

MACHEESMO

- MEALS -

TOMATO LOVE

August is really my favorite month when it comes to summer produce. While a lot of veggies are perfect this time of year, it's really just due to tomatoes.

I'll eat them any way I can get them this time of year. Sometimes it's just sliced and sprinkled with a little sea salt. Sometimes I'll make a quick sauce out of them or add them to a pizza. The meals are always great.

August is one of my favorite cooking months!

Helpful Equipment:

- Baking Dish
- Slotted Spoon
- Colander



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

MEAL 1

- Goat Cheese and Tomato Pasta

MEAL 2

- Paprika Mediterranean Chicken

MEAL 3

- Eggplant Orzo Bake

BRUNCH!

- Fresh Tomato Benedicts

#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 | Goat Cheese and Tomato Pasta Toss

This pasta is an amazing trick because it almost ends up being like a macaroni and cheese, but without all the work. The goat cheese melts into the sauce and makes it super creamy.

Tomato and Goat Cheese Pasta

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

Ingredients:

1/3 cup olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
2 pints cherry tomatoes, divided
12 ounces shell pasta
5 ounces goat cheese
Fresh basil, garnish
Pine nuts, toasted for garnish
Salt and pepper

Directions:

- 1) Take out about half of a pint of cherry tomatoes and dice them finely. For the rest of the cherry tomatoes just chop them in half or in quarters depending on size.
- 2) In a large bowl, add olive oil, minced garlic, about a teaspoon of kosher salt, and the diced and halved tomatoes. Stir together well and let sit for 10-15 minutes.
- 3) Cook pasta according to package in salted water until it's al dente. Drain pasta and save 2 cups of the pasta cooking water.
- 4) Add drained pasta to bowl with tomatoes and stir to combine. Stir in about a cup of hot pasta cooking water and 3 ounces of the goat cheese. Stir to combine.
- 5) Toast pine nuts lightly in a dry skillet over low heat. You'll only need a small handful per bowl of pasta. Keep a close eye on the pine nuts as they toast or they will burn. When they are fragrant and lightly toasted, remove them from the heat.
- 6) Stir pasta well to combine. If it's really dry, add more reserved cooking water. Divide pasta between serving bowls. Garnish with dollops of extra goat cheese, fresh basil, and toasted pine nuts.



MEAL 2 | Paprika Mediterranean Chicken

This is one of the first baked chicken dishes I ever really mastered and still love to make it to this day. The flavors are clean, but deep and fresh tomatoes are a must in making the dish perfectly.

Mediterranean Chicken

Yield: Serves 4 | **Time:** 1 hour

Ingredients:

Paprika Oil:

1/2 Cup olive oil
2 Tablespoons paprika
1 Tablespoon chili powder
2 cloves garlic chopped fine
Pinch of salt and pepper

Rest of the dish:

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
1 Pint cherry tomatoes (or 4 ripe roma tomatoes, chopped)
2 cans (15 oz.) garbanzo beans
1/4 Cup chopped cilantro (optional or as garnish)
1 Cup Greek yogurt
2 cups uncooked couscous

Directions:

- 1) Whisk together all the paprika oil ingredients. Can be made in advance.
 - 2) Add 1 tablespoon of the oil to the Greek yogurt and stir together. Store in the fridge until needed.
 - 3) Take 2/3 of the oil and pour it generously over your chicken breasts. Every inch of them should be covered with the rub.
 - 4) Bake chicken at 350 degrees F. for about 30 minutes.
 - 5) Open up your garbanzo beans, drain them, and dump them in this bowl along with the tomatoes and add the last of the paprika oil mixture. If you aren't afraid of cilantro you can throw 2 tablespoons of that in now as well.
 - 6) After your chicken has been cooking for 30 minutes, pull it out and pour your tomato and chickpea mixture evenly around the chicken.
 - 7) Bake again for for 30 more minutes or until chicken is cooked.
- Serve with yogurt sauce and couscous cooked according to package directions.



Vegetarian?

A lot of the flavor in this dish comes from the spice mix. Feel free to substitute tofu which will bake up nicely and get crispy around the edges or use a variety of fresh vegetables. Peppers, mushrooms, or eggplant (pressed and salted) would work fantastically.



MEAL 3 | Eggplant Orzo Bake

A reader recently told me that this was her favorite recipe I've ever posted. Even though it does have a longer prep time than I normally like for meal plan recipes, it can be done almost entirely in advance and is worth every prep second since tomatoes and eggplants are perfect this time of year.

Eggplant Orzo Bake

Yield: Serves 4 | Time: 90 min.

Ingredients:

1 large eggplant (about a pound), cubed and salted
2 teaspoons herbs de provence
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 cup olive oil
1 carrot, peeled and diced
1/2 sweet onion, diced
1/2 red pepper, diced
1 rib celery, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound tomatoes, chopped
8 ounces orzo pasta, cooked
8-10 ounces mozzarella, cubed
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
Salt and pepper

Directions:

1) Cube eggplant into 1/2-inch cubes. Place cubes in a colander and sprinkle with about a teaspoon of kosher salt. Put a bowl filled with water on top of the eggplant to press. Let sit for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, prep other ingredients.

2) You can cook orzo in advance. When done, rinse with cold water and toss orzo with a drizzle of olive oil to keep the pasta from sticking.

3) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. When eggplant is done pressing, rinse with cold water. Heat 2-3 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once hot, add eggplant pieces and cook for 8-10 minutes until eggplant pieces are browned and lightly charred. Add herbs de provence and red pepper flakes to the eggplant and cook for another minute. Remove from the pan.

4) Add another drizzle of oil to the skillet. Add onions, carrots, celery, and red pepper and cook until veggies are softened. Add garlic and chopped tomatoes and cook for another minute.

5) In a large bowl, stir together eggplant, veggies, orzo, and diced mozzarella. Season the mixture with a pinch of salt and pepper.

6) Transfer the mixture to a 2 1/2 quart (or 9x13) baking dish. Dust heavily with grated Parmesan cheese.

7) Bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees F. covered with foil. Then uncover and bake for another 15-20 minutes.

8) Serve baked pasta while warm!



Recipe Do Ahead!

This is a perfect recipe to make in advance. You can press the eggplant and get the dish completely ready to go so all you have to do is pop it in the oven and dinner is served!



Summer Brunch | Tomato Benedicts

If I had to pick only one brunch dish to eat for this entire month, it would definitely be this one. If the poached egg thing is scary, you can just fry an egg and serve it on top. The tomatoes are where it's at anyway. Note that the serving size on this recipe is for two people so adjust accordingly!

Bruschetta Benedicts

Yield: Serves 2 | **Time:** 30 min.

Ingredients:

1 pound very ripe tomatoes
1 clove garlic
1 Tablespoon fresh basil
2 Tablespoons olive oil
4 large eggs
Baguette for toast
White vinegar for poaching
Salt and pepper
Hot Paprika (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Combine the chopped tomatoes with the minced garlic and basil and drizzle with olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper. Set aside.
- 2) Slice baguette on a bias and toast in a 400 degree oven for 5 minutes until golden brown around the edges.
- 3) Bring a medium saucepan full of water and 1/4 Cup of white vinegar to a simmer over medium heat. Slowly roll the eggs into the water being careful not to just DROP the egg in. Let simmer for 3 minutes, very carefully stirring.
- 4) Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon to a paper towel to drain.
- 5) Top toasted bread with bruschetta mixture and a poached egg. Drizzle with olive oil and top with basil leaves and a pinch of paprika.





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

- Basil, fresh (1 Tbsp. + Garnish)
- Carrot (1)
- Cilantro (1/4 cup)
- Cherry tomatoes (3 pints)
- Celery, stalk (1)
- Eggplant (1 large)
- Garlic, cloves (7)
- Onion, sweet (1)
- Red pepper (1/2)
- Tomatoes (2 lb.)

Meat, Poultry, Seafood

- Chicken, boneless skinless
(4 small breasts)

Dairy

- Eggs, large (4)
- Goat cheese (5 oz.)
- Greek yogurt (1 cup)
- Mozzarella cheese (10 oz.)
- Parmesan cheese (1/2 cup)

Spices and Pantry Items

- Baguette (1)
- Black pepper
- Chickpeas (2 15-oz cans)
- Chili powder (1 Tbsp.)
- Couscous (2 cups)
- Herbs de Provence (2 teas.)
- Hot paprika (garnish)
- Kosher salt
- Olive oil (1 1/4 cup)
- Orzo pasta (8 oz.)
- Paprika (2 Tbsp.)
- Pine nuts (garnish)
- Red pepper flakes (1 teas.)
- Shell pasta (12 oz.)
- White vinegar (for poaching)