

Tom Venuto's

Private Collection of

**MUSCLE-
FEEDING,
FAT-BURNING
RECIPES**



Copyright © 2011, 2012 Fitness Renaissance, LLC

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the author or publisher.

Published by Tom Venuto and Fitness Renaissance, LLC
in the United States of America.

Editor: Lee Allen Howard (lee_allen_howard@yahoo.com)

Note: All third party trademarks-® and ™-are the property of their respective owners.

A WORD OF CAUTION: DISCLAIMER

This book is for reference and informational purposes only and is no way intended as medical counseling or medical advice. The information contained herein should not be used to treat, diagnose, or prevent a disease or medical condition without the advice of a competent medical professional. This book deals with in-depth information on health, fitness, and nutrition. Most of the information applies to everyone in general; however, not everyone has the same body type. We each have different responses to exercise depending on our choice of intensity and diet. Before making any changes in your lifestyle, you should consult with a physician to discover the best solution for your individual body type. The author, writer, editors, and graphic designer shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any damage or injury alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this book.

A vertical bar on the right side of the page with a gradient from orange at the top to dark blue at the bottom.

Tom Venuto's Private Collection of Muscle-Feeding, Fat-Burning Recipes

www.BurnTheFat.com

www.BurnTheFatInnerCircle.com

Copyright © 2011, 2012 Fitness Renaissance, LLC. All rights reserved.

WARNING: This ebook is protected by Federal copyright law. It is illegal to re-sell, auction, share, or give away this ebook. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law!

Contents

Welcome!.....	3
---------------	---

Breakfast Recipes

Pumpkin Spice Oatmeal	5
High Protein Pumpkin Pancakes ("Pumpcakes")	8
3-Minute High Protein Apple Cinnamon Oatmeal	12
Yamcakes: A Burn The Fat-Approved "Portable Meal To Go!"	16
Rich and Creamy Vanilla Oatmeal Pancakes.....	21

Lunch & Dinner Recipes

Muscle-Making Teriyaki Chicken Stir-Fry.....	25
Healthy Fried Rice	29
Turkey and Egg White Wrap ("Wramble")	32
Low Calorie Red and Green Vegetable Scramble	36
Nutty Wild Rice and Mushrooms	39
Mexican Pepper and Potato Scramble	44
Hot Black-eyed Peas and Rice with Lean Tenderloin	47
3-Minute Black Beans With Spicy Salsa	51
Italian Style Chicken and Rice with Tomatoes and Herbs.....	55
Shrimp Fra Diavolo ala Venuto	58
Muscle-Man Cheesy Grits.....	62
Super Simple Salmon Salad Sandwich	69
Warm Crunchy Tuna Rice With Spinach	74
Mediterranean Shrimp and Rice	78
Beefy Spanish Rice	81
Authentic Greek Salad With Chicken.....	85
Asian Sesame Cucumber Salad	89

Super Lean White Bean Chili	93
Hot 'N' Spicy Red Jambalaya.....	97
Garbanzo Bean Tuna Salad	102
Healthy Cajun "Fried" Cod Cakes	106
Mega-Protein T.N.T. Burgers (Tasty Nutritious Turkey).....	111
Hot 'N' Spicy Ground Turkey Scramble (or Omelet)	116
Crunchy, Cheesy Potato Pancakes (Croquettes)	121
Quick and Easy Salmon Burgers	127
Protein-Packed Authentic Healthy Greek Burgers!	132
Israeli Tuna Salad: A Delicious Lean Protein and Fibrous Carb Combo!	138
Healthy Greek Omelets: A High-Protein, Nutrient-Dense, Flavor-Packed Power Meal!	143
Spicy Tuna Burgers! A New Burn The Fat Recipe With A Kick!.....	148
Lazy Person's Chinese "Stir-Fry".....	154
Super Simple Tuna Burgers!.....	158

Welcome!

Welcome to my official *Muscle-Feeding, Fat-Burning Recipes* book! This private collection is not your usual recipe collection—it's much, much more! Every recipe has been carefully analyzed and modified from traditional recipes in order to fit into healthy fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition guidelines.

The recipes are designed to be quick so they fit into busy, time-strapped lifestyles and super-simple so that no previous cooking experience is required. Not only that, every recipe has been personally made and taste-tested by Tom Venuto, the author of [***Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle***](#), and founder of the [***Burn the Fat Inner Circle***](#).

You also get more than just ingredient lists and instructions, you get Tom's "Burn The Fat" cooking and nutrition tips as well!

Tom is a self-confessed former "kitchen dummy" who used to hate cooking and likes everything plain and simple. If a recipe has the Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval, it means that Tom has actually made this himself. And if a "kitchen dummy" like Tom can make it, then anyone can!



Now, for the recipes...!

Breakfast Recipes



Pumpkin Spice Oatmeal

You've heard it a million times before: eat more vegetables! You've heard it so many times, you're sick of us "diet police" nagging you about it! And yet, you know it's true. You need to eat more vegetables (nag, nag). The trouble is, it seems so easy to eat processed carbs like bread, cereal, pasta and even sugary foods, but it seems so hard to add more veggies—at least in a way that tastes good. And therein lies one of the secrets to getting more veggies—find clever ways to "sneak" them into your meals that actually make your food taste even better. Enter pumpkin spice oatmeal... delish!



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 1/2 can (212 g) pumpkin
- 2/3 cup (54 g) oatmeal, dry
- 1-1/3 cups water
- 1 scoop (26 g) vanilla protein powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- Sweetener (optional)

Directions

1. Scoop out 2/3 of a cup of natural (unsweetened) oatmeal and place it in a microwave-safe bowl.
2. Add water as per oatmeal cooking instructions, add the canned pumpkin to the oatmeal and stir.
3. Microwave on high for 2 minutes, or until cooked.
4. For the high protein version, stir in vanilla protein powder.

5. Add nutmeg, cinnamon, vanilla extract (optional).
6. Sweetener is optional.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 393

Protein: 42.8 g

Carbs: 35.3 g

Fat: 11.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Just a quick review on why pumpkin is good for what ails you. First, the bright orange color means pumpkin is loaded with beta carotene. Pumpkin is also loaded with potassium. There's 564 mg of potassium in a cup of mashed pumpkin and that cup comes with only 100 calories! (100 calories of banana, by comparison, contains 1/3 less potassium.) That single cup of pumpkin also gives you 8 grams of fiber. (This entire recipe contains a whopping 12.5 grams of fiber, almost half your daily target!)

By the way, pumpkin has a very high water content, and research on energy density has found that foods with high water content (such as fruits and vegetables) are much more filling, so they help keep hunger at bay.

This recipe calls for half a cup of canned pumpkin, which will give you just 50 calories, 10 grams of carbs, 1 gram of protein and 4 grams of fiber. If you have the calories to spare, by all means feel free to increase your serving size, and you might like it with the extra pumpkin flavor.



Not all supermarkets have canned pumpkin. If you can't locate this product at your regular grocery store, then your local health food store should have it. My local store carried Farmer's Market brand organic pumpkin. I also know that Trader Joe's has canned pumpkin, and there are several other well known brands well. The size of my can was 15 ounces (425 grams) and I used half a can for this recipe.

As for oatmeal—it is simply the king of breakfast carbs for fat-burning and muscle-building programs. It's a GREAT starchy/complex carbohydrate source. It's highly satiating and provides lasting energy without the crash you get from sugary refined cereals. Personally, I never get bored with oatmeal—it's how I've started every day for over two decades. I must have dozens of oatmeal recipes, and this is a delicious one. It's easy. Just add canned pumpkin to your oatmeal and cook it in the microwave (takes two minutes or so).

Cinnamon is a great spice for use in your oatmeal and it just so happens that cinnamon is great with pumpkin too. Add a dash of nutmeg to enhance the flavor even more, or just use pumpkin spice. Many traditional pumpkin recipes use brown sugar, but that adds calories, so is not included in our ingredients above. Non-caloric sweetener such as Splenda is optional. Those who prefer to avoid artificial sweeteners might check out Stevia or Truvia which is stevia and erythritol, a sugar alcohol.

Pumpkin spice oatmeal can be made without the protein powder, but the vanilla flavor protein actually enhances the overall flavor a lot. This recipe calls for one scoop, and if you wanted to bump the protein content even higher, you could add more to meet your protein requirement. If you prefer the pumpkin oatmeal without the protein powder, then instead you could cook up some egg whites (with one whole egg) and eat them alongside your oats for a Burn The Fat approved meal (or just enjoy the pumpkin and spice oatmeal by itself as a vegetarian meal).

Pumpkin isn't just for Thanksgiving any more—try this and let me know what you think!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 1 minute prep, 2–3 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

High Protein Pumpkin Pancakes (“Pumpcakes”)

If there’s one bona fide superfood that is known about, talked about and eaten the least—it’s pumpkin! Usually, you only think of pumpkin around Halloween when Jack-O-lanterns are being carved and Thanksgiving when pumpkin pie is served. But pumpkin can be made into healthier recipes than pie, and pumpkin certainly deserves to be listed among the superfoods. Unlike pancakes, which are flour-heavy and mostly carbohydrate, my pumpcakes were designed to be very high in protein, making them a standalone meal. Fifteen minutes from now you can be enjoying these tasty Burn The Fat-approved treats.



Yield: makes 2 large (5-inch wide) pancakes

Ingredients

- 7.5 oz (212 g) of canned pumpkin
- 1/3 cup (27 g) oatmeal, dry
- 1/3 cup (40 g) multigrain or whole wheat pancake mix
- 1 scoop (26 g) vanilla (or plain) protein powder
- 4 egg whites
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

Directions

1. Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk thoroughly with a fork. For a finely mixed batter, put the ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
2. Preheat a non-stick skillet on medium heat, or use a large griddle. Pour the pancake mixture onto the pan or griddle to form 2 large pancakes.

3. Flip each pancake as soon as it is firm enough to flip and the bottom side is lightly brown. Cook on medium heat and keep a close eye on them since they cook quickly and the outside burns easily.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 507

Protein: 44.1 g

Carbs: 69.7 g

Fat: 5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

If there's one bona fide superfood that is known about, talked about and eaten the least—it's pumpkin! Usually, you only think of pumpkin around Halloween when Jack-O-lanterns are being carved and Thanksgiving when pumpkin pie is served. But pumpkin can be made into healthier recipes than pie, and pumpkin certainly deserves to be listed among the superfoods.

Right from the first glance, you should realize the bright orange color means pumpkin is loaded with beta carotene. Pumpkin is also packed with potassium. There's 564 mg of potassium in a cup of mashed pumpkin, and that cup only comes with 100 calories! (By comparison, bananas only contain 2/3 the amount of potassium as pumpkin.) That single cup of pumpkin also gives you 8 grams of fiber (this entire recipe contains a whopping 14.2 grams of fiber, approximately half your daily target).

There are a variety of neat recipes you can make with pumpkin. If you've been following my recipe column for some time, then you probably already know that I love making various types of pancakes because they are delicious as well as portable. This pumpkin pancake recipe is very similar to our previous yam pancake recipe, also known as yamcakes (see ["Yamcakes: A Burn The Fat-Approved "Portable Meal To Go!"" on page 16](#)). Appropriately, I've named my pumpkin pancakes, "pumpcakes."



Pumpkin certainly deserves to be listed among the superfoods.

Pumpcakes are not made like traditional pancakes—with a near-liquid batter that makes small, flat pancakes. Instead, I add ingredients that make a very thick batter that you almost have to spoon onto the griddle or fry pan. The thicker batter allows you to make large, thick, fluffy pancakes about 5 to 5.5 inches in diameter and 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch thick.

Unlike pancakes, which are flour-heavy and mostly carbohydrate, my pumpcakes were designed to be very high in protein, making them a standalone meal. The protein comes primarily from the four egg whites along with a scoop of protein powder. There is also some protein in the pancake mix and oatmeal.

If you wanted to bump the protein content even higher, you could add non-fat cottage cheese to this recipe, which contains 12 grams of protein per cup. If you wanted less protein, you could skip the vanilla protein powder and instead eat a half a dozen scrambled egg whites alongside your pancakes.

I encourage you to experiment with your own pumpcake variations. I tested five batches with different recipes before choosing one favorite. In my first batch, I tried buckwheat flour, but then decided to stick with multigrain (primarily made from whole wheat), since buckwheat has a strong and distinctive flavor which dominated the recipe, in my opinion. The brand of flour I use is a multigrain plus flax pancake mix. Whole wheat pancake mix or oat bran are also options.

In my first couple of batches, I used a larger amount of multigrain pancake mix, but the batter consistency was thick and sticky, making for difficulty pouring and flipping (batter stuck to the spatula). I believe this is part of the reason why traditional pancake recipes call for vegetable oil, but I wanted to skip the oil to save on calories and avoid the refined vegetable oils that are usually used in pancakes.

You could probably fix a batter that's too thick or sticky by adding some skim milk or changing your ratio of flour/oats to egg whites, but I prefer the consistency of the

batter created by using both oatmeal and whole wheat flour rather than just the flour. You also save some calories this way because the flour is 40% more calorie dense per unit of volume than oatmeal.

Choosing spices was easy. I simply looked up a traditional pumpkin pie recipe and noticed that cinnamon, nutmeg and ground ginger were listed, so I used those and added a teaspoon of vanilla extract. You might also want to try pumpkin pie spice. After all, if we could get these healthy pumpcakes tasting even a little like pumpkin pie, that would be nice, eh?

Looking at some pumpkin pie recipes, you might be tempted to add brown sugar to the mix, but there's a surprising sweetness to these pumpcakes without the sugar and there's lots of flavor from the spices. Some people may want to use low calorie sweeteners like Splenda, but that's optional. If you wanted to, and you had calories to spare, you could top these with an all-fruit jelly or low calorie maple syrup.

Enjoy these pumpkin pancakes especially around Halloween and Thanksgiving as a treat for you and your family, but eating more pumpkin any time of the year will do your body a whole lot of good!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B+

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 7 minutes prep, 8 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

3-Minute High Protein Apple Cinnamon Oatmeal

With two minutes of cooking time and about one minute of prep time, this high protein apple cinnamon oatmeal is about as fast and easy as it gets. Without question, old fashioned oatmeal (the kind that has no added sugar) is one of the best sources of natural starchy carbs you can eat. Even if you choose a lower-carb nutrition approach, if you wanted to leave a small amount of starchy carbs in your daily meal plan, oatmeal would be a great choice. Packing 33.6 grams of protein, there's a reason this meal is one that Tom Venuto has been eating for years. Enjoy!



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup old fashioned oats, dry
- 1-1/3 cups water
- 1/3 cup natural (unsweetened) applesauce
- 1-1/2 scoops vanilla protein powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Scoop out your oatmeal with a measuring cup and place in a microwave-safe bowl.
2. Add 2 parts water for each 1 part oatmeal (for example, 1-1/3 cup water for 2/3 cup oats).
3. Microwave on high for 2 minutes or until water has been absorbed and oatmeal has expanded to thick porridge consistency.
4. After cooking, add applesauce, protein powder and cinnamon to taste. Stir and serve hot.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 397

Protein: 33.6 g

Carbs: 53.5 g

Fat: 7 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

With two minutes of cooking time and about one minute of prep time, this high protein apple cinnamon oatmeal is about as fast and easy as it gets. Without question, old fashioned oatmeal (the kind that has no added sugar) is one of the best sources of natural starchy carbs you can eat. Even if you choose a lower-carb nutrition approach, if you wanted to leave a small amount of starchy carbs in your daily meal plan, oatmeal would be a great choice.



Old fashioned oatmeal is 100% natural, high in nutrients, high in fiber and it's a slow-digesting type of carb.

Old fashioned oatmeal is 100% natural, high in nutrients, high in fiber and it's a slow-digesting type of carb. It's also extremely filling and hunger-satisfying. An entire cup of old fashioned oats contains only 300 calories and many people, especially women, tell me that they can't even eat that much. That's a great bang for your buck when you're on a fat loss program. A typical serving of oatmeal for a fat loss program is about 2/3 of a cup to 3/4 of a cup. This recipe calls for 2/3 of a cup, but you can adjust your serving size according to your calorie needs.

One complaint many people have shared with me is that they don't like the taste of oatmeal, or they don't like the consistency. Some people say that cooked hot oatmeal is too thick and "pasty." Well, I have just the solution for you. Try adding unsweetened applesauce into your oatmeal. It not only changes the consistency, it also adds great flavor and natural sweetness, making additional sweeteners unnecessary. Then

sprinkle on some cinnamon—the apples and cinnamon complement each other beautifully.

By the way, did you know that every teaspoon of cinnamon has 1.3 grams of fiber and that cinnamon has been proven in clinical research to help stabilize blood sugar and even lower blood lipids? Yup. Not only that, cinnamon also contains biologically active compounds such as polyphenols, antioxidants and anthocyanins. Cinnamon is good for digestion (it's reputed as a gas reliever), and may help with pain and stiffness in joints. This is a bona fide superfood, gang, and adding some to your morning oatmeal every day would go a long way toward improving your health—especially if you have issues with blood sugar regulation. No excuses. It's easy to do... just sprinkle.

In the ***Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle*** system, a complete meal contains a source of lean protein. Eggs or egg whites are a typical breakfast staple, but of course that takes extra prep time, so a quick and easy complete meal suggestion when you're in a hurry is to turn your regular oatmeal into "high protein oatmeal" by adding protein powder. Some of our members have expressed concerns over denaturing the whey protein while cooking it in the microwave. While it's not likely that cooking it for two minutes with your oatmeal would cause any major damage to the amino acids or the valuable protein sub-fractions in whey, it's just as easy to add the powder after the oatmeal is cooked. Just stir it in and serve.

I recommend a vanilla protein powder. Specifically, I use a "vanilla praline" flavor as I've found it adds its own dash of additional flavor. If you prefer, you can purchase unflavored protein powder, and you won't taste anything but the apple cinnamon oatmeal. As an alternative, you can skip the protein powder and cook up some eggs for your protein and just have the oatmeal as your carb source.

A lot of Burn The Fat members, subscribers and customers have been very curious about what I eat every day for burning fat and building muscle. I can tell you that this recipe is one of the meals I have eaten almost every day, week after week, for many years. It tastes great, it's high in nutritional value, but most of all, you just can't beat it for convenience.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 1 minute prep, 2 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Yamcakes: A Burn The Fat-Approved “Portable Meal To Go!”

A note from Kyle Battis, Inner Circle Manager: When Tom first told me about yamcakes, I must admit, I raised an eyebrow and was a bit skeptical. However, Tom has not led me astray with his food advice in the past, so I gave the recipe a try. Y-U-M-M-Y!!! About 20 minutes later I bit into a warm yamcake and I was hooked, just as I’m sure you will be when you try this Burn The Fat recipe. Enjoy!



Yield: makes 2 yamcakes

Ingredients

- 4 egg whites
- 1/2 cup oatmeal
- 1/4 cup skim milk
- 6 oz yam, skinned, mashed
- 3 tablespoons (approx 40 grams) whole wheat or flax pancake mix
- 1 scoop plain or vanilla flavored protein powder
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons maple extract

Directions

1. Microwave or bake your yam and then remove the skin.
2. Place the yam and all the other ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. If you don’t have a food processor or blender, simply mix and whisk with a fork until the mixture is as smooth as possible. Your mixture should not be too liquid, but rather thick.

3. Preheat a non-stick skillet on medium heat or better yet, use a large griddle. Pour your mixture onto the pan or griddle to form 2 small pancakes. Flip the pancakes as soon as the bottom side is lightly brown and firm enough to flip. Cook on medium heat and keep a close eye on them as they cook quickly and the outside burns easily.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 359

Protein: 26 g

Carbs: 52 g

Fat: 3.3 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

The nutmeg and cinnamon complement the yam flavor perfectly.



When I first shared this recipe with a fitness-minded friend, she scrunched her eyebrows and said, “Yam cake?!” I suspect she was thinking along the lines of carrot cake! Lo and behold, sugar-laden regular cake is not to be found in the Burn The Fat program, so I said, “No, no, not cake, pan-cake... yam pancake. Yamcake is the shorthand for yam pancake!” She got it then, but didn’t seem too excited about “healthy pancakes.” I said, “Just wait till you try them—they might as well be cake, they are that delicious and pretty darn nutritious, even for strict diets.

It’s not just the fact that these are so delicious it seems like you could be “cheating,” but what I also like about yamcakes is that they are a portable food. Over and over again I hear from my clients and members that eating 5 or 6 times a day is the hardest thing to do when you’re busy and especially if you travel. Over and over my answer is

to cook portable foods in advance and take them with you. Yamcakes are yet another portable food recipe you can add to your arsenal. Cook them up and take them with you wherever you go. Then you can eat them like a snack, but they are really a substantial meal in and of themselves.



You can identify a yam by its darker orange color, pointier ends and unusual sizes and shapes.

The yam contains the majority of the starchy carbs in this recipe, and yams happen to be one of the top five best starchy carb choices on the Burn The Fat program. I would probably even rate them as being in the top two (with oatmeal being the other top starchy carb choice).

Yams are flavorful, all-natural, low in calories, and packed with nutrients and antioxidants like beta-carotene, so it's no wonder yams are a favorite carbohydrate among bodybuilders, fitness competitors and health-seekers alike. According to Brian Rowley, science editor for *FLEX* magazine, "Bodybuilders use yams when cutting bodyfat because they are low on the glycemic index. Waxy white potatoes (boilers) are high on the glycemic index, so they make an excellent post-workout meal, but nothing compares with a yam the rest of the time."

Although the glycemic index is only a secondary factor when making carb choices on the Burn The Fat program, if you're carb sensitive or if you're on a very strict diet (like a contest diet), then the glycemic index could be given more weight in your choices.

By the way, sweet potatoes are not exactly the same thing as yams (sweet potatoes are slightly higher on the glycemic index), but they're otherwise similar, which also makes them good choices for fat burning diets. You can identify a yam by its darker orange color, pointier ends and unusual sizes and shapes. A typical plain bodybuilding-style yam meal would be a yam with a green veggie, and chicken breast or fish. Yamcakes are a unique and, I daresay, more fun way to cook yams.

One of the reasons these yamcakes taste so good is because of the spices. The nutmeg and cinnamon complement the yam flavor perfectly. Add cinnamon liberally and a little bit less nutmeg because nutmeg is a very strong spice and a little bit goes a long way. Maple extract is optional, but it enhances the cinnamon, nutmeg, yam mixture even more. You can add sweetener such as Splenda if you like, but remember, yams are a complex carb and as such are naturally sweet.

You may want to experiment with some variations on this recipe. For example, if you increase the quantity of yam you use to 8–10 ounces, you will get a slightly different texture and of course, a little more yam flavor (don't forget to account for the additional calories). The pancake mix is optional, but it adds quality to the batter texture. When I make these, I use a 100% whole wheat pancake mix or better yet a multigrain-plus-flaxseed pancake mix. (It never hurts to get some extra omega-3s!) If you experiment with your batter mix and find it is too thick, you can add a little more skim milk. If it is too liquidy, add more yam or oats.



Try a 100% whole wheat pancake mix or better yet a multigrain plus flaxseed mix.

The protein powder is optional, although including the protein powder boosts the protein content high enough that these yam pancakes become a complete meal (protein plus complex carb). Some recipes are exclusively protein meals or carb meals respectively. For example, some omelets are entirely protein meals, meant to be served as the protein portion of a meal, and a complex carb such as oatmeal or whole grain toast on the side needs to be added to make it a complete meal. Conversely, some pancake recipes are mostly carbs without much protein, so protein needs to be added to make it a complete meal.

Yamcakes are extremely low in fat, and this is a good thing because they are high in carbs and generally you do not want to eat a lot of fat and carbs in the same meal. If you wish, however, you can add calories and healthy fats by using one whole omega-3 egg and 2–3 whites rather than 4 egg whites.

Yamcakes are delicious hot right off the pan or griddle. They also make fantastic portable foods and are pretty darn good cold after being refrigerated. Just wrap them up in foil and take them with you wherever you go. Although they look small, you will find them surprisingly filling.

I give yamcakes a very respectable B+ nutrition grade. If you eliminate the whole wheat pancake mix and the maple extract, I would give these an A grade, and they would even be suitable for bodybuilding or fitness “competition diets” ... on your high carb days, of course!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B+

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 10 minutes prep, 7 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Rich and Creamy Vanilla Oatmeal Pancakes

I just made these tasty vanilla pancakes for my second breakfast and, WOW, were they good! Not only are they tasty but they are really simple to make and that makes me a happy because I am a culinary dummy. My recommendation is to gather your ingredients and put these on the menu for tomorrow morning!



Yield: makes 4 pancakes (serving size: 2 pancakes)

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 cups quick oats
- 5 egg whites
- 1 cup non-fat cottage cheese
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

1. Put all the ingredients together in a mixing bowl. Stir the mixture very thoroughly until it has a pancake-batter-like consistency, or you can simply use a blender and blend the mixture until it's smooth.
2. Spray some non-stick spray on a frying pan or griddle (or brush lightly with olive oil). Split the mixture to make four pancakes (approximately a half cup each).
3. Cook on medium heat. When one side is lightly browned and solid enough to flip, turn the pancakes over with a spatula and cook the other side until lightly browned and firm.

Eat your pancakes hot off the griddle, wrap them up in foil and take them with you on the go, or make big batches and put them in the refrigerator or freezer for future use!



Rich and Creamy Vanilla Oatmeal Pancakes ready for the road!

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

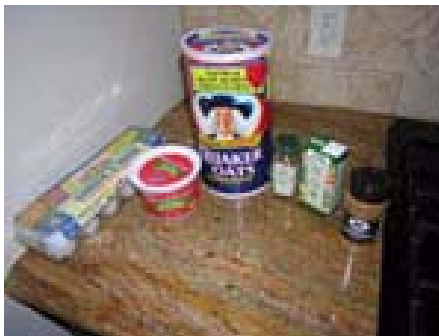
Calories: 392 cal

Protein: 37.2 g

Carbs: 50.2 g

Fat: 5.2 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



This is great way to make high protein oatmeal pancakes that come out with a rich and creamy consistency, by using nonfat cottage cheese in your batter. Using the quantity of ingredients listed above, this recipe makes four small pancakes (about a half a cup of batter per pancake), and two pancakes makes a complete meal for a fat loss program (approximately 400 calories).

If you need fewer calories to accommodate your personal nutrition plan, simply increase or decrease the amounts of all ingredients proportionately to get the desired calorie content you want. (Note: Most women require 300–360 calories per meal for fat loss programs and most men require 400–480 calories per meal for fat loss programs, based on 5–6 meals per day. Maintenance and muscle growth programs can require substantially more calories.)

These pancakes are delicious without the protein powder, but using a vanilla protein powder increases the protein content from 28 grams per serving to 37 grams per serving, while adding a great vanilla flavor. Using a sweetener is completely optional. These pancakes taste great either way.



If your pancake batter consistency is not right, you can use more egg whites or add some water to make it thinner, or you can use more oatmeal or fewer egg whites to make it thicker. Be sure to make a note of it for your next batch.

If you are lactose intolerant, then you may not be able to enjoy this particular version of the oatmeal pancake because this recipe calls for a dairy product in the form of cottage cheese. However, this is only one of many ways to make oatmeal pancakes. If you can't eat dairy products, try apple cinnamon oatmeal pancakes instead (see [“3-Minute High Protein Apple Cinnamon Oatmeal” on page 12](#)).

These pancakes are also great for cooking in bulk, so it pays to use a griddle for making large batches. Remember, one of the keys to sticking with a fat-burning muscle-feeding lifestyle that requires 5 or 6 small meals a day, is planning your meals in advance. This is another great way to have portable meals ready when you need them.

This is a great travel meal because these pancakes are small and completely portable. Not only that, they are also “finger food,” and you can eat them conveniently even while you're behind the wheel driving, flying on a plane, sitting in class or at a seminar, hiking up in the mountains, or just about anywhere else! (Be careful when eating these on planes! Your seat-mate may get jealous and try to steal them from you!)

These creamy high protein oatmeal pancakes get an “A-grade,” they are Burn The Fat program-approved and they're easy to make, so they get the “Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval.” The best part is, they taste so good it almost feels like you're “cheating!”

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy!

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Lunch & Dinner Recipes



Muscle-Making Teriyaki Chicken Stir-Fry

Teriyaki chicken stir-fry is easy to make because it's simply a mixture of rice, chicken, mixed vegetables and teriyaki sauce. Your choices for vegetables are endless, and other traditional stir fry veggies you might try include snow peas, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, water chestnuts, bok choy or celery. However, there is something about this particular combination—carrots, green pepper, mushrooms and onions—that is absolutely delicious with teriyaki sauce, chicken and rice.



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

1-1/2 cups brown rice

10 oz skinless chicken breast

4 oz carrots, (about 1 cup, sliced)

5 oz green pepper, chopped (1 whole, large)

1 cup mushrooms (Portobello or regular), pieces or sliced

1/2 onion, chopped

Teriyaki sauce, sugar free (or your favorite brand or recipe)

Directions

1. Begin cooking the rice in a pot or a rice cooker first, allowing for 30–40 minutes rice cooking time.
2. After the rice has started cooking, prepare a large, deep sauté pan or wok by lightly coating the surface with non-stick cooking spray.
3. Chop chicken breast into small squares and add to pan. Heat on medium until no longer pink.
4. Chop and add carrots, green pepper, onion and mushrooms. Simmer on medium heat and stir regularly.

5. When the vegetables and chicken are cooked, scoop out 1.5 cups of rice and add to the pan or wok.
6. Add teriyaki sauce and stir into the mixture. Serve and enjoy.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 368

Protein: 40.5 g

Carbs: 50 g

Fat: 2.1 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

The goal with many of our Burn the Fat recipes is to achieve the highest nutritional value per calorie (high nutrient density) and the lowest possible calories per volume (low calorie density).

Japanese chicken, rice and vegetable stir fries are inherently very healthy meals, but there are some neat little tricks you can use to make them even healthier and leaner.

If you look in traditional cookbooks for oriental stir fry recipes, you'll often see sesame oil or peanut oil (sometimes even olive oil). By ditching the oil, you save a ton of calories, and with a good teriyaki sauce, there's still plenty of flavor.

A small amount of oil for flavor or texture is your prerogative, but be sure to account for the extra calories if you add it. Remember, all oils are calorically dense, with about 130 calories per tablespoon. All you need is a high quality non-stick surface frying pan coated lightly with cooking spray and your ingredients will stir just fine without sticking.

Here's calorie density reducing trick number two: The "fibrous carbs" (such as green vegetables and most stir fry veggies) are very low in calorie density per unit of volume. The "starchy carbs," although some can be healthy (brown rice), are high in caloric density. To reduce the caloric density of a recipe batch, all you need to do is alter the traditional ingredient amounts by reducing the starchy carb serving while increasing the fibrous carb servings. The taste stays almost exactly the same.

For example, most recipes that would make a batch for two would call for 2 cups of rice and might call for half a cup of mushrooms and half a green pepper and so on. To make a lower calorie version, you could cut the rice (starchy carb portion) to 1.5 cups or even 1 cup, and increase the vegetable portions to a cup (or even more!).

Regular chicken teriyaki also usually calls for some kind of cooking wine, whether the traditional Japanese variety or some other. You can dispense with the wine as well, and that will save you even more calories. Don't worry, a really good teriyaki sauce is all you need to put on top of your rice, chicken and veggies—the sauce will be your “splurge.”

Teriyaki sauce is basically just soy sauce which has sweetener and spices added to it (and sometimes the cooking wine). It's often used as a marinade, but it's terrific in stir fry, as you will see when you cook this. The only downfall is the high sodium content, which is the case with all soy sauces. If you're restricting sodium, keep in mind that there's about 300 mg of sodium per tablespoon of regular sauce.

You could make your own teriyaki sauce, but I was lazy and used the store-bought variety. If you shop in a regular grocery store, you may find that the sweetener used is sugar or corn syrup. Not so great, but at 25-30 calories per tablespoon on average, it's not all that much in the bigger scheme of things.

If you shop in a health foods store, you'll find “natural” teriyaki sauces. Instead of refined sugars you will find “natural” sweeteners like cane juice, honey or even pineapple juice. You could say that's an improvement, but do keep in mind, calorically, a carb is a carb at 4 calories per gram.

One thing I did find of interest to some people is a sugar-free teriyaki sauce. Because it was sweetened with Splenda, that reduced the energy content to a miniscule 5 calories per tablespoon. So, if you're not bothered by Splenda (some people prefer to avoid artificial sweeteners), then that's yet another calorie savings.

The ingredients above make a nice big batch that you can split in half and serve for two (or save a serving for later). With the amount of vegetables in a batch, plus the generous serving of chicken, you will be amazed how filling this is for the amount of calories—less than 370 per serving!

If you're highly active or pursuing muscle gain goals, you could easily increase the portions or change the recipe to include more rice.

This is one of my all-time favorite stir fry combinations for flavor. If we don't dock this dish for the sodium or the tiny amount of sweetener, this is an A-grade recipe all the way, so enjoy it without guilt!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 30-40 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Healthy Fried Rice

Do you love Chinese food, but are afraid of eating it because you don't trust the restaurants? After all, you just don't know how many extra hidden calories might be in there (sauces, not-so-lean meats, etc.). You also might realize that you don't have any control over the sodium content either (soy sauce is like liquid salt). If so, then why not make your own healthy Chinese, like this healthy "fried" rice, where you control the ingredients?



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown rice
- 1 whole egg
- 4 oz top round steak, cubed small (optional for high protein version)
- 3 egg whites
- 1 cup mushrooms, pieces or sliced
- 1/2 cup chopped scallions (green onions)
- Garlic powder to taste
- 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce

Directions

1. Begin cooking the rice in a pot or a rice cooker first, allowing for 30–40 minutes rice cooking time, or as per instructions.
2. After the rice has started cooking, prepare a large, deep sauté pan or a wok by lightly coating the surface with non-stick cooking spray.
3. Heat pan on medium and add the chopped green onions and mushrooms.
4. For the high protein version, add beef cubes to the pan or wok.

5. Add the eggs and stir. Watch closely to avoid burning and turn heat to medium-low once eggs are cooked.
6. When the rice is finished, scoop out a cup and stir the rice into the mixture.
7. Add garlic powder and light soy sauce to taste. Serve and enjoy.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 386

Protein: 25.7 g

Carbs: 35.3

Fat: 11.8 g

With lean beef:

Calories: 532

Protein: 51.8 g

Carbs: 35.3

Fat: 15.6 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

This healthy Chinese “fried” rice is super easy to make. I especially like this recipe because it can be made with or without meat, depending on your tastes and whether you want medium protein or high protein.

Use the rice of your choice, although I do recommend brown long-grain rices. Basmati is one of my favorites. For information about brown rice versus white rice, read “The Great Rice Debate” in the Burn the Fat Q&A department: www.burnthefatinnercircle.com/members/608.cfm.

This dish packs about 25 grams of protein in the basic version and more than 50 grams in the high protein beef version.

I recommend one whole egg and a few egg whites, although you can use all whites if you want to save a little on calories. (Don’t forget that there is some nutritious stuff in those yolks, including the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin, which help protect you

against cataracts and macular degeneration.) Feel free to use more eggs or egg whites if you have calories to spare and you want more protein.

To save calories and make this a Burn the Fat-friendly meal, use my low calorie density trick: keep the serving size of starchy carbs fairly small (the rice) and make the serving size of the fibrous carbs and veggies large (use lots of mushrooms).

If you want to keep your sodium intake in check, you can use a reduced sodium soy sauce. Kikkoman brand, for example, contains almost 40% less sodium—540 mg per tablespoon versus 920 mg in regular soy sauce. It still tastes great, and this meal just wouldn't be the same without that extra flavor.

In future Burn the Fat recipes, we'll be making some great veggie-loaded stir fries, so keep that wok handy. But in the meantime, enjoy this one—I'm sure it will become a favorite of yours because it's so simply and easy to make. You'll be AMAZED at how filling this is at under 400 calories!

If you don't dock this dish for the sodium, this is an A grade recipe all the way, so savor it without guilt!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 30-40 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Turkey and Egg White Wrap (“Wramble”)

What’s a “wramble,” you ask? Simple... a scramble inside a wrap! This wramble uses egg whites (of course), lean ground turkey, tomatoes, cilantro and spices. It’s delicious and very versatile too: You can eat the scramble alone for an almost no-carb meal, or wrap it up in a 100% whole grain tortilla—then you’ve got a portable meal to go! It’s very high in protein, super fast and easy to make, and did I mention, it’s delicious!



Yield: makes 2 servings (2 wraps or scrambles)

Ingredients

- 2 100% whole wheat wraps
- 1 whole egg
- 5 egg whites
- 8 oz ground turkey, 99% fat free
- 1 small (approx 4 oz) tomato
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Black pepper to taste
- Pinch of sea salt (optional)

Directions

1. Spray your pan with non-stick cooking spray and then preheat the pan on medium. Alternately, use 1/2 to 1 tablespoon of olive oil (accounting for calories added).
2. Add the turkey and cumin. Crumble and stir the turkey as it cooks until it’s light brown and then add the egg whites. Stir the egg white/ground turkey mixture as the egg whites cook.

3. Season to taste with black pepper and salt (optional).
4. Chop your tomatoes into small pieces and dice your cilantro. Add tomato and cilantro last, stir again and cook for another minute or two and remove from heat.
5. Heat your wrap/tortilla slightly until soft and warm (on separate skillet or in the microwave). Divide turkey/egg white mixture into the wraps/tortillas, roll the wraps and serve!

Tip: Completely drain the fluid from the pan before you scoop the turkey-egg mix onto the tortilla or wrap. In fact, you may even want to pat it dry with a paper towel—again, so it doesn't make a drippy mess.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (1 wrap):

Calories: 377

Protein: 46.4 g

Carbs: 33.5 g

Fat: 6 g

Scramble only:

Calories: 217

Protein: 40.4 g

Carbs: 4.5 g

Fat: 2.4 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

I call this versatile recipe a “wramble.” That’s a scramble inside a wrap!

If you’re on a strict fat loss program and you’re restricting carbs, you could ditch the wrap and you’d have an almost no-carb scramble (pictured here). Even with a wrap (whole grain carbs), this is a fairly low carb recipe and it’s very high in protein.



If you're an athlete or bodybuilder in hard training and you need more carb calories, you could spread the turkey/egg white mixture out into more wraps or eat the scramble and have the carbs of your choice on the side in just the amounts you need. Like I said, this recipe is versatile!

It's also delicious! This turkey/egg white scramble is such a taste home-run, it's one of those meals I could easily eat every day. I make this one quite often.

For this recipe I use a wrap made from whole wheat that contains 160 calories per 56 gram (2 oz) serving. You can also use a tortilla, which is essentially the same thing as a wrap. Some wraps made specifically for sandwiches are thinner. The tortilla-style wraps are usually thicker, which is better for holding the stuff inside when it's chunky, as with this scramble.

Either way, look for whole grains. If you shop in a health food store, you will probably find a wider variety of healthy options that are true 100% whole-grain products. These may include Ezekiel bread wraps or tortillas and even non-wheat wraps such as whole spelt. You may also find reduced calorie and reduced carb versions. I've seen tortillas and wraps in the 100-120 calorie range. Keep that in mind in case you want to save some calories and carbs.

If you read my recipe column regularly, you know I'm a fan of portable foods, which can be packed with you, taken on the road and literally eaten with your bare hands. That's because the Burn the Fat lifestyle calls for the bodybuilder-athlete eating method of 5-6 smaller meals a day. If you choose this approach, then it's helpful to have a lot of portable foods in your repertoire.

When I first got the idea for this wrap, I figured it would be another great portable meal. It certainly can be, but you do have to wrap it up tight or the turkey/egg mix will make a mess. Pictured at the top of this section is what I call a "roll-up," which you can eat with a fork, or sloppily eat over a plate with your hands. For a proper portable meal, you really need to fold up your wrap nice and tight.

Note: When you use less filling inside the wrap, you can more easily fold it up tight and take it with you. You could use the same amount of egg white/turkey mixture as listed above and divide it up into three or even four wraps. Just be sure to count those extra wrap calories, or choose the lower calorie varieties.

Tip: Completely drain the fluid from the pan before you scoop the turkey-egg mix onto the tortilla or wrap. In fact, you may even want to pat it dry with a paper towel—again, so it doesn't make a drippy mess.

One more idea: If you make a fold-over wrap, you could even put your finished wrap into a George Foreman Grill rather than heat the tortilla/wrap beforehand.

In the Burn the Fat system, we consider whole grain products totally fair game, healthy foods, but we do give them a B grade rather than an A grade. That's because whole grain breads, wraps and tortillas are mostly all natural, but bread products don't grow off trees—they are slightly processed. Overall, though, we give the entire recipe a B+ rating, and this is very quick and easy to prepare. Enjoy!

PS: If you happen to be a master wrap-maker and you'd like to show off your talents, shoot a video and share your wrap technique with the rest of us in the recipe forums!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B+

Portable Food: Yes (if you drain it and wrap it up tight!)

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 7-8 minutes cooking.

Super Simple Seal of Approval: Check!

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Low Calorie Red and Green Vegetable Scramble

This breakfast recipe is simple, tasty and low in calories. Its jam-packed with a nutritious assortment of veggies and lean protein so it's not too taxing on your caloric budget. With its A+ rating and its fast cooking time, it's a perfect breakfast meal that will keep you full for hours. This veggie scramble makes fitting more servings of veggies into your daily diet a snap.



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 1 whole egg
- 5 egg whites
- 1 small tomato (approx 4 oz)
- 1 cup spinach, chopped
- 1/2 red bell pepper (approx 1/2 cup), chopped
- 1 oz scallions (green onions) (approx 1/2 cup), finely chopped
- Black pepper to taste
- Dash of sea salt (optional)

Directions

1. On a cutting board, chop all your vegetables into small pieces. Spray your pan with non-stick cooking spray (such as PAM olive oil spray) and then preheat the pan on medium.
2. Add vegetables and cook for approximately three minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the eggs and stir again until the scramble is completely cooked. Add pepper to taste. A dash of salt is optional.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 258

Protein: 28.4 g

Carbs: 24.6 g

Fat: 5.4 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

In terms of bang for your caloric buck, it doesn't get much better than this green and red vegetable scramble. You get four different types of vegetables: two red and two green, plus lean protein from eggs in a meal that is delicious, nutritious and extremely filling. The best part is, this recipe is very low in calories so it will fit into even the strictest types of fat loss programs, and it's easily scalable for more calories and carbs when you have room for them in your caloric budget.

When you hear health recommendations such as "Eat at least 5 or 6 servings of vegetables per day," it can seem kind of intimidating. You often wonder how you're going to eat all those veggies and—if you do somehow manage it—whether you're going to gag in the process.

Fear not, because this veggie scramble solves these problems. There are few better ways to help achieve your vegetable consumption goal than veggie omelets or scrambles. The combinations of veggies you can use are limitless. Red pepper, tomatoes, scallions and spinach make a particularly delicious combination.

You can spice this scramble as you please, but the veggies give so much flavor that just a dash of pepper will do. A pinch of salt is optional for folks who aren't restricting sodium.

One of the best features of this recipe is that it's extremely low in calories, so it makes an ideal meal for any fat loss program for any person of any size and activity level. Depending on the serving sizes you use, this scramble clocks in at just under 260 calories.



If you want or need additional calories or protein, you can use more than one egg yolk or additional egg whites.

If you want or need additional calories or protein, you can use more than one egg yolk or additional egg whites. And of course, you can also serve this with your favorite starchy carbs such as oatmeal, whole grain toast, whole grain tortillas or fruit. Eat the veggie scramble by itself if you're on a reduced carb program.

A small bowl of oatmeal along with this scramble can leave your stomach feeling totally satisfied, possibly even stuffed while taking in a remarkably small amount of calories.

With all natural ingredients and four different types of vegetables, this healthy fat loss-friendly breakfast gets an A+ rating all the way, and it only takes minutes to prepare. Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A+

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking.

Super Simple Seal of Approval: Check!

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Nutty Wild Rice and Mushrooms

This is not a low calorie meal compared to most of our other Burn The Fat recipes, but if you've got some calories to spare (think high carb day, post-workout meal or muscle gain programs), this nutty wild rice and mushrooms dish is amazing! Wild rice has a nutty flavor to begin with, but when you add nuts and some spices, it's a flavor explosion! Prior to making this, I went shopping at my local health food store and found a special brown and wild rice blend. It contains long-grain brown rice, wild rice, sweet brown rice, Wehani rice and black japonica rice (the brand I use is Lundberg Organic Wild Blend).



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

2 cups wild and brown rice blend, cooked
2 cups mushrooms, pieces or slices
1/2 cup pine nuts
1 cup scallions (green onions), chopped
1 cup chicken broth (optional)
1-2 teaspoons basil
1-2 teaspoons thyme
Pinch of sea salt (optional)

Directions

1. Begin cooking the rice in a pot or a rice cooker first, allowing for 30-40 minutes rice cooking time.
2. After the rice has started cooking, prepare two sauté pans, one small and one large. In the large pan, lightly coat the surface with non-stick cooking spray. Add the green onions and mushrooms. Optionally, sauté in the broth. Add the garlic, pepper and salt and stir.
3. In the small pan, add the pine nuts and toast over medium heat until lightly browned.

4. When the rice is finished, scoop out a cup, stir the rice into the mixture and serve.

For a complete meal, serve with lean protein such as turkey breast on the side, or cut turkey breast into strips or small squares, and stir into your rice mixture.

Nutrition Info

Per serving, rice only:

Calories: 444

Protein: 14.6 g

Carbs: 69.7 g

Fat: 11.8 g

Rice with 4 oz turkey breast:

Calories: 622

Protein: 33.9 g

Carbs: 69.7 g

Fat: 11.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

This is not a low calorie meal compared to most of our other Burn The Fat recipes, but if you've got some calories to spare (think high carb day, post-workout meal or muscle gain programs), this nutty wild rice and mushrooms dish is amazing! Wild rice has a nutty flavor to begin with, but when you add nuts and some spices, it's a flavor explosion!

Prior to making this, I went shopping at my local health food store and found a special brown and wild rice blend. It contains long-grain brown rice, wild rice, sweet brown rice, Wehani rice and black japonica rice (the brand I use is Lundberg Organic Wild Blend).



Wild rice has a nutty flavor to begin with, but when you add nuts and some spices, this is like a flavor explosion!

If you can't find a wild and brown rice blend at your local food market, do not fear. Simply get some wild rice and make the recipe with half long grain brown rice and half wild rice.

I did quite a bit of researching through traditional cookbooks and recipe websites before making the Burn The Fat version of wild rice and mushrooms. Most of the traditional wild rice and mushroom recipes use butter. I strongly recommend leaving out the butter because it adds so many calories to an already calorie-dense dish, and this has so much flavor that the butter simply is not needed.

Many of the traditional wild rice and mushroom recipes also use almonds. Almonds are great, but I recommend trying pine nuts—they complement the wild rice blend perfectly, and just wait til you try them toasted!

You could easily use white or yellow onions, but I opted for scallions (green onions). For mushrooms, take your pick—fresh or canned. If you use canned mushrooms, you might want to drain and rinse them to avoid adding a thousand or more grams of sodium.

Mushrooms, by the way, are a bona fide health food. In Asia, mushrooms have been revered for centuries because of their medicinal properties. The shiitake variety of mushroom contains fiber, vegetable protein, vitamins, minerals and numerous other phytonutrients. These include eritradene, which has been shown to lower cholesterol, according to Japanese research. Mushrooms also contain immune boosting compounds such as lentinan (aka beta-1,3 glucan)

There are many possibilities for spices here, but I decided to go with thyme and basil. Not too much—try just one teaspoon at first, then taste before adding more.

Most traditional wild rice recipes suggest using chicken (or vegetable) broth to add flavor. While there are no calories, the only concern is the extremely high sodium count. Suggestion: use a small amount and sauté your vegetables in it. If you pass on the broth, you could try a pinch of sea salt if that makes your tastebuds happy.

This is essentially a vegetarian dish, yet a complete protein, I might add (nuts and rice are complementary). However, for the “meat heads” out there (like me), you can serve this with turkey breast or chicken breast. That makes it a complete Burn The Fat “bodybuilding-style” meal as well, because Burn The Fat meals all contain a lean protein source.

With just 4 ounces of turkey breast, served in addition to the rice, this recipe adds up to a grand total of 622 calories and 34 grams of total protein. As I mentioned earlier, it’s not a low calorie meal (unless you want to really reduce the serving size).

If you want to save some calories to better fit this into even a strict (lower calorie) fat loss menu, just drop the pine nuts (or reduce to just a sprinkle of them). That will save you up to 160 calories. Without the pine nuts, this recipe contains a fat-loss friendly total of 462 calories.

Alternately, you could reduce the amount of rice (try 2/3 to 3/4 cup) or increase the vegetables (mushrooms, onions, etc.). Also consider adding additional vegetables such as green peppers. Adding low calorie fibrous vegetables in place of some of the (higher calorie) rice can increase the volume of a meal, thereby keeping your stomach happy, while actually decreasing the energy density of the meal.

With calories and portion control in mind, this is an A grade recipe all the way, so enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 10 minutes prep, 30–40 minutes cooking

Super Simple Seal of Approval: Check!

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Mexican Pepper and Potato Scramble

Mucho delicious! The Mexican potato and pepper scramble is one of my all-time favorite breakfasts. Not only is it delicious, it's so filling, you will walk away from the table feeling satisfied on a remarkably small amount of calories. The trick is in changing the "caloric density ratio" of the ingredients... one of my Burn The Fat Recipe secrets! Enjoy it hot and spicy or mild with one easy ingredient switch.



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

6 oz potato, skinned
1 whole egg
5 egg whites
1/2 medium onion, finely chopped
1/2 green bell pepper, finely chopped
1/2 red bell pepper, finely chopped
Black pepper to taste
Tabasco sauce to taste
1/2 cup salsa (optional)

Directions

1. Peel the potato and microwave it for approximately 4 minutes or until cooked.
2. Finely chop the green pepper, red pepper and onions.
3. Spray a frying pan with non-stick cooking spray (PAM olive oil spray, for example) and then add the vegetables.
4. When the garlic and vegetables have begun to cook, add the whole egg and egg whites.
5. Stir the egg and vegetable mix as the eggs begin to cook.

6. Cut the pre-cooked potato into thin slices and stir into the scramble.
7. Add black pepper and Tabasco to taste. Try mild or medium salsa instead of pepper sauce if you prefer.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 373

Protein: 29.9 g

Carbs: 55.3 g

Fat: 5.4 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

I could eat a Mexican pepper scramble for breakfast every day. It's one of my all-time favorites. The best part about this recipe is that you will not believe how full you will feel on only 373 calories. Even with a starchy carb (the potato), the caloric density of this recipe is extremely low.

The secret to the high bulk and low calories is to alter the ratio of ingredients compared to the way you find most omelets or scrambles in traditional recipe books.

All you have to do is increase the portion sizes for the low-calorie-density fibrous carbs (red pepper, green pepper and onion) and decrease the serving sizes of the high-calorie-density starchy carbs (white potatoes) and the fats (egg yolks limited to one yolk and the remaining whites).

In fact, the calories are so low on this recipe that this serving size is suitable for the average female on a fat loss program, and most women will find this extremely filling. Men, athletes, bodybuilders or any highly active individuals may actually need to increase the serving size on the potato (if you want more carbs) or on the eggs (if you want more protein), or both.

Alternately, you can have a small bowl of oatmeal on the side, or try 100% whole grain toast. A whole wheat tortilla works as well. After all, this is "Mexican" scramble, you know!

For low carb diets, increase the vegetable servings and reduce or remove the potato.

Regular readers of my recipe column may notice that I am fond of spicy foods and hot sauces, but I realize personal tastes may vary. This recipe is delicious with a splash of Tabasco sauce or any red hot pepper sauce (for example, Trappey's Red Devil). However, if you don't like your food too hot, try a mild salsa on this. It actually changes the texture a bit and is quite delicious (or use both—salsa and Tabasco). Remember the calories in the salsa. Salsa is a low calorie food, but not calorie-free—about 40 calories in a half a cup).

This recipe requires only a few minutes of prep time to chop up your veggies and a total of less than 10 minutes of cooking time (you can start cooking your veggies and eggs while your potato is microwaving). Not quite as fast as our lightning fast 3-minute high protein oatmeal, but still a quickie and an all-time favorite for me that I've been enjoying for years.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A+

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 3 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Hot Black-eyed Peas and Rice with Lean Tenderloin

Black-eyed peas are a fabulous source of starchy carbohydrates, compatible with any fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition program. For nutritional value, they are hard to beat. One 15 oz can (1-3/4 cups), the amount used in this full batch, gives you 315 calories, 21 grams of vegetable protein, 56 grams of slow-releasing low-GI carbs and a hefty 14 grams of fiber. Add rice, spices, red hot sauce and my secret vegetable combo, and you will be hooked on this one, I promise you! Easy to adapt for vegetarians too.



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

One 15-oz (130 g) can black-eyed peas (1-3/4 cups)
1 cup long-grain brown rice, cooked
10 oz pork tenderloin (uncooked weight)
1 medium onion (8 oz, approx 1 heaping cup), chopped
1 green bell pepper (5 oz, approx 1 cup), chopped
3 celery stalks (approx 6 oz, 1 heaping cup), chopped
2 tablespoons hot sauce (or as hot as you like it)
Black pepper to taste
Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Begin cooking the rice in a pot or a rice cooker first, allowing for 30–40 minutes rice cooking time.
2. After the rice has started cooking, prepare a large, deep sauté pan, and coat the surface with non-stick cooking spray (or use olive oil).
3. Chop the onions, celery and green peppers, and sauté them in the pan until they begin to soften.

4. Chop the pork tenderloin into strips or preferably into small squares, add to pan and stir until evenly browned (or cook separately).
5. Add the garlic, pepper and salt. Add in the black-eyed peas and stir.
6. When the rice is finished, scoop out a cup, stir the rice into the mixture and serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 470

Protein: 42.8 g

Carbs: 35.3 g

Fat: 5.9 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

If you look through popular cookbooks for black-eyed pea recipes, you will find many, ranging from soups to salads to main courses. Many of the traditional recipes, however, are high in fat, starchy carbs and total calories. One of the secrets to adapting conventional recipes to fat-burning nutrition programs is to reduce the caloric density.



After analyzing the ingredients of some popular black-eyed peas and rice dishes, I first took out calorie dense and high fat ingredients such as full fat pork, sausage or extra oil. Then I increased the portions of the low calorie fibrous carbs (celery, onions and green pepper) and decreased the portions of the starchy carbs—notably the rice. With my Burn The Fat modifications, you get a very large volume of food with fewer calories per unit of volume (because the fat is reduced and the starchy-to-fibrous carb ratio is altered).

For diabetics and other people with blood sugar regulation concerns, it's also good to know that black-eyed peas are low on the glycemic index, which means the carbs are digested and released into the bloodstream slowly. A study from the University of

Colorado found that in carb-sensitive adults, eating black-eyed peas helped to reduce the glycemic response to an otherwise high glycemic meal.

For a recipe that contains two starchy carbs, this is fairly low in calorie density. You will be amazed how filling this is at under 500 calories a serving. It was a simple matter of increasing the quantities of fibrous veggies mixed in with your starchy carbs (rice and black-eyed peas). This is a good trick to remember for many of your recipes: Add more fibrous vegetables, less starch or sugar, and less fat, and you get fewer calories per unit of volume—plus you get to eat more, feel fuller and still get leaner!

Although black-eyed peas and rice are often served as a delicious vegetarian dish, most Burn The Fat recipes contain the ever-present lean protein source. In this case, I chose pork tenderloin instead of chicken. Many people avoid all pork because they believe it's high in fat. However, just like red meat, the fat content depends on the cut. In fact, one cut of pork—pork tenderloin—is as lean as chicken and leaner than almost any cut of red meat. (Remember that slogan, “The other white meat”? Advertising, yes, but indeed tenderloin can be included on the lean protein list.)

Five ounces (141 grams) of pork tenderloin contains only 154 calories with 30 grams of protein, 3.2 grams of fat and no carbs. If you don't like pork, you can simply use chicken or turkey breast in this recipe for your lean protein. The tenderloin, however, goes very nicely with these ingredients, and it's a nice change-up if you are used to eating chicken breast every day.

For spices, a dash of pepper and a pinch of salt do the trick. If you like it hot, try a hot pepper sauce like Trappey's Red Devil.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard ✓

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 8 minutes prep, 30–40 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!



3-Minute Black Beans With Spicy Salsa

Beans are probably one of the most under-used of all the healthy starchy carbs. High on the starchy carb lists for bodybuilders and fitness fanatics are usually oatmeal, brown rice, yams or sweet potatoes and white potatoes, but poor beans often get ignored and neglected. That's a shame because beans are loaded with fiber and slow-releasing carbs; they're great for your health and inexpensive too. Not only that, if you use canned beans, they don't require cooking, so you can literally have yourself an instant meal. This delicious dish takes all of 3 minutes to make.



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 1 can (15 oz/425 g) black beans
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup (16 tablespoons/264 g) hot salsa
- 10 oz chicken breast (uncooked weight)
- 2 cloves garlic (or 1 tablespoon chopped garlic)
- Pepper to taste
- Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Cut the chicken into small cubes or squares and cook on a grill pan or George Foreman Grill.
2. Open the can of beans and drain the excess liquid (bean juice), and/or rinse with water, then add the beans to the bowl.
3. Add olive oil, hot salsa, garlic, pepper and dash of salt (optional).
4. Add chicken and mix all ingredients.
5. Serve as a black bean "salad" or microwave and serve hot.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 391

Protein: 43 g

Carbs: 41 g

Fat: 10.9 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

When it comes to starchy carbs, the top of the A-list for bodybuilders and fitness fanatics usually includes oatmeal, brown rice, yams, sweet potatoes and white potatoes. Meanwhile, poor beans often get ignored and neglected.

That's a shame because beans are loaded with fiber and slow-releasing carbohydrates (great for sustained energy). The health value of beans is top notch. Studies going back decades have shown that beans can lower cholesterol and are superb for glycemic control (blood sugar regulation).

On a practical level, beans in the can are also a great convenience food because canned beans require no cooking. In fact, this recipe, served vegetarian style (without the chicken) takes all of three minutes to prepare. Don't forget that black beans are inexpensive and have a long shelf life, so they won't be going bad any time soon after you purchase them.

Beans are available dried, of course, and there is little difference in the nutritional value between canned and dried beans. The difference is in the prep and cooking time. Canned beans may be a bit more expensive, but the savings in time and convenience is worth a little bit extra in price.

Some varieties of canned beans are high in sodium, but if you are following a low sodium diet, you can shop around for no sodium varieties of canned beans or you can just rinse the beans thoroughly under cold water before serving. Rinsing is recommended anyway, because most folks find bean juice (and the bean "sludge" at the bottom of the can), somewhat unappetizing.

At 15 grams per cup, very few foods pack the fiber punch of black beans. Twenty-five grams of fiber per day is the current recommendation in the US dietary guidelines. An ideal daily fiber intake may be approximately 30 grams for women and about 35

grams for men. One serving of black beans takes you a long way toward your daily fiber goals.

Beans are also high in protein, with 15 grams per cup. Although the protein in beans is not a complete protein, this is a significant protein source for vegetarians, and it's easy to combine complementary vegetable sources of protein in meals and throughout the day to obtain all the essential amino acids.

What about the infamous side effect of beans? It's true that beans can be gas-forming because we cannot digest the oligosaccharides. Therefore, these sugars pass through the GI tract intact where bacteria in the small intestine break them down and, voila, gas. However, not everyone is affected, and there are some solutions in the event that you're one of the people bothered by intestinal symptoms.

Rinse your beans thoroughly, since some of the gas forming compounds can be reduced by draining off the juice in the can or by replacing the water that dried beans are soaked in with fresh water. According to health food expert and author George Mateljan, there is anecdotal evidence that cooking beans with kombu (seaweed) improves the digestibility of the beans. Incidentally, some brands of beans such as Eden Organic are canned in kombu. Of course, there's always Beano.



The ingredients listed for this recipe amount to just under 800 calories, so that's two servings. Most women require 300–360 calories per meal for fat loss programs and most men require 400–480 calories per meal for fat loss programs, assuming you are following the Burn The Fat style of eating with 5–6 meals per day (meal size will depend on your body size, activity level and your meal frequency).

For many of our recipes, I adjust the batch sizes so that there are two servings. This facilitates the “meal splitting” method, where you prepare twice as much as you need. You eat half, then you have the other half for your next meal, which makes it very easy to follow the Burn The Fat eating schedule. Of course, you can also split your batch with a meal companion, or double up on the batches to serve your family.

Don't be afraid to try variations and expand on this recipe. If you have the calories to spare, try adding a second tablespoon of olive oil for additional flavor and texture. If you're vegetarian, you might want to add rice instead of chicken. If you're an athlete or bodybuilder with high calorie needs, you can try the beans with rice and chicken. This will work with turkey or lean beef as well. If you really want to splurge, try your

beans and spicy salsa wrapped in a tortilla, and calories permitting, add some low fat cheese.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 3 minutes beans, 10 minutes with chicken

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Italian Style Chicken and Rice with Tomatoes and Herbs

Many years ago I worked at a health club in New York and there was a health food restaurant right next door. It was like “bodybuilders heaven” because the menu not only had a couple dozen healthy and muscle-friendly meals to choose from, they also had mix-and-match options like “pick a starchy carb: yam, rice, potato” and “pick a lean protein: chicken, steak, bison, fish” and “pick a fibrous carb: broccoli, asparagus, mixed veggies, green beans, etc.” One of my favorite meals at this muscle-meal haven was chicken and rice with tomato sauce. It was a really simple dish, but they had it nicely spiced up with some chopped onions and green peppers. It’s not a fancy “gourmet” recipe, but Italian style chicken and rice is a muscle-building and fat-burning program classic.



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 1 cup long-grain brown rice, cooked
- 12 oz chicken breast (uncooked weight)
- 1/2 green bell pepper (approx 2/3 cup), chopped
- 1/2 6 oz onion (approx 1/2 cup), chopped
- 14.5 oz can of diced tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- Black pepper to taste
- Garlic powder to taste
- Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Begin cooking the rice in a pot or a rice cooker first, allowing for 30–40 minutes for cooking time (depending on your cooking method).
2. After you've started the rice, prepare a large, deep sauté pan, and coat the surface with a tablespoon of olive oil (or save calories by using non-stick cooking spray).
3. Chop the onions and green peppers, and sauté them in the pan until they begin to soften.
4. Chop the chicken into strips or preferably into small squares, stirring until evenly browned.
5. Add the diced tomatoes. Add spices (basil, oregano, black pepper and garlic powder) to your liking.
6. When the rice is finished, scoop out a cup, stir it into the chicken-vegetable mixture and serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 393

Protein: 42.8 g

Carbs: 35.3 g

Fat: 11.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Many years ago I worked at a health club in New York and there was a health food restaurant right next door. It was like “bodybuilders heaven” because the menu not only had a couple dozen healthy and muscle-friendly meals to choose from, they also had mix-and-match options like “pick a starchy carb: yam, rice, potato” and “pick a lean protein: chicken, steak, bison, fish” and “pick a fibrous carb: broccoli, asparagus, mixed veggies, green beans, etc.” I swear it was like they took the “playbook” right out of ***Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle***. But that’s bodybuilding-style nutrition for you—it’s simple and the principles are fairly universal.

One of my favorite meals at this muscle-meal haven was chicken and rice with tomato sauce. It was a really simple dish, but they had it nicely spiced up with some chopped onions and green peppers. I don't know what made me think of this out of the blue so many years later, but I decided to experiment in the kitchen a bit to see if I could duplicate it. Well, it was easy. It's not a fancy "gourmet" recipe, but Italian style chicken and rice is a muscle-building and fat-burning program classic.

This meal is similar to Spanish rice, except for the chicken, spices and veggies. Remembering that I prefer my Spanish rice with more tomato flavor, I used a full 14.5-oz can of diced tomatoes for my Italian rice. If you want it even more tomato-ey, you could add a tablespoon or two of tomato paste. You could probably use any type of canned tomatoes or tomato sauce you like; however, read labels and do your best to avoid the ones with corn syrup. Sodium-free versions of canned tomatoes are widely available if you want to keep your sodium intake down.

For spices, you have quite a few possibilities here and I urge you to be creative. I simply used a few Italian spices: Basil, oregano, black pepper and garlic powder. You could mince up a garlic clove or toss in some diced garlic from a jar if you prefer. This combination of spices turned out great, but feel free to spice to suit your own personal tastes.

What I really like about this meal is that it's very filling for the number of calories you get. The ingredients listed above make two servings at just under 400 calories each. An athlete or bodybuilder on muscle-growth phase might go for 50% more (600 calories), and that will leave you very full! Adjust the ingredients (amount of rice, etc.) to increase or decrease the calories for your needs.

By the way, I use a rice cooker and a large saucepan on the stovetop, but you can make big batches of this in a crock pot if you're a crock pot kind of person. This is an A-list recipe all the way, so enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 15 minutes prep, 30–40 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Shrimp Fra Diavolo ala Venuto

Fra Diavolo is a spicy Italian dish, made with shrimp or other seafood for lean protein, in a tomato sauce with healthy, nutrient-rich superfood vegetables. This surprisingly healthy dish is totally Burn The Fat-friendly and perfect for fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition programs. With a few tweaks, you can even turn this traditional pasta meal into a low carb recipe. How's that for versatility? Make this for dinner guests, family or your significant other, and you are sure to impress!

Yield: makes 4 servings (approx 1-1/4 cups) of sauce and shrimp per serving



Shrimp Fra Diavolo with Pasta

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup chopped carrots (approx 4.5 oz)
- 1 cup chopped celery (approx 2 large stalks)
- 1 cup finely chopped onion (approx 1/2 large onion)
- 1 tablespoon crushed garlic (or to taste)
- 1 pound shrimp
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 1-2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes (or to taste)

Dash of sea salt

1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions.
2. Meanwhile, heat the 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large, deep saucepan or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, carrots, celery and onions.
3. When the vegetables are sizzling and have started to soften, add the tomatoes, bring to boil, then turn down heat and let simmer.
4. Meanwhile, in a separate skillet over medium-high heat, add the shrimp (shelled), and cook for about 2 minutes per side or until just cooked evenly. (Alternately, use pre-cooked shrimp.) Add cooked shrimp to tomato sauce.
5. Add the herbs and spices: parsley, basil, oregano, crushed red peppers and sea salt. Simmer, stirring occasionally.
6. Taste and adjust seasoning. If in doubt, go light on red pepper, garlic and seasonings and add more to taste, if desired.
7. Serve over drained, hot pasta. Mix well and serve.

Nutrition Info

One serving shrimp and sauce:

Calories: 259

Protein: 23.3 g

Carbs: 14 g

Fat: 9.1 g

One serving of sauce with one cup cooked pasta (2 oz dry):

Calories: 469

Protein: 32.3 g

Carbs: 56 g

Fat: 10.1 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Fra Di-what? That's what I said when I first read about this spicy Italian recipe, but I'm certainly glad I kept reading and started cooking.

Fra Diavolo is a tomato-based seafood and pasta dish, usually made with shrimp. Italian for "brother devil," Fra Diavolo is named after a Sicilian guerilla leader, Michele Pezza, who refused to give in to the French occupation of Naples.

Fra Diavolo is surprisingly healthy and compatible with fat-burning and muscle-building programs. You've got your vegetables (carrots, celery, onions and tomatoes), your complex carbs (whole wheat pasta), and your lean protein (shrimp is traditional, but this goes great with scallops, lobster and other seafood as well).

Some of the traditional versions of this recipe use 3–4 tablespoons of olive oil or even more, but you can get by with just two, which will save you a lot of calories. Don't worry about the calories or fat in those 2 tablespoons because extra virgin olive oil is one of the healthy fats.

I looked at many variations on Fra Diavolo and most of them did not include the celery or carrots. However, my vote goes to the celery and carrot version by a landslide.

I made this recipe with only one can of diced tomatoes (14.5 ounces) and preferred it this way, but you could add tomato paste for a more tomatoey flavor, or you could use more diced tomatoes for a saucier dish.

One modification of this recipe is the wine. The traditional recipe includes one cup of dry white wine. To avoid the alcohol and save some calories, you can leave out the white wine and you will not lose much flavor. Some people might wish to replace the wine with something like chicken broth or white grape juice, but that is not a necessity. If you are the traditional type, try just a half a cup of white wine, which keeps the vino in the mix, but saves you a few calories. Generally, you'll want to avoid alcohol during fat loss programs, but it can certainly be enjoyed occasionally in moderation.

Typically, Fra Diavolo is served with linguini, but it goes with just about any type of pasta. I used penne, and I chose a whole grain penne, which is a slight improvement in nutritional value over white pasta. Remember that all types of pasta are calorie dense, so you have to watch the calories.

Fra Diavolo is supposed to be a pasta dish, but I found that you could turn this into a low carb recipe by leaving out the pasta and increasing the seafood (try shrimp and

scallops) and increasing the vegetables. Fra Diavolo is also nice with a green salad on the side, especially Fra Diavolo low carb.



Low carb Fra Diavolo with shrimp and scallops

This dish is a lot spicier than you might think just by looking at the ingredients list, so I recommend going light on the spices at first, especially the red pepper, then adding more to taste. I over-peppered on my first batch, and although I enjoy very spicy food, I imagine that if I served that first batch to guests, I would have seen smoke coming out of their ears!

Actually it doesn't take that long to cook (and you can use pre-cooked shrimp too). But if you let the sauce simmer a bit longer, it will bring out the flavors more. This recipe takes a bit of prep time and cooking time, but it's definitely worth the effort. Serve this meal to your dinner guests, family or significant other, and you are sure to impress!

Buon appetito!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard ✓

Burn The Fat Grade: B+ with pasta, A without pasta

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 15 minutes prep, 20–30 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Muscle-Man Cheesy Grits

If you're from the South, then grits need no introduction. Grits are to Southerners what pasta is to Italians. But are grits a muscle- and fitness-friendly food? Find out how Tom Venuto turns traditional southern grits into bodybuilding, muscle-building, mouth-watering, high-protein cheesy grits!



Yield: makes one "muscle-man"-sized serving

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup quick-cooking grits
- 1-1/2 cups skim milk (or water)
- 1/2 cup lowfat cheddar cheese
- 1 whole omega-3 egg
- 1 tablespoon light butter spread (such as Smart Balance)
- 1/2 cup chopped scallions (green onions)
- Dash of pepper
- Dash of paprika
- Dash of sea salt (optional)

Directions

1. Measure dry grits and pour them into a bowl.
2. Add skim milk, or use water if you want to reduce the calories for a fat loss program.
3. Add a half a cup of shredded lowfat cheddar cheese, or grated block cheese.
4. Stir in one whole egg.
5. Add a dash of pepper and paprika.

6. Cook approximately 3–4 minutes in microwave, or on stovetop (stovetop takes longer). Stir during cooking to prevent clumping.
7. Let your grits stand to cool for a few minutes, add a dash of sea salt to taste (optional) and enjoy.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 640

Protein: 41 g

Carbs: 77 g

Fat: 13.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

If you're from the Southern United States, then grits need no introduction. Grits are to Southerners what pasta is to Italians. If you're from the North or West, you may not eat grits. In fact you might not even know what grits are. In the latter case, let me introduce you. And even if you're a grits-a-holic, let me show you how to make grits as muscle- and fitness-friendly as they can be!

What are grits?

Grits are simply coarsely milled corn. If they were milled further, they would become corn meal or corn flour. There is a slight problem with this. By processing the corn, even lightly, we drop the nutrition grade from A to B. During the milling process the corn loses the germ and the bran so technically once it makes it into the grits hot cereal form, it's no longer a whole grain. Whole grain grits do exist, but they are much less common—you probably won't find them in your local grocery store. Usually they go under "stone ground grits" and you can find them in health food stores and by mail order. Whole grain grits retain some of the germ. They may take longer to cook and may require refrigeration.

Incidentally, many people argue that corn is not an A-grade food to begin with and doesn't belong in a fat-burning or a health-promoting nutrition program. The majority of the backlash against corn, however, comes from the low carb movement. Low carb diet authors warn us to avoid corn like the plague. They remind us that corn is not even a vegetable, it's a grain, and grains are VERBOTEN on strict low carb diets. I like

low carb diets at times, but my philosophy differs from inflexible and dogmatic low carbers in that I believe in balanced diets that allow natural, unprocessed grains and occasionally even lightly processed grains. That includes grits.

The A food B food lecture, revisited

Two nutritional facts about corn, however, prove why corn grits are not as good a choice as vegetables, especially on fat loss programs. One is that corn is a calorie-dense grain. A cup of corn has 140 calories. By comparison, a cup of strawberries has 46 calories. A cup of broccoli has 44 calories.

Second, corn does not have the superfood antioxidant and phytonutrient density that many fruits and vegetables have, although a cup of whole corn will give you 6 grams of fiber. The caloric density of grits is even higher—260 calories in a half a cup, measured uncooked. Compare that to a half a cup of oatmeal, uncooked, clocking in at 150 calories.

A third consideration is for the person who has legitimate blood sugar regulation and carbohydrate metabolism problems. The calorie-dense grains, starches and sugars are not good choices for these carbohydrate-intolerant individuals.

The bottom line is, corn and corn products like grits have pros and cons. I would recommend oatmeal or other completely unprocessed carbs as first choices, along with lots of vegetables and fruits as A-list carbs. With apologies to the Southerners, I don't consider grits a daily staple food; I see it as an occasional choice for variety. However, the key word here is choice.

I've found that by being a little more relaxed and by learning how and when you can sensibly use lightly processed carbohydrates and grains, you can broaden your recipe choices and enjoy life a whole lot more than if you take an all or none attitude towards certain foods. What I'm saying is that just because grits don't make it on the A-list doesn't mean they're completely forbidden! In fact, there are situations when it's much more appropriate to use recipes like this one. Take athletes and bodybuilders, for example, who require much larger amounts of energy than a dieter who is training for fat loss and who need to fuel up before workouts and re-fuel afterwards...

If it's good enough for Mr. Olympia, is it good for you too?

The reason I thought of featuring a grits recipe is because someone sent me an email asking about grits after they'd watched a DVD of Mr. Olympia Ronnie Coleman. The videographer followed the famous bodybuilder every day from his breakfast at home, to the gym and back home again. A Texan and the biggest and most muscular bodybuilder of all time, Ronnie ate grits every morning. The question was, if grits are

good for the greatest bodybuilder of all time, what about me? The answer is, while not a great recipe for everyone in every situation, it makes a pretty good meal for a bodybuilder or highly active athlete in training.

My mission was to look at some traditional grits recipes and see how I could make it leaner, healthier, higher in protein and more suitable for a Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle-style bodybuilding plan. It was a challenge, but I came through for you! Be careful though, this is so delicious, you might get hooked, and remember not to let foods like grits push out the more nutrient-dense, lower calorie foods that you will eat the majority of the time.

Traditionally, grits are not thought of as a health food, at least the way they are usually served. Grits can be stovetop cooked or microwaved and then served as hot cereal, like oatmeal. Grits can also be made into other recipes and baked in the oven. Most people don't eat plain grits. They don't have a tremendous flavor on their own, and some people say they taste, well, "gritty." Or, as Jean Anderson and Barbara Deskins wrote in *The Nutrition Bible*, "Although most Southerners are weaned on gruels of grits, others find grits as appealing as library paste." That's why traditional recipes make grits richer by including full fat cheese, butter, heavy cream or even cream cheese. Then they are often served with or alongside bacon and whole eggs. That's a lot of calories and fat.

So how do we modify traditional Southern grits and turn them into muscle-man grits? First of all, we ditch the full fat cheese and we use low fat or even non-fat cheese. Cheddar is the favorite for grits. The low fat cheddars are delicious, and the non-fat varieties aren't all that bad either. (Some cheeses, like feta, taste like cardboard when they take all the fat out.) As a bonus, you get 18 grams of complete protein in 2 ounces of low fat or non-fat cheddar.

Next, I wanted to add even more protein while at the same time adding some extra consistency and thickness to the "porridge." For this, I added one whole egg into the recipe. I like omega-3 eggs and or free range eggs when I use whole eggs. I tried a couple experiments with only egg whites, which reduced the calories and fat grams, but I think the yolk really adds something to this, so that's why it's included in the final take of my recipe. Use 2 egg whites if you want to cut fat and save calories. The eggs add another 6 grams of protein. You could use even more eggs if you wanted to create a grits and eggs recipe (see Ronnie Coleman video), although I've found that microwaved eggs aren't that great in taste or texture. Scramble up some eggs on the side and mix them in your cooked grits if you choose.

My goal was to make this recipe a complete standalone meal that was high in protein, so additional protein did not have to be eaten on the side. It was easy. I used cheese and I made the grits with skim milk instead of water. One and a half cups of skim milk adds another 12 grams of protein, bringing the protein tally up to 36 grams, and with the protein in grits, this recipe totals 42 grams of protein. (I told you these were “muscle man” grits!) If you want to save 135 calories and you don’t mind having “only” 30 grams of protein, use water instead of skim milk. There’s almost no difference in taste.

The spices include pepper, paprika and sea salt. Go easy on the paprika, use just enough so you can taste it. Same for the pepper—a dash will do ya. I hardly ever suggest adding salt into anything, as there are some health concerns, and you can very easily acquire a taste for high salt foods that is hard to break. But I have to tell you, a dash of salt makes grits sing. Wow, what a difference. Just use sea salt rather than regular salt so you get the least processed variety. Keep in mind that some people are sodium sensitive and sodium can increase blood pressure, so skip the salt if that’s you.

Butter: Artery-clogger or health food?

Last but not least, I know the Southerners reading this are thinking, “Tom, it’s just not grits without butter!” To be honest, I have to agree. I tested this with butter (light butter product) and without it. It works without butter, because the cheese adds a lot of flavor, but with butter it makes a world of difference in taste. Here’s the deal. First there was the saturated fat scare so everyone ditched their butter and started using margarine. Then we had the trans fat scare so everyone either stopped using butter and margarine altogether or they went back to butter. The trans fat scare was legit, by the way. Trans fats are nasty stuff.

Interesting enough, some of the top authorities in the natural health movement today (such as Johnny Bowden and Paul Chek) are now urging people to go ahead and use butter. They say that if the butter comes from grass-fed, organically raised cows, it is perfectly healthy to eat. The debate is still raging over saturated fat. At the present time, the prudent advice is to keep saturated fat low and well balanced with polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, but not to completely demonize saturated fats. Saturates play some important roles in the body for health and hormone production and the link to heart disease is very controversial. Also, as Chek, Bowden and their colleagues point out, the quality of the fat depends a lot on the animal it came from.

Still, you don’t want saturated fat to dominate your total fat intake, and foods like butter are high calorie foods. What should you do? It’s your choice, but you could use

butter in small quantities if you can fit it into your calorie budget. For someone on a restricted calorie fat loss program, I'm not convinced, even by the natural health gurus whom I respect, that butter is a good way to spend your calories when your calories are limited. You'll have to decide whether to budget for the extra calories, skip the butter altogether or use a light butter or an omega-fortified butter spread like Smart Balance.

Don't get too excited over the health claims for omega-fortified reduced calorie butter flavor spreads though. Smart Balance has Smart Marketing. There's really very little long chain essential fatty acids (EPA and DHA) in Smart Balance—only 32 mg. The rest is ALA from flax. If you take fish oil or eat fatty fish, the amount of long chain EFAs in Smart Balance is trifling in comparison. Furthermore, even though they use olive, flax, canola and palm oils instead of the hydrogenated trans fatty acids that are used in margarines, these oils still may be refined.

Flax in particular raises an eyebrow in processed foods because flaxseed oil is such a delicate oil. Still, these butter spreads, if you like the taste, contain only 50 calories per tablespoon, half the calories of butter. Even if the good stuff claimed on the labels is exaggerated, it's probably not a bad choice and the calorie savings is a clear benefit. Incidentally, light butter is also available at 50 calories per tablespoon, which is made with real butter and more water, with stabilizers and emulsifiers added to keep it solid.

Last but not least, there are butter flavor sprinkles such as Butter Buds and Molly McButter. The main ingredient is maltodextrin, which is a quick-absorbing complex carbohydrate derived from corn. Not exactly health food, but the plus side of butter sprinkles is you get that butter flavor with only 15 calories per tablespoon.

Cooking hints and calorie tips

You can cook your grits on the stovetop, or do what I did—microwave it. It takes a bit longer than oatmeal, usually about 4 minutes, depending on your power setting. You may want to stir it after 2–3 minutes so it doesn't clump up. It will be piping hot when you take it out, so stir it again thoroughly and let it stand for a few minutes until it's cool enough to eat.

The serving size listed above was chosen for a male bodybuilder or athlete and is surprisingly filling. Females usually require about 500–600 fewer calories per day than males, so a female-sized serving would be about 75% of what's listed above. It's very easy to reduce the calories in this recipe if you choose, to make it fall into a fat loss-friendly program. Simply use water instead of skim milk, which reduces calories

by 135, dropping the calorie count to 505 (you could also use half water and half milk), use egg whites or drop the eggs, and or drop the butter or use butter flavor sprinkles. Or, of course, you can simply reduce the serving size of everything.

This has been a longer recipe column than usual, but I hope my detailed explanation of how to use certain types of carbs appropriately was helpful to you. I also hope by now, you've started picking up on my methods for making traditional high calorie, high fat recipes lower in calories and higher in protein. Even if a recipe doesn't get a top grade, remember that you can make over any recipe to reduce the calories, increase the nutrition and improve the nutrition grade.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B-

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 4 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Super Simple Salmon Salad Sandwich

If you crave a delicious, mouth-watering sandwich, but you're not sure what kind of sandwich is healthy, or if you're just bored with tuna fish, then here's a dynamite new recipe for you to try—the super simple salmon salad sandwich. Not only is salmon a bona fide superfood because of its high omega-3 fat content, this recipe takes just minutes to prepare and is a convenient, portable meal you can take with you anywhere you go.



Yield: makes 2 pita pocket sandwiches

Ingredients

- 1 6-oz can salmon
- 1 tablespoon light omega-3 mayo
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery
- 2 teaspoons dill weed, dried
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 100% whole wheat pita pockets

Directions

1. Put all ingredients into a bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Spoon into a whole grain pita pocket (or spread onto a sandwich) and enjoy!

That was easy, wasn't it?

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 539

Protein: 41 g

Carbs: 37.3 g

Fat: 20.2 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Every once in a while don't you just crave a sandwich? I do. I don't need one very often, I just like to have the option. That's exactly why I don't like all or none thinking or the extremes of low carb diets. Some guy wrote a book called, *Life Without Bread*.

Yechhhhh! What a horrid thought. Sure, banish as much of the white flour, white bread, and white sugar as you can, and keep the starchy carbs in moderation while on strict fat loss programs (have them for breakfast or after workouts, at least). But why not allow yourself some whole grain bread sometimes, even if it's not your daily staple food?

So if you want a sandwich, what kind is healthy and fits in with a fat-burning program? I remember a scene in the movie, *Analyze This* with Robert Deniro where Gangster One says, "Hey what kind of sandwich ain't too fattening?" Gangster Two says, "Half a sandwich." A comedy, yes, but truer words have never been spoken.

One popular favorite is the tuna sandwich. But the most basic tuna sandwich—tuna and mayo—is boring. Even tuna, lettuce and tomato, while an improvement, is still boring. So I was thinking, how could I make a more interesting tuna sandwich? Then it dawned on me... with the concerns about mercury in tuna, and with most people not getting enough omega-3 fats, why not use an even higher omega-3 and heavy metal-free source of fish—canned salmon. Bingo! That was the next recipe I was going to make.

Once again, I slaved in the kitchen for hours for you. I researched every tuna salad and salmon salad recipe I could find, then I taste-tested 5 different recipes. The recipe I settled on is one of the simplest, with the fewest ingredients. Not only that, it's a vast improvement over traditional salmon salad, as I ditched the oily, high calorie dressings, sour cream, regular mayo, full fat cheese, bacon and other high calorie ingredients that appear in many of the traditional salmon salad recipes.



First let's talk about dill weed. (No *Beavis and Butthead* jokes, please.) Dill weed is a very versatile herb, but it's fabulous with salmon. (Note to self: Next time you're making broiled salmon steaks, try dill weed, brush a little olive oil on, then add a dash of pepper and garlic or onion powder. Yum!) Dill is also a superfood in its own right because it contains calcium monoterpenes and flavonoids.

Next, let's talk about mayonnaise. Mayo is not a top grade food choice. Mayonnaise is made from eggs and soybean oil, plus a bit of sugar and spices or flavorings. With the oil content, right off the bat you know it's calorically dense. Furthermore, soybean is not a great oil. Many people realize that white sugar and white flour are refined and therefore less healthy foods. But it seldom dawns on them that oils can be processed too. Oils can be refined with chemicals and solvents to prolong their shelf life. Call them "white oils" if you like, and lump them together with white sugar and white flour.

In addition, high amounts of omega-6 fats which are found in these oils are unhealthful if they're not balanced with omega-3 fats. Omega-6 fats are essential, but most people get far too much omega-6 and not enough omega-3. This means you should look for ways to achieve the reverse: get more omega-3 and not so much omega-6. What's the solution? One choice is to go with a canola oil mayo. That's an improvement in omega-6 to omega-3 ratio department and canola does have some omega-3 fatty acids. However, even canola oil has its detractors.



Also consider that regular canola oil mayo is still full-fat and high in calories—about 100 calories per tablespoon. An alternative is light mayonnaise, which usually has 35–50 calories per tablespoon, and that's what I used in this recipe. Light mayos may be made with soybean or canola oil. You can also choose products such as the Smart Balance brand of omega-fortified mayonnaise which is made with canola, soy, flaxseed and olive oils. That's an improvement and at 50 calories, it's half the calories of regular mayo.

Last but not least, there's fat-free mayo. Yes, such an animal exists. Smart Beat is one brand that makes fat-free mayo. How do they do it? They use thickeners such as corn starch and stabilizers such as cellulose. It also contains maltodextrin and sugar, but at 10 calories per tablespoon, it's an insignificant amount of sugar. You'll have to decide

which one to use based on how much of a trade-off you're willing to accept between calorie savings and taste. As you can imagine, a 10-calorie-per-tablespoon mayo doesn't taste quite like the real thing. In any case, mayonnaise is not a daily staple food, but allowing it occasionally expands your range of recipe possibilities.

There is one other workaround if you want to raise the nutrition grade a bit and skip the mayo altogether. Try yogurt in this recipe instead of mayonnaise. I like this particular recipe the best, but you can also experiment with other ingredients such as cucumbers and tomatoes.

Once you've made your salmon salad spread, you can slather it on 100% whole grain bread and make a sandwich or you can try my favorite: spoon it into a whole grain mini-pita pocket (one ounce/28 gram size). The batch ingredients listed above make two mini pita pockets. With the ingredients listed, two salmon salad pita sandwiches total 539 calories. If you're on a tight calorie budget, have only one sandwich, or you can cut 100 calories by using 4 ounces of salmon instead of 6, or cut 40 calories by using the non-fat mayo. Light whole wheat breads are also available at 60–70 calories per slice compared to 100–110 calories per slice for regular whole wheat bread.



By the way, if you go the pita pocket route, guess what? You now have yet another take-it-with-you portable meal! I love meals that you can easily pack, carry with you and eat without fuss. If you're following a 5–6 small meals per day plan as outlined in [***Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle***](#), recipes like this make it a cinch, and they also make for great travel and day trip meals.

This meal gets a B grade because it uses lightly processed (B-grade) carbs (whole grain bread), and mayonnaise. For best results, use as many A-list foods and recipes as possible (totally unprocessed foods). But don't be afraid of occasional B-food recipes because it makes your nutrition program less restrictive and more enjoyable for the long term.

Sorry, but I don't buy into the dogma of "never eat bread." Remember, as long as you're in a calorie deficit, you will get leaner. And don't forget, salmon is a bona fide superfood due to its high omega-3 content. Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Warm Crunchy Tuna Rice With Spinach

Who else wants to know how to make one of Tom Venuto's favorite recipes? After testing out the first batch, I found myself making this tasty dish almost daily for an entire week straight—and doing it from memory! It's that easy to make, and it's so delicious! This Burn The Fat "clean eating" dish gets an A+ because it adheres to the Burn The Fat eating guidelines and because it's got superfood ingredients including tuna, which is high in omega-3 fatty acids and spinach, which is a nutritional green food powerhouse. Discover how to prepare this appetizing dish below...



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 1 6-oz can water-packed albacore tuna
- 2 cups spinach, chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped scallions (green onions), chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 cup long-grain brown rice (measured after cooking)
- 2 teaspoons lemon pepper salt seasoning

Directions

1. Start cooking your rice using your favorite method: rice cooker, stovetop, sauce pan, or simply reheat leftover rice.
2. Chop up 2 cups of spinach and put it in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Chop one large stalk of celery (about 1/2 cup), chop up your scallions (1/2 cup), and finely chop the parsley (1/4 cup) and add to the bowl.
3. Add brown rice, add tuna, season with 2 teaspoons of lemon pepper seasoning, and mix.
4. Heat in sauté pan for 2–3 minutes or until warm.

5. Serve and enjoy.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 408

Protein: 39.6 g

Carbs: 54.6 g

Fat: 3.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

It's official! This is now one of my new favorite recipes. After testing out the first batch, I found myself making this almost every day for an entire week straight, and doing it from memory, without needing the recipe in front of me. It's so easy to make, and so delicious!



This "superfood recipe" gets its lean protein from tuna, which is also high in omega-3 fatty acids.

This is one of those recipes I like a lot because you can very easily control the calories and carbohydrate intake by altering the amount of rice used and the flavor of the dish doesn't change much at all. The starchy carbs such as rice are the calorie dense part of most recipes (with the exception of oils and other concentrated fats), so it's easy to tweak this recipe to fit any nutrition program.

For example, if you're a male bodybuilder working on gaining muscle mass, you might use 1-1/2 to 2 cups of brown rice and call that one serving. If you're a female on a fat loss program you might use one cup of rice as listed in the instructions above. If you're controlling your carb intake, you could go with as little as 1/2 cup to 3/4 cup of rice per serving.

It's the lemon pepper salt seasoning that really adds some super zing to this dish. However, if you're controlling sodium intake, then a low sodium alternative is lemon juice and pepper. A few companies also make no-sodium lemon pepper seasonings, so be sure to watch for the difference when you shop.

Celery adds great crunch, and it's about as low in calories as any food can get. You couldn't overeat celery if you tried, but it adds bulk to a recipe, which helps make you feel fuller and more satisfied. (One of the secrets of getting lean is to fill out your recipes with high-satiety, high-fiber, low-calorie foods.) Celery also contains a substantial amount of vitamin C as well as health-promoting compounds such as phalides (which may help lower cholesterol and blood pressure) and coumarins (which may help prevent cancer).

In the summer of 2007, The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) published an article called "Organic Food: Is it worth the price?" which gained mass media attention because it listed the 12 foods that are most likely to be contaminated with large amounts of pesticides. The list was compiled by the Environmental Working Group, a Washington DC non-profit group, based on 43,000 analyses for pesticides, conducted by the US Department of Agriculture between 2002 and 2004. That list of the "Dirty Dozen" included spinach and celery, both of which are in this recipe.



"Be like Popeye and eat more spinach, will ya!"

There's been much debate about whether organic foods are worth the extra cost. That's a personal decision you need to make for yourself after getting informed about the facts. If you want to avoid pesticides, but you're unsure about spending the money to eat 100% organic, then a good place to start is to go organic with foods listed on the "dirty dozen." In order of most to least contaminated, that includes:

- Peaches
- Apples
- Sweet Bell Peppers
- Celery
- Nectarines
- Strawberries
- Cherries
- Pears
- Grapes

- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Potatoes

In summary, warm, crunchy tuna rice with spinach gets an A+ because it's not only Burn The Fat "clean eating" at its best, it's got superfood ingredients including tuna, which is high in omega-3 fatty acids and spinach, which is a nutritional green food powerhouse. (Be like Popeye and "Eat more spinach, will ya!")

This recipe scales out well, so if you're serving your significant other, family or a group, it's just as easy to double, triple or quadruple the ingredients—just be sure have a BIG bowl handy.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A+

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 8–10 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking (rice)

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Mediterranean Shrimp and Rice

If you're tired of bland meals, you're going to love this quick and easy variation on Mediterranean shrimp and rice because it's bursting with flavor while packed with nutrition. I guarantee it won't seem like you're on a diet when you have this for lunch! The lean protein source is shrimp which is a nice departure from the usual chicken and tuna commonly used in muscle-building and fat-burning recipes. This recipe gets an A grade for nutritional value, and it's super easy to make in just minutes.



Yield: makes 1 serving

Ingredients

1 cup long-grain brown rice, cooked
6 oz (170 g) shrimp, sliced
1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
1/3 cup scallions (green onion), chopped
6 Greek Kalamata olives, small, pitted and sliced
1/2 oz (14 g) low fat Greek feta cheese, crumbled
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar or to taste
Dash of black pepper
Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Begin by starting to cook your rice (rice cooker recommended).
2. Chop red pepper into small cubes and chop scallion and olives into thin slices and then combine in a bowl.
3. Chop shrimp into slices or leave whole, whichever you prefer, then add them to the bowl.
4. Add crumbled low fat feta cheese.

5. Add brown rice and mix.
6. Season with 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar and a dash of pepper and salt to taste.
7. Warm in microwave or on sauté pan until hot. Serve and enjoy.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 496

Protein: 44 g

Carbs: 55 g

Fat: 10.7 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Shrimp is a great source of protein that is highly underused on the menus of most fitness enthusiasts. Shrimp is a complete protein, containing all the essential amino acids. Shrimp is also high in minerals. A six-ounce serving as indicated in this recipe gives you almost 100% of your daily requirement for selenium. You also get a nice shot of vitamin D.

Shrimp also contains astaxanthin, a powerful carotenoid which is the same pigment responsible for giving salmon its pink color. One study showed that astaxanthin is 100 times more powerful than vitamin E as an antioxidant. You'll even get a small dose of the healthy omega-3 fatty acids in your shrimp as well. I bet you never thought of shrimp as one of the superfoods, but you should!

Shrimp does contain cholesterol (330 mg in six ounces), but that's probably not a concern for most healthy people. In one clinical trial, researchers examined the effect of shrimp or eggs on the blood cholesterol levels of subjects who currently had normal blood lipids. The study showed that while the bad LDL cholesterol increased 7% in the subjects eating the shrimp diet, the good HDL cholesterol levels increased by 12%. The shrimp eaters also lowered their triglyceride levels by 13%. In healthy subjects, there's not always a direct correlation between the dietary cholesterol you eat and the cholesterol in your blood. If you currently have high cholesterol or triglycerides, consult your doctor for advice on dietary cholesterol intake.

There are several ways you can purchase your shrimp. You can get them fresh and whole, which saves you money, but will require shelling and de-veining, adding to your prep time. At the supermarket you can grab platters of pre-cooked shrimp rings, which are ready to eat. You can also purchase bagged frozen shrimp uncooked or pre-cooked and ready to eat. Usually all you need to do is pull off the tails. There's also canned shrimp for maximum convenience.

The olives and feta cheese make this a traditional Mediterranean dish with a Greek flair. I recommend going easy on the feta—just a sprinkle of crumbled feta is enough to add the “Greek flavor.” If you have calories to spare and you love cheese, then increase the serving to a full ounce. Just keep in mind that cheese is a calorie-dense food, especially the full-fat varieties. You'll save on calories by keeping the cheese quantity small and using the low fat variety.

This Mediterranean meal could actually be served as a low calorie salad by holding the rice, but the rice adds substance and makes it much more filling as a full meal. You can raise or lower your calories and carbs by changing the amount of rice you use. For women and for those in fat loss programs on tight calorie restrictions, you might pull back the rice to 2/3 to 3/4 cup. That would save you 50–75 calories or so. For men and those in muscle growth programs, the rice portion could be increased to 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 cups or more.

Although this tastes great at room temperature or cool (as a salad), I think it's best served warm, so I'd recommend heating it the microwave for a minute before serving. Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 8–10 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking (rice)

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Beefy Spanish Rice

Introducing Tom Venuto's "Beefy Spanish Rice." The tasty combination of ground beef (or turkey), tomato sauce (or stewed tomatoes of some sort), brown rice, some key spices, and one of Tom's "secret ingredients" makes this Spanish rice a super simple, high-protein meal packed with cancer-fighting lycopene and other nutrients! This Burn The Fat-approved recipe works great as a side dish or a zesty main dish. Enjoy!



Yield: makes 3 servings

Ingredients

2 cups long-grain brown rice, cooked
12 oz lean ground beef
1 green bell pepper
1 large onion (approx 2 cups), chopped
1 14.5-oz can diced tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 teaspoons thyme
Dash of black pepper
Dash of garlic powder
Tabasco sauce to taste (optional)
Worcestershire sauce to taste (optional)

Directions

1. Begin by starting to cook your rice (rice cooker recommended).
2. Next, prepare a large, deep sauté pan by coating the surface with non-stick cooking spray.

3. Chop the onions and green peppers, and sauté them until they begin to soften. Add the ground beef, stirring until evenly browned.
4. Add the diced tomatoes and tomato paste. Add spices (thyme, black pepper and garlic powder) to your liking. Add Worcestershire sauce for additional flavor and or Tabasco sauce to make it hot and spicy.
5. Stir in the rice and serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 417

Protein: 32.9 g

Carbs: 42.7 g

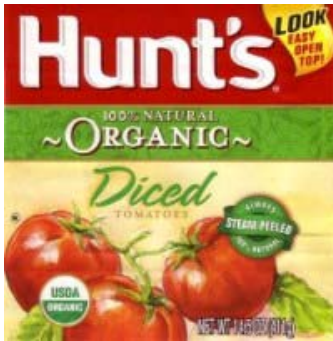
Fat: 13.2 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

The simplest version of Spanish rice is three base ingredients: ground beef (or turkey), tomato sauce (or stewed tomatoes of some sort), and brown rice. Spanish rice can be super simple and is often served as a side dish, but when you give it “the treatment” and also add protein, it becomes a hearty, zesty main course.

Lean ground turkey can very easily be substituted for the beef, but in my opinion, the beef version of this Spanish rice kicks ground turkey’s butt. Use ground turkey if you don’t like beef or if you’re really saving on calories. (Ground beef contains much more fat and therefore more calories than ground turkey.) Another alternative is lean ground bison (buffalo).

Traditional recipes often call for bacon or sausage. I recommend passing on both because they are processed meats and they are usually fattier than lean ground beef and much fattier than ground turkey. We want to keep our calories in check, so using just the beef or just the ground turkey works great for keeping this dish as light as possible.



The cancer-fighting lycopene in tomatoes is just what the doctor ordered.

My first batch of this Spanish rice was excellent, but I felt it would have been better if it had more tomato flavor. So on my second batch, I added two tablespoons of tomato paste. There was a big difference—just what the doctor ordered—and when you consider the low calories and high health value of tomatoes, which contain cancer-fighting lycopene and other nutrients, I mean that literally.

If you prefer your beefy rice to be less thick and a little saucier, you could add another can of diced tomatoes (that would add only another 23 calories per serving). I may try that myself on the next batch.

You could use almost any type of canned tomatoes for this recipe: tomato sauce, diced tomatoes or stewed tomatoes (even salsa). One word of warning: Read the labels because some canned tomatoes include corn syrup, which adds totally unnecessary calories. In addition, sodium-free versions of canned tomatoes are widely available if you want to keep your sodium intake down. There are also “natural” varieties such as Hunt’s brand that is organic and made with sea salt.

For spices, you have quite a few possibilities here: oregano, basil or thyme all work. I chose thyme and it was perfect. I also added some black pepper and garlic powder. You could mince up a garlic clove or toss in some diced garlic from a jar if you prefer. Garlic is a personal taste, but personally, I like the garlic flavor in this dish.

If you like your food hot, try some Tabasco sauce. In my opinion, the Tabasco really “made” this dish. Not too much... just enough so there is a slight hot taste. If you want to give this even more zing, try a little Worcestershire sauce. It won’t add too many calories (15 per tablespoon), but it will add an even more spicy flavor and it complements the beef nicely.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 30–40 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Authentic Greek Salad With Chicken

Ever since a Greek restaurant opened across the street from my house, I've been hooked on Greek salads with grilled chicken. With the possible exception of the full fat feta cheese, it's pretty much a 100% Burn The Fat-friendly type of meal (and even the cheese is okay if you watch the calories). With some insights from my Greek training partner, Kostas, this recipe is now "Authentic Greek Cuisine" and Burn The Fat-approved.



Yield: makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 pound chicken breast (2 large), grilled
- 3 medium (5 oz) tomatoes, diced or wedged
- 2 green bell peppers, diced or sliced into strips
- 1 medium red onion, sliced into rings
- 1 large cucumber, sliced lengthwise and cut into half-moons
- 16 pitted Kalamata black olives
- 4 oz low fat Greek feta cheese, cubed small
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- Dash of sea salt

Directions

1. After washing, prepare your vegetables as follows: cut your tomatoes into small pieces or wedges; cut green peppers into small squares or strips; slice cucumber lengthwise, then cut into half moons; slice the red onions into thin rings.
2. Place all the vegetables into a large salad bowl. Add the Kalamata olives. Cut the feta cheese into small cubes and place on top.

3. Grill two large chicken breasts (8 oz each), then cut into long, thin strips. Let the chicken cool and place chicken strips on top of salad.
4. In a separate cup, combine the olive oil, sea salt and oregano and whisk lightly to mix.
5. Pour the dressing over the salad, then toss and serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving, with chicken:

Calories: 428

Protein: 42.2

Carbs: 11.4 g

Fat: 22.1 g

Per serving, without chicken:

Calories: 232

Protein: 7.6 g

Carbs: 11.4 g

Fat: 17 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Ever since a Greek restaurant opened across the street from my house, I've been hooked on Greek salads with grilled chicken. With the possible exception of the full fat feta cheese, it's pretty much a 100% Burn The Fat-friendly type of meal (and even the cheese is okay if you watch the calories).

When I told my Greek training partner, Kostas, that I had been eating a lot of Greek salads (in New Jersey), he said, "Let me show you how we really do it in Greece." So, while there are numerous variations on Greek salad (Horiatiki Salata), my Greek co-author assures me that this is the "authentic" way.

I made only one alteration, and that is using low fat feta cheese. Kostas didn't say I was "allowed" to do that... but after all, this is a Burn The Fat recipe. The low fat feta simply saves you some calories and it tastes nearly as good as regular full fat feta.

On the other hand, I would warn you to avoid non-fat feta. One of our goals with this recipe column is to show you ways to decrease calorie density, which helps you get leaner, while making our recipes healthier at the same time. Sometimes, however, what you gain in reduced calories, you lose in reduced taste. Because non-fat feta tastes like cardboard, I'd take a pass if I were you.



It's okay to eat full fat or low fat dairy products occasionally, instead of non-fat products; you simply have to remember that the calorie density is higher.

It's okay to eat full fat or low fat dairy products occasionally (instead of non-fat products); you simply have to remember that the calorie density is higher. Adjust your serving sizes accordingly, and you'll be fine.

Speaking of dietary fat, this is the type of recipe which is perfectly acceptable for a fat loss program and yet some people who are fat-phobic (a carryover from the 80s and early 90s low fat craze), often take one look at the fat grams and avoid the food or meal for that reason alone. When it comes to healthy fats like extra virgin olive oil, there is no need for concern. In fact, it's important to consume adequate amounts of healthy fats.

The only trouble, as I mentioned above, is that dietary fat contains a lot of calories. As long as you keep your calories at or near your daily target, then there's no reason to avoid a salad like this one just because it contains 22 grams of fat per serving.

If you were hung up on fat grams and not focused on (1) good fats versus bad fats and (2) calories in versus calories out, you would miss out on some delicious meals and some of the best superfoods. Repeat after me: "Extra virgin olive oil is good... I just need to watch my calories!"

The dressing for the authentic traditional Greek salad is simple: "Olive oil is the only thing that goes on it," says Kostas. "Vinegar is optional. But no lemon juice! It doesn't go with the feta." (I used red wine vinegar and preferred it that way myself.)

Kostas continued with explicit instructions about the veggies: "Green bell peppers are the only peppers in the salad. No red or yellow peppers." Oops! Well, don't worry, I

won't tell Rachel Ray that her salad isn't "authentic Greek"... and remember, you got the real scoop right here!

There was more from chef Marangopoulos:

"Feta cheese can be cubed, but not crumbled. I've never seen it crumbled in a restaurant in Greece. Usually they put the feta as a large, flat chunk (something like 3 inches by 3 inches square), on top of the vegetables."

"Tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers, red onions (they are the bomb), black Kalamata olives and feta cheese. Once you put all this in the bowl, drizzle the olive oil all over it and then, sprinkle oregano all over the feta and the vegetables. That is the traditional way in Greece."

The chicken is usually not found in traditional salads in Greece, but that part is our Burn The Fat touch. By adding the chicken, you get your lean protein source and then the salad goes from side dish to a full meal—perfect for low carb diet. If you require more calories for a muscle-building diet, then you can add carbs. (Try a whole wheat pita or baked potato on the side). Of course, if you're vegetarian, enjoy it without the chicken—it's delicious either way.

Last but not least, don't ask a Greek if you should use lettuce in a Greek salad. You will look very silly.

Kali Orexi!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 20 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Asian Sesame Cucumber Salad

The main ingredient in Asian sesame cucumber salad is cucumbers, an extremely low calorie food that contains only about 15 calories per cup (sliced), or about 35 calories for a medium (8-inch) cuke. Cucumbers are also satiety champs because they make you feel full without all the calories. Foods with a high water content are very satiating. It's also well known that fiber adds to the satiety value of foods. Well, it just so happens that cucumbers have a very high water content and they have 2.4 grams of fiber, if you leave the skin on. Enjoy this tasting and filling recipe!



Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

3 cups cucumber, halved, seeded, and then sliced
2 cups sliced carrots
1/2 cup scallions (green onions), chopped
1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, sliced and finely chopped (optional)
1 tablespoon white sesame seeds, toasted
1/3 cup vinegar
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. Slice your cucumbers in half lengthwise, scoop out the seeds and center portion so you are left with a concave half moon shape, and then chop it into thin slices.
2. Chop red peppers into very small squares.
3. Chop carrots into slices (small carrots or baby carrots).

4. Combine cucumbers and all other ingredients in a salad bowl, toss and serve, or refrigerate and serve chilled.
5. Sesame seeds may be toasted first in a skillet until they are browned, then sprinkled on top as the finishing garnish.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 178

Protein: 4.1 g

Carbs: 21.5 g

Fat: 9.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Cucumbers are an extremely low calorie food with only about 15 calories per cup (sliced), or about 35 calories for a medium (8-inch) cuke. Cucumbers are also satiety champs. Satiety refers to how much a food fills you up. Foods with a high water content are very satiating. It's also well known that fiber adds to the satiety value of foods. Well, it just so happens that cucumbers have a very high water content and they have 2.4 grams of fiber, if you leave the skin on.

One of the great benefits of salads which include a lot of cucumbers and other high satiety vegetables, is that they tend to make you feel fuller on fewer calories.

A trick which has been proven in controlled research is to fill up on highly satiating, low calorie foods prior to a main course as appetizers. Not only is a tasty salad a healthier, lower calorie appetizer than the usual fried, greasy finger foods that most people start with, but also, the end result is you tend to eat less of the main course and fewer calories overall. With a satiating salad first, the total calorie count for the entire meal is almost always lower than if the main course were served first in an ad libitum fashion (helping yourself without counting calories).

Some of the traditional versions of this recipe call for red pepper flakes, but I prefer a chopped red bell pepper. It adds more bulk to the salad, which again, helps you feel fuller on fewer calories. You also get the additional nutrients that are found in red vegetables. Red peppers contain beta-cryptoxanthin, a carotenoid which may help to lower the risk of lung cancer. Red peppers also contain lycopene, the well known

carotenoid that has made tomatoes famous as a health food, as well as vitamin C and beta carotene. The splash of red in the salad also adds some color, so when you make this salad for guests, it will look all the more impressive!



Cucumbers—very low calorie density, very high satiety value

Speaking of colors, most of the traditional Asian cucumber salad recipes do not include carrots, but personally I think the carrots add a lot more punch and crunch. Carrots, which have gotten an undeserved bad rap due to a high glycemic index, are a power food that make a great addition to any fat loss program. I recommend keeping a bag of baby carrots in your fridge at all times for snacks and then use them in recipes like this one often. The carrot's claim to fame is beta carotene, but that's not all it offers you. Carrots are also a good source of lutein and zeaxanthin, carotenoids which play a role in eye health and preventing macular degeneration. In the two cups of sliced carrots that this recipe calls for, you also get about 4 more grams of fiber.

The traditional Asian recipe calls for 2 teaspoons of sugar. A slightly sweet taste does add something to this salad, but you can easily do without the sugar. This healthier and lower calorie version of cucumber salad has omitted the sugar.

This cucumber salad gets its Asian flavor from the sesame oil, sesame seeds and ginger. The ginger is optional—try it with or without and see which you prefer. The sesame oil and sesame seeds are where most of the calories come from. Sesame seeds have 52 calories per tablespoon, so if you want to save calories you can easily drop them from the recipe, but I'd suggest keeping them since this is such a very low calorie side dish as is. Sesame seeds also happen to be highly nutritious; they're loaded with minerals and contain phytosterols that may help lower cholesterol.

With all the colorful veggies, the fiber, the vitamins, and the minerals, this makes an A+ multi-superfood salad. It does take a little bit of prep time with all the chopping necessary, but if you get yourself a really good set of chef's knives, it will make the task faster and easier.

I just got a set of fancy Japanese Shun knives for my birthday... these things are like "mini-swords"—straight from *Kill Bill*—I kid you not! Careful, watch those fingers!

Sesame cucumber salad goes great with Asian food, but you can include it as a side dish with just about anything or enjoy it completely on its own.

Itadakimasu!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Moderate

Time required: 25 minutes Prep, 0 minutes Cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Super Lean White Bean Chili

Some the traditional chili recipes call for dried beans and very long cooking times. Not this chili. I don't have that much patience, and no recipes make it into this cooking column unless they are fast and simple enough for a "kitchen dummy." In about 20–30 minutes you can cook up this high protein, nutrient-rich, fat-burning, muscle-building recipe. You'll love it!



Yield: makes 3 servings

Ingredients

- 2 cups yellow onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 1 pound 99% lean ground turkey
- 2 cups (one 14.5-oz can) reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cans (15.5 oz) great northern beans
- 2 cans (4.5 oz) chopped green chilies
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon hot chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves (optional)
- Dash of black pepper
- Dash of salt (optional)

Directions

1. In a large, deep saucepan, coat the surface with a non-stick cooking spray or a tablespoon of olive oil (add 40 calories and 4 grams of fat per serving for each tablespoon of oil you use). Alternately, use a crock pot.

2. Add onions and garlic and sauté them until they begin to soften (about 3–4 minutes).
3. Add the ground turkey, stirring occasionally until cooked (about 4–5 minutes).
4. Add the chicken broth, then stir in the green chilies, cumin, coriander, oregano, black pepper and chili powder.
5. Add white beans after draining all the liquid from the can. Heat to a boil, then reduce heat, cover and let simmer for at least 15–20 minutes.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 420

Protein: 52.5 g

Carbs: 53.2 g

Fat: 1.7 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



This is the quick version of white bean chili. You can prepare, cook and serve this in as little as 25–30 minutes! Time permitting, of course, you may want to let it simmer much longer, or even leave it in a crock pot on low all afternoon to really bring out the flavors. But if you're in a hurry, this works beautifully in a pinch.

Some of the traditional chili recipes call for dried beans, which require soaking and very long cooking times. I don't have that much patience, and no recipes make it into this cooking column unless they are fast and simple enough for a "kitchen dummy." That's why I opted for the canned beans. You can feel free to use dried beans and go through the soaking and slower cooking process if that's your preference.

This recipe works great with turkey breast, chicken breast or ground turkey. My favorite by far is the ground turkey. You can get it very lean—99% fat free, which helps keep our calorie count down. In fact, the 99% lean ground turkey helps make this one of the leanest chili recipes you could ever make. You can use lean ground

beef, but even the leanest ground beef is much higher in fat and calories than the white meats.

Chili usually calls for tomato sauce or tomatoes, but I left them out because I wanted something a little bit distinctive and different from regular chili. Instead we simply use two cups of chicken broth to give us a stew-like consistency, but not a soupy consistency.



You can season your chili according to your tastes, whether you like it mild or “atomic hot.”

You can season your chili according to your tastes, whether you like it mild or “atomic hot.” I recommend a hot chili powder—at least 1 tablespoon—and you can add more from there if you like. You can even add other “hot stuff” including various hot sauces or hot peppers. A dash of black pepper and the oregano work very well in this dish and the cumin is a must-use spice.

Some people like ground cloves in their chili. I prefer it without the cloves as I can’t help think of ham when I taste and smell cloves, but it does add a distinctive flavor. Just go easy if you decide to try the ground cloves—1/2 teaspoon at most—otherwise it will overpower the whole thing.

By the way, if you’re on a muscle mass-building program and you need to increase the calorie count, this chili is very good with corn, or you can simply bump up your serving size of this recipe. The ingredients listed make one big batch of about 1260 calories, so that feeds three people (or two bodybuilders, ha-ha).

Of course, if you look at most conventional cookbooks or cooking shows (that are not fitness-oriented), you may be tempted to serve this topped with Monterey jack or cheddar cheese, a dollop of sour cream on top and maybe even some tortilla chips. Some guys I know might be tempted to wash it down with a Corona too (or pour some

right into the chili). Then again, it would no longer be a “Burn The Fat” recipe if you did all of that—it would more like a calorie and fat fiesta!

But hey, that’s what I’m here for, right? To tell you what NOT to do and to take traditional recipes and give them a “lean and mean, high protein” makeover!

Give this leaner, lighter white bean chili a try. I think you’ll be pleasantly surprised at how great it tastes, even without all the extra fat and calories. Eaten as listed above, this is about as healthy as it gets. Made with all-natural ingredients (no refined foods), we give our white bean chili an A grade. This is not, however, a low sodium dish, so keep that in mind if you are restricting sodium for any reason.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Moderate

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 20–25 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Hot 'N' Spicy Red Jambalaya

Some jambalayas are “red,” using tomatoes or tomato sauce, while other recipes such as “brown” Cajun jambalaya call for chicken stock. Some even use both. Our tasty creation is a Creole “red” jambalaya, so we’re going to use tomatoes and dash of tomato paste in a high-protein, nutrient-rich combination.



Yield: makes 5 servings

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3/4 cup fresh onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 stalks celery, cut into thin slices
- 1 red or green pepper, diced
- 1 yellow pepper, diced
- 1 pound boneless chicken breast, cut into small pieces
- 2 cans diced tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1/2 cup scallions (green onions), chopped
- 1 pound shrimp (shelled, precooked)
- 2–4 tablespoons Louisiana hot sauce (or any hot pepper sauce)
- Dash of cayenne pepper powder
- Dash black pepper
- 2 teaspoons thyme
- 2 teaspoons parsley flakes
- 1 bay leaf

2 cups long-grain brown rice, cooked (measured after cooking)

Directions

1. Pre-cook your rice in advance, about 30–40 minutes beforehand, so it's ready to add to the jambalaya last, after all other ingredients have been cooked.
2. In a large pot (approx 3-quart) or a jumbo fryer (12 inches wide by 4 inches deep), coat the surface with olive oil and begin cooking the onions and garlic on medium heat.
3. Next add in the green pepper, yellow pepper and celery and sauté about 4 minutes. Add the chicken (cut into 3/4-inch cubes) and stir until the chicken is lightly cooked (white) on all sides (about 6 minutes).
4. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, hot sauce, all the spices and the bay leaf. Pour in the shrimp, stir and bring to a boil. Stir in the precooked rice, reduce heat, cover and let simmer until the shrimp, chicken and all ingredients are fully cooked through and most of the liquid has been absorbed (about 15–20 minutes).
5. When the jambalaya has reached the right consistency (thickened up like a stew), you're done! Remove the bay leaf. Serve hot.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 433

Protein: 50 g

Carbs: 34 g

Fat: 9.3 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



This Hot N' Spicy Jambalaya is about as healthy as it gets. Made with all natural ingredients (no refined foods), we give it a "grade A."

There are a wide variety of ways to make Jambalaya. Some Jambalayas are "red" and use tomatoes or tomato sauce, while other recipes call for chicken stock ("brown" Cajun Jambalaya). Some even use both. Ours is a Creole "red" Jambalaya, so use tomatoes and dash of tomato paste.

The vegetables include onion, garlic, green or red pepper, yellow pepper and celery. If you wanted to increase the bulk of this recipe while keeping the calorie density low, you could easily increase the amount of vegetables you use, relative to the meat and seafood. You may want to consider chopping all your veggies in advance while your rice is cooking so they're ready to add to the pot right when you need them.

By the way, if you don't have a rice cooker yet, I recommend getting one. The cooking time for long-grain "slow cooked" rice is quite a bit faster in a good rice cooker, and many rice cookers also double as steamers. On another practical note, although I haven't tried it myself, I've been told that you can even make your jambalaya right in a rice cooker!

For protein, shrimp is the traditional seafood ingredient (although crawfish makes for some true authentic Louisiana-style jambalaya as well). Traditional jambalaya also usually calls for sausage or ham. We want to make a healthier, lighter type of jambalaya, so we're going to use chicken instead. This saves you a lot of calories and keeps the saturated fat level down. Don't worry, though, because we won't be sacrificing much if any flavor with that substitution. If you really want to save on calories, you can make this strictly a shrimp jambalaya and leave out the chicken (shrimp is an excellent source of lean protein).



Shrimp is an excellent source of lean protein.

Brown rice is the traditional starchy carb part of the recipe. I've seen jambalaya made with pasta, pinto beans or even barley, if you want something different, but you can't go wrong with brown rice. The rice should be precooked separately first so it is ready to add to the jambalaya last, after the vegetables and sauce have already been simmering.

If you like hot and spicy food, try a dash of cayenne powder (or Creole seasoning) and up to 4 tablespoons of regular hot sauce (cayenne pepper sauce). **Warning:** 4 tablespoons is enough to make you crack a sweat, so if you don't like it hot, use less and add according to your taste. If you like it really hot, then push up the Scoville units meter and use your favorite mega hot sauce. In this chef's opinion, this recipe is best served hot and spicy... but have it your way—it's delicious even a little milder.



In this chef's opinion, this recipe is best served hot and spicy... but have it your way—it's delicious even a little milder.

This is a fairly calorie dense recipe, mainly because it uses chicken and shrimp (which is why it's also mega high in protein). If you're on a tightly calorie-restricted fat loss program, you may want to try this dish with only shrimp to save on the calories, otherwise you'll have to go with a pretty small serving size.

This batch of ingredients makes five small servings at 433 calories per serving. Adjust the serving size of this recipe according to your calorie requirements, or don't hesitate to adjust the recipe ingredients to meet your needs. This jambalaya is pretty filling, but keep in mind that when something tastes this good, it's easy to forget about calorie density.

Last but not least... this is about as healthy as it gets. Made with all natural ingredients (no refined foods), we give it a "grade A."

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Moderate

Time required: 40 minutes prep, 25–30 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Garbanzo Bean Tuna Salad

If you've never tried a garbanzo bean salad, then you don't know what you're missing. Also known as "chickpeas," garbanzo beans are heart-healthy legumes that pack a whopping 12.5 grams of fiber per cup. The rest of the salad is loaded with nutrient-rich superfoods ideal for muscle-building and fat-burning diets. When you factor in the quick prep time, the nutritional value and the incredible flavor, we give this Burn The Fat recipe our highest nutrition grade possible: A+.



Yield: makes 3 servings

Ingredients

- 1 15-oz can garbanzo beans
- 4 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- 2 6-oz cans water-packed light tuna, drained
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley
- 1 medium (approx 6 oz) tomato, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint leaves (optional)
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Dash black pepper
- Dash salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 4 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Directions

1. Open your can of garbanzo beans, drain and rise, then add to a large mixing bowl or a large salad bowl.

2. Open and drain your tuna and add to the bowl. Add chopped spinach.
3. Chop your tomato and onion into small cubes and add to the mix. Crush and chop 2 garlic cloves and add to bowl (alternately, you could use 1 tablespoon of jarred minced garlic).
4. Add 2 tablespoons of fresh parsley, finely chopped and 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint (mint is optional). The salad dressing consists of 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil, 4 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar and 4 tablespoons of red wine vinegar (you can add more of the vinegars to your taste).
5. Finish by adding a dash of black pepper and salt to taste. Mix the salad very thoroughly and serve, or place in the refrigerator until chilled and then serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 396

Protein: 35.7 g

Carbs: 38.6 g

Fat: 13.2 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



Not only do garbanzo beans make for some great salads, they are also heart-healthy and they pack a whopping 12.5 grams of fiber per cup.

Garbanzo beans, also known as “chickpeas,” belong to a class of starchy carbohydrates known as legumes. Other well-known legumes include beans, peas and lentils, although garbanzo beans are the most widely consumed legume in the world. Not

only do garbanzo beans make for some great salads, they are also heart-healthy and they pack a whopping 12.5 grams of fiber per cup.

With this much going for them, garbanzo beans could easily qualify as a superfood, so if you're not including them in your nutrition program, you're definitely missing out (especially once you learn how to make this salad).

There are more variations on garbanzo bean salads than you can count, but out of all the traditional recipes I looked at and tested, this one is my favorite. One reason, of course, is because it tastes so good, another is because it's easy to make and doesn't require cooking, yet another is because this recipe is loaded with numerous superfoods.

Although this salad could easily be made with any type of lettuce or salad greens, I was surprised to see that hardly any cookbooks suggested garbanzo bean salad with spinach. Spinach is a nutritional powerhouse—another true superfood—low in calories and loaded with vitamins and phytochemicals such as lutein.

*Adding spinach makes this a
"multi-superfood salad!"*



But why stop there? Add tomatoes (yet another superfood) and the cancer-fighting members of the allium family—garlic and onions—and you have a multiple-superfood bonanza!

You could easily leave out the tuna and enjoy this recipe as a side salad (with a lean protein in your main course), but by adding the tuna into this salad as a lean protein source, you create a full-fledged muscle-building, fat-burning meal unto itself.

Albacore tuna has, unfortunately, been flagged as a fish to eat in limited quantities due to potential mercury contamination, which is a real shame. However, recent advisories have suggested that the chunk light variety contains 1/3 the amount of mercury as albacore, and it's still okay to eat tuna provided you stay informed of FDA and EPA guidelines for consumption (especially for pregnant and nursing women and infants or young children).

Alternately, this salad would probably work just as well with canned salmon—or you could even try it with chicken or turkey breast. Tuna is simply the most natural fit with these ingredients.

Keep in mind that while this is one of the most nutritionally rich salads you could ever eat, it is not a low calorie meal compared to salads that contain only fibrous carbs, so keep your portion sizes in check. Garbanzo beans are a starchy carbohydrate, so the caloric density is relatively high (420 calories in one 15-ounce can, the standard size). Also keep in mind that while olive oil is a healthy monounsaturated oil, rich in healthy phenol antioxidants, all oil is calorie dense, with 120 calories per tablespoon. (By the way, be sure to go with the “extra virgin olive oil” because that’s the type that has not been processed with heat and chemical solvents.)

The amount of ingredients listed above makes three servings with just under 400 calories per serving. Share with family or friends, or put the leftovers in the refrigerator and serve later—it’s delicious chilled. The best part is this recipe requires no cooking and is about as easy as it gets to prepare. If you use canned garbanzo beans, it takes about 15 minutes to make. You could certainly use dried, uncooked garbanzos, but then your prep time will be much longer (for soaking and cooking the beans).

Although there are quite a few ingredients, we still give this one our Super Simple Seal of Approval, and without a doubt it gets our highest nutrition grade possible: A+.

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A+

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 15 minutes prep, 0 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Healthy Cajun “Fried” Cod Cakes

These easy-to-make and delicious fish cakes are inspired from the famous Portuguese Bacalhau, a salty cod and potato seafood casserole. By adding some hot cayenne pepper seasoning and breading the cod cakes with whole wheat crumbs before pan-cooking, you get a great “Cajun-fried” taste and texture that is remarkably light and lean.



Yield: makes 4 fish cakes (serving size: 2 fish cakes)

Ingredients

- 12 oz (340 grams) boneless, skinless codfish
- 12 oz (340 grams) potatoes, peeled
- 2 whole eggs
- 1/2 cup scallions (green onions), finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped, or parsley flakes
- 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper powder
- 3 tablespoons hot pepper sauce (or Tabasco)
- 1 tablespoon butter buds (optional)
- 4 tablespoons whole wheat bread crumbs

Directions

1. Pre-cook cod by boiling for 10 minutes or until it flakes easily (or lightly pan cook).
2. Cook potatoes (boil, bake or microwave), peel, then mash as if making mashed potatoes.
3. Combine fish with potatoes and add eggs, parsley, scallions, cayenne powder, hot pepper sauce, and butter buds. Mix all the ingredients with a fork as thoroughly as possible. (The mixture should be thick enough to form patties.)
4. Roll mixture tightly into balls, flatten into cakes and coat with bread crumbs.

5. Pan-cook on medium heat for 5–7 minutes or until first side is golden brown. Flip and cook the other side until crispy and golden brown, then serve hot.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (2 fish cakes):

Calories: 432

Protein: 41.8 g

Carbs: 49.4 g

Fat: 6.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

When I say I “slaved over a hot stove all day” to come up with this recipe for you, I’m not kidding! I made 8 different variations of fish cakes and cod cakes (with some early attempts falling into pieces while flipping, I shamefully admit), before giving this one the blue ribbon. So you can rest assured, this has been taste-tested to the max... and it’s delicious!

Of course, you may be wondering how you can eat “fried” fish as part of a fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition program, aren’t you? Well, it’s not really “fried” as in deep fried in oil, but I call them “Cajun fried” cod cakes anyway because these fish cakes taste so good, they could almost pass for deep fried.

These cod cakes are probably most inspired from the famous Portuguese Bacalhau, a salty cod seafood casserole. However, by adding some red hot pepper seasoning, you get a great spicy Cajun taste, and by breading the patties with whole wheat crumbs and then pan cooking until lightly browned, you get a “deep fried” texture and crispiness, yet you still have a healthy and remarkably light and lean recipe.

Cod cake recipes are based on two primary ingredients: fish and white potatoes. You can use any white potatoes for this (Russet or baking potatoes, for example). I recommend equal amounts of potatoes and codfish (12 oz cod, uncooked weight, to 12 oz potatoes, uncooked weight). If in doubt, go with a little more potato than fish because your mixture will be thicker and easier to form into cakes that way.



You can pre-cook your cod by boiling or lightly pan cooking it first before adding it to the mixture and making it into patties. I also took a short cut: Cod recipes usually tell you to soak your fish overnight, changing the water repeatedly (presumably to remove the saltiness). But since I'm lazy, I skipped that step.

There's a bit more cooking and prep time for these than most of the recipes I make because you have to bake your potatoes and also pre-cook the cod before you

make the fish patties. However, cod is a very lean white fish, so very little cooking time is required in general. Prep time can vary. If you bake your potatoes, that usually takes about 40 minutes at 400 degrees, or you can microwave a 12-ouncer in about 8–10 minutes on high power so total time could be as little as 30 minutes start to finish if you take the shortcuts.

The trickiest part of making your cod cakes is keeping them in one piece when you flip them, so be sure to get your spatula completely underneath the patty and then flip it very carefully. The real key, however, is in getting the right consistency to your mixture to start with. The ideal mixture should be fairly thick. If it's too watery, then it will be hard to form into patties and they will tend to fall apart when you flip them. Don't forget, you can always make smaller patties (for example, 6 instead of 4 as listed above), and those are much easier to flip.

You can make the mixture thicker by increasing the amount of potato relative to fish, or you could use one egg instead of two (which will also reduce the calories). Alternately, you can use bread crumbs right in the mix (instead of just for exterior breading), which does the trick very nicely, but that adds extra calories you'll have to factor into the total. If you have extra calories to spare (anyone highly active, or men trying to gain lean muscle mass, for example), then I recommend including the bread crumbs. It makes your fish cakes taste even better and they're easier to cook.

Real whole wheat bread crumbs are a little hard to find. I'd recommend looking in a health food store. You may not be able to find true 100% whole grain crumbs, but there are at least a couple brands of plain whole wheat or organic whole wheat bread crumbs (Jaclyn's brand, for example). The plain varieties give you about 100–110 calories per 1/3-cup serving.

You can experiment with the spices and seasonings, (partially based on how hot you like your food), but I think you'll find this combination of ingredients especially delicious. Tabasco, hot cayenne pepper or habanero pepper sauce all work great, and I suggest a tablespoon of cayenne powder added for good measure.

Many traditional fish cake recipes call for butter, but you can get a very large calorie savings by taking a pass on the butter. If you like butter flavor, try Butter Buds or Molly McButter, which are low calorie butter flavored sprinkles. These products are made primarily from maltodextrin, which is certainly not a grade-A nutritional powerhouse, but it's a good substitution if you want to save on calories (15 calories per tablespoon versus 110 calories in 1 tablespoon of real butter).

Another big calorie savings comes from using a thin coating of non-stick cooking spray rather than frying the cod cakes in oil. When lightly covered with bread crumbs, you may be surprised how this lighter and healthier rendition of the traditional recipe almost passes for being deep fried, even without the oil.

If you were to use butter, oil and flour as the traditional recipe calls for, you would have hundreds of additional calories. This recipe is a great example of how a typical recipe can be made leaner and lighter without sacrificing taste. I can take almost ANY traditional recipe and—with a few simple substitutions and a little creative thinking—turn it into something that is light, delicious and healthy... and you can too.

Last but not least, since cod is a very light fish, you may find that these are not as filling as some other Burn The Fat recipes. At 216 calories per cake, though, you may want to limit yourself to two cakes per meal if you're on a calorie-reduced fat loss program. Try serving these with a salad or a fibrous vegetable on the side to fill you up with a high nutrient density, low calorie density, complete Burn The Fat meal.

Bon Appetit!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy



Time required: 10 minutes prep, 10–14 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Mega-Protein T.N.T. Burgers (Tasty Nutritious Turkey)

After I made my first batch of these mega-protein turkey burgers, I immediately took one to my training partner and another to a friend for “taste testing.” They were freaking out! My training partner said, “NO WAY! There’s no way these are on your diet—they taste too good... tastes like something from McDonalds!” My other friend had a similar reaction: “Mmmmm, too good... feels like I’m cheating...”



Yield: makes 4 burgers (serving size: 2 burgers)

Ingredients

1 pound (454 g) 99% fat free ground turkey
4 egg whites
1 cup (40 g) crumbled Shredded Wheat cereal, crumbled
1/2 cup celery, finely diced
1/2 cup onion, finely diced
2 tablespoons horseradish mustard
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon parsley flakes
Dash of pepper
Dash of salt

Directions

1. Place one pound of ground turkey in a large mixing bowl. Add four egg whites. Add one cup of crumbled Shredded Wheat to the mixture.

2. Very finely dice your celery and onion or use a blender or food processor to chop them (but do not liquefy). Add 1/2 cup of each to your mixture.
3. Add spices and seasonings: 1 tablespoon of soy sauce (try Tamari sauce for stronger flavor or Bragg Liquid Aminos as a natural soy sauce alternative), 2 tablespoons of horseradish mustard, 1 tablespoon garlic powder, 1 tablespoon of parsley flakes, a dash of pepper and a dash of salt.
4. Mix the ingredients thoroughly with a fork, then form into four patties with your hands. Cook on a grill, grill pan, or for fastest cooking, use a George Foreman Grill (takes about 4–5 minutes to cook).

Nutrition Info

Per serving (2 burgers):

Calories: 379

Protein: 65 g

Carbs: 23 g

Fat: 2.6 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

After I made my first batch of these mega-protein turkey burgers, I immediately took one to my training partner and another to a friend for “taste testing.” They were freaking out! My training partner said, “NO WAY! There’s no way these are on your diet... they taste too good... tastes like something from McDonalds!” My other friend had a similar reaction: “Mmmmm, too good... feels like I’m cheating.”



“Mmmmm, too good... feels like I’m cheating.”

Well guess what... these are not cheat foods—these are Burn The Fat Program-approved! The idea that healthy fat-burning, muscle-building foods have to taste bad

or bland is totally false, so put that out of your mind. If you really want to have some fun with your friends and family, when you serve them some of these “TNT burgers,” tell them that the “secret ingredient” is Jack Daniels! (I’ll explain about the “secret ingredient” in just a minute.)

First you start with a pound (454 grams) of ground turkey. Lean ground turkey is a very overlooked, underutilized protein source. If you select the 99% lean variety, it’s extremely high in protein and almost fat free. All too often, dieters and bodybuilders complain about eating nothing but tuna, chicken and egg whites for protein, while there are so many delicious ground turkey recipes! I can give this recipe a highly respectable B+ Burn The Fat grade, but I give these mega protein turkey burgers an A+ for flavor. I’m not kidding—they’re delicious!



Each one of these burgers packs a whopping 32.5 grams of protein.

Many burger recipes, whether tuna, salmon, beef or ground turkey, call for bread crumbs to make a tastier, more solid burger. After shopping in numerous supermarkets and health food stores, I couldn’t find any bread crumbs that were 100% whole grain. Most commercial bread crumbs are made from white flour, or enriched (not whole) wheat, or they contain other calorie-containing ingredients or flavorings (like oil or Italian seasonings, etc.). One brand I found said it was “all natural” wheat. However, after reading the ingredients list carefully, it didn’t say 100% whole grain, it said whole wheat *flour*. This is not whole grain. Whole grain foods contain all parts of the grain kernel including the bran, the germ and the endosperm.

The only way you can be 100% certain you’re getting a whole grain is if the label says, 100% whole grain! It’s not the end of the world should you ever eat wheat products and they’re not 100% whole grain, but whole grain is the better choice. So what are you supposed to do for bread crumbs? Simple, do what Tom does: toast some 100% whole grain bread and crumble it! Or, in this case, if you need finer particles, use crumbled Shredded Wheat—it works great—and it’s 100% whole wheat. A cup (40g)

of Shredded Wheat contains 140 calories, 31 grams of natural carbs, 5 grams of fiber and only 1 gram of fat. There's your perfect alternative to packaged bread crumbs.

By the way, burgers can also be made with oatmeal instead of bread crumbs, but they tend to come out a littler drier, and one of the things that's so nice about these TNT burgers is the way they come out so moist, tender and juicy.

The celery adds a really nice crunch—definitely a must-use ingredient. You can puree your celery and onion with a food processor (but just until it's finely chopped—don't liquefy it), or you can dice them very finely with a sharp knife. For spices, add garlic powder, parsley flakes, pepper and a little pinch of salt.



"There is a big difference between typical refined white table salt sold at the grocery store and unrefined sea salt."—Paul Chek

Salt is a controversial subject in health and nutrition. According to health lecturer Paul Chek, salt comes in two forms—refined and natural—and he says, "There is a big difference between typical refined white table salt sold at the grocery store and unrefined sea salt." Refined salts, according to Chek, undergo processing and may contain aluminum-based anti-caking agents, so he recommends natural sea salt (like Celtic or New Zealand), if you use salt. Whether you invest more money in natural sea salt, you'll have to decide for yourself, based on how much you're personally concerned about food processing.

Also keep in mind, 10% of the population is sodium sensitive, and this can lead to an increase in blood pressure with high sodium consumption. If you've been diagnosed with high blood pressure and told by your doctor to limit salt, then take a pass on the shaker, and also pass on the soy sauce too, which is extremely high in sodium. On that note, a natural alternative to regular soy sauce is Bragg Liquid Aminos. Sounds like a protein supplement, but it's not—it's an all-purpose seasoning almost the same as soy sauce, not low in sodium by any means, but the difference is, this product does not contain artificial ingredients and does not use genetically modified (GM) soybeans.

Last but not least, the secret ingredient... Jack Daniels! Jack Daniels brand Horseradish mustard, that is. Two tablespoons and you're golden. Any spicy mustard would probably work here if you can't find J.D., but trust me, you don't want to leave out "the secret ingredient."



The secret ingredient...!

I like to cook my burgers on a George Foreman Grill (a must-own appliance for every fat-burning and muscle building kitchen). Just 4–5 minutes and they're ready to eat!

Each one of these burgers packs a whopping 32.5 grams of protein and only 11.5 grams of carbs. With just 189 calories per patty, you could easily have two of these for a mega-high protein (65 g), low carb meal.

Or, if you need more carbs, serve one burger on a whole grain bun or between 2 slices of whole grain bread and top it with lettuce and tomato. Bodybuilders: two burgers with whole wheat buns will have you "gaining mass" in no time.

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B+

Portable Food: Yes!

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 15 minutes prep, 4–5 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Hot 'N' Spicy Ground Turkey Scramble (or Omelet)

This hot 'n' spicy ground turkey scramble is going to blow you away! This meal is absolutely delicious and incredibly nutritious. Not only that, it's one of the most versatile dishes you will ever make. If you're on a high carb or higher calorie muscle-gaining program, use the kidney beans. If you're on a low carb or lower calorie fat loss program, ditch the kidney beans. It's delicious either way. And wait, speaking of versatility, you can make this the easy way as a scramble, or if you like omelets, the spicy turkey, pepper, mushroom and onion mix makes a great omelet filling.



Yield: 3 omelets or scrambles

Ingredients

- 8 oz 99% fat free ground turkey
- 2 whole eggs
- 12 egg whites
- 1 cup (1 whole) red pepper, chopped
- 1 cup (1 whole) green pepper, chopped
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup raw mushrooms, chopped
- 2 tablespoons garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tablespoons hot pepper sauce
- Dash of pepper
- 2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1-1/2 cups (1 can or 130 g) kidney beans (for higher carb version)

Directions

1. Coat a medium to large non-stick skillet with 1 tablespoon of olive oil (or use non-stick cooking spray). Cook the ground turkey, peppers, mushrooms, and onions on medium heat.
2. Add the spices, stir and let simmer until fully cooked. In a second pan coated with non-stick spray, cook your eggs, either scrambled, or prepare one-third of the eggs as an omelet.
 - If making a scramble, simply add the scrambled eggs into the large skillet when all ingredients are cooked and mix.
 - If making an omelet, scoop one third of the mixture onto the eggs and then fold over to form your omelet. Repeat for two more omelets. Makes three servings of scramble or three omelets.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (1 omelet or scramble):

Calories: 371

Protein: 44.4 g

Carbs: 26.5 g

Fat: 8.8 g

Low carb version without beans (1 omelet):

Calories: 270

Protein: 36.4 g

Carbs: 8.5 g

Fat: 8.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

This hot 'n' spicy ground turkey scramble is going to blow you away! This meal is absolutely delicious and incredibly nutritious. Not only that, it's one of the most versatile dishes you will ever make. If you're on a high carb or higher calorie muscle-gaining program, use the kidney beans. If you're on a low carb or lower calorie fat loss program, ditch the kidney beans. It's delicious either way. And wait, speaking of

versatility, you can make this the easy way as a scramble, or if you like omelets, the spicy turkey, pepper, mushroom and onion mix makes a great omelet filling.



This hot 'n' spicy ground turkey scramble will blow you away with a "flavor explosion!"

Mushrooms, onions and red or green peppers are traditional ingredients for all kinds of egg scramble or omelet recipes. However, you can really spice up your omelets without a lot of extra preparation or work. All it takes is a little hot pepper sauce (such as Chef Emeril's, or the Red Hot stuff if you dare), a bit of Worcestershire sauce, some garlic, a dash of pepper, a dash of turmeric, and shazam! You have yourself a hot and spicy flavor explosion! And does it ever smell good too! My neighbors were dying to know what was cooking.



Mushrooms, onions and red or green peppers are traditional ingredients for all kinds of egg scramble or omelet recipes.

This is a super high protein meal because it uses two lean protein sources—egg whites and lean ground turkey. Lean ground turkey is a very underused lean protein source. Many people complain about being bored with chicken all the time, so if that's you, just grab some ground turkey next time you're grocery shopping.

Check out these stats: 4 ounces of 99% fat free lean ground turkey contains 28 grams of protein, 0 grams of carbs and only 1 gram of fat. We're talking pure protein here. The turkey really adds substance to an egg scramble or omelets and is surprisingly filling for how few calories are in this dish per serving.



If you like omelets, the spicy turkey, pepper, mushroom and onion mix makes a great omelet filling.

Just a quick word of warning. Don't be fooled by label claims when you're buying "lean" meat such as ground turkey. When they say 92% lean or 92% fat free, that's really not very lean when you're talking about fat content by weight and not by calories. As a result, the higher fat versions of ground turkey contain substantially more calories. Just because it's ground turkey doesn't mean it's leaner than chicken. Read labels carefully and get the leanest stuff you can—99% if it's available.

If you're on a low carb diet (or just a low carb day on a cyclical low carb diet), this recipe makes a delicious meal without any starchy carbs. If you're on a higher carb or higher calorie diet, this meal is even better with kidney beans. For all the muscle mass gainers out there, be sure to include the kidney beans for your natural complex carbs and double up on the serving... a 740-calorie double serving is enough of a meal to pack some muscular bulk on even the biggest bodybuilder!



Kidney beans are an "A Grade" food and a "Fiber All-Star"

Kidney beans are probably one of the most underused natural starchy carbs that everyone on a fat loss (or muscle growth) program can and should eat more often. With the exception of occasional chili, most people seldom eat kidney beans or other legumes. And that's a shame.

Nutritionists often call kidney beans a "fiber all star"—with 10 grams of fiber per cup, it's easy to see why. But wait, it gets even better. On the subject of health benefits, the high fiber content of kidney beans prevents your blood sugar from spiking too rapidly, so kidney beans are an especially good choice for people who have insulin resistance,

hypoglycemia or diabetes. By the way, did you know that research has shown that people who eat high fiber diets have much lower risk of cardiovascular disease?

Kidney beans are also packed with nutrients including the minerals molybdenum, folate, iron and magnesium, as well as vitamin B1 (thiamin).

Want even more good news? Unlike many canned foods, such as vegetables, which lose nutritional value from the canning process, kidney beans retain their nutrients whether you get them canned and ready to eat, or you purchase them dry and cook them yourself. So if you're busy like most people are these days, it's great to know that you can just open the can and dump it in the pan!

This meal takes a wee bit of prep time to chop up all your vegetables, but believe me, it's worth every minute, and this recipe is super simple to make. Not to mention, the ingredients above make a big batch of three servings, so you can either share or save your leftovers for later.

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A-

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 12 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Crunchy, Cheesy Potato Pancakes (Croquettes)

Potatoes may have gotten a bad rap in the fat-burning diet and nutrition world, but for the most part, this negative reputation is undeserved. There are three reasons that so many people shun potatoes or believe they are unhealthy or fattening. You're about to learn the truth about these "potato myths" and discover the "secret recipe" that tastes so good you might just feel like you're cheating... Get your tastebuds ready for crunchy, crispy, cheesy, "pancakes."



Yield: makes 4 pancakes (serving size: 2 pancakes)

Ingredients

- 12 oz potatoes, skinned
- 1 whole egg
- 2 egg whites
- 3/4 cup non-fat mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup scallions (green onions), finely chopped
- 1/4 cup chives, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon garlic, chopped or minced
- 1 cup Shredded Wheat (cereal), crumbled

Directions

1. Skin your potato with a peeler and then bake or microwave until cooked.
2. While your potato is cooking, finely chop your scallions and chives into small pieces.
3. In a mixing bowl, add the eggs, cheese, scallions and garlic. Add your potato and mash the potato thoroughly with a whisk or mix the ingredients with a fork or mixer. Add your crumbled Shredded Wheat. The mixture should be firm enough to form into patties. Make four small pancakes.

4. Spray a pan with non-stick cooking spray and cook on medium heat for about 5 minutes or until the first side is lightly browned and crispy. Flip and cook the other side until done. Serve hot by themselves or, for a higher protein meal, serve with a side of scrambled or over-easy eggs.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (2 pancakes):

Calories: 356

Protein: 25.6 g

Carbs: 55.8 g

Fat: 3.3 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Potatoes may have gotten a bad rap in the fat-burning diet and nutrition world, but for the most part, this negative reputation is undeserved. There are three primary reasons that so many people shun potatoes or believe they are unhealthy or fattening:



Potatoes have received a bad rap.

First is because of the way most people eat them—as French fries (fried in oil), or smothered in butter, sour cream and bacon bits. French fries served in restaurants and fast food chains the conventional way are usually cooked in oil that adds calories and disease-promoting trans fatty acids. Baked potatoes that are smothered in high calorie toppings don't help much in the fat loss department either.

Second is because the low carb craze brainwashed people into thinking that all carbs were bad. Although the low carb trend has peaked and subsided, unfortunately, to a large degree an unwarranted fear of carbs still remains. Those who are informed however, realize that there are good carbs (the natural, unprocessed, nutrient-dense kind) and there are bad carbs (the man-made, processed, calorie-dense) kind. They also know that carbs are important to fuel high activity levels, they are important at certain times such as during the post-workout window, even on restricted carb diets, and that even low carb diets can be rendered more effective by cycling carbs rather than removing them altogether.

The third reason the potato has gotten a bad rap is because of the interest in the glycemic index (GI). The GI measures how quickly carbohydrate foods are broken down into blood glucose. According to the GI scale, low GI carbs are the good carbs because they are slowly absorbed, and high GI carbs are the bad carbs because they are quickly absorbed. Potatoes are a high GI food. However, it turns out that while the GI has value in certain situations, the GI by itself is not the best way for healthy people to make carb choices for fat loss because many high GI foods are completely natural and nutritious, and the GI becomes less significant when carbs are eaten in mixed meals that also contain protein, fat and fiber.

The truth is that fat loss is foremost a matter of calories, not carbs or GI, and potatoes actually have a lot going for them. Potatoes are an “A-grade” food because they are not processed or refined. A potato is a food you eat in its natural form—the same way it came out of the ground (except for the cooking).

Potatoes are high in vitamin B6 and vitamin C and contain the minerals copper, potassium and manganese. They also contain carotenoids, flavonoids and caffeic acid, and scientists in the UK recently discovered blood pressure-lowering compounds in potatoes called kukoamines.

A single baked potato will also give you 12% of your daily value for fiber. Almost all the fiber is in the skin, so usually it's a good idea to eat the whole potato, skin and all. (Our potato pancake recipe simply tends to come out with better flavor and texture with the potatoes skinned... so be certain you're getting plenty of fiber elsewhere in your diet).

Bottom line: Potatoes are healthful, and potato recipes can certainly be included in a fat-burning nutrition program, provided you keep your calories in check and avoid traditional high calorie toppings.

You could use just about any variety of potato you like for this recipe, although many cooks would suggest that Russet or Yukon Gold potatoes are ideal for making potato pancakes.

According to Burn The Fat Program principles, a “complete meal” is one that contains a lean protein and a natural complex carb, which qualifies these potatoes pancakes as a full meal. The complex carbs come from the potato and wheat, and the lean protein comes primarily from the eggs and the non-fat cheese.

Regular whole milk cheese is usually quite high in fat and only moderate in protein. Cheeses that are made from skim milk are much higher in protein. Many people don’t realize that non-fat dairy products are a significant source of lean, high quality protein. In fact, 3/4 of a cup of non-fat mozzarella or cheddar contains 27 grams of complete protein. Coincidentally, if you look at two of the most popular types of protein powder supplements on the market, they are whey and casein. And guess what? Those are the two types of dairy proteins.

The cheese has a lot to do with why these pancakes taste so good, but lactose-intolerant individuals could easily drop the cheese from this recipe and enjoy them just the same. However, by skipping the cheese, you drop out a lot of the protein. When recipes are primarily carbohydrates, a protein needs to be added on the side to balance out the meal. (A serving of natural carbs plus a serving of lean protein makes a complete meal.) Use any type of cheese you desire, just go for the non-fat variety as a first choice and 1% or 2% low fat as second choice. Cheese enthusiasts could increase the cheese quantity to a cup or so, and that will boost the protein and enhance the flavor even more (but don’t forget to account for the extra calories!).

Speaking of flavor, the garlic is a must. I usually use fresh chopped garlic or the jarred variety that is finely chopped. A tablespoon should do the trick. Scallions, for those who aren’t familiar with them, are the long tubular green onions. Chop them up as finely as possible. Chives are very similar in flavor to scallions and are a natural mix with potatoes. Use one or the other or use both.



There are good carbs (the natural, unprocessed, nutrient-dense kind) and bad carbs (the man-made, processed, calorie-dense) kind.

The Shredded Wheat is a nice alternative to bread crumbs. In traditional potato croquette recipes, the mixture is formed into a ball and then rolled in the crumbs as an exterior “breading.” In this recipe, I suggest stirring your crumbs right into your mixture instead of breading the exterior. The Shredded Wheat (or bread) crumbs makes your mixture more solid so you can more easily turn your mixture into patties; otherwise, your mixture will be the consistency of mashed potatoes and won’t form pancakes as easily. Tip: If you add your crumbs last, that keeps the pancakes crunchier.

By the way, as you may notice while you blend or whisk your potato mixture, this is a pretty darn good recipe for mashed potatoes. You can simply leave out the Shredded Wheat/bread crumbs, and if you need to make it creamier, use a little bit of skim or low fat milk. (You don’t need butter or full fat sour cream to make delicious mashed potatoes.)

Keep in mind, this is a somewhat high carb and high calorie recipe, because potatoes are a starchy carb and the shredded wheat is a grain, and these types of carbs are more calorie dense than fibrous carbs, salad vegetables and green vegetables. If you’re on a very strict fat loss diet like a figure or bodybuilding competition diet, you may need to eat fewer recipes like this one and more fibrous carb and lean protein-based recipes.

However, as long as you’re within your calorie limits for each meal and for the day, this recipe fits into most fat loss programs perfectly. These pancakes make especially great breakfasts and post-workout meals, and they are superb for muscle building programs.

I must warn you... these crunchy, crispy, cheesy pancakes taste so good that you might just feel like you’re cheating. But lo and behold, these sinfully delicious potato

pancakes are approved, healthy Burn The Fat meals! They're also so easy to make, they even get my "Kitchen Dummy" seal of approval!

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B+

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking

8 Ingredients Or Less Super Simple Seal of Approval: Check!

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Quick and Easy Salmon Burgers

Salmon is one of the best sources for healthy omega-3 fatty acids in Mother Nature's kitchen, and these "Quick and Easy Salmon Burgers" are a phenomenal combination of flavor and healthy eating. With an impressive nutritional profile and multiple superfoods in this Burn The Fat recipe, you'll be preparing these tasty burgers often!



Yield: makes 2 burgers (serving size: 1 burger)

Ingredients

1 7.5-oz can salmon

1/2 cup oats

2 egg whites

2 tablespoons dried onion or finely chopped onion

1 tablespoon garlic powder, or finely diced garlic

Ground black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Open your can of salmon, drain the liquid from the can, remove any bones, and add the salmon to a mixing bowl. Add the oatmeal, egg whites and spices. Mash and mix the ingredients together thoroughly, making sure the salmon is broken up into very small chunks. If your mixture is too runny, you can add more oats; if it's too dry, you can add another egg white or some water.
2. Form two burger patties with your hands and compress them tightly. With the amount of ingredients listed above, this makes two medium-sized burger patties, about 4 to 4-1/2 inches wide and 1/2 inch thick.
3. Place your salmon burgers in a skillet coated with non-stick cooking spray. Cook on medium heat until the patties are lightly browned and solid enough for easy flipping. Flip your burgers and then cook the other side. Flip again if necessary and then serve by themselves, with a side of salad or vegetables, or on whole grain bread or a whole grain bun.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (1 burger):

Calories: 249

Protein: 28 g

Carbs: 12.3 g

Fat: 10 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

In another Burn The Fat recipe, we make simple [**"Spicy Tuna Burgers! A New Burn The Fat Recipe With A Kick!" on page 148.**](#) These quick and easy salmon burgers are very similar, but are possibly even healthier, and they get an even higher grade, because this recipe uses oatmeal in the mixture and because salmon is one of the best sources for healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

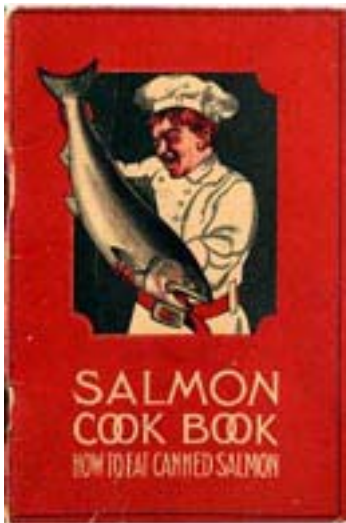


Canned salmon comes in many different varieties and sizes.

These burgers contain 10 grams of fat per burger, so anyone who is still “fat phobic” might shy away at first. But remember, the fat in salmon is the good kind. If you compare brands of canned salmon, you will see that many contain 15–20 grams of fat per can, while others contain only 2–3 grams of fat per can. Although the calories will be a little higher, you definitely want to go for the higher fat variety. Here’s why...

Plants contain a form of omega-3 fatty acids called alpha linolenic acid (ALA). Flax seeds and flaxseed oil are great sources of ALA. However, the ALA needs to convert in the body to EPA and DHA, the kind of omega-3 fat found in fish. There's been some debate about how well this conversion takes place. Even the world's top nutrition experts can't seem to agree, so the take-home lesson is that you can and should consume vegetable or plant sources of omega-3 such as flax—but don't skip the fish, and salmon happens to be one of the best sources of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids.

The list of benefits for these omega-3 fats could go on for pages, but for now, suffice it to say that it's good, healthy stuff! Salmon has also been recommended as one of the safest fish to eat because tests have revealed that salmon is one of the species of fish unlikely to be contaminated with mercury.



While doing research for this recipe, I looked at more than half a dozen different traditional ways to make salmon burgers.

While doing research for this recipe, I looked at more than half a dozen different traditional ways to make salmon burgers. I saw that many of them used bread crumbs or crackers, which we suggested in a previous recipe for tuna burgers (see [**"Spicy Tuna Burgers! A New Burn The Fat Recipe With A Kick!" on page 148**](#)). However, I now realize (and I hope you do too), that you can take almost any traditional recipe and give it a higher grade and better nutritional value by making some simple substitutions. I thought, "Why not substitute the crackers or bread crumbs with oatmeal, because oatmeal is an A-grade food?" Well, sure enough, using oatmeal, the burgers turned out delicious!

This recipe is one of the simplest ways to make salmon burgers. You can experiment with more complex recipes using additional or different ingredients if you like. Other

salmon burger recipes call for finely chopped or diced celery or red pepper. Dill weed, parsley, mustard, lemon juice, hot sauce or Tabasco sauce are also often listed as variations to enhance flavor or provide a different taste. (I've also seen hollandaise sauce, vegetable oil or mayonnaise listed, although I'd suggest the former for a healthier and less calorie dense burger).

Canned salmon comes in a variety of different sizes. I've seen 3.75-oz, 5.5-oz, 6-oz, 7.5-oz and big 15-oz cans. This recipe was based on the 7.5-oz can of Bumble Bee Canned Pink Salmon, because this provided a perfect quantity for two burgers, and this brand is widely available in regular grocery stores (315 cal, 42 g protein, 0 g carb, 17.5 g fat). Calories and nutrient content can vary slightly from one brand to the next. You can find numerous other brands online as well as in your local grocery store or health food store.



For a higher-carb version of this recipe, add a whole wheat bun.

Taste may also vary depending on the fat content and type of salmon: pink, red, Chinook (King), Coho, or sockeye. I tried numerous brands of canned salmon and some were very rich while others tasted almost like tuna. Some brands contain lots of skin and bones while others do not. It's optional whether you remove bones in canned salmon, because if they are very soft, they may be completely edible and may actually provide a great source of calcium. In a burger recipe like this, after it's all mashed together, you tend not to even notice. (There are exceptions, as I found one brand that had far more bones than the others.) Also note that you can find salmon canned with or without salt. Be sure to read the labels!

Since 2004, labeling law requires canned salmon to indicate whether it is wild or farmed. Generally, wild Alaskan salmon is a top choice. Most people don't realize this, but "Atlantic" salmon is usually farmed, not wild. The name "Atlantic" refers to the fish species, not to its origin.

Served alone, each of these salmon burgers has only 249 calories. This makes a large snack or small meal. For a complete meal, try a side vegetable or salad, or on higher calorie/higher carb menus, use a 100% whole grain bun or 100% whole wheat bread for a salmon burger sandwich. (These are delicious on toasted whole grain bread, and also portable, for take-it-with you meals!)

By the way, salmon isn't the only superfood in this recipe. Onions and garlic both have healthful properties. Numerous studies have shown that the regular consumption of onions or garlic has been linked to a reduced risk for several types of cancers. Scientists say that the potential cancer protection may be due, at least in part, to the bioactive sulfur compounds that give garlic and onions their strong taste.

Guess what else? Simple salmon burgers get a Burn The Fat grade of A+! I don't give very many A+ grades, but salmon is an A+ superfood, and oatmeal is one of the most healthful types of starchy carbs you can include on any fat-burning or muscle-building program.

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A+

Portable Food: Yes (as a sandwich)

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 10 minutes prep, 8 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Protein-Packed Authentic Healthy Greek Burgers!

Who doesn't love a good hamburger? Well, vegetarians of course, but even vegetarians eat veggie burgers! This column, however, is all about the real beef, done the lean and healthy way. Burgers may be an "All American meal," but today you're about to learn how to make the authentic Greek burger. (My Greek co-author and co-chef has assured me of this!) Enjoy this muscle-building meal that requires minimal preparation and cooking!



Yield: makes 4 burgers (serving size: 2 burgers)

Ingredients

- 1 pound 95% fat free ground beef
- Large tomato slice (1 slice per burger)
- 2 oz low fat feta cheese, cut in 4 thin slices (1 slice per burger)
- 1 whole omega-3 egg
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 1 tablespoon onion, finely chopped (optional)
- Pinch of ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons whole wheat bread crumbs
- 4 whole wheat hamburger buns (optional)

Directions

1. Place the ground beef, egg, olive oil, oregano, onions, breadcrumbs and pepper into a large mixing bowl.
2. Mix all the ingredients together before forming it into four medium-sized burger patties. It's important to use your hands in order to mix all the ingredients thoroughly enough.

3. Place your patties on your favorite grill (the George Foreman Grill is highly recommended). Cook on medium for approximately 8 minutes or as long as needed, based on how well done you like your burgers.
4. Open up the bun and place your feta cheese slice and tomato slice on your burger. Add ketchup if you like. On lower carb diets, serve your burgers without the bun.

Nutrition Info

Per serving, 1 burger with bun:

Calories: 387

Protein: 33.1 g

Carbs: 32.9 g

Fat: 11.2 g

Per serving, 1 burger without bun:

Calories: 237

Protein: 27.1 g

Carbs: 4.9 g

Fat: 9.2 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Who doesn't love a good hamburger? Well, vegetarians of course, but even vegetarians eat veggie burgers! This recipe, however, is all about the real beef, done the lean and healthy way. Burgers may be an "All American meal," but today you're about to learn how to make the authentic Greek burger. (My Greek co-author and co-chef has assured me of this!)

The main ingredient of course, is the beef! Choosing your beef is your first task. First of all, it's perfectly okay to eat red meat on a fat loss program, and most certainly on a muscle growth program as well. One of the biggest concerns most people have about beef is the fat content, particularly the saturated fat. According to conventional nutritional wisdom, saturated fat is a culprit behind the rise in cholesterol that in turn contributes to heart disease.

Recent research however, has suggested that the link between saturated fat, cholesterol and heart disease is not as simple as it was once believed. The impact of

saturated fat on coronary health depends on numerous factors, including the amount of healthy omega-3 fats in the rest of the diet, the ratio of omega-3 to omega-6, the amount of exercise you're getting, genetics and many others.

So while it still isn't a good idea to eat a high fat or high saturated fat diet, most people needn't fear including a small amount of saturated fat. The key is to keep saturated fats to a small amount. Most experts suggest keeping your saturated fat intake to 1/3 of your total fat intake and your total fat intake to 20–30% of total calories.

To keep the fat and calories in check, use the leanest ground beef you can find. Lean protein is one of the keys for fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition, and although some fat, even saturated fat, is necessary for various bodily functions, you should choose protein sources that are mostly protein and not mostly fat.

Regular, full fat—80% “lean”—ground beef contains DOUBLE the calories and TRIPLE the fat as 95% lean beef. 80% lean beef has about 23 grams of fat and nearly 300 calories per 4-oz serving and only 19.5 grams of protein. It has more fat calories than protein calories. Even 85% “lean” ground beef is not as lean as it may sound when you measure fat by percentage of calories and not weight. When you go with the higher fat beef, you are getting a lot more calories per unit of volume.

Shop around for the leanest ground beef you can find. The 95%–96% lean variety of beef is sometimes difficult to find in your local grocery store, but if you can't find it locally there are numerous retailers online that will send you the lean stuff frozen by the pound or by the patty. You may also want to consider grass-fed beef, which gives you a healthier and more favorable nutrient content and omega-6 to omega-3 fat ratio.

Beef, especially the very lean variety, is high in protein, but it also contains lots of other stuff that's a boon to muscle growth, including B vitamins, iron, creatine, CLA, zinc and selenium, just to name a few. No wonder it's so popular with bodybuilders.

I recommend using an omega-3 egg. It never hurts to boost the good fat intake in your diet, so whenever a Burn The Fat recipe calls for a whole egg, go for the EFA-rich variety. Speaking of healthy fats, be sure to remember your tablespoon of olive oil. It adds flavor and texture to your burgers, not to mention, it's not an “Authentic” Greek burger without it.

For spices, be generous with the oregano—it can really add a nice flavor to your burgers. Add a pinch of ground pepper, and experiment with chopped onion too, if you like.

Using whole wheat bread crumbs adds a little more texture to the burger and also adds some additional calories and carbs. An alternative to ready-made bread crumbs is to simply toast a slice of whole wheat bread and crumble it yourself.

You could use any type of non-fat or lowfat cheese for this burger, but my co-author Kostas says, “It is NOT a genuine ‘Greek burger’ without the feta!” Like the ground beef, when it comes to cheese, go with the low fat variety. Athenos brand makes a low fat feta, and Alpine Lace makes one that is even leaner. Non-fat and low fat cheeses, are a substantial source of complete protein, and they go a long way in adding flavor to your meals and recipes like these burgers.



Kostas says, “It is NOT a genuine ‘Greek burger’ without the feta!”

Don’t forget your tomato. Get the biggest, ripest tomato you can and cut a nice thick slice. Tomatoes are an A+ power food! They are very low in calories while high in lycopene, lutein, vitamin C, vitamin A, B vitamins, chromium and potassium. The carotenoid lycopene in particular has been a hot item because of its amazing health benefits. This phytonutrient has been researched for its antioxidant, heart protection and cancer-preventing properties.

You can cook your burgers on the grill or in a grill pan and simply flip them over after the first side is cooked, but one of the best ways to cook these is on a George Foreman Grill (aka the “Lean, Mean, Grilling Machine”).

If you use hamburger buns, shop around and read labels! Whole wheat hamburger buns are sometimes not available in regular grocery stores—you may have to shop in a health food store to find them. White bread products are not a good choice—go for the whole grain. Read the labels carefully. After comparing brands, I saw some very sneaky label tricks. One brand of “100% whole wheat” burger rolls said “0 grams trans fats” right on the label. But after looking at the ingredients list, guess what was in there? Partially hydrogenated soybean oil”

Because trans fats pose such a health threat, the FDA now requires that trans fat be listed on nutrition labels, but there's a loophole. If there is less than .5 grams of trans fat per serving, food manufacturers can list 0 g on their label. The FDA says that this is a low enough amount to pose little health threat, but many experts say that there is NO safe level of trans fats!

When you select whole wheat products, always read the ingredients list on the label. The first ingredient should be 100% whole wheat. Hamburger buns that are truly 100% whole grain are actually somewhat hard to find. According to the FDA, 100% whole grain means that the food "contains the intact, ground, cracked or flaked grain, whose principal anatomical components—the starchy endosperm, germ and bran are all present in the same relative proportions as they exist in the intact grain."

"Whole wheat" or "enriched wheat" is not the same. The dead giveaway is the texture. True 100% whole wheat has a much more chunky texture and you can see seeds and larger grain particles. Whole wheat bread that is not made from 100% whole wheat has a much finer and softer texture. This is because the grain has been milled, which removes the bran and the germ, and gives it that fine, soft texture and increases shelf life (but it removes vitamins, minerals and fiber!).

So, if it's 100% whole wheat, it's a good choice (we give it a "B" grade). If it's wheat, but not 100% whole wheat it drops to a "C" grade. Shop and choose carefully! (Note: most of the brands we looked at had between 130–200 calories. The one used in this recipe is based on 150 calories).

Last but not least, if you're on a reduced carb program, you can simply eat your burgers without the bun... trust us, they're still darn good!

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 10 minutes prep, 8 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Israeli Tuna Salad: A Delicious Lean Protein and Fibrous Carb Combo!

This is a traditional Israeli salad (a lettuce-free salad), with the simple addition of tuna fish, which turns it into a complete muscle-building and fat-burning meal. It's the tuna (lean protein) that makes this a complete meal.



Many salad recipes come without protein. To make a greens- or vegetable-based salad into a complete Burn The Fat meal, it is important to add lean protein.

Tuna, chicken, turkey, shrimp or even non-fat or low fat cheese are great ways to add lean protein to salads. In this case, the tuna is a natural fit!

Yield: makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 2 6-oz cans of tuna
- 3 medium cucumbers
- 2 5-oz (medium) tomatoes, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 tablespoons (1/4 cup) white wine vinegar
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 scallions (green onions) (optional)
- Dash of salt to taste
- Sprinkle of pepper taste

For convenience, increase the ingredients proportionately to prepare large batches in advance and store in the refrigerator until ready for use.

Directions

1. Chop up your vegetables into small 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch cubes.
2. Place all your veggies in a large bowl or container and then add the white wine vinegar, lemon juice and olive oil.
3. Add parsley, a dash of salt and a light sprinkle of pepper to suit your taste. Keep your salad separate until you are ready to eat, then add your tuna. Serve chilled or at room temperature. Makes two servings.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 355

Protein: 42.7 g

Carbs: 26.4 g

Fat: 10.7 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

This is a traditional Israeli salad (a lettuce-free salad), with the simple addition of tuna fish, which turns it into a complete muscle-building and fat-burning meal. It's the tuna (lean protein) that makes this a complete meal. Many salad recipes come without protein. To make a greens or vegetable-based salad into a complete Burn The Fat meal, it is important to add lean protein. Tuna, chicken, turkey, shrimp or even non-fat or low fat cheese are great ways to add lean protein to salads. In this case, the tuna is a natural fit!



Fresh cucumbers add crunch to your salad!

This salad does not contain any starchy carbs, so if you are on a higher calorie program or a muscle gaining program, you will need to add your starchy carbs separately (for example, baked potato, etc.), or else the calories in this dish will be too low.

Alternately, you can serve this salad as a side dish without the tuna, along with your main course (for example, chicken, vegetable and rice as a main course with Israeli salad—sans tuna—as side dish or appetizer).

Connoisseurs say that the secret to a really good Israeli salad is very fresh, crisp and finely chopped vegetables. This recipe is extremely easy to prepare, especially because it is a raw salad that requires no cooking, but do take your time chopping your vegetables into very small, fine cubes, about 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch in size.



Fresh tomatoes add some nice flavor to the salad as well!

Use the freshest, crispest vegetables possible. All of the salad vegetables used in this recipe are extremely low in calories. An average medium cucumber is usually around 8 ounces, about 8 or so inches in length, and contains only about 8 grams of carbs and only 35–40 calories. An average tomato is about 5 ounces and contains only 35 calories and about 7 grams of carbs. Green peppers also measure in with only about 7 grams of carbs and about 30 calories each. Scallions (small green onions) are optional, but make a nice addition to the vegetable mix. Use fresh parsley for best results.



White wine vinegar adds a fantastic flavor to the salad!

White wine vinegar is usually not included in the traditional Israel salad recipes you'd find in most cookbooks, but it was recommended to me by a female bodybuilder friend who often used white wine vinegar and balsamic vinegar to, in her words, "make her contest diet tolerable." You will find that it adds a fantastic flavor, as the veggies soak in the vinegar, olive oil and lemon juice mix. Olive oil could be removed if you really wanted to cut the calorie count down, but the olive oil adds flavor and is the healthy type of fat, so there's no need to remove it unless you really want to budget calories.

An interesting fact you should know about is that some lemon juice products list the calories on the label as 0. This reveals one of the many loopholes in the government labeling laws that allow food manufacturers to say a food is calorie-free if there are fewer than 5 calories per serving. Well, there are 4 calories per teaspoon of lemon juice. Insignificant, yes, but zero, no! All the food companies have to do is reduce their serving sizes. For example, if they make the serving size of lemon juice 1 teaspoon they can say zero calories, rather than make the serving size 1 tablespoon and say 12 calories. Sneaky, sneaky, sneaky! (Moral: read labels carefully and check serving sizes!)

The good news is, Israeli tuna salad is so low in calorie density, that you can eat a small mountain of this stuff without going over your daily or per-meal limits. You will be surprised how filling it is. That's the great thing about fibrous carbs and salad vegetables. Remember, fibrous carbs plus lean protein meals are the most effective combination for maximum fat burning!

Between the fact that this salad is so low in calories and it's also low in carbs (with no starchy carbs or grains whatsoever), Israeli salad makes a perfect meal for strict (even low carb) fat loss programs, as well as for evening meals or snacks on programs that use carb tapering, (when no concentrated starches, grains or carbs are eaten late in the day). Hint: if you get nighttime munchies, keep a big bowl of this salad in your fridge!

This recipe gets an A grade. If you get bored with regular lettuce-based salads or flavorless foods, then you have to give this one a try. It's crunchy, healthy, tasty and will probably end up being a regular addition to your weekly menus!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 10 minutes prep, 0 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Healthy Greek Omelets: A High-Protein, Nutrient-Dense, Flavor-Packed Power Meal!

They say that “breakfast does a body good,” and in this Burn The Fat recipe, you will learn exactly how to create a healthy Greek omelet from scratch—even if you’re a complete “kitchen dummy.” Give yourself 10 minutes in the morning and start your day off right with this tasty meal.

Yield: makes 1 omelet



Ingredients

- 4 egg whites
- 1 whole egg (preferably omega-3)
- 1 cup spinach, chopped
- 8 olives, pitted and slivered
- 1/4 cup low fat feta cheese

Directions

1. Prepare your omelet filling first by placing the sliced olives, feta cheese and spinach in a bowl or on a plate next to your cooking area. Using a fork, blend your eggs in a mixing bowl.
2. Spray your pan with non-stick cooking spray (such as PAM) and then preheat your pan on medium heat. Pour your eggs into the pan (they should sizzle a bit when they hit the hot pan). Cook the eggs on medium heat until the eggs are almost set, but still just slightly liquid in the middle.
3. Add your cheese and the rest of your fillings onto one side of the omelet. Fold the omelet over top of your fillings and press down lightly with your spatula. Allow to cook for one or two more minutes, flip and cook other side again another minute or two, if necessary, and then serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 285

Protein: 29 g

Carbs: 13.2 g

Fat: 14.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



Some black olives will add taste to your omelet!

Traditional omelets are often made with whole eggs, ham and regular cheese. However, every one of those ingredients is high in fat and therefore high in calories. There are some simple ways to make all your omelets much healthier and lower in calories, without sacrificing flavor.

The Greek omelet is an absolutely delicious dish that also happens to be a great type of recipe for fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition. Why? Because Greek omelets are healthy, loaded with power nutrients, and super easy to make, (only four or five ingredients!).

One of the keys to great omelets is to start with a really good non-stick pan. Ideally it will be a pan with a 6–8 inch bottom diameter and curved 2-inch sides. Then, to be sure your omelet does not stick at all, you should also use a non-stick cooking spray such as PAM. There is no reason not to coat your pan with olive oil; however, that will add even more calories. If you check the ingredients lists, you'll see that non-stick cooking sprays are also pure oil (they are NOT calorie-free!), but being able to spray it on in a mist makes for major calorie savings. Although some people use butter, butter adds unnecessary calories and is neutral at best in terms of nutrition, while olive oil has substantial nutritional value.

The size of your omelet is also an important factor. Use too many eggs and they become harder to manage and fold over nicely. The traditional omelet calls for no

more than 3 whole eggs (sometimes even just 2). When you are cooking healthy low calorie omelets, you can get some major calorie savings by using only one whole egg and the rest egg whites.



One omega-3 egg and some egg whites makes a great omelet!

When you discard some of the yolks, that means you can use more whites to make up for it, so this recipe calls for 4 egg whites and 1 whole egg. If you are cooking for more than one person, it is easier to cook two omelets separately (one after the other) rather than double up on ingredients.

Rather than throw out all the egg yolks, consider using one egg yolk and make it an omega-3 egg. Most people today are deficient in the healthy omega-3 fats and are consuming too many omega-6 fats relative to omega-3. One large omega-3 egg contains 70 calories and 4.5 grams of fat, including 150 mg of omega-3.

Using too many whole eggs adds a lot of calories into your diet. Discarding most of the yolks and using mostly egg whites removes a lot of calories from your diet. When you are on a “calorie budget” as you are on any fat burning program, it pays to save on calories, and this is one easy way to do it.

Fortunately, since almost all the fat is in the yolk, but the protein is split evenly between the white and the yolk, egg whites are a superb high protein food and a perfect choice for your breakfasts. If you do not like to crack open eggs and separate yolks from whites, then you can simply use products such as Egg Beaters, or egg whites by the carton.

Cheese is what gives flavor and character to nearly every omelet. In fact, eggs and cheese by themselves is a simple and tasty way to make an omelet. Feta, of course, is the classic Greek white cheese and it has a very nice salty and tangy flavor.

Keep in mind that cheese is not a low calorie food. Regular cheeses are high in fat and dietary fat is very calorie dense, with 9 calories per gram. When you are budgeting your calories for fat-burning programs, I suggest taking the calorie savings and using reduced fat and reduced calorie cheeses. Reduced fat feta cheese is available at most supermarkets, and will save you about 1/3 in calories.

For example, Athenos brand reduced fat feta cheese contains 60 calories per ounce with 4 grams of fat. Alpine Lace makes an even lower calorie and lower fat feta cheese with only 50 calories and 3 grams of fat per ounce. Regular feta cheese contains 80–90 calories per ounce with 6–7 grams of fat. (Note: The reduced fat crumbled feta used in this recipe contains 70 calories and 4.5 grams of fat in 1/2 cup.)

Spinach is a “power food” packed with all kinds of vital micronutrients and phytochemicals.



In a perfect world, you would have a vegetable or dark leafy green at every single meal of the day. Typically, though, most people don't think of eating veggies at breakfast, at least not as often as fruit and whole grains or cereals. However, any time you make eggs, you can always add veggies to them to boost nutritional value.

Spinach is quite simply, a nutritional powerhouse. It contains a wide variety of nutrients and phytonutrients and it is very low in calories. It contains lutein, zeaxanthin, beta-carotene, co-enzyme Q-10, plant-derived omega-3 fatty acids, plus numerous vitamins and minerals.

Spinach also has more research-backed health benefits than almost any other food. A number of studies demonstrate an inverse relationship between spinach and cardiovascular disease, cancer, age-related macular degeneration and cataracts. It's one thing to pick foods that can help you get lean, but if you can eat foods that get you lean and healthy at the same time—and spinach is one of them—then that's what you should do. So throw some spinach in your omelets!

An omelet of this size with these ingredients clocks in with less than 300 calories and is very low in carbs (13 grams). There are 14 grams of fat in this dish, which may seem high at first, except when you realize that the omega egg and olives make them mostly very healthy fats. Unless you're on a very carb-restricted or higher calorie program, try serving this with fruit or whole grain toast or a bowl of oatmeal on the side.

Last but not least, if you are the type of person who lacks the “omelet-flipping gene” and yours just fall apart every time, don’t despair. You can always fall back on “Greek scrambled eggs!” Just throw all these ingredients together in your pan and mix!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A-

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Spicy Tuna Burgers! A New Burn The Fat Recipe With A Kick!

A note from Kyle Battis, Inner Circle Manager: I just got this recipe from Tom, and it was perfect timing because I was ready for my second lunch. (I'm like a Hobbit when it comes to meals.) I followed the directions in the recipe and 10 minutes later I had a tasty stack of Spicy Tuna Burgers ready to be devoured. WOW! These things were tasty, and from the nutritional profile below, they look really healthy too. If you are looking for a tasty meal, set aside 10 minutes and cook up a batch of these Spicy Tuna Burgers. Enjoy!



Yield: makes 4 burgers (serving size: 2 burgers)

Ingredients

- 2 cans water-packed tuna
- 1 cup oatmeal (old fashioned oats)
- 2 tablespoons of non-fat or light mayo (such as smart balance)
- 4 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- Black pepper (to taste)

Directions

1. Open your two cans of tuna and thoroughly drain the liquid from the cans. Put the tuna into a mixing bowl. Add the oatmeal, nonfat mayonnaise, Worcestershire sauce and black pepper.
2. Mash and mix the ingredients together thoroughly, making sure the tuna is broken up into very small chunks. Form burger patties with your hands and compress them tightly. With this amount of ingredients, you can make 2, 3 or 4 patties, but larger patties cook more slowly and may fall apart while flipping, so 4 smaller patties is ideal.
3. Place your tuna burger patties into a skillet coated with non-stick cooking spray. Cook on medium heat until your burgers are lightly browned and solid enough for

easy flipping. Flip your burgers and then cook the other side. Flip again if necessary and then serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 305

Protein: 42 g

Carbs: 35 g

Fat: 10.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips

Here is yet another very simple tuna burger recipe—one that has some character and a nice spicy flavor. Tuna burgers are a favorite on fat-burning and muscle-building nutrition programs and not just because they are high in protein. Another benefit of burgers like these is that they are portable foods and they are very quick and easy to make. Sure, they're a bit messy, but they require literally no cooking skill to prepare!



These are high in protein and only moderate in carbs—perfect for fat loss programs, but for higher carb and higher calorie nutrition programs, you can eat your spicy tuna burgers as a sandwich—just slap your burger inside two slices of whole wheat bread or a whole wheat pita. Incidentally, this mixture can also work in sandwiches as a cold spread (uncooked).

When making your patties, mix the ingredients very thoroughly and be sure the tuna is broken up into small flakes. If there are large chunks of tuna in your mixture, your burgers tend to fall apart more easily when you flip them. Compressing the patty very tightly also helps, as does pressing down the patty with a spatula once it is in the frying pan.

These spicy tuna burgers get a respectable grade (“B-”) because the primary ingredients are oatmeal and tuna fish. The reason for not getting the perfect Burn The Fat grade “A” is because this recipe uses mayonnaise and Worcestershire sauce. Both contain corn syrup.



If you're going to use mayo, use this better "bad" choice.

SmBal Omega Mayo (Quart or Pint Jars)

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 TBSP (15g)	
Servings Per Container 32 or 64	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 50	Calories from Fat 40
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	8%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturate Fat 1.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2.5g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 125mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 2g	1%
Protein 0g	
Vitamin E 10%	
Not a significant source of Vitamin A, Vitamin C, calcium, iron, dietary fiber and sugar.	
*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.	

INGREDIENTS: Water, natural vegetable oil blend (canola, soy, flaxseed, olive), vinegar, eggs, corn starch-modified, sugar, contains less than 2% of natural plant sterols, salt, lemon juice, natural flavor, xanthan gum, (potassium sorbate, calcium disodium EDTA, sodium benzoate and TBHQ) to protect freshness, beta carotene and oleoresin paprika color, Vitamin E (d α -tocopheryl acetate).

Omega-3 500mg/svg.; Omega-6 1200mg/svg.
Omega-6 to Omega-3 ratio 2:4

Food manufacturers are starting to make healthier food choices!

Mayonnaise, used in small quantities within your calorie limits, is perfectly okay on baseline nutrition programs; however, you would be better off with a canola mayo or a reduced calorie variety of mayo. Regular mayo is calorie dense (as are all oil- and fat-based products) and is made with soybean oil. Soybean oil does contain some omega-3 fatty acids, but it has an omega-6 to omega-3 ratio of 12 to 1, which, according to dietary fat experts such as Artemis Simopoulos, is unacceptably high. Canola mayo has a better omega-6 to omega-3 ratio.

There has been a trend lately with mainstream food products (which can even be found at conventional grocery stores), to add healthy fats into the ingredients. Many of these new products make for better choices, although sometimes only small “token” amounts of good fats are added (such as flaxseed oil or flax seeds). This is mainly for marketing to the health-conscious crowd or for nutritional “political correctness.”

Mayonnaise is one such example. The Smart Balance brand makes an “Omega Plus” mayonnaise, which is made with canola, olive, soybean and even some flaxseed oil. It also contains fewer calories than conventional mayo, although it does contain some sugar. Light varieties of mayo can be very low in calories, depending on the brand, but all of them contain corn syrup or sugar.

Faced with the prospect of full-fat, very high calorie mayo, you are best to take the calorie savings and go with the very light mayo, or use small amounts of the canola mayo. Light canola mayo (including brands such as Smart Balance) is probably one of the better choices because you get the calorie savings and a better ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acids.

Worcestershire sauce is made from vinegar, molasses, high fructose corn syrup, tamarind concentrate and various spices. Foods and condiments that contain high fructose corn syrup in the first few ingredients are not “A” grade foods. It’s difficult to completely eliminate corn syrup because it’s hidden in so many foods, from ketchup to salad dressings. Consumed in very small amounts, it is unlikely to slow your progress much (although I would not recommend consuming anything with any corn syrup if you’re on a strict fat loss diet, if you’re going into physique competition, or if your fat loss has been slow).

I found it very interesting that in more than one popular diet book, Worcestershire sauce, as well as several other “low calorie” condiments and sauces, were listed as “free” or “unlimited” foods (meaning, you can use these foods in unlimited quantities and “not worry about the calories”). I was laughing my butt off when I saw that because this is one reason that many people fail to reduce their bodyweight—they refuse to count calories and or fail to account for calories that may appear to be inconsequential. Trust me, they all add up in the end, and it is a research-proven fact that most people forget to count things and underestimate their calorie intake.



Add a little spicy kick to your tuna burgers with this ingredient!

I can see how a diet book author might make the mistake of authorizing unlimited amounts of low calorie foods, but on closer inspection, you can see that food manufacturers play all kinds of sneaky tricks, some of which involve labeling law loopholes and others that simply involve reducing the serving sizes so that there are often more calories than you realize.

In the case of Worcestershire sauce, when you look at the label, you see 5 calories per serving and your first impression tends to be, "That's hardly anything—I can have this and my body won't even notice it." If you look at the serving size, however, you will see that it is only one teaspoon. (Do you know how small a teaspoon is?) Our tuna burger recipe calls for 4 tablespoons, so that's 12 teaspoons or 60 calories. That is still not a lot of calories, but it's not insignificant either. If you decided that this was a "free" food and you did the same thing with several other condiments like ketchup, steak sauce, salsa and so on, along with forgetting to add up the milk in your coffee and snacks that are not counted, can you see how you could end up with several hundred calories not accounted for, which could explain an "unexplainable" progress plateau?

So, yes, you must count the calories in the sauces and condiments you use, and pay attention to the serving sizes. Although you are foregoing a Burn The Fat "A" grade, using things like light mayo and Worcestershire in small amounts is perfectly acceptable on a baseline nutrition program and it allows you to enjoy a much wider variety of recipes, which in turn makes following your nutrition program a lot more enjoyable.

On competition diets, such as those for bodybuilding, fitness or figure, the food selections should be made much stricter, and all foods containing corn syrup (Worcestershire sauce, ketchup, steak sauce, light mayonnaise, etc.), are best eliminated completely for maximum results. Remember, ambitious goals require stricter diets. For general fitness and fat reduction goals, simply keep track of your calories, maintain your calorie deficit, watch your serving sizes and enjoy recipes like this one!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B-

Portable Food: Yes

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Lazy Person's Chinese "Stir-Fry"

Chinese food can be very healthy if you choose wisely (think veggies, rice and chicken breast!). It can also be a complete fat-storing disaster if you choose poorly (think restaurant-style Kung pao chicken and other Chinese fried stuff). Making your own Chinese at home is a great alternative, and many people really enjoy wok cooking. However, that takes time and work. The words "Chinese" and "take-out" are so synonymous they are almost one in the same. Why? Because almost everyone is busy, and most people are lazy, at least when it comes to cooking (and especially when it comes to 5-6-meal-per-day fat loss or muscle-building programs). So what's a busy lazy person to do? Here comes the "Lazy Person's Chinese Stir-Fry" to the rescue.



Yield: Makes a batch of four servings for fat loss programs.

Ingredients

1-1/2 cups brown basmati rice or long-grain brown rice (measured dry)

12 oz chicken breast

16-oz bag of Chinese vegetable blend (frozen)

4 teaspoons Bragg Liquid Aminos (soy sauce alternative seasoning)

Directions

1. Begin by preparing your rice. You can do it the traditional way by boiling water in a pot on the stove, adding your rice, stirring, then reducing the heat to simmer and cooking for approximately 40-50 minutes, or as per the instructions on package. Even better, a rice cooker is a great convenience and time saver.
2. For your veggies, you can use fresh or steamed, but for the lazy person's stir fry, throwing frozen Chinese veggies in the microwave works just fine.
3. Cook your chicken breasts on an open-faced grill pan (such as a Circulon pan), coated with non-stick cooking spray, or you can use a George Foreman Grill (another must-have "Burn The Fat" kitchen appliance).



4. If you use a grill pan, you can chop up your chicken into small pieces for faster cooking. When the rice, chicken and veggies are cooked, simply add some Bragg Liquid Aminos (available online or at most health food stores), mix and serve.

Nutrition Info

Per serving:

Calories: 441 cal

Protein: 33.4 g

Carbs: 63 g

Fat: 6.8 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



It's a good thing that carbo-phobia has finally started dying down because rice—if you pick the right kind—is a great addition to a fat burning nutrition program and is one of your best starchy carb sources. Your choice of rice definitely makes a difference. First, choose brown rice over white rice. White rice has been stripped of many of its vitamins, minerals and some of its protein. The sticky white rice is a favorite in Chinese restaurants, but is nutritionally lacking compared to brown rice and it is absorbed more quickly, causing a greater blood sugar and insulin spike.

Minute Rice and “instant rice” may be faster and more convenient, but they are the lowest of all in nutrient content. Your best bet is to choose long-grain, slow-cooked brown rice and simply use a rice cooker to prepare large batches for later use. By the way, rice absorbs the water and fluffs up when it's cooked, so if you measure 1-1/2 cups dry rice prior to cooking, it will be at least 2 cups cooked. Be sure to remember this when you add up those calories!

If you haven't tried brown basmati rice, you will love it. Originating from India's basmati seed (yeah, I know, it's not “Chinese,” but never mind, it's great stuff), this is a nutritious long-grain brown rice. As you cook Basmati rice, your kitchen will fill with a wonderful popcorn aroma, and this is one of the most flavorful of



all rices. This makes it ideal for simple dishes without requiring a lot of spices or ingredients because the plain rice alone tastes so good.

By the way, nothing beats a rice cooker! Once you get spoiled by using this fantastic kitchen appliance, you will wonder how you ever lived without one. Not only does a rice cooker cook long-grain rice in almost half the time, you can also cook very large batches; all you have to do is put in the measured rice, add water and push a button. Cooking your food in quantity is one of the keys to staying on your nutrition program consistently.



Just about any types of veggies go great with rice. The Chinese blends usually contain green beans, broccoli, carrots, red peppers, onions, mushrooms, snow pea pods, water chestnuts and bamboo shoots or similar combinations. A typical oriental vegetable blend will have about 35 calories per cup (approx 3 oz). Calorie contents may vary based on brand and

blend (I like the ones with the little Thai baby corns myself; always reminds me of that movie BIG, with Tom Hanks... but I digress....)

Check the labels if you wish to be precise with your calorie intake, but when it comes to veggies, it's hard to go overboard. Most people don't eat enough veggies, so I say, load up! It's the starchy carb intake you want to keep in check because rice is fairly calorie dense and it's easy to "over-dose." Vegetable blends are fantastic because each different type of vegetable contains a variety of nutrients and phytochemicals. When it comes to fat loss and nutritional value, you simply cannot beat veggies.

For seasoning, try Bragg Liquid Aminos as an alternative to soy sauce. The name Liquid Aminos is kind of deceiving as this is not a protein supplement, (although it makes us weight-training folks feel better about using it!). This is actually a natural soy sauce alternative and all-purpose seasoning that contains no artificial ingredients (no chemicals, no preservatives, etc.).

Keep in mind that even low sodium soy sauces and most seasonings are very high in sodium, and they are simply "reduced" sodium compared to regular soy sauce. Many people ask about sodium on fat loss programs. Since there are no calories in sodium, it will not affect your body composition, although high sodium intake may cause water retention and a puffy appearance. Sodium is an important and necessary element in the human body, but keep in mind that a small percentage of people are highly "salt sensitive," and for some hypertensives, high sodium can be a health risk. The average

American consumes 4500 mg of sodium per day, and the recommended daily level for adults is only 2400 mg per day.

So there you have it! Brown rice, veggies and chicken is a great Burn The Fat meal that you can enjoy often, and this dish is about as super simple and “lazy-person friendly” as it can get! (for those who are “non-lazy,” we’ll try some more advanced wok recipes in future Burn The Fat recipes!)

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: A

Portable Food: No

Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy!

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 25 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

Super Simple Tuna Burgers!

Tuna fish has been a staple in the diets of bodybuilders and people interested in achieving a lean and healthy physique. If you have arrived at the point where eating tuna straight out of the can is becoming a little boring, yet you are not a gourmet chef, then this recipe is the one you have been looking for! Let Chef Venuto show you his super simple recipe for turning a can of tuna into a tasty meal!



Yield: makes 2 burgers

Ingredients

- 1 can solid white albacore tuna
- 2 egg whites, large
- 8 low fat whole wheat crackers
- Mrs. Dash seasoning (to taste)

Directions

1. Open your can of tuna and thoroughly drain the liquid from the can. Put the tuna in a mixing bowl and chop the tuna into the smallest pieces possible.
2. Crumble the crackers into small crumbs and add them to the tuna. Add two egg whites. Add Mrs. Dash seasoning to suit your taste.
3. Stir the four ingredients until they are mixed and semi-solid so you can form them into a patty.
4. If your mixture is too liquid, you can add more crackers. Form burger patties with your hands and compress them tightly. Place tuna patties in a fry pan coated with non-stick cooking spray such as PAM.
5. Cook on medium heat until the burger is lightly browned and solid enough for easy flipping. Flip your burgers and then cook the other side. Makes two burgers.

Nutrition Info

Per serving (2 burgers):

Calories: 329

Protein: 46.5 g

Carbs: 22.6 g

Fat: 4.5 g

Cooking and Nutrition Tips



Tuna fish is high-protein food that can help you achieve a leaner physique.

There are many different recipes for tuna burgers you can find in a variety of cookbooks. Some of them are pretty complicated and require 8, 10, or even 12 ingredients, spices and so on. We will surely explore more advanced tuna burger recipes in the future, because the high lean protein content fits nicely with fat burning nutrition and there are ways to make them with a little more “class” and finesse than this recipe (not to mention score an “A” grade), but the recipe you are learning today is so simple, even a kitchen dummy could make it—blindfolded! Sometimes “fast, messy and simple” trumps “complicated and gourmet!”

Any kind of tuna works for this recipe. Albacore is a favorite for many. Any type of whole wheat crackers will also work. Be sure to choose low fat 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain varieties of crackers. White flour and enriched, refined grain products are not a good choice. Suggestions: Healthy Valley, or Barbara’s Bakery brands, available at most health food stores. You may also want to try using whole wheat bread (crumbled) in place of crackers.

Egg Beaters or liquid egg whites (in a carton) may be substituted for regular egg whites. In case you’re not familiar with Mrs. Dash, this is a great salt-free multi-purpose seasoning you can find at any grocery store in the spices section. There are several varieties of Mrs. Dash. For this tuna burger recipe, I suggest the original “Table Blend” version.

When making your patties, the trick here is to crumble the crackers very thoroughly, drain the tuna completely and chop it thoroughly, and stir the mixture thoroughly. This helps the patty stay together when you flip it. If there are large chunks of tuna or cracker in your patty, the burger will more easily fall apart when you try to flip it. Compressing the patty very tightly also helps, as does pressing down the patty with a spatula once it is in the frying pan. If your mixture is too liquid, you can add more crackers, and note the amount for your next batch.

Because two of the ingredients are tuna fish and egg whites, this is a high protein meal, with about twice as much protein as carbs. You can eat the burgers as is, or serve with salad or a side dish. If you want a higher carb count, you can make these into sandwiches. Just throw your tuna burger between two slices of whole wheat bread, and there you have yet another “portable food,” ready to take with you!

These super simple tuna burgers get a respectable “B” grade. The reason for not getting the perfect “A” is because this recipe calls for whole wheat crackers. In the Burn The Fat system, “A” grade foods are totally unprocessed, unrefined foods. Foods that are made from whole grains, but lightly processed (often coming in a box or package, and not straight from the “package” it came from in nature), usually get around a “B”. As a general rule, if you eat mostly A and B foods, 90% of the time or more, you will get great results in your fat-burning (or muscle-building) quest.

Enjoy!

Burn the Fat Recipe Scorecard

Burn The Fat Grade: B

Portable Food: Yes!

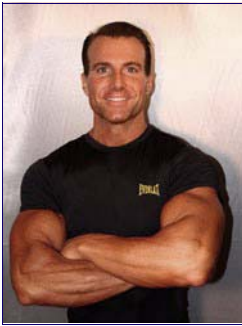
Cooking Difficulty Level: Easy

Time required: 5 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle Program-Approved: Check!

Kitchen Dummy Seal of Approval: Check!

About Tom Venuto



Tom Venuto is a natural bodybuilder, nutrition researcher and freelance writer. Tom holds a bachelor of science degree in Adult health/fitness (exercise science) and is a long time member of the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

Tom has been training since 1983 and has competed 28 times since 1989 as a lifetime natural (steroid-free) bodybuilder. His titles include the Mr. Natural New Jersey, Natural Pennsylvania, Natural New York State, Natural Mid Atlantic States and Natural Eastern Classic Championships. He was also runner up in both the Natural USA and Natural North America Championships.

Venuto is the author of numerous books including the #1 selling e-book **[Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle](#)** (e-book), the National and #1 Amazon bestseller, ***The Body Fat Solution*** (Avery/Penguin, hardcover).

Tom is a regular guest on podcasts and radio shows including Martha Stewart healthy living (Sirius XM satellite radio), ESPN-1250, WCBS-AM and Blog talk radio.

Tom's articles have been featured on *hundreds* of websites worldwide and he has been featured in *IRONMAN*, *Australian IRONMAN*, *Natural Bodybuilding*, *Muscular Development*, *Men's Fitness*, *Men's Exercise*, *First For Women*, *Oprah Magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*.

Tom is also the founder and CEO of the premier fat loss support community, **[Burn The Fat Inner Circle](#)**. He lives in Hoboken, New Jersey, near New York City.

You can visit Tom online at:

Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle

<http://www.BurnTheFat.com>

Burn the Fat Inner Circle

<http://www.BurnTheFatInnerCircle.com>