



# YOUR RECIPES

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Whether you're looking for inspiration or want to follow the whole recipe, it's here for you.



# EASY & SIMPLE

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I've created these recipes using simple and basic ingredients that are easy to find. I can't stress enough how important it is to use seasonal fruits and vegetables. You get more flavor and health benefits from them. Farmers markets are the best place for them, although many supermarkets carry them as well. When they are in prime season, you won't need a lot of spices to add, just salt, pepper, lemon and olive oil will do the trick. I've been practicing eating healthy on a budget, shopping mindfully, not overbuying the ingredients and then wasting them for years already. I'm happy to share my experience with you, so that you save money and do not waste the food. You will feel rewarded, light and happy at the end of the day.





# FARRO SALAD

## EASY & SIMPLE

Farro is a great source of fiber, iron, protein and magnesium. It's perfect in salads, soups or stews. You can add any vegetables of your choice, enrich it with feta, olives, dried fruit and nuts, add herbs to give more flavor and color. You can cook whole package of farro (2-3 cups or 1 pound), save it in the fridge or freezer and use as you need. Lasts quite well and doesn't change the texture or taste. Takes about 15 minutes to cook in salted water (cooking instructions will be on the box)



## Ingredients - version 1 - any season

- Version 1 (any season)
- 1 cup cooked farro
- 1 cup cooked shrimp (I use Trader Joe's frozen cooked shrimp)
- 1 cup frozen grilled corn kernels (from Trader Joe's)
- Handful of parsley, or scallions, chopped
- 1 shallot or 1/4 red onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp. Mayo
- 1 lemon zest/juice
- salt, pepper



# FARRO SALAD

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients - 2 - summer & fall

- 1 cup cooked farro
- 1 zucchini
- 1 eggplant
- 1 corn
- Handful of parsley
- salt, pepper, lemon juice and olive oil

In this case you need to cut and roast the vegetables and then add to farro.

## Ingredients - 3 - fall & winter

- 1 cup cooked farro
- 1 cup cubed butternut squash, roasted
- 2 cup kale, chopped
- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds, or dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup toasted pecans, walnuts or pumpkin seeds
- salt, pepper, olive oil, lemon juice

## Ingredients - 4 - any season

- 1 cup cooked farro
- 1 can tuna or salmon
- 1/2 cup olives (kalamata/green)
- 1 cup artichoke hearts (frozen or canned)
- Handful of parsley
- Toasted hazelnuts or any other nuts
- 1/4 cup raisins
- salt, pepper, olive oil, lemon juice





# QUINOA SALAD

## EASY & SIMPLE

Just like farro, pasta, steel cut oats, and rice, quinoa is such a great base for different salads. It's one of the superfoods, tastes delicious and can be enjoyed any season of the year. In summer, you can add tomatoes, cucumber, parsley, red onions, olives and feta (greek salad inspired). In fall, use roasted veggies, like butternut squash, mushrooms, kale, garnish with pomegranate seeds and toasted pecans. In winter, add sweet potatoes, delicate squash, roasted fennel, dried cranberries and toasted pumpkin seeds. In spring, add grated carrots, spinach, asparagus. There can be as many variations of it as you want, using fresh produce you have in your fridge or pantry ingredients. Fresh herbs, shallots, scallions are always great to add to salads like that. You can use white, red or a mix of the colors, they all are good. Frozen vegetables are also great to use in the salad (corn, artichokes).



## Ingredients - 1 - any season

- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 medium size tomato
- 1 Persian or 1/4 English cucumber
- 1 shallot or 1/4 red onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup kalamata or green olives
- 1/2 cup feta
- Olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper



# QUINOA SALAD

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients - 2

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- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 cup roasted butternut squash
- 1 cup roasted mushrooms
- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
- Handful or chopped parsley
- Lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper



## Ingredients - 3

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- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 cup roasted zucchini
- 2 cups chopped kale
- 1 cup roasted mushrooms
- 1/4 cup dried fruit (cranberries, raisins, goji berries)
- 1/4 cup nuts or seeds (walnuts, pecans, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds)
- Handful or parsley
- Olive oil, lemon juice, salt, paper





# QUINOA SALAD

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients - 4

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- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 cup chickpeas or beans
- 2 cups spinach
- 1 roasted fennel
- 1/4 cup dried fruit
- 1/4 cup nuts or seeds



## Ingredients - 5

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- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 cup cooked shrimp (frozen cooked shrimp is great)
- 1 cup corn kernels (use frozen)
- 3 pickled cucumbers or 1 tbsp capers or 1/2 cup olives
- 1 shallot
- Handful of parsley
- Lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper



# CHICKPEAS

## EASY & SIMPLE

They are one of my all time favorite ingredients, because:

1. They are high in fiber, protein, and healthy fats, good to manage the weight, support heart and gut health.
2. They are delicious and very versatile. You can use them in soups, stews, salads, spreads, snack, list is long.
3. They are affordable and super nutritious. Different spice mix will give them different flavor (curry, chili, tahini, ginger/garlic)



It's always handy to have a can of chickpeas in your pantry for quick use, but if you buy a bag of dried chickpeas (\$2.00 per pound), you will save some money. You will need to soak them overnight to rehydrate them and cook for an hour. Add a tea spoon of baking powder and it will hasten the cooking time. I also like to add couple of bay leaves in to give the flavor to the chickpeas. After they are cooked, portion in either small containers or ziplock bags and either freeze or place in the fridge (lasts well for a week). Here are some of my favorite recipes using chickpeas





# CHICKPEA CURRY

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients

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- 2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 1 can coconut milk (plus 2 cups water)
- 1 of each, onion, carrot, red bell pepper, chopped
- Few garlic cloves, chopped, 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp. Curry powder
- 2 tbsp. Neutral or coconut oil
- 2 tbsp tomato paste/sauce/fresh tomatoes (whatever you have at home). If you are adding sauce, 1 cup is fine. 2 fresh tomatoes.



## Directions

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1. Cook onions, carrot and bell pepper on a medium low heat for about 10 minutes, stir as it needs.
2. Add garlic and ginger, cook for two more minutes.
3. Add chickpeas, tomato paste, stir and cook for few more minutes.
4. Add coconut milk, curry powder, salt, let it boil, turn the temperature down and simmer for about 20 minutes.



# CHICKPEA SHAKSHUKA

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients

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- 2 cups cooked chickpeas (one can)
- 2 fresh tomatoes (or 2 cups tomato sauce/crushed tomatoes)
- 1/2 of each, onions, red bell pepper, chopped
- Few garlic cloves (as many as you like, but do not over do, keep the balance, it's an essential ingredient in cooking and in life in general)
- 2 tbsp. Oil (any oil you have)
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp. Zatar spice mix (or dried oregano and basil)
- Good olive oil to drizzle over at the end
- Salt, pepper



## Directions

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1. Cook onions and peppers in oil in a medium low heat for about 5-7 minutes, until they are translucent.
2. Add garlic, stir and cook for two minutes.
3. Add chickpeas, cook a little bit, stirring as it needs.
4. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper, let it boil, turn the temperature down and simmer until the tomatoes are getting cooked, about 5-8 minutes.
5. Using a spoon make a nest for eggs, drop whole eggs in the sauce, season with salt, pepper, cover and cook for two minutes until the egg white is set and yolks are still runny, sprinkle zatar spice mix and drizzle good olive oil over. Good olive oil is another flavoring agent in dishes.





# CHICKPEA SALAD

## EASY & SIMPLE

You can create as many variations of chickpea salad as you want using the ingredients that you either have at home, or are seasonal and you want to include them in your daily diet. Here's some ideas:

## Ingredients - 1

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- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- 1 persian/or 1/4 of English cucumber, cubed
- 1 tomato, cubed
- Small chunk of feta
- 1 shallot
- 1/2 cup olives
- For the dressing simple lemon juice, vinegar, salt and pepper will do the trick.

## Notes

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This dish resembles a Greek salad with the addition of chickpeas for added protein, texture, and flavor. It's particularly enjoyable in the summer or fall, a time when our bodies crave refreshing salads and when tomatoes and cucumbers are in season. Thinly sliced radishes make a great addition if you have them, but if not, it's still delicious without them.

If you have some radishes add it thinly slices, if not no worries.



# CHICKPEA SALAD

EASY & SIMPLE

## Ingredients - 2

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- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- 1 avocado, cubed
- 3-4 radishes, thinly sliced
- Few sprigs parsley
- 1 shallot
- salt, pepper, lemon juice, olive oil



## Ingredients - 3

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- 1 cup chickpeas
- 1 red bell pepper
- Few leaves of kale, chopped
- Salt, pepper, lemon juice/or vinegar, olive oil



# CHICKPEAS WITH MUSHROOMS AND KALE

## EASY & SIMPLE

This meal is among my top favorites for its simplicity and speed, offering quick preparation, nutritional value, and a bounty of flavors.

## Ingredients

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- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- 1 package (more or less) any mushrooms (cremini, white, shiitake), sliced
- Handful of kale leaves or a bag of baby kale (they fade away)
- 2 tbsp. Oil (any)
- salt, pepper, any spices or dried herbs of your choice

## Directions

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1. Heat the oil and cook the mushrooms till they are crispy, do not over stir them, stir few times only so that they can get color.
2. Remember color is the flavor.
3. Add the chickpeas (if you are using canned chickpeas, drain and rinse them first), cook for few minutes, add kale, for about a minute, season with salt, pepper and any fresh or dried herbs and spices that you have.





# CHICKPEA SOUP

## EASY & SIMPLE

Whether you have a can of your favorite chickpea brand or the one you cooked and saved, they all will make a quick and healthy soup that will fill you up and give you all the nutrients your body needs. Just because I had all those veggies at home, I used them, but you are free to use whatever veggies you have (cauliflower, broccoli, potatoes, squash, zucchini, mushrooms, carrots, onion, green beans, kale, spinach). This is a great soup if you are feeling a cold coming on or are getting sick.

## Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 2 carrots, graded or cubed
- 1 yellow squash, sliced
- White mushrooms (about 10), sliced
- Handful of kale, roughly chopped
- 2 tomatoes, skin removed and chopped
- Cilantro, chopped
- 1 tsp. Grated ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Olive oil
- 1 bay leaf
- salt, freshly ground black pepper

## Directions

1. I don't like to use store bought stock/broth. When you make a vegetable soup, water is the best to be used. All the vegetables that go into the soup infuse and flavor the water and it's light, clean and flavorful.
2. In a medium pot, add about one quart water, add chickpeas, carrots, mushrooms and a bay leaf and cook for about 10 minutes.
3. Add squash, tomatoes and kale and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Season with salt, pepper, ginger, garlic, cilantro, drizzle olive oil and turn the heat off. This way everything will stay fresh and super flavorful.



# ROASTED SEASONED CHICKPEAS

## EASY & SIMPLE

This is a great snack and you can use the seasoning you have or like. Here's some options: curry seasoning mix, jerk seasoning mix, steak seasoning mix, dried rosemary and garlic, oregano and paprika. You'll need generous amount of olive oil, salt and pepper as well.



## Directions

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1. Preheat the oven to 350.
2. Make sure the chickpeas are well dried. Place them in a bowl, add olive oil, season with your favorite seasoning mix and place in the oven for about 20-25 minutes until they are toasted and crispy outside and still soft inside.
3. You can use them for snacking or sprinkle over your salad.



# TUNA AND POTATO SALAD

## EASY & SIMPLE

It's always good to have canned tuna in your pantry. It's such a versatile ingredient. You can make quick tuna salad adding capers, olives or pickled cucumbers, celery, lemon juice, olive oil or mayo, eat that with crackers or over salad, both are very tasty and healthy.

I also love to have some kind of potatoes in my fridge, whether it's baby potatoes or fingerling, red or golden. I use them for salad, for soup, or roasting in the oven. They are such a comfort food for me.

Canned tuna or salmon and potatoes are such a great and simple combination. You don't need to add much to make it delicious. Just some pickles, capers or olives, maybe some celery for crunch, parsley for the flavor and color, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper. That's it.

## Ingredients

- 1 canned tuna
- 2-3 medium size golden or red potatoes
- 2 celery sticks, finely chopped
- 3-4 pickled cucumbers, diced or 1 tbsp.  
Capers or 1/2 cup olives
- 1 lemon zest and juice
- 2 tbsp. Olive oil
- salt, pepper
- Handful of parsley

## Directions

1. Boil the potatoes in salted water for about 15-20 minutes until they are fork tender, drain and let them cool down a little bit so that they are easy to peel.
2. Cut into small or desirable sized cubes and place into the bowl, add tuna, celery, pickled cucumbers, parsley, lemon juice/zest, olive oil, season with salt, pepper, mix well and enjoy.





# BEAN SALAD

## EASY & SIMPLE

This is such a simple, fast and delightful dish, can be prepared in 5 minutes and is as affordable as it gets. I like to use frozen shrimp from Trader Joe's that you can defrost early with just rinsing with water and pat dry with paper towel.

## Ingredients

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- 2 cups shrimp
- 1 bag of spinach
- 1 can or beans (white or cannelloni)
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Olive oil, salt, pepper

## Directions

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1. Heat the oil in a skillet, add garlic and cook for a minute or two on medium heat.
2. Add shrimp, cook until they change color from opaque to pink, add beans, spinach, let the spinach cook down, season with salt, pepper, drizzle more olive oil and that's it.



# COMFORT FOOD

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Chilis, soups, and stews provide an excellent opportunity to blend your chosen vegetables, legumes, and proteins into a single dish. Prepare them in advance to enjoy throughout the week. These one-pot meals are simple to assemble, letting the heat do its magic. They invite improvisation, with no need to follow the recipes strictly. The only thing you need to focus on is maintaining balance, not just in the kitchen but also in life.





# BEEF CHILI

## COMFORT FOOD

Most of us are familiar to the traditional chili which is cooked beef, beans and tomato sauce with chili spices (very strong cumin flavor). It's too greasy and not as balanced or nutritionally appealing to me. Here's my version of light, delicious, healthy and super comforting chili.

## Ingredients

### 8-10 servings

- 1 yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2-3 medium sized carrots, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 4-5 garlic cloves
- 1 pound ground beef (or turkey or chicken)
- 2 cans of beans (your choice) If you cook your own beans use about 3 cups (or more if you like)
- 1 cup tomato sauce or crushed tomatoes or 1 tbsp. Tomato paste
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp. Chili spice mix or 1 tsp each, ground cumin, paprika, coriander
- Handful or cilantro
- salt, chili flakes
- Lime to garnish



## Directions

1. Heat a medium size or large pot and add ground beef, break the meat with wooden spoon and let it cook to get some color for about 4 minutes on medium high heat.
2. Add onions, garlic, carrots and bell pepper, stir and cook everything together covered for about 10 minutes, stir from time to time, but not all the time, let the heat do its magic.
3. Add beans, tomato sauce, 2 cups water, spices, bay leaf, season with salt, chili flakes, cover, let it boil, turn the temperature down and cook for 10 more minutes, add cilantro and garnish with lime.





# CHICKEN CHILI

## COMFORT FOOD

This is one of my all-time favorite comfort foods, perfect for the fall and winter seasons. It's light yet packed with nutrients, simple to prepare, and brimming with flavor. Whether you use chicken thighs or breasts is entirely your choice. I have a preference for thighs, as they seem more flavorful to me. If spinach isn't your thing, kale is a great alternative.

## Ingredients

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- 4 chicken thighs, boneless, skinless, cubed
- 1 yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2 medium size carrots, chopped
- 2 cans white beans or 3 cups cooked beans
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cups water
- 1 bag baby spinach
- 1 tsp each, cumin, coriander, paprika
- Bunch of cilantro
- Salt, pepper
- Lime to garnish

## Directions

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1. Heat the medium size pot well. If you are using chicken breast that has no fat, use about 2 tbsp. Oil. If you are using thighs, they have some fat and I use that instead of oil or butter.
2. Add chicken pieces and let them cook for a few minutes. Do not stir until they change color. This way, it'll be easier to stir.
3. Add onions, carrots, bay leaves, salt, pepper, spices, stir, cover the pot and let all cook in medium low heat for about 10 minutes, until the onions dissolve.
4. Add beans, water, let it boil, turn the heat down, cover and simmer for about 10 minutes, add spinach, cilantro and turn the heat off. Garnish with the lime.



# BEEF STEW

## COMFORT FOOD

You've probably heard of beef bourguignon from the movie "Julie and Julia" which is a simple beef stew with pearl onions and mushrooms, cooked in wine and tomato sauce until it melts in your mouth. Sounds fancy, but it's super easy to make and is pure comfort food. It's even better next day.

## Ingredients

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- 1 pound beef stew meat
- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 medium size carrots, cut into an inch size chunks
- 4 red potatoes, cut in chunks
- 2 cups tomato sauce or 3 medium size fresh tomatoes
- 2 tbsp oil
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup red wine
- 4 cups water
- salt, pepper, cilantro



## Directions

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1. Heat the oil in a medium size pot, add beef pieces and brown them on both sides, takes about 10 minutes total.
2. Add onions, garlic, salt, pepper, bay leaves, turn the heat down, cover and cook for about 10 minutes to let the onions soften up and dissolve.
3. Add the red wine, let the alcohol evaporate, add potatoes, carrots, tomato sauce, water, cover and either place in the oven on 350 for 3 hours or let it simmer on low heat on the stove. Do not stir while it's cooking. The beef should be very soft and tender.
4. Season with more salt and pepper, cilantro and turn the heat off.



# CHICKEN STEW

## COMFORT FOOD

Four simple ingredients: Chicken, onions, tomatoes and bay leaf, create an amazing flavor, that is hard to forget. For this dish, I like to use a whole chicken and you don't need to butcher it yourself. Thankfully, you can buy already butchered chicken or just the pieces that you like, wings, thighs or drumsticks, they all work well.

## Ingredients

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- 1 whole chicken, cut into pieces
- 3 large yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 3 large tomatoes, skinned and chopped or 2 cups crushed tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 egg
- salt, pepper, chili flakes

## Directions

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1. Heat a medium sized pot, add chicken pieces, add onions, salt, pepper, bay leaves, cover and cook in its steam for about 30 minutes, stirring from time to time.
2. Add tomatoes, one cup water and cook about 10 more minutes.
3. Whisk an egg in a bowl, add 1/2 cup water and pour into the stew.
4. Turn the heat off.





# PORK STEW

## COMFORT FOOD

One of my childhood favorites. I still remember the smell of this dish in the kitchen.

## Ingredients

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- About a pound of pork shoulder, leg, ribs or mix of all the above. Meat that has some fat and bones always makes tastier stew
- 3-4 medium size potatoes (any kind you have, red, yellow, russet), peeled and cut into inch and 1/2 size pieces
- 2 medium size carrots, cut into inch size pieces
- 2 large yellow or white onions, sliced thinly
- 3 medium size tomatoes, peeled and cubed, or 2 cups tomato sauce/crushed tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- Handful of cilantro, chopped
- 2-3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tsp. Chili flakes
- salt, pepper



## Directions

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1. Heat a pot and place the pork pieces with the fat side down evenly, let the fat render and the pieces get crispy.
2. Season with a little salt and black pepper, add onions, bay leaves, stir and cover the pot, turn the heat down and let them cook in its steam until the onions become very translucent and soft. Stir if needed, not all the time, let the heat and steam do its magic. Takes about 10-15 minutes, do not rush this process, just enjoy the wonderful aromas of meat, onion and bay leaves.
3. Add tomato sauce, let it cook for a few minute.
4. Add potatoes, carrots, about 4 cups water, season well with more salt and pepper, chili flakes, let it boil, turn the heat down, cover the pot and simmer for about 30 minutes or until the meat is cooked. Add cilantro, garlic and turn the heat off.



# BEANS

## COMFORT FOOD

Legumes hold a special place in my heart for their incredible versatility. They seamlessly integrate into various dishes, enriching soups, stews, and salads. Experimenting with spices and herbs brings out their unique flavors. I prefer buying dry beans, soaking them overnight, and cooking them with a few bay leaves. Some are used immediately, while the rest are stored for later use, keeping well in the fridge and even longer in the freezer.

Growing up, beans were a staple in our daily meals, especially the exceptionally tasty varieties from a region in Georgia where my uncle farmed. Helping him harvest beans and potatoes meant we always had a share of these delicious legumes. My all-time favorite way to enjoy them was straight from the pot, served in a bowl with a bit of their cooking liquid, seasoned with salt, pepper, a small piece of butter, thinly sliced shallots, and cilantro. This simple, yet flavorful dish remains my favorite, especially when enhanced with high-quality olive oil.

After eating my share of the perfectly cooked beans, my mother would prepare a bean soup with cooked onions, garlic, and herbs. As a child, I wasn't fond of onions, but I've since developed a better version of this soup. The trick is to thoroughly crush the beans; the starch beneath their skin helps thicken and creamify the soup. Bean skins can be tough, requiring slow and gentle cooking to soften, though this varies with different varieties – black beans have tougher skins, while white beans soften more readily.

My preferred types are kidney, white (cannellini), and pinto beans. Now, let's dive into some recipes.



# BEAN SOUP

## COMFORT FOOD

Super simple, delicious and very versatile, pure comfort dish.

## Ingredients

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- About 4 cups beans
- 2-3 medium size potatoes (red or golden), cubed in 1/2 inch size pieces
- 2 medium size carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 whole onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- Handful of cilantro
- salt, pepper, chili flakes, ground coriander (1 tsp)
- 2 tbsp olive or other oil
- About 1 quart water



## Directions

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1. Heat a medium size pot, add oil and cook onions, carrots and celery on medium heat for about 3-4 minutes, until they are softened and slightly cooked.
2. Add potatoes, water, beans, bay leaves, cover, let it boil and after it boils turn down the heat and let it simmer for about 20 minutes, until the potatoes are cooked.
3. Season with salt, pepper, chili flakes, coriander, cilantro and garlic and turn the heat off.





# BEAN SALAD

## COMFORT FOOD

Super simple, delicious and very versatile, pure comfort dish.

## Ingredients

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- 3 cups cooked beans
- 1 shallot, thickly sliced
- Handful of cilantro
- 3 tbsp. high quality olive oil
- 2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- salt, pepper



## Directions

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1. Place the beans in a bowl. If you are using canned beans, two cans will be enough, just drain and rinse them well before.
2. Add all the ingredients listed above, mix well. If the beans are warm they absorb the flavors easier.





# DAILY BITES

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Hope you enjoyed!

