

# Delicious Family-Friendly Budget Recipes

## Berry Medley and Banana Smoothie

Smoothies are a simple, fast way to make breakfast in the morning, especially if you have a busy day ahead.

*Serves 4 | Freezing time overnight | Prep. time 10 minutes | \$*

### **Ingredients**

- 2 cups frozen berry medley (any kind)
- 1 cup quick oats
- 2 bananas, sliced
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 4 scoops protein powder, optional
- 4 cups low-fat milk

### **Directions**

1. Divide the berries, oats, bananas, honey, and protein powder (if used) into 4 airtight containers and place them in the freezer for at least 2 hours or overnight for the next morning.
2. In the morning you'll be serving the smoothie, take out a frozen portion and add it and 1 cup of almond milk to a blender.
3. Blend until smooth.

### **Nutrition per serving**

Calories 228, fat 4 g, carbs 44 g,  
Protein 8 g, sodium 188 mg

## Homemade Ranch Dip and Veggies

Vegetables dipped in creamy ranch dressing are a great snack. However, store-bought dressings tend to be loaded with additives and processed ingredients. This simple recipe for a homemade ranch uses Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, and simple seasonings. It's a great stand-in for store-bought options.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 10 minutes | \$*

### **Ingredients**

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup plain, reduced-fat Greek yogurt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 pound raw vegetables (such as carrots, celery, and bell peppers), for dipping

### **Directions**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the yogurt, mayonnaise, garlic powder, and dill. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Portion into 4 airtight containers, keeping the ranch and vegetables separate. Store in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days.

### **Nutrition per serving**

Calories 153, fat 11 g, carbs 10 g,  
Protein 5 g, sodium 340 mg

# Ground Turkey Chili

Chili is such a simple dish to create with minimal ingredients. It's also easy to vary the kinds of beans, veggies, and proteins you use. This version uses ground turkey and red kidney beans. Also added are veggies, frozen and fresh, to make this a hearty dish. You will also keep costs down by adding less meat.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 30 minutes | \$\$*

## **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 12 ounces ground turkey
- ½ cup chopped white onion
- ½ cup frozen corn, thawed
- ½ cup frozen bell peppers, thawed
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 cups tomato sauce
- ¾ cup canned red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## **Directions**

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.
2. Add the turkey, breaking up the meat, and cook for 4 to 5 minutes until mostly browned.
3. Add the onion, corn, peppers, garlic, chili powder, and cumin.
4. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes to caramelize the vegetables and bring out the flavor of the garlic and spices.
5. Mix well and make sure not to burn the garlic.
6. Add the tomato sauce and beans and mix well.
7. Add ¼ cup of water and bring to a simmer. Cook for 25 to 30 minutes to really develop the flavors.
8. Add salt and pepper to taste.
9. Portion evenly into 4 airtight containers and let cool (this will cool the chili quicker than cooling down the whole pot).
10. Store the chili for 4 to 5 days in the refrigerator or up to 2 months in the freezer.

## **Nutrition per serving**

Calories 311, fat 15 g, carbs 26 g,  
Protein 22 g, sodium 177 mg

# Tuna Macaroni Salad

Canned tuna is a great, affordable source of protein. It's convenient to stock a few cans of this tasty fish in your pantry when you're craving a quick lunch. This filling salad also uses macaroni, fresh-cut vegetables, and a simple and tasty dressing. It's great any night of the week and could easily be turned into a casserole-type dish by melting some cheese on top.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 10 minutes | \$*

## **Ingredients**

- 1 cup macaroni noodles
- 1 (5-ounce) can flaked white tuna, drained
- 3 dill pickles, finely diced
- ½ cup shredded carrot
- ½ cup finely diced cucumber
- ½ cup finely diced celery
- 1½ tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce, optional
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## **Directions**

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil over high heat and cook the macaroni according to package directions. Make sure to stir while cooking because macaroni tends to stick.
2. Once cooked, drain the macaroni, run under cold water to cool, and transfer to a large bowl.
3. Add the tuna, pickles, carrots, cucumber, and celery. Mix well.
4. In a separate, medium bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, vinegar, garlic powder, hot sauce (if using), and olive oil to make the dressing.
5. Add the dressing to the bowl with the tuna salad and mix well. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Portion evenly in 3 airtight containers. Store in the refrigerator for 4 to 5 days or freeze for up to 1 month.

## **Nutrition per serving**

Calories 176, fat 9 g, carbs 34 g,  
Protein 15 g, sodium 103 mg

# Budget Beef Stroganoff

This budget beef stroganoff is inexpensive without sacrificing taste.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 20 minutes | \$\$\$*

## **Ingredients**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 12 ounces lean ground beef
- 8 white button mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tablespoons diced white onion
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ cup beef stock
- 2 dill pickles, diced
- 3 tablespoons sour cream
- 7 ounces dry egg noodles
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## **Directions**

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium-high heat.
2. Add the beef and cook for about 7 minutes, until well-browned.
3. Add the mushrooms, onion, and garlic powder.
4. Sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, until the vegetables are well-caramelized, and you can smell the garlic.
5. Add the beef stock and let it reduce by half to develop the flavor and cook the beef further.
6. Add the pickles and sour cream, then reduce the heat to low and let the sauce thicken for 2 to 3 minutes.
7. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
8. Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil and cook the egg noodles according to package directions.
9. Drain and toss into the pan with the beef and veggies. Mix well, coating the noodles with the sauce.
10. Portion equally into 4 airtight containers and let cool completely. Store for 3 to 4 days in the refrigerator or up to 1 month in the freezer.

## **Nutrition per serving**

Calories 370, fat 12 g, carbs 39 g,  
Protein 27 g, sodium 159 mg

# Vanilla Muffins

These muffins are light, fluffy, and quite filling. Not to mention affordable! Kids love them because they're so much easier to hold and eat than a cupcake or cake.

Serves 12 | Prep time 10 minutes | Cooking time 15 minutes | \$\$\$

## Ingredients

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 1 large egg, room temperature
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole milk
- Cooking spray or vegetable oil for greasing, optional

## Frosting

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

## Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C).
2. Line a muffin pan with muffin liners or grease each hole with cooking spray or vegetable oil.
3. In a mixing bowl, mix the flour and baking powder.
4. In another large bowl, whisk the vegetable oil, egg, sugar, vanilla, and milk.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix until combined. Be careful not to overmix the batter.
6. Transfer the batter to the muffin pan, filling the liners just ¾ full to allow room for the muffins to rise.
7. Bake in the oven for about 12–15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
8. Remove from the oven and let the muffins rest in the pan for 5 minutes. Then, transfer to a wire rack to cool down.
9. To make the frosting, whisk all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Adjust consistency with more water or milk, if needed.
10. Spread the frosting evenly on the cooled-down muffins.
11. Serve and enjoy.

## Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 261, fat 14 g, carbs 29 g  
Protein 2 g, sodium 15 mg

\*\*\*These recipes and more are found in Louise Davidson's *Quick and Easy Family-Friendly Budget Recipes: Cheap and Wicked Good*. To download a copy of the book, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

