

Cookery Demo and Nutrition Talk

With Janet & Linda
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Recipes



Binky's Bites

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EcoJudaism and Sustainable Cooking

EcoJudaism is a unique initiative promoting environmental sustainability within the Jewish community. Kol Chai is close to receiving the EcoJudaism Gold award, which requires meeting specific criteria.

On the food front, Kol Chai encourages members to consider the environmental impact of their dietary choices and to make modifications to reduce it. Ideally, food should be LOAF (Locally grown, Organic, Animal-friendly, Fairtrade), with a preference for vegetarian and vegan options. The recipe above aligns with these principles, using sustainable ingredients to create a tasty, nutritious, vegan, and eco-friendly dish.

Eco reasons for choosing some of these ingredients

- Dried butter beans reduce packing waste and undergo minimal processing compared to canned beans
- Pearl Barley is a wholegrain sustainable crop which requires fewer resources than other grains. It is also typically less processed, retaining more nutrients
- Onion, leeks, carrot, celery and garlic are often locally grown which reduces the carbon footprint. Choosing organic options further minimises the use of pesticides and fertilisers
- Chestnut mushrooms are a sustainable crop as they require minimal space to grow

Binky's Bites Bean & Barley Soup

Serves around 8 generous portions

Here is my modern take on a traditional heartwarming bean and barley soup

- 200g dried butter beans soaked for at least 12 hours (or use a jar of ready cooked butter beans like Bold Bean Co (570g) including the liquid. It's tasty and will help to thicken the soup)
 - 100g pearl barley, rinsed
 - 1 large onion, finely chopped
 - 2 leeks, finely chopped
 - 2 carrots, cut into small fine batons
 - 2 celery sticks, finely diced
 - 300g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
 - 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 1 teaspoon hot paprika
 - 2 litres vegetable stock (I use Marigold Swiss Vegetable Bouillon)
 - Half a tube of tomato purée
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 3 tablespoons olive oil
 - Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)
1. Drain and rinse the soaked butter beans. Place them in a large pot, cover with fresh water, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside
 2. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the chopped onion. Fry until softened, and slightly golden. Add the garlic and cook for another minute
 3. Add the leeks, carrots, celery, and mushrooms. Fry for 5 minutes until all the moisture has escaped from the mushrooms
 4. Add the cooked beans (or if you're using ready cooked ones, add them at this stage including the liquid), barley, vegetable stock, tomato puree, bay leaf, and paprika to the pot. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 2 hours, allowing the flavours to meld together. You may need to add extra vegetable stock if the soup looks very thick. You can cook it for even longer if you feel the soup needs it. This is not an exact science. Just go by taste!
 5. Remove the bay leaves before serving
 6. Garnish with freshly chopped parsley

Tastes even better the next day and lasts in the fridge about three to four days

Nutritional Notes

This hearty bean and barley soup is a super nourishing dish, perfect for colder months. Packed with plant-based protein, fibre, vitamins, and antioxidants, it supports energy, immunity, and overall wellbeing.

Butter Beans

A fantastic source of protein and fibre, butter beans aid digestion and blood sugar control and are rich in energy-boosting B vitamins. Soaking dried beans reduces phytates, enhancing nutrient absorption. Ready-cooked beans like Bold Bean Co. are convenient and nutritious.

Pearl Barley

This nutty grain is rich in beta-glucans, which support heart health by lowering cholesterol and boost immune function by enhancing the activity of immune cells. It's also high in manganese, selenium, and phosphorus, promoting bone health and metabolism.

Onion, Leeks, and Garlic

This aromatic trio provides prebiotic fibre to nourish gut bacteria and support digestion. Garlic adds antimicrobial and immune-boosting benefits, thanks to its allicin content.

Carrots and Celery

Carrots offer beta-carotene for vision and skin health, while celery provides hydration and anti-inflammatory antioxidants like apigenin.

Mushrooms

Chestnut mushrooms are low in calories but rich in B vitamins, selenium, and copper for energy and immunity. They also contain ergothioneine, an antioxidant that protects cells.

Paprika

Paprika delivers a smoky kick and antioxidants like vitamin E and carotenoids to support skin health and reduce inflammation.

Tomato Purée

Tomato purée is a concentrated source of lycopene, a powerful antioxidant for heart health and skin protection.

Olive Oil

Drizzling olive oil adds heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and antioxidants. Its anti-inflammatory properties may also support a healthy gut microbiome.

Parsley

More than just garnish, parsley is rich in vitamins C and K, supporting immunity and bone health. Its fresh flavour brightens the soup beautifully.

Chilli Tofu – serves 4

This recipe comes from the wonderful book East full of great vegan and vegetarian recipes by Meera Sodha

- 2 packs (560g approx) of tofu drained, thoroughly dried with kitchen paper and cut into 3cm cubes – we like Tofoo Co brand
- Cornflour
- Rapeseed / extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp cumin seeds, coarsely ground
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 3cm fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 4 green finger chillies: 2 very finely chopped, 2 slit down their length (less if you prefer)
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 peppers, ideally 1 red and 1 green, cut into 1cm slices
- 1 tsp of Gochujang, dried red chilli paste for extra heat – optional

1. Spread the tofu cubes on a large plate and dust with cornflour, turning them to coat.

Spicy air-fried tofu

Place the drained, dried tofu cubes in a bowl. Add 1tsp garlic powder, ½ tsp onion powder, 1 tsp paprika, ½ sea salt, cornflour, ½ tbsp light soy sauce or tamari, ¼ tsp ground pepper and 1 tbsp of olive oil or sesame oil.

Toss well to combine.

Place in air fryer in one layer so that tofu has a little space around each piece.

Set air fryer to 200°C.

Cook for ~12 minutes stirring the tofu cubes halfway through.

Remove from air fryer, allow to cool for a few minutes then serve.

Tofu cooked in frying pan

Take a deep frying pan with a lid, add enough oil to come 0.5cm up the sides, and heat on medium. Line a plate with kitchen towel to place fried tofu on.

Shake any excess cornflour off the tofu, then put half of it into the hot oil. Fry for around 10 minutes, turning regularly with tongs, until golden, then transfer to the paper-lined plate and repeat with the remaining tofu

2. In a pan, fry the cumin and onion for 10-12 minutes, until soft and sweet
3. Add the garlic, ginger and chillies, fry for 5 minutes
4. Add the black pepper, tomato purée, soy sauce, maple syrup and salt. Stir to mix, cook for 5 minutes
5. Add the pepper strips and 100ml of water. Cover and leave to cook for 8 minutes, stirring every now and then, adding more water if need be: there should be just enough 'sauce' to coat the tofu.
6. When the peppers are soft, return the tofu to the pan, turn the heat up and stir to coat the
7. tofu in the sauce. Stir-fry for 5 minutes, then take off the heat.

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Nutritional Notes

Tofu – from the soya bean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete protein with all essential amino acids (unusual for plant-based protein); supports muscle and bone health. Protein Content: ~10g per 100g. • High in calcium, magnesium, and iron; low in saturated fat. Contains phytoestrogens, potentially supporting heart and breast health.
Extra Virgin Olive Oil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats and antioxidants. • May support a healthy gut microbiome and reduce inflammation. • Extra virgin olive oil has antibacterial properties.
Cumin Seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich in iron and antioxidants; supports energy production. • Aids digestion by stimulating digestive enzymes. • May help regulate blood sugar levels.
Onion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prebiotic; supports gut health by feeding beneficial bacteria. • High in quercetin, which reduces inflammation and supports heart health. • Contains vitamin C for immunity.
Garlic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prebiotic and antimicrobial; supports gut and immune health. • Contains allicin, which reduces inflammation and may lower cholesterol. • Rich in manganese, selenium, and vitamin C.
Ginger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-inflammatory; helps reduce muscle soreness and joint pain. • Aids digestion and alleviates nausea. • Contains gingerol, a unique compound with antioxidant properties.
Green Chillies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High in vitamin C and capsaicin, boosting metabolism and immunity. • Capsaicin provides natural pain relief and may reduce appetite. • Antioxidant-rich for overall health.
Ground Black Pepper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances nutrient absorption (e.g., curcumin, beta-carotene). • Stimulates digestive enzymes for better digestion. • Contains antioxidants to reduce oxidative stress.
Tomato Purée	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich in lycopene, supporting heart health and skin protection. • High in vitamin C and potassium for immunity and blood pressure regulation. • Antioxidant properties may reduce inflammation.
Soy Sauce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds umami flavour; reduces need for extra salt. • High in sodium; use in moderation.
Maple Syrup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural sweetener with small amounts of manganese and zinc. Contains antioxidants; less processed than refined sugar.
Red & Green Peppers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High in vitamin C and beta-carotene; supports immunity, skin, and eye health. • Fibre-rich; low in calories but nutrient-dense.

Roast Cauliflower with Tahini and Pomegranate

Makes one generous sized serving bowl

This is a very simple recipe, but always popular. The cauliflower can be eaten hot or cold

- 1 large cauliflower, cut into medium sized florets
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 120 ml tahini paste
- Seeds of half a pomegranate
- 30 ml lemon juice (freshly squeezed)
- 60 ml water (adjust as needed for desired consistency)
- ½ tsp salt (or to taste)
- ¼ tsp garlic granules (adjust to taste)
- Handful of parsley, finely chopped

1. Toss the florets in the oil and season with salt and pepper

Spicy cauliflower in air fryer

2. Add florets to bowl. Coat with 1½ tbsp oil.
3. In a separate small bowl add half a teaspoon of salt, onion powder, garlic powder, black pepper plus spices such as smoked paprika, turmeric and cumin. Mix well and add spices to the florets, tossing well to get everything coated.
4. Place seasoned cauliflower into air fryer and air fry at 200°C for 15 minutes, stirring or shaking basket 2-3 times during cooking to achieve uniform browning.
5. Remove from air fryer and serve immediately.

Cauliflower in oven

Place florets in a large wide roasting pan and roast for around half an hour in the oven at 190°C, turning occasionally

6. In a mixing bowl, add the tahini paste
7. Gradually add the lemon juice and water while whisking continuously. This helps to keep the mixture smooth and prevents it from becoming too thick
8. Add the salt and garlic granules, and continue to whisk until everything is well combined
9. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. If the tahini is too thick, you can add a bit more water, one tablespoon at a time, until you reach your desired consistency
10. Drizzle the cauliflower with tahini and decorate with pomegranate seeds and parsley

Nutritional Notes

This vibrant dish of roasted cauliflower with pomegranates and tahini sauce is as nutritious as it is delicious. Combining the health benefits of brassica vegetables, spices, and a drizzle of tahini, it's packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and flavour.

Cauliflower

This versatile vegetable from the brassica family is a nutritional powerhouse. Like its relatives broccoli and kale, cauliflower contains compounds such as glucosinolates and sulforaphane, which support the liver's detoxification processes. These compounds help activate enzymes that neutralize toxins and protect cells from damage.

Cauliflower is also a good source of vitamin C, supporting immune health and collagen production. Its high fibre content aids digestion and promotes a healthy gut.

Pomegranates

These jewel-like seeds are loaded with antioxidants, including punicalagins and anthocyanins, which help combat oxidative stress and support heart health. They're also a source of vitamin C, adding immune-boosting benefits and a tangy-sweet crunch.

Tahini Sauce

Made from sesame seeds, tahini is high in healthy fats, plant-based protein, and minerals like calcium and magnesium, supporting bone health and muscle function. It also contains antioxidants like sesamol, which may reduce inflammation.

Spices

- **Smoked Paprika:** Adds depth of flavour and antioxidants like carotenoids, supporting skin and eye health.
- **Turmeric:** Contains curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory compound that may boost brain and joint health.
- **Cumin:** Aids digestion, supports energy production, and contains antioxidants that promote overall health.
- **Black Pepper:** Enhances nutrient absorption, particularly curcumin from turmeric, and contains anti-inflammatory properties.

Onion Powder and Garlic Powder

These allium-based seasonings are rich in compounds like allicin and quercetin, known for their antimicrobial and immune-boosting effects. They also add prebiotic fibre to support gut health.

Together, these ingredients create a dish that's nourishing, satisfying, and full of vibrant flavours, perfect for boosting your health and delighting your taste buds.

Dark Chocolate Bark with Toasted Seeds & Cherries

This is incredibly easy to make and so delicious. Your guests will be impressed. If you want to get a bit more fancy, you could use any silicone chocolate moulds of your choice.

- 100g dark chocolate 70% or more. I use Green & Black's or vegan choc of your choice
 - 30g sunflower seeds
 - 30g pumpkin seeds
 - 20g dried sour cherries, chopped
 - Pinch of sea salt flakes. Preferably a good make like Maldon
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1. Roast seeds in oven at 180°C for 10 mins or dry fry in a hot frying pan and stir carefully. Careful not to burn them. Wait until you hear a popping sound for seeds.
 2. Break the chocolate into cubes and place in a heatproof bowl
 3. Cook in microwave on about 600 W for 1 min or in a double boiler with a small saucepan with little boiling water in the bottom and place chocolate into bowl on top of the saucepan (bain-marie).
 4. Stir and cook again at same temp for about 20 secs. Stir any remaining pieces into the melted chocolate. It is important not to overcook!
 5. Have ready a flat board or tray that will fit in the fridge.
 6. Add roasted seeds, dried fruit and a pinch of sea salt flakes into the chocolate and stir well
 7. Spread onto a board/tray lined with baking parchment until flat and even. Place in fridge to cool for around an hour
 8. Take chocolate out of fridge
 9. Cut into pieces with a large knife

Nutritional Notes

This delicious combination provides a mix of antioxidants, healthy fats, fibre, and essential minerals, making it a satisfying and guilt-free indulgence.

Dark Chocolate

Opting for chocolate with 70% or more cocoa content ensures high levels of flavonoids, powerful antioxidants that support heart health, brain function, and healthy skin. Dark chocolate also contains phenylethylamine (PEA), often called the "love compound," as it promotes the release of feel-good endorphins, enhancing mood and well-being. It's also a good source of magnesium, which helps reduce stress and supports muscle and nerve function.

Sunflower Seeds

These little seeds are nutrient powerhouses, packed with vitamin E, an antioxidant that supports skin health and protects cells from oxidative damage. They're also rich in healthy fats and selenium, which helps maintain thyroid function and immunity.

Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of zinc, important for immune function and skin repair. They also provide magnesium, iron, and protein, contributing to energy production and muscle health. Their crunchy texture adds a satisfying element to the bark.

Dried Sour Cherries

These tangy gems are rich in anthocyanins, antioxidants linked to reduced inflammation and muscle recovery. Sour cherries also contain melatonin, which can support better sleep, and a natural sweetness that balances the dark chocolate.