

Cookbook Review:

Going Solo in the Kitchen

Singles everywhere will no longer have an excuse for getting take-out. *Going Solo in the Kitchen* by Jane Doerfer contains a variety of tips, tricks, and delicious recipes easy enough for any solo cook. Not only is this book full of fun and fresh recipes, but it also contains a plethora of tricks on how to store and use leftovers successfully. This cookbook concentrates on inexpensive and time conscious recipes all targeted to satisfy the needs of singles.

With more than 350 simplistic recipes, any solo cook will be sure to find something that hits the spot. From fun summer salads to warming winter entrees, this book combines traditional favorites, like chicken noodle soup and meatloaf, with exciting new flavors, like avocado, papaya and shrimp salad. The recipes are often low-cost, and quick to make, so if you are looking for fast meals on a budget, this cookbook is for you. The best part is that with every recipe comes a bit of advice. Whether it is helpful hints on how to use leftovers for tomorrow lunch, or a couple variations in the recipe for you to try next time, the chef makes sure to cover all the bases.

Couscous and Sweet Potato Salad

1/2 cup salted water	1/2 to 2/3 cup cooked sweet potato, cut into 1/2 inch thick pieces
1/2 -1 teaspoon olive oil	1-2 Tablespoons orange juice
1/3 cup dried instant couscous	Pinch of cumin
3 Tablespoons peeled, seeded, and cooked roasted red peppers, or chopped fresh peppers	Pinch of cinnamon
1/4 cup sliced scallions	Salt to taste
1 Tablespoon sliced celery (optional)	Lettuce (optional)
	Orange or lime slices for garnish

Bring the water to a boil and stir in olive oil and couscous. Remove the pan from the heat, cover, and let sit for 5 minutes. You will end up with about 1 cup cooked couscous. In the same pot, toss the couscous with the red pepper, scallions, celery, and sweet potato, and orange juice. Season with a pinch each of cumin, cinnamon, and salt to taste. If you wish, mound the couscous on lettuce leaves and garnish with a slice of orange or lime. You can either eat the salad right away, or wait about 30 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

Makes 1 serving with: Calories-169, Carbohydrates- 30g, Fat- 5g, Protein- 3g, Fiber- 5g

Ground Turkey Chili

1 cup dried pinto beans	Worcestershire sauce
1 cup chopped onion	2 Tablespoons chili powder
2 teaspoons minced garlic	4 ounces ground turkey
Freshly ground pepper	2 Tablespoons catsup or cocktail sauce (optional)
1, 15-ounce can of tomato sauce	1 teaspoon cider vinegar
1 green pepper	

Put the beans in a pot, cover with 5 cups of water, bring to boil and boil for 5 minutes. Let sit for 30 minutes. Drain, cover again with water, and bring beans to boil. Add onions, garlic and black pepper to taste. Simmer, stirring occasionally and adding more water if needed, for 1 ½ -2 hours. The beans should cook through, but retain some texture. Stir in the tomato sauce and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes. Seed the pepper, cut it into chunks, and add to the chili. Add a dash of Worcestershire sauce, 2 tablespoons of chili powder, and the ground turkey. Simmer, breaking up the ground turkey, until it is cooked through, about 10-15 minutes. Taste and add catsup or cocktail sauce, if you wish. Just before serving stir in cider vinegar.

Makes 2 servings with : Calories 285, Carbohydrates 41g, Protein 21g, Fat 6g, Fiber 12g

Stuffed Pork Chop with Apples and Squash

1 strip raw bacon, cut into ¼ inch pieces (or 2 teaspoons butter)	1 medium egg, lightly beaten
1/3 cup dices onion (about ½ medium onion)	1 inch thick pork chops (about 5 ounces), halved to the bone to make a pocket for stuffing
1 Tablespoon finely diced red pepper	1 apple, cored and cut into thick slices
1 Tablespoon chopped scallion stems (optional)	1 winter squash, seeded, peeled, and thickly sliced (4-6 slices)
3 Tablespoons chopped mushroom stems	1/2 cup stock or water
1 cup coarsely shredded breadcrumbs	
Freshly ground pepper	

Place the bacon in a heavy skillet and render the fat slowly. Remove the bacon bits with a slotted spoon and place them in a large mixing bowl. To the fat in the pan add onion, pepper, optional scallions, and mushrooms, and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, for 3 minutes. Stir in breadcrumbs and cook 2 minutes longer, stirring constantly. Add the mixing bowl and toss with the bacon. Let cool slightly, and then moisten with the egg and a tablespoon or two of stock or water. (The amount of liquid you add depends on how moist you like stuffing to be.) Taste and season with black pepper.

Sear the pork chop on both sides in a hot pan. Fill the pocket with the stuffing. If there's any leftover stuffing arrange it around the chop. Place in a baking dish about 6 inches in diameter. Surround with alternating slices of apple and winter squash and pour the remaining stock over them.

Cover the pan with foil and bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 30 minutes. Remove the foil, raise the heat to 400 degree and bake 10 minutes longer, adding stock or water if necessary. Serve with tossed green salad.

Makes 4 servings with: Calories 434, Carbohydrates 26g, Protein 36g, Fat 20g, Fiber 7g

Reference: ***Going Solo in the Kitchen*** by Jane Doerfer, 1998 (\$16.95)