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5 DINNER RECIPES THAT MAKE GREAT LUNCHES
by Bridget Shirvell
Embrace the notion of leftovers. They’re one of the secrets to surviving hectic work week mornings, because let’s face it, it’s hard enough to remember all the things you need heading out the door. Forget preparing, cooking, and packing a lunch. Turning last night’s dinner into lunch makes busy weekday mornings a whole lot easier. Succeeding at it, takes some practice and planning. You have to be creative, think about whether your dinner will reheat well in a microwave or can be eaten cold or at room temperature, if the dish will pack well, and if it can be consumed without making a mess. From corn chowder to chicken chimichangas, these chef-created recipes will step up your brown-bag game.

**Cod and Corn Chowder**

There is nothing like a chowder to warm your bones on a chilly fall or winter evening. This cod and corn chowder recipe from Rima Kleiner, owner of Dish on Fish, is easy to prepare and chock-full of vegetables that add depth to the chowder. And as a bonus it’s as satisfying reheated the next day for lunch.

**Photo: Rima Kleiner, MS, RD of Dish on Fish**
Makes 4-6 servings

What you’ll need

1 1/2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1/2 medium yellow onion, chopped
2 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
2 cups potatoes, washed well and diced (keep peel on)
1 1/2 lb. cod, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 cups frozen sweet corn, thawed
1/2 cup half-and-half
½ cup skim milk
Dash of turmeric
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
Salt and ground black pepper, to taste

How it’s done

In a large Dutch oven or pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions and scallion whites. Sauté until softened, about 2 minutes. Add broth, potatoes, and cod. Cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add corn, half-and-half, milk, and turmeric. Cover and bring to a light simmer. Add salt and pepper, as desired. Garnish with scallion greens.

Uptown Tavern Mediterranean Salad

Dropping temperatures and shorter days always make me crave comfort food but those heavy meals put me to sleep at my desk. Enter this colorful salad from Lety Gonzalez of Uptown Tavern. Made with peppery arugula, cashews, and sundried tomatoes it’s filling enough for a weekday dinner with chicken or salmon on top, and the next day I have a mason jar full of pickled veggies and dressing.
Makes 2 servings

What you’ll need

Arugula
1 cans white beans
1 cups marinated olives
Pickled onions
Goat cheese
Sundried tomato vinaigrette

Pickled Onions
1 cup vinegar
3 cups water
1 cup white sugar
1 tsp pickling spices
2 large onions
1 large red peeled beet

Sun Dried Tomato Vinaigrette
1 large shallot
1 tsp minced garlic
1 cup red wine vinegar
2 cups extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup sun dried tomatoes

**Spiced Nuts**
1 cup raw cashews
2 tbs curry powder

**How it’s done**

**Pickled Onions**
Julienne the onions. Cut the beet into quarters. Place onions and beets into a 4-quart container. In a pot heat up the pickling spices, sugar, water, and vinegar. Bring to a boil and pour into the quart container with the onions and beets.

**Sun Dried Tomato Vinaigrette**
Place the tomatoes, shallot, garlic, red wine into a food processor. Slowly blend the oil in until emulsified.

**Spiced Nuts**
Heat a tablespoon of oil in a pan. Toss the cashews and curry powder until roasted to your liking.

**Salad Assembly**
Toss arugula, white beans, salt, and pepper in a mixing bowl. Place on a serving dish and top with olives, goat cheese, spiced nuts, and pickled onions.

**Sweet & Sour Ribs**
Days you know will stretch on, need ribs. Chef and author [Jorj Morgan](#) suggests prepping the dish the night before and then all you need to do is turn the slow cooker on in the morning. When you come home you’ll be greeted to a mouthwatering smell and a hearty dinner. The next day you can turn the leftover sweet and sour ribs into an easy to pack and eat at your desk grilled panini.
Makes 8 servings

What you’ll need

Sauce
1/2 cup honey
1/4 cup Ponzu sauce
1/4 cup Asian chili sauce
1/4 cup ketchup ¼ cup rice wine vinegar
Zest of 1 orange, about 1 tablespoon
1 teaspoon ground ginger

Ribs
2 tablespoons olive oil
8 country style ribs, about 4 pounds
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon coarse ground pepper
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
How it’s done

_Sauce_
Whisk all of the sauce ingredients together in a small bowl.

_Ribs_
Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over high heat. Season the ribs with salt, pepper, onion, and garlic powders. Brown the ribs in the skillet until golden, about 6 to 8 minutes total. Place the ribs into the slow cooker. Pour the sauce over top. Cook on low until the ribs are quite tender and the meat is falling away from the bone.

**Baked Chimichangas**
There are so many ways to make these baked chimichangas from [Jessica Braider of The Balanced Kitchen](https://www.thebalancedkitchen.com), it will become your new go-to recipe. Go vegetarian, switch up the protein, add an egg, or change up the vegetables depending on the season. No matter your preference you’ll have a savory, balanced dinner that works as an easy to pack, filling lunch that can be reheated or simply eaten at room temperature.

![Baked Chimichangas](image)

**What you’ll need**

- 8 whole wheat tortillas
- 2 medium zucchini, chopped
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained or 2 cups homemade beans
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 1/2 cups chicken, shredded or finely chopped
1 cup shredded cheese (cheddar, Monterey jack, Mexican blend, etc.)
8 whole wheat tortillas
Cooking spray (optional)

**How it’s done**

Preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Chop the zucchini into small pieces. In a large bowl, toss the zucchini with the olive oil and a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Spread evenly on the baking sheet and roast for 10-12 minutes, or until some pieces are just starting to brown.

While the zucchini is roasting, rinse and drain the black beans and put them into the large bowl along with the chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper. Stir well. When the zucchini is roasted, mix it into the black bean and spice mixture.

Lay out the tortillas. Put about 1/4 cup of the bean mixture in the center of each tortilla. Evenly distribute the chicken and cheese on top. Fold each tortilla as you would a burrito and place, seam-side down on the baking sheet. Spray each with cooking spray (if using); this will give them a nice crust and a golden color. Bake for 15-18 minutes, or until golden on top.

**Yellow Squash Fettuccine Bowls**

Squash is the ultimate busy-weeknight go-to. Healthy, quick, and easy to cook, and with so many ways to do it up it’s impossible to get bored. Sarah Adler, founder of Simply Real Health and author of the Simply Real Health Cookbook uses a spiralizer to turn yellow squash into noodles for an alternative to traditional fettuccine. The result is a savory dinner that turns into a leftover lunch without being so heavy you’ll be nodding off in that 3 p.m. meeting.
Makes 2 large servings of fettuccine

What you’ll need

4 yellow squash
1 cup tomato sauce
1 zucchini
1 bell pepper
1 eggplant (or other assorted veggies) sliced into bite sized pieces
sea salt and pepper to taste

Greek Chicken Meatballs*

*Greek Chicken Meatballs
Makes approximately 30, ½ inch meatballs
1 pound organic ground chicken (or turkey or beef)
1/2 cup almond meal or almond flour
1 egg
2 tablespoons fresh chopped fresh dill or 3 teaspoons dried dill or Italian seasoning
1 teaspoon dried oregano
2 teaspoons dijon mustard
1 clove garlic, chopped
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Combine all ingredients together in a bowl and mix well to combine. Roll into small ½ -1 inch balls.

Heat coconut oil or butter in a large skillet and add a few meatballs to the pan at a time, turning so each side browns for approximately 5-7 minutes each.

How it’s done

Preheat oven to 400-425 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Add veggies, toss to coat with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt and pepper. Roast for 25 minutes or until done to your liking.

To prep the noodles: spiralize 4 yellow squashes. When veggies and meatballs are done, heat noodles in a pan with sauce, and add veggies, meatballs, and a generous sprinkle of pecorino cheese to serve.