

MACHEESMO

- MEALS -

WARMING UP TO SPRING

I think... think... it's finally starting to warm up. I know there are still some storms happening on the East coast but I feel like the end is near and spring is just right around the corner.

It's probably jumping the gun a bit to run off to the farmer's market and expect perfectly ripe strawberries, but there are some vegetables that you should be able to find during these pre-spring days.

Mushrooms... asparagus... watercress... these are delicious veggies that should be pretty abundant right now.

Helpful Equipment:

- Food Processor
- Oven Safe Skillet
- Griddle



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

MEAL 1

- Roasted Salmon
- Watercress Pesto

MEAL 2

- Open Face Mushroom Burgers

MEAL 3

- Spring Veggie Pita Melts

Sturdy Lunch!

- Smoked Salmon Egg Scramble

#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 | Roasted Salmon and Pesto

This is one of those meals that looks incredibly fancy, but is actually dead simple to make. All the pieces take about 25-30 minutes to pull together so it's a relatively fast dinner for how fancy it looks.

Watercress Pesto

Yield: Serves 4 | **Time:** 45 min

Ingredients:

1/2 cup walnuts, toasted
1/2 cup sunflower seeds, toasted
1 bunch watercress (about 2 cups)
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
3/4 cup olive oil
1 lemon, juice only
2 cloves garlic
Salt and pepper
Red quinoa or brown rice, for serving

Directions:

- 1) To start pesto, add nuts to a dry skillet over medium-low heat and toast until fragrant, about 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 2) Add nuts to a food processor and pulse a few times until roughly ground.
- 3) Add other pesto ingredients to the food processor and process until an even consistency. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve pesto over quinoa or rice with pan-seared salmon.

Pan-Seared Salmon

Yield: Serves 4 | **Time:** 30 min

Ingredients:

4 5-6 ounce filets salmon
Olive oil
Salt and pepper

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Drizzle salmon with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Heat an oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat.
- 2) Once hot, add salmon, skin-side up and sear the salmon for 3 minutes.
- 3) Flip salmon and transfer to a 350 degree F. oven. Cook for 8 minutes until the salmon is just cooked through. You might need an extra minute or two if you're cooking the salmon as one whole filet.
- 4) Serve salmon over red quinoa or brown rice with a good amount of the watercress pesto.

Vegetarian Version



If you want to skip the salmon here, sear some tofu in a pan with a drizzle of oil. Serve the tofu over the red quinoa with the pesto on top.



MEAL 2 | Open-Faced Mushroom Sandwiches

Naming my favorite part of this recipe is tough for me. It's a toss up between the slightly spicy sauteed spinach and onions, the savory mushrooms, or the crispy bread. As far as weeknight dinners go though, this is solidly in my will-make-again file.

Open-Faced 'Shroom Sandies

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 30 min.

Ingredients:

4 rolls, sliced and toasted
4 Portobello mushrooms
1 large sweet onion, sliced
1 large bunch spinach
1 avocado, sliced
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
Red pepper flakes
Salt and pepper
Baked French Fries (frozen)

Directions:

- 1) Slice and toast your bread and cook fries according to package instructions.
- 2) In a large skillet over medium heat, add a drizzle of olive oil and the sliced onions. Cook until onions are translucent and soft, about 10 minutes. Season with a pinch of salt.
- 3) Remove onions from skillet and add washed spinach. Cook for a few minutes until spinach is wilted. Remove from pan.
- 4) Add a fresh drizzle of olive oil to the pan and add the large mushrooms. Cook them for about 5 minutes per side until they start to release their liquid and soften.

If the mushrooms look like they aren't cooking evenly, add a splash of water to the pan which will quickly steam the mushrooms and get them cooking.
- 5) When mushrooms are done, remove from the skillet and slice into big slices. Return onions and spinach to the skillet to warm up.
- 6) On the toasted rolls, spread out a few thin slices of avocado. Season the avocado with a pinch of salt and pepper and top with a few mushroom slices.
- 7) Top mushrooms with spinach and sauteed onions. Season with a pinch of red pepper flakes and serve with baked fries on the side.



Frozen Fries

I'm not a huge fan of frozen foods, but I do use them occasionally to round out a meal. This sandwich is so healthy that it doesn't bother me to serve it with some baked fries.

If these fries aren't your thing, you could serve these sandwiches with a small side salad as well.

MEAL 3 | Spring Veggie Pita Melts



This is one of my wife's favorite sandwiches that is actually inspired from a small DC sandwich place. It's really simple to make but the flavors are fresh and perfect for spring. It's really easy to make a bunch of these at once if you have a griddle but you can also cook them in a pan and keep them warm in an oven.

Spring Veggie Pita Melts

Yield: 4 sandwiches | Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

1 onion, sliced
8 cremini mushrooms, sliced
1 bell pepper, sliced
1 poblano, sliced
6-8 ounces pepper jack, grated
2 small tomatoes, sliced
1 avocado, sliced
Bean sprouts
4 pitas
Olive or vegetable oil
Kosher salt

Chips or a side salad for serving.

Directions:

- 1) Prepare all of your ingredients. Slice your veggies, avocado, tomato, and cheese.
- 2) Add a few tablespoons of vegetable or olive oil to a griddle or pan and add your onions, shrooms and peppers. Cook for a few minutes over medium-high heat until they are softened. Season with a pinch of salt.
- 3) Split them into four even piles and put your cheese on top of them. Turn heat down to low. (You might have to do this in batches depending on your pan size.)
- 4) Slice pita in half and add it to your griddle cut-side down to it can toast lightly. Once toasted, flip and top one side of the pita with the avocado and tomato.
- 5) When your cheese is melted over the veggies, add the whole stack to the pita.
- 6) Top with sprouts and slice and serve with some chips on the side.



The Scramble! | Salmon and Egg Scramble

A little bit of smoked salmon goes far in this dish and it pairs perfectly with tender asparagus spears which should start popping up in stores and markets any day now. When shopping for asparagus for this recipe, try to get the thinner spears that are tender.

Salmon and Spears Scramble

Yield: Serves 4 | **Time:** 25 minutes

Ingredients:

8 large eggs
1/4 cup heavy cream or milk
12 spears asparagus, chopped
1/2 small red onion, sliced thin
4 ounces smoked salmon, flaked
4 ounces goat cheese
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
Salt and pepper
Scallions, chopped
Capers, garnish (opt.)
Toast, for serving

Directions:

- 1) Chop asparagus spears into about 1-inch chunks. Discard the tough wooden bottoms of the spears. Slice the red onion thin and scramble the eggs with the milk (or cream).
- 2) In a large skillet, add a drizzle of oil over medium heat. Then add asparagus, onion, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook until the veggies are slightly soft, about 4 minutes.
- 3) Add the butter to the pan and pour in the scrambled eggs and let sit for a few minutes. Once the eggs start to firm up, turn the heat down to low and slowly stir them so they scramble a bit. Cook the eggs until they are almost cooked through, but still a tiny bit liquid. Be careful not to over cook the eggs.
- 4) When the eggs are almost done, add in flaked salmon, goat cheese, scallions, and capers and carefully fold those into the eggs. Try to keep the salmon in nice big chunks. Cook for just a minute to gently warm ingredients.
- 5) Season the eggs with salt and pepper and serve the eggs with toast, extra scallions, and capers.



Smoked Salmon Primer

Smoked salmon is typically available in two forms. You can find it thin slices (lox) which are also cured and will be really salty.

The other kind is just smoked and comes in large pieces which flake a part. Use this kind for this recipe. The lox variety will be too salty for a dish like this.



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

- Asparagus (12 spears)
- Avocado (2)
- Bean sprouts
- Cremini mushrooms (8)
- Garlic (2 cloves)
- Green bell pepper (1)
- Lemon (1)
- Poblano pepper (1)
- Portobello Mushrooms (4)
- Red onion (1/2 small)
- Scallions, garnish
- Spinach (1 bunch)
- Sweet onion (2 large)
- Tomatoes, Roma (2)
- Watercress (2 cups)

Meat, Poultry, Seafood

- Salmon, skin-on (4 5-6 oz. filets or about 1 1/2 pounds)
- Smoked salmon (4 oz.)

Dairy

- Butter, unsalted (1 Tbsp.)
- Eggs (8)
- Goat cheese (4 oz.)
- Heavy cream (1/4 cup)
SUB: milk
- Parmesan cheese (1 cup)
- Pepper jack cheese (6-8 oz.)
- Ricotta cheese (2 oz.)

Spices and Pantry Items

- Black pepper
- Capers, garnish (opt.)
- Chips, for serving with pitas
- French fries (16 oz.)
- Kosher salt
- Olive oil (1 cup)
- Pita breads (4)
- Red pepper flakes
- Red quinoa (2 cups)
SUB: brown rice
- Sandwich rolls (4)
- Sunflower seeds (1/2 cup)
- Toast, for serving with eggs
- Walnuts (1/2 cup)