

“EASY WINTER FIXINS”

This week I opted for recipes that are light and easy to make. After the sudden onset of holiday foods and treats, as well as a busy schedule, I needed some balance. I have two fish dishes this week, which is sort of unusual for my plans. Fish is easy to cook and can be very inexpensive if you buy frozen wild-caught fish. Even though I live right by the ocean, local fresh fish can be expensive. I prefer fresh fish if I can afford it, though. We're using lots of fresh winter vegetables, and I'm introducing Kefir this week, too. Kefir is a cultured good-for-you yeast that begins with kefir grains. You will probably have to mail-order kefir grains unless you know someone else who makes it (I'll give you a source!). Once you have it, though, you can continue making it and giving extra cultures to your friends! Kefir is excellent for smoothies and, much like other cultured foods, are excellent for your health, aiding in digestion, immunity, metabolism, and much more!

-Roz Mignogna



PAN SEARED CHICKEN WITH PEAS AND PARSLEY BUTTER

WHAT'S FOR DINNER

- Poached Salmon with Cucumber Cream Cheese Salad and Spinach Brown Rice
- Lemon-Herb Halibut with Roasted Winter Veggies
- Grilled Lamb Chops with Winter Herb Pesto and Sautéed Brussels Sprouts
- Pan Seared Chicken with Peas and Parsley Butter

EXTRAS

- Cheesy Caramelized Onion Cornbread

NOURISHING ADDITIONS

- Kefir and Kefir Smoothies

SUGGESTED EXTRAS

(Recipes and shopping list items not included.)

- Make Baja fish tacos with leftover fish using tortillas, cabbage, cheese, and mayonnaise or sour cream
- Brown Rice Leftover Risotto- sauté leftover meat/fish and veggies in butter then stir in cooked brown rice. Season and add cream and/or Parmesan cheese.

PLANNING NOTES

- We're making brown rice this week with the salmon recipe. Sometimes you may want to opt for pre-cooked organic brown rice (with no added ingredients), but to make from scratch, soak rice overnight then plan to cook for about an hour until soft.
- Kefir will take 12 hours to 2+ days to culture. Once you start, it's fun to keep it going!



POACHED SALMON WITH CUCUMBER CREAM CHEESE SALAD



ROASTED WINTER VEGGIES

POACHED SALMON WITH CUCUMBER CREAM CHEESE SALAD AND SPINACH BROWN RICE

Total Time: 15 minutes (*using pre-cooked brown rice-add 1 hour plus an overnight soak if you need to cook brown rice.*)

Ingredients:

For Fish:

4 skin-on filets of salmon (*as needed*)
½ cup white wine
salt and pepper

For Salad:

1-2 cucumbers, thinly sliced with a grater
½ cup cream cheese, at room temperature
1 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
2 tablespoons white vinegar
salt and pepper

For Rice:

½ - 1 cup cooked brown rice per person
¼ cup butter
4 cups fresh spinach (*1 cup frozen- thawed and squeezed to remove all water*)
salt and pepper
¼ cup cream cheese

For salmon, mix 2 cups of water and white wine in a saucepan and bring to a soft boil in a large skillet or saucepan. Poach salmon filets in liquid for 5-7 minutes, until cooked.

For salad, whisk cream cheese, parsley and vinegar, plus salt and pepper, to taste, in a medium bowl. Stir in cucumbers until coated with cheese mixture.

For rice, heat butter in a medium saucepan and stir in brown rice and spinach. Cover and let spinach wilt. Stir in salt and pepper and cream cheese until smooth and creamy and seasoned as needed.

LEMON-HERB HALIBUT WITH ROASTED WINTER VEGGIES

Total Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients:

4 filets white fish (*as needed*)
¼ cup butter
salt and pepper
2 tablespoons flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
2 teaspoons thyme, finely chopped

For Veggies:

4-6 cups winter vegetables, chopped, such as fennel, Brussels sprouts, butternut squash, leeks, sweet potatoes
¼ cup butter, melted
2-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
½ cup Parmesan cheese, finely grated
salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Prepare vegetables first by tossing them with butter, oil, cheese, salt and pepper in a large baking dish. Place in oven for 30-40 minutes, tossing every 10-15 minutes, until veggies are soft.

When vegetables are about 20 minutes from being done, place fish in a baking dish and dot with butter, season liberally with salt and pepper, then sprinkle with herbs. Bake fish for 10-15 minutes, until cooked. Serve fish with vegetables, topped with extra Parmesan and chopped parsley, if desired.

GRILLED LAMB CHOPS WITH WINTER HERB PESTO AND SAUTEED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

¼ cup mixed herbs: thyme, rosemary, flat-leaf parsley
2 cloves of garlic
zest of ½ lemon
2 tablespoons pine nuts
extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper
1-2 lamb chops per person
¼ cup butter
2-4 cups Brussels sprouts, halved

Place herbs, garlic, lemon zest, pine nuts, ¼ cup oil, 2 teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper in a small food processor and pulse until smooth.

Heat oil in a large skillet. Liberally season lamb chops with some of the pesto then sear lamb chops for 2-5 minutes on each side (*depending on thickness and desired doneness*), until cooked.

Meanwhile, heat butter in a large skillet and sauté Brussels sprouts for 8-10 minutes, until softened. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Serve with lamb chops.

PAN SEARED CHICKEN WITH PEAS AND PARSLEY BUTTER

Total time: 30-40 minutes

Ingredients:

6-10 cut chicken pieces (*as much as needed*)
salt and pepper
garlic powder
extra virgin olive oil
2-4 cups peas (*frozen and thawed ok*)
¾ cup butter, (*1/2 cup softened*)
½ cup flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
juice of 1 lemon

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Season chicken liberally with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Heat a few tablespoons oil in a large oven-safe skillet and sear chicken for 5 minutes on each side, until browned. Place chicken in oven for 15-25 minutes (*depending on thickness of pieces*) until fully cooked (*meat will be about 165°F and juice will run clear when sliced*). Remove chicken from pan and place the pan over medium heat. Squeeze lemon juice over pan, scraping bits from bottom of pan and creating a quick sauce.

Meanwhile, heat peas in a saucepan and stir in ¼ cup butter. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. In a medium bowl, mash ½ cup of butter with parsley and a few dashes of salt, until smooth. Serve chicken with peas, topped with a dollop of parsley butter and lemon sauce.

KEFIR AND KEFIR TONIC SMOOTHIES

Kefir is a cultured good-for-you yeast that begins with kefir grains. You will probably have to mail-order kefir grains unless you know someone else who makes it. Once you have it, though, you can continue making it and giving extra cultures to your friends! Kefir is excellent for smoothies and, much like other cultured foods, are excellent for your health, aiding in digestion, immunity, metabolism, and much more!

You can get your kefir grains from Cultures For Health. Go to my resources page and click on the link: <http://realfoodfamily.com/real-food-and-natural-living-resources/#starters>

Basic Kefir Recipe

Recipe is based on a recipe from Sally Fallon Morrell's Nourishing Traditions cookbook.

2 cups fresh whole milk, non-homogenized and preferably raw
 ½ cup good quality cream (optional)
 1 tablespoon kefir grains/kefir starter

Place kefir grains in a fine strainer and rinse with filtered water. Place milk and optional cream in a clean wide-mouth, quart-size mason jar. If milk is cold, place jar in a pan of simmering water until milk reaches room temperature. Add kefir grains to milk, stir well and cover loosely with a cloth. Place in a warm place (65°F-76°F) for 12 hours to 2 days. Stir vigorously occasionally to redistribute the grains. Every time you stir, taste the kefir. When it achieves a tartness to your liking, the kefir is ready. It may also become thick and effervescent, depending on the temperature, incubation time, and the amount of curds you use. Pour the kefir through a strainer into another jar to remove the grains. Store in refrigerator. Use the grains to make another batch of kefir, or prepare them for storage by rinsing them well with water and placing in a small jar with about ½ cup filtered water. They may be stored in the refrigerator several weeks or in the freezer for several months. If they are left too long in storage, they will lose their culturing power.

KEFIR TONIC SMOOTHIE

1 cup frozen fruit, such as strawberries and banana
 dash of lemon zest and juice
 1 cup kefir
 1 tablespoon coconut oil
 1 raw egg yolk (organic/pasture-raised)
 2 teaspoons maple syrup or honey (optional)

Place ingredients and blend until smooth.
 Enjoy the goodness!

CHEESY CARAMELIZED ONION

CORNBREAD

I make this special treat with a delicious pre-made organic cornbread mix that I find at my local health food store. It is typically made with milk, eggs, and melted butter. The ideal way to make this is from scratch with a traditional Masa Harina flour, which is corn flour soaked in limewater.

Ingredients:

Cornbread mix, made with melted butter, eggs, and milk (not oil or water)
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 onion, sliced
 ½ cup red bell pepper, finely chopped (optional)
 salt and pepper
 1 ½ cups cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F (or as directed for cornbread mix). Mix cornbread mix in a large bowl. Heat butter in a saucepan and sauté onions for 10-15 minutes, adding a tablespoon of water every few minutes, until onions are soft and brown. Stir in bell pepper for a 2-4 minutes, and lightly season with salt and pepper. Stir onions and peppers into cornbread batter, then stir in cheese. Butter a baking dish and bake cornbread as directed. Enjoy!