

Weeknight
Cooking


MELISSA GOES MEATLESS



Melissa d'Arabian makes Meatless Monday a lot more fun. Try one of these hearty vegetarian dinners from her new cookbook.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTONIS ACHILLEOS





"In the wintertime, I crave stick-to-your-ribs food. This chili is comforting and full of nutrients."

BUTTERNUT SQUASH CHILI

ACTIVE: 25 min | TOTAL: 1 hr 25 min | SERVES: 4

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, very finely chopped or pressed through a garlic press
- ½ cup dry red wine
- 3 cups butternut squash cubes, in 1-inch pieces
- 1½ cups cooked white beans, such as Great Northern (rinsed, if canned)
- 1 14-ounce can whole tomatoes with juice, chopped into ½-inch pieces
- ½ cup store-bought salsa
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- Plain reduced-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 avocado, halved, pitted and cut into ½-inch cubes

1. Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat, 1 minute. Add the bell pepper and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is soft, about 5 minutes.
2. Stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 more minute. Pour in the wine and let bubble 1 minute, stirring and scraping any browned bits from the bottom of the pot.
3. Add the butternut squash, beans, tomatoes and their juice, salsa, 1 cup water, the chili powder, cumin, cocoa, cinnamon and cayenne, if using. Bring the chili to a simmer, then reduce the heat to medium low and cook, stirring occasionally, until the squash is tender and the chili begins to thicken, about 1 hour. (If the soup looks too thick while cooking, add up to 1 cup more water.) Serve topped with a dollop of Greek yogurt and some avocado cubes.

If you're using dried beans, soak in water overnight, then simmer until just tender, 1 to 1½ hours (or cook 4 to 5 hours in a slow cooker on high).

"Who says meatballs have to have meat? After roasting, eggplant takes on a meaty flavor."



If you serve these with spaghetti, go with whole-grain pasta.

EGGPLANT MEATBALLS WITH MARINARA SAUCE ACTIVE: 25 min | TOTAL: 1 hr 45 min | SERVES: 4

- 1 small eggplant (about 12 ounces)
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- ½ cup cooked white beans, such as cannellini or navy (rinsed, if canned), smashed with a fork
- 1 large clove garlic, very finely chopped or pressed through a garlic press
- ½ cup finely chopped fresh basil leaves or flat-leaf parsley
- ½ cup finely grated parmesan cheese, plus extra for sprinkling (optional)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup whole-wheat panko-style breadcrumbs
- Olive oil mister or nonstick pan spray
- 2 cups marinara sauce (homemade or store-bought)

1. Preheat the oven to 375°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and place the eggplant on top. Use a fork to prick the eggplant 4 times, then place the eggplant in the oven and roast it until it has completely collapsed and a paring knife easily slips into the center, 40 to 50 minutes. Cool the eggplant 20 minutes. Leave the oven on.
2. Slice the eggplant in half lengthwise and use a spoon to scoop out the flesh (discard the skin). Place the roasted eggplant in a medium bowl and stir in the egg and beans. Add the garlic, basil, parmesan, ¾ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper and stir to combine, then mix in the breadcrumbs.
3. Again, line the rimmed baking sheet with a clean sheet of foil and lightly mist it with spray. Shape the eggplant mixture into balls about the size of a golf ball (2 tablespoons per ball; you should get about 16). Place them on the prepared baking sheet and lightly mist the top of the balls with spray. Bake the eggplant balls until they are golden brown and firm, about 20 minutes.
4. While the meatballs cook, warm the marinara sauce in a small saucepan. Remove the meatballs from the oven, sprinkle with a little extra parmesan and serve with the marinara sauce.

SWEET POTATO MILLET BURGERS

ACTIVE: 30 min | TOTAL: 1½ hr | SERVES: 4

- 1 small sweet potato (about 6 ounces),
peeled and chopped into ½-inch pieces
- Kosher salt
- ½ cup millet
- ½ cup cooked chickpeas (rinsed, if canned),
smashed with a fork
- ¾ cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 1 4-ounce can chopped roasted green chiles
(preferably Hatch New Mexican chiles)
- 1 small shallot, very finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- ¾ teaspoon onion powder
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup cornmeal
- 1 to 2 tablespoons canola oil, or olive oil
mister or nonstick pan spray
- 4 whole-wheat burger buns, lightly toasted
- Favorite burger toppings, such as raw onion,
tomato slices and lettuce

1. Bring 1½ cups water to a boil in a small saucepan. Add the sweet potato and ¾ teaspoon salt, reduce the heat to medium low and cook 10 minutes. Add the millet and chickpeas, reduce the heat to low and cook, covered and stirring occasionally, until the millet is tender and absorbs all of the water, about 20 minutes (add more water, if needed). Turn off the heat and transfer the mixture to a medium bowl, letting it cool slightly.

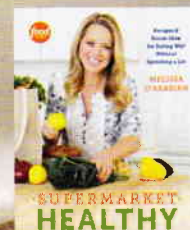
2. Stir in ½ cup breadcrumbs, the chiles, shallot, cumin, paprika, onion powder and ¾ teaspoon salt. Shape the mixture into 4 patties, pressing them so they are about ½ inch thick. Place the patties on a plate and refrigerate 30 minutes.

3. Lightly beat the egg in a medium bowl. In another medium bowl, stir together the remaining ¼ cup breadcrumbs with the cornmeal. Place 1 chilled patty in the beaten egg, turning over the patty to coat the other side. Dip the patty in the cornmeal-breadcrumb mixture and sprinkle the mixture over the top of the patty, lightly pressing it on. Repeat with the remaining 3 patties.

4. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add half of the canola oil and the patties and cook until they are golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the remaining oil to the skillet and use a spatula to carefully flip the patties (they will be somewhat soft); cook the other side until golden brown, 3 to 4 more minutes. Serve each burger on a bun with your favorite toppings.



Millet is a mild-flavored grain that's rich in fiber, iron and B vitamins. If you can't find it, use 1 cup cooked quinoa, brown rice or bulgur.



Find these recipes and more in Melissa's new book, *Supermarket Healthy* (\$25, Clarkson Potter).