

Fresh, delicious, autumn recipes for one



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Break out of the 'just for me' rut

When you live alone, we can get into a rut when it comes to cooking: eating the same food all week long so you use everything up (but get really bored), or otherwise grazing and eating toast or a sandwich for dinner, because cooking seems like too much bother if it's 'just for me'.

This book is to help solo cooks break out of that rut. As the saying goes: you're worth it! Here's a simple, delicious week of food, packed with the goodness of fresh NZ seasonal vegetables and fruit. It's a lineup that's inexpensive, doesn't repeat the same meal over and over, and will inspire you to take the time to cook 'just for you'.

How to use this book

The recipes in this book are designed for one-person households, but they're easily adapted for two or more. You'll notice a couple of the recipes serve two; this is so you can have a friend over for dinner, or have nice leftovers for lunch the next day. The servings are generous.

This is a weekly menu, so if you use the shopping list and cook all the recipes, you should use up all the fresh ingredients over the week. You'll notice some instructions ask you to save some of the things you make for later in the week. You can of course just dip in and cook one or two recipes.

Recipes developed and written by Niki Bezzant.

Thanks to Good Thing (goodthing.co.nz) for tableware, glasses and dishes.

Shopping list

Here's what you'll need to make the dinners for the week. Read through the recipes and make sure you have basics like oil, spices, sauces and condiments.

Fresh vegetables and fruit:

1 bunch baby carrots or
4 medium-sized carrots
Lemons
Limes
Mandarins
Bag of rocket or spinach
Potatoes – floury variety e.g. Agria
Herbs e.g. parsley, thyme, rosemary
2 purple or orange kūmara
1 head broccoli
1 red onion
Bunch of spring onions
Bag of parsnips
Apples
Pears
Nashi pears
Cauliflower
1 head cabbage
(red or green, or a mix)
Garlic

Grocery shelves:

1 small bag walnuts
1 small bag almonds or hazelnuts
Sesame seeds
Ground coriander
Ground cumin
Allspice
Pumpkin seeds
Paprika
1 can chickpeas
Sesame oil
Dried cranberries
Walnuts
1 can crushed tomatoes
Mayonnaise
Chicken stock
Dijon Mustard

Chilled/frozen:

Plain yoghurt
200g Feta cheese
500g chicken thighs
Small pack tofu
2 good quality pork sausages
Bag of edamame beans (shelled)
Parmesan cheese



Breakfast ideas

Try these easy and filling options to get your autumn days off to a good start.

Apple, pear & cinnamon nutty oats

To make a tasty variation on ordinary porridge, combine oats, nuts such as almonds and walnuts, seeds, cinnamon and dried cranberries. Grate an apple into this, and cook as you would regular porridge. Serve with yoghurt and sliced pear.



2 pieces wholegrain toast topped with 2 eggs and served with tomatoes and spinach.

Frittata or omelette made with leftover roast vegetables.

Lunch ideas

If you make this week of food, you'll likely have leftovers for lunch on a couple of days. On other days, use these ideas for inspiration.

Tuna slaw

Use a mix of cabbage and carrot to make slaw. Add seeds, nuts, spring onion and a can of flavoured tuna. Mix with a little mayonnaise or plain yoghurt.

Chilli-topped kūmara

Use some of your leftover chilli from Saturday night and put it on top of half a roasted kūmara or potato. Add leftover feta, plain yoghurt or sour cream and a bit of chilli sauce. Garnish with fresh herbs.

Cauliflower salad

Chop and blanch cauliflower and make a salad with salad leaves, nuts, seeds, dukkah, dried cranberries and balsamic dressing. Add feta and leftover cooked shredded chicken. This is nice with some cold potatoes added, too.

Autumn dessert/snack idea

Lime & ginger-poached Nashi pear

Slice Nashi into wedges. Place in a pot and just cover with water. Add a teaspoon of brown sugar, a few slices of ginger or dash of vanilla extract and a squeeze of lemon or lime juice. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes, until soft. Serve Nashi with cereal, as dessert or with yoghurt as a snack.



Flavour booster: *Make your own dukkah*

Makes around ½ cup
Time to make: 5 minutes

Ingredients

¼ cup walnuts
¼ cup almonds or hazelnuts
1 tablespoon sesame seeds
½ teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon ground cumin
Pinch allspice
¼ teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper

This is a simple nut and spice mix that adds heaps of flavour to your vegetables – make a batch and sprinkle it over salads or cooked veges to make them a bit special. It'll keep for a week or two in an airtight container in a cool place.

Heat a pan to medium and add the nuts. Toast (keep your eye on them) for 2-3 minutes. Add the sesame seeds and toast another 1-2 minutes, until the seeds are golden. Add the spices and seasoning and mix, then remove from heat.

Let the mixture cool a few minutes, then put into a blender or processor. Blend for 10-20 seconds, until it's just reaching a crumb-like texture.



Monday

Roasted carrots with mandarin salad & chickpea puree with dukkah sprinkle

Serves: 1

Time to make: 30 minutes

Ingredients

1 bunch baby carrots or
3-4 medium-sized carrots
Olive oil
3 teaspoons dukkah spice mix
(make your own or buy a pack
– look for it in the deli at your
supermarket)
½ can chickpeas, drained
(save the rest for Saturday's
chilli)
1 tablespoon sesame oil
2 tablespoons lemon or
lime juice
1 mandarin
1 cup rocket leaves
2 tablespoons roughly
chopped walnuts
1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon red wine or
balsamic vinegar
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
Pinch of chilli powder

Garnish (optional)

Fresh herbs e.g. parsley, thyme,
rosemary, plain yoghurt

Method

- Preheat oven to 200°C. Trim carrots – if using larger ones, halve vertically – then place on a baking tray and drizzle or spray with oil. Sprinkle with half the dukkah mix. Roast for 20-30 minutes, until soft and browned.
- While carrots are roasting, prepare chickpea puree. Combine chickpeas and sesame oil in a processor or blender. Add salt and pepper and a pinch of chilli, if you like, and lemon juice. Blend until smooth, adding more oil or juice (or hot water) if you need to. Taste and adjust seasoning.
- To make salad, peel and segment mandarin and add to a bowl with rocket and walnuts. Combine olive oil, vinegar and mustard to make dressing; add to salad and toss well.
- To serve: spread chickpea puree on plate and top with carrots. Add salad and sprinkle with remaining dukkah. Sprinkle over herbs and add a drizzle of yoghurt, if using.

TIP: This dish is vegan, if you leave out the yoghurt to garnish.



Serves: 2

Time to make: 30 minutes

Ingredients

2 parsnips, sliced into chunks
 1 tablespoon butter
 ¼ cup milk
 1 lemon
 300g chicken thighs
 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 ¼ head cabbage – red or green, or a mix of both
 1 apple
 1 carrot
 1 broccoli stalk
 1 tablespoon dried cranberries
 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds
 ¼ cup plain yoghurt
 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
 Oil or butter for cooking
 ½ cup chicken stock
 ½ cup white wine (optional)

Tuesday

Lemon chicken with autumn slaw & creamy parsnip mash

Method

- Place parsnips in pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook for 5-8 minutes until parsnips are tender. Drain. Mash parsnips with butter, milk and salt and pepper to taste. If you like, you can use a stick blender to make your mash super smooth and creamy.
- Remove zest from lemon and set aside, then juice lemon and set juice aside, too.
- Prepare slaw: thinly slice cabbage, apple, carrot and broccoli stalk. Place in a large bowl with cranberries and seeds. Combine yoghurt, mayonnaise, half the chopped garlic, half the lemon zest and a tablespoon of the lemon juice. Mix well and season with salt and pepper.
- Prepare chicken thighs by slicing into even thirds.
- Heat a pan over medium-high heat and add oil or butter. Add remaining garlic and chicken thighs and cook, turning, for 2-3 minutes each side, until browned. Add stock and wine, if using, along with remaining lemon juice and zest. Turn down heat and cook a further 5 minutes, until chicken is cooked through and sauce has reduced. Add more stock if needed.
- Serve chicken thighs with sauce from pan, add creamy slaw and mash on the side.



Serves: 2

Time to make: 30 minutes

Ingredients

1 large purple or orange kumara
 ¼ cup frozen edamame beans, defrosted
 Olive oil
 ½ head broccoli, cut in florets
 2 tablespoons dried cranberries
 2 cups rocket leaves
 2 spring onions, finely sliced
 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds
 2 tablespoons roughly chopped walnuts
 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
 1 teaspoon red wine or balsamic vinegar
 ½ teaspoon mustard
 80g feta, crumbled
 ¼ cup plain yoghurt
 Black pepper
 Handful herbs e.g. parsley, thyme, rosemary, roughly chopped

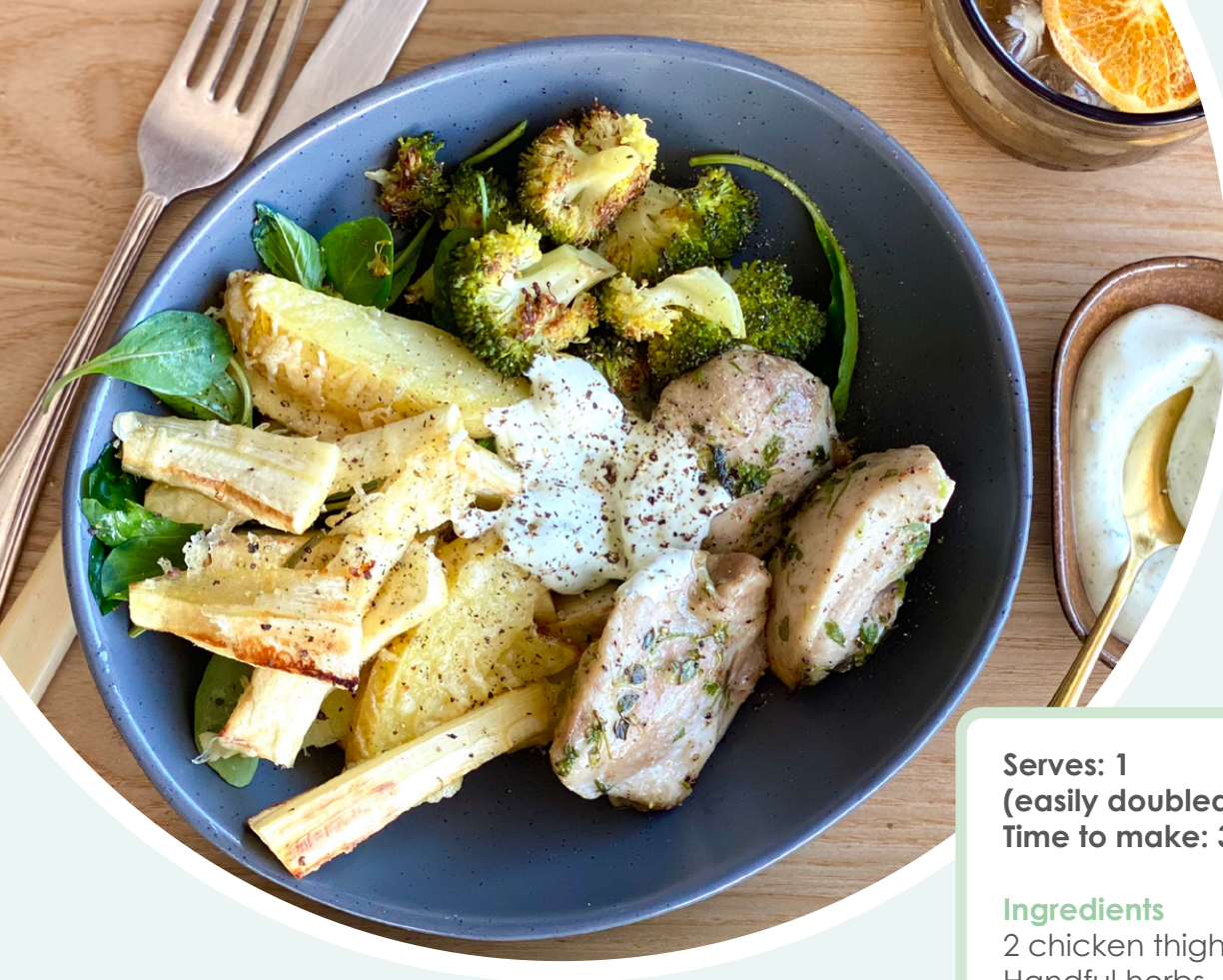
Wednesday

Baked kumara with edamame, whipped feta cream & broccoli salad

Method

- Preheat oven to 200°C. Halve kumara lengthwise and place in a baking dish. Spray or drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in oven for 10 minutes.
- After 10 minutes, add edamame beans to tray with a little oil. Return tray to oven and continue baking for 15-20 more minutes, until edamame are crispy and kumara is soft and roasted.
- While kumara roasts, make broccoli salad and feta cream. Bring a pot of salted water to the boil and add broccoli florets. Cook for 2 minutes, until bright green and slightly tender. Drain and rinse under cold water. Place in a large bowl. Add rocket, spring onions, cranberries, walnuts and pumpkin seeds. Combine olive oil, vinegar and mustard to make dressing, add to salad and mix well.
- To make feta cream, place feta, yoghurt and half the herbs into a blender or processor and add black pepper. Blend, scraping down if necessary, for 3-4 minutes, or until smooth and creamy. Taste and season if needed.
- To serve: place kumara in a bowl or plate. Top with roasted edamame beans and a dollop of feta cream, and salad on the side. Garnish with remaining herbs, if desired.

TIP: Toast more pumpkin seeds than you need for this recipe; we'll be using them in other recipes later in the week. You'll also have leftover feta cream; save this for Saturday's dinner.



Thursday

Charred broccoli tray bake with crispy Parmesan potato & parsnip wedges and herbed chicken

Serves: 1
(easily doubled to serve 2)
Time to make: 30 minutes

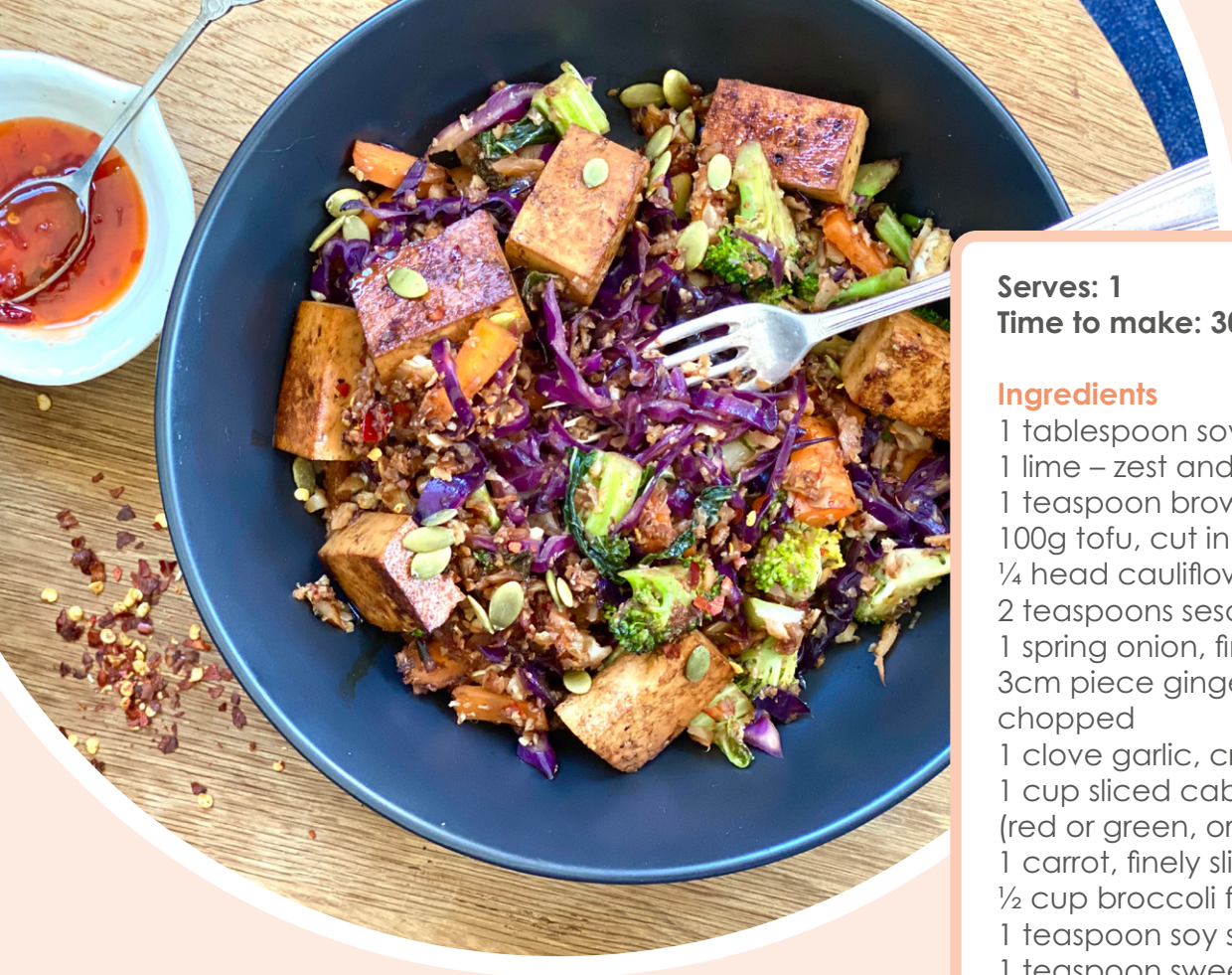
Ingredients

2 chicken thighs, cut in thirds
Handful herbs, e.g. parsley,
thyme, roughly chopped
¼ head broccoli, cut in florets
1 potato, cut in wedges
1 -2 parsnips, cut in wedges
¼ cup grated Parmesan
cheese
1 cup rocket or spinach leaves
Optional garnish: sprinkle of
dukkah, dollop of yoghurt

Method

- Preheat oven to 200°C. Coat chicken with oil and herbs.
- In a large oven dish, spread chicken, broccoli, potatoes and parsnip. Drizzle or spray with oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 20-30 minutes, removing after 15 minutes and sprinkling vegetables with Parmesan cheese. Return to oven for remaining cooking time, until vegetables are tender, and cheese is golden.
- Remove tray from oven and sprinkle over rocket. Mix gently through vegetables to wilt leaves slightly. Garnish with herbs, pepper and yoghurt if desired.

TIP: This dish makes a great salad when served cold, so you can make extra for lunch tomorrow if you like.



Serves: 1
Time to make: 30 minutes

Ingredients

1 tablespoon soy sauce
 1 lime – zest and juice
 1 teaspoon brown sugar
 100g tofu, cut in cubes
 ¼ head cauliflower
 2 teaspoons sesame oil
 1 spring onion, finely sliced
 3cm piece ginger, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, crushed
 1 cup sliced cabbage (red or green, or a mix)
 1 carrot, finely sliced
 ½ cup broccoli florets
 1 teaspoon soy sauce
 1 teaspoon sweet chilli sauce (optional)
 ½ teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)
 1 tablespoon toasted pumpkin seeds

Friday

Fried cauliflower rice with glazed soy-lime tofu

Method

- Combine lime zest and juice, soy sauce and sugar in a bowl. Add tofu cubes and mix. Set aside.
- Grate or quickly process cauliflower (use pulse function) to make a fine, rice-like texture. Prepare other vegetables so you're ready to cook.
- Heat a pan to medium-high heat and add sesame oil. Add spring onion and garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add cabbage, broccoli and carrot and cook for 2 minutes more. Then add cauliflower and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes before adding sauces, if using, and chilli flakes.
- Remove cauliflower mix from pan and set aside, keeping warm. Add a little more oil to pan and return to medium-high heat. Add tofu, setting marinade aside. Cook tofu, turning, until browned on all sides. Remove from heat and add 3 tablespoons water along with marinade to pan, quickly tossing to coat tofu in glaze.
- Serve tofu on top of cauliflower rice, garnished with seeds.



Saturday

Smashed potatoes with vege chilli, feta cream & roasted onions

Serves: 2

Time to make: 40 minutes

Ingredients

2 medium flouy potatoes,
e.g. Agria
1 red onion, finely sliced
1 spring onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic
¼ head cauliflower, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
¼ cup edamame beans
½ can chickpeas
1 can crushed tomatoes
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon chilli flakes
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
100g tofu (or whatever remains
from Friday's dinner) cut in
chunks
2 tablespoons feta cream
(left over from Wednesday)

Method

- Preheat oven to 180°C
- Cut potatoes into chunks and place in a pot. Cover with water and bring to a boil. Cook for 10 minutes, or until just cooked. Slice onion thinly. When potatoes are cooked, drain and place on a baking dish with onion. Roughly crush with a fork or masher. Spray or drizzle with oil. Bake for 10-15 minutes, until browned and crisping up on the edges.
- While the potatoes cook, make the chilli. Spray a large pan with oil and heat to medium hot. Place spring onion, garlic, cauliflower and carrot in pan and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Add edamame, chickpeas, tomatoes and spices, along with ½ can of water. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Add tofu and stir to warm through.
- Serve chilli on top of potatoes, garnished with feta cream and toasted seeds, if desired.

TIP: Leave out the feta cream to make this dish vegan.



Sunday

Roasted apple, pear & parsnip salad with balsamic dressing & grilled pork sausages

Method

- Preheat oven to 200°C. Arrange apple, pear, parsnip and kūmara on tray. Halve sausages lengthwise and add to tray.
- Combine balsamic vinegar and olive oil and drizzle over vegetable mix. Mix gently to coat. Roast in the oven for 30 minutes, or until vegetables are soft and sausages are cooked. Place rocket on tray and gently mix through.
- Serve with mustard or chutney of your choice.

Serves: 2

Time to make: 40 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 apple, cut in eighths
- 1 pear, cut in eighths
- 1 parsnip, cut in wedges
- 1 small kūmara, cut in wedges
- 2 large or 4 small good-quality pork sausages
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cups rocket or spinach leaves

To serve

Mustard or chutney of your choice



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