

HEALTHY WEEKNIGHT DINNERS

DAY 1

PORK VERDE STEW WITH MEXICAN BROWN RICE

\*The pork cooks all day in the slow cooker, the rice takes 45 minutes, mostly unattended after 5 or so minutes of prep.



DAY 2

PORK TACO BAR (PREPARE THE QUINOA FOR DAY 3)

\*Done within 10 minutes or so, the quinoa cooks while you prepare and eat to have a leg up on Days 4 & 5.



DAY 3

ITALIAN-STYLE QUINOA CAKES WITH EGGPLANT-TOMATO RAGU

\*This meal should be done in less than 30 minutes.



DAY 4

FETA AND QUINOA STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS WITH ROASTED ASPARAGUS

\*Dinner should be done in 30-40 minutes without much time prepping.



DAY 5

SHRIMP AND BROCCOLI DIVAN OVER PASTA

\*Dinner should be done in about 20 minutes!



BONUS  
DESSERT

HEALTHY  
PUMPKIN SPICE COOKIES

Not included in grocery list



MORPH MEAL



GLUTEN FREE (OR GF OPTIONS)



GREAT LEFTOVER LUNCH (MAKE EXTRA)



SLOW COOKER MEAL



VEGETARIAN

## PRODUCE

- 1lb Asparagus (Day 4)
- 5 Onions (Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, Day 5)
- 18 Cloves garlic
- 1 Small eggplant (Day 3)
- 1 Bunch fresh basil (Day 3, Day 4)
- 4 Carrots (Day 1)
- 1cup Fresh cilantro (Day 1)
- 1 Jalapeno chile pepper (Day 1)
- 6 Tomatillos (Day 1)
- 1 Green bell peppers (Day 1)
- 1 Tomato (Day 2)
- 1 Package shredded cabbage (Day 2)
- 2 Limes (Day 2)
- 6-8cups Fresh broccoli florets (Day 5)

## DAIRY

- 1 Egg (Day 3)
- 1cup Parmesan cheese (Day 3)
- ½ cup Feta cheese (Day 4)
- ½ cup Sour cream (Day 2)
- 2 cups Milk (Day 5)

## MEAT/SEAFOOD

- 1 ½ lb Shrimp (Day 5)
- 2 lb Pork tenderloin (Day 1, Day 2)
- 4 Chicken breasts (Day 4)

## CANNED/DRY GOODS

- 28 oz Canned crushed tomatoes (Day 3)
- 15 oz Diced canned tomatoes (Day 1)
- 8-12 Corn tortillas (Day 2)
- 1 cup Brown rice (Day 1)
- 2 cups Quinoa (Day 3, Day 4)
- 8 oz Pasta (brown rice, quinoa or whole wheat) (Day 5)

## PANTRY STAPLES

- Dried Italian seasoning
- Red pepper flakes
- Ground cumin
- Chili powder
- Healthy oil/fat of your choice
- Kosher/sea salt
- Fresh ground black pepper
- Salsa of your choice
- Brown rice flour



# PORK VERDE STEW WITH MEXICAN BROWN RICE

SERVES 4

## INGREDIENTS

2 pounds pork tenderloin, cubed  
2 teaspoons cumin  
2 pinches kosher salt fresh ground black pepper, to taste  
4 carrots, chopped  
1 cup fresh cilantro  
4 cloves garlic  
1 onion, chopped  
1 jalapeno, chopped  
6 tomatillos, quartered

2 tablespoons oil  
1 green bell pepper, chopped  
1 onion, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon chili powder  
1 tablespoon dried cumin  
2 pinches Kosher salt  
15 ounces canned diced tomatoes  
1 cup brown rice  
2 1/2 cups water or broth

## PREPARATION

### STEP 1:

Add the pork, cumin, salt, pepper and carrots to your slow cooker.

### STEP 2:

In a blender add cilantro, garlic, onion, jalapeno and tomatillo's. Blend, adding a bit of water if needed to get blending started.

### STEP 3:

Add the salsa verde to the slow cooker, stir to combine. Cook on low for 6-10 hours.

### STEP 4:

About 45 minutes before serving dinner start the brown rice. Heat a saute pan over medium high heat, add oil, swirl to coat. Saute the peppers, onion, garlic and spices until tender, about 5 minutes. Add in the tomatoes, rice and water, bring to a boil. Lower heat to low, cover and let cook 45 minutes.

### STEP 5:

Set aside half of the pork, cool and refrigerate for Day 2.

### STEP 6:

Fluff the rice, serve a bed of rice with the pork stew over the top. Enjoy!

DAY 1 MENU NOTE: YOU'LL BE MAKING EXTRA PORK FOR DAY 2

## INGREDIENTS

Cook quinoa for Day 3 while you prepare dinner and eat!

2 cups quinoa

4 ¼ cups water or broth

### RESERVED PORK FROM MEAL 1

8-12 corn tortillas

1 tomato, chopped

1 package shredded cabbage (for coleslaw—in the salad area)

or

1/2 head small cabbage, shredded

1 onion, minced

2 limes, quartered

1/2 cup sour cream

Fresh salsa of your choice

## PREPARATION

### STEP 1:

In a saucepan bring the water or broth to a boil, add quinoa, lower the heat to low and cover. Cook for 45 minutes.

### STEP 2:

Cool and refrigerate for Day 3 and 4.

### STEP 3:

Heat the corn tortillas in a dry pan over medium high heat until puffy. Place in a dry clean towel and wrap while you heat the rest.

### STEP 4:

Reheat the pork in a saucepan or microwave.

### STEP 5:

Set out all of the toppings and assemble your taco's as you wish! Enjoy!

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon healthy oil/fat of your choice
- 1 onion, minced - set aside half
- 6 cloves garlic, minced - set aside half
- 1 pinch Kosher/sea salt
- 2 cups cooked quinoa (prepared on Day 2)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 4 teaspoons healthy oil/fat of your choice, divided
  
- 1 small eggplant, cut into 1" pieces
- 2 pinches Kosher/sea salt fresh ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes, optional
- 2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
- 28 ounces canned crushed tomatoes
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped

## PREPARATION

### STEP 1:

To prepare the quinoa cakes heat a saucepan over medium heat. When hot add 1 tsp of oil, swirl around the pan. Add half of the chopped onion and garlic, season with 1 pinch salt and saute about 2 minutes.

### STEP 2:

Add to a bowl with the cooked quinoa, egg, parmesan cheese and 1 tsp dried Italian seasoning. Mix well. Form into 4 cakes (using a measuring cup if you want them to look perfect - I just form with my hands).

### STEP 3:

Place on a sprayed baking pan and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

### STEP 4:

While the cakes set up you can start your sauce. Heat a large skillet over medium high heat. When hot add 2 tsp oil, swirl around the pan.

### STEP 5:

Add the eggplant and other half of the onion and garlic, 2 pinches salt, pepper, dried Italian seasoning and pepper flakes if using. Saute about 10 minutes, add the crushed tomatoes. Let the ragu simmer while you cook your quinoa cakes. Heat a large skillet over medium high heat. Add 2 tsp of oil, swirl around the pan. Add your quinoa cakes, carefully transferring them to the pan. Cook, flipping once carefully, about 8-10 minutes. Serve your cakes, topped with the ragu. Garnish with fresh basil. Enjoy!



## FETA AND QUINOA STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS WITH ROASTED ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken breasts, boned and skinned
- 2 cups cooked quinoa (prepared on Day 2)
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 2 teaspoons healthy oil
- 2 pinches Kosher/sea salt fresh ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
  
- 1 lb asparagus, ends trimmed, washed
- 2 tsp healthy oil
- Kosher/sea salt and fresh ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 clove garlic, optional

### PREPARATION

#### STEP 1:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

#### STEP 2:

Slice a pocket into the side of each chicken breast by using a sharp knife to create a small incision on the fattest side of the breast - slice a large pocket almost to the other side of the chicken breast - try not to slice through. Make the pocket as big as you can on the inside, while keeping the incision as small as possible. Place the chicken breasts on a baking sheet.

#### STEP 3:

In a bowl combine the quinoa, feta and basil. Stuff this mixture into the chicken breasts, dividing evenly. Pack it in as tight as you can. Coat the chicken breasts with the oil, season with salt, pepper and the garlic.

#### STEP 4:

Bake for 25-30 minutes, until a thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the meat registers 170 degrees. This may take more or less time, depending on the size of your chicken breasts.

#### STEP 5:

Remove from the oven, cover with foil and let the meat rest for 10 minutes. Prepare the asparagus by preheating the oven to 500 degrees (You can do this after you take the chicken out to rest.) Place the asparagus on a baking sheet. Season with oil and salt/pepper/garlic if using.

#### STEP 6:

Roast about 10 minutes, tossing halfway through. Enjoy!



## SHRIMP AND BROCCOLI DIVAN OVER PASTA

SERVES 4

### INGREDIENTS

8 oz pasta (brown rice, quinoa or whole wheat, any shape)  
6-8 cups broccoli florets  
2 Tb healthy oil/fat of your choice  
1 onion, finely diced  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 ½ lb shrimp, peeled and deveined  
2 tsp dried Italian seasoning  
2 Tb brown rice flour  
2 cups milk  
½ cup shredded parmesan cheese  
2 pinches Kosher/sea salt  
fresh ground pepper to taste

### PREPARATION

#### STEP 1:

Get the water on to boil for the pasta and the broccoli while you make the sauce.

#### STEP 2:

When the water boils add the pasta, cook until 5 minutes are left (according to the package directions) and add the broccoli. Drain the pasta and broccoli when done.

#### STEP 3:

Meanwhile heat a large skillet over medium heat, when hot add oil, swirl to coat. Add the onion and garlic, cook about 2 minutes. Add the shrimp and Italian seasoning. Stir and cook until the shrimp is almost cooked through.

#### STEP 4:

Stir in the flour, then pour in the milk while stirring. As soon as the sauce comes to a boil remove from the heat. Add the parmesan, salt, pepper and the pasta and broccoli. Stir to combine. Serve and enjoy!



BONUS DESSERT RECIPE!  
**HEALTHY PUMPKIN  
SPICE COOKIES**

ADAPTED FROM [WHOLELIVINGBLOG.COM](http://WHOLELIVINGBLOG.COM)

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups organic raw whole rolled oats
- 8 ounces (about 1 cup) organic mashed pumpkin (from a can is ok)
- 1 small ripe banana, chopped
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds
- 3 tbsp ground flax seeds
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt

## PREPARATION

### STEP 1:

Preheat the oven to 350.

### STEP 2:

Lightly spray a baking sheet with a natural olive oil or canola oil cooking spray.

### STEP 3:

Combine pumpkin, banana, maple syrup, pumpkin pie spice and salt in a large mixing bowl and mix on high with a hand mixer until mostly smooth, about two minutes.

### STEP 4:

Fold in the oats, almonds and flax using a large wooded spoon until the mixture is uniform.

### STEP 5:

Form 6 large cookies and bake for 14-16 minutes until set. They will stay soft but hold together well. Let cool 10 minutes before eating, and store in an airtight glass container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. This recipe also works well if you make 12 small cookies of equal size and bake for 11-13 minutes.

BONUS DESSERT NOTE:



Please enjoy this week's recipes!  
Thank you for subscribing to receive Menus by Chef Kirsten Helle!

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My goal is for these meal plans, grocery lists and recipes help save you time and money, as well as help you eat a healthier and bring more life to your table!

Shopping tips—buy organic or organically farmed produce when possible. Grass fed, organically raised meats are superior for health benefits and benefits to the earth as well.

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In regards to recipes being gluten free, Mesa de Vida makes no claim that the products you choose to buy are in fact gluten free.

Chef Kirsten Helle accept no responsibility in your preparation of these meals.

In regards to cooking times: ovens and stoves can vary. The time it takes for my food to come up to temperature may not be the same it takes for yours to come to temperature. Cook all meat thoroughly and handle properly.