



10

Fast and Frugal
RECIPES

from Ketchup With That

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BAKED OATMEAL

A bowl of oatmeal for breakfast is a nutritious way to start the day, but not everyone is a fan. Baked Oatmeal is the perfect solution. You can make a double batch and keep it in the fridge (or freeze it in individual serving) to heat up for super-quick breakfasts. I like to serve this with a bit of maple syrup and milk poured over the hot baked oatmeal.

Ingredients:

- 2 cup rolled oats (use old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats, but not instant)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup raisins
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 egg

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Grease an 8x8-inch baking pan.

In medium-sized mixing bowl, stir together oats, baking powder, salt, sugar and raisins.

In separate bowl, beat together milk, vegetable oil, applesauce and egg until thoroughly mixed.

Add milk mixture to oats and stir to combine.

Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 25-30 minutes until all of the liquid has been absorbed and the baked oatmeal is lightly browned.

Remove from oven and serve. **Makes 4-6 servings.**

BAKED OATMEAL, CONTINUED

VARIATIONS

Coconut Baked Oatmeal:

Replace milk with coconut milk. Add ½ cup of flaked coconut.
Replace applesauce with crushed pineapple.

Cranberry Maple Baked Oatmeal:

Replace sugar with maple syrup. Reduce applesauce to 1/3 cup. Replace raisins with dried cranberries.

BREAKFAST PARFAITS

Sometimes just changing things up a bit can encourage even the pickiest eater to try something new. These breakfast parfaits are a no-cook meal that you can prepare quickly the night before for a ready-to-go breakfast.

The uncooked oatmeal will soften up perfectly overnight when it's layered with yogurt and fresh or frozen fruit. This recipe is infinitely variable to accommodate the preferences of your people.

Ingredients (per serving):

- ½ cup quick-cooking oatmeal
- ½ cup fruit-flavored yogurt (or plain yogurt if you prefer)
- ½ cup fresh or frozen fruit, diced or whole if using berries (I like to use frozen raspberries and blueberries)

Directions:

In each 12-oz drinking glass (or small mason jar) layer ¼ cup oats, ¼ cup fruit, and ¼ cup yogurt. Repeat layers.

Put glass in the fridge overnight and serve cold in the morning.

BLACK BEAN DIP

Served with crackers, tortilla chips and a selection of vegetables, this dip makes an easy light meal. You can also serve it as a snack or appetizer. Use leftovers in a wrap for a quick lunch.

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped fine (about 1 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 cups cooked black beans (or 1 can, drained and rinsed)
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Heat a pan over medium heat and add oil.

Add onions and cook for a few minutes until it begins to soften. (If it starts to brown, turn down the heat.) Add the garlic, and cook for 1-2 minutes longer.

Add the salt and cumin and cook for 1 minute, stirring to keep the cumin from burning. Add the beans and coat with the onion mixture.

Add the salsa, oregano and ground pepper and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Stir to prevent sticking. (Depending on what brand of salsa you are using, the mixture may become very thick and may stick easily. Add water as needed to prevent sticking.)

Take the pan off the heat. Mash the mixture with a potato masher or gricer. (You can puree the mixture in your food processor if you prefer, but I like a chunkier texture.)

Stir in the cheese and spoon the mixture into a 9-inch baking dish. Bake the dip for 10-15 minutes until it is hot and bubbly and serve. **Serves 4-6 as a light meal, and 8-10 as an appetizer.**

Make ahead:

You can prepare the up to three days in advance. Store tightly wrapped in the fridge, then bake for 20-25 minutes.

TACO BEEF DIP

This is a healthier version of the popular taco dip. It works well as a light meal, or as an appetizer. Vary it according to the preferences in your house.

Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped fine (about 1 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb. lean ground *beef* (*if you are using medium-ground beef, you will need to drain the fat off after browning the meat*)
- 3 tablespoons taco seasoning (you can use a package or [make your own](#))
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 cups chopped vegetables (*I use cucumber and red peppers*)
- 1 cup salsa
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Directions:

Heat a pan over medium heat and add oil.

Add onions and cook for a few minutes until it begins to soften. (If it starts to brown, turn down the heat.) Add the garlic, and cook for 1-2 minutes longer.

Add the beef and cook, stirring, until no longer pink. (If you are using medium-ground beef, drain off the fat before proceeding with the recipe.) Add the taco seasoning and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Place the meat mixture in a 9x9-inch baking dish. Spread sour cream over meat. Top with chopped vegetables.

Cover vegetables with salsa and sprinkle with chopped green onions. Top with grated cheese.

Serve with tortilla chips or crackers.

Serves 4-6 as a light meal, or 10-12 as an appetizer or snack.

Make ahead:

You can prepare the beef in advance and store in the fridge for up to two days, or freeze for up to two months. Thaw completely before preparing the dip.

GREEK PASTA SALAD

This is one of my favorite summer meals, and is great any time of year. It makes a nice, healthy packed lunch. Using sun-dried tomatoes instead of fresh tomatoes will help keep the salad from getting watery. If you are going to serve it all at one meal, you can use 3 fresh tomatoes chopped into 1" chunks.

Ingredients:

- 6 cups cooked rotini or penne
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Juice from 2 lemons (about ¼ cup)
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar (optional)
- 1 medium cucumber, cut in 1" chunks
- 2 red bell peppers, cut in 1" chunks
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 10 Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- ½ cup slivered sun-dried tomatoes (soak them in warm water for 5 minutes before adding to the salad)
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- ¼ cup fresh chopped parsley
- 1 teaspoon red chili pepper flakes (optional)
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- ½ head of romaine lettuce, chopped into 1" strips (optional)

Directions:

In large mixing bowl, toss the pasta with the olive oil, lemon juice and balsamic vinegar (if using).

Add remaining ingredients and toss well.

Divide lettuce (if using) among serving bowls, and top with salad.

Serves 8-10.

BIG BATCH SPAGHETTI SAUCE

Spaghetti is one meal that my kids will always eat, so I usually have some of this sauce on hand for a 'cheap and cheerful' meal. I buy canned tomatoes when they go on sale for \$1 and use it in this sauce. This makes enough sauce for 6 meals for my family of 5. I also use it in the Easy Lasagna recipe that is included in this ebook.

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 6 medium onions, finely chopped
- 8-10 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 lbs lean or medium ground beef
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 12-oz can tomato paste
- 6 28-oz (791 ml) cans diced tomatoes (*whiz them in the blender or food processor to break up the larger chunks of tomato*)
- ¼ cup dried oregano
- ¼ cup dried basil
- 2 tablespoons dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried rosemary
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt (you will need to vary this depending on the brand of tomatoes you use)
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground pepper
- 2 teaspoons dried chili pepper flakes
- 1 cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese (optional)

Directions:

Heat a stock pot over medium heat and add oil.

Add onions and cook for a few minutes until they begin to soften. (If the onions start to brown, turn down the heat.) Add the garlic, and cook for 1-2 minutes longer.

Add 1 teaspoon of the salt to the onion mixture and cook until it dissolves.

Add the ground beef and cook, breaking up large chunks, until the beef is browned. Add the Worcestershire sauce and tomato paste

and stir until thoroughly combined. Cook, stirring occasionally, for an additional 5 minutes.

Add the canned tomatoes, oregano, basil, thyme, rosemary, brown sugar, remaining salt, ground pepper and chili flakes.

Bring mixture to a simmer, then reduce heat and continue to simmer for 40-45 minutes. Stir frequently to prevent sticking. The sauce should have thickened a bit, and some of the water from the tomatoes should have evaporated. Cook for 5-10 minutes longer if the sauce still needs to thicken.

If using cheese, stir it in now until melted, and remove the pot from the heat.

Taste the sauce and adjust the seasonings if needed. The flavors will meld together as the sauce cools.

Divide sauce into containers for freezing, and let cool in the fridge without lids. When sauce is cool, place lids on. Label and store in the freezer.

The sauce will keep for 3-4 months in the freezer.

EASY LASAGNA

If you have some of the Big Batch Spaghetti Sauce in the freezer, you can put together a simple lasagna in no time at all. A lasagna made with the cooled sauce (before the sauce has been frozen) can be wrapped up and frozen for up to 3 months. You don't need to cook the noodles before you make the lasagna, which helps keep things quick and simple.

Ingredients:

- 5 cups spaghetti sauce (thawed if frozen)
- 2 cups grated mozzarella
- 1 cup grated cheddar
- ½ cup grated parmesan
- 10-12 lasagna noodles (uncooked)

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

In a mixing bowl, stir together the mozzarella, cheddar and parmesan cheeses.

Spread one cup of spaghetti sauce in the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish. Cover with half of the lasagna noodles, overlapping as needed so that there are no bare patches.

Spread 2 cups of sauce over the noodles. Sprinkle 1 cup of the cheese mixture over the sauce.

Cover with the remaining noodles. Spread the rest of the sauce over and top with remaining cheese.

Bake for 40-50 minutes until the cheese is melted and the top is browned. Let the lasagna sit for 10 minutes before cutting.

Makes 8-10 servings.

Variations:

You can vary this recipe in lots of ways. Use different cheeses, add roasted vegetables, add an additional layer (but make sure your pan is deep enough)...

SIMPLE TOMATO SAUCE

This simple sauce is quick to put together and makes a nice light pasta meal. It goes well with rotini or cavatappi.

Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 19-oz (791 ml) can diced tomatoes (with juice)
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried chili pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- Grated Parmesan or Romano cheese (for serving)

Directions:

Heat a pan over medium heat and add oil.

Add onions and cook for a few minutes until they begin to soften. (If the onions start to brown, turn down the heat.) Add the garlic, and cook for 1-2 minutes longer.

Add ½ teaspoon of the salt and stir until the salt has dissolved. Add tomatoes, ground pepper, oregano, basil, chili pepper flakes and brown sugar.

Simmer sauce gently over medium-low heat for about 20 minutes until some of the liquid from tomatoes has evaporated, and the sauce has thickened. Taste and add remaining salt if needed.

While the sauce is simmering, prepare your pasta. Toss cooked pasta with 1 cup of the sauce. Divide pasta into serving bowls. Top with remaining sauce and sprinkle with the grated Parmesan or Romano.

Makes 4-5 servings.

Make ahead:

This sauce can be prepared a couple of days in advance and refrigerated until needed. Heat gently in a pan over medium-low heat, or microwave for 4-5 minutes, stirring halfway through the reheating time.

The sauce can also be frozen for up to 3 months. Thaw and reheat.

Variations:

Add 10 pitted and slivered Kalamata olives and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sliced artichoke hearts to the sauce at the same time that you add the tomatoes.

You can also add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sun-dried tomatoes, and top with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of crumbled feta instead of Parmesan or Romano.

APPLE MINCEMEAT CRUMBLE

This is a nice dessert during winter. The apples balance the mincemeat so that it is not overpowering. Fast and easy to put together, but still special enough to serve for company.

Ingredients:

- 4 medium apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 cups mincemeat
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/3 cup butter, cut in small cubes
- ½ cup oatmeal

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Toss apples with the all-purpose flour. Add mincemeat and stir until thoroughly mixed. Place apple mixture in 9-inch round pie plate or 9x9-inch baking dish.

Topping: In small bowl, stir together whole wheat flour, brown sugar and cinnamon. Toss butter cubes in the flour mixture, then cut in the butter until the mixture is crumbly. Add the oatmeal and stir to mix.

Sprinkle the topping over the apples in the baking dish. Press lightly on the topping to pack it down slightly. Place dish on a cookie sheet, and bake for 35-40 mins, or until mixture is bubbly and apples are tender.

Serve warm.

Makes 6-8 servings.

Make ahead:

The dish can be prepared up to two days ahead and kept in the fridge until ready to bake. Add 10 minutes to the baking time.

To freeze, mix apple, all-purpose flour and minciment and freeze separately from crumble. Thaw apple mixture before baking, and sprinkle with the topping mixture.

PEANUT BUTTER BITES

These no-bake treats taste like Reese's peanut butter cups. You can freeze them to have on hand anytime.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups peanut butter
- 2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 2-1/2 cups semi-sweet or milk chocolate chips
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon corn syrup (optional)

Directions:

In a medium pot, melt the butter and peanut butter together and stir until they are thoroughly combined.

Take the mixture off the heat and add the graham cracker crumbs and icing sugar. Stir until everything is completely mixed.

Spoon about 1 teaspoon of the mixture into the bottom of 1" baking cups. As the mixture cools it will thicken up, so press the filling down to smooth it out if needed.

Melt the chocolate and oil in the microwave by heating for 30 seconds at a time until the chocolate is completely melted. Stir after each 30 second interval. Add the corn syrup if using. (The corn syrup will help the chocolate stay glossy when it hardens.)

Spoon the chocolate over the peanut butter filling in the cups. If the chocolate becomes too thick as you are working, soften it up by heating for 30 seconds again in the microwave.

Let the cups cool until the chocolate is firm.

Makes approximately 100 1-inch bites.

Variation:

These can be made as bars instead of in mini baking cups. Spread the peanut butter mixture in the ungreased pan that has the bottom lined with parchment paper. Spread melted chocolate over.

Cut into 1" squares when chocolate is firm. You can freeze the bars before or after cutting into squares.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Here are six of my favorite recipe sites:

Rock Recipes

www.rockrecipes.com

Barefeet in the Kitchen

www.barefeetinthekitchen.com

Budget Bytes

www.budgetbytes.com

Flourish

www.kingarthurfLOUR.com/blog

Mennonite Girls Can Cook

www.mennonitegirlscancook.ca

Simply Recipes

www.simplyrecipes.com