

Vegetable Soup

Adam Ragusea Style – everything boiled in water with tomatoes

1 L of water

2 onions

2 carrots

Chop and boil

2 tomatoes

Chop and add

4 big napa cabbage leaves

½ cup white wine

Simmer for a bit

Add ½ tbsp fresh minced garlic

Take off the heat

Add 2 cups of cold water and 1 cup of frozen peas

Salt and pepper

Serve with olive oil

I did this and added too much oil. Will try again. Frozen corn would be good too.

Onions First Style – based on sauteed mirepoix + stock

Sautee a bunch of mirepoix

Add stock

Add anything you want (e.g. potatoes & leeks, or roasted squash like the photo)

Immersion blend.



Preserves

I've tried:

- Pickled cucumbers
- Pickled carrots
- Pickled red cabbage
- Pickled wild ramps (not opened yet!)
- Preserved lemons (not opened yet!)
- Pickled celery (bad idea!)

I start by boiling all the jars and stuff in a kind of relaxed way. I just put a couple of inches of water in a big pot and throw the jars and lids in. I'm not trying to seriously sterilize this stuff so it lasts forever, just make sure they are pretty clean.

Then you boil equal parts water and vinegar, with way less salt than you would expect, like 3tbsp for 1 L of liquid. You can add sugar too, like the same amount as the salt. Not everyone does, but I think it's a good idea.

Good things to add to the jar are: garlic cloves, mustard seeds, dill seed, dill fronds. I loved the dill ones – I think for dill pickles people usually only use seeds but I did fronds and they turned out great. The cabbage I just did plain which works well as a topping for something like a falafel pita, which will have tons of its own sauces and flavours.

The preserved lemons were a bit different. Basically you just cut the lil' ends of the lemons, and score them deeply with a cross shape. Then you put 1 tsp of salt in each one, and then layer them into a jar, starting with 1 tsp of salt, separating each lemon with 1tsp of salt, and ending with 1tsp of salt. The recipe I followed said you should squish them and the jar should be about half full of lemon juice, then you add sterilized water to finish it off. They should sit for a month before eating, and it's a good idea to invert the jar now and then to let the salt and juice mix around.



Wild Ramps after Foraging and Washing



Shelf of Misc. Jars

Cheese and Eggs

Farmers Cheese: (from The Spruce Eats)

1 gallon of milk, ½ cup of acid (vinegar, lemon juice, etc.), ½ tbsp
Bring the milk to the slowest of boils on the lowest of settings, like 190F.
Mix in the acid and stir
Add the herbs
Strain it in cheesecloth
Add salt
Let it sit



Cheese!



Leftover whey from the process. The internet said it's a good way to fortify juice with extra nutrients. I disagree. It was awful.

Sous Vide Eggs

I want to try cooking eggs sous vide sometimes, but for now all I have done is pasteurize them. Anova has the instructions on their site. It is just 135F for 1:15, then chill them quickly in ice.



Boiled eggs

Hot start vs. cold start: definitely hot start. Cold start helps avoid cracking the shells (both from thermal shock and from it being easier to put them into the water gently), but hot start helps the egg separate from the shell. With some practice, I've been pretty successful at not cracking the eggs

Simmer vs. off the heat: I've been doing simmer and it's been working great – and its faster.

I found that 7 minutes was pretty ideal for a medium-soft egg on my stove.

Thai

Sticky Coconut Rice:

Soak the sticky rice for 30 mins. When you are about to cook it, put more liquid than you think you need. The liquid should include a can of coconut milk, maybe two if you want tons of coconut-ness, or you are doing like 3+ cups of rice. Run the rice cooker but instead of trusting it to be perfect, open it every 15 minutes or so and stir it thoroughly. This will let the heat out, and the rice will take forever, probably at least an hour. If you do it longer, you will get a denser, gluey-er result.

Mango coconut dessert:

I've been trying to make this cool vegan ice-cream esque thing, but so far I have been totally unsuccessful. It's just blended mangos and coconut cream and maybe mint. If it freezes fully its inedible, and it's really hard to freeze it partway. It isn't even that great when you do get a nice consistency. I might try to do a mousse instead. I found that Dragon brand coconut cream is super thick and rich.



Red Curry Paste:

I tried to make chili paste after seeing "red thai chilis" for sale for 3\$ at a grocery store. Bad move. It was over 200 individual peppers, it took forever to cut them up, and then when I tried to roast them a bit in a pan with a bit of oil, the house almost had to be evacuated. I think I could probably find a decent plain chili paste in a big jar for a few dollars and save tons of headache.

I used it in a red curry paste recipe from [this site](#). I just put cilantro leaves instead of coriander root because I couldn't find it anywhere. It was really good but it was hard to make something with such a strong flavour – how do you taste test it? When used in curry it would take a few spoonfuls to match a can of coconut milk.



Indian

I've been making a basic Indian curry recipe for months now and it's become one of my most go-to dishes. Here's my write-up of the recipe, which is based on observation and experience so the measurements may be a bit off, but I did my best to guess at them.

I view this as a template to follow, more than a specific recipe. You don't need to make it with paneer and peas – I've done various combinations of potatoes, peas, paneer, and spinach. With potatoes, I parboiled them first.

cumin seeds (1 tsp?)
some amount of garlic and ginger (3-4
cloves and 1 tbsp?). I usually use ginger
paste
1 onion
1 large tomato
1 tbsp ground cumin
1 tbsp ground coriander
0.5 tbsp turmeric
chili powder to taste (0.5 tbsp?)
your favourite flavorless light oil
1 400g block paneer, cubed
some peas (I usually use frozen and cook
them from frozen)
fresh cilantro if you like it



- blend the onion, garlic, and ginger in a blender. You can add some oil to help it flow better
- in a pan on medium high heat, fry the cumin seeds for a few minutes in some oil. adding some butter as well can add flavour but don't brown it too much
- add the blended mix to the pan and salt it
- while its frying, blend the tomato in the blender.
- add the tomato when you start to get a bit of golden color in some places on the onion mix
- add the remaining spices
- put a lid on, turn it to low, and leave it for way longer than feels necessary, like probably 20-30 minutes, stirring sometimes. It should thicken and it should get kind of like glossy, with places where you can see oil separating out from the sauce.
- add about a cup of water, though the amount may vary. You want enough sauce to have a nice ratio with the curry additions, and the flavour to be neither too strong nor too weak.
- Add the paneer and peas
- simmer for a while to let it come together
- add the cilantro and stir in a pinch of garam masala. Turn off the heat and let it sit for a while.

Some notes on the above:

- The person who showed me this recipe (thanks Niha) used some pre-mixed ingredients, including a jar of garlic+ginger paste, and a 1:1 ground cumin and ground coriander mix.
- The 1:1:0.5 ratio of cumin, coriander, and turmeric is the worlds easiest spice mix and is delicious. Chili powder can be added to taste depending on how spicy it is.
- I usually serve this with roti, naan, and lentils. The roti can be quickly heated in a hot dry pan, and the naans put on a dry baking sheet in the oven. Add butter after.

Red Lentils:

Sautee some onions and garlic. Maybe ginger if you want. Use the spice mix from above and put in whatever seems right. Probably like 1 tbsp of mix per cup of lentils? Once the spices have made a paste with the other ingredients and cooked a little bit, throw in a diced tomato if you want. Or don't. I'm not your boss. I don't think it makes a huge difference to be honest, but I think the end product does taste a bit better if you include the tomato. Then you add the lentils and liquid (1:2.5) and simmer uncovered until done. Coconut milk makes it amazing, trust me, and it's hard to put too much (thanks Emma for the tip).

Lauki Ki Subji:

I found [Manjula's Kitchen](#) on YouTube, made by the sweetest woman. I made her "Lauki Ki Subji" recipe. Lauki is also known as opo or long squash.

Her recipe starts with cumin seeds, asafoetida - which smells like durian when raw but changes entirely when cooked - and fenugreek seeds. It's quite a different approach to spices than the above recipe, though she does use turmeric and ground coriander as well.

You quickly toast the cumin seeds, asafoetida, and fenugreek seeds, then add chickpea flour (which has a nice sweet smell and thickens up the sauce nicely) and toast that quickly before adding tomatoes. That's basically it, plus a couple other spices, and adding the vegetable. She finishes it with cilantro.

Have all the ingredients prepared and measured ahead of time - it goes fast.

It has an amazing smell that reminds me of Indian restaurants and Indian people's houses more than the curry recipe above. Leftovers mixed with scrambled eggs make an amazing breakfast burrito!



Italian

Tomato Sauce from Scratch – From Cristiano Tomei



What I did:

410 g red onion (two peeled)

1000 g tomato + pot

423g carrot roughly chopped and peeled

158 g celery – I took the leafy centre

1 tsp salt

16 basil leaves

- All in big pot, on low heat, with tomatoes on bottom
- Left for 4 hours
- Pushed through food press
- Simmered very briefly (probably unnecessary) with a bit (1tbsp?) of olive oil and a knob of butter
- Serve with fresh basil!

This was really good. I'm not sure how much I'd say it was "delicious" but the acidity and umami of the tomatoes made it super mouthwatering. It was also quite sweet, maybe there was a touch too much carrot but honestly the other flavours were very strong too so I wouldn't reduce the carrots much.

Notes:

Cristiano does it for less time and its waterier, then he lets it drain through a cloth for an hour, he reserves the water that drains out, and carries on with the sauce.

I made it again with much larger portions – and then after 4 or 5 hours of simmering I had the kind of consistency that Cristiano had. With larger portions it needs to be simmered longer to get the liquid out.

Rosé:

- 2 med/small finely minced or grated carrots
- ½ sweet onion
- 2-3 spoons garlic
- ½ cup butter
- 7 big basil leaves
- 4 tomatoes blended
- 1 can classico sweet basil marinara
- ¼ cup heavy cream

Steps:

- Sautee the carrots/onion/garlic/butter
- Turn the water on for the pasta a bit before these are done
- When the veg looks good, add the sauce, tomatoes, herbs. Put the pasta on
- When the pasta is al-dente or even a bit less cooked, take it out, reserve a bit of pasta water (using the jar of sauce for this is a good way to get all of it out)
- Add the finished pasta and pasta water
- Let it sit for a bit
- Turn it off and stir in the cream

This is a super good way to really elevate some jar sauce. It has a delicious fresh tomato flavour, and when served with fresh basil its really good. I've also made it using the "sauce from scratch" recipe above.



Another way to just build up a jar sauce a bit, with more robust flavours:

½ red onion

⅓ cup red wine

Brown the onion, potentially with some carrot, add the sauce, add the wine, simmer a bit.

Ravioli

This was probably one of the best things I've made. Vegan pasta dough made from scratch, with a roasted butternut squash and garlic filling, and a pecan sage vegan butter sauce.

The dough was from [Adam Ragusea](#). 1 cup of flour, ½ cup of water, 1 tbsp of oil, a pinch of salt. I also added a pinch of turmeric just for color. Mix the ingredients together, and err on the side of having too wet of a dough than too dry – it's easier to incorporate flour than water. Knead for a while, like maybe ten minutes, until its springy, looks good, but isn't sticky. Wrap tightly and put in the fridge for at least 30 mins. Apparently, this helps the starches hydrate. Or something.

The filling was made by just cutting some squashes in half and chucking them into an oven with some heads of garlic (yes, full heads) for a while until everything was beautifully roasted. Then they were blended in a food processor until smooth, with salt, olive oil, and a touch of nutritional yeast.

The sauce is done by melting vegan butter in a pan, getting it reasonably hot, and adding in some sage leaves so that they get nice and crispy. Ideally, the sage imparts flavour to the butter, while also turning into a nice garnish once you take it out and let it drain a bit. If I were doing this non-vegan, this would be the entire recipe. However, vegan butter doesn't brown and give that nice nutty flavour – so we add pecans with the sage.

The dough was rolled to the thinnest setting of a pasta machine and laid on a table. I put dollops of filling all over the place on half of the sheet, leaving the other half blank. Get a small bowl of water, and using your finger, paint water in circles around each filling pile. Then you fold the sheet over on itself, cut them out, and pinch together the dough all around each one.



Risotto

I kind of love risotto and I kind of hate it. The ingredients are either shelf-stable (rice, parmesan), or things I always have anyway (onions, garlic). So, it's a good way to take "all I have in the fridge is a container of mushrooms" and make something that feels like a real meal.

The problem is I've made it a bunch of times and its never that great. I don't know why. I should go to an expensive restaurant to see what really good risotto is like. Maybe I just don't like risotto. My basic recipe is written here. Rice should be Carnaroli or Arborio. Carnaroli helps you feel like there are firm rice grains inside a creamy sauce, instead of just the whole thing being homogenous.

3 cups rice
5 cups stock
1 big onion
Whatever veg., usually mushrooms
White wine or other acid
Parsley

- Sautee the onion
- Add the veg
- Add the rice
- Stir it a lot so the rice starts getting brown in some places but doesn't burn
- Add in your wine/acid and clean the pan
- Add most of the stock at once (yes, it's fine)
- Add stock in small batches, stirring often, until the rice is juuuust done.
- Add the parsley, and serve with parmesan or nutritional yeast
- Serve with parmesan, or nutritional yeast.



Misc.

Waffles (taken from allrecipes)

Dry mix:

8 cups all-purpose flour

1.5 tbsp salt

1/3 cup baking powder

1/2 cup white sugar

Vegan:

1 cup mix, 1 cup non-dairy milk, 2 tbsp oil, 1 tsp vanilla

Non-vegan:

1 cup + 1 tbsp mix, 1 egg, ¾ cup warm milk, 3 tbsp melted butter, ½ tsp vanilla

Makes like two full waffles, maybe slightly more

Deep frying:

Easy beer batter: 1 part beer and 1 part flour. Oil should be 350-375.

Desserts

Hard Meringues

¼ cup sugar and 1/4tsp vanilla per egg white. Whip to soft peaks, then slowly add sugar while whipping hard peaks. Put in a 225F oven. Serve with whipped cream and berries.

Peanut butter cookies (taken from allrecipes)

- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup crunchy peanut butter
- ½ cup white sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 ¼ cups flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp baking soda
- 375 for like 6 minutes

They become much firmer when they cool so take them out way before you think you need to

Add chocolate chips if you want, or raisins if you want your girlfriend to hate you...apparently

Brigadeiros

A Brazilian classic. I forget how to make these, so I'll update this next time I do it.



Panna cotta (from epicurious)

I love this and it looks awesome and is so easy. Makes eight ½-cup servings.

- 1 envelope plain gelatin (~1 tbsp)
- 2 tbsp cold water
- 2.5 cups heavy cream
- 0.5 cup milk
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 0.5 tbsp vanilla

Mix gelatin and cold water in a tiny pan, let sit, then bring to very low heat to dissolve.



In a large pan: bring the cream, milk, and sugar juuust to a boil, stirring a lot. Take off the heat and stir in the gelatin and vanilla.

Portion into ramekins and let them chill for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Serve with mint and fruit!