



SPRING INTO SHAPE

Cocktail: Low-carb, sugar-free Tom Collins
Wheat free chocolate and orange cake
Crafts: A Bright Bold and Beautiful spring table
Roast vegetables with quinoa
Sesame and Orange dressing
Strawberry and poppy seed salad
Baked Parmesan chicken with mango and pineapple salsa
Zesty lemon and herb steak salad with blackened tomatoes
Low GI dressings

TABLE: A bright bold and beautiful spring table



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Low Carb and sugar free Tom Collins

1 tot gin
Squeeze of fresh lemon
Sprite Zero to top

Place ingredients in a glass over ice. Garnish with lemon

Wheat chocolate and orange cake

2 small/medium oranges
6 extra- large eggs
1 heaped teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
200g ground almonds
250g castor sugar
50g cocoa

1. Place the oranges in a pot filled with cold water and boil for 2 hours or until soft. Drain and, when cool, cut in quarters and remove any big pips. Place in a food processor and process, including pith, peel and all
2. Add the eggs, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, almonds, sugar and cocoa and process until smooth.
3. Pour into a lined 24cm round tin and bake at 180 °C for approximately 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
4. Allow to cool before turning cake out

Toppings

1. Low fat

Sieve over cocoa powder or icing sugar with patterned paper as demonstrated

2. Medium Fat

Boil 1 cup of strong coffee with half a cup of sugar till syrup and drizzle the warm Espresso syrup over a slice of cake

3. What diet?

Melt 75g butter and 175g couverture buttons. Allow to cool slightly then add 1 TBS syrup, ½ cup sour cream.

Blend 2 ½ cups icing sugar and 1 heaped TBS cocoa in the processor then add the chocolate and blend till smooth

Optional: add 2 TBS cointreau or van der hum orange liqueur

COOK'S notes: This is a moist cake and can be made 2 or even 3 days in advance and stored in an airtight container not the fridge.

Roast vegetables with quinoa (6-8)

1x 500g roast vegetable mix from Woolies, or use a selection of peppers, butternut, carrots, red onions, baby marrow and potatoes

4 tablespoons sesame seeds

Maldon salt and pepper

½ cup orange juice

½ cup Italian parsley, finely chopped

1 cup quinoa

1 lemon

1. Place vegetables on a non stick mat, drizzle with orange juice, toss with sesame seeds and seasoning and roast at 200 ° for 35-40 minutes
2. Place 2 cups of water in a pot and bring to boil
3. Add the quinoa, reduce heat, cover and cook for about 10-15 minutes and fluff with a fork
4. Grate lemon zest into quinoa, then squeeze in some juice and toss through the parsley
5. Combine the vegetables and quinoa

COOK'S notes: The vegetables are perfect served this way and can also be topped with fresh rocket. Should you want to add a "lite" splash and serve these vegetables with a piece of grilled chicken or fish add the following healthy dressing with a robust nutty sesame flavour.

Sesame and Orange dressing

¼ cup fresh orange juice

¼ cup cider vinegar

½ teaspoon grated orange zest

1 teaspoon grated ginger

1 teaspoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon reduced salt soy sauce

Combine ingredients

Strawberry and poppy seed salad

Dressing

3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

4 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons brown sugar or xylitol

2 teaspoons black poppy seeds

½ teaspoon coarse black pepper

Salad

1 packet mixed leaves or spinach and rocket

250 g strawberries, halved

Low fat feta

Toasted almond flakes to top

1. Mix dressing ingredients together, pour over strawberries and allow to stand for at least 15 minutes.

2. Arrange salad leaves on a platter and add strawberries
3. Crumble with low fat feta and top with almonds

COOK'S notes: Asparagus and smoked chicken or grilled baby marrow strips and steamed salmon can be added to the salad to serve as a main meal.

Baked Parmesan chicken with mango and pineapple salsa (4)

4 chicken breasts, bashed then sliced in half or into strips

¼ cup low oil mayonnaise

¼ cup fat free yoghurt

2 tablespoons wholegrain mustard

2 tablespoons Maldon salt

1 teaspoon crushed garlic

1 tablespoon honey

4 tablespoons grated parmesan

Zest of one lemon (retain the lemon)

1 ½ cup bread crumbs-from grated low GI bread *

¼ cup sesame seeds

1. Combine the mayonnaise, yoghurt, mustard, honey and garlic in one wide-rimmed bowl. Squeeze the remaining lemon into the mixture
2. Mix the breadcrumbs, parmesan, zest and sesame seeds in another bowl.
3. Dip the chicken breasts into the mayonnaise mixture and then into the breadcrumb mixture to coat thickly and then place on baking tray lined with a non stick mat
4. Bake at 180 °C for approximately 20 minutes until golden on the outside and chicken is cooked through.

COOK'S notes: To make fresh low GI breadcrumbs place a whole loaf, 5 slices at a time, in a processor. Measure out 8 cups and freeze what you don't use.

Mango salsa

When fresh mango is seasonal use only mango. Otherwise, use fresh pineapple combined with tinned mango. Drain the syrup and rinse mango under water.

1 cup of finely cubed mango (or ½ cup cubed tinned mango with ½ cup cubed pineapple)

½ cup red pepper, finely cubed

¼ cup chopped coriander

Sweet chilli sauce

Combine all ingredients and add chilli sauce to coat

COOK'S notes: For healthy lunch boxes serve strips of chicken on a brown roll with light mayonnaise and lettuce or serve with tomato sauce sachets as a healthier alternative.

* Wholegrain mustard may be replaced with 1 tablespoon soya sauce if you are serving fussy eaters and you will then leave the mustard out of the salsa too.

Zesty lemon and herb steak salad with blackened tomatoes (2-3)

2x rump/sirloin steaks (approx 500g)

½ teaspoon crushed garlic

3 tablespoon soy sauce
Zest and juice of one lemon
¼ cup mint leaves
¼ cup basil leaves
¼ cup coriander leaves
1 avocado sliced or cubed
½ -1 punnet cherry tomatoes
1 mixed lettuce pack

1. Place steak, soya sauce, garlic and lemon juice in a bowl and allow to marinate for a minimum of 10 minutes.
2. remove steak from marinade and brush one side with olive or canola oil
3. heat a non stick pan on high and add the steaks (oil side down)

For a rare steak cook 3 minutes per side

For a medium steak cook 4 minutes per side

For well done cook 4 minutes per side, turn down the heat and cook for 8-10 minutes turning once

4. Remove steak from pan and place in a bowl and cover with tin foil and rest 5-10 minutes before serving (allows the meat to relax making it more tender)
5. Place the tomatoes into the pan and back onto the heat and toss till bursting and blackened. If there are no pan juices add some more oil or a squeeze of lemon juice
6. Arrange salad greens, herbs and tomatoes on a large platter or individual plates.
7. Slice beef thinly and place on top of greens. Top with avocado and dressing of your choice Combine dressing ingredients and pour over salad.

COOK'S Notes: Chilli may be added to the marinade and the first dressing. Make this an easy meal by purchasing the Woolies 4 pack (ginger, garlic and chilli)

Sun dried tomatoes can be used instead of cooked cherry tomatoes. Don't use the ones marinated in oil, instead hydrate dried tomatoes in boiling water then slice in half. Use about ½ - ¾ cup.

LOW GI Dressings (combine all ingredients)

Orange and Honey

2 TBS soy sauce
3TBS fresh orange juice
1 TBS honey
½ tsp crushed ginger
½ tsp garlic

Honey and mustard dressing

4T or 60 ml raw honey
4T or 60ml ml balsamic vinegar
4T or 60 ml whole grain mustard

Creamy herb dressing

1 cup fat free yoghurt
4 TBS lite mayonnaise
1 TBS whole grain mustard

4T fresh chopped herbs
2 tsp brown sugar or xylitol
Pepper
1-2 tsp Maldon salt
* Add fat free milk to thin if a pouring consistency is required

Make at home fat free potato chips

Peel potatoes and boil for 10 minutes. Cut into chips, spray with olive oil spray and season well. Recommended seasonings include paprika, salt and vinegar seasoning or simply crushed Maldon salt. Place on a non-stick baking sheet and bake at 180° C for approximately 30 minutes or until golden and crisp.

TABLE: A bright bold and beautiful spring table

Bought

- Flower paper from the Scrapbook on Heathway square R10-R14.50 each
- Jewelled flowers R27.50 the Scrapbook
- Flower stickers R65 the Scrapbook
- Flower serviettes Mr Price R15.99
- Striped ramekins Mr Price R29.99
- Bright dish cloths Mr Price R11.99
- Pink cake domes Mr Price on sale R39.99
- Daisy chocolate transfers, the Chocolate Den in Edenvale R20 for 9
- Ladybird chocolate transfers, the Chocolate Den in Edenvale R24.50 for 20
- Small white cups, Chocolate Den Edenvale R10 for 10
- Wooden dragonfly's and butterflies Crafters Market R4.50
- Edible heart gems-for cupcakes et R36
- Jellies, sweets, all sorts and berries from Woolies

Made

- Mineral bottles wrapped in flower paper
- Wheat grass with painted skewers and butterflies
- Edible flowers in ice cubes
- Printable labels for salad dressings (mail me for template), wrapped around salad bottles and attached with elastic
- Spring fever shots : Assorted shooters in large syringes, sealed with a jelly tot
- Oil and vinegar bottles in consol glass with flower wine stoppers
- Wooden cutlery with spotted paper on a white napkin, wrapped with coloured ribbon.
- Spring blocks from the Scrapbook
- Gerberas, tulips or other flowers in consol bottles with flower stickers
- Champagne glasses with flower stickers
- Bucket draped in striped dish cloths
- Dragonflies and butterflies painted with acrylic pain and names written on in black
- Pop corn balls see recipe below. Skewers for pop corn sticks painted in acrylic paint
- Chocolate and ladybird daisies: Melt couverture chocolate and place in the moulds. Remove when cool and set

Bright Popcorn balls (makes 10 large tennis and 20 golf ball size)

500g white marshmallows
40ml butter

Food colouring

5 cups popped popcorn

1. Divide the marshmallows, butter and popcorn into 5 batches (or as many colours as you would like) and make one batch at a time
2. Melt marshmallows and butter, add food colouring and mix well
3. Add the popcorn
4. Rub some oil onto your hands and roll the mixture into balls
5. Cool and stick a kebab stick into each
6. Paint sticks in a variety of fun colours beforehand. Leave the sharp end unpainted as this is the part you will stick into the popcorn balls

COOK'S Notes: This is a rather messy job, wear gloves and limit colours as you dirty many dishes with very sticky gooey marshmallows. Pink marshmallows require no food colour. Don't worry about measuring precisely-just mix popcorn in the marshmallow mix.