



The Clever Packed Lunch



healthy ideas to save your sanity

for kids
at
school

for
parents
at work

for life
on
the fly

Hazel Key

Dedicated to the two people who
made this all wonderfully necessary:
Samantha & Benjamin

This eBook is also available in print as a soft-backed book, and
can be ordered online from <http://lunchideasforschool.com>

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The Universe will always expose Wisdom,
or the lack of it, given time.

The Clever Packed Lunch



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Too Much On Your Plate?

I recall vividly that first nervous day when my daughter started pre-school, the preparations were made with reverence and love and planned well in advance. But very soon her school days were following one-another in rapid succession. Her lunches were coming home half-eaten, or worse. Gradually the mornings before school became a chore as I searched for new ideas to encourage her to eat, and I began to realise that lunch box food was a whole new game.

A carefully prepared lunch-box is far more than just a healthy lunch; it's a 'parcel of love' that stays with the child when they're away; a reminder of their family. This is not insignificant and I believe it can sow the seeds of emotional resilience. No packaged food or canteen meal can achieve the same.

It became apparent to me that, for children, including young children in child care or Kindergarten, eating interferes with the main focus of their day, which is quite rightly, their learning and play.

So I needed to find foods that were not only extra healthy but extra-interesting. Foods that could survive the journey from home to school and still be appealing. I had to add variety in taste, texture and colour and include all the food groups. And I had to prepare it quickly (sometimes whilst still half asleep or juggling other tasks!) and then repeat the job 5 times a week!

I began experimenting with foods, reading about nutrition and sharing ideas with other mums. Gradually I built a repertoire of ideas and recipes that worked, and when the opportunity arose to manage and operate the organic tuck-shop at my children's school, I took it.

Now the learning began in earnest, and my knowledge-base evolved and widened as I faced feeding children with food intolerances and allergies, and some with fussy habits.

In recent years I've been alarmed by the problem of child obesity and interested in the latest research that tells us we can do more than just build healthy bodies by feeding our kids well; we can actively support their learning through diet by including foods which have been



shown to benefit brain function and concentration, and by reducing foods like refined sugar that do the opposite.

I realised I wanted to share my knowledge, and with the help of Beata Sinclair, a qualified nutritionist, this book emerged.

Beata has edited and approved the book and the nutritional advice within it, in order that you can be confident your children will not only enjoy the food but build a resilient, healthy body in the process.

It's clear that establishing good eating habits very early on in life is crucial for long-term health. I firmly believe that a healthy eating habit is one of the greatest gifts you can give your children and I am delighted to be able to assist you in this task.

My Approach to Healthy Eating

Here are four guidelines that form the basis of my family's healthy diet

Control portion size

I think the portion sizes in the menus I've created are a good guide to establishing normal and healthy eating patterns for active children. If a child is under or over weight, portion sizes need to be adjusted, in addition to other dietary and lifestyle changes, until a healthy stable weight is reached.

Eat as wide a variety of foods as possible

There is no one food that can supply everything the body needs. It seems to me that eating any food in large quantities is not good for the body; any food, even if it's broccoli! That's because it leaves less 'space' in your diet for the other foods which provide the wide variety of nutrients needed for good health.

Hazel has managed to combine her love of healthy food and her obvious competence in the kitchen to present us with a practical source of quick, healthy and delicious meal ideas that will take the stress out of preparing portable food.

The information that you find here is easy to understand, logical and most importantly (for myself as a nutritionist) promises to deliver healthier meals for your family.

Beata Sinclair
BHSc (Nutrition)





The media is a constant source of advice about the latest super-nutrients, and it's easy to get the impression that all you need to do is load your diet with them and health will follow. But many of these nutrients are toxic if eaten in large quantities.

My solution for myself, and my family is to eat a wide variety of healthy food. I don't follow fads, and I've learned to trust myself; to trust my own instincts.

Maintain balance

It's interesting to note that recent research indicates full-fat milk and cheese do not contribute to weight gain and that low-fat diets are not effective in reducing body fat.

I have this chart on my wall at home as a reminder of how to maintain a balanced approach to eating. It's based on official advice published by the US, UK and Australian governments and clearly indicates the five food groups and how much of each we should eat.



What doesn't appear on the chart are the foods of low nutritional value: lollies and sweets, fried foods and other foods high in processed fats and sugars. You may be surprised to hear that I DO, periodically, allow my children very small quantities of these, because I've found that a complete ban can result in either outright rebellion or subversion! And realistically, you can't completely avoid these foods, even if you try.

So I believe that if you are sufficiently disciplined you can allow these low-value foods a tiny space in your childrens' diets as long as you give them little attention in the process, thereby not identifying them as special. In this way I've found I can model a degree of flexibility which they can mirror, so that more is gained than is lost.

Adopt positive nutrition

What that means for me is focusing on what my family can (and should) eat, not dwelling on what we shouldn't. It means filling our diet with great



food that offers good value in terms of its nutrition, leaving little space for processed and junk foods. And it means embracing healthy food, experimenting with recipes and discovering that healthy food really can, and does, taste better.

Two important points

Sugar There seems to be growing awareness about the negative effects of refined sugar on health. Cane sugar is increasingly being singled out as a cause of excess weight and obesity leading to a whole gamut of health problems, including type 2 diabetes; a serious and incurable disease. And it was a shock to me to realise that sugar can, for some people, be addictive (hence my earlier reference to discipline).

And reducing sugar in baking (for example) has some unexpected rewards. When the overwhelming taste of sugar is gone, you realise that the other ingredients, for example butter, dried fruit, nuts and spices, all have the most delicious flavours. Cut down on sugar and you get the taste. Let your children discover the joy of eating less sugar and the health benefits it brings.

I'm focused on reducing sugar in my family's diet (and you'll find my recipes reflect this approach) by:

- Giving careful consideration to the amount of sugar in the recipes; I measure and taste-test to get the balance right.
- Replacing cane sugar with Rapadura (available in health food stores) and/or Honey (organic is good, raw is even better). There are a number of other alternatives available of course, many of which can be found in the sugar section at health food stores and some supermarkets, and I urge you to take a look and find something that appeals to you.

Making changes to life-long habits does require discipline; you may well miss the sweetness initially, but taking small steps everyday can be very effective. I believe it's worth it, and when I remind myself that my kids are developing eating habits for life, I know it.

A Note about Nuts

There is, understandably, a great deal of concern about nuts at school because of the risk of life-threatening allergic reaction in some children. So you may feel it necessary to exclude nuts, particularly for children below the age of seven. This is fine because none of the recipes in the book rely on nuts and you can certainly replace them with other ingredients such as seeds or dried fruit where appropriate. On page 75 you'll also find some alternatives for lunch box menus.

Do be aware though, that for children who live with this terrible condition every single day, it's almost impossible to eliminate the risks entirely.

The generally accepted approach is to focus instead on educating the sufferer about their condition, and on preparing them in the event of an attack. Some schools do not recommend banning nuts, for a wide variety of reasons, and it's important to understand that nuts are a highly nutritious food that can be enjoyed by the vast majority of children over the age of seven.

Rapadura sugar is a healthier alternative to refined cane sugar





Gluten Like many families, we love to eat bread, as well as pasta and a wide variety of cereals. But the general consensus is that our western diet contains too much gluten, and it's easy to see why when you consider all the foods made using wheat, the main source of this protein.

The rapid increase in gluten intolerance is perhaps a sign of long-term over-consumption? I think it makes good sense to reduce gluten intake, even if you're not intolerant of it, and I've realised that I can reduce it for my own family without too much difficulty by:

- Using low gluten cake/pastry flour (available in supermarkets) wherever possible; 'All-Purpose' flour (more than 10% protein) is needed only for bread-making.
- Replacing bread with brown rice or whole grains low in gluten, such as rye sometimes. Note that sourdough, which is a healthier type of bread, is often made with rye flour and is likely to contain less gluten.
- Using spelt flour as an alternative to wheat. Spelt is an ancient form of wheat which is said to be better for digestion. But note that it does handle differently.

My System and How it Works...

If you're looking for a system that takes the drudgery out of school mornings, I've plenty in store...

This book is about forward planning. It offers a complete system for making the process of preparing healthy school lunches more efficient, and includes tried-and-tested recipes that can be adapted to your own family's needs and schedule. It's a system that extends beyond packed lunches too, into food that's ideally suited to our fast-paced unpredictable lifestyles.



It's portable, liberating, go-anywhere food with the potential to replace the 'fast-food' that seems to be so devastating for our health.

Now, some people like having a system created for them, but some don't. So if you're one who doesn't, if you've got a repertoire and a pretty good routine going but you're feeling the need to breathe a bit of fire and life into it, that's fine, because this book is a resource for new ideas and recipes too.



Examine the Book

Read through the book by yourself and then show it to your kids; every single recipe is photographed in colour, making it easy to use and attractive to the eye, especially for younger children.

Go right through it with them if you can, looking at all the recipes and food ideas, discussing and identifying what they like the look of, and what they don't. Make a note of these as you go, or you could print out the whole book and write your notes directly into it.

I find that listening carefully first, before expressing my own views and setting the boundaries works best. That's not always easy of course, especially when life is busy, but when I do manage it I wonder why I don't do it all the time!

'this is a system that extends beyond packed lunches too; into food that's ideally suited to our fast-paced unpredictable lifestyles; it's portable, liberating, go-anywhere food...'

Plan your Menu (and have fun in the process)

On pages 19 to 28 you'll find the complete two-week fully photographed menus. Why two-weeks? Because after two-weeks you can start all over whilst still providing plenty of variety, and because, if you want to, you can then calculate exactly how many Piroshki Buns or Coconut Macaroons (for example) that you need to bake.

Once you've done that you'll be able to plan your shopping and baking for a whole semester (school term).

Now you're ready to print (or photocopy) all ten pages of the two-week menu as well as the sandwich table. And if, based on what your kids have told you, the menus need to be modified, then you'll also need photocopies of any alternative foods or recipes they want to include (see page 75 for a useful photo-resource of ideas).

Why? Because I have an idea to get them really involved; give your kids the tools to modify them! Set them down with print-outs, scissors, paper, glue etc, and with your guidance and approval let them create their own 'daily menu collage'.

If you're struggling to agree on what goes into the lunch, don't worry too much about making sure each daily menu is absolutely balanced; balancing it out over a week may be better if it gains their cooperation. Try to demonstrate flexibility, within your limits.

But if despite all your efforts, your child says she just wants sandwiches for lunch, don't worry. I've found that my children's tastes can change rapidly, and that given time (and as long as I don't turn it into a full-on battle) they'll begin to expand the list of foods that they'll eat.

In the meantime, you can use the sandwich table to identify some new and interesting creations to bring greater variety to their lunch box. And remember that sandwiches can definitely be healthy and don't have to be made freshly each morning; see page 34 for an idea on that. You can then

*Colour Matters!
Try to combine a
number of colours
in the lunch-box
to make it more
appealing: red,
green, orange,
purple, blue.*



*There's a reason why
this attracts; it seems
that our instincts guide
us to brightly coloured,
and especially to a
range of colours
in our food, simply
because this is the
healthiest way to eat.*



*If you need
to modify
the menus
you may find
the ideas
on page 75
useful - print
the page,
and the
menus, and
do a little
cut-and-paste*



simply write down on the menu collage the sandwich they've chosen for each day. Finally you can stick their work-of-art somewhere prominent; on the fridge perhaps, or somewhere else in or near your food preparation area.

Organise your Pantry

With the menu agreed you can go into action. The checklist is there for you to identify everything that's needed for all the chosen recipes and everything else in the two-week menu, including the fresh items they've either chosen or you know they like (i.e. fruit, salad vegetables and bread for example). Go through it and tick what you need. From there you can identify what you don't have, thereby creating your final shopping list.

Organise your Food Storage

Before you go shopping, consider how you're going to store your food. Most of the recipes can be frozen, which is perfect because it really speeds up the final packed lunch preparation, and frozen food retains nutrients well.

However, this may take some re-organisation of your freezer. You may worry that you don't have space for anything else. But take a closer look; go through the freezer. Are there items that you won't be keeping anymore because of the changes you're making? Here's the opportunity for a clear out! You might want to use up these foods before embarking on making the new recipes. Once you've done that you may find you do have enough space.

If not, I suggest that you bake the savoury food choices containing meat, chicken or fish and freeze those in preference to the cookies and cakes. But assuming you now have enough freezer space, you should consider what containers you'll store the food in.

Once you've got your system running, you'll probably find that your freezer naturally empties out towards the end of the semester. I find this makes the school break an ideal opportunity to clean and tidy before re-stocking ready for the coming term!





When buying new containers always choose square or rectangular ones to save space, and keep in mind the volume you plan to store. You could even measure the freezer space before going shopping to ensure you use it as efficiently as possible.

The container pictured left is ideal; it has clips to keep the food secure, and rubber seals to keep it air-tight. And it's made of very transparent plastic, so that you can see exactly what's inside, even when frozen. I find that when using this type of container I don't need labels.

Prepare and Cook

Did you know that frozen vegetables and fruits can sometimes be more nutritious than fresh? Many days can pass between the farmers field and your fridge, in which time precious nutrients can be lost from fresh vegetables. In contrast, frozen fruit and veggies are often processed very quickly and once frozen can retain their nutrients for several months.

Now you're ready for the preparation. I often use the school holidays to get everything prepared and into the freezer before the first day of school and I highly recommend this.

Take a look at the preparation and cooking plan on page 35. By spacing it out and making just a few things each day you can get a lot done without stress and without impacting too much on holiday time. And if you wait until the kids are bored (which is surely inevitable!) you may find yourself with some helpers. Having them participate also means they're more likely to enjoy the food, and as a bonus they'll be learning how to cook for themselves.

Here's a recipe you can make on the fly; ideal for when you find the freezer empty!

'Open Sesame' Egg Noodles (use Rice Noodles for a Gluten Free version)

Cook noodles according to packet instructions. Meanwhile pour boiling water over some frozen mixed vegetables in a heatproof bowl and leave for 5 minutes. Drain the noodles, add a few drops of Sesame Oil and some Sesame Seeds (to taste), stir in the drained veggies and a small can of Salmon and there you have it; a nutritious lunch-box meal!

This can be prepared the night before and stored in the fridge too!



Building a Supportive Pantry

Grocery Shopping

I find supermarkets offer so much choice that grocery shopping can feel really overwhelming. With the vast range on offer it's no wonder we come away with too many bags, too little money and that 'overdosed' feeling!

That's why I always take a shopping list with me. Starting on page 16 is a checklist that can become your personal shopping list. It includes everything needed for the menus and recipes plus every item in the sandwich table as well as items that are useful simply to have on-hand in the pantry, fridge or freezer. So don't be concerned by the length of it; you probably have a number of these items already.

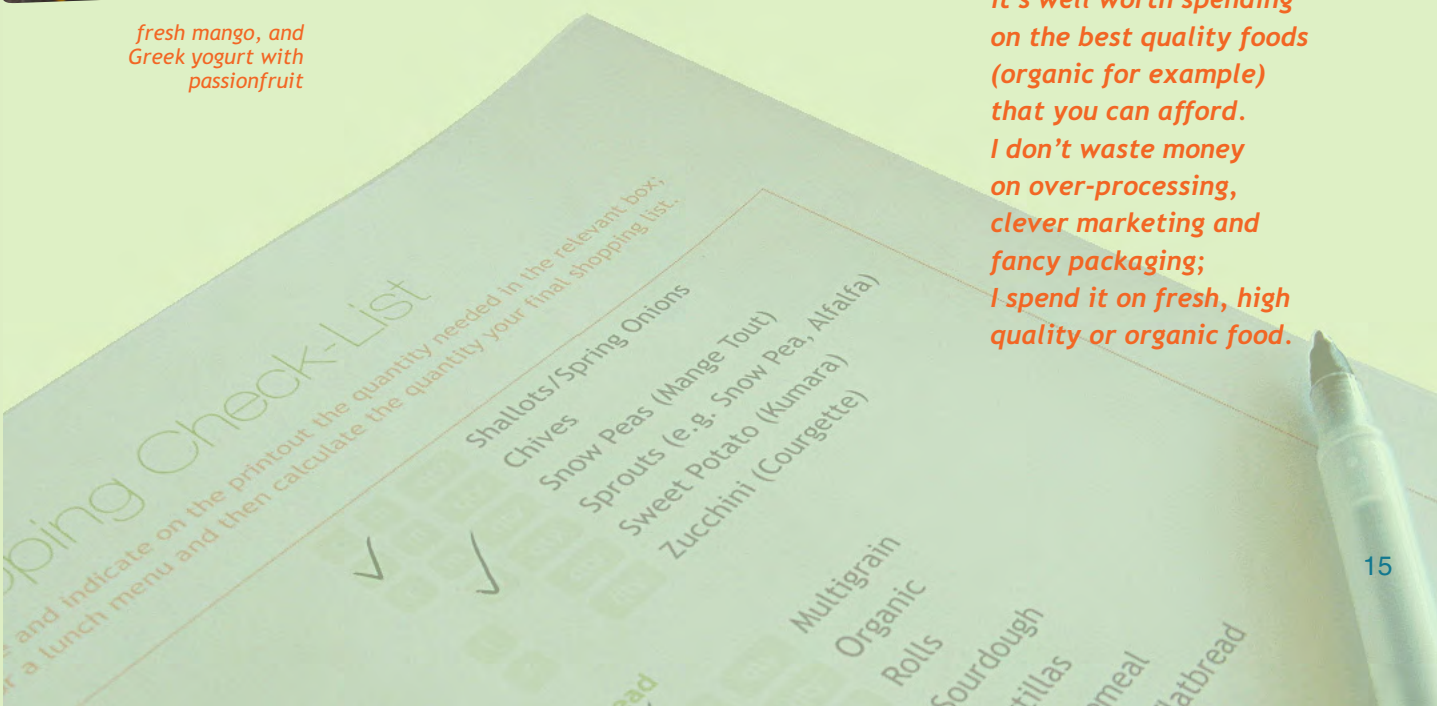
There'll be items in it you don't need straight away too; that's why it's only a checklist at this stage. Your shopping list emerges after you've established the two-week menu and the recipes you plan to make.

Nature's packaging - beautiful clever and completely recyclable



*fresh mango, and
Greek yogurt with
passionfruit*

I've done my time in the supermarkets and I'm pretty sure you could save money on your grocery bill by adopting the strategies within these pages. Having said that, if you find yourself with money to spare, I think it's well worth spending on the best quality foods (organic for example) that you can afford. I don't waste money on over-processing, clever marketing and fancy packaging; I spend it on fresh, high quality or organic food.



Shopping Check-List

Simply make a copy of this page and indicate on it the quantity needed in the relevant box; **r** for a recipe, and/or **m** for a lunch menu, and then calculate the total **qty** as necessary, for your final shopping list.

Fruit

m	qty	Apples
r	m	qty Bananas
	m	qty Cherries
	m	qty Fresh Figs
	m	qty Grapes
	m	qty Honeydew Melon
	m	qty Kiwi Fruit
r	m	qty Oranges
	m	qty Passionfruit
	m	qty Paw Paw (Papaya)
	m	qty Pears
	m	qty Pineapple
	m	qty Rockmelon
	m	qty Strawberries
	m	qty Watermelon

Vegetables and Herbs

r	m	qty Avocado
r		qty Beetroot
r		qty Broccoli
r	m	qty Red Capsicum (Pepper)
r	m	qty Carrot
r		qty Cherry Tomatoes
r		qty Chives
r		qty Coriander (Cilantro) leaf
	m	qty Corn Cobs
	m	qty Cucumber
r		qty Garlic
r		qty Ginger Root
r		qty Lemons or Limes
r		qty Mushrooms

r	qty	Onions
r	qty	Pumpkin
r	qty	Potato
r	qty	Rosemary - fresh
r	m	qty Shallots/Spring Onions
r	m	qty Snow Peas (Mange Tout)
	m	qty Sprouts (e.g. Snow Pea, Alfalfa)
r	qty	Sweet Potato (Kumara)
r	qty	Zucchini (Courgette)

Bread

r	m	qty Multi-grain
	m	qty Rolls
r	m	qty Sourdough
	m	qty Tortillas
r	m	qty Wholemeal
	m	qty Wraps/Flatbread

Pantry

r	qty	Baking Powder!
r	qty	Balsamic Vinegar
r	m	qty Beetroot - Tin#
r	qty	Black Pepper
r	qty	Bread/All Purpose Flour
r	qty	Breakfast Cereal!
r	qty	Cake Flour (Low Gluten)
r	m	qty Chick Peas - Tin
r	qty	Chocolate Chips - dark/70% cocoa!
r	qty	Cocoa Powder (unsweetened)
m	qty	Corn - for popping
	m	qty Corned Beef!
r	qty	Coriander (Cilantro) leaf Jar/Tube#
r	qty	Cranberries (dried)!

Shopping Check-List

Simply make a copy of this page and indicate on it the quantity needed in the relevant box; **r** for a recipe, and/or **m** for a lunch menu, and then calculate the total **qty** as necessary, for your final shopping list.

m	qty	Cranberry Sauce!	r	m	qty	Pumpkin Seeds
r	m	qty	r	qty	qty	Raisins/Sultanas!
r	qty	Crushed Chilli (dried or fresh)	r	qty	qty	Rice - Medium Grain or Sushi
r	qty	Cumin Powder	r	qty	qty	Rice - brown, Medium Grain
r	m	qty	r	qty	qty	Rice Flour
m	qty	Dates (dried)!	r	qty	qty	Rolled (porridge) Oats
m	qty	Dried Apple!	r	qty	qty	Rosemary Leaf jar/tube#
m	qty	Dried Apricots!	r	m	qty	Salmon ('ready-to-eat')
m	qty	Egg Mayonnaise/Aioli!	m	qty	qty	Sardines
m	qty	Egg Pasta (incl. tomato/spinach)!	r	qty	qty	Seaweed Sheets (Sushi)
r	m	qty	r	qty	qty	Sesame Seeds
r	qty	Extra Virgin Olive Oil	r	qty	qty	Sesame Oil
r	qty	Figs (dried)!	r	qty	qty	Shredded (Desiccated) Coconut
r	qty	Garlic - minced, jar/tube#	r	qty	qty	Spelt Flour
m	qty	Gherkins	r	qty	qty	Stock Cubes!
r	qty	Ginger - minced, jar/tube#	r	qty	qty	Sugar (Rapadura ideally)
r	m	qty	r	qty	qty	Sunflower Seeds
m	qty	Honey (organic or raw ideally)	r	qty	qty	Sushi Vinegar or Seasoning
m	qty	Horseradish Sauce!	r	m	qty	Sweet Chilli Sauce!
r	qty	Linseeds	r	qty	qty	Tahini - jar
m	qty	Maple Syrup!	r	m	qty	Tamari (fermented Soy Sauce)
m	qty	Meat or Fish Pate/Paste!	m	qty	qty	Tartare Sauce!
r	qty	Mixed Herbs	r	m	qty	Three (or five) Bean Mix - Tin
r	m	qty	r	m	qty	Tomato Paste/Puree
r	qty	Mustard! (seeded, honey etc)	r	m	qty	Tomato Ketchup/Sauce!
r	qty	Noodles! (pref. Egg or Rice)	r	qty	qty	Walnuts
r	m	qty	r	qty	qty	Wine Vinegar
r	qty	Nut Butters (not peanut)	r	qty	qty	Wholemeal Flour
r	qty	Oat Bran	r	qty	qty	Yeast - dried
r	qty	Oil (eg Rice Bran, Sunflower)				
m	qty	Olive Paste!				
m	qty	Olives!				
r	qty	Oregano - dried				
m	qty	Pappadams - mini				
r	m	qty				
m	qty	Pistachios - shelled				
m	qty	Pistachios - unshelled				
r	qty	Poppy Seeds				
r	qty	Preserved Ginger!				

cont. page 18

Shopping Check-List

Simply make a copy of this page and indicate on it the quantity needed in the relevant box; **r** for a recipe, and/or **m** for a lunch menu, and then calculate the total **qty** as necessary, for your final shopping list.

Packing and Storing

r	qty	Freezer Storage Containers
r	qty	Freezer Tags or Labels and Marker
r	qty	Non-stick (Greaseproof) Baking Paper
r	qty	Patty/Muffin Papers

Fridge

r	qty	Beef - lean minced
r	qty	Butter
r	qty	Buttermilk (cultured)
m	qty	Cheeses
r	qty	Cheddar grated
r	qty	Chicken Breast
r	qty	Chicken - lean minced
r	m	qty Cream Cheese!
r	m	qty Eggs
r	qty	Feta Cheese
r	m	qty Ham - lean sliced!
r	qty	Milk
r	qty	Mozzarella Cheese grated
r	m	qty Parmesan
r	m	qty Quark (Creme Fraiche)
r	qty	Ready-Made Pastry Sheets!
r	m	qty Salmon - fresh
r	m	qty Sausages (organic ideally)!
r	m	qty Sour Cream!
r	m	qty Yogurt - Greek/Plain

Freezer

r	m	qty	Baby Peas
r		qty	Blueberries
	m	qty	Corn Cobs
r		qty	Peas, Corn and Carrot/Capsicum
r		qty	Raspberries
r		qty	Spinach - chopped leaf
r	m	qty	Sweet Corn
r	m	qty	Frozen Ready-Made Pastry Sheets!

Enter Any Additional Items Below

r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty
r	m	qty

! - Quality-check the ingredients

- Suggested for convenience, fresh is still best

Two-Week Menu - Day One



Clockwise from top left

- Piroshki Buns (recipe page 42) with Tomato Ketchup
- Corn, Capsicum and Gherkin
- Honey Rice Pudding (recipe page 64)
- Banana and Red Grapes.

Two-Week Menu - Day Two



From the top:

- Dips: Beetroot & Walnut, Pea and Parmesan, Cream Cheese Raita (page 56) • Pappadams
- Crusty Fingers (recipe page 51) • Rockmelon • Olive Oil, Tahini & Pistachio Muffin (recipe page 68).

Two-Week Menu - Day Three



From the top:

- Mixed Bean Salad & Avocado Dressing (recipe page 53)
- Sleeping Dogs (recipe page 41) & Tomato Ketchup
- Kiwi Fruit
- Snow Peas
- Pepitas & Pistachios
- Blueberry Egg Pudding (recipe page 62).

Two-Week Menu - Day Four



From the top:

• Watermelon • Pea and Ham Crusty Pies (recipe page 50) • Clever Chocolate Cake with Greek Yogurt (recipe page 70) • Carrot Sticks • Almonds and Macadamia Nuts.

Two-Week Menu - Day Five



From the top:

- Salmon Sushi Slice with Tamari (recipe page 46) • Strawberries with Greek Yogurt
- Corn Cob with fresh herbs • Banana and Nut butter Muffin (recipe page 66).

Two-Week Menu - Day Six



From the top:

- Toasted Sandwich (see page 34)
- Cucumber and Capsicum sticks with Egg Mayonnaise
- Dates soaked in Orange Juice with Orange Slices
- Pear.

Two-Week Menu - Day Seven



From the top:

- Spinach or Italian-Style Meatballs (recipe page 39) and Tomato Ketchup
- Mixed Salad
- Rockmelon & Passionfruit
- Crunchy Cereal & Chocolate Chip Cookie (recipe page 60).

Two-Week Menu - Day Eight



From the bottom:

- Sesame Chicken Toast with Sweet Chilli Sauce (recipe page 37)
- Snow Peas & Carrot sticks with fresh Coriander
- Pistachio nuts
- Coconut Macaroon (recipe page 58)
- Red Grapes.

Two-Week Menu - Day Nine



From the bottom:

- Lunchtime Pizza (recipe page 45) with Olive Oil and Basil leaves, and Mixed Potato Wedges (recipe page 52)
- Fresh Fig & Honeydew Melon
- Popcorn with Butter and Honey.

Two-Week Menu - Day Ten



Clockwise from top right: • 'Open Sesame Egg Noodles' (see page 14) with Sesame Oil • Raspberry & Coconut Muffin (recipe page 66) • Cherries • Walnuts & Pumpkin Seeds • Pawpaw with Lime Juice.

The Humble Sandwich

There are good reasons why sandwiches are a central feature of the lunch-box: apart from their obvious portability, the variations are almost endless and they're (potentially) healthy.

One of my priorities is to buy bread from a specialist bakery. Supermarkets are convenient, but a good bakery, that uses the freshest high-quality ingredients is in a different category altogether in my view, and it's worth searching out.

But as I hope you'll discover in the recipe section, making your own bread, when you have the time and the inclination, especially with the aid of a bread-making machine or food-mixer, is really quite easy.

The sandwich selection table is pretty comprehensive; it's spread across 4 pages (30-33) and it's designed to get your creative juices flowing. Simply select your chosen 'main' filling from the row across the top and read down the column on the left to gather ideas about fillings that go well with it. The colours indicate my idea of a match!

But perhaps this is another opportunity to get the coloured pencils out and involve the kids? Print out the tables and add your own ideas to them. Although I've indicated by colouring the boxes some good combinations, there's plenty of room for your own wonderful (and even weird!) ideas. We're all different; your children may adore scrambled egg with grapes on sourdough! And if they find something tasty, and it's healthy, then why not?

Some of our Favourite Sandwich Fillings

- Salmon, Cucumber and Tartare Sauce
- Tomato, grated Parmesan and Olive Oil (no butter)
- Cream Cheese and sliced Nectarine or Peach
- Brie or Camembert, sliced Mushrooms and Baby Spinach
- Turkey, Cranberry Sauce and sliced Green Apple
- Mixed Salad and Aioli or Egg Mayonnaise
- Basil Pesto, Olive Oil (no butter) and Tomato
- Chicken (Tikka's yummy) Avocado and Aioli.



Tomato, Parmesan and Olive Oil in a Garlic and Rosemary Focaccia.

Here's an idea to bring even more variety to lunches; once you've made your sandwich, coat it in beaten egg and then fry in a non-stick pan (with or without butter or olive oil). Add some seeds to the egg before frying for a lovely crunchy texture and extra nutritional value.

Run your eye across the top of this 4 page chart to select your main filling, then scan down the side to discover ideas to accompany your choice. The colours indicate my idea of a good combination. Or make up your own!

[illegible]

Sandwich Filling Selection Table - Section Two

Run your eye across the top of this 4 page chart to select your main filling, then scan down the side to discover ideas to accompany your choice. The colours indicate my idea of a good combination. Or make up your own!

	Cheeses			Salmon (fresh or tinned)	Tuna	Sardines	Fish Paste	Nut Butter
	Hard	Soft	Cream					
Apple								
Apricot fresh or dried)								
Asparagus (cooked/tinned/jar)								
Avocado (add lemon juice!)								
Baby Spinach								
Basil Pesto								
Banana								
Beetroot (grate or cook & slice)								
Capsicum								
Carrot (grated)								
Chives								
Cranberries (sauce/fresh/dried)								
Celery								
Cucumber								
Creamed Corn								
Dates (dried - soaked in OJ?)								
Eggplant (Aubergine) marinated								
Figs (fresh or dried)								
Gherkin/ Dill Pickles								
Green/Spring Onion (Shallot)								
Honey								
Lettuce								
Mixed Salad								
	Hard	Soft	Cream	Salmon (fresh or tinned)	Tuna (tinned)	Sardines	Fish Paste	Nut Butter
	Cheeses							

Sandwich Filling Selection Table - Section Three

Run your eye across the top of this 4 page chart to select your main filling, then scan down the side to discover ideas to accompany your choice. The colours indicate my idea of a good combination. Or make up your own!

	Cooked Meats							Egg scramble or boil & mash
	Beef	Chicken	Bacon	Ham	Turkey	Sausage	Paste	
Mushroom								
Mustard and Cress (Sprouts)								
Olives (whole, or paste)								
Peas (mashed)								
Pineapple (well-drained)								
Pumpkin (raw grated, or roast)								
Radish (grated, sliced)								
Red Onion								
Rocket (Arugula)								
Snow Peas								
Snow Pea Sprouts								
Sweet Potato (raw grated, or roast)								
Tomato (fresh or sun-dried)								
Tomato Pesto (sun-dried)								
Horseradish Sauce (go easy!)								
Marmalade								
Mayonnaise (fresh, egg, or aioli)								
Mustard (check the heat!)								
Parmesan Cheese (grated)								
Pickles								
Sesame Oil								
Sour Cream								
Sweet Chilli Sauce								
Tahini								
Tartare Sauce								
Tomato Ketchup								
Yeast Extract (Vegemite/Marmite)								
	Beef	Chicken	Bacon	Ham	Turkey	Sausage	Paste	Egg scramble or boil & mash
	Cooked Meats							Egg scramble or boil & mash

Sandwich Filling Selection Table - Section Four

Run your eye across the top of this 4 page chart to select your main filling, then scan down the side to discover ideas to accompany your choice. The colours indicate my idea of a good combination. Or make up your own!

	Cheeses			Salmon (fresh or tinned)	Tuna	Sardines	Fish Paste	Nut Butter
	Hard	Soft	Cream					
Mushroom								
Mustard and Cress (Sprouts)								
Olive Oil								
Olives (whole, or paste)								
Peas (mashed)								
Pear								
Pineapple (well-drained)								
Pumpkin (grated or roast)								
Raisins								
Radish (grated, sliced)								
Red Onion								
Rocket (Arugula)								
Snow Peas								
Snow Pea Sprouts								
Sweet Potato (grated or roast)								
Tomato (fresh or sun-dried)								
Tomato Pesto (sun-dried)								
Horseradish Sauce (go easy!)								
Marmalade								
Mayonnaise (fresh, egg, Aioli)								
Mustard (check the heat!)								
Nut Butter (pref. not Peanut)								
Parmesan Cheese (grated)								
Pickles								
Sesame Oil								
Sour Cream								
Sweet Chilli Sauce								
Tahini								
Tartare Sauce								
Tomato Ketchup								
Yeast Extract (Vegemite/Marmite)								
	Hard	Soft	Cream	Salmon (fresh or tinned)	Tuna	Sardines	Fish Paste	Nut Butter
	Cheeses							

Plan-Ahead Sandwiches

Ideally, sandwiches should be made freshly each morning, which of course can make mornings a bit frantic. But, I've developed another method, which preserves the freshness whilst giving you the convenience of make-ahead:



- Make the sandwiches (a loaf at a time is good, as long as you've the freezer space).
- Freeze them in sealed containers or freezer bags between sheets of non-stick paper.
- On the day of use, defrost just what you need for that day, about 30-45 minutes at room temperature, or you can prepare from frozen - they just take a little longer.
- Toast in a sandwich toaster (Jaffle) using a little olive oil or butter (follow the user instructions) until the sandwiches are heated through, crisp and golden; as if you'd just made them!

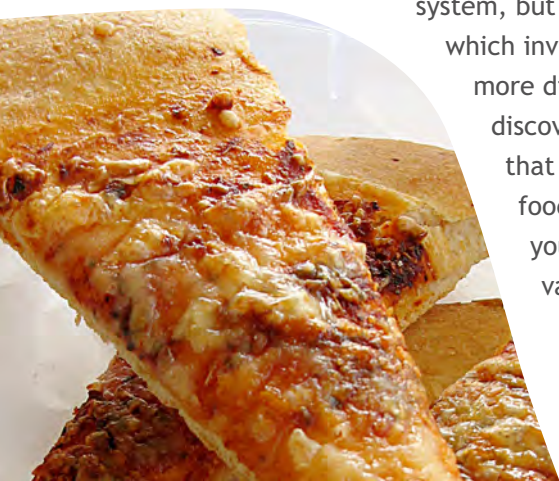
Any filling that's suitable to freeze can go in (see page 73) as long as it isn't altered unfavourably (as far as your child is concerned) by freezing. Remember to store the varieties separately so that the flavours don't transfer.

Serving The Lunches Hot

My children enjoy the recipes hot or cold; so I've found no need for them to be kept warm, particularly in the summertime.

Keeping food cold is quite easy with this system, but keeping food hot (not warm, which invites the growth of bacteria) is more difficult. However, I've

discovered these insulated lunch jars that can keep solid food (as well as liquid food) hot, which might be worth considering for your kids and your climate. They're available in a variety of sizes via an online store.



Preparation and Cooking Plan

I've found that combining certain recipes together when cooking, as well as preparing them in a certain order, speeds up and simplifies the process and hopefully will lead to a more enjoyable gastronomic experience. You'll also see a 'Make Together With' icon on the recipe pages, which indicates the recipes I find are suited to being prepared together.

Day 1

- **Beef & Spinach and Italian-Style Meatballs** (make extra into burger patties for dinner) page 38.
- **Sleeping Dogs** (cook sausages only) page 41.
- **Piroshki Buns** (make filling only) page 42.

Day 2

- **Basic Enriched Dough** page 40.
- **Sleeping Dogs** (final making-up).
- **Piroshki Buns** (final making-up).

At this point you've already completed about a third of the savoury food for a whole semester of lunch-boxes.

Day 3

- **Coconut Macaroons** page 58.
- **Clever Chocolate Cake** page 70.

Day 4

- **Chicken and Creamed Corn Soup** (make enough for dinner) page 54.
- **Chicken Sesame Toasties** page 37.

You've added more choice, variety and depth to your stores by now.

Day 5

- **Beetroot Dip** page 56.
- **Pizza** (make enough for dinner) page 44.
- **Mixed Potato Wedges** page 52.

Day 6

- **Sushi Rice Slice** page 46.
- **Honey Rice Pudding** page 64.

Day 7

- **Corn Puddings with Zucchini & Capsicum** page 48.
- **Blueberry Egg Puddings** page 62.

You probably have enough savoury food for the whole school term now by, plus a variety of healthy sweet items too.

Day 8

- **Pea Parmesan & Olive Oil Dip** page 56.
- **Pea & Ham Crusty Pies** page 50.
- **Crusty Fingers** page 51.

Day 9

- **Crunchy Cereal & Choc Chip Cookies** page 60.
- **Raspberry Coconut, & Banana Nut Butter Muffin** (mixed batch) page 66.

You're on the home-run.

Day 10

- **Plan-Ahead Sandwiches** page 34.
- **Olive Oil, Tahini & Pistachio Nut Muffins** page 68.

Finished! Now you can relax and look forward to more than 2 months of hassle-free, healthy packed lunches.

The Recipes

I hope you enjoy these recipes that I've gathered and modified over many years. I've chosen them because they're both appealing and reliable, and because they're recipes that you can expand on to create your own rich, tailor-made resource.

My focus has been to make the process of cooking and preparing as efficient as possible, to deliver healthy, delicious food that's just that little bit different.

Children, as you're no doubt aware, are unpredictable, and there are bound to be ingredients, or even whole recipes they simply won't eat. So I've offered where possible some practical ideas and alternatives to hopefully guide you neatly around any problems you may encounter.

It's important always to use the best-quality, and freshest ingredients to ensure the highest nutritional content and a tasty result.

If you have a difficulty with no easy solution, you can contact me for help via my web site at: <http://lunchideasforschool.com>

But if you have a difficulty with no easy solution, do let me know via my blog or email and I'll do my best to help. And I'd love to hear about your own ideas and discoveries too; what works and what doesn't.

Almost all the recipes are suitable for freezing (as indicated) and can be stored for several months (3 months at -18 degrees). In hot weather, it's a great idea to put suitable food into the lunch-box whilst still frozen to help keep the rest of the lunch cool, but otherwise defrost them in the fridge overnight.

See the glossary at the end of the book for standard measurements and oven temperatures that you should check before you begin.



Chicken & Sesame Toasties

Makes up to 18 serves

- lean Minced Chicken 500g (1lb 2oz) not previously frozen
- minced Garlic 2 cloves (approx. 1 teaspoon)
- fresh minced Ginger 2 teaspoons
- fresh leaf Coriander (Cilantro) 2 tablespoons (approx. 1 handful) chopped
- Sweet Chilli Sauce 2 tablespoons
- multi-grain/wholemeal Bread 1 large loaf, sliced (crusts removed if tastes demand*)
- Sesame Seeds ¾ cup (approx.)

Make
Together
With

Chicken
& Corn
Soup
page 54

**If you
need to
remove
the crusts
see page
51 for an
idea of how
to turn
them into
something
yummy!*

*I don't
recommend
children
under 12
prepare
this recipe
because of
the raw
chicken.*



- Combine the chicken with the next 4 ingredients listed.
- Divide the mix between the slices of bread and spread to the edges.
- Spread sesame seeds on a plate or other flat surface and press the bread, chicken side down, into the seeds to coat the chicken.
- Freeze them in their own, separate, sealed container in layers with non-stick baking paper between the layers (raw meat must not be stored in the same container as cooked foods) .
- Remove from the freezer 30-60 minutes before cooking.

For cooking there are two options:

- **Toasting (preferred):** Place the toasts, chicken side down in a lightly oiled pre-heated sandwich toaster (or under a medium grill) until the chicken is cooked through and browned a little.
- **Frying:** Heat about 2 tablespoons oil in a frying pan on a medium-high heat until hot. Shallow fry, chicken side down first, until golden, before lightly frying the other side. Drain on absorbent paper.



Here's a quicker way to roll the meat into balls; do the job in two stages. First, using a measuring tablespoon quickly divide into individual lumps. Repeat until all done. Then roll into balls and lay out on your baking tray. With this method the job should take only five minutes.

Meatballs (Gluten Free)

One of my favourite time-saving tricks is to combine lunch and dinner into one process. Here are two recipes to help you do exactly that.

These meatballs are great in lunch-boxes of course - they fulfil all the usual criteria, can be easily frozen, and are portable. They're packed with iron too (especially the spinach version) but here's the thing; the mix can be doubled and adapted for dinner times into patties (for burgers), or shaped like sausages or kebabs. Or the meatballs can be baked in the oven with spaghetti, tomato sauce and cheese (this is one of my family's absolute favourite meals!).

Leafy greens are so important for health, but how can you get your kids to eat them? Try this Beef & Spinach meatballs recipe - my son hates greens, but he loves these!



Meatballs baked with spaghetti, tomato sauce and cheese

Italian-Style Meatballs

Makes 5 serves @ 4 meatballs each

lean Minced Beef	600g (1lb 6oz)
Egg	1 whole
dried Oregano	2 tablespoons
finely chopped fresh Rosemary	1 tablespoon
Salt	1 teaspoon
Tomato Paste	2 rounded tablespoons
Rice flour	2 rounded tablespoons
Cumin Powder	¼ teaspoon
dried Crushed Chilli	¼ teaspoon (optional)



The Italian-Style Meatball mix makes delicious juicy beef patties for an evening meal or a BBQ

Beef & Spinach Meatballs

Makes 7 serves @ 4 meatballs each

lean Minced Beef	500g (1lb 2oz)
frozen (or fresh) chopped Leaf Spinach	200g (7½oz)
minced Garlic	1 teaspoon (about two cloves)
grated Cheddar Cheese	3 cups (250g/9oz)

- Decide which of the recipes you're making and mix all the ingredients together.
- Pre-heat the oven to Moderate.
- Using about 2 tablespoons mix, roll into balls and place onto baking trays.
- Cook for 30 minutes (Spinach Meatballs) or 20 minutes (Italian Meatballs) until nicely browned.
- Cool completely before freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

Delicious served cold with a salad, some egg mayonnaise and pita bread or tortillas (or rice if you're gluten free).



Basic Enriched Bread Dough

I've used this dough in the following 2 recipes because it's lovely and soft, and rich. It's also easy to handle even though slightly moist, and it has the benefit of healthy Oat Bran too. Below are the ingredients for what I've described as '1 quantity'.

Make
Together
With:

Coconut
Macaroons
page 58

- melted Butter*** 125g (4½oz)
- Dried Yeast** 1½ teaspoons
- Bread Flour** 3 cups
- Oat Bran** ½ cup
- Salt** 1 teaspoon
- Sugar** 1½ tablespoons
- Egg Yolk** 1 (save the white for making Macaroons)
- warmed Milk** 280ml (10floz) approx.

For additional speed you can use Ready-Rolled Puff Pastry instead, for both the Sleeping Dogs and Piroshki Buns recipes, but take care to check the nutritional information of the pastry, and choose one made with butter; some inferior pastry's can contain 'trans fats' that are known to be very bad for the health.

- Melt the butter.
- Put the yeast into a large bowl (a food mixer is ideal for this job) and add all the other ingredients, except the milk, in the order shown.
- Mix (if not using a mixer, hands are the next best thing!) gradually adding enough milk to form a very slightly sticky dough.
- Knead on a floured surface either by hand or using the mixer, until soft and elastic (3-5 minutes normally).
- Cover and leave in a warm place for an hour to rise and double in size; a great time to prepare your filling (see recipes pages 41-42).

Store in the fridge if not using immediately; but it's best used within 24 hours.



Sleeping Dogs

All kids seem to love sausages, which makes the effort involved with these well worth it - they always disappear from my children's lunch box. My daughter says it's the 'blanket' of bread that makes these so good. **Makes 14**

best quality Sausages 14, cooked and cooled*

Basic Enriched Dough# 1 quantity (page 40)

Mustard or Tomato Ketchup ¼ cup (optional)

beaten Egg for glazing



Or use 3½ sheets standard size ready-rolled puff pastry.

*** I cook the sausages in a Moderate oven until only just done - about 15 minutes.**

- Prepare baking trays (e.g. by greasing or lining with non-stick baking paper) so that the food won't stick.
- Divide the dough into 14 pieces and roll out thinly into an oval to wrap once lengthwise around the sausages (see photo). If you're using frozen pastry instead, cut each full pastry sheet into 4 squares, and the half sheet into two.
- Spread the mustard or ketchup, if using, over the middle of the dough or pastry.
- Wrap the dough around the sausages (moistening the edges with water and pressing the join firmly together to get a good seal).
- Brush with beaten egg and, if making the bread version, leave to rise on the baking trays for 15 minutes.
- Heat your oven to Moderately Hot.
- Bake for about 12-15 minutes until the bread (or pastry) is golden, remove, and allow them to cool before freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

Once de-frosted, these can be eaten cold or reheated in a Moderately Slow oven for 10 minutes.

* For additional speed you can use 4 sheets of Ready-Rolled Puff Pastry instead.

Carrot, Sweet Potato, Pumpkin or Potato can be used for this recipe instead of Beetroot. Or you could even use a combination.

Piroshki Buns

Makes 12

*Basic Enriched Dough 1 quantity (page 40)

Filling:

Olive Oil 1 teaspoon

finely chopped Onion 1 small

minced Garlic 1 clove

finely chopped Mushrooms 75g (3oz)

raw, finely diced #Beetroot 150g (6oz) 1 medium

lean Minced Beef 300g (12oz)

Tomato Paste (Puree) 4 tablespoons (3oz)

dried Mixed Herbs 1 teaspoon

Salt 3 pinches

beaten Egg for glazing

To make the filling:

- Heat the oil in a large frying pan and add the onion, garlic, mushrooms and beetroot, stirring until the mixture is soft.
- Add the beef and cook, breaking up any lumps and cooking until it changes colour.
- Stir in the tomato paste, salt and herbs. Allow to cool.

'A pinch' is a recognised measure of volume equivalent to 1/8 teaspoon.

To make up the buns:

- If using frozen pastry, take it out of the freezer to soften slightly.
- Prepare your baking trays so the buns don't stick.
- Divide the dough equally (by eye) into two. Roll out each piece thinly to approx. 25cm (10") x 40cm (16") and cut each in half lengthwise and into 3 widthwise (or if using pastry, cut the sheets into quarters).
- Divide the filling between the 12 (about 1/3rd cup each) and then gather the dough around the filling, pinching it and squeezing it together to seal the mixture in (only if using pastry will it need to be moistened with water at the edges to get a good seal).
- Turn them over and place on a baking tray. Brush the tops with beaten egg and leave in a warm place for fifteen minutes (note that the pastry version should be baked straight away).
- Pre-heat oven to Hot and bake for 12-15 minutes, until golden.

Freeze once cool in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.







Lunchtime Pizza

I usually double this recipe and make it just before dinner so that we get an evening meal as well, which makes the preparation time well worth it, and of course you can add whatever additional toppings you like.

Makes 16-20 slices/serves

Dough

Dried Yeast	2¼ teaspoons
All-Purpose (Bread) Flour	3 cups
Wholemeal Flour	½ cup
Salt	1¼ teaspoons
Sugar	1 teaspoon
tepid Water	1½ cups (approx)

Topping

Tomato Paste (Puree)	¼ cup
Balsamic Vinegar	2 teaspoons
Extra Virgin Olive Oil	2 teaspoons
Fresh or Dried Mixed Herbs	¼ cup fresh or 2 tablespoons dried
Salt & Black Pepper	to taste (a pinch of salt is enough)
grated Mozzarella	1 cup
grated Cheddar	1 cup



Lunchtime Pizza served with Sweet Potato Wedges (page 52); not only healthy but popular with kids.

- Combine all the dry dough ingredients in a bowl, then slowly add the water to achieve a non-sticky dough. Knead for about 5 minutes, by hand or in a food mixer.
 - Prepare two large baking trays so that the pizza's won't stick.
 - Divide dough into two and roll out on a floured surface to about 33cm (13") diameter (or as thin as you like) and place on the trays. Leave to rise for 15-30 minutes.
 - Preheat the oven to Hot.
 - Leaving the cheeses aside, combine all the other ingredients in a small bowl and spread over the pizza bases. Add any additional toppings, then sprinkle the grated cheese over the top.
 - Bake for 9-11 minutes until golden and bubbling.
 - Eat immediately or cool and then slice before freezing in sealed containers between layers of non-stick paper.
- This pizza recipe freezes really well and can also be re-heated if desired.

Some favourite additional toppings:

Sliced Mushroom and Red Onion

Halved Cherry Tomatoes with Capsicum, Feta Cheese and fresh Basil served with a drizzle of Extra Virgin Olive Oil.



Make
Together
With:

Honey
Rice Slice
page 64

Gluten Free Sushi Rice Slice

Sushi is enjoyed by kids and adults alike and it's healthy too, but I find it fiddly and time-consuming to make, and it can't be frozen. So here's my answer; it's got similar ingredients but goes one better; I've added egg, which boosts its nutritional value.

Makes 12 slices/6-12 serves

cooked Medium Grain White Rice* 3 cups

Eggs 3 lightly beaten

fresh filleted Salmon 150g/5oz (or 1 x 200g/8oz tin)

Sushi Vinegar or Sushi Seasoning 3 tablespoons

snipped Chives or Spring Onion 2 tablespoons (use scissors)

sheets Nori Seaweed 2 sheets, cut into short fine strips

You'll find your kitchen scissors a useful tool in the preparing of this recipe.

One cup of uncooked rice = approximately three cups cooked rice. Do try making this with brown rice, a far healthier option!

- Heat the oven to Hot.
- Line a 23cm square or round baking tin with non-stick (baking) paper so the mixture won't stick, or you can make 12 individual 'cakes' using a medium sized muffin pan.
- Slice or flake the Salmon. Put the cooled rice into a medium bowl and using a fork, stir in the beaten egg breaking up the lumps as you go.
- Add all the other ingredients stirring gently, just enough to combine.
- Transfer to the baking tin and spread to the edges.
- Bake for approx. 25-30 minutes (slice) or 20-25 minutes (cakes) depending on how brown you like the top.
- Cool before freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

These will keep for 2 months in the freezer (at -18 degrees) but don't store in the fridge for more than a day. Defrost them in the fridge overnight ready for the lunch-box next day and serve with Tamari.

**Sushi Rice would normally be used for a recipe like this, but it is more expensive and I have found ordinary Medium Grain Rice works just as well. Whichever rice you use it will be sticky, so when cooking you may need to stir just a little initially to prevent it from sticking to the pan.*

Empower
your
Brain!

with
Eggs &
Salmon



Corn Puddings with Capsicum & Zucchini

A variation of the Blueberry Egg Pudding recipe on page 62, these are not only great in lunch-boxes, because they freeze really well, but they make a delicious change at breakfast time too.

Makes 12

melted Butter 60g (2oz)
low gluten Plain Cake Flour 1½ cups
Baking Powder 2 teaspoons
Salt 2 pinches
grated Zucchini (Courgette) ½ cup
diced Red Capsicum (Pepper) ½ cup
grated Cheddar 1 cup
cultured Buttermilk* 1½ cups
Eggs 4
Creamed Corn 1 cup
freshly ground Black Pepper to taste

Shallot (Spring Onion) can be substituted for the Zucchini (Courgette).

- Turn the oven on to Moderately Slow, then put the butter into a medium heatproof bowl and into the oven to melt (about 10 minutes).
- Thoroughly grease a 12-hole muffin tin, or you can use squares of greaseproof baking paper (note the mixture will stick to ordinary patty papers).
- In a large bowl combine the flour, baking powder and salt.
- Stir in the zucchini, capsicum and cheese.
- Remove the melted butter from the oven and turn the oven up to Moderately Hot.
- Add the buttermilk to the melted butter and whisk in the eggs before stirring in the creamed corn and adding pepper to taste.

• *Greek Yogurt and Milk at a ratio of 1:3 when lightly whisked together can be used to replace Buttermilk.*



Make Together With:

Blueberry Egg Pudding page 62



- Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and whisk together until only just combined.
- Using a jug with a large spout, and a spoon to control the flow, almost fill the muffin cups with the batter.
- Bake the puddings for 20-25 minutes until browned a little on top.
- Serve immediately or cool completely before freezing in an airtight container between layers of non-stick paper.

These are delicious served with a little sour cream, guacamole (mashed avocado, lime juice and minced garlic) and/or sweet chilli sauce.

To save time, bake in a 23cm round cake tin, (which has been lined with greaseproof paper) and then slice once cooked. But do remember you'll need to add about 10-15 minutes to the cooking time.

Pea & Ham Crusty Pies

I often keep a loaf of bread in the freezer; bread will keep for several months as long as it's well sealed. So these pies can be made on the fly, or baked in batches and frozen for up to a month. Just one thing though; *make sure you use a quality, slightly denser bread without the big holes in it!

Makes 18 (9 -18 lunches)

good quality sliced Bread*	1 loaf (18 slices)
Pea, Parmesan and Olive Oil Dip	1 quantity (recipe page 56)
softened Butter	60g (2oz)
chopped, sliced Ham	50g (1¾oz)
lightly beaten Eggs	5
Milk	½ cup
grated Cheddar Cheese	⅔ cup

- Prepare two medium muffin trays to prevent sticking.
 - Remove the crusts from the bread slices but don't throw them away; use them to make Crusty Fingers (recipe on the next page).
 - Mix the butter and pea dip together using a knife and spread evenly over the slices.
 - Carefully push the bread into the holes of a medium muffin tin and add some of the ham to each, leaving about 1/3 for later. Heat the oven to Moderate.
 - Mix the eggs and milk together in a jug with a good pouring spout and, taking care not to let them overflow, pour slowly into the bread moulds (if they do overflow, which happens easily, don't worry - they may stick a little to the pan but will still come free if the pan is well greased).
 - Sprinkle with the rest of the chopped ham and then the cheese.
 - Bake for 20-25 minutes until crust and filling are golden.
 - Cool in the tray before removing and storing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.
- These can be 'crisped' from frozen in a Moderately Slow oven (approx. 15 minutes).

Make
Together
With:

Pea,
Parmesan
& Olive Oil
Dip page 56

Crusty
Fingers
page 51





Crusty Fingers

Lovely and crisp and ideal for eating with dips instead of those very expensive breadsticks or European-style crackers.

You'll need:

Bread Crusts from a good quality loaf

Olive Oil

- Pre-heat the oven to Moderate.
- Simply spread out the crusts on a baking sheet and drizzle with a little olive oil.
- Bake for 20 minutes until crisp and golden.
- Cool before storing in a sealed container. These can be frozen too!





Mixed Potato Wedges

So easy and surprisingly healthy; these are made with Sweet Potato; a highly nutritious food. There are three varieties and all are better for your health than ordinary potato. Gold Kumara has a lovely orange flesh, the Red variety a deep purple-red skin and there's a White variety too. I buy organic because I like to leave the skin on; it's rich in fibre, makes the job of preparing much quicker and its wonderful colour adds to the appeal of these low-fat chips. I find these are far better suited to lunch-boxes than ordinary potato because they have a slightly chewy texture once roasted and they survive freezing and de-frosting.

Makes 6-8 serves

Gold, Red & White organic Sweet Potato (Kumara) 1kg/2lb 4oz (about 4 medium-sized)

Olive Oil 1 dessertspoonful

Sea Salt ½ teaspoon

- Heat the oven to Hot, placing a large baking tray inside to heat through.
- Scrub the potatoes clean, but don't peel them. Dry them thoroughly with kitchen paper.
- Cut in half lengthwise, then into wedges roughly 1 inch (2.5cm) thick and put into a container with a tight-fitting lid.
- Add the olive oil and salt.
- Seal tightly with the lid and shake to coat the potato with a thin film of oil and salt.
- Remove the tray from the oven and spread the potatoes over it in a single layer.



FACT: Sweet Potato (Kumara) is a great nutritional food; in 1992, the CSPI reported that this versatile root vegetable was ranked number one for nutritional value compared to all other vegetables. It's rich in fibre, complex carbohydrates, protein, vitamins A and C, iron, and calcium. Sweet potatoes scored 184 points whereas the common potato scored only 84.

- Bake for 30 minutes until crisp, golden and cooked through
- Cool before dividing into portions, sealing in freezer containers or bags (use a straw to extract the air from the bags) and placing in the freezer.
These are yummy served with some egg mayonnaise or sour cream for dipping.

Potato Wedges
Variation:
sprinkle with fresh or dried herbs (Rosemary, Chives, Oregano) and minced Garlic before roasting.

Mixed Bean Salad with Avocado Dressing

Makes 2-3 serves

ready-to-eat Mixed Beans 400g (14oz) tin
ready-to-eat Chick Peas $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (optional)

Dressing (whisk together):

Lime (or Lemon) Juice 1 tablespoon
Extra Virgin Olive Oil 2 tablespoons
Salt 2 pinches (optional)
Avocado $\frac{1}{2}$ a small, mashed

- Thoroughly mix the dressing ingredients, including the avocado, with a whisk (the lime juice prevents the avocado from turning brown) and pour over the salad ingredients, using a spoon for the avocado.

This recipe is not suitable for freezing.

This salad can be extended into a complete meal by adding Cherry Tomatoes, cubed Feta Cheese and diced Cucumber.



Gluten Free Chicken & Corn Soup

Makes 8 serves

Chicken or Vegetable stock 2 litres (8 cups)

lean Chicken Breast Meat 800g (2lb) cut into ½ cm thick strips

Creamed Corn 2 x 400g (14oz) cans

chopped Shallot/Spring Onion ½ cup

- Heat the stock in a large saucepan and add the chicken.
- Boil, then leave to simmer until the chicken is cooked
- Add the creamed corn and shallot/spring onion, stir and allow to heat through.

*Idea!
It's possible
to add extra
chicken, which
you remove
once cooked
through, and
can freeze
for later use;
ideal for
Asian dishes.
Chicken cooked
by this method
is both moist
and tender.*

Serve hot; I use a wide-necked vacuum flask.

You can add cooked Egg or Rice Noodles (or cook them in the soup) for variety and additional nutritional value, but this soup is also really good just as it is.

A sprinkling of sesame seeds on the top adds a nice crunchy texture.





Make
Together
With:

Clever
Chocolate
Cake
page 70

Beetroot & Walnut Dip

Makes about 4-6 servings

- unsalted raw Walnuts 100g (4oz)
- Garlic 1 clove
- cooked Beetroot 500g (1lb 2oz)
- Parmesan Cheese ½ cup
- Lemon Juice 2 teaspoons
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil (to consistency)
- Salt pinch (optional)

** It's far better not to peel beetroot because the skin is packed with vitamins, minerals and fibre. Saves time and effort too! Simply scrub clean and cook (and buy organic if you can).*

- In a food processor, blend the nuts and garlic.
- Add the beetroot, cheese and juice and blend until all combined.
- Add olive oil to get the consistency right; firm enough to stay on the cracker! Add the salt if using.

Freeze as individual portions; large ice-cube trays are useful for this, otherwise as separate mounds in a sealed container.

Pea, Parmesan & Olive Oil Dip

Makes 3-4 serves

- frozen Baby Peas 1 cup
- grated Parmesan Cheese ½ cup
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil 4 teaspoons approx. (to consistency)
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Why not try these dips as a spread in sandwiches?

The Pea Dip goes well with Ham, and the Cheese Raita is yummy with Salmon, especially if you use Sour Cream to make the raita.

- Boil the kettle.
- Put the peas into a small bowl and pour the boiling water over. Leave for 5 minutes.
- Drain the peas and place in a food processor or large pestle and mortar and mash.



- Stir in the parmesan and olive oil.
- Taste, and add salt and pepper as desired
- A little lemon or lime rind stirred through, if you have it available, is quite yummy and adds a lovely colour.

Pea, Parmesan and Olive Oil Dip can be frozen in portions in a sealed container. This goes well with Crusty Fingers (recipe page 51).

Cream Cheese Raita

This dip is yummy with pappadams and great as a sandwich filling too. The moisture from the cucumber loosens the thickness of the cheese. You can use Greek yogurt or even sour cream instead of cream cheese if your child prefers it.



All the recipes on these two pages are gluten free. The Beetroot Dip and the Cheese Raita go well with mini Pappadams, (also gluten free) available from asian stores and supermarkets.

Makes 1 serving (recipe is NOT suitable for freezing)

- *quality Cream Cheese ¼ cup (50g/2oz)
- grated Cucumber 2.5cm (1") piece
- Salt & Pepper to taste

- Put the cream cheese in a small bowl.
- Using a fork, gradually incorporate the cucumber until you achieve the right consistency (soft enough to push a cracker into, but stiff enough not to run off it!).
- Taste, and add seasoning as necessary. You can also add a pinch or two of Ground Cumin for an authentic Indian flavour.

Raita will keep in the fridge for only a day and is best eaten fresh.

**Quark (very similar to Creme Fraiche) is a quality cream cheese ideal for this recipe. You can also use Sour Cream or Greek Yogurt instead of cream cheese.*

Gluten Free Coconut Macaroons

Makes approximately 18

Make
Together
With:

Basic
Enriched
Dough
page 40

Tip! The coconut can be soaked in ½ cup boiled water for 10 minutes to soften and moisten it before use, which results in a softer, chewier texture.

Egg Whites 2 (as fresh as possible)

Raw or Rapadura Sugar ⅓ cup

Shredded (Desiccated) Coconut 1½ cups

- Thoroughly grease a large baking tray or use non-stick baking paper; this mixture can be sticky!
- Heat oven to Moderately Slow.
- In a scrupulously clean bowl, whisk the egg whites until stiff (a food mixer takes the hard work out of this recipe!). Save the egg yolks to make the basic enriched dough on page 40.
- Gradually add the sugar, whisking all the time until glossy.
- Gently stir in the Coconut. The mixture will now be quite dry.
- Place little heaps (about 1½ tablespoons) on the baking tray and bake for about 15 to 20 minutes, until golden brown.
- Turn the oven off. These can be left in the oven overnight to become crisp, or taken out immediately for a chewier texture.

Freeze once cold, in a sealed container between layers of non-stick baking paper.

If you use Rapadura Sugar your Macaroons will have a rich brown colour





Crunchy Cereal & Chocolate Chip Cookies

These are truly delicious; they're lovely and crunchy and because they contain very little sugar you can really taste the dried fruit, the butter, the seeds... they're a real, healthy, treat!

Makes about 26 cookies

Unsalted Butter 220g (8oz)

Rapadura Sugar ½ cup

Wholemeal Flour 1 cup

Baking Powder 2 teaspoons

Salt 1 pinch (omit if using salted butter)
 Porridge Oats 1½ cups
 low sugar Breakfast Cereal 1 cup (see photo below of the type I use)
 good quality Dark Chocolate Chips ½ cup, frozen ideally, to hold their shape
 *Mixed Seeds ½ cup
 any *Dried Fruit ½ cup, chopped smaller if needed
 Eggs 2 lightly beaten

*I use a mix of Linseeds, Sunflower, Sesame, Poppy, and Pumpkin Seeds.

*Cranberries add wonderful colour, and flavour, as well as extra nutritional value.

Idea! To save time, cookies can be baked in a lamington pan, as a slice, instead of individual cookies and then sliced when cold. Note that if you use this method, and like your cookies crunchy you may need to increase the cooking time by about 5 minutes.

- Prepare two baking trays so the dough won't stick (e.g. by greasing or lining with non-stick baking paper).
- Heat oven to Moderate.
- Melt butter and sugar in a saucepan over a low heat.
- Meanwhile put the 1 cup of flour, 2 teaspoons baking powder and pinch of salt into a large bowl, stir in the 1½ cups oats and 1 cup cereal followed by the ½ cup each of chocolate chips, seeds, and dried fruit.
- Place the 2 beaten eggs into a small bowl and add the melted butter mixture and mix.
- Add to the dry mixture, stirring until combined.
- Place golf ball sized quantities of the dough, spaced out, onto the baking sheets and flatten lightly with a wet fork.
- Bake for 12-14 minutes until golden.

Cool before freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

As is often the case, quality in equals quality out. I check ingredients and sell-by dates before buying; the cereal I use for this recipe is low in sugar.





Eggs contain some amazing nutrients. And one of the most amazing is Choline which is essential for optimum brain function, particularly for memory and retention. Human breast milk is rich in Choline for very good reason.

Blueberry Egg Puddings

These puddings make wonderful 'food for the brain'. They contain two ingredients that are known to be important for optimum cognitive function; Blueberries and Egg (particularly the yolk) and these puddings contain good amounts of both. They also freeze really well and can be eaten warm or cold - in fact, on a hot day, they're really yummy when eaten chilled.

Makes 12 puddings

Empower
your
Brain!

with
Eggs &
Blueberries

Butter	60g (2oz)
low gluten Cake Flour	1½ cups
Baking Powder	2 teaspoons
Rapadura Sugar	⅓ cup
cultured Buttermilk*	1½ cups
Eggs	4
frozen or fresh Blueberries	1½ cups

*Greek yogurt and milk, at a ratio of 1:3 can be whisked together to replace the buttermilk.

To save time, bake in a 23cm round cake tin, (which has been lined with grease-proof paper) and then slice once cooked. Do remember you'll need to add about 10-15 minutes to the cooking time.

- Turn the oven on to Moderately Slow, then put the butter into a medium heatproof bowl and into the oven to melt (about 10 minutes).
- Thoroughly oil a 12-hole muffin tray (or line with squares of greaseproof baking paper). Note the mixture will stick to ordinary patty papers.
- Remove the melted butter from the oven and turn the temperature up to Moderately Hot.
- In a large bowl combine the flour, baking powder and sugar.
- Add the buttermilk to the melted butter and whisk in the eggs.
- Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and whisk together until just combined.
- Gently stir in the blueberries.
- Using a jug with a large spout, and a spoon to control the flow, almost fill the muffin cups with the batter.
- Bake the puddings for 20-25 minutes until browned a little on top.
- Serve immediately or cool completely before freezing in an airtight container between layers of non-stick paper.

These go really well with a little Pure Maple Syrup. Pure Maple Syrup (made from the sap of the Maple tree), while very high in sugar, also contains some useful micronutrients, including minerals such as zinc, and vitamins too. It's a natural, unprocessed food that can be enjoyed in moderation.





Honey Rice Slice made with Brown Rice

Make
Together
With:
**Sushi Rice
Slice**
page 46

Gluten Free Honey Rice Slice

A portable version of traditional Rice Pudding made healthier with the addition of egg, dried fruit and seeds. And it's **Gluten Free**.

Makes 18 slices

Medium Grain Rice*	1½ cups
Milk	3 cups
Eggs	3 lightly beaten
Mixed Dried Fruit	¾ cup
Mixed Seeds	¼ cup
Honey	¼ cup

****Medium Grain Rice is also known as Pudding Rice. You can use white or brown for this recipe. Keep in mind that brown rice is definitely the healthier option (check cooking times on the packet though; brown rice takes considerably longer to cook).***

- Put the rice and milk into a medium saucepan over a medium heat and stir. Stir now and then until it boils; keep an eye on it as it can quickly come to the boil. Turn the heat down so that it's just simmering, stirring occasionally until all the milk is absorbed (about 15 minutes).
- Transfer to a mixing bowl to cool.
- Heat the oven to Moderately Hot.
- Prepare a 23cm square or round baking tin (or medium-sized muffin tin for individual 'cakes') so that the food won't stick (e.g. by greasing or lining with non-stick baking paper).
- Stir the beaten egg into the cooled rice.
- Add all the other ingredients and stir gently, just enough to combine.
- Transfer into the baking tin, spread to the edges and sprinkle the top with a few extra seeds.
- Bake for approx. 30 minutes (or 20 minutes if you make cakes in a medium muffin tray). I like them slightly brown on top.
- Cool before freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

Try any of the following in this recipe, they're all delicious and highly nutritious too:

*Cranberries
Raisins
Dates
Dried Figs
Sunflower Seeds
Pumpkin Seeds
Linseeds*

*Honey Rice
Slice made
with White
Rice.*



These will keep for 2 months in the freezer (at -18 degrees) but don't store in the fridge for more than a couple of days. Defrost them in the fridge.

Honey Rice Slice is absolutely scrumptious served with a dollop of organic Quark (or Creme Fraiche). Do give it a try!



Raspberry and Coconut Muffins with Oat Bran

Muffins

Coconut is another food that hides some very beneficial nutrients beneath it's somewhat humble exterior; coconut oil for example, has properties that can boost immunity.

Most kids like muffins. They also freeze well and the basic recipe is very adaptable. I have two versions that I find are more popular than most, so I've devised a method of making both from one batch of the basic mixture. If you want to make only one of the versions then just double the amount of the additional ingredients (raspberries for example).

Banana, Nut Butter and Coconut Muffins, with Oat Bran



Basic Muffin Mix

Makes approximately 18 medium size muffins

melted Butter	200g (7½oz)
low gluten Cake flour	2⅓ cups
Baking Powder	2 tablespoons
Oat Bran	½ cup (optional)
Rapadura Sugar	¾ cup
Desiccated Coconut	1½ cups
Salt	pinch
cultured Buttermilk	400ml (13floz) or 1:3 Yogurt & Milk
Eggs	2
Milk	A little, to achieve 'dropping consistency'

For Raspberry Coconut Muffins:

*frozen Raspberries	1 cup
---------------------	-------

For Banana & Coconut Nut Butter Muffins:

ripe Banana	1
Nut Butter	⅓ cup (any except Peanut)

Frozen Raspberries are best for this recipe because they hold their shape well when stirred into the batter.

- Prepare medium muffin pans so the muffins won't stick (e.g. by greasing or lining with patty papers).
- Heat the oven to moderate (the butter can be put in the oven in a heatproof container to melt now, but keep an eye on it to prevent burning).
- Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl (including the sugar, coconut and salt) breaking up any lumps.
- Using a whisk, combine the buttermilk and eggs in a medium bowl and add the melted butter.
- Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and pour in the wet, then gently mix - it's important that you mix just enough to combine. Now add enough milk to achieve a 'dropping consistency'.
- **For the mixed batch only:** remove half of the batter to the medium bowl that you just used (I find measuring it by eye accurate enough).



- **For raspberry muffins:** Gently stir the raspberries into the batter, enough to combine only. Spoon into muffin tin.
- **For banana/nut muffins:** Mash the banana with the nut butter (give the nut butter a stir in the jar with a fork if it's settled) and combine thoroughly with the banana before gently stirring into the (remaining) batter in the other bowl, just enough to combine. Spoon into muffin tin.
- Bake until golden brown on top, about 25 minutes.

Cool completely before freezing in an airtight container between layers of non-stick paper.

Olive Oil, Tahini & Pistachio Nut Muffins

Tahini is a paste made from grinding sesame seeds, so it's highly nutritious and when combined with the healthy olive oil, buttermilk, eggs, and nuts in this recipe the result is a very nutritious, appealing and satisfying mini-meal.

Makes 12

- low gluten Cake flour** 2¹/₃ cups
- Baking Powder** 1¹/₂ tablespoons
- Rapadura Sugar** ³/₄ cup
- Salt** pinch
- zest and juice of an Orange** 1 (organic ideally)
- Tahini** ¹/₂ cup
- Olive Oil** ¹/₂ cup
- Eggs** 2
- cultured Buttermilk** 200ml (6¹/₂floz) or 1:3 Yogurt & Milk
- shelled Pistachios** ¹/₂ cup, roughly chopped
- Milk** to 'dropping consistency'

What is a 'dropping consistency'? It's a way of establishing the correct ratio of wet and dry ingredients in a mixture; if the mixture 'drops' slowly from the spoon rather than pouring or remaining where it is, then a dropping consistency has been achieved

Take care when measuring dry ingredients, with a measuring cup (particularly flour); trapped air-spaces can give you an inaccurate measure, but shaking the contents down in the cup usually solves it.

- Prepare a 12-cup medium/large muffin tin so the muffins don't stick (e.g. by greasing or lining with non-stick baking paper or patty papers).
- Heat the oven to Moderate.
- Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl, breaking up any lumps.
- Remove the zest from the orange into the bowl. Squeeze the juice into a separate medium-size bowl.
- Give the tahini a stir with a fork, to combine the separated oil, and then measure it into the medium bowl containing the juice.
- Add the olive oil. Whisk thoroughly and then, leaving the milk aside, whisk in the other liquid ingredients.
- Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and pour in the wet, then gently mix; it's important that you mix only just enough to combine.
- Stir in half of the pistachio nuts.
- Add a little milk, if necessary, to achieve a dropping consistency.
- Divide the batter equally between the 12 cups of the muffin tin.

- Sprinkle the rest of the pistachio nuts over the top and bake in the pre-heated oven for approximately 25 minutes until golden brown.

These are divine eaten whilst still warm. Otherwise, cool on racks before freezing in an airtight container between layers of non-stick paper.



Clever Chocolate Cake

This recipe contains 3 ingredients known to benefit brain function (hence the name): Cocoa, Walnuts and Sweet Potato. Perfect for school!

I think it qualifies as 'clever' because it's low in sugar and very healthy, and I suspect the children will love it.

Makes 14-16 serves

Organic Sweet Potato	160g/6¼oz
Organic Orange	1
roughly chopped, pitted Dates	1 cup (130g/5oz)
melted Butter	½ cup (100g/4oz)
Wholemeal Flour	1½ cups
Baking Powder	1 tablespoon
Unsweetened Cocoa Powder	¾ cup
Rapadura Sugar	¾ cup
Milk	1½ cups approx. (to consistency)
fresh* Walnuts	¾ cup roughly chopped

- Prepare a 19cm square cake tin, 21cm round cake tin, or 23cm x 13cm loaf tin so the mixture won't stick (e.g. by greasing or lining with non-stick baking paper).
- Cut the sweet potato into small chunks (I save time and maintain nutrients by leaving the skin on). Steam for about 15-20 minutes, until very soft. Cool.
- Finely grate the rind from the orange and put into a large bowl. Juice the orange and place the juice in a small saucepan.
- Add the dates and butter to the saucepan and heat over a medium heat until the dates are soft (about 15 minutes).
- Put the flour, baking powder, cocoa and sugar into the bowl with the orange zest, mix thoroughly to remove any lumps and then add the walnuts.
- Heat the oven to Moderate.
- Put the date mixture and sweet potato into a blender and blend to a paste. Add 1 cup of the milk and combine.
- Add the date mixture to the dry ingredients and mix.

**Walnuts can become rancid and bitter with time; check that the nuts you're buying are fresh, and store them in the fridge or freezer.*

Make Together With:

Beetroot & Walnut Dip page 56

Empower your Brain!

with Walnuts, Cocoa & Kumara



Cooked, Mashed Sweet Potato can be frozen, so I always prepare plenty and freeze it (measured out) for future use. I don't bother peeling it; saves time and retains nutrients.

- Add enough of the remaining milk to achieve a dropping consistency.
- Transfer the mixture to the prepared tin and bake in a moderate oven for 50-55 minutes; check the centre of the cake is cooked by pushing a skewer into it and checking it comes out clean.
- Cool completely before slicing and freezing in a sealed container between layers of non-stick paper.

Serve with some creamy Greek Yogurt, and raspberries or strawberries, to balance the richness of the cake.



Easy Ice-cream

I love how popular I suddenly am when I serve this! It makes the little bit of pre-planning worth it. This can't go into lunch-boxes of course (!) but it's a lovely treat to welcome children home from school on those hot days.

very ripe **Banana** ½ (per person)

Pure (Single) Cream ¼ cup

Milk ½ cup approx. (to consistency)

Idea: You can add a little honey, or stir in a few frozen blueberries and sprinkle finely chopped nuts on the top. And a small handful of good quality dark chocolate chips stirred through, lifts it into the realms of the divine, while the result remains healthy.

- Start the day before; peel the banana, remove any stringy bits or bruising, break into large chunks and freeze in an airtight container. During the summer I usually prepare enough for a number of servings.
- Slice the bananas into 2cm/1" chunks and place in a blender with the cream.
- Following your blender's operating instructions, blend until thick, light and creamy and serve immediately.

Freezing Foods

- Foods stored in the freezer must be airtight as much as possible.
- If you store in plastic bags, a straw is useful for sucking out the air to protect the food from drying out.
- Use non-stick baking paper between the layers.
- Do NOT re-freeze uncooked meat - use fresh meat for all the recipes and then freeze as soon after cooking as possible.

What can't you freeze?

- Eggs in their shells
- Creamy Sauces (e.g. Yogurt, Mayonnaise)
- Stuffed Poultry and Meats
- All Salad Vegetables
- Fruit that you want to remain firm
- Un-baked yeast dough (it kills the yeast).

Oven Temperatures

This is a guide only; please check your oven's user instructions.

Recipe Guide	C	F	Gas
Very Slow	120	250	1
Slow	150	300	2
Moderately Slow	160	325	3
Moderate	180-190	350-375	4
Moderately Hot	200-210	400-425	5
Hot	220-230	450-475	6
Very Hot	240-250	500-525	7

Measurements

1 cup = 250ml (8fl oz)

½ cup = 125ml (4 fl oz)

1/3 cup = 85ml (2 2/3 fl oz) approximately

1 tablespoon = 15ml (½ fl oz)

1 dessertspoon = 10ml (1/3 fl oz)

1 teaspoon = 5ml (1/6 fl oz)

1 cup Plain Flour = 150g

Note: The conversion of quantities in the recipes between metric/imperial/cups has been rounded off to the nearest whole number and is based on the US imperial system.



Apples



Organic Dried Apricots



Steamed Asparagus



Organic Baked Beans



Beetroot



Organic Dried Apple



Organic Boiled Egg



Egg Pasta



Dried Fruit, Coconut and Seed Mix



Olives



Organic Dried Figs



Fresh Pineapple

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The Clever Packed Lunch

A carefully prepared lunch-box is far more than just a healthy lunch; it's a 'parcel of love' that stays with the child when they're away, a reminder of their family. This is not insignificant and I believe it can sow the seeds of emotional resilience. No packaged food or canteen meal can achieve the same.

This book is a lifeline for the overstretched mothers and undernourished kids who are the victims of our fast-paced modern existence.

Hazel has managed to combine her love of healthy food and her obvious competence in the kitchen to present us with a practical source of quick, healthy and delicious meal ideas that will take the stress out of preparing portable food.

The information that you find here is easy to understand, logical and most importantly (for myself as a nutritionist) promises to deliver healthier meals for your family.

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