

7-Day Menu Planner by Susan Nicholson

SUNDAY (Family) -- Surprise the family with **GRILLED TERIYAKI FLANK STEAK**. In a small bowl, combine 2 tablespoons Mrs. Dash (or another brand) Spicy Teriyaki Marinade, 1 tablespoon canola oil, 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt, 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper and 3 cloves minced garlic. Spread mixture evenly on both sides of a 1 1/2-pound flank steak. Cover and refrigerate 3 to 4 hours. Remove steak and discard marinade. Grill 9 minutes per side or until desired doneness. (Caution: Don't overcook, or it will be tough.) Remove from grill; cover and let stand 10 minutes. Slice steak diagonally across grain into thin strips and serve.

Alongside, add **DILL RICE**. In a large bowl, combine 2 1/2 cups hot cooked brown rice, 1 (14-ounce) can drained quartered artichokes, 1/2 cup sliced green onions, 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, 1 1/2 teaspoons lime zest, 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice, 2 tablespoons olive oil, and coarse salt and pepper to taste. Toss to mix.

Add **STEAMED SUGAR SNAP PEAS** and **WHOLE-GRAIN ROLLS**. Buy **CHOCOLATE MERINGUE PIE** for dessert.

PLAN AHEAD: Save enough pie for Monday.

SHOPPING LIST: Mrs. Dash or another teriyaki marinade, canola oil, coarse salt, black pepper, garlic, flank steak, brown rice, canned quartered artichokes, green onions, fresh dill, limes, olive oil, fresh sugar snap peas, whole-grain rolls, chocolate meringue pie.

MONDAY (Express) -- Try Amy's or another brand **VEGGIE COMBO PIZZA** for a quick meal. Serve the vegetable-loaded pizza with a packaged **GREEN SALAD**. Slice the leftover **PIE** for dessert.

SHOPPING LIST: frozen vegetable pizza, packaged green salad.

TUESDAY (Budget) -- Save some money with **HAM AND LENTIL STEW** (see recipe) for an easy dinner. Add a **LETTUCE WEDGE** and **CRUSTY BREAD**. **RED AND GREEN GRAPES** are a simple dessert.

PLAN AHEAD: Save enough stew for Wednesday. **SHOPPING LIST:** diced ham, dried lentils, carrots, celery, onion, garlic, fat-free chicken broth, dried oregano, pepper, frozen leaf spinach, lemons, lettuce, crusty bread, red and green grapes.

WEDNESDAY (Heat and Eat) -- Serve leftover **HAM AND LENTILS A LA KING** tonight. Spoon the leftover **STEW** over **CORNBREAD** (from a mix). Add a **ROMAINE SALAD**. For dessert, **FRESH TROPICAL FRUIT** is good.

SHOPPING LIST: cornbread mix, romaine, fresh tropical fruit.

THURSDAY (Meatless) -- Who needs meat when you have **FRESH TOMATO SAUCE WITH PENNE PASTA** (see recipe) on the menu tonight? Serve the delicious pasta combo with a **SPINACH SALAD** and **ITALIAN BREAD**. For dessert, fat-free **CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM** should please everyone.

PLAN AHEAD: Save enough ice cream for Friday. **TIP:** To remove tomato skins easily, briefly plunge into boiling water, then immediately place into ice water to cool and set color; peel and chop when cool enough to handle.

SHOPPING LIST: extra-virgin olive oil, onion, garlic, ripe plum tomatoes, fresh basil, sugar, coarse salt, pepper, penne pasta, parmesan cheese, fresh spinach, Italian bread, fat-free chocolate ice cream.

FRIDAY (Kids) -- What could be more fun for the kids than a **GREEN MONSTER** for dinner! Make the "monsters" by spreading refrigerated guacamole over split bagels (spread gently over the holes). Add eyes and a nose with sliced black olives, a crunchy mane with Chinese noodles, poppy seed freckles and a crown from sliced red bell peppers. Create other "monsters" with grated baby carrots (for hair), cherry tomato halves (for cheeks) and alfalfa sprouts (for hair).

Add a glass of **TOMATO JUICE** or **SOUP** on the side. For dessert, top leftover **ICE CREAM** with **MARSHMALLOW TOPPING**.

SHOPPING LIST: refrigerated guacamole, bagels, sliced black olives, Chinese noodles, poppy seeds, red

bell peppers, grated baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, alfalfa sprouts, tomato juice or soup, marshmallow topping.

SATURDAY (Easy Entertaining) -- Our guests wanted seconds of **PAN-SEARED TROUT WITH ITALIAN-STYLE SALSA** (see recipe), and so will yours. Serve the fish with **PARSLEY BUTTERED ORZO**, fresh **ASPARAGUS**, a **RED-TIPPED LETTUCE SALAD** and **BAGUETTES**. Buy a **BERRY COBBLER** for dessert.

SHOPPING LIST: plum tomatoes, red onion, kalamata olives, garlic, fresh parsley, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, capers, coarse salt, pepper, crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese with basil and



tomatoes, trout fillets, lemons, parsley, butter, orzo, fresh asparagus, red-tipped lettuce, baguettes, berry cobbler.

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THE RECIPES

HAM AND LENTIL STEW (Tuesday)

Makes about 12 1/2 cups
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 4 to 5 hours on high; 7 to 9 hours on low

1 cup ham, diced
2 cups dried lentils
2 cups carrots, sliced
2 cups celery, thinly sliced
1 cup onion, chopped
1 tablespoon garlic, minced
3 cups water
2 (14-ounce) cans fat-free chicken broth
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 (16-ounce) package frozen leaf spinach, not thawed
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

In a 4-quart or larger slow cooker, combine ham, lentils, carrots, celery, onion, garlic, water, broth, oregano and pepper. Cook on high 4 to 5 hours, or on low 7 to 9 hours, or until lentils are tender. Stir in spinach; cover and cook 10 minutes on high or until tender. Thin with more water if necessary. Stir in lemon juice.

Per cup: 161 calories, 14 grams protein, 1 gram fat (6 percent calories from fat), 0.3 gram saturated fat, 27 grams carbohydrate, 6 milligrams cholesterol, 431 milligrams sodium, 6 grams fiber.

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FRESH TOMATO SAUCE WITH PENNE PASTA (Thursday)

Makes 4 servings

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: less than 20 minutes, plus pasta

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
4 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
15 very ripe plum tomatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
5 leaves fresh basil (and more for garnish, if desired)
1/2 teaspoon sugar (1/2 teaspoon more if tomatoes are not very ripe)

Coarse salt and pepper to taste

8 ounces penne pasta

Freshly grated parmesan cheese for garnish

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet on medium-high.

Add onion, garlic, tomatoes, basil, sugar, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to boil; lower heat to low and simmer 15 minutes or until the sauce is reduced by half.

Meanwhile, cook pasta according to directions; drain. Spoon sauce over pasta. Garnish with extra basil and parmesan, if desired. (Adapted from "Welcome to Claire's," Claire Criscuolo, Lyons Press, 2012.)

Per serving: 360 calories, 10 grams protein, 12 grams fat (28 percent calories from fat), 1.6 grams saturated fat, 56 grams carbohydrate, no cholesterol, 18 milligrams sodium, 5 grams fiber.

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PAN-SEARED TROUT WITH ITALIAN-STYLE SALSA (Saturday)

Makes 6 servings

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: about 5 minutes

For the Italian-style salsa:

4 plum tomatoes
1/2 small red onion, chopped
12 pitted kalamata olives, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 teaspoons capers
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese with basil and tomatoes

For the trout:

6 (6-ounce) trout fillets
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
Lemon slices for garnish

For the salsa: In a medium bowl, mix together all ingredients. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

For the trout: Sprinkle fillets with salt and pepper. Heat half the oil in a large nonstick skillet on medium-high. Add 3 fillets, skin side up, and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Peel off skin and turn; cook 1 to 2 minutes, or until fish is opaque and flakes with a fork. Repeat with remaining oil and fillets. Top fillets with salsa. Garnish with lemon and serve immediately.

Per serving: 311 calories, 37 grams protein, 16 grams fat (46 percent calories from fat), 2.8 grams saturated fat, 5 grams carbohydrate, 102 milligrams cholesterol, 524 milligrams sodium, 1 gram fiber.