

LOW COST
LOW CARB

10 GLUTEN-FREE, SUGAR-FREE & DAIRY-FREE
FAVOURITES TO FIT YOUR BUDGET

BY RUTH VAN GORP

PREFACE

When I first decided to seriously commit to reducing my complex carbohydrate intake and eliminating added sugars from my diet, I naively thought my biggest challenge would be giving up pizza, chocolate chip cookies, and double-double coffees. As challenging as this was, however, the obstacle I was totally unprepared for was the toll it would take on my wallet.

Popular low carbohydrate diets like Whole30®, Atkins®, The Paleo Diet®, etc. tout the benefits of grass-fed meat, organic produce, fancy ingredients and gluten-free flour alternatives, but don't readily acknowledge that these items are out of the price range of many consumers. For someone living on a budget, it's difficult to justify spending twenty dollars on a small bag of almond flour when the wheat alternative can

be purchased for less than a fifth of the cost. Paying double or triple the price for common staples like meat, fruits and vegetables, can also add up to thousands of extra dollars over time that could divert funds from other essential day-to-day living expenses. Even more, these pricey items are not likely to be found in the essential care packages provided by food banks and other charity organizations, to the people whom are most at risk for nutritional deficits. *So what's a hungry, health-conscious person supposed to do?*

My goal in compiling this book is not to convince anyone to follow any specific diet plan, but rather to share what I've learned from my experiences and provide some resources that anyone can use to get started on their personal journey(s) to better health.

Wherever possible, I've included alternatives and substitutions that take into consideration a variety of dietary restrictions, including vegan and vegetarian options. Better yet, *every recipe in this book is gluten-free, sugar-free and dairy-free* (depending on which ingredients you select). You can also choose to eliminate artificial sweeteners and other additives, and even make your own substitutions to fit within a specific diet regimen.

*Once you get cooking,
the possibilities are endless!*



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Legend:







Prep Time: 2 hr, 5 min

Serves: 1

Ingredients:

2 tbsp whole chia seeds

½ cup dairy-free milk

Optional:

1 tsp maple syrup or
sweetener of choice

2 tsp cocoa powder

fresh berries or fruit

coconut cream for topping

Per serving:

158 calories, 9 g fat,

14 g carbohydrate,

5 g protein, 14 g fibre

EASY CHIA PUDDING

A versatile recipe with endless variations—perfect for a snack, dessert, or breakfast on the go.

- 1** Pour ingredients into a bowl or jar and mix well. Let settle for 2-3 minutes, then mix again thoroughly until you see no clumping.
- 2** Cover the container and store in the fridge for a minimum of 2 hours to allow chia seeds to absorb the liquid.
- 3** When ready to eat, add desired toppings and enjoy cold!

Tip: Chia pudding can be stored in the fridge up to 1 week.
For a more decadent variation, use coconut milk.

Source: Jawad, Yumma. "3-Ingredient Chia Pudding." *Feel Good Foodie*, Elite Cafemedia, 24 June 2018, <https://feelgoodfoodie.net/recipe/3-ingredient-chia-pudding/>. Accessed 9 February 2019.



Prep Time: 25 min

Serves: 8

Ingredients:

1 cup finely chopped onion

1 medium jalapeño or

serrano pepper, chopped,
ribs and seeds removed

¼ cup lime juice

¾ tsp fine sea salt

1 ½ lb's ripe red tomatoes
(about 8 small or 4 large),
finely chopped

½ cup finely chopped
cilantro

Per serving:

25 calories, <1 g fat,

6 g carbohydrate,

1 g protein, 2 g fibre

CLASSIC PICO DE GALLO

A fresh, homemade salsa to add flavour to a variety of snacks and/or meals.

- 1** In a medium serving bowl, combine the chopped onion, jalapeño, lime juice and salt. Let marinate for about 5 minutes while you chop the tomatoes and cilantro.
- 2** Add the chopped tomatoes and cilantro to the bowl and combine. Taste, and add more salt if desired.
- 3** For the best flavour, let the mixture marinate for at least 15 minutes. Serve immediately, or store in the fridge up to 4 days.

Tip: Skip the expensive "artisan" chips and make your own from baked sweet potatoes, beets, parsnips, carrots, taro, or zucchini.

Source: Taylor, Kathryn. "Classic Pico de Gallo." *Cookie and Kate*, 11 September 2018, <https://cookieandkate.com/2018/classic-pico-de-gallo-recipe/>. Accessed 9 February 2019.





QUICK LOW CARB CHILI

Prep Time: 5 min

Cook Time: 25 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 lb lean ground beef
(or chicken or turkey)
1 tbsp olive oil
1 cup salsa or tomato sauce
1 medium onion, chopped
2 ribs celery, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
½ tbsp chili powder
½ tsp ground chipotle
1 tsp garlic powder
½ tbsp cumin
1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
⅓ cup water or broth

Per serving:

273 calories, 11 g fat,
7 g carbohydrate,
36 g protein, 2 g fibre

Make your own chili in minutes. Perfect for a weeknight meal!

- 1** Brown the meat in a large frying pan with olive oil over medium heat, about 7-10 minutes.
- 2** Add in the other ingredients, stirring thoroughly to combine.
- 3** Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 4** Serve warm and add toppings if desired.

Tip: Avoid pre-packaged chili spices, as they often contain sugar. Add lentils if desired, and any other leftover vegetables.

Source: Blackburn, Sara. "Low Carb Keto Chili." *Perfect Keto*, 16 April 2018, <https://perfectketo.com/low-carb-keto-chili/>. Accessed 16 February 2019.



Prep Time: 7 min
Cook Time: 30 min
Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, coarsely chopped
6 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
2/3 cup orange juice
3 large pieces orange zest
2 1/2 tbsp grated fresh ginger
2 cups broth (vegetable or chicken)
2 cups water
salt and pepper to taste

Optional:

1 tsp turmeric (curcuma)
dash paprika or cumin for extra spice
1/4 cup coconut milk

Per serving:

120 calories, 3 g fat,
24 g carbohydrate,
2 g protein, 4 g fibre

SWEET & SPICY CARROT SOUP WITH ORANGE AND GINGER

A sweet and spicy pick-me-up for a brisk fall or winter day.

- 1** On the stove, place a large pot over medium heat. Add olive oil and onion, and sweat for about 3-4 minutes.
- 2** Add the remaining ingredients (except cream) and stir. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, cover and simmer until the carrots are tender (about 25 minutes).
- 3** Remove orange zest and discard. Allow soup to slightly cool, then puree in a blender or food processor.
- 4** Return to pot and add cream if desired, or serve warm.

Tip: This soup keeps up to 7 days in the fridge, or 4 months in the freezer. If using ground (dry) ginger, reduce amount to about 1/2 tsp.

Source: "Carrot Soup with Orange and Ginger." *SOS Cuisine*, Sukha Technologies Inc., 2005-2019, <https://www.soscuisine.com/recipe/carrot-soup-orange-ginger#>. Accessed 9 February 2019.







Prep Time: 15 min

Cook Time: 15 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 2 lb's cremini or white button mushrooms
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves
- ½ cup thinly sliced shallots
- ⅓ cup flat-leaf parsley
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp fine-grain sea salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 3-4 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Per serving:

- 204 calories, 14 g fat,
- 14 g carbohydrate,
- 7 g protein, 2 g fibre

MARINATED ITALIAN MUSHROOMS

A simple side dish recipe with lots of flavour.

- 1** Remove the stems from the mushrooms. Gently rub the mushrooms with a damp cloth to remove any debris.
- 2** In a large wok, heat 2 tbsp's olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and shallots and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes. Raise the heat to medium-high and add the mushroom caps. Sauté, stirring frequently for 7-8 minutes more.
- 3** With a slotted spoon, transfer the mushroom mixture to a large bowl, discarding the leftover water and oil in the wok. Stir in the parsley, thyme, oregano, salt, pepper, vinegar, and remaining 2 tbsp's olive oil until combined.
- 4** Let the mushrooms cool for 20-30 minutes, then cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or overnight, so the flavours can develop. Stir the mushrooms a few times during this process.
- 5** Serve the mushrooms chilled or at room temperature.

Tip: The longer the mushrooms marinate, the more pronounced the flavour.

Source: Liddon, Angela. The Oh She Glows Cookbook: Vegan Recipes to Glow from the Inside Out. Glo Bakery Corporation, 2014.



Prep Time: 5 min
Cook Time: 32 min
Serves: 8

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp garam masala
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 3 (15 oz/425 g) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 (14.5 oz/410 g) cans diced tomatoes
- 1 (13.5 oz/400 mL) can full fat coconut milk
- 1 tsp arrowroot starch
- salt (to taste)
- fresh chopped cilantro

Per serving:

- 393 calories, 13 g fat,
- 60 g carbohydrate,
- 15 g protein, 15 g fibre

CHICKPEA TIKKA MASALA

A vegan spin on a South Asian dish. Keep it low-carb by serving with cauliflower rice.

- 1** Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onions, a pinch of salt, and sauté until translucent, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for about 1 more minute.
- 2** Add ginger and spices and sauté until fragrant (about 30 seconds).
- 3** Add chickpeas and diced tomatoes, bring to a boil, lower to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes.
- 4** Stir in coconut milk and simmer for 5 more minutes.
- 5** In a small bowl, whisk the arrowroot starch with 2 tbsp water. Add to the chickpea mixture and cook for 5 more minutes or until the sauce has thickened.
- 6** Taste and adjust seasoning as desired.
- 7** Remove from heat, top with fresh chopped cilantro, and serve.

Tip: Small amounts of lesser-used spices can be purchased for a fair price at a bulk foods store.

Source: Mike. "(Vegan) Easy Chickpea Tikka Masala." *TheIronYou*, 2 March 2016, <https://www.theironyou.com/2016/03/vegan-easy-chickpea-tikka-masala.html?m=1>. Accessed 13 February 2019.





LEMONY BAKED FISH FILLETS

Prep Time: 5 min

Cook Time: 10-12 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 4 basa fish fillets or other mild white fish about 4 oz each (1 lb)
- 8 tsp olive oil
- 4 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp lemon pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- dash paprika
- dash sea salt
- ¼ cup green onions chopped fine
- 2 tbsp parsley chopped

Optional:

- lemon wedges for garnish

Per serving:

- 188 calories, 10 g fat,
- 1 g carbohydrate,
- 23 g protein, <1 g fibre

Serve with salad greens, or with homemade baked sweet potato fries for a healthy take on "fish and chips."

- 1** Preheat oven to 425°F.
- 2** Pat fish fillets dry with a paper towel, and place in baking dish or rimmed baking sheet greased with olive oil or cooking spray.
- 3** Brush fillets with olive oil and drizzle lemon juice over top. Combine spices in a small bowl, and sprinkle evenly over the fish. Sprinkle onions and parsley over the fillets as well.
- 4** Bake uncovered for 10-12 minutes, or until fish flakes with a fork. For larger or frozen fillets, increase the bake time until the fish reaches an internal temperature of at least 145°F, and flakes.
- 5** Serve warm with lemon wedges on the side.

Tip: This recipe uses basa fillets as they are relatively inexpensive, but just about any mild white fish (eg: tilapia, cod, sole) will do.

Source: Pilley, Marjory. "Lemony Baked Basa-Quick and Easy!." *The Dinner Mom*, 18 March 2013, <https://www.dinner-mom.com/lemony-baked-basa/>. Accessed 29 January 2019.

CRISPY BAKED CHICKEN THIGHS

Juicy, flavourful, packed with protein, and cheaper than chicken breasts.

Prep Time: 5 min

Cook Time: 35-45 min

Serves: 8

Ingredients:

- 3 lb's bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs (about 6-8 thighs)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp paprika

Optional:

- fresh or dried rosemary

Per serving:

- 410 calories, 31 g fat,
- 2 g carbohydrate,
- 27 g protein, <1 g fibre

- 1** Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a high-rimmed baking sheet or baking dish with foil for easy cleanup and set aside.
- 2** Remove the chicken thighs from their packaging and pat them dry with paper towels. Arrange the chicken thighs on the prepared baking sheet and drizzle with the olive oil, rubbing the oil into the chicken to coat.
- 3** In a small bowl, mix the spices together. Lift up the chicken skins so that they are partially attached, and sprinkle spice blend under the skin of each thigh. Sprinkle the remaining half of the spice blend evenly over top of the chicken skins.
- 4** Bake chicken in preheated oven for 35-45 minutes, until chicken reaches an internal temperature of at least 165°F.

Tip: Bone-in, skin-on chicken works best, as it imparts more flavour and helps prevent the chicken from drying out. You may remove skin after baking.

Source: Nichole. "Crispy Baked Chicken Thighs." *The Salty Marshmallow*, 1 November 2017, <https://thesaltymarshmallow.com/crispy-baked-chicken-thighs/>. Accessed 9 February 2019.





SPAGHETTI SQUASH AND MEATBALLS

This recipe uses spaghetti squash in place of pasta, but for an even lower carb alternative you can use thinly sliced or spiralized zucchini "zoodles."

Prep Time: 15 min

Cook Time: 40-60 min

Serves: 4

Ingredients (squash):

1 spaghetti squash
2 tsp olive oil
dash pepper
dash salt

Ingredients (meatballs):

2 lb's ground beef
1 lb ground pork
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 egg
1 tbsp chopped parsley
1 tbsp chopped oregano
1 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp black pepper

Optional:

½ tsp red pepper flakes
marinara sauce for topping
grated parmesan cheese
for topping

Per serving:

681 calories, 22 g fat,
15 g carbohydrate,
101 g protein, 3 g fibre

- 1** Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Using a sharp knife, cut the top and bottom ends off of the squash, then cut it in half lengthwise. Remove the seeds and brush the flesh of the squash with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place squash cut-side down on baking sheet, and bake for 40-60 minutes, until easily pieced with a fork.
- 2** Line 2 baking sheets with foil and set aside. Combine meatball ingredients and mix well. Shape into equal-sized balls (about 2 tbsps each, for about 24 balls).
- 3** Arrange balls on baking sheets. Bake in 400°F oven for about 20 minutes, or until cooked through (balls should reach an internal temperature of at least 160°F).
- 4** Using a fork, shred the cooked squash to a spaghetti-like texture, then plate. Top with marinara sauce and cooked meatballs. Serve warm and enjoy.

Tip: Most store bought brands of pasta sauce contain small amounts of sugar. For a truly sugar-free version, you can make your own marinara sauce.

Source: Meghan. "Make Ahead Meatballs (Paleo, Gluten Free, Whole 30)." *Fox and Briar*, Elite Cafemedia, 9 December 2016, <https://www.foxandbriar.com/make-ahead-meatballs-paleo-gluten-free-whole-30/>. Accessed 9 February 2019.



Prep Time: 5 min

Serves: 1

Ingredients:

2 medium frozen bananas,
peeled and chopped
2 tbsp dairy-free milk
(or water)

Optional:

1-2 tbsp nut butter
coconut, cocoa powder,
other frozen fruits, or other
add-ins of choice
cinnamon or fresh grated
nutmeg for topping
sliced almonds or nuts of
choice for topping

Per serving:

212 calories, 1 g fat,
54 g carbohydrate,
3 g protein, 6 g fibre

5-MINUTE BANANA “ICE CREAM”

A sweet treat to satisfy your craving, without added sugar or sweeteners.

- 1** In a blender or food processor, mix the bananas and the milk. Depending on how powerful your blender is, you may need to chop the banana into smaller chunks.
- 2** Pulse in short bursts until bananas have a crumb-like texture. Add any additional ingredients of your choice.
- 3** Continue to blend until slightly creamy. Serve immediately.

Tip: Overripe bananas work best, but you can use any kind of frozen fruit. Only make as much as you are ready to eat, as it does not re-freeze well.

Source: King, Melissa. “5 Minute Banana Ice Cream (Vegan).” *My Whole Food Life*, 25 March 2013, <https://mywholefoodlife.com/2013/03/25/5-minute-banana-ice-cream/>. Accessed 29 January 2019.



GOOD NUTRITION SHOULD BE AFFORDABLE.

*Make fresh meals at home with simple ingredients
that will satisfy you and your wallet.*

