



# BUDGET BITES

A budget-minded meal plan

*6 dinners for 2 adults. Menu on back page.*

**QUICK & EASY MEALS** WINTER 2022 VOL. 15



# DAY 1

Spinach Pesto Penne, Simmered Collards, and Sliced Tomatoes



## Spinach Pesto Penne

- 3 oz fresh spinach
- 2 Tbsp walnuts, toasted and chopped
- ½ cup cottage cheese
- 1 small garlic clove
- 4 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh basil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½# penne pasta
- 1 small stalk broccoli, cut in pieces

Cook pasta in boiling water about 7 minutes, until al dente. Drain and rinse. Steam broccoli in a small amount of water, about 4-5 minutes. Purée spinach, walnuts, cottage cheese, garlic, basil, 2 Tbsp Parmesan, salt & pepper in a blender. Set aside ¼ cup pesto for Day 6. Rinse pasta with hot water to reheat; stir desired amount of pesto into pasta. Top with broccoli and Parmesan cheese.

## Simmered Collards

- 1 bunch collard greens, de-stemmed
  - Pinch of dried chili flakes
  - ¼ tsp garlic powder
  - ½ Tbsp butter
  - Salt and pepper to taste
- Chop collards, place in a pot with a little water. Add seasonings, cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Serve with pasta and one tomato, sliced. Reserve a little of the cooked greens for Day 3.

# DAY 2

Black Bean Chilaquiles, Roasted Yams, and Mango

## Black Bean Chilaquiles

- 6 corn tortillas
  - ¼ cup olive oil
  - ¼ cup chopped green onions
  - 1 cup whole tomatoes, drained
  - ½ can black beans, drained and rinsed (keep remaining ½ can for Day 4)
  - ½ Tbsp lime juice
  - ½ cup frozen corn
  - 1 tsp fresh oregano
  - Salt and pepper to taste
  - 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
  - Salsa for topping
- Cut tortillas into thin strips. Heat oil in a skillet until hot; add tortillas and green onions, turning occasionally until tortillas are crisp, about 10 minutes. Stir beans, tomatoes, lime juice, corn, and seasonings together in a skillet and heat. Add cheese; heat until melted. Serve over fried tortillas, topped with salsa.

## Roasted Yams

- 2 medium yams, peeled & cut in ½" cubes
  - Olive oil
  - Salt
- Heat oven to 450°F. Spray yams with olive oil until coated, sprinkle with salt and stir. Place on a baking sheet and roast 15-20 minutes, until tender. Set ½ aside for Day 4. Serve remaining yams with chilaquiles and mango slices.





# DAY 3

## Miso Ramen with Egg, Cheesy Hickory Bread, and Tossed Salad



### Miso Ramen

- 2 pkg ramen noodles
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp miso paste
- 2 small radishes
- 2 small crimini mushrooms
- 2 green onions
- Reserved greens from Day 1
- Optional sesame oil for topping
- Optional hot sauce for topping

Place two pots on the stove with 3 cups of water in each. Bring to boil. While waiting for water to boil, slice radishes and mushrooms as thinly as possible, chop green onions, and set aside. When the water starts to boil, use a slotted spoon to gently ease each egg into one pot. Place the two ramen noodle blocks in the other pot. Simmer the noodles for 3 minutes, remove from heat, add 2 Tbsp of miso paste to the water and stir until dissolved into a broth. After eggs have simmered for 7 minutes, remove and rinse under cold water. Set aside to cool.

Divide noodles and broth equally into two bowls. Arrange vegetable slices, green onions, and some collards from Day 1 atop the noodles and broth. When eggs are cooled, peel carefully, cut in half and arrange egg halves atop ramen. Serve with optional toppings of sesame oil and/or hot sauce.

*Note: this recipe uses miso paste for the broth, so if you purchased packaged ramen, you may set aside or dispose of the spice packet included in the package.*

### Cheesy Hickory Bread

- ½ loaf French bread
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ tsp hickory smoked salt
- 1 tsp tamari

Cut bread diagonally into 1" slices. Mix remaining ingredients – spread generously on bread slices. Reassemble loaf, wrap in foil, and bake at 350°F for 15-20 minutes.

Toss a salad with lettuce, spinach, carrot, radish, cucumber and red bell pepper. Reserve ½ salad for Day 5 and serve the rest with ramen and bread.



# DAY 4

Herbed Veggie Orzo, Buttered Corn Tortillas, and Sliced Cucumbers



## Herbed Veggie Orzo

6-8 cups water

1 cup orzo

½ can black beans, drained and rinsed

½ red bell pepper

Reserved roasted yams from Day 2

½ cup chopped fresh herbs, mixed  
(oregano, basil, sage)

1 cup chopped fresh parsley

2 Tbsp olive oil, divided

½ tsp sea salt

Ground black pepper to taste

Shredded Parmesan cheese to taste

Bring water to a boil and stir in the orzo. Cook about 7 minutes, until al dente. Drain and return to pan. In the meantime, place herbs, 1 Tbsp oil, and salt in a small bowl. To the orzo, add black beans, yam, and herbs and heat. Stir in red bell pepper. Drizzle with remaining olive oil and top with shredded Parmesan.

Serve with warmed, buttered tortillas and sliced cucumbers. Also great topped with sliced avocado.

# DAY 5

Easy Chicken Divan with Broccoli & Rice, Tossed Salad, and French Bread

## Easy Chicken Divan

2 – 5 oz cans chicken breast, with broth

1 cup water

1 stalk broccoli, cut into spears

1 can cream of chicken soup

8 oz instant jasmine rice

Ground black pepper to taste

Shredded Parmesan cheese to taste

Before opening rice, squeeze it to break up the grains. Place rice in a skillet with 2 Tbsp water. Heat through. Add chicken, with broth, and soup. Stir and heat. Meanwhile, steam broccoli spears in a small amount of salted water for 4-5 minutes or until tender crisp and still bright green; drain. Spoon rice into serving dish, place broccoli spears on top and sprinkle with ground black pepper and Parmesan cheese.

Serve with reserved salad from Day 3 and 2-3 slices warmed French bread with butter.





# DAY 6

## Pesto Sandwich with Broiled Portabellas and Savory White Beans



### Pesto Sandwich

- 4 slices French bread
- ¼ cup *Spinach Pesto* (from Day 1)
- 4 slices Monterey Jack cheese
- 4 slices tomato
- 2 Tbsp pumpkin seeds
- 4 leaves fresh basil, optional

Spread pesto onto each slice of bread. Fill each sandwich with 2 slices cheese, 2 slices tomato, 2 basil leaves, and 1 Tbsp pumpkin seeds. Heat 30-45 seconds in microwave, if desired.

### Broiled Portabellas

- 2 small portabellas
- 4 tsp olive oil
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Remove caps from mushrooms and place mushrooms dome side down on a baking sheet. Drizzle 2 tsp olive oil and 1 tsp balsamic into each cap. Add salt & pepper. Marinate 30-60 minutes at room temperature. Broil 3-4 minutes or to desired finish. Serve as a side or add inside the pesto sandwich.

### Savory White Beans

- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh sage
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 ½ tsp olive oil
- 3-4 green onions, chopped
- 1 ½ tsp lemon juice
- 1 – 15 oz can cannellini beans, drained
- Salt and pepper to taste

Combine sage, garlic, onions, and oil in a saucepan and sauté until garlic is golden. Add lemon juice and beans and cook 10 minutes or until heated through. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot or chill and serve as a salad.



# Donna's Kitchen

## Tips & Tricks For Quick & Easy Meals



### ***Cold butter won't spread?***

Grate cold butter into a bowl and it will warm to room temperature much more quickly.

### ***No time to chop?***

Many items can be chopped in a food processor, using the 'S' blade and pulsing the processor until you reach the desired size of chop. Running it constantly will usually purée the food, but pulsing will chop it.

### ***Need a head start on dinner prep?***

You can peel and chop vegetables in advance—such as onions, carrots, celery, tomatoes, and peppers—and store them in sealed container in the refrigerator. If you prep potatoes in advance, store them in cold water to keep them from browning.

### ***Want to boil water in a flash?***

If you have an electric tea kettle, heat water in it before adding it to a pot to heat up. The kettle heats it much faster.

### ***On a tight timeline for pasta?***

You can cook pasta ahead, drain it, rinse it in cold water, and store it in sealed container in the refrigerator. At dinner time, simply rinse it in hot water right before serving.

### ***Looking to set it and forget it?***

Rediscover the joy of slow cookers. Toss in your ingredients in the morning, turn it on low for eight hours and by dinner time the house smells great and a hot meal is ready to dish up and serve the whole family.



Simple, healthy meals  
start at First Alternative  
Natural Foods Co-op



### **Co-op Deli & Kitchen**

Don't feel like cooking, but don't want to go out to eat either? Visit the Co-op deli, where our kitchen prioritizes organic or non-GMO ingredients, and sources local ingredients whenever possible. Supply varies but there are always lots of options:

***Hearty soups (hot or packaged)***

***Heat & eat meals***

***Sandwiches & salad bar***

***Diverse prepared salads***

***Tofu nuggets & falafel***

### **Easy Options in Grocery**

At the Co-op, you can count on food being free from artificial additives and preservatives—only the best natural foods fill our shelves, bulk bins, and freezers. Be sure to keep some of these super-easy meal options on hand for those nights when you're feeling a little low-energy:

***Frozen meals (veggie bowls, pot pies, tamales, pizza—GF & vegan options)***

***Indian simmer sauces, curry pastes, and heat & eat meals***

***High-quality ramen & rice mixes***

***Wide range of non-GMO or organic sauces & bulk or packaged pastas***

***Many soups & broths, including dry soup mixes & miso paste in bulk***

# DAILY MENU & SHOPPING LIST



Day 1 - Spinach Pesto Penne

Day 2 - Black Bean Chilaquiles

Day 3 - Miso Ramen with Egg

Day 4 - Herbed Veggie Orzo

Day 5 - Easy Chicken Divan

Day 6 - Pesto Sandwiches

## BULK

2 tsp balsamic vinegar

Pinch dried chili flakes

½ cup frozen corn

¼ tsp garlic powder

2 Tbsp miso paste

½ cup olive oil

¾ tsp pepper

2 Tbsp pumpkin seeds

½ cup salsa

1 Tbsp sea salt

¼ tsp smoked salt

2 Tbsp walnuts

1 tsp tamari

## GROCERY

1 can black beans

1 can cannellini beans

2 - 5 oz cans chicken

1 pkg corn tortillas

1 can cream of chicken  
condensed soup

1 loaf French bread

8 oz pkg instant rice

7 oz pkg orzo

½ # penne pasta

2 pkgs Ramen

1 bottle salad dressing

1-14 oz can whole  
tomatoes

## DAIRY

2 eggs

1# butter

½ cup cottage cheese

## PRODUCE

1 bunch basil

2 stalks broccoli

1 carrot

1 bunch collard greens

2 small crimini  
mushrooms

2 cucumbers

1 bunch fresh sage

1 head garlic

1 bunch green onions

1 lemon

1 head lettuce

1 lime

1 mango

1 bunch oregano

1 bunch parsley

2 small portabellas

1 bunch small radishes

1 red bell pepper

1 bunch spinach

2 slicing tomatoes

2 medium yams

## DELI

6 Tbsp Parmesan,  
shredded

½-¾# Monterey  
Jack cheese

**First Alternative**  
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

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