

# MACHEESMO

## - MEALS -

## SPRING GREENS!

One of my favorite things about spring is walking through a market and seeing loads of fresh lettuces and greens to try. It seems like every year there are a few new ones that pop up.

To that end, I highly encourage substitutions and experimentation for this meal plan. I used pretty basic greens that are available almost anywhere: spinach, arugula, sprouts, etc. But don't feel bound by the recipe. Feel free to use what you can find that looks fresh and delicious!

### Helpful Equipment:

- Oven Safe Skillet
- Food processor
- Mandoline



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

### MEAL 1

- Warm Spinach Salad
- Crispy Chicken Thighs

### MEAL 2

- Spinach Artichoke Orzo

### MEAL 3

- Curried Mango Chicken

### SANDWICH!

- Big Veggie Bagel Sandwiches

**#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 | Warm Spinach Salad with Crispy Chicken

This is traditionally a salad that is made with bacon, but I switched it up a bit and made a full meal out of it by serving a full crispy chicken thigh on top. The chicken warms the salad through and is really delicious.

### Spinach Salad with Chicken Thigh

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 35 min

#### Ingredients:

5 ounces baby spinach  
1/2 small red onion, slivered  
2 cups red seedless grapes, halved  
4 ounces blue cheese, crumbled  
2 cups croutons  
4 large chicken thighs, skin on and bone in  
Salt and pepper  
Olive oil

#### Directions:

- 1) Drizzle chicken thighs with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- 2) Place a heavy, oven-safe pan (cast iron skillet) over medium heat. While the pan is still cold, place chicken thighs in the pan, skin-side down. Let thighs sit, untouched, for 10-12 minutes.
- 3) Using tongs, flip chicken thighs. A lot of fat should be rendered out of the thighs and the skin should be crispy. Transfer pan to hot oven and roast for 14-16 minutes until thighs are cooked through.
- 4) Meanwhile, divide spinach between plates and top with slivered onions, grapes, blue cheese, and croutons.
- 5) When chicken thighs are done, whisk together dressing using the chicken drippings and drizzle over salad. Serve immediately - each salad topped with a crispy thigh. Top with chicken and other salad toppings.

### Warm Vinaigrette

Yield: 1/2 cup | Time: 5 min

#### Ingredients:

1/4 cup white wine vinegar  
2 tablespoons chicken drippings (opt.)  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon dijon mustard  
Dash of hot sauce  
Salt and pepper

#### Directions:

- 1) Whisk together ingredients and drizzle over salads.



### Vegetarian Version



This salad has great flavors going on even without the chicken. I would sear a little tempeh to place on top of the salad and you'll need another tablespoon or two of olive oil in the dressing to round it out.

## MEAL 2 | Spinach Artichoke Orzo

This is a nice, light pasta dish that's great at room temperature or even cold the next day. It has tons of fresh veggie flavors. Besides being great for a quick weekday dinner, it's also perfect for a picnic!

### Spinach Orzo

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 35 min.

#### Ingredients:

12 ounces orzo pasta, cooked and rinsed  
1/4 red onion, diced  
6 ounces marinated artichokes, drained  
1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes (in oil), diced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 bunch spinach, washed well  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 cup grated pecorino cheese  
Salt and pepper

#### Directions:

- 1) Cook orzo according to package. This should involve boiling it in a few quarts of water along with a pinch of salt and a drizzle of olive oil. Boil it until it is just cooked, then drain it and rinse it quickly with cold water to stop the cooking (or it will become sticky).
- 2) In a large skillet, add a drizzle of olive oil and the diced red onion over medium-high heat. Cook for a few minutes until onion softens. Season with a pinch of salt.
- 3) Add artichokes, sun-dried tomatoes, and garlic and continue to cook for another minute or two.
- 4) Add washed spinach to the skillet along with a few tablespoons of water to help the spinach steam. Cook until spinach is wilted, just a minute or two.
- 5) Stir in orzo and season with salt and pepper. Stir well to combine.
- 6) Serve salad warm or cold with grated pecorino cheese.



#### No Orzo?

Most supermarkets should carry orzo pasta, but if you can't find it for some reason, substitute a different small pasta. Even elbow macaroni would work fine!





## MEAL 3 | Mango Chicken Curry Salad

I know. There was already sort of a chicken salad in this meal plan, but trust me that this is a different beast entirely and none of the flavors are similar. In fact, I think this version is a little easier to make start to finish.

### Mango Chicken Salad

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 30 minutes

#### Ingredients:

1-1 1/2 pounds chicken, cooked  
5 ounces arugula  
1 mango, sliced thin  
1/2 cup yogurt  
Cumin seeds, garnish

#### Mango Curry Dressing:

3 tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 cup mango chutney  
1/2 lemon, juice only  
1 tablespoon curry  
Pinch of salt

#### Directions:

- 1) Combine the dressing ingredients in a small food processor and pulse until well combined. Some chunks are okay.
- 2) You can use leftover chicken for this, but if you are using fresh chicken, season it well with salt and pepper and sear it in a skillet over medium heat with a drizzle of olive oil until it's cooked through, about 8 minutes per side. I find it helpful to butterfly my breasts in half so they cook evenly.
- 4) Add arugula to a medium bowl and toss with about half of the dressing. It should be very lightly dressed.
- 5) Divide arugula between plates and top with sliced chicken, fresh mango slices, a dollop of yogurt, and cumin seeds. Serve with extra dressing on the side.



#### Vegetarian Version



If I were leaving the chicken out of this recipe, I would just load up on veggies: sliced red peppers, cherry tomatoes, and maybe dried cranberries or golden raisins. If you're feeling ambitious, press and sear a few pieces of firm tofu marinated in sesame oil and slice those up. Tofu and curry go together perfectly!



#### Ingredient Spotlight: Mango Chutney

A common ingredient in Asian cooking, a good jar of mango chutney can amp up the flavors in any dish. It's absolutely essential to make the dressing for this recipe.

Your local supermarket should carry it and my favorite brand is "Pataks" if you can find it. If they don't carry it, definitely check any Asian market and you should be able to score a jar.

## Hearty Sandwich! | Big Veggie Bagel Sandwiches

These thick and crunchy bagel sandwiches are jam-packed with fresh spring-time veggies. Golden beets, radishes, and sprouts are all at their peak these days. Grab them, slice them thinly and pile them on a bagel for a brunch salad you can feel good about.

### Veggie Bagel Sandwiches

Yield: Serves 2 | Time: 20 min.

#### Ingredients:

- 4 bagels, toasted
- 8 ounces goat or ricotta cheese
- 3 scallions, chopped
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 golden beet, sliced thin
- 1/2 cucumber, sliced thin
- 4 radishes, sliced thin
- 1/4 red onion, sliced thin
- 1/2 green pepper, sliced thin
- Sprouts
- Salt and pepper

#### Directions:

- 1) Chop scallions finely and mash them into goat cheese with honey.
- 2) Prepare all veggies, slicing them very thin. I like to use a mandoline slicer for this, but you could just chop them as thin as possible with a knife also.
- 3) Slice bagels in half and toast in a 350 degree oven about 8 minutes or toast in a toaster.
- 4) Slather bagels with the goat cheese mixture and let people pile on the toppings that they want! You could leave the cheese out for a healthier version, but a little bit is fine in my opinion!
- 5) Slice the sandwiches in half for easier eating.





## 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

- Arugula (5 oz.)
- Baby spinach (5 oz.)
- Cucumber (1/2)
- Garlic (2 cloves)
- Golden beet (1)
- Grapes, red seedless (2 cups)
- Green pepper (1/2)
- Lemon (1)
- Mango (1)
- Radishes (4)
- Red onion, small (1)
- Scallions (3)
- Spinach (1 bunch)
- Sprouts

### Meat, Poultry, Seafood

- Chicken breasts (1 1/2 lb.)
- Chicken thighs (4 med-large)

### Dairy

- Blue cheese (4 oz.)
- Goat cheese (8 oz.)  
SUB: Ricotta cheese
- Pecorino (1 cup)
- Yogurt (1/2 cup)

### Spices and Pantry Items

- Artichokes, marinated (6 oz.)
- Bagels, savory (4)
- Black pepper
- Croutons (2 cups)
- Cumin seeds
- Curry powder (1 Tbsp.)
- Dijon mustard (1 teas.)
- Honey (1 Tbsp.)
- Hot sauce
- Kosher salt
- Mango chutney (1/4 cup)
- Olive oil (3/4 cup + drizzle)
- Orzo pasta (12 oz.)
- Sugar (1 teas.)
- Sun-dried tomatoes, marinated (1/2 cup)
- White wine vinegar (1/4 cup)