

Quick Look at Base Recipes

By Judi Carvell

Base recipes are just that, a base to build off of. Spreads make great bases. They are basically a combination of a fat, salt, acid and or sweet. And then herbs and spices can be added into later to change the flavor of the dish; this is called layering the base.

Examples:

Citrus Miso Dressing - Base

From Rouxbe Cooking School

- 1¼ cup freshly-squeezed orange or tangerine juice
- 1 tbsp tahini
- ½ cup sweet white miso
- Pinch of sea salt

Culture Combination - Layers

Italian: 1/4 cup sundried tomatoes, 2 cloves garlic, 3 tbsp fresh basil.

Thai: 1 1/2 tbsp fresh ginger, 1/2 chili, 3 tbsp fresh cilantro, 2 tbsp fresh basil, 2 tbsp fresh mint.

Asian: 2 tbsp tamari, 1 tsp toasted sesame oil, 2 cloves garlic, 2 tbsp fresh ginger

Judi's 3-Way Lentil Base

1. Pressure cook lentils, onions, mushrooms together according to package and pressure cooker instructions.
2. Divide 3 ways
 - Thoroughly dry out 1/3 portion – use for lentil burgers by adding in oats, garlic, onion powder, and other seasonings of choice.
 - Keep next 1/3 portion somewhat moist:
 - Add low-salt taco seasoning – use for not only tacos, but for a salad topping.
 - Keep last portion the texture of soup:
 - Add chili seasoning, tomatoes and other beans for a quick bowl of chili.

Simple Easy Bowl Meals

The Anatomy of a Bowl Meal

1. **Plant-Based Protein**
 - Beans - Green beans (lima, split peas) - Lentils - Nuts/Seeds - Faux meat (seitan, tempeh, tofu)
2. **Grains, Starchy Vegetables & Pasta**
 - Whole grains - Starchy vegetables (winter squash) - Pasta
3. **Greens**
 - Sprouts - Delicate Greens - Dark Greens
4. **Non-Starchy Vegetables or Non-Sweet Fruit**
 - Non-Starchy Vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus...) - Non-Sweet Fruit (avocado, bell peppers, cucumbers, summer squash/zucchini...)
5. **Fresh Herbs, Spices, & other Toppings**
 - Fresh Herbs (basil, dill, mint) - Spices & Toppers (chives, flax meal, nutritional yeast, seeds)
6. **Condiments & Dressings**
 - Condiments (sauces, pesto, salsa) - Dressing of Choice - Acid & Salt (Braggs, tamari, vinegar...)

By keeping a well-stocked pantry and batch cooking, you can easily pick one thing from each group for a quick, simple, satisfying bowl meal. Usual ratio is:

- 1/3 to 1/2 cup protein
- 1/2 cup of grain/starchy vegetable
- 3/4 cup greens
- 3/4 cup non-starchy veggies.

Example:

Judi's Quick & Easy Italian Bowl

- 1/2 cup canned cannellini beans
- 1/2 cup whole wheat rotini or GF pasta
- 3/4 cup fresh arugula
- 3/4 cup mix of tomatoes, zucchini, onions & peppers

If desired drizzle with Maple Grove Fat Free Italian dressing or other FF dressing of choice!

Quick & Easy Sauces

Judi's Lazy Rosé Sauce

A full rich and delicious sauce, but easy on the fat!

- 1 Jar of marinara (Aldi's carries a brand that is oil free)
- 1/4 Cup cashews (pre-soaked if not using a high-speed blender)
- 1/4 Cup Nutritional yeast
- 2 Tbs of Chardonnay or canned mushroom liquid

Put jar of sauce in blender, add the remaining ingredients and blend till smooth. Pour over favorite pasta!

Del's Date and Stir-Fry Sauce

I always have this sauce on hand. With this sauce, some cooked rice or pasta, and a package of frozen vegetables, I can have dinner ready in less than 15 minutes. Even if I have to make this easy sauce, I can have dinner in less than 30 minutes. ~ Chef Del Sroufe

- 1/4 cup low –sodium soy sauce or tamari, or to taste
 - 1 1/2 cups low-sodium vegetable stock
 - 1/4 cup pitted Medjool dates
 - 1 1/2 tsp ground ginger
 - 1 1/2 tsp granulated garlic
 - 1 Tbs arrowroot powder
1. Combine everything but the arrowroot powder in a saucepan and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until the dates are softened.
 2. Add the cooked mixture to a blender and, with the motor running, add the arrowroot powder.

*Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 7 days.

Del's No-Queso Sauce

This is a creamy sauce with a kick. Use it to make a great mac and cheese, or even as a sauce for burritos.

- 2 cups frozen cauliflower
 - 2 cups water
 - 1 roasted red bell pepper
 - 2 chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
 - 1 tsp of sea salt
1. Add the cauliflower to a medium saucepan with the water.
 2. Bring to boil over high heat; cook until cauliflower is tender – 6 minutes for frozen, 10 minutes for fresh.
 3. Scoop the cauliflower into a blender, reserving the cooking liquid, and add the remaining ingredients
 4. Puree the mixture, adding just enough of the cooking water to make a creamy sauce.

Del's Easy Garbanzo Spread

Use it as a dip, spread it in a wrap, or try it as a pizza sauce!

- 1 15-ounce can garbanzo beans, drained – liquid preserved
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 tsp ground cumin
 - 1tsp water
 - ½ tsp black pepper
1. Combine garbanzo beans, garlic, cumin and water in food processor.
 2. Blend on low, gradually adding reserved bean liquid until desired consistency is achieved.

More Quick & Easy Recipes!

Dr. Pam's Latin Black Bean Soup

- 1 carton of Trader Joe's brand Latin Black Bean Soup
 - 1 Can of organic black beans
 - 1 Pkg of pre-packaged rice
 - ½ Pack of frozen corn
1. Put all ingredients in a pot, place on stovetop on medium heat until warm, and then serve.

Dr. Pam's Quick and Easy Spaghetti Dinner

- 1 lb of whole wheat pasta
- 1 jar of marinara sauce
- 1 jar of artichoke hearts
- ½ bag or pound of fresh kale

Cook pasta according to directions, drain, add sauce stir in artichoke hearts and fresh kale. If preferred cook medium low on stovetop till kale is wilted.

Judi's Mexi-can

Quick, easy and versatile

- 1 can pinto beans
- 1 can black beans
- 1 can garbanzo beans
- 1 can white hominy
- 1 can corn
- 1 can chili flavored tomatoes
- 1 can diced green chilis

Add

- Chile powder
- Green or red onions
- Garnish with fresh cilantro and lime juice to taste

*Rinse all ingredients thoroughly, except tomatoes and chilis. Can substitute canned for frozen or pre-cooked beans.

Desserts!

Judi's Cherry Almond Sweet Potato Milkshake

1. In a blender add: Ice cubes, vanilla, 1T. almond butter, 1 cup plant milk (preferably low-calorie), pinch of salt. Blend well.
2. Add fresh pitted cherries, blend, then slowly add in pre-baked sweet potatoes until you reach desired consistency of your milkshake.
 - ➔ You can warm on stovetop after blending to create a warm pudding-like dessert!
 - ➔ Also, change the ingredients to make a peanut butter chocolate version!

Creamy Strawberry Tofu Freeze

- 1 12-ounce block of extra firm silken tofu
 - ½ cup chilled orange juice (fresh squeezed- not processed)
 - ¼ cup of Sucanat (type of cane sugar)
 - ½ teaspoon vanilla
 - 1 ½ pounds whole frozen strawberries, partially thawed
1. Place tofu in a blender or food processor
 2. Pulse until smooth, gradually adding orange juice and vanilla
 3. Add Sucanat and a few strawberries; blend
 4. Continue adding strawberries a few at a time, stopping to scrape blender sides
 5. Process until very smooth
 6. Serve immediately as a milkshake, or freeze for a custard-like dessert

My Grocery Store Finds!

- Giant Eagle
 - *Maple Grove Farms FF* dressings. Some flavors I found: FF Greek, FF Balsamic, FF Raspberry, FF Honey Dijon. Not all are FF – Buyer beware! Read labels!
 - *Skinny Pasta* made from *Konjac*, a tuber that grows underground in Asia.
 - *G. Hughes Sugar Free BBQ Sauce* (also online). A possible objectionable ingredient is sucralose; it's been linked to migraines and insulin resistance due to destruction of the gut microbiome.
 - *Dr McDougall's* line of products with no objectionable ingredients.
 - Box soup that's is very low in fat, but does include minimal oil.
 - *Little Green Sprouts Organics*. The few I checked had no added sauces or oils! Score!
 - New section of all types of riced veggies, make sure to read labels. Some have added flavorings, seasonings and sauces which are not healthy!
 - *Birdseye Steamfresh* has pre-cooked whole grain brown rice located in the freezer section. Also have an oil free version with veggies added!
 - Pre-baked tofu at the Murrysville location.
- Wal-Mart:
 - New section of a brand called, *Gardein* – this is vegan junk food! Avoid!
 - *Organic Brown Jasmine* pre-cooked rice in the rice section with no objectionable ingredients.
 - *Seeds of Change* is mixture of pre-cooked quinoa, brown and red rice with flaxseed and all ingredients are organic. There is sunflower oil added to keep from sticking, but very low in fat. Another flavor is quinoa with brown rice and garlic
 - *Earthly Choice* – pre-made bowls that just need 60 seconds in the microwave. They have 3 flavors, but the downside is sodium and a little oil, but better than other options I've seen on the market.
 - *Loma Linda Foods* – Buyer beware – a lot of oils are added in to maintain shelf life freshness
- Aldi's:
 - Oil free marinara, called *Simply Nature Organic!* It's great to use as a base to build off of.
 - *Simply Nature shredded wheat* with no added sugars or GMO's
- *Grape Nuts* are also a good source of fiber and make for nice fulfilling breakfast or snack
- Some store-name Bran Flakes are not too bad, just watch for added sugars – Giant Eagle brand is 7g of added sugar per cup.

Quick Tips for Success!

- Pre-bake starches like potatoes. For a family of two I cook 12 at a time, when I get down to 3 or 4, we throw in another batch. This is a go-to food that will help with satiety. And don't forget, along with them you can throw in a few sweet potatoes for dessert!
- Do the same with grains and beans – Keep your fridge stocked with pre-cooked grains and beans so you only have to use the convenient canned foods on occasion
- Make tomorrow night's supper while eating tonight's supper!
- Make huge salads – they will often keep for 3-4 days
- Pita pockets stuffed with your favorite vegetables and topped with a no-oil dressing.
- Cooked kale with marinara sauce or top with Mexican or Italian flavored tomatoes – great side dish
- Cooked brown rice, black beans, and salsa served over a bed of greens.
- Buy tools that will make this easier for you – prices are coming down on a lot of these items, I suggest stand-alone equipment if you are just getting started. The all-in-ones are nice, but you can't multi-task with those. As you build your cooking inventory, you can add more all-in-ones. Some suggestions:
 - Microwave steamer
 - Pressure cooker
 - Toaster oven
 - High speed blender
 - Food processor
 - Air fryer
- Multitask - pick items and plan on which piece of equipment you're going to cook it in. I look at my *Meal in Bowl* list and choose from each category, then match it to my equipment. Example:
 - Protein/bean was pre-cooked or use canned, but rinse
 - Starch was pre-cooked and leftover from the night before
 - Put rutabaga in pressure cooker
 - Steamed greens in microwave
 - Boil broccoli on stovetop (or steam in microwave). I can have a big meal done in under 15 min.
- Buy cookbooks that match your skill level, complicated cookbooks can be frustrating & discouraging.
- Make a big batch of quinoa or basmati brown rice
 - Use plant milk and fruit for a quick and easy breakfast
 - Then spice and season for a dinner or side dish later
 - Learn and experiment with spices and combinations – use what you learn in cookbooks and apply it to your own dishes.
- Turn leftover hummus into pasta sauce by adding a little plant milk and fresh basil or other herbs!

Last but not least.... *Find your tribe – surround yourself with like-minded people!*

Questions or more information please e-mail me: judicarvell@gmail.com

Calorie Counting, Measuring, and Recording Food Intake

Pamela A. Popper, President Wellness Forum Health

Many people find it difficult to let go of habits that are counter-productive, such as counting calories and fat grams and other nutrients in food. It's a fruitless strategy for many reasons, the most important of which is that no one can do it accurately. For example, today for lunch I had a large salad and a bowl of vegetable biryani. How many calories did I consume? I have no idea. The only way to find out would have been to weigh and measure the salad ingredients before I put them in the bowl, measure the dressing as I added it (at 7.5 calories per Tablespoon, who cares?), and separate out the rice, green beans, peas and other foods in the biryani and weigh them too. Then I could have entered data for my meal into an online program and looked at the nutrient values of what I was about to consume. Most people, including me, do not have time for this. I seldom meet people who make the time to do this who have benefited from this type of tracking.

But wait, you might be thinking, Pam must be calculating calories if she knows the calorie content of the dressing. I do pay attention to calories and fat, but I do it differently – as I'm purchasing foods, rather than as I'm eating them or afterwards.

My deliberation about nutrient values in foods takes place while *shopping* for them. I've made a commitment to a particular eating pattern that is low in fat, low in calories and high in fiber, and I shop for foods that are in compliance with this dietary pattern.

Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes are calorie-dilute and there is no need to count and measure. At 100 calories per pound, it's hard to overeat vegetables from a calorie standpoint. Cooked beans have between 10 and 15 grams of fiber per cup – hard to overeat these without exploding. I don't purchase avocados and nuts because I only eat those foods when they are part of a recipe or served in a prepared dish. I don't purchase things like non-dairy cheeses and ice creams, cookies, chocolate, etc. because these are treats for special occasions. I only purchase foods that are "on plan" and then those are the only things I have to eat at home.

I do read the labels on packaged foods in order to keep myself out of trouble. One of my favorite low-fat dressings has 7.5 calories per tablespoon, so if I drink the whole bottle I will only be consuming 120 calories.

I sometimes like to munch on salty foods, such as crackers and hummus. It's important to read labels in order to purchase crackers that will not cause me to over-consume calories. For example, for one national brand, a serving is defined as 37 crackers, with each serving containing only 110 calories and one gram of fat. If I lose all control one day and eat 74 crackers and an entire container of fat-free hummus I will only have consumed 390 calories and two grams of fat.

A not-so-good choice would be another national brand of crackers which defines a serving as 5 crackers, with each serving containing 70 calories and five grams of fat. Combine these crackers with a container of full-fat hummus and my calorie intake for this same munching episode would be:

Crackers	1,036 calories; 74 grams of fat
<u>Hummus</u>	<u>700 calories; 50 grams of fat [i]</u>
Total	1,736 calories; 124 grams of fat

I do not buy crackers or hummus such as those in the second example EVER.

Here's my point. Pay attention when you are shopping for food and eating a healthy diet is easy. If your environment at home is set up correctly, there is no need to count, weigh, measure, and enter food intake into data bases and tracking systems. Good choices have already made – at the grocery store - and all you have to do is prepare the food, eat and enjoy it!