

Valentines Day Menu

Spicy Roasted Chickpeas
Arugula and Fennel Salad with Parmesan and Walnuts
Pasta Carbonara with Peas
Flourless Chocolate Cakes

Menu Notes

All these recipes are written for 2 servings. If you are having a larger party just double, triple etc. These recipes would be fun to cook with someone else, pretty easy and straightforward. If you are making a gluten free meal, swap out the regular pasta for your favorite gluten free variety. But if you are cooking to impress someone else I've included tips at the bottom of each recipe to help you with timing-look for the asterisk.

Grocery List

3oz pancetta or bacon

½ lemon

½ fennel bulb

¼# arugula (about 1 large handful)

1 small shallot

5T olive oil

1 can chickpeas

2tsp black pepper

1/2tsp cayenne

1/2tsp cumin

1/4tsp thyme leaves

1/2tsp vanilla extract (or your favorite liqueur Kahula, Chambourd, Grand Marnier...)

1/2C bittersweet chocolate chips or a 2oz bar cut into pieces

1T brown sugar

2T sugar

1/2 tsp honey

1/4C walnuts

12oz spaghetti, or your favorite pasta shape

1T unsweetened cocoa powder

4 eggs

2T butter, plus a little extra for buttering the ramekins

3oz Parmesan cheese (grated, shredded or whole)

1/2C frozen peas

Optional-fresh raspberries, whip cream or ice cream to have with dessert

Spicy Roasted Chickpeas

2T Olive oil
1 Can Chickpeas
1/2tsp Cayenne
1/2tsp Ground cumin
Salt

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Pour oil on to a rimmed baking dish and place in the oven. Drain and rinse the chickpeas. Transfer the chickpeas to a paper towel lined plate and dry them as best you can. Sprinkle the chickpeas with cayenne and cumin and carefully put them on the hot baking dish. Bake in the oven until they are crisp and golden, about 15 minutes. Transfer the roasted chickpeas to a paper towel lined dish and sprinkle with salt. Serve hot.

Optional: you can replace the spices with dried herbs if you like, or you can also play around with the flavorings. Curry is a fun one, add a little lime zest after taking out of the oven

*drain, rinse, dry and season the chickpeas ahead of time and have the oven preheated. Don't leave the oil and pan in the oven longer than 7 minutes

Arugula and Fennel Salad with Parmesan and Walnuts

½ Lemon, juiced
½ tsp honey
2T Olive oil
salt and pepper
½ Fennel bulb, core removed and thinly sliced
¼# Arugula (about 1 large handful)
1 Small Shallot, thinly sliced
¼C Walnuts, toasted
1oz Parmesan cheese (shaved, grated or shredded)

Put the lemon juice, honey, olive oil, and a pinch of salt and pepper in a large bowl, use a fork to mix them up a bit. Add the fennel, arugula, shallot and walnuts. Toss well. Taste and adjust seasoning (depending on how juicy your lemon is you may need more oil if the salad tastes too tart). Divide between plates and garnish with Parmesan

*have everything in the bowl except the arugula and Parmesan cheese; the fennel and shallot would be lovely marinated for a bit

Carbonara with Peas

2 Eggs

1 Egg yolk

2tsp Black pepper

1/4tsp Thyme leaves

pinch Cayenne

1/2C Parmesan cheese, grated. Plus extra for topping the pasta

1T Olive oil

3oz Pancetta or Bacon, cut into small pieces

12oz Spaghetti (or your favorite shape)

1/2C Frozen Peas

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Heat a large sauté pan over medium high heat. When hot add the pancetta and cook until brown and crispy. Remove the pancetta from the pan with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the pasta to the boiling water. Meanwhile whisk together eggs, yolk, pepper, thyme, cayenne, cheese and olive oil. Place a large colander in the sink, and put the frozen peas in the colander. When the pasta is nearly cooked, scoop out about 1C of the pasta water and set aside. Drain the pasta in the colander, heating the peas as you do so. Transfer the pasta and peas back into the empty pasta pot, add the cooked pancetta too. Stir two tablespoons of pasta water into the egg mixture. Pour the egg mixture on to the hot pasta. Gently stir until the sauce becomes creamy. If it's starting to look to dry add extra pasta water. Serve immediately.

*whisk together the egg mixture, cook the pancetta, get the colander set up and have the water boiling

Flourless Chocolate Cakes

2T butter, plus a little for greasing the ramekins

1/2C Bittersweet chocolate chips

1T+ 1 1/2tsp Sugar

1T Brown sugar

1 Egg

1/2tsp Vanilla extract (or can use a liqueur-Kahlua, Chambord, Grand Marnier....)

small pinch salt

Unsweetened cocoa powder for dusting the ramekins

2 6oz ramekins

Optional-whipped cream or ice cream to top the cakes, and/or fresh berries

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter the ramekins and dust with cocoa powder, set aside. Place the butter and chocolate in a small pan and melt over low heat. (can also do this in a microwave, carefully) In a small bowl stir together the sugars and salt. In another small bowl whisk the egg and vanilla together until well mixed. Pour the chocolate mixture into the bowl with the sugar and stir. Add the egg mixture and stir until everything is fully incorporated. Divide between prepared ramekins and bake for 20-25 minutes. The middle should be just slightly wet looking. Remove from oven, let them sit for a few minutes and serve hot.

Put this in the oven right as you sit down to eat dinner, if you are quick eaters. If you like to take your time eating, prepare the recipe up until you stir everything together.

*prepare the ramekins, place the chocolate and butter in the pan, measure out the sugars and have the egg and vanilla whisked together