bits stuck to the pan.
- 8) Once white wine is cooked off, ladle in warm chicken stock. Add about 3/4 cup of stock at a time and stir risotto as it cooks over medium heat.
- 9) When pan is dry, ladle in more stock. Continue doing this until the risotto is soft but still has a tiny bite to it. This will probably take between 4-5 cups of stock and about 25-30 minutes.
- 10) When risotto is desired texture, season with salt and pepper and stir in chopped persimmons.
- 11) To remove pomegranate seeds, cut the pomegranate into quarters and break apart the quarters submerged in a bowl of water. The seeds will sink.
- 12) Serve risotto sprinkled with pomegranate seeds and leftover salad on the side.



What's with the Stirring?

Many recipes for risotto will require you to constantly stir the risotto as you ladle in the warm stock. If you are constantly stirring, there is very little chance of your risotto burning and it also brings out some of the starch in the risotto and makes it creamy.

I don't do this when I make risotto. I give it a good stir and let it cook for a minute or two, then stir, then when it looks dry, I ladle in more stock and continue. I don't stir constantly, but I don't leave it for more than 3-4 minutes also.



Coffee Cake! | Meyer Lemon Packed

Meyer lemons are very much in season this year and you should be able to find them. They are much more mild than standard lemons and you can't substitute regular lemons for them in this recipe unless you want a permanent pucker face.

Meyer Lemon Coffee Cake

Yield: 8x8 baking dish | **Time:** 90 min.

Ingredients:

- 5 Meyer lemons, zest and sliced thin
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, soft
- 1 cup sugar + extra
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 cup Greek yogurt

Crumb Topping:

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, cold

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Zest 5 Meyer lemons and slice them very thinly. Discard ends from lemons.
- 2) Bring a medium pot of water to a simmer and add lemon slices. Lightly simmer lemon slices for 90 seconds. Drain lemon slices and set slices on paper towels. Sprinkle lemon slices with sugar.
- 3) In a small bowl, stir together the crumb ingredients and cut in cold butter pieces. The mixture should be chunky and the butter should be in pea-sized pieces.
- 4) In a stand mixer with the paddle attachment or a large mixing bowl with a hand mixer, cream together butter, sugar, and lemon zest. Mix until the butter mixture is light and fluffy, at least 4-5 minutes. Then beat in eggs, one at a time, and vanilla extract.
- 5) In a separate bowl, stir together dry ingredients: flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
- 6) Add half of dry ingredients to the cake base, then add Greek yogurt, and finish batter with the rest of the dry ingredients.
- 7) Lightly butter an 8x8 baking dish and spread in half of the cake batter. Dot batter with lemon slices and cover with rest of the cake batter. Top with extra lemon slices and finish coffee cake with crumb.
- 8) Place coffee cake on a baking sheet to catch any that overflows and bake in a 350 degree F. oven for 55 minutes. The center should be just set.
- 9) Remove cake and let cool for 20 minutes or so and then cut into 9 even squares.





SHOPPING LIST

This is a full list of all the ingredients used in every meal in this week's plan. I recommend reviewing it for stuff you probably already have on hand before rushing out to the store and buying everything! If items on the list don't have amounts, it is most likely because the recipe uses a very small amount of that ingredient or it is used as a garnish.

Fresh Produce

- Apples, granny smith (1)
- Avocado (1)
- Grapes, green (2 cups)
- Kale (1 big bunch)
- Lemons (3)
- Meyer lemons (5)
- Parsley, garnish
- Pear (1)
- Persimmons (2)
- Pomegranate (1)
- Raspberries (1 cup)
- Shallots (3-4)

Meat, Poultry, Seafood

- Chicken (1 1/2 lb.)

Dairy

- Butter, unsalted (1 1/4 cup + extra)
- Cream (1 cup)
- Eggs (2)
- Feta cheese (4 oz.)
- Greek yogurt (1 cup)
- Gruyere cheese (4 oz.)

Spices and Pantry Items

- All-purpose flour (3 1/2 cups)
- Arborio rice (1 1/2 cups)
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Black pepper
- Brown sugar (3/4 cup)
- Cayenne pepper
- Chicken stock (2 qt.)
- Herbs de Provence (1 teas.)
- Honey (1 Tbsp.)
- Kosher salt
- Olive oil (1/4 cup + 5 Tbsp.)
- Peas, frozen (1 cup)
- Penne pasta (1 lb.)
- Raspberry jam (1/4 cup)
- Sourdough bread (4 slices)
- Sugar (1 cup + extra)
- Vanilla extract (1 teas.)
- White wine (1/3 cup)
- White wine vinegar (2 Tbsp.)