



Food from a  
Loving Home

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A COLLECTION OF VEGETARIAN RECIPES.  
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Lauren Burns



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# Introduction

Food should be a source of joy. A pleasure of wonderful tastes, flavours, textures and colours. Living energy to nourish and nurture our bodies. Food can be social, festive, decadent, nurturing, mouth-watering, sensual, comforting and creative. It is to be enjoyed, celebrated and respected.

This book is a collection of my favourite recipes that represent all of the above. It is about eating wholesome, creative food and having a positive attitude towards food and its role in our lives.

It was Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, who said, ‘Let thy food be thy medicine, and thy medicine be thy food’. This statement could not be more poignant as our society moves more and more towards convenience and fast-food eating, driven by marketing campaigns and multinational corporations. The concept of food as medicine transcends the medicinal and healing properties of foods, of which there are many. I believe Hippocrates’ statement also encompasses farming practices, food preparation, mindfulness, quality, pleasure and the social aspects of food.

I believe in cooking with fresh seasonal produce and good-quality ingredients that are as unadulterated as possible, and endeavouring to keep things close to their whole form. The less food is polluted with chemicals, preservatives and additives, the more you can taste the subtle flavours of nature.

We eat with our eyes as well as our mouths, so preparation and presentation are important. Studies have shown the effects on our health of eating in a calm environment, and how stress can impact on digestion. So it’s good to be mindful of your situation and state of mind when you sit down to a meal.

These recipes are not just for adults – many were my favourites to cook as a child. I am a firm believer in not ‘dumbing down’ food for children. I believe you should involve kids in cooking and give them family food to teach their palate to enjoy a variety of tastes and textures. As Stephanie Alexander says, ‘(They) become seduced by the pleasures of good food, and develop an appreciation of the rituals and tastes of the table that lasts a lifetime.’

In this book I want to share my love of food and my enthusiasm for cooking delicious, plentiful, tasty and creative meals. I hope you enjoy the recipes, which are coming from my home to yours.

x Lauren

# Hot Oat and Quinoa Porridge

Kick-start the morning with this great breakfast. Oats are an excellent source of fibre and are brilliant for the nervous system, and quinoa is an excellent source of protein. For more information on quinoa, see page 00.

## SERVES 2

- 3 cups water
- ¼ cup quinoa (red or white)
- 1 cup oats
- handful of sultanas
- handful of almonds and walnuts, roughly chopped
- pure maple syrup or raw honey
- pepitas

Pour the water into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the quinoa and boil for 10 minutes over a high heat. Stir in the oats, sultanas and nuts, then reduce the heat and simmer for 5–10 minutes or until the water has been absorbed and the mixture is at your desired consistency. You may need to add a little more water. Serve drizzled with maple syrup or honey and sprinkled with pepitas.

**Notes:** You can make a pre-porridge mix to have on hand, containing the oats, nuts and sultanas. Just add it after the quinoa has cooked for 10 minutes.

## Variations

- Add ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon just before serving.
- Serve with milk.
- Add fresh dates with the sultanas, or serve with prunes.
- Serve with fresh fruit such as bananas or blueberries or poached apples or pears (see page 000).
- Sprinkle with ground flaxseeds or LSA mix (see page 000) to serve.



# Pomegranate and Haloumi Salad

This salad was inspired by a dish my friend Anita brought to a dinner party one night. It is light and fresh, and the fleshy pomegranate seeds just burst in your mouth. The colours are wonderful and the salad looks very festive.

## SERVES 4

- 125 g haloumi cheese
- 1 pomegranate
- 1 butter lettuce, washed and torn into big chunks
- 2 tablespoons Erriba Salad Dressing (see page 000)

Line your griller with foil. Cut the haloumi in half lengthways and place on the foil (to catch excess liquid). Grill each side on medium–high heat until golden brown (4–5 minutes each side). Cool a little, then cut into 2.5 cm squares. Set aside.

Cut the pomegranate in half and scoop out the seeds into a bowl, discarding any that are brown or discoloured. Juice will come out when you scoop out the seeds – let that go into the bowl too. Using your fingers, remove any white pulp around the seeds.

Place the lettuce leaves in a salad bowl and spoon over the pomegranate seeds. Add the haloumi. Combine the pomegranate juice left in the bowl with the salad dressing, then drizzle over the salad and serve.

### Variation:

- Use a lighter salad dressing, such as a vinaigrette made with olive oil, white wine vinegar and lemon juice.
- seeds, some strips of roasted red capsicum or a couple of tablespoons of fresh corn kernels from a corn cob.
- Add a handful of sunflower



# Matzo Balls in Vegetable Soup

Matzo balls or kneidlach are traditionally Jewish dumplings made from matzo meal and served in soup. For me, this dish is the essence of Mum's home cooking and a great comfort food. Traditionally, shortening or chicken fat would be used instead of butter, and chicken stock would be used instead of vegetable stock.

**SERVES 4-6**

- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1 teaspoon vegetable bouillon stock powder (see page 00)
- 4 eggs
- 110 g coarse matzo meal
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 teaspoon salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 quantity hot Vegetable Soup (see page 000)

Put the butter in a measuring cup and pour over a little boiling water to melt. Add the stock and enough cold water to make ½ cup. Break the eggs into a bowl and beat lightly. Add the butter liquid, matzo meal, parsley and salt. Grind in pepper to taste, then mix well. Let stand for 20 minutes.

Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Using wet hands, form tablespoons of the matzo mixture into balls and drop them into the boiling water. Lower the heat and simmer for 20 minutes, covered.

Remove the matzo balls with a slotted spoon and add to the vegetable soup. Let the balls soak in the soup for at least 10-15 minutes to absorb the flavours. Serve hot.

**Note:** If doubling the recipe, use only 6 eggs.





## Tofu in Tomato Sauce with Coconut Lime Rice

I have been making this sublime dish since I was a teenager – it’s a winner! The wine and spring onions make the sauce gorgeous and moreish, and it’s such a good match with the coconut lime rice.

**SERVES 4**

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 60 g butter
- 1 onion, roughly diced
- 3 spring onions, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- ½ cup water
- 1 bouillon stock cube (vegetable or not-chicken – see page 00), crumbled
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 ripe tomatoes (5 if small), diced

- 375–400 g medium–soft tofu (not silken)
- plain flour, for dusting
- about 1 tablespoon freshly chopped flat-leaf parsley
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Coconut Lime Rice

- 600 g (3 cups) basmati rice
- 625 ml water
- 400 ml coconut milk
- 2 fresh kaffir lime leaves, ripped once or twice to release flavour

In a heavy-based saucepan, heat one-third of the olive oil and butter over a medium heat. Add the onion and spring onion and fry for 4–5 minutes until golden. Stir in the garlic and tomato paste and cook for 4–5 minutes. Add the wine and bring to the boil, then add the water, stock cube, bay leaf and tomato. Reduce the heat and cook gently for 25 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Meanwhile, make the coconut lime rice. Wash the rice in cold water, then place it in a saucepan and pour in the water and coconut milk. Stir and add the lime leaves. Bring to the boil, then put the lid on the saucepan and reduce the heat to very low. Cook, covered, for 20 minutes until the rice is light and fluffy and has absorbed all the liquid.

# Hedgehog

No family celebration is complete for us without this treat of my mum's. What I like about this version is that the biscuits are not finely ground but broken into pieces, which allows clumps of caramel to form. The dark chocolate ganache offsets the sweetness of the caramel perfectly. Divine.

- 150 g butter
- 1 x 250 g packet Marie biscuits
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons sweetened condensed milk
- ½–¾ cup walnuts, roughly chopped
- Dark chocolate ganache**
- 2 tablespoons cream
- 110 g dark chocolate, broken into pieces

Grease a 28 cm x 18 cm baking dish with a little of the butter. Break the biscuits into chunks the size of 10 cent and 20 cent pieces and place in a bowl.

Put the golden syrup, brown sugar, condensed milk and remaining butter in a saucepan over a medium heat (be generous with the quantities!) and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring. Pour over the broken biscuits and stir, making sure they are well coated. Tip the mixture into the baking tray and pack it down firmly by pressing with a small rolling pin or glass. You may need to beat it down a little to make sure it is firmly packed together and smooth on the top. Refrigerate overnight.

Next day, make the ganache. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over a medium-high heat until just boiling, then reduce the heat and stir in the chocolate until melted. Pour the ganache over the chilled hedgehog and sprinkle with the walnuts. Gently press down on the walnuts to secure them. Let the ganache set (this will take about 1 hour), then slice the hedgehog into squares.

The hedgehog will keep for 4–5 days in an airtight container.







## Agedashi Dofu

This Japanese dish of fried tofu served in a flavoursome broth is complemented by the punch of fresh ginger and clean crispness of daikon radish. It's a lovely entree or accompaniment to an Asian-style meal or simply on its own with a bowl of hot rice. Be sure to use medium-soft tofu for this dish – silken tofu will fall apart, while tofu that is too firm will not achieve the beautiful lightness that makes the dish so delicate.

### SERVES 4

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 375 g medium-soft tofu   | 1 litre water                             |
| cornflour or potato flour or plain flour, for dusting (cornflour or potato flour will puff up the crust more than plain flour) | 4 tablespoons mirin                       |
| 60–120 ml vegetable oil or grapeseed oil, for frying   | 4 tablespoons tamari                      |
| 2 x 10 g sachets vegetarian dashi  | 1 tablespoon freshly grated daikon radish |
|  | 4 cm piece fresh ginger, grated           |
|  | 2 spring onions, finely chopped           |

Wrap the tofu in paper towel or a clean tea towel to absorb any moisture, then cut into 3–4 cm cubes and dust with flour. Fry the tofu in oil over a high heat for 2–3 minutes each side until light and golden. The cubes should look like they are about to burst. Drain on paper towel.

To make the broth, gently heat the dashi, mirin and tamari until hot but not boiling.

Put a quarter of the daikon and ginger in each serving bowl, followed by a quarter of the fried tofu. Pour over some broth and garnish with spring onion to serve.

# Chai Tea

Chai or Indian masala tea is a lovely way to enjoy fresh spices in a sweet milky brew. There are many good-quality commercial chai blends that you can purchase and then add more spices, but it's also easy to make your own from scratch.

**SERVES 2**

- 2 cloves
- 1 star anise
- 3 cardamom pods
- 2 cups milk (soy or cow's)
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated or chopped ginger
- small piece of cinnamon stick
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1½ teaspoons unperfumed leaf tea (such as English Breakfast)
- 1 cup boiling water
- raw honey (about 1 generous teaspoon per person) or sugar to taste

Using a mortar and pestle, bash the cloves, star anise and cardamom pods to release their flavour, making sure the cardamom seeds come out of the pods. Pour the milk into a saucepan and add the bashed spices along with the ginger, cinnamon stick and tea leaves. Heat over a medium-high heat for a few minutes until the milk is close to boiling point, then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the boiling water and simmer on a very low heat for a further 5 minutes. Strain or place the chai in a coffee plunger. Add honey or sugar to taste.

### Variations:

Add more spices or use different proportions. Add a pinch of chilli powder.



## Moisturiser

This moisturiser can be used on the face or body and is velvety smooth – and of course it doesn't contain the chemicals many commercial brands do. It's well worth the effort to make it yourself!

This moisturiser is a semi-solid emulsion – that is, a mixture of oil (the 'Fat Phase') and water (the 'Water Phase') held together by an emulsifying agent. The two are combined individually and then combined together. Always be sure to use the best-quality ingredients (see the introduction to Lip Balm on page 000 for details of where to buy the ingredients) and invest in a good set of scales for weighing.

### MAKES 500 G

#### Fat Phase

60 g emulsifying wax  
28 ml macadamia oil  
28 ml sweet almond oil  
10 g cocoa butter

#### Water Phase

386 ml spring water  
12 g glycerine  
2 g (80 drops) citricidal  
(grapefruit seed extract)

Combine the fat phase ingredients in one saucepan, and the water phase ingredients in another saucepan. Heat separately to 65–70°C (use a confectionery thermometer to measure the temperature). Add the water phase to the fat phase and blend for 1 minute using a food processor or stick blender, then blend again every few minutes until cool. This will take about 1 hour.

Transfer to airtight dark glass jars (dark glass jars are needed because the oils will oxidise faster with exposure to light or air). The moisturiser will keep for 3–6 months if stored in a dark place away from sunlight.

### Variations

Add 10 drops of an essential oil such as lemon myrtle, lemongrass or lavender as the moisturiser is cooling, and blend well. When choosing your essential oil, think about whether you will be using the moisturiser for your body or face. Personally, I prefer an

unperfumed moisturiser for the face.

For a thicker cream (such as a night cream), use 80 g emulsifying wax, 25 ml almond oil, 10 ml hemp oil, 15 ml macadamia oil and 15 g cocoa butter for the fat phase.

