



Cookbook Review: *The About.com guide to Shortcut*

Cooking by: Linda Larsen

If you are looking for a simple, straightforward and easy cookbook to follow, the *About.com guide to Shortcut Cooking* may be exactly what you are looking for. This book is equipped with 225 simple recipes that fall into various categories, making it a convenient book for all cooking occasions. From soups and salads to seafood and vegetarian recipes, this cookbook covers many different types of cooking, so everyone can find something they may like. The only thing this cookbook lacks is creativity and uniqueness. Most recipes are very simple and very common. Although there aren't any elaborate or extremely unique recipes, this cookbook is perfect for the beginner chef trying to get down the basics and learn how to make quick and simple meals for all occasions.

The About.com guide to Shortcut Cooking Recipes

Beef Fiesta Casserole

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 lb lean cooked ground beef | 1 (15 oz) can low sodium corn niblets |
| 1 cup taco sauce | 1 (15 oz) can dark red kidney beans, rinsed |
| 1 (8 oz) can low sodium tomato sauce | 1 ½ cups shredded low fat Cheddar cheese |
| 1 (8 oz) package tortilla chips | |

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In large skillet, combine cooked ground beef, taco sauce, and tomato sauce and simmer for 10 minutes. Add corn and kidney beans and cook over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer for 5 minutes. In 2-quart casserole dish, layer 1/3 of beef mixture, 1/3 of chips, and 1/3 of cheese. Repeat layers, ending with cheese. Bake for 20-30 minutes until hot and bubbly. Serve with desired taco toppings and enjoy!

Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition Facts per serving:

450 calories, 22g fat, 340mg sodium, 32g carbs, 8g fiber, 29g protein

10-minute Black Bean Pasta

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|----------------------------|---|
| 1 tablespoon butter | 1 (12 oz) package refrigerated fresh fettuccine |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 2 (15 oz) cans black beans, rinsed |
| 3 cloves of garlic, minced | 1/3 cup grated Romano cheese |
| 1 red bell pepper, chopped | |

Bring large pot of water to a boil. Meanwhile, heat butter and olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and red bell pepper, and cook and stir until tender, about 4 to 5 minutes. When water boils, cook fettuccine until al dente, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add pasta, black beans, and reserved cooking water to red bell pepper mixture. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cook 2 to 3 minutes, until mixture is hot and sauce is blended. Serve with Romano cheese.

Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition Facts per serving (¼th of casserole):

262 calories, 5.5g fat, 214mg sodium, 37g carbs, 12.5g fiber, 13g protein

10-Minute Toasted Almond Broccoli

1 (16 oz) package frozen broccoli florets
¼ cup butter
1/3 cup sliced almonds
2 gloves garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare frozen broccoli according to package instructions, just until tender. Meanwhile, in a skillet, melt butter over medium heat until foamy. Add almonds and garlic; cook and stir until almonds are light golden brown and garlic is fragrant, about 2 to 3 minutes. Place broccoli in serving dish, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and pour almond mixture over. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition Facts per serving:

145 calories, 9g fat, 69mg sodium, 5g carbs, 3g fiber, 3g protein

Four-Ingredient Peas and Tomatoes

2 tablespoons butter
2 cups frozen baby peas
¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil, chopped
1 cup grape tomatoes, cut in half
½ teaspoon garlic salt

Prepare frozen broccoli according to package instructions, just until tender. Meanwhile, in a skillet, melt butter over medium heat until foamy. Add almonds and garlic; cook and stir until almonds are light golden brown and garlic is fragrant, about 2 to 3 minutes. Place broccoli in serving dish, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and pour almond mixture over. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition Facts per serving:

78 calories, 3g fat, 127mg sodium, 9g carbs, 3g fiber, 3g protein

Chocolate Raspberry Marshmallow Pie

1 (10 oz) package large marshmallows
½ cup raspberry juice
2 cups fat free Cool-Whip topping, thawed

½ cup grated milk chocolate 1 premade chocolate crust
½ cup raspberry jam

In large microwave-safe bowl, combine marshmallows and raspberry juice. Microwave on 50 percent power for 1 ½ minutes, remove and stir. Continue microwaving at 50 percent power until marshmallows are melted. Beat well with wire whisk to combine. Let stand for 20 minutes to cool slightly. Then fold in 1 ½ cups whipped topping and the grated chocolate. Spoon half of the marshmallow filling into the piecrust, then top with raspberry jam. Repeat layers, ending with raspberry jam. Spread with remaining whipped topping, and freeze pie until firm. Let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes before slicing. Enjoy!

Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition Facts: 395 calories, 12g fat, 22mg sodium, 71g carbs, 0g fiber, 3g protein

The About.com guide to Shortcut Cooking author: Linda Larsen

Publisher: Adams Media (2007)

ISBN: 978-1-59869-273-0

Price: \$17.95