

# NOW COOK IT.



## Resource Card:

### Spanish eating customs

Spaniards eat their lunch, or comida, between 2:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon. Serving as the day's main meal, it is traditionally quite a bit larger than the dinner meal, or cena. The Spanish dinner (cena) is traditionally much smaller than the midday comida. It often consists of something lighter like a salad, a sandwich, or a selection of tapas. Spaniards eat late for this final meal of the day- anytime from 9:00 until 11:00 in the evening.

#### Spanish Eating Customs: Tapas

A tradition begun long ago in the southern city of Seville, Spaniards have since perfected the art of snacking. Going out for tapas consists of travelling from bar to bar and sharing plates of the bars' specialties with a small group of friends.

#### Spanish Eating Customs: Sobremesa

The word [sobremesa](#) literally means "over the table" and refers to the art of conversation after a meal. Instead of taking the last bite and leaving, Spaniards often stay at the table conversing, savoring each other's company, and perhaps sharing a drink. If good conversation ensues, be prepared to stay for hours!

#### Spanish Eating Customs: Siesta

No, it's not a myth. Yes, the infamous siesta really does exist. It began long ago as after eating the large mid-day meal farmworkers needed to rest and digest before going back out to work the fields. While this daily break doesn't necessarily include a nap, businesses and stores do shut down for about two hours and many people return home to eat with their families.

Source: <http://www.enforex.com/culture/spanish-eating-customs.html>

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## Resource Card: French eating customs

Meal times in France are fairly predictable and it is rare to see people eating outside of the designated hours. It is an amazing fact that if it is little after noon, the majority of people are sitting down eating.

### Breakfast

Breakfast, or le petit-déjeuner, is eaten early in the morning, soon after rising. It is almost always a fairly simple affair and typically other than heating water for hot drinks, the French do no cooking for this meal.

### Lunch

Even while working, the French will nearly always take at least an hour to eat at noon time or 12:30. This meal (called le déjeuner), although perhaps simplified with people's increasingly speedy lives, will still typically include three courses: a starter, a main plate, and a cheese or dessert course.

### Apéritif

When entertaining, the French often have an apéritif, or before dinner drink with some finger foods, at 7 or so in the evening.

### Dinner

Dinner, called le dîner, is usually eaten at 7:30 or 8 at night. Parents of small children might feed the kids a bit earlier before sitting down to dinner themselves. Dinner is eaten slowly and once again several courses are usually enjoyed. The whole affair might take about an hour.

As you can see, traditional French eating customs are characterized by punctuality and taking the time to enjoy one's food and family.

Source: <https://www.easy-french-food.com/french-eating-customs.html>

Source: <http://www.enforex.com/culture/spanish-eating-customs.html>

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## Resource Card:

### Italian eating customs

Italian cuisine has influenced food culture around the world and is viewed as a form of art by many. Wine, cheese and pasta are important part of Italian meals. Pasta comes in a wide range of shapes, widths and lengths, including penne, spaghetti, linguine, fusilli and lasagna.

For Italians, food isn't just nourishment, it is life. "Family gatherings are frequent and often centered around food and the extended networks of families," said Wagner.

No one area of Italy eats the same things as the next. Each region has its own spin on "Italian food," according to [CNN](#). For example, most of the foods that Americans view as Italian, such as spaghetti and pizza, come from central Italy. In the North of Italy, fish, potatoes, rice, sausages, pork and different types of cheeses are the most common ingredients. Pasta dishes with tomatoes are popular, as are many kinds of stuffed pasta, polenta and risotto. In the South, dishes are dominated by tomatoes, either served fresh or cooked into sauce, and also includes capers, peppers, olives and olive oil, garlic, artichokes, eggplant and ricotta cheese.

Source: <http://www.livescience.com/44376-italian-culture.html>

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## Resource Card:

### American eating customs

American cuisine has been influenced by Europeans and Native Americans in its early history. Today, there are a number of foods that are commonly identified as American, such as hamburgers, hot dogs, potato chips, macaroni and cheese, and meat loaf. "As American as apple pie" has come to mean something that is authentically American.

Source: <http://www.livescience.com/28945-american-culture.html>

Americans as a nation eat a lot of food.

They consume large amounts of processed and fast foods such as hamburgers, hot dogs, subs, etc.

As a result, the diet is one that is high in fat, salt, sugars, preservatives and refined carbohydrates.

60% percent of Americans are considered to be obese.

The tendency towards 'junk foods' is cultural – convenience/processed food is quicker, cheaper, larger, cleaner, tastier and therefore better.

Healthy-eating of course does exist across the States with a liking for local produce, fine teas and quality breads not uncommon in most cities.

Source: <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/usa-guide#C3>

# CHORIZO PATATAS BRAVAS.

## Ingredients

1 onion  
2 cloves of garlic  
1 red chilli, seeds removed  
2 tbsp olive oil  
150ml red wine  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
750g new potatoes  
1 heaped tbsp smoked paprika  
A pinch of chilli powder  
225g chorizo sausage  
400g tenderstem broccoli (or alternative green veg)  
2 tbsp fresh parsley

## Method.

Peel and finely dice the onion and chilli.  
Fry the onion in a saucepan with the olive oil for 5 minutes to soften, making sure you use a lid and stir occasionally.  
Peel and chop the garlic then add to the softened onion with the chilli and cook for another minute before splashing in the wine. Reheat to a boil and, without a lid, reduce until half the wine has evaporated and the flavour has concentrated.  
Add in the tomatoes, paprika and chilli powder then reheat to a simmer and cook gently for about 15 minutes with the lid off, then season to taste and keep warm.  
Whilst the tomato sauce bubbles, wash the potatoes then dry, leaving the skins on. Cut in half if the new potatoes are large... you're aiming for bite-sized pieces. Try to keep them all fairly consistent and place them into a large saucepan.

Cover the potatoes with cold water so that they are fully submerged and add some salt if you wish.

Heat to a boil and boil the potatoes for 6-7 minutes before adding in the broccoli to boil for another 2 minutes.

Drain into a colander and separate the broccoli and potatoes, saving the broccoli to one side.

Place a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium-high heat whilst you remove the skin from the chorizo and chop up into bite-sized pieces. Once hot, place the chorizo in and sauté them for 2-3 minutes to release all of their oils.

Add the partially cooked, hot potatoes to the pan to fry for several minutes until they go golden.

Pour the tomato sauce over the potato and chorizo, toss together and transfer to a serving bowl and garnish with fresh parsley.

Warm the part-cooked broccoli in the hot, empty pan that you cooked the potatoes in with a splash of water, then serve beside the patatas bravas.



# LAMB ROGAN JOSH.

## Ingredients

400g diced lamb  
2 tbsp vegetable oil  
2 white onions  
2 cloves of garlic  
3cm piece of root ginger  
3 cardamom pods, lightly crushed  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
2 tsp paprika  
2 tsp chilli powder  
1 cube of chicken stock  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
240g basmati rice  
1 tsp cumin seeds  
360ml water  
2 tbsp natural yoghurt  
Fresh coriander to serve

## Method.

Fry the lamb in a large saucepan with 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil over a hot heat for 3-4 minutes until beginning to brown.

Peel and slice the onions, then add to the lamb to cook for another 5 minutes to soften. Add a lid to the pan for this stage.

Peel and chop the ginger and garlic and assemble all the spices (except the cumin seeds), then add to the pan once the lamb and onions have browned.

Stir and fry for 1 minute.

Crumble in the stock cube, add the tinned tomatoes and a tin's worth of cold water.

Cover and leave to simmer as gently as possible for at least 2 hours – or until the lamb will break apart with the side of a fork.

Heat the other 1 tablespoon of oil in a separate saucepan over a medium heat and add in the rice and cumin seeds. Stir it all and toast for a minute until slightly fragrant.

Add the cold water to the rice and cover tightly whilst bringing up to the boil. Then turn down the heat to as low as possible to maintain a gentle simmer and leave it for 8 minutes before removing from the heat to steam for another 5 minutes. Finish by fluffing with a fork and seasoning to taste.

Turn the heat off on the lamb and stir in the yoghurt to serve with the rice and optional fresh coriander.



# SLOW COOKED BEEF AND MUSHROOM PIE.

## Ingredients

5 rashers of smoked bacon  
2 carrots  
1 onion  
1 stick of celery  
250g mushrooms  
1 tbsp butter  
600g stewing beef, diced  
2 heaped tbsp plain flour  
250ml red wine  
600ml beef stock  
1 30cmx20cm ready-rolled shortcrust pastry  
1 egg, beaten  
1.2kg potatoes  
2 tbsp olive oil  
4 cloves of garlic

## Method.

Cut the streaky bacon into small squares.  
Peel and dice the carrots and onion. Wash and dice the celery then wash and quarter the mushrooms.  
Place the butter into a large saucepan and put it over a high heat.  
Add the bacon when the butter is bubbling, then after a few minutes add the beef chunks. Leave the pan alone while the beef browns well, only turning it when it's well caramelised.  
Scoop the beef and bacon out of the pan once it has browned (best to use a slotted spoon so the butter and bacon fat remains), then add the diced carrot, onion and celery into the pan.  
Turn the heat down to medium and fry the veg gently for 10 minutes until it begins to brown.  
Add in the mushrooms, stir them in and fry for another minute.  
Add the beef and bacon back into the pan with the flour and stir to coat everything. Turn the heat up high and pour in the red wine. Let it bubble and reduce by half.  
Pour in the beef stock and 200 ml water then bring everything to a boil, immediately turning the heat

down low, putting a lid on it and simmering on the lowest heat for 3 hours, checking occasionally that it isn't sticking.

Remove the lid from the beef pan when the meat is tender enough to fall apart and continue cooking to reduce the consistency of the sauce until it's thick enough to not run all over the plate.

Transfer the beef into a 2 litre pie dish, then cool in the fridge and when it's cooled preheat an oven to 200°C.

Beat the egg in a small dish and brush it around the outside of the pie dish with the cooled beef inside, then unroll the pastry, drape over and press on the edges to stick. Trim around the outside edges with a knife, cutting down towards the board, then squish the edges with the prongs of a fork to give decorative marks, but also to make sure it's stuck. Then poke a hole in the middle to allow steam to escape.

Brush the pastry with beaten egg and bake for 40 minutes until the pastry is a deep golden brown and the filling is piping hot, then remove and leave to stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Whilst the pie bakes, peel the potatoes and cut them into quarters or halves so that they are all the same size and about the same size as golf balls.

Grab a bowl and toss the potatoes with oil, salt and pepper if you prefer.

Tip them onto a roasting tray and drizzle with a little more oil.

Place the garlic cloves (still in their skins) around the potatoes and place in the oven for 45 minutes, on a shelf underneath the pie. Simply give them a turn every 15 minutes, until golden brown all over. When the pie comes out to rest for 10 minutes, move the roast potatoes to the top of the oven.

Serve the portions of the pie with roast potatoes and whatever boiling or steamed veg you fancy.



# PANZANELLA SALAD.

## Ingredients

1 clove of garlic  
1 small red onion (or small white onion or shallot)  
1 red pepper  
1 yellow pepper (or orange or green)  
4 plum tomatoes  
½ a 400g ciabatta loaf  
1 ½ tbsp of red wine vinegar  
4 ½ tbsp of extra virgin olive oil  
few sprigs of fresh basil

## Method.

Peel the clove of garlic and rub it around the inside of a large mixing bowl. This is just enough to impart the raw garlic flavour.

Peel and finely slice the onion and place into the mixing bowl.

De-seed and chunk the peppers into 2cm square pieces and add those to the bowl too.

Quarter the tomatoes and cut out the seeds and pulp, then chunk up into bite-size pieces to match the peppers, before adding to the bowl.

Rip or cut the leftover bread into small bite-sized pieces and mix into the salad.

Toss the whole thing together with the oil, vinegar and season to taste.

Rip in the fresh basil, mix it up and cover the bowl. Refrigerate for at least a couple of hour before eating but then eat at room temperature for the best flavour.





# CHILLI CON CARNE.

## Ingredients

1 onion  
2 cloves of garlic  
2 tbsp of oil  
2 tbsp chilli powder  
1 tbsp ground cumin  
1 tbsp ground coriander  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1 orange  
1 tbsp honey  
2 tbsp tomato purée  
500g minced beef  
500ml ale (or favourite type or veg stock)  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
400g tin of red kidney beans  
300g long grain rice (brown if you prefer)  
2 avocados

## Method.

Peel and finely dice the onion and garlic.

Fry the onion and garlic in a large, deep saucepan with one tablespoon of oil and a lid, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes until they are soft and smelling sweet.

Whilst the onions are cooking preheat a frying pan or wok as hot as it will go, then add an extra tablespoon of oil and add in the minced beef to start to cook and colour it for a few minutes. Break the mince up in the pan and move it around occasionally, but not continually or else it won't brown. Excess liquid will come out of the beef, get rid of that to help it brown.

Spoon the spices into the onions once softened along with the zest of half of the orange, honey and tomato purée then cook for a further couple of minutes. Keep stirring or the spices will burn on the base of the pan.

Pour a little of the ale into the spiced onions to deglaze the pan (a small amount of liquid will heat quickly and remove all the gnarly flavour that may have stuck to the bottom of the pan).

Transfer the browned mince to the spiced onions, avoiding too much fat being added (best to do this with a slotted spoon) then drain away excess fat and, whilst the frying pan is still really hot, splash a little ale into this pan as well to deglaze (may not be required if it's non-stick).

Tip the liquid into the main pan along with the rest of the ale and the tinned tomatoes.

Stir and heat to a very gentle simmer, cover with a lid and cook on the lowest heat possible for 3 hours. Check back occasionally to make sure it's not sticking to the bottom of the pan... add a little water and stir if it is.

Open and drain the tin of kidney beans and add to the chilli con carne after the 3 hours. Heat those through and continue to cook without a lid until you get the consistency of chilli that you're happy with.

Boil a large pan of water with a little salt if you prefer. Dump in the rice, stir and reheat to a simmer. Cook for 10 minutes at a gentle boil (longer if using brown rice).

Halve, de-stone and mash the avocados whilst the rice is boiling and season to taste.

Drain the cooked rice (taste a few grains to make sure they are cooked first) into a sieve and shake dry.

Taste the chilli and adjust the seasoning and spice to your personal taste, then serve a ladle on top of a portion of the cooked and drained rice. Top with a dollop of the mashed avocado and extra sprinkle of chilli powder if you like.



# SRIRACHA PRAWN STIR-FRY.

## Ingredients

100g long grain rice  
2 tsp of chopped red chilli  
2 tbsp of distilled malt vinegar  
1 tbsp of reduced salt soy sauce  
1 tbsp of honey  
1 lime  
165g of cooked king prawns  
1 leek  
1 courgette  
1 tbsp of vegetable oil  
198g tin of sweetcorn (or 150g frozen)  
**100g frozen peas, defrosted**

## Method.

Boil a kettle full of water and use to half-fill a saucepan.

Heat the pan to a boil using a lid for speed, then tip in the rice, stir well and heat back to a boil again. Reduce the heat slightly and simmer gently for 9 minutes.

Peel and chop the garlic and chilli then mix in a bowl with the vinegar, soy sauce, honey and lime juice. Stir in the prawns and leave to marinate.

Cut off the tough green end from the leek and cut what is left lengthwise down the middle, then slice. Wash using cold water in a colander to make sure there is no trapped soil in the layers of the leek. Dice the courgette chunks to about 1cm cubes.

Open the tin of sweetcorn (or defrost 150g if using frozen) and drain. Put the peas in a little warm water to defrost them.

Drain the rice once cooked, run under cold water to cool and prevent it overcooking and becoming mushy, then shake out as much water as possible before scattering onto a baking tray or large plate and spread out to let it dry.

Heat the vegetable oil in large saucepan or wok over a high heat.

Add in the leeks and courgette and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes before adding the peas, sweetcorn and prawns, without any of their marinating liquid. Continue cooking for another minute.

Add the rice and keep the whole mixture moving about for a few minutes, using a flipper or wooden spoon, until every grain of rice is piping hot and the prawns are piping hot right through. Now pour in the marinating sauce and toss and stir through until that is also piping hot.

Use soy sauce and/or extra lime juice to adjust the seasoning to personal taste, then serve straight away.



# SHARING NACHOS.

## Ingredients

2 small red onions  
2 cloves of garlic  
4 tbsp of olive oil  
400g large fresh tomatoes  
2 tsp paprika  
2 tsp ground cumin  
2 tsp ground coriander  
400g tin of kidney beans  
1 vegetable stock cube  
30g fresh coriander (optional)  
1 lime  
1 avocado  
120g cheddar cheese (up to 200g if you want a really stringy, cheesy treat)  
200g tortilla chips, plain or lightly salted

## Method.

Preheat your oven to 180°C.

Peel and finely dice the onions and the cloves of garlic, along with the chilli. Keeping them separate. Coarsely chop half of the tomatoes and set aside.

In a saucepan (with a lid) with 2 tbsp of the oil, gently fry half of the onions and garlic for 5 minutes, or until translucent and smelling sweet.

Add in half of the chilli, with all the paprika, ground cumin and ground coriander and cook for a further minute as you stir.

Drain and rinse the tin of kidney beans and add to the pan with the chopped tomatoes then crumble in the stock cube, along with 250ml of water.

Heat to a gentle simmer and cook with the lid off for 20 minutes.

After this, use a potato masher to crush the beans into a semi-chunky paste, then remove from the heat and set aside.

Quarter and deseed the other half of the tomatoes, then cut into a 1cm dice.

Add the remaining chopped garlic, onion, chilli and half of the coriander leaves (if using), then mix in a bowl with the tomatoes. Add 2 tbsp of olive oil along with the zest and juice of half a lime. Season to taste.

Cut the avocado in half and twist to separate. Scoop out the stone with a spoon, then scoop out the flesh onto a board. Roughly chop up then add to a bowl to mash with a fork adding a squeeze of lime (the one you previously zested), the rest of the chopped coriander (if using) and season to taste.

Layer the tortilla chips in an oven-proof dish with the grated cheese. Put it in the oven for 3-4 minutes, or until the cheese has melted.

Dollop over the salsa, guacamole and beans then serve with plenty of napkins on the side!



# SAUSAGE CARBONARA.

## Ingredients

75g dry spaghetti  
2 Cumberland sausages (or any sausages will do)  
2 rashers of smoked streaky bacon  
1 tbsp of olive oil  
1 clove garlic  
1 egg  
10g Parmesan  
fresh basil (optional to serve)

## Method.

Boil a large pan of salted water over a high heat.  
Add the dry spaghetti and cook for 8-9 minutes, until just cooked through. (Stir once to separate strands once in the water.)  
Squeeze the sausage meat from the skins and roll into small balls, about 4 per sausage.  
Dice the bacon into small squares.  
Grab a large frying pan and set over a high heat with the olive oil.  
Add the sausage balls and bacon, then fry for a few minutes to brown before turning the heat down and cook for a few more minutes.  
Peel and chop the garlic. Once the bacon and sausage are well browned and cooked through (cut

into the sausage and have a look if you're not sure) add the garlic and fry for another minute.

Separate the egg and add the yolk to a mixing bowl with about a tablespoon of the hot pasta water.

Grate in the cheese and crack in plenty of black pepper, then mix all together.

Drain the spaghetti, saving some of the pasta water.

Add the pasta and 2 tablespoons of reserved water into the main frying pan.

Toss everything together and take the pan off the heat.

Pour the egg mixture into the pan with the pasta, keep stirring really well and add more reserved water if you need to in order to get a silky sauce.

Serve up immediately and finish with the fresh basil (optional).



# BUILD YOUR OWN PIZZA.

## Ingredients

500g '00' flour or strong bread flour, plus extra for dusting  
7g instant yeast sachet (1 sachet)  
1 tsp caster sugar  
1 tsp garlic powder (optional)  
300ml warm water (body temperature)  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 small white onion  
1 clove of garlic  
1 tbsp olive oil  
150ml white wine  
1 tsp dried oregano  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
100g grated mozzarella cheese  
100g grated cheddar cheese  
Any other toppings or flavourings you like - get creative!

## Method.

Place the flour in a large mixing bowl along with the yeast, sugar and garlic powder (if using). Use a whisk or your hands to combine them thoroughly, making sure there is an even distribution throughout. Season with a pinch of salt if you wish. Make a well in the middle and slowly pour in about 90% of the water and all of the oil. Use a wooden spoon to combine everything into a single ball, adding a splash more water if you need, then tip it out onto a lightly floured work surface.

Stretch the ball of dough, using the palm of your hand, and fold it over in a kneading action. Continue for around 10 minutes, stopping once the dough is soft and elastic. Sprinkle a little flour on your hands or the work surface if it becomes too sticky, but try to use as little as possible.

Return the dough to the mixing bowl and cover loosely with a tea towel or some cling film. Leave at room temperature for 2 hours to prove and double in size.

\*Use this time to make your tomato sauce if you are making your own.

Peel and finely dice the onion and garlic.

Fry the onion in a saucepan with one tablespoon of olive oil for 5 minutes to soften, using a lid and stir occasionally.

Add the garlic to the softened onion and cook for another minute before splashing in the wine and including the oregano.

Reheat to a boil and, without a lid, reduce until half the wine has evaporated.

Add in the tomatoes, reheat to a simmer and cook gently for about 15 minutes, then season to taste and cool ready to spread on the pizza. (You can blitz it to get it smooth if you prefer).

After proving has completed, preheat your oven to 220°C, then knock the air out of the dough back into its original size and tip onto a lightly floured work surface, dividing it into two or four (depending on what size pizzas you're making).

Using a rolling pin or your hands, stretch out one of the pieces of dough into a pizza base about as thin as you can, then place it on a pizza pan or baking tray.

Place enough of your prepared tomato sauce onto the base of the pizza to just cover it and spread it around evenly with the back of a spoon. Add any toppings you wish – if you want to use meat, make sure it is cooked first. Finish by topping with a mixture of both the grated cheeses.

Bake in the oven for anywhere between 12-14 minutes, or until the crust is golden and slightly risen, and the cheese is bubbling on top. Remove from the oven, cut it up and serve.



# NUTTY CHICKEN NOODLES.

## Ingredients

1 chicken breast  
1 chicken stock cube (optional)  
1 tbsp of crunchy peanut butter  
1 tsp of reduced salt soy sauce  
1 tsp of sesame oil  
1 lime  
1 clove of garlic  
½ tsp of root ginger, grated  
½ tsp of cracked black pepper (or from a peppermill)  
1 red pepper  
1 small white onion (or shallot if you have one)  
1 small carrot  
½ tbsp of vegetable oil  
1 tsp of chopped fresh chilli  
50g of rice noodles  
few sprigs of fresh coriander  
1 tbsp of sesame seeds (optional)

## Method.

Heat about 750ml of water in a saucepan, with a lid, then crumble in and dissolve the optional stock cube.

Cut any fat from the chicken breast and lower into the water once it's just below boiling. Just below boiling should be when tiny bubbles start to form on the bottom of the pan and a few make their way to the surface, but there isn't too much movement.

Keep the water/stock just below boiling and poach gently for 15 minutes.

Mix the peanut butter, soy, sesame oil, juice of the lime, grated clove of garlic, grated ginger and cracked black pepper in a small bowl or cup and add a couple of tablespoons of the poaching chicken

stock to create a sauce the consistency of thick soup.

Deseed the pepper and cut into thin strips. Chop the chilli as small as possible, removing the seeds.

Peel and finely slice the onion, then peel and cut the carrot into thin strips. The best way to cut the carrot is to peel it into thin strips with a potato peeler, then line those strips up and slice fine strips with a sharp, straight-edged knife.

Boil a kettle full of water and place the rice noodles in a bowl, then pour enough of the boiling water onto the noodles to cover them and leave for 3 minutes.

Heat the ½ tablespoon of vegetable oil in a large frying pan, saucepan or wok and heat over a high heat.

Add the prepared pepper, onion and carrot all at once and stir-fry for 2 minutes, keeping everything moving in the pan, then mix in the chopped chilli.

Drain the noodles in a sieve, then add to the pan of veg along with the sauce and toss everything to combine. Transfer onto a serving plate.

Pluck the chicken out of the water, check that it's cooked right through by cutting in half and making sure that the thickest part has no pink bits.

Cut or tear the chicken up as soon as it's cool enough to handle and pile onto the noodles.

Scatter with a few fresh coriander leaves and optional sesame seeds to serve.



# SPAG BOL.

## Ingredients

1 white onion  
2 cloves of garlic  
1 carrot  
1 stick of celery  
1 tbsp of olive oil  
500g beef mince  
175ml red wine  
2 tbsp tomato purée  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
150ml milk  
1 tbsp dried oregano  
300g dried spaghetti  
40g Parmesan  
Bunch of fresh basil (optional to serve)

## Method.

Peel and finely dice the onion and cloves of garlic.

Peel and finely dice the carrot, then wash the celery cut off the top and bottom and finely dice that.

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat before adding all of the diced vegetables to fry, with a lid on, for about 10 minutes until all the veg has softened.

Turn the heat up on the pan, remove the lid, then add the minced beef, breaking it up as much as possible as you add it to the pan.

Cook for 5 minutes to gain some colour of the meat before splashing in the red wine and allow to bubble and reduce for a few minutes. Then add tomato purée, tinned tomatoes, milk and the dried oregano.

Stir to combine, then heat to a very gentle simmer.

Place the lid back on and cook over the lowest heat possible for 2 hours, keeping an eye on it as you may need to add a glass of water if it reduces so much that it starts to stick to the bottom of the pan. Then season to taste.

When you're ready to eat, heat a large pan of water to the boil and add some salt if you prefer.

Lower the spaghetti into the water and make sure all strands are submerged as quickly as possible and then stir so that they don't stick together. Heat back to a boil and cook for 9 minutes before draining into a colander.

Toss the drained pasta into the sauce and serve up between 4 plates. Finish with plenty of grated Parmesan, optional basil and enjoy.



# BANGERS AND MASH.

## Ingredients

600g white potatoes  
2 red onions  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp dried oregano  
300ml chicken or beef stock  
6 chunky pork sausages  
100ml milk (whole or semi-skimmed)  
1 tbsp of butter  
1 tbsp of wholegrain mustard  
150g frozen peas, defrosted  
1 tsp cornflour  
1 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce

## Method.

Half fill a large saucepan (that has a lid) with cold water.

Peel the potatoes and cut into roughly equal chunks about the size of golf balls. Submerge in the cold water, season if you prefer, and heat to a gentle simmer on the hob with a lid for speed. Remove the lid and simmer for 15 minutes, keeping an eye out to make sure the pan doesn't boil over and make a mess, but that it remains simmering so that they cook.

Peel and slice the red onions, then dump into a medium sized saucepan with the olive oil and cook over a medium heat, with a lid for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the oregano and stock into the pan and heat to a simmer and bubble for 10-15 minutes to reduce.

Preheat a grill to a medium heat and heat a third pan of water to a boil ready for the peas. (Submerge the peas in warm water to defrost if they are still frozen.)

Lay the sausages out on the rack of a tin-foil lined grill pan so that they aren't quite touching, then prick them with a small sharp knife to pierce the skin. This stops them exploding as they cook.

Grill the sausages for 6-8 minutes, turning them occasionally. You want a good golden colour and will know they are cooked through when you cut into one of them and it's piping hot all the way through with a firm texture.

Drain the potatoes in a colander once cooked (you'll know this because if you poke one of the larger pieces with a sharp knife and lift it out it'll slide easily off of the blade), then return to the hot dry pan.

Splash in the milk, butter and mustard before mashing until smooth with a potato masher. Season to taste when you're happy it's smooth.

Tip the peas into the rapidly boiling pan, return to a simmer and boil for 1 minute before draining in a colander.

Dissolve the cornflour in a small bowl with a few tablespoons of cold water, then add to the onion gravy and bubble for 60 seconds to thicken. Season to taste with a splash or two of Worcestershire Sauce.

Serve a mound of mash with 3 sausages on top and a generous drizzle of the gravy, with peas on the side.





# VEGGIE PASTA BAKE.

## Ingredients

350g dry pasta shapes (we used macaroni)  
200g button mushrooms  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 small white onion  
240g fresh spinach  
40g butter  
40g plain flour  
600ml semi-skimmed milk  
120g cheddar cheese, grated  
2 slices of bread, preferably stale  
1 clove of garlic  
1 tsp dried basil  
1 tsp dried thyme

## Method.

Preheat the oven to 200°C.  
Wash and cut the mushrooms into quarters and sauté with 1 tablespoon of olive oil (fry with occasional movement/stirring/tossing) in a large hot pan for 5 minutes to lightly brown. Whilst they brown and you occasionally shake and stir the mushrooms, peel and finely slice the onion.  
Add the sliced onion to cook for 2 minutes, then add the spinach to the mushroom and onion pan too.

Cook for a further 2 minutes so that the spinach wilts (using a lid to trap in steam sometimes helps), then remove from heat and put to one side.

Heat a large pan of water to the boil and add salt if you prefer.

Tip in the pasta, stir and reheat to a rapid boil to cook the pasta as per packet directions, but for 1 minute less, then drain and reserve.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over a medium heat and add the flour to form a paste, stirring for a minute to cook. Slowly add the milk, continuously stirring and only adding more milk when what you have in the pan is smooth and bubbling. Bring to a gentle simmer and bubble for 1 minute. You can always use a whisk if yours is lumpy.

Take the sauce off of the heat and stir in the grated cheese and season to taste.

Blitz up the bread, peeled clove of garlic and herbs in a food processor to form the crust. Add a tablespoon of olive oil and season to taste.

Add the cooked and drained pasta to the sauce and veg to coat, then pour into an oven dish. Top with the breadcrumbs and bake for 15 minutes until golden and bubbly.

