

Bev's Bites ProPoints Vol2. Recipes I've cooked.

All these recipes are easy to cook because I have cooked them, I don't do difficult!

Baby herb and cheese scones

Makes 26 - 1pp each (total 47pp) takes 20mins

225g (8oz) self raising flour
1tsp salt
40g (1 1/2oz) low fat spread
1tsp dried herbs (oregano, marjoram or mixed herbs)
50g (1 3/4oz) half mature Cheddar cheese, grated
1/2 teaspoon mustard powder
150ml (5floz) skimmed milk

Preheat the oven to gas 7/220oC/fan oven 200. Line a baking tray with baking parchment. Sift the flour into a large bowl and mix in the salt. Add the low fat spread and rub with your fingertips until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Stir in the herbs, cheese and mustard. Make a well in the centre and gradually stir in all but 2 tbsps of the milk. Turn out onto a floured surface. Knead quickly and lightly until smooth. Press out the dough gently, with the palms of your hands, to about 1cm (1/2 inch) thick. Cut into rounds about 3cm (1 1/4inches) in diameter. Place on the prepared baking tray. Press together the trimmings and repeat the rolling and cutting process until the dough is used up.

Brush the scones with the reserved milk and bake for 12-15 minutes, until risen and golden. Cool on a rack.

Corned beef and sweetcorn hash

Serves 4 = 13pp each

Takes 10 Minutes to make, 25 Minutes to cook
Replace the tinned sweetcorn with frozen peas, if you like.

2½ tbsp olive oil
1 large red onion, sliced into thin wedges
Knob of butter
400g waxy potatoes (such as charlotte), cut into 2cm chunks
1 tsp chilli flakes
2 tsp dried thyme or 2 or 3 sprigs of fresh
300g tin corned beef, cut into chunks
120g tin sweetcorn, drained and rinsed
4 large free-range eggs

Parboil potatoes for about 6-8 minutes. At the same time, add 1 tbsp of the oil to a large frying pan and gently fry the onion over a low heat for 6 minutes to soften. Remove to a bowl and set aside.

Add another splash of oil and the butter to the pan, increase the heat to medium-high and fry the potatoes for 10 minutes until beginning to crisp and turn golden. Stir in the chilli flakes and dried thyme, fry for another minute or so, then add the corned beef. Season Continue frying the corned beef, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes until starting to crisp. Stir in the sweetcorn and return the cooked onion to the pan. Cook for a couple more minutes to warm through. Meanwhile, heat the remaining olive oil in another large frying pan, crack the eggs into the pan and fry until the white has just set. Serve the corned beef and sweetcorn hash on warmed plates and top each serving with a fried egg.

Savoury red pepper and basil cheesecake

27 Pro Points per recipe

takes 35 minutes to prepare, 20 minutes to cook + 10 minutes cooling.

Serves 6 - 5pp each, or serves 4 – 7pp each, Freezeable

For the pastry:

100 g (3 1/2 oz) plain white flour plus 2-3 teaspoons for rolling

1 tablespoon cornflour

50 g (1 3/4 oz) polyunsaturated margarine

a pinch of salt

For the filling:

3 red peppers, de-seeded and halved

350g (12oz) low fat plain cottage cheese

2 eggs

2 tablespoons torn fresh basil

salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. To make the pastry, mix the flour and cornflour together in a bowl. Rub in the margarine with your fingertips, under the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add the salt and then stir in enough cold water to make a soft dough.
2. Preheat the oven to Gas Mark 5/ 190°C/fan oven 170°C. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pastry so it is big enough to line the base and sides of a 20 cm (8 inch) fluted loose-bottomed flan tin.
3. Lift the pastry into the tin and prick the base with a fork. Line with non-stick baking parchment and baking beans. Bake blind for 10 minutes. Remove the paper and the beans and return the pastry to the oven for 10 minutes.

4. Meanwhile, grill the peppers under a high heat, skin side up until the skins blacken and blister. Transfer the peppers to polythene bag and seal. When they are cool enough to handle, peel off the skins and roughly chop the flesh.

5. Place the peppers, cottage cheese, eggs, basil and seasoning in a food processor and blend until smooth. Remove the pastry flan case from the oven and spoon in the pepper filling.

6. Return the flan to the oven for 20 minutes, until the filling has set and is firm to the touch. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before slicing into wedges to serve.

Tip: if you don't have a food processor, chop the red pepper very finely and push the cottage cheese through a sieve. Mix them together with the eggs, seasoning and basil as in step 5 before spooning into the flan case.

Butternut Squash Scrumptious

Serves 4, 4pp each

Ingredients

1 butternut squash, peeled & diced into 2cm cubes

2 onion diced

70g diced pancetta

3/4 teaspoon smoked paprika

30g chorizo sausage, sliced

3 tablespoons sherry

125 ml Water

75g Saint Agur blue cheese

Add onion and pancetta to a large frying pan and cook for a few minutes, then add chorizo followed by paprika. Next add sherry & water, cover and cook for 20 minutes or until squash is cooked. Break the cheese into pieces and mix into the pan, serve.

Chicken hot pot

Once the prep's done, this almost takes care of itself

Serves 6 – 18pp per portion

Ready in 1 hr 45 mins

2 tbsp olive oil (8pp)

12 free-range organic chicken thighs, on bone (63pp)

1 onion, peeled and sliced

2 sticks celery, sliced on the diagonal

few sprigs thyme, leaves removed

150ml white wine (4pp)

100ml chicken stock

5tbsp double cream (11pp)

800g potatoes, peeled and sliced (16pp)

25g butter, melted (5pp)

1 Heat the oven to Mark 5/ 190°C Heat the olive oil in a shallow casserole pan. Brown the chicken thighs on all sides, then remove to a plate and add the onion, celery and thyme to the pan. Season and cook gently for 5 mins.

2 Put the chicken back in the casserole with the veg, adding the wine and stock. Allow to bubble for 5 mins, then swirl in the cream, making sure the chicken is covered in the liquid. Arrange the potato slices on top. Brush with the melted butter, with foil and bake in the oven for 1 hr. Uncover and bake for a further 30 mins until the potatoes are soft and golden.

Tip – if you don't want to open a new bottle of wine for this recipe, swap for cider, sherry, vodka or even dry martini.

Chicken with 40 cloves of garlic

Serves 4, 13pp each

2 tbsp regular olive oil

8 chicken thighs (with skin on and bone in), preferably organic

1 bunch (about 6) spring onions

small bunch fresh thyme

40 garlic cloves (approx 3-4 bulbs), unpeeled

2 tbsp dry white wine

1½ tsp sea salt flakes or ¾ tsp pouring salt

good grinding pepper

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

Heat the oil on the hob over a high heat in a wide, shallow, ovenproof and flameproof casserole (that will ultimately fit all the chicken in one layer, and that has a lid). Sear the chicken, skin-side down. This may take two batches, so transfer the browned pieces to a bowl as you go. Once the chicken pieces are seared, transfer them all to the bowl.

Finely slice the spring onions, put them into the casserole and quickly stir-fry them with the leaves torn from a few sprigs of thyme. Put 20 of the unpeeled cloves of garlic (papery excess removed) into the casserole, top with the chicken pieces, skin-side up, then cover with the remaining 20 cloves of garlic.

Add the vermouth (or white wine) to any oily chicken juices left in the bowl. Swill it around and pour this into the casserole. Sprinkle with the salt, grind over the pepper, and add a few more sprigs of thyme. Put on the lid and cook in the oven for 1½ hours. I must remember to keep track of the dishes I cook from now on!

Classic Spaghetti Bolognese

Serves: 6 (13pp each)

2 tbsp vegetable oil (8pp)

3 medium onions, finely chopped

200 g (7 oz) pack smoked back bacon, diced (12pp)

3 cloves garlic, crushed

1 kg (4 1/2 cups) 35 oz frozen beef mince (45pp)

250 g (2 cups) 9 oz button mushrooms, sliced

400 ml (14 fl oz) red wine (10pp)

750 g (1 3/4 lb) jar of passata (alternatively use 2 x 400 g (14 oz) can chopped tomatoes)

250 ml (9 fl oz) beef stock (either fresh or made up from a stock cube)

1 tbsp thyme, finely chopped

4 tbsp tomato puree

salt and freshly ground black pepper

10 g (1/4 oz) finely chopped basil

10 g (1/4 oz) finely chopped parsley

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan and gently fry the onions, bacon and garlic for 5 minutes.

2. Add the mince and cook until brown, this will take about 5 minutes.

3. Add the mushrooms, red wine, chopped tomatoes, passata, stock, thyme and tomato puree. Bring to the boil. Season, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

4. Add the basil and parsley. Serve with Parmesan cheese and cooked spaghetti.

Home-Made Baked Beans,

Serves 2 large portions at 6pp each, 3 at 4pp, 4 at 3pp.

Depends what you're serving it with.

410g / 14 1/2 oz haricot beans (can) (7pp)

2 tsp olive oil (3pp)

1 small onion, finely chopped

3 stalks celery, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tbsp agave syrup (2pp)

400g / 14 oz chopped tomatoes (can)

1 tbsp tomato purée

1/2 tsp rosemary

Empty the contents of the haricot beans' can into a saucepan. Heat gently for 5 mins, stirring frequently. Drain well.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large saucepan and fry the onion, celery and garlic for 4 mins, or until the onion starts to soften.

Stir in the agave syrup, chopped tomatoes and tomato purée. Simmer for 2 mins. Then stir in the cooked haricot beans and rosemary. Return to the boil and then simmer for about 8 mins, or until all vegetables are soft and piping hot.

Banana Ice

serves 2, 0pp

Prep time: 7 hours freezing time

Mash 2 ripe bananas. Transfer to a small plastic container. Cover and place in the freezer for several hours. Allow to stand at room temperature for 10 minutes before serving. Serve

Indian-spiced potatoes and peas

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 25 minutes

Serves 5, 5pp each

500g waxy potatoes, such as charlotte
2½cm fresh root ginger, chopped
6 garlic cloves, chopped
2 tbsp sunflower oil
1 onion, roughly chopped
1 tsp turmeric
4 tomatoes, roughly chopped
1½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp cayenne pepper
150g frozen peas
10g fresh coriander, chopped

1. Cook the unpeeled potatoes in boiling water until tender. Drain and, once cool enough to handle, cut into chunks.
2. Work the ginger and garlic to a paste in a mortar and pestle or a small food processor. Add 3 tbsp water and stir.
3. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a deep frying pan add the potatoes and onion. Cook over a medium heat for 5-6 minutes until golden, then add the turmeric and cook for another 2 minutes. Add the remaining 1 tbsp oil and the chopped tomatoes; cook for about 5 minutes until the tomatoes are soft, stirring from time to time. Stir in the garlic and ginger paste, then add the cumin and cayenne pepper; season.
4. Cook for 2 minutes, then add the peas and 150ml water. Simmer for 4–5 minutes until thickened. Stir in the coriander and serve with plain rice and low-fat plain yogurt on the side.

Leftover Roast Chicken Curry

Serves 2, 7pp each

300g leftover chicken
One bag spinach de-stalked and washed
400g tin tinned tomatoes
1 onions chopped
2 garlic cloves chopped small
thumb ginger peeled and chopped small
¾ or 1 fresh red chilli chopped small
1 tspn garam marsala
½ tsp crushed black pepper corns
½ tsp fenugreek
handful fresh coriander
300 ml chicken stock
2 tbsp plain yoghurt
1 tbsp oil

Fry the onions until soft Add the garlic, chilli and ginger, and fry until golden

Add garam marsala, crushed black pepper corns and fenugreek and fry for one minute. Add just-washed leaves of spinach, put lid for a few minutes to wilt leaves

Add left-over chicken, tomatoes and chicken stock. Simmer for 20 minutes, or more if you want – reduce to consistency you fancy. Add coriander and yogurt, and stir in.

Or instead of the curry why not make burgers with them, you could even feed these the kids just omit the chilli if they're not keen on the spicy.

Chicken lickin'

Serves 2, 12pp each,
or if you just want to cook the chicken it's 4pp each chicken piece

Ingredients:

1 egg white
10g / ½ oz parmesan, finely grated
280g / 10 oz chicken breasts, skinless and boneless
200g / 7 oz new potatoes, cut into small cubes
50g / 1 ¾ oz frozen peas
100g / 3 ½ oz frozen broad beans
100g / 3 ½ oz frozen soya beans
50g / 1 ¾ oz spinach
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tbsp olive oil

(1) Preheat the grill to medium. Beat the egg white in a bowl and tip the parmesan onto a plate. (2) Dip the chicken first in the egg white, then in the cheese. Then grill for 10 mins, or until browned and crisp, turning halfway. (3) Meanwhile, boil the potato for 10 mins, or until softened. Add the peas, broad beans and soya beans for the final 3 mins, then drain. Toss the vegetables with the spinach, white wine vinegar and oil. (4) Serve the parmesan chicken on top of the potato, peas, beans and spinach.

Real Chicken Nuggets

Serves 4, 10pp per serving
1 egg
½ a teaspoon garlic powder
225g bread brown or white
125ml milk
900g diced chicken
¼ teaspoon paprika

First, preheat the oven to gas mark 6/200 °C. Toast bread until a light brown. Then break up into small pieces, crust too. Reduce to

fine crumbs in the food processor. Add garlic powder and paprika, and whizz again. Place the breadcrumbs in a large plastic bag or a deep tray. Beat the egg in a large bowl with the milk, and add the diced chicken, in batches if necessary. Transfer the chicken pieces to the bag or tray of breadcrumbs and toss to coat evenly. Arrange the crumbed chicken on a lightly greased baking sheet, and bake in a preheated oven for approximately 10 mins until browned and crisped, and cooked through.

Onion and blue cheese gratin

Serves 4, 8pp each

8 medium red onions, peeled, quartered, and separated
3 pumps from WW oil spray (3pp)
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper
16 sprigs fresh thyme, leaves picked
6 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
300ml white wine (7pp)
8 tablespoons half fat crème fraîche (11pp)
100g blue cheese, broken up (11pp)
15g (1tbsp) parmesan, grated (1pp)

Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas 6. Break the onion quarters apart to give you little 'petals'. Place these in a A4 sized dish or earthenware oven dish. Drizzle with a tbsp olive oil and a pinch of salt and pepper, and toss in your thyme and garlic. Mix up well, add your white wine, cover with a double layer of tinfoil, wrap tightly and place in the preheated oven. Bake for 45 minutes, then remove the dish from the oven, take the tinfoil off and pop the dish back in the oven for 15 mins to start caramelizing. Once the onion is looking lightly golden, stir in your crème fraîche and sprinkle over your gruyere and parmesan. Turn the oven down to 180°C/350°F/gas 4 and let the gratin tick away for about 15 minutes or until golden and gorgeous. You can eat this straight away, or cool it down and flash it under the grill later.

Mustard Chicken with leeks

Serves 4, total 28pp, 8pp each

a few sprigs of fresh rosemary

4 x180g chicken breasts, skin off (18pp)

4 teaspoons Colman's mustard powder

3 baby leeks or 1 large leek (trimmed, halved lengthways & finely sliced)

4 cloves of garlic (crushed)

100ml White Wine (2pp)

75ml single cream (4pp)

1 heaped teaspoon wholegrain mustard

Tbsp olive oil = (4pp) (best to use the Weight Watcher oil spray for maximum coverage & you'll save PP)

Turn the heat under the trying pan up to medium. Pick and finely chop the leaves from the rosemary sprigs and sprinkle them into the pack of chicken. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of mustard powder over each breast, then season and drizzle some olive oil over the chicken and into the frying pan. Massage and rub these flavours all over the meat. Put the chicken breasts in the pan, skin side down. Wash your hands well. Use a fish slice to press down on the chicken to help it cook. It should take around 18 minutes in total – mine took longer as they were big breasts!.

Add leeks to one side of pan. Add garlic to pan of chicken, flip the chicken breasts, then press down again. Stir in the leeks and the white wine.

Check the chicken is cooked through, and then pour 75ml of cream into the frying pan. Transfer the chicken breasts to a board and slice into uneven pieces. Stir 1-heaped teaspoon of wholegrain

mustard into the sauce, then taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. Spoon the sauce onto the plates and put the sliced chicken on top. Serve.

Pan Roast Potatoes

24pp total, Serves 4 at 6pp per serving

Prep Time: 5 minutes, Cooking Time: 25 minutes, Serves: 3

450g floury potato (10pp) (100g-150g potatoes per person)

30g unsalted butter (6pp) or use low fat for less pp

2 tablespoons olive oil (8pp)

1 tablespoon of chopped chives (optional)

Peel the potatoes and chop them into roughly 2cm-3cm pieces. Put the oil and butter into a frying pan over a low heat then, when the butter is bubbling, put in the potatoes and mix them around to coat them in the oil.

Cook them for about 25 minutes turning them over every 5-10 minutes. They are cooked when a knife easily goes through them and they feel like a cooked roast potato.

Drain off any fat left in the pan

Put them onto the serving dish, sprinkle over the chives and serve.

Savoury mini muffins

Makes 16 - 1pp each (total 22pp) or have 2 for 3pp
or why not make 11 for 2pp each.

Takes 20mins (vegetarian, freezable)

150g (5 1/2oz) self raising flour

1tsp baking powder

2tsp chopped fresh thyme

4 x 15g sundried tomatoes, reconstituted according to packet
instructions

1 egg

1 egg White

40g (1 1/2oz) low fat spread, melted

Salt & ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to gas 6/200°C/fan 180 °C. Put paper cases on a baking tray. Sift the flour & baking powder into a large bowl. Stir in the thyme & season. Drain the tomatoes, reserving 3 tablespoons of the soaking liquid, & dry them. Cut into small pieces & stir into the flour. Beat together the egg & egg white. Add the low fat spread & reserved soaking liquid & then add this to the flour mix quickly. Do not beat. Spoon the mixture into the cases. Bake for 8-10 minutes bit longer if making 11 until risen and golden. Serve warm or cold.

Red Onion and Stilton

(12pp total)

5 medium red onions, sliced

2 tbsp cranberry sauce

350ml hot vegetable stock (made with 2 oxo cubes)

2 tbsp balsamic vinegar

80g Stilton

Place onions in a non-stick frying pan with the cranberry sauce and stock. Season. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the lid and increase the heat. Add the balsamic and cook for a further 10 minutes or until all the liquid has evaporated. Remove from the heat and cool completely.

Use this as a topping for roasted butternut squash, just cook the squash and top with the mixture and crumble the Stilton on top and bake for another 15 minutes.

Alternatively, use on top of a jacket potato or maybe mix in some pasta.

You can top a 375g ready-rolled piece of puff pastry with it to make a tart for 7pp a portion, serves 8. just leave a border of about 1cm and spread the mixture inside, bake for 15-20m on gas mark 6/200°C

Really filling Brunch Burgers

(total 49pp, serves 4 @ 12pp each)

3 x 250g medium baking potatoes (16pp)

3 shallots, finely chopped

1 leek, finely sliced

2tbsp sunflower oil (6pp)

6 tomatoes, halved horizontally

grating of nutmeg

4 free-range eggs, fried, to serve (7pp)

1tbsp wholegrain mustard (1pp)

150g extra mature Cheddar, grated (17pp)

1 large onion, finely sliced

salad, to serve

Pierce the potatoes and microwave for 15 mins, or until soft. Leave to cool, scoop out flesh into a bowl and mash.

Meanwhile, fry the leek and shallots in 1 tbsp of the oil until golden. Stir into the potato with nutmeg, mustard and 100g of Cheddar; season. Shape into 4 burgers, pressing a quarter of remaining cheese into the centre of each.

Fry the onion in remaining oil until browned. Grill the burgers and tomatoes, cut side up, on a medium heat on a baking tray, for 8-10 mins, turning burgers once.

Serve each burger with grilled tomatoes, onions, a fried egg and some salad.

Creamy mushrooms one pan

Serves 4, ready in 20m (5pp each, total 18pp)

50g butter

750g mixed mushrooms, thickly chopped

1 bunch spring onions, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely sliced

2tsp paprika

Grating of fresh nutmeg

3tbsp Brandy or red wine

150g half fat sour cream

1/2 small bunch flat leaf parsley, roughly chopped

In a large frying pan, melt a quarter of the butter and fry a third of the mushrooms until golden brown. Transfer to a plate and repeat until all the mushrooms are cooked.

Add remaining butter, spring onion, garlic, paprika and a little nutmeg to the pan and cook for a few mins until soft n

Return mushrooms with any juices, turn up the heat and add the brandy (or wine). Cook off for a minute, season with salt and pepper, then stir in the soured cream and parsley. Add a dash of boiling water if it's too thick. Heat through gently and serve.

Can top jacket potato or toast for extra pp or a roasted butternut squash for zero pp.

Spicy parsnip soup

total 34pp serves 4 (9pp each)

2tbsp olive oil (8pp)

2 onions, chopped

1kg parsnips, peeled & diced into 3cm cubes (19pp)

1tbsp curry paste (4pp)

1 ½ litres hot vegetable stock

100g low fat soft cheese (3pp)

freshly ground black pepper

chopped flat leaf parsley, to garnish.

Heat the oil in large saucepan, add the onions and cook for 1-2m until softened. Add parsnips & cook, covered, over low heat for 5m with the lid on, to sweat the vegetables.

Stir in curry paste and cook for a minute and then add the hot stock. Cover and simmer for 20-25m until parsnips are soft. Add ¾ of the low fat soft cheese to the soup and blend until smooth. Season to taste & serve with remaining soft cheese stirred into soup, garnish with fresh parsley.

Savoury bread pudding

Prep 5mins, ready in 30 minutes, Serves 1, 9pp

Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6. Whisk together 100ml skimmed milk, 1 egg, 2 tsp wholegrain mustard and 1 tbsp chopped fresh mixed herbs, such as parsley, chives or coriander. Break a small slice of bread into 1cm chunks and stir it into the milk mixture, along with 35g grated cheese. Spoon into an individual sized ovenproof dish and bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and crunchy on the top.

Roasted garlic mash

serves 4, 5pp each

Prep 15mins, total time 1hr 30m

4 x 250g jacket potatoes (20pp)

4 cloves garlic

2 sprigs rosemary

Sea salt

Preheat oven to 200oC, fan oven 180oC, gas mark 6. Prick the potatoes all over with a fork and place in an ovenproof sig. Sprinkle with sea salt - this draws out the moisture and gives you a full flavoured mash.

Add the whole, unreeled garlic and some rosemary. Bake in oven for about an hour or until tender. Remove the garlic cloves as soon as they're soft enough to squeeze; approximately 45-50 mins. Cut the cooked potatoes in half and scoop out the potato from the skins. Press the potato through potato ricer or mash. Squeeze the garlic cloves from their skins and mash them into the potato. If needed loosen with a little water. Serve either as is or put back into potato skins.

African drumsticks

Serves 4 at 5pp each

80ml Worcestershire sauce

1 teaspoon ground ginger

4 X 15ml tablespoons tomato ketchup

1 X 15ml tablespoon apricot jam

1 onion, peeled and finely chopped

8 chicken drumsticks

2 teaspoons English mustard powder, or to taste

1 X 15ml tablespoon garlic oil

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Mix the Worcestershire sauce, tomato ketchup, mustard powder, ground ginger apricot jam and chopped onion in a shallow dish

Dunk the drumsticks in this marinade to coat them all over. (if it helps, you could at this stage leave them to marinate, covered in the fridge overnight) put the oil into a smallish roasting tin or ovenproof dish, in which the drumsticks will fit snugly, and tip the tin about so that the oil more or less covers the base. Arrange the drumsticks in the tin and pour over them any remaining marinade.

Cook for 45 minutes to 1 hour, basting once or twice: the deeper the dish, the longer the drumsticks will take to colour and cook through.

The chicken can be marinated overnight in a covered bowl in fridge.

Red cabbage in balsamic vinegar

serves 4, 4pp each

1 red cabbage

1tbsp olive oil (4pp)

125ml balsamic vinegar

100g caster sugar (11pp)

Cut the cabbage into quarters and remove and discard the core. Shred the cabbage and place in a heavy based pan or casserole over a low heat with the oil, vinegar, sugar and 125ml water. Bring to simmering point, then cover and cook over a low heat for about an hour, stirring now and then until the cabbage is tender. Season to taste.

Basic Pizza Dough – 27pp total, serves 2, 13pp per serving

Pizza dough is made in almost the same way as white bread – by hand or using a food processor, except that you add olive oil and a little sugar to the flour mixture and there isn't a second rising. You might consider making double the quantity and freezing half to make another pizza at a later stage. Just pop the dough, after knocking out the air, into a polythene bag, seal and freeze.

Makes a 10 inch (25.5 cm) base pizza

6 oz (175 g) plain white soft flour (17pp)

1 level teaspoon salt

1 level teaspoon easy-blend dried yeast

½ level teaspoon golden caster sugar

1 tablespoon olive oil (4pp)

To roll out:

2-3 level tablespoons polenta (cornmeal) (5pp)

Pre-heat the oven to its lowest setting.

Method

Begin by warming the flour slightly in the oven for about 10 minutes, then turn the oven off.

Sift the flour, salt, yeast and sugar into a bowl and make a well in the centre of the mixture, then add the olive oil and pour in 4 fl oz (120 ml) hand-hot water. Now mix to a dough, starting off with a wooden spoon and using your hands in the final stages of mixing. Wipe the bowl clean with the dough, adding a spot more water if there are any dry bits left, and transfer it to a flat work surface (there shouldn't be any need to flour this).

Knead the dough for 3 minutes or until it develops a sheen and blisters under the surface (it should also be springy and elastic). You can now either leave the dough on the surface covered by the upturned bowl or transfer the dough to a clean bowl and cover it with clingfilm that has been lightly oiled on the side that is facing the

dough. Leave it until it looks as though it has doubled in bulk, which will be about an hour at room temperature.

Having made the dough and left it to rise, pre-heat the oven to gas mark 8, 450°F (230°C), along with the pizza stone or baking sheet.

The next stage is to tip the dough back on to a work surface that has been sprinkled generously with polenta to prevent it from sticking. Knock all the air out of the dough and knead it for a couple of seconds to begin shaping it into a ball. Then dust your rolling pin with polenta and roll the dough out to a circle that is approximately 10 inches (25.5 cm) in diameter. Then finish stretching it out with your hands, working from the centre and using the flat of your fingers to push the dough out; it doesn't need to be a perfect round, but you want it to be a fairly thin-based pizza, with slightly raised edges.

Using a thick oven glove, very carefully lift the baking sheet or pizza stone out of the oven and sprinkle it with polenta. Now carefully lift the pizza dough on to the stone or baking sheet and cover the pizza with your choice of filling, taking it up to the raised edge. Bake the pizza on a high shelf for 10-12 minutes, until the crust is golden brown.

My beef and ale casserole

prep time 30 mins, cooking time over 2 hours

Serves 6, 8pp each

2 tbsp vegetable oil (8pp)
1kg/2lb 3oz braising steak, cut large pieces (35pp)
2 sticks celery
12 Chantenay carrots, or 2 carrots
6 shallots or 2 large onions
3 cloves garlic (plus
1 heaped tsp tomato purée
1 tbsp plain flour (2pp)
salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ litre/17fl oz real ale or bitter (6pp)
200ml/7fl oz dark beef stock
1 bulb of garlic, broken into cloves but NOT peeled just remove papery outer

Preheat the oven to 160C/320F/Gas 2. Heat a large casserole on the hob. Add some of the vegetable oil and, when hot, add some of the beef in a single layer and cook over a high heat until browned. When browned, remove the beef to a bowl, before adding the next batch and browning. Don't crowd the pan. Remove the last batch of meat and place in a bowl.

Roughly chop the celery. Add the last bit of oil to the casserole and add the celery. Roughly chop the carrots and onions and add to the casserole. Slice the garlic and add to the casserole. Stir all the vegetables thoroughly and allow them to brown gently, scraping up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan as you go. Once the vegetables are coloured, add the tomato purée and stir. Add the flour and stir together well until the flour is incorporated. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Throw in the whole UNPEELED garlic cloves, when cooked these aren't strong like peeled garlic they are just soft tasty deliciousness ;)

Add the ale to the casserole, followed by the beef stock. Bring up to the simmer and return the browned beef to the casserole.

Cover the casserole with a lid and place in the preheated oven to cook for 2½-3 hours, or until cooked, when the beef is done, it should fall apart to the touch.

Serve with mash or chips or bread for extra ProPoints.

Sweet and Sour Turkey

Serves 4 at 4pp

2 teaspoons Oil, Sunflower
350 g Turkey, Breast, Skinless & Boneless, Raw, cut into strips
2 medium Spring Onions, cut into 2.5cm (1 inch) lengths
2 medium Pepper, All Types, 1 red, 1 yellow, de-seeded and sliced
227 g Water Chestnuts, can, drained
350 g Uncle Ben's Oriental Sweet & Sour Cooking Sauce, Light
115 g Pineapple, canned pieces in natural juice, drained
1 pinch Salt, season to taste
1/2 teaspoons Pepper, Black (Whole, Cracked or Ground), season to taste (ground)

Heat the oil in a large, non-stick frying-pan or wok. Add the turkey and stir-fry briskly for 2-3 minutes, until sealed.

Add the spring onions, peppers and water chestnuts and stir-fry for a further 3-4 minutes.

Pour on the sauce and add the pineapple. Mix well, bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 3-4 minutes. Season to taste and serve.

Butternut and Sweet Potato Soup

total 6pp, serves 2 at 3pp each.

200g / 7 oz butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and diced
150g / 5 ¼ oz sweet potato, peeled and diced (4pp)
750ml / 1 ¼ pts vegetable stock (3 vegetable oxo cubes crumbled into 750ml boiling water)
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground nutmeg
2 tbsp low fat fromage frais (2pp) or not low fat for 3pp

Add the butternut squash, sweet potato, stock, cinnamon and nutmeg to a large saucepan. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Pulse the soup in a blender until smooth. Return the blended soup to the saucepan and tip in the fromage frais. Stir to combine and divide between two bowls.

Serve with bread, if you like for additional ProPoints.

Strawberry Salad

1 punnet Strawberries
1 bag rocket
a good glug of Balsamic Vinegar
½ Red Onion
a drizzle extra virgin olive oil (1tbsp = 4pp)
Freshly ground black pepper

Wash & chop your strawberries into quarters, slice your onion into strips. Throw into your salad bowl with the rocket; pour the balsamic vinegar & olive oil over to desired level.

Season to taste with your black pepper. Serve!

Celeriac and Apple Soup

4 servings, zero point

1 medium Onion, chopped
2 vegetable stock cubes (make 1 1/2 pints)
1 teaspoons Curry powder, or paste (optional)
250 g Celeriac, about half a standard size, cut into 1 cm cubes
1 medium Apple peeled, cored and cut into quarters
1 sprig(s) fresh parsley chopped to garnish

Put the onion in a large pan, with enough stock or water to cover and the curry powder or paste, if used. Cover the pan and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the celeriac and the remaining stock, cover and cook for a further 15 minutes. Add the apple and cook for a further 5 minutes, until the apple has collapsed. Either mash the soup with a potato masher or liquidise it in a food processor or liquidiser. Serve sprinkled with parsley.

Zero PP spicy dip

One jar of roasted red peppers in brine, blend to a pulp in food processor. Add the stalks from a bunch of coriander, a clove of garlic and two fresh red chillies (seeds in if you like it really hot, removed if you don't. Season with salt. Add juice of half a lemon.

Blend again until everything is finely blended.

Rib Sticking Stir-Fry

Serves 2, 13pp each

2 tbsp wok oil
300g chicken or turkey breast fillet, cut into 4cm x 0.5cm strips
300g stir-fry packed ready chopped vegetables
60ml soy sauce
60ml Chinese cooking wine
1 x 400g can cannellini beans, drained
1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander or parsley

Heat the oil in a wok, and over a fairly high heat add the chicken or turkey strips and toss them until about to colour.

Once the meat has sealed, add the chopped vegetables and toss around again until they begin to soften, then add the soy sauce and the cooking wine. The soy sauce will help the meat strips bronze beautifully.

Once the heat is back up and sizzling, add the drained beans and toss everything about to mix before tipping onto two plates.

Sprinkle with the herbs and serve straight away.

Scallops & Chorizo

Serves 4, 4pp each

110g chorizo (Slice the chorizo into rounds no thicker than 3mm)
400 small scallops (halve them to make 2 thinner discs if they are very fat)
Juice of ½ lemon
4 x 15ml tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat a heavy-based pan on the hob and, when hot, dry-fry the chorizo round until crisped on either side (the chorizo will give out plenty of its own oil); this should no more than 2 minutes.

Remove the chorizo to a bowl and fry the scallops in the chorizo-oil for 1 minute a side. Return the chorizo to the pan with the scallops, add the lemon juice and let bubble for a few seconds before arranging on a serving plate and sprinkling with lots of parsley.

Roast Chestnut, Lamb and Brussels Sprout Linguine

Serves 2, 14pp each

100g / 4 ¼ oz wholewheat spaghetti (9pp)
10 chestnuts, each top pierced OR buy ready cooked and skip step 2 (5pp)
1 tbsp olive oil (4pp)
200g / 7 oz lamb leg steaks, fat trimmed (10pp)
2 onions, diced
1 garlic clove, crushed
200g / 7 oz Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
200g / 7 oz mushrooms, thinly sliced
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard (1pp)

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C / fan 175°C / 400°F / Gas Mark 6. Cook the spaghetti according to packet instructions and then drain.
2. Roast the chestnuts for 10 mins. Then allow to stand for 2 mins before peeling off their skins.
3. Heat half of the oil in a frying pan and cook the lamb for 6 mins on each side, or for longer if you prefer your steaks well-done. Halfway through cooking the lamb, toss in the onion, garlic, Brussels sprouts and mushrooms. Sauté for the final 4 mins of the lamb's cooking time, or until the vegetables turn golden and tender. Then, once cooked, carve the lamb into thin slices.
4. Meanwhile, combine the red wine vinegar, mustard and remaining oil in a cup.
5. Toss together the spaghetti, vegetables, roasted chestnuts and lamb in a mixing bowl. Tip in the dressing and combine. Then serve up.

Roman Cobbler

Serves 5, 12pp each

For the topping

¼ whole nutmeg, grated
600 ml (1pt) skimmed milk
125g (4oz) fine semolina
75g grated cheese
25g margarine
1 egg, lightly whisked
Salt & black pepper

for the filling;

625g boneless pork shoulder steaks
25g margarine and a little more
1tbsp oil
2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
a small handful of fresh sage leaves, chopped finely or 1 tsp dried sage
125g mushrooms sliced
1tbsp parmesan cheese
Salt & black pepper

Make the topping at least 2 hours in advance, as follows. Add the nutmeg to the milk in a saucepan, together with salt and black pepper. Stir in the semolina. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 3-4 minutes until very thick, stirring all the time. Remove from the heat and add to grated cheese, butter and whisked egg. Return to a low heat and stir for a minute more. Oil a large roasting tin, spread the mixture evenly over the bottom of the tin. Cover with a cloth and leave to get completely cold – in the fridge if possible.

Using a sharp knife, cut the pork into very small pieces and season with salt and pepper. Melt the margarine and the oil in a large frying pan. Stir in the pork pieces and chopped garlic over a medium heat for about 5 minutes until cooked. Add the sage and mushrooms and cook for a further minute or two, stirring the mixture.

Transfer the meat and mushrooms with a slotted spoon into a shallow, ovenproof dish. Bubble the remaining liquid in the pan over a strong heat for a moment or so until reduced and slightly thickened and pour over the meat.

Set the grill on medium heat. Cut the cooled mixture topping into fingers (about 5x2.5cm, 2x1inch) and arrange in an overlapping pattern all over the meat. Dot with margarine, sprinkle generously with grated cheese and put under the grill until a rich golden brown.

Quick Zero ProPoint Home Made Tomato Ketchup

Serves 4

3 tbsp tomato puree
2 teaspoons vinegar
1 teaspoon brown sugar
¼ pint 150ml of boiling water

Turkey Tikka Kebabs

5pp each, serves four, takes 25mins

Barbecue them if you can - or grill them indoors.

500 g Turkey, Breast, Skinless & Boneless, Raw
150 g Yogurt, Low Fat, Plain, natural (as purchased)
2 tablespoons Curry Paste, all types, (tikka masala)
1 tablespoons Lemon Juice
2 slice(s) Cucumber, chunks - roughly chopped
4 medium Tomato, roughly chopped
1/2 large Onion, All Types, (red) thinly sliced
1 individual Chilli, Green or Red, (red) deseeded and sliced
2 tablespoons Coriander, Fresh, chopped fresh
1 pinch Salt
1 teaspoons Pepper, Black (Whole, Cracked or Ground) (ground)
Cut turkey into 2.5 cm (1 inch) chunks. Place in non-metallic bowl.
Add yogurt, curry paste and lemon juice. Mix well, then cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, overnight if possible.
Preheat barbecue or grill. Thread turkey onto skewers. Cook, turning often, for 12 - 15 minutes, until thoroughly cooked.
Meanwhile, mix together remaining ingredients to make salad.
Season, then serve.

Butternut Pasta & stilton

serves 4 (13pp each)

23g blanched almonds (or pinenuts – any nuts really ;)) (4pp)
1 butternut squash peeled and cubed about 2cm square
5 slices streaky bacon (8pp)
3tbsp sherry (2pp)
125ml water
tsp paprika
3 diced onions
ww spray oil x 2 squirts (2pp)
260g papperdelle pasta (or any pasta I guess) (26pp)
100g stilton (or any blue cheese) (11pp)
1 red pepper from a jar (or use fresh and add at same time as butternut squash)

Use a big non stick frying pan with a lid (if you haven't got a lid use a baking tray on top of the pan does the same thing just gets hotter!) Squirt two pumps of WW oil and fry onions until softish, then add streaky bacon and paprika. (about 5 mins total)

Add butternut squash, sherry and water and cook for 20 minutes until squash is cooked (not too soft). After about 15m add the pepper from jar.

In the meantime cook your pasta for as long as it says on packet. Crumble stilton and break up almonds. When pasta cooked, keep a cup of the water to one side, and drain the rest.

Stir this into the squash mixture and add a little of the water if needed to loosen it up a bit. Then add crumbled stilton and almonds, stir and serve.

Pork Ragu

27pp total, 7pp each

500g lean pork tenderloin cut into 2cm cubes. (I used turkey breast pieces – cheaper! And makes the dish 6pp each)

1 onion

low fat cooking spray

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon grated nutmeg

1 star anise

1 tablespoon plain flour

1 red chilli (deseeded and chopped finely)

2cm (3/4 inch) piece of fresh ginger peeled and grated

25g whole blanched almonds

600ml (1 pint) vegetable stock.

1 tablespoon tomato puree

100ml (3 ½ fl oz) reduced fat coconut milk

50g ready to eat dried apricots – halved

salt & freshly ground black pepper

25g packet of fresh coriander, chopped roughly to serve

Serve with mash made with 800g potatoes for additional 4pp each.

Heat a large, lidded heavy based saucepan and spray with low fat cooking spray. Add the pork in batches and cook for 1 minutes on each side until brown. Transfer to a plate and set aside.

Spray the pan again with low fat cooking spray and gently cook the onion for 3-4 minutes until softened. Add the cinnamon, nutmeg, star anise, plain flour, chilli, ginger, almonds and return the pork to the saucepan. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring continuously.

Pour in the vegetable stock, tomato puree and coconut milk. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 35 minutes, stirring from time to time. Stir in the apricots and cook gently for 5 minutes. Check the seasoning, stir in the coriander and serve.

Rapid Ragu

Serves 4, 17pp each

2 tbsp garlic oil

125g cubed pancetta

500g lamb mince

75g caramelised onions (jar)

80ml marsala

400g can of chopped tomatoes

75g green lentils

125ml water

50g grated red Leicester or cheddar

Heat the oil in a wide, medium-sized saucepan, and fry the cubed pancetta until beginning to crisp. Add the lamb, breaking it up with a fork in the bacony pan as it browns. Tip in the caramelized onions, marsala, tomatoes, lentils and water and bring the pan to the boil. Simmer the ragu for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Sprinkle with the cheese before serving.

Sweet Apple & Apricot Pork

Serves 4, 8pp each

4 pork fillets (500g) 18pp
1 red onion, finely chopped
2 small apples
9 dried apricots 4pp
2 tbsp oil 8pp

For the sauce

½ pint pork or vegetable stock (made with 1 stock cube)
1 tbsp golden syrup
1 tsp butter
1 tsp plain flour
2 tsp sage

Wash and finely chop the apples, apricots and onion and remove any excess fat from the pork fillets.

Warm oil and quick fry pork fillets with finely chopped onion, turning once.

Place the pork and onion in a large ovenproof dish and cover with the apples and apricots.

Blend the flour, butter and sage together in a mixing jug to make a smooth paste; add the stock cube, syrup and ½ pint (250ml) boiling water, whisking with a fork or small hand whisk until everything has dissolved.

Pour the sauce over the pork and cover the dish with a lid or sheet of silver foil.

Cook in a moderate oven, gas mark 4, (180oC) for about an hour or until the pork is tender.

Mirin Glazed Salmon

Serves 4, 7pp each

60ml mirin (Japanese sweet rice wine) (or sherry)
50g light brown sugar (5pp)
60ml soy sauce (1pp)
4 x 125g narrow & tall pieces salmon
2 tbsp rice vinegar
1-2 spring onions, halved and shredded into fine strips

Mix the mirin, brown sugar and soy sauce into a shallow dish that will take all 4 pieces of salmon, and marinate the salmon in it for 3 minutes on the first side and 2 minutes on the second. Meanwhile heat a large non-stick frying pan on the hob.

Cook the salmon in the hot, dry pan for 2 minutes and then turn the salmon over, add the marinade and cook for another 2 minutes.

Remove the salmon to whatever plate you're serving it on, add the rice vinegar to the hot pan, and warm through.

Pour the dark, sweet, salty glaze over the salmon and top with the spring onion strips.

Serve with rice or noodles for extra points and maybe some sushi ginger too.

Parma Blue Cheese Chicken Breasts

Serves 4, 7pp each

4 medium Chicken, Breast, Skinless, Raw
50 g Stilton Cheese
8 leaves fresh basil plus extra to garnish
4 thin slices Parma Ham
1 vegetable or chicken stock cube mixed with 300ml boiling water
4 tablespoons Dry white wine
black pepper

Preheat oven to Gas Mark 5/190°C/fan oven 170°C/375°F.

Cut a pocket into each chicken breast using a sharp knife, and place 2 basil leaves in each pocket, then share the cheese equally between them. Close the pockets and wrap each chicken breast in a slice of Parma Ham.

Arrange in a shallow baking dish and add the stock and white wine. Season with some black pepper. Cover with foil and bake for 15 minutes, then remove the foil and bake for a further 20 minutes. Serve garnished with extra basil leaves.

Butternut and Sweet Potato Soup

Serves 2, 2pp each

175g diced butternut squash
175g sweet potato
750ml hot chicken or vegetable stock
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground mace
Pepper
4 tsp buttermilk

Put the diced butternut & sweet potato in a saucepan with the hot chicken or vegetable stock and both spices.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender. Add some pepper to taste.

Puree the soup in a blender and serve in two bowls garnishing each bowl with swirls made with 2 tsp of buttermilk.

Lamb and caramelised onion tagine

Ingredients	Serve 6-8 8 portions = 15pp, 6 portions = 11pp	Serve 3-4 4 portions = 15pp, 3 portions = 11pp
Leg of lamb, diced	1kg	500g
Garlic, separated into cloves	1 head	½ head
Pitted black olives	1 x 350g can, drained (150g)	½ 350g, drained (75g)
Caramelised onions from a jar	100g	50g
Capers	4 tbsp	2 tbsps
Ground Cumin	2 tsp	1 tsp
Ground ginger	2 tsp	1tsp
Red wine	750ml	375ml

Preheat the oven to 150°C/gas mark 2.

Put all the ingredients into a casserole or heavy-based pan, pouring in the wine last and giving everything a good stir.

Bring the pan to a boil, then clamp on the lid and put into the oven for two hours or until the lamb is very tender.

Maple Chicken 'N' Ribs

This recipe is fast but needs leaving overnight or up to two days in the fridge.

Ingredients	qtys	for 6 to 8	For 3 or 4
=		6 = 16pp each 8 = 13pp each	3 = 17pp 4 = 13pp
Pork ribs		12 (24pp)	6 (12pp)
Chicken thighs, skin & bone on		12 (63pp)	6 (31pp)
sharp Apple juice		250ml (3pp)	125ml (1pp)
15ml tbsp maple syrup		4 (4pp)	2 tbsp (2pp)
15ml tbsp vegetable oil		2 (8pp)	1 tbsp (4pp)
15ml tbsp soy sauce		2	1 tbsp
Star anise		2	1
Cinnamon stick, halved		1	½
Cloves garlic, unpeeled		6	3

Put ribs and chicken pieces in a couple of large freezer bags or into a dish.

Add the remaining ingredients squelching everything together well, before sealing the bag or covering the dish.

Leave to marinate in the fridge overnight or up to 2 days.

When the marinating time is up, take the dish out of the fridge and preheat the oven to 200°/gas mark 6.

Pour the contents of the freezer bag into one or two large roasting tins (making sure the chicken is skin-side up. Place in the oven and cook for about an hour and a quarter, by which time everything should be sticky and glossed conker-brown.

Blue cheese chicken

Serves 4 6pp (total 22pp)

4 x 125g skinless chicken breasts

50g blue cheese crumbled

2 tbsp low fat mayo

4 slices wafer thin ham

1 tsp olive oil

salt & freshly ground pepper

Preheat the oven to gas mark 5/190C line a baking tray with non stick baking parchment.

Make slits along the length of each chicken breast to form deep pockets. Place the blue cheese in a small bowl with the mayo and seasoning, and mix together thoroughly. Spoon equal amounts of the mixture into each chicken breast pocket.

Wrap a slice of wafer thin ham around each chicken breast and secure it with a cocktail stick. Place the wrapped chicken on a baking tray and brush with olive oil. Bake for 25 minutes. Leave the chicken to stand for 5 mins before slicing in half on the diagonal to serve.

Basic Stew Recipe

For each stew you will need: (serves 4-6)

2 sticks of celery, 2 medium onions, 2 carrots, 1 tbsp olive oil,
1 heaped tbsp plain flour, 1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
Sea salt & freshly ground pepper

Then choose one of the following:

Beef & ale (3 hrs) serves 4 at 7pp each, or 6 at 5pp
500g diced stewing beef
2 fresh or dried bay leaves, 500ml, Guinness or stout

Pork & Cider (2½hrs) serves 4 at 8pp each, or 6 at 5pp
500g diced stewing pork, preferably free-range or organic
3 sprigs of fresh sage, 500ml medium-dry cider

Chicken & white wine (1½hrs) serves 4 at 9pp each, or 6 at 7pp
500g diced, boneless, skinless chicken thighs
3 sprigs of fresh thyme, 500ml white wine

Lamb & red wine (2½hrs) serves 4 at 9pp each, or 6 at 7pp
500g diced stewing lamb
3 sprigs of fresh rosemary, 500ml red wine

If using the oven to cook your stew, preheat oven it to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Trim the ends off your celery and roughly chop the sticks. Peel and roughly chop the onions. Peel the carrots, slice lengthways and roughly chop. Put a casserole pan on a medium heat. Put all the vegetables and herbs into the pan with 1tbsp of olive oil and fry for 10 minutes. Add your meat and flour. Pour in the booze and tinned tomatoes. Give it a good stir, then season with a teaspoon of sea salt (less if using table salt) and a few grinds of pepper. Bring to the boil, put the lid on and either simmer slowly on your hob or cook in an oven for the times shown

above. Remove the lid for the final half hour of simmering or cooking and add a splash of water if it looks a bit dry. When done your meat should be tender and delicious, remove any bay leaves or herb stalks before serving, and taste it to see if it needs a bit more salt & pepper.

For variations following, remember to add the ProPoints to the stew ProPoints total

Why not add a puff pastry lid to your stew?

Serves 4 at 15pp each, or 6 at 10pp

500g puff pastry, Plain flour for dusting, splash of milk
1 large egg, preferably free-range or organic

Preheat oven it to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Transfer your fully cooked stew to a large pie dish and let it cool completely. Remove the puff pastry from the fridge 10 minutes before you need to roll it out. Dust a clean work surface and your rolling pin with flour and roll out the pastry until it's the thickness of £1 coin and large enough to cover your pie dish easily. Crack the egg into a small bowl, add a splash of milk and beat with a fork. Brush the edge of the pie dish with a little of the egg mixture – this will help the pastry to stick. Wind the pastry round the rolling pin, then unroll it over the dish (if it tears, don't worry, just patch it up and keep going). Run a knife around the side of the dish to trim off any excess pastry. Using a fork, lightly press down around the edge of the pastry to 'crimp' it. Brush the top of the pie with a little more of the egg mixture. Using the tip of a knife, make a small hole in the middle of the pastry to let the steam escape. Bake in the bottom of the oven for 40 minutes, or until the pastry is golden and crisp.

Or serve it with lovely dumplings?

Serves 4 at 6pp each, or 6 at 4pp

250g self raising flour, 125g really cold butter
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven it to 190°C/375°F/gas 5. Put your flour into a mixing bowl. Using a coarse grater, grate your cold butter into the flour. Add a pinch of salt & pepper. Using your fingers, gently rub the butter into the flour until it begins to resemble breadcrumbs. Add a splash of cold water to help bind it into a dough. Divide the dough into 12 pieces and gently roll each into a round dumpling. The dumplings will suck up quite a bit of moisture, so if your stew looks dry, add a cup of boiling and give it a good stir. Place the dumplings on top of your fully cooked stew and press down lightly so that they're half submerged. Cook in the oven or on the hob over a medium heat with the lid on for 30 minutes.

Or make it into a kinda hot-pot?

Serves 4 at 4pp each, or 6 at 3pp

600g medium potatoes
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper
Olive oil or a knob of butter
A few sprigs of fresh thyme

Preheat oven it to 190°C/375°F/gas 5. Fill a large baking dish with the fully cooked stew. Peel the potatoes and put them into a pan of boiling, salted water. Boil for 10 mins. Drain them in a colander and put to one side for 5 mins to cool slightly. Slice the potatoes lengthways into 1cm-thick slices and lay these over the top of the stew. Drizzle your pie with some olive oil or melt the butter and brush this over the potatoes. Pick the thyme leaves off the stalk and sprinkle them over the potatoes with a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook in the oven for 40 minutes.

Or a sort of cottage pie?

Serves 4 at 7pp each, or 6 at 4pp

1kg potatoes
A splash of milk
A tbsp butter
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper
A sprig of fresh rosemary
1 tbsp Olive oil

Preheat oven it to 190°C/375°F/gas 5. Fill a large baking dish with the fully cooked stew. Peel the potatoes, cut them in half and put them into a pan of salted, boiling water. Boil for about 10 minutes until tender. Stick a knife into them to check they're soft all the way through. Drain in a colander and return them to the pan. Add the milk, butter and a pinch of salt & pepper. Mash until smooth and creamy, adding another splash of milk if necessary. Roughly top the stew with the mashed potato – don't worry about it being smooth and even. Pick a few rosemary leaves off the wood stalk and lightly push them into the potato. Drizzle your pie with some olive oil, lightly coating the rosemary leaves. Cook in the oven for 25 minutes.

Chicken liver salad

Serves 2, 8pp each

2 tbsp olive oil
300g chicken livers
130g rocket salad
1 tbsp sherry vinegar
1 tbsp maple syrup
1 tsp salt

Heat oil in heavy based frying pan and cook livers for about 7 minutes, turning the livers about in the pan regularly and squishing them as you do so to help them cook evenly.

While they are cooking, arrange the salad on two plates.

Once the livers are cooked, their rawness inside turned to mousy pink, take the pan off the heat and quickly add the sherry vinegar and maple syrup.

Stir everything about, deglazing the pan, then divide the dressed livers between the two plates of salad and pour the juice from the pan over them.

Sprinkle with the salt and serve warm.

Chicken Schnitzel with bacon and white wine

Serves 4 = 5pp each

1 teaspoon garlic oil = 1pp
4 rashers streaky bacon = 6pp
4 chicken escallops (breasts) approx 125g = 12pp
100ml white wine = 2pp

Put the oil in a frying pan and add the bacon.

Fry till the bacon is crisp and the pan is full of bacony juices. Remove the bacon to a piece of foil, wrap it and set it aside for a moment.

Fry the chicken for about 2 minutes a side, until there is no pinkness when you cut into a piece. Make sure the pan's hot so that the escalopes catch a little, turning beautifully bronze.

Remove the chicken to a serving plate and quickly crumble the bacon you've set aside into the pan, then pour in the wine, letting everything bubble up, and finally, pour over the chicken pieces.

Serve with green beans and for an additional 4pp each have 200g mash potato

Ginger Beer Pork

Serves 4 Total 30pp – 8pp each

450g pork fillet
2 tbsp flour
Salt & pepper
½ pint / 250ml ginger beer
½ pint pork or vegetable stock
1 onion
2 tsp brown sugar
1 clove garlic
1tsp caraway seeds
1 tbsp Oil

Warm oil in large saucepan while you cut pork into thin strips and coat in the seasoned flour.

Quick fry the pork and strain the old oil if its a bit dirty and add fresh, with the onion and garlic.

Stir in the stock and the ginger beer with the sugar and caraway seeds. Bring to the boil then reduce the heat and simmer very gently for 45 minutes - 1 hour, until the pork is tender.

Serve with any combination of winter vegetables and 200g mashed potatoes each (4pp per person)

Lamb with rosemary and port

Serves 2, 10pp each

1 tablespoons Oil, Olive
2 teaspoons Worcestershire Sauce
2 medium, Boneless Leg Lamb Steaks
For the sauce;
1 tablespoons Butter
1 sprig(s) Rosemary, Fresh
1 clove(s) Garlic
4 tablespoons Port

Mix together the oil and Worcestershire sauce in a bowl, then smear this over the steaks, either with a pastry brush or by dipping the steaks directly into the bowl.

Heat a heavy-based frying pan and cook the steaks for about 3 minutes a side, depending on the thickness of the steak and how you like it done.

Wrap them in foil to rest on a warm plate or in a warm place, while you make the sauce. With the pan still on the heat, but turned down low, add the butter and let it melt, then finely chop the needles from the rosemary sprig and add them to the pan.

Peel and crush or finely chop the garlic clove into the pan, then pour in the port, letting it sizzle and reduce slightly. Unwrap the steaks and add any juices from the foil parcel to the sauce. Then put the steaks onto plates and pour the sauce over them. Serve with green beans or any vegetable of your choice. For an extra 4 pp you could serve this with 200g potatoes each, boiled or mashed, or a crusty bread roll for dunking.

Huntsman Chicken, serves 4, 6pp each

4 x 150g skinless, boneless chicken breasts
4 rashers lean back bacon
1 tbsp finely chopped fresh flat leaf parsley

for the barbeque sauce

low fat cooking spray
20 silverskin onions, drained and rinsed.
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tablespoon light brown sugar
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon tomato ketchup
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon mild chilli powder
1 tablespoon tomato puree
1 tablespoon brown sauce

Preheat oven to Gas Mark 5/190oC/fan oven 170oC. To make the sauce, heat a saucepan and spray with low fat cooking spray. Cook the onions and garlic for 3-4minutes until lightly browned. Added the remaining ingredients, 125ml water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 5 minutes until beginning to thicken. Set aside.

Wrap each chicken breast with a rasher of bacon and put into an ovenproof dish. Pour over the BBQ sauce and bake in the oven for 30 minutes until cooked. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Mushroom sloppy Joes

4pp per serving

350g large button mushrooms, quartered
2 garlic cloves, crushed
low fat cooking spray (1pp)
150ml vegetable stock
can of Batchelors Low Fat condensed mushrooms soup (4pp)
2 tbsp half fat crème fraiche
4 medium slices of wholemeal bread (8pp)
salt & freshly ground black pepper
1tbsp chopped fresh parsley, to garnish.

Place mushrooms and garlic in a pan, spray with low fat cooking spray and cook them gently for 5 minutes. Add stock and seasoning, and cook over a high heat for 5 minutes. Stir in the soup and heat through. Add the crème fraiche and stir well. Remove from the heat toast the bread. Top the four slices of toast with mixture. Scatter over the parsley and serve.

Warming Mince Beef Pies

Makes 4 pies, per pie

made with filo = 6pp, puff = 11pp, shortcrust = 12pp

2 sliced onions

1 crushed garlic clove

2tsp butter (2pp)

1tsp olive oil (1pp)

115g sliced mushrooms

125ml red wine

Dash of balsamic vinegar

225g extra lean beef mince

Few sprigs of fresh thyme

Salt and pepper

250g short crust or puff pastry or 8 sheets filo

You will need 4 oven proof ramekins or gratin dishes.

Preheat oven to 200°C/gas mark 7

Sauté onions and garlic in the butter and oil until caramelised. Add the mushrooms, wine, and balsamic vinegar. Reduce down for a few minutes, then remove from the heat and allow to cool.

Mix together the minced beef, thyme, and seasoning.

Roll out the pastry to about ¼ thick and cut out four lids for your pies, split the beef mixture between the four pots, then top with the onion mix. Top with pastry or scrunch 2 sheets of filo pastry per pie. Brush pastry top with skimmed milk.

Place on a baking tray and bake for 15-20 minutes until the pastry is nicely browned.

Serve with roasted vegetables and 200g mash per person (additional 4pp each)