



The Neat and Cozy House

SERENITY IN EVERY CORNER

Weekly Meal Planning

Week 39

Sunday - Chicken Quinoa Taco Soup & Pizza

Monday - Steak with Garlic Green Beans and Pasta Salad

Tuesday - Ground Turkey Tacos

Wednesday - Red Thai Curry Chicken with Udon Noodles

Thursday - Chicken Stir Fry with Garlic Noodles or White Rice

Friday - Sausage & Veggie Orzo with Basil Pesto

Saturday - Eat Out / Take Out

Recipes - Weekly Meal Planning - Week 39

Sunday - **Chicken Quinoa Taco Soup**

****Ingredients:****

- 1 tablespoon Olive Oil
- 1 Onion, diced
- 2 Stalks of Celery, diced
- 1 Large Carrot, diced
- 2 tablespoons Chili Powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Cumin
- 1 teaspoon Salt (or to taste)
- 1 teaspoon Pepper Blend (a mix of black and white pepper)
- 1 teaspoon Garlic Powder
- 1 tablespoon Granulated Chicken Bouillon
- 1 can (15 oz) Black Beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz) Corn (do not drain)
- 2 cans (15 oz each) Green Beans (do not drain)
- 96 ounces Chicken Stock (homemade or store-bought)
- 1 Rotisserie Chicken, meat removed and shredded (or 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, diced)
- 1/2 cup White Quinoa, rinsed and drained

****Directions:****

1. **Prepare the Mirapox:**

- In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat. Add the diced onion, celery, and carrot (mirapox) to the pot. Sauté the vegetables until they become tender and the onion turns translucent, which should take about 5-7 minutes.

2. **Add the Spices:**

- Sprinkle in 2 tablespoons of chili powder, 1 1/2 teaspoons of cumin, 1 teaspoon of salt (adjust to your taste), 1 teaspoon of pepper blend, 1 teaspoon of garlic powder, and 1 tablespoon of granulated chicken bouillon. Stir the spices into the sautéed vegetables and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes until fragrant.

3. **Add Black Beans, Corn, and Green Beans:**

- Add the drained and rinsed black beans, the can of corn (do not drain), and the two cans of green beans (do not drain). Stir everything together to combine with the vegetables and spices.

4. **Add Chicken Stock:**

- Pour in the 96 ounces (12 cups) of chicken stock, and stir well to combine the ingredients in the pot.

5. **Add Chicken:**

- If using a rotisserie chicken, remove the meat from the bones and shred it into bite-sized pieces. If using chicken breasts, dice them into small, even pieces.

6. **Add Chicken to the Pot:**

- Once the stock and vegetables are combined, add the shredded rotisserie chicken or diced chicken breasts to the pot. Stir well to combine.

7. **Add Quinoa:**

- Pour in the rinsed and drained 1/2 cup of white quinoa. Stir everything together.

8. **Simmer:**

- Reduce the heat to medium-low and let the soup simmer for about 15 minutes or until the quinoa and chicken are cooked through. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking.

9. **Rest Before Serving:**

- Turn off the heat and let the soup sit for an additional 10 minutes before serving. This allows the flavors to meld and the soup to thicken slightly.

10. **Serve:**

- Ladle the chicken quinoa taco soup into bowls, and you can optionally garnish with toppings such as shredded cheese, diced avocado, chopped fresh cilantro, sour cream, or a squeeze of lime juice.

Enjoy your hearty and healthy Chicken Quinoa Taco Soup!

Homemade Pizza with Store-Bought Pizza Dough

Ingredients:

- 1 store-bought pizza dough (usually available in the refrigerated or frozen section of the grocery store)
- 1/2 cup pizza sauce (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- Toppings of your choice (e.g., pepperoni, bell peppers, mushrooms, onions, olives, basil leaves, etc.)
- Olive oil (for brushing)
- Cornmeal or flour (for dusting)
- Salt and pepper (optional, to taste)
- Red pepper flakes (optional, for added heat)
- Grated Parmesan cheese (optional, for sprinkling)
- Garlic powder (optional, for extra flavor)

Instructions:

1. **Preheat Your Oven:**

- Preheat your oven to the highest temperature it can go (usually around 475-500°F or 245-260°C). If you have a pizza stone, place it in the oven while it preheats.

2. **Prepare the Pizza Dough:**

- Take the store-bought pizza dough out of its packaging and let it come to room temperature for about 30 minutes. This makes it easier to work with.

3. **Prepare Your Work Surface:**

- Sprinkle some cornmeal or flour on a clean, flat surface. This will prevent the dough from sticking.

4. **Roll Out the Dough:**

- Roll out the pizza dough to your desired thickness. You can use a rolling pin or stretch it with your hands. If you like a thin crust, roll it out thinner; for a thicker crust, leave it a bit thicker.

5. **Transfer to a Pizza Pan or Stone:**

- If you have a pizza stone, carefully transfer the rolled-out dough onto a piece of parchment paper, then onto the hot stone in the oven. If using a pizza pan or baking sheet, place the dough directly on the greased pan.

6. **Add Pizza Sauce:**

- Spread the pizza sauce evenly over the dough, leaving a small border around the edges for the crust.

7. **Add Cheese and Toppings:**

- Sprinkle the shredded mozzarella cheese over the sauce. Add your favorite toppings on top of the cheese.

8. **Seasoning (Optional):**

- If desired, sprinkle with salt, pepper, red pepper flakes, and a dusting of garlic powder for extra flavor.

9. **Bake the Pizza:**

- Place the pizza in the preheated oven. If using a pizza stone, slide the parchment paper with the pizza onto the stone.

10. **Bake Until Golden Brown:**

- Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown, and the cheese is bubbling and slightly browned.

11. **Remove and Cool:**

- Carefully remove the pizza from the oven and let it cool for a minute or two. This allows the cheese to set slightly, making it easier to slice.

12. **Slice and Serve:**

- Use a pizza cutter or a sharp knife to slice the homemade pizza into your desired number of slices.

13. ****Optional Finishing Touches:****

- If you like, sprinkle grated Parmesan cheese or fresh basil leaves over the hot pizza just before serving.

14. ****Enjoy:****

- Serve your homemade pizza hot, and enjoy a delicious, customizable meal right at home!

Feel free to get creative with your toppings and experiment with different combinations to create your perfect homemade pizza. (Serves - A lot! Party Recipes)

Monday - **NY Center Cut Strip Steak with Garlic Green Beans and Pasta Salad**

****Ingredients:****

****For the Steak:****

- 2 NY Center Cut Strip Steaks
- Salt, to taste
- Black Pepper, to taste
- Garlic Powder, to taste
- Olive Oil (for grilling)

****For the Garlic Green Beans:****

- 1 pound fresh green beans, ends trimmed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Olive Oil
- 1/2 teaspoon Salt
- 1/2 teaspoon Black Pepper or Pepper Blend
- 1 teaspoon Minced Garlic

****For the Pasta Salad:****

- 1/2 pound your favorite pasta (e.g., rotini, penne)
- 1 cup cucumber, diced
- 1 cup bell peppers (various colors), diced
- 1/2 cup scallions, sliced
- 1/2 cup cheese (e.g., cheddar, mozzarella), cubed or shredded
- Your favorite Italian Dressing (store-bought or homemade)

****Directions:****

****For the Steak:****

1. Preheat your grill to high heat.

2. Use a meat tenderizer to gently pound the steaks, which will help tenderize them and even out their thickness.
3. Season both sides of the steaks generously with salt, black pepper, and garlic powder. Drizzle a bit of olive oil on each steak and rub the seasoning into the meat.
4. Place the steaks on the hot grill and cook to your desired doneness. For medium-rare, grill for about 4-5 minutes per side. Adjust the time for your preferred level of doneness (add a couple of minutes per side for medium, and so on).
5. Remove the steaks from the grill and let them rest for a few minutes before slicing. This allows the juices to redistribute and keeps the meat juicy.

*****For the Garlic Green Beans:*****

1. In a large pan, add the trimmed green beans with about 1/4 inch of water. Cover and steam over medium heat for approximately 10 minutes or until the water evaporates and the beans become tender.
2. Add 1 1/2 teaspoons of olive oil to the pan, followed by the minced garlic. Sprinkle it with salt and black pepper (or pepper blend). Sauté for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is fragrant and the green beans are slightly browned. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.

*****For the Pasta Salad:*****

1. Cook the pasta according to the package directions until it's al dente. Drain the pasta and rinse it under cold water to cool it down quickly.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooled pasta, diced cucumber, bell peppers, scallions, and cheese.
3. Pour your favorite Italian dressing over the pasta and vegetables. Start with a moderate amount and add more to taste. Toss everything together until the salad is well coated with dressing.

*****To Serve:*****

Plate the grilled NY Center Cut Strip Steaks alongside the Garlic Green Beans and a generous helping of Pasta Salad. Enjoy your delicious and balanced dinner! (Serves 4)

Tuesday - *Ground Turkey Tacos Recipe*****

*****Ingredients:*****

*****For the Ground Turkey Filling:*****

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 1 red pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 packet (1.25 oz) taco seasoning mix (or use homemade seasoning)
- 1/2 cup water

****For Assembling Tacos:****

- 8 small taco shells or tortillas
- 1 cup shredded lettuce
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese (cheddar, Monterey Jack, or your choice)
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)
- Salsa and hot sauce (optional, for serving)
- Lime wedges (optional, for serving)

****Directions:****

****1. Prepare the Ground Turkey Filling:****

- Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
- Add the diced onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes until it becomes translucent.
- Add minced garlic and sauté for another 30 seconds until fragrant.
- Add the ground turkey to the skillet. Break it apart with a spatula and cook, stirring occasionally, until it's no longer pink and starts to brown.
- Stir in the taco seasoning mix, tomato sauce, and water. Reduce heat to medium-low, and let it simmer for about 5-7 minutes, or until the mixture thickens slightly. Stir occasionally to ensure even cooking.

****2. Assemble the Tacos:****

- Warm the taco shells or tortillas according to package instructions.
- To assemble each taco, start with a spoonful of the ground turkey mixture.
- Top with shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes, shredded cheese, diced red onion, and a dollop of sour cream.

- If desired, sprinkle with chopped fresh cilantro for a burst of flavor and color.

****3. Serve:****

- Serve your delicious ground turkey tacos immediately with optional sides like salsa, hot sauce, and lime wedges for extra flavor. Let your guests customize their tacos to their liking.

Enjoy your homemade ground turkey tacos – a quick, easy, and flavorful meal that's perfect for any night of the week! (Serves 4)

Wednesday - *Red Thai Curry Chicken with Udon Noodles and Garden Salad*****

****Ingredients:****

****For the Red Thai Curry Chicken:****

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 jar of store-bought Red Thai Curry sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

****For the Udon Noodles:****

- 2 packages of frozen Udon noodles
- Water (as per package instructions)

****For the Garden Salad:****

- 4 cups mixed lettuce greens (e.g., Romaine, spinach, or spring mix)
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 3 scallions (green onions), chopped
- Your choice of salad dressing

****Directions:****

*****For the Red Thai Curry Chicken:*****

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper.
3. Add the chicken breasts to the skillet and sear them for about 2-3 minutes on each side, or until they are nicely browned.
4. Pour the entire jar of Red Thai Curry sauce over the seared chicken breasts.

5. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the skillet, and let the chicken simmer in the sauce for approximately 30 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and tender. Check the chicken's internal temperature, which should reach 165°F (74°C).

6. Once cooked, remove the chicken from the skillet and slice it into thin strips.

*****For the Udon Noodles:*****

1. Cook the frozen Udon noodles according to the package instructions. Usually, you'll need to boil them for a few minutes until they are heated through and tender.

2. Drain the noodles and set them aside.

*****For the Garden Salad:*****

1. In a large salad bowl, combine the mixed lettuce greens, sliced red bell pepper, cucumber slices, diced tomatoes, and chopped scallions.

2. Toss the salad ingredients together.

3. Serve the salad with your choice of salad dressing on the side, allowing each person to dress their salad to taste.

*****To Serve:*****

1. Place a portion of the cooked Udon noodles on each plate.

2. Top the Udon noodles with slices of the Red Thai Curry Chicken.

3. Serve with a side of garden salad and your preferred salad dressing.

Enjoy your Red Thai Curry Chicken with Udon Noodles and Garden Salad – a balanced and flavorful meal that combines the richness of Thai curry with the freshness of a garden salad. (Serves 4)

Thursday - *Chicken Stir-Fry with Garlic Noodles or White Rice*****

*****Ingredients:*****

*****For Marinating the Chicken:*****

- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes

****For the Stir-Fry Sauce:****

- 3/4 cup water
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon distilled white vinegar

****For the Stir-Fry:****

- 1/2 pound fresh broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 medium onion, chunked
- 1 medium red pepper, chunked
- 1 small carrot, thinly sliced diagonally
- 1/4 pound fresh snow peas, halved diagonally
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper (adjust to taste)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil (divided)

****For the Steamed Rice:****

- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 2 cups water
- Pinch of salt (optional)

*****Garlic Vermicelli Noodles:****

- 1 box of Pasta Roni Garlic and Olive Oil Vermicelli Noodles
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1-3/4 cups water

****Instructions:****

For the Steamed Rice: (to be cooked while the stir-fry is being made)

- **1.** Rinse the rice under cold running water until the water runs clear. This helps remove excess starch.
- **2.** In a medium-sized saucepan, combine the rinsed rice, 2 cups of water, and a pinch of salt (if desired).
- **3.** Bring the water to a boil over high heat.
- **4.** Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the saucepan with a tight-fitting lid, and simmer for about 18-20 minutes or until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed.
- **5.** Remove the saucepan from the heat and let it sit, covered, for 5 minutes to allow the rice to steam and fluff up.

For the Garlic and Olive Oil Vermicelli:

***Make per package instructions.

For the Stir-Fry:

****1. Marinate the Chicken:****

- In a bowl, combine 1 tablespoon of cornstarch, 1 tablespoon of soy sauce, 1/2 teaspoon of sugar, and the minced garlic clove. Add the cubed chicken breasts and stir to coat. Let the chicken marinate for 15 minutes.

****2. Prepare the Stir-Fry Sauce:****

- In another bowl, combine 3/4 cup of water, 2 tablespoons of soy sauce, 1 tablespoon of cornstarch, 2 teaspoons of sugar, and 1 teaspoon of distilled white vinegar. Mix well and set aside.

****3. Prepare the Vegetables:****

- Cut the broccoli into bite-sized florets, chunk the onion and red pepper, thinly slice the carrot diagonally, and halve the snow peas diagonally.

****4. Stir-Fry the Chicken:****

- Heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil in a hot wok or a large skillet over high heat. Add the marinated chicken and stir-fry for about 3 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and lightly browned. Remove the chicken from the pan and set it aside.

****5. Stir-Fry the Vegetables:****

- In the same pan, add the remaining 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil. Add the broccoli, onion, red pepper, carrot, and crushed red pepper. Stir-fry for about 3 minutes or until the vegetables reach your desired level of tenderness.

****6. Combine Ingredients:****

- Add the snow peas to the pan and stir-fry for an additional 2 minutes.

- Return the cooked chicken to the pan with the vegetables.

****7. Add the Stir-Fry Sauce:****

- Pour the prepared stir-fry sauce over the chicken and vegetables. Stir everything together and cook until the sauce boils and thickens, which should take just a minute or two.

To Serve:

Spoon the hot and fluffy steamed rice or the garlic vermicelli onto plates or into bowls, then top it with the delicious chicken stir-fry. Garnish with fresh cilantro or sliced green onions if desired. Enjoy!
(Serves 4)

Friday - **Italian Sausage, Veggie Orzo with Basil Pesto Recipe**

****Ingredients:****

- 1 pound Italian sausage (hot or mild)
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 zucchini, diced
- 1 yellow summer squash, diced
- 1 pound orzo pasta
- 1 (6-ounce) jar basil pesto
- 2 ripe tomatoes, diced
- Balsamic vinegar (for drizzling)
- Parmesan cheese (for sprinkling)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Olive oil (if needed)

****Directions:****

****1. Brown the Italian Sausage:****

- In a non-stick pan, cook the Italian sausage over medium-high heat, breaking it into crumbles with a spatula. Brown the sausage until it's cooked through and no longer pink, approximately 5-7 minutes. If the sausage doesn't release enough oil, you can add a small amount of olive oil to the pan.

****2. Sauté the Veggies:****

- Once the sausage is browned, add the diced onion, red pepper, zucchini, and yellow summer squash to the same pan. Sauté the vegetables in the rendered sausage fat over medium heat until they become tender and slightly caramelized, about 5-7 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

****3. Cook the Orzo:****

- In a separate large pot, cook the orzo according to the package instructions until it's al dente. Make sure to reserve 1 cup of pasta cooking water before draining the orzo.

****4. Combine Ingredients:****

- Add the cooked and drained orzo to the sausage and vegetable mixture. Stir to combine everything thoroughly. If the mixture seems dry, you can add some of the reserved pasta cooking water to achieve your desired consistency.

****5. Add the Basil Pesto:****

- Turn off the heat, and stir in the entire 6-ounce jar of basil pesto until the orzo and sausage are evenly coated with the pesto sauce.

****6. Serve:****

- Portion the Italian Sausage, Veggie Orzo with Basil Pesto onto plates or into bowls.

****7. Garnish:****

- Top each serving with diced tomatoes, a drizzle of balsamic vinegar, and a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese.

****8. Enjoy:****

- Serve your delicious Italian Sausage, Veggie Orzo with Basil Pesto as a complete meal. It's packed with flavor and sure to be a crowd-pleaser! (Serves 6 - 8)

Saturday - Eat out / Take Out