

# 7-Day Menu Planner by Susan Nicholson

**SUNDAY** (Family) -- The family will be surprised at the wonderful flavor of MEXICAN CHICKEN SALAD (see recipe), a cool, refreshing main dish. Serve it with CORN-ON-THE-COB and CRUSTY BREAD. Buy a CHOCOLATE LAYER CAKE and top it with fat-free STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM for dessert.

**PLAN AHEAD:** Save enough cake for Monday. Cook enough chicken for Tuesday.

**SHOPPING LIST:** avocado, fat-free or reduced-fat sour cream, limes, garlic, coarse salt, pepper, cooked chicken breast, jicama, green onions, fresh cilantro, serrano chiles, salad greens, corn-on-the-cob, crusty bread, chocolate layer cake, fat-free strawberry ice cream.

**MONDAY** (Budget) -- I love a Labor Day with very little labor. That's why this BARBECUE PORK recipe is perfect. In a 4-quart or larger slow cooker, combine a 2-pound well-trimmed boneless pork loin roast (cut into 2 or 3 pieces), 1 chopped onion, 3/4 cup cola beverage (not "diet") and 3/4 cup of your favorite barbecue sauce. (I used KC Masterpiece hickory brown sugar flavor.) Cook, covered, 7 to 8 hours on low or 5 to 6 hours on high. Remove pork; shred. Serve on sliced whole-grain sandwich buns and drizzle with defatted sauce from slow cooker.

Add BAKED BEANS, COLESLAW, PICKLES and DEVILED EGGS. For dessert, slice WATERMELON and serve with leftover CAKE.

**PLAN AHEAD:** Save enough barbecue pork for Wednesday.

**SHOPPING LIST:** boneless pork loin roast, onion, cola beverage, any barbecue sauce, whole-grain sandwich buns, baked beans, coleslaw, pickles, deviled eggs, watermelon.

**TUESDAY** (Heat and Eat) -- Tonight's CHICKEN RIGATONI AND PESTO will be quick. Toss shredded cooked (leftover) chicken with pesto sauce, halved cherry tomatoes and cooked rigatoni. Add a ROMAINE SALAD and WHOLE-GRAIN BREAD. FRESH PLUMS are your dessert.

**SHOPPING LIST:** pesto sauce, cherry tomatoes, rigatoni, romaine, whole-grain bread, fresh plums.

**WEDNESDAY** (Kids) -- The kids can help prepare PORK WRAPS. Heat large fat-free flour tortillas and the leftover barbecue pork. Spoon the pork down the center of the tortilla; top with mild salsa, shredded Mexican-blend cheese and shredded lettuce, and then roll. Serve with BAKED CHIPS. For dessert, SLICED MANGOES are a favorite.

**SHOPPING LIST:** fat-free flour tortillas, mild salsa, shredded Mexican-blend cheese, lettuce, baked chips, mangoes.

**THURSDAY** (Express) -- For a quick and pretty meal, make SHRIMP, BEET AND FETA SALAD. In a large bowl, combine 8 cups baby spinach leaves with 1 (16-ounce) jar drained sliced pickled beets. Add 1/3 cup light Italian dressing mixed with 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon; toss to coat. Divide mixture among 4 serving plates. Divide and top each serving with 1 pound cooked, cleaned medium shrimp, 1/2 cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese and 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts.

Serve with BREAD STICKS. Make BUTTERSCOTCH PUDDING (instant) with 1 percent milk for dessert.

**SHOPPING LIST:** baby spinach leaves, jar sliced pickled beets, light Italian dressing, dried tarragon, cooked, cleaned medium shrimp, crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese, pine nuts, bread sticks, instant butterscotch pudding, 1 percent milk.

**FRIDAY** (Meatless) -- MOROCCAN GARBANZO BEANS WITH RAISINS is a great no-meat dinner. In a large saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon canola oil on medium.



Add 1 medium sliced onion, 1 medium chopped onion and 1 clove minced garlic; cook about 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until onions are softened. Stir in 1 cup acorn or butternut squash (peeled, seeded, diced), 1/4 cup raisins, 1 cup vegetable broth, 1 teaspoon turmeric, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer about 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until squash is tender. Stir in 1 (15-ounce) can rinsed reduced-sodium garbanzo beans. Serve over BROWN RICE. (Adapted from "Betty Crocker Vegetarian Cooking," Jeff Nowak, editorial director; Wiley, 2012.)

Serve with SLICED TOMATOES and GARLIC BREAD. For dessert, FRESH RASPBERRIES topped with light whipped cream taste great.

**SHOPPING LIST:** canola oil, onions, garlic, acorn or butternut squash, raisins, vegetable broth, turmeric, cinnamon, ground ginger, canned reduced-sodium garbanzo beans, brown rice, tomatoes, garlic bread, fresh raspberries, light whipped cream.

**SATURDAY** (Easy Entertaining) -- With guests coming for dinner, you will certainly impress them with GRILLED PORTERHOUSE STEAKS WITH GARLIC-HERB PEPPERCORN CRUST (see recipe). Serve with your GRILLED VEGETABLES, ROSEMARY ROASTED RED POTATOES, MIXED GREENS and SOURDOUGH BREAD. Top off the special meal with BANANA-COCONUT CREAM DESSERT (see recipe).

**SHOPPING LIST:** fresh parsley, fresh thyme, garlic, peppercorns, porterhouse or T-bone steaks, coarse salt, vegetables to grill, fresh rosemary, red potatoes, salad greens, sourdough bread, reduced-fat biscuit mix (such as Bisquick), sugar, butter, fat-free sugar-free instant vanilla pudding mix, 1 percent milk, bananas, fat-free whipped topping, shredded coconut, slivered almonds.

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## THE RECIPES

### MEXICAN CHICKEN SALAD (Sunday)

Makes 4 servings

Preparation time: 20 minutes

For the dressing:

1/2 avocado, halved  
1/2 cup fat-free or reduced-fat sour cream  
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced  
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper

For the salad:

2 cups cooked chicken breast, coarsely shredded  
1/2 pound peeled jicama, cut into matchstick pieces  
2 green onions, finely chopped  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
1/2 teaspoon seeded serrano chiles, finely chopped  
6 cups mixed greens

For the dressing: In a blender, combine dressing ingredients. Blend until smooth.

For the salad: In a large bowl, combine chicken, jicama, onions, cilantro and chiles; toss to mix. Add

dressing and toss to coat. Divide greens among 4 plates; top with salad mixture and serve.

Per serving: 235 calories, 26 grams protein, 7 grams fat (27 percent calories from fat), 1.5 grams saturated fat, 17 grams carbohydrate, 65 milligrams cholesterol, 227 milligrams sodium, 7 grams fiber.

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**GRILLED PORTERHOUSE STEAKS WITH GARLIC-HERB PEPPERCORN CRUST** (Saturday)  
Makes 8 servings

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 14 to 16 minutes

For the seasoning:

2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme  
5 cloves garlic, minced  
2 teaspoons coarsely ground mixed peppercorns (black white, green and pink) (see Notes)

For the steaks:

2 porterhouse or T-bone steaks, cut 1 inch thick (about 1 pound each)  
1 teaspoon coarsely ground mixed peppercorns  
Coarse salt to taste

In a small bowl, combine seasoning ingredients; press evenly onto steaks. Grill, uncovered, 14 to 16 minutes for medium-rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally. Remove bones and fat from steaks; carve into slices. Season with peppercorns and salt to taste, and serve.

Notes: To easily grind whole peppercorns, use a pepper mill or coffee grinder (be sure to clean after using). A porterhouse is two steaks in one: a top loin (strip) and a tenderloin separated by a bone.

Per serving: 186 calories, 22 grams protein, 10 grams fat (49 percent calories from fat), 4.2 grams saturated fat, 1 gram carbohydrate, 51 milligrams cholesterol, 66 milligrams sodium, no fiber.

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**BANANA-COCONUT CREAM DESSERT** (Saturday)

Makes 16 servings

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes; chilling time: 1 to 24 hours

2 cups reduced-fat biscuit mix (such as Bisquick)  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1/4 cup firm butter  
1 (4-serving size) package fat-free, sugar-free instant vanilla pudding mix  
1 3/4 cups 1 percent milk  
2 medium ripe bananas, sliced  
2 cups frozen fat-free whipped topping, thawed  
1/4 cup toasted shredded coconut  
1/4 cup toasted slivered almonds

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Mix biscuit mix and sugar in a medium bowl. Cut in butter, using a pastry blender or crisscrossing two knives, until crumbly. Press into bottom of ungreased 7-by-11-inch baking dish. Bake 13 to 15 minutes or until light brown. Cool completely, about 30 minutes. Make pudding as directed on package, using 1 3/4 cups milk; spread over crust. Top with bananas. Spread whipped cream over top. Sprinkle with coconut and almonds. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour, but not longer than 24 hours.

Per serving: 150 calories, 3 grams protein, 6 grams fat (33 percent calories from fat), 2.7 grams saturated fat, 22 grams carbohydrate, 9 milligrams cholesterol, 293 milligrams sodium, 1 gram fiber.