



Gary's golden rules...

“Food is always better shared. When it comes to enjoying food with family and friends, here's how to keep it healthy but never compromise on flavour.”

For feeding the family

Don't be afraid to experiment

Remember, a recipe is just a guide, so feel free to take a little chilli or turmeric out of a recipe to cater to little tastebuds. The key is to have a go and play with the recipe. Add that flavour but start small. It could be just a sprinkle of chilli on your eggs in the morning or a little crushed fennel and cumin seeds on your roast pork. And there the journey begins...

Create & share food together

As a family, we always try to eat home-cooked food for every meal. Whether it's a cake, a roast chicken or pasta, making things at home gives you a sense of what goes into your food, how good it is if it's made with care and where our food comes from. I also insist that everyone sits down for dinner—television off, no distractions. It's a chance for us to share a meal and talk about our day. Irreplaceable.

Meal prep for the whole family

The secret to easy weekly meal planning is spending some time when preparing meals to make a little bit extra to put into containers and keep in the fridge. I've made a habit of cooking extra vegetables at night so I have some for lunch or school lunches the following day. Cook a few extra beans, broccoli or sweet potato, and then you have the basis to work on a dish. You could take the beans and add some spinach, a little cucumber, some olives and a tin of tuna or smoked trout.

For entertaining a crowd

Get ahead

Preparation is key. I tend to do a hot element that can be roasted or popped on the BBQ and a few side dishes that can be prepared in advance. Mind you, a couple of curries always goes down a treat. My South Indian black pepper chicken curry (page 35) is always a winner. I also slice chicken breast, pork, veal or fish thinly so I can bake or fry in minutes. I cut vegetables a little smaller or start vegetables for roasting in a good non-stick and oven-proof frying pan and then pop in the oven sizzling. They will be ready before you know it!

Do it your way

You don't have to spend up big when hosting friends and family. Slow-cooked dishes using cheaper cuts of meat and vegetables is a good starting point. They can be made in advance to keep things nice and easy. The more you make at home, the cheaper it often is, as snacks, chips, crackers and pre-made dips can all cost a bomb.

Get everyone involved

Don't be afraid to ask someone to bring a plate to share the load and never get stuck in the kitchen by yourself. Keep it simple and bring your guests into the kitchen. I love crowding around the kitchen bench with a few snacks and homemade dips having a drink and chatting.

Flavour boosters

Up the delicious factor of any dish with these magnificent mixes

Yemeni hot sauce: this is great for marinating, or just serving with grilled or roasted meats. Serve with a basic roast chicken and it really lifts the dish. *Recipe page 53*



Coconut chilli dressing: this is like a crispy relish and is great to use with mellow ingredients like tofu or firm white fish. *Recipe page 106*



Zesty tahini yoghurt: this is a great all-rounder, as a dip for breads and snacks, served with grilled meats or even a Middle Eastern burger. *Recipe page 55*



Horseradish dressing: this pairs brilliantly with grilled steaks or as a punchy dressing on top of a simple green salad. *Recipe page 25*



Wasabi dressing: use this dressing tossed through hot noodles or as a way to lift simple steamed greens as a side dish. *Recipe page 96*



Crispy onion and garlic: this is a great way to add healthy crunch and flavour to your salads or noodle dishes. *Recipe page 20*



Chilli and lime dressing: this is a very fresh dressing perfect for summer salads and cold dishes, or as a dipping sauce for BBQ meats. *Recipe page 59*



Furikake: use this as a seasoning on your Asian-style salads, or even on top of grilled meats. It is like the salt and pepper for salads, smashed avo, eggs and anything off the grill! *Recipe page 23*



Dukkah: make a batch of this and use it on anything from your eggs in the morning to your fish or lamb for seasoning with a little crunch. *Recipe page 64*



Roasted prawn sambal seasoning: this is a surprise seasoning here and can be used to pack in flavour to your san choy bow and larb salads, even if you're cooking with chicken or pork. *Recipe page 59*



Nuoc cham: Great dipping sauce for anything from rice paper rolls to spring rolls and as a dressing to really amp up a salad. *Recipe page 20*



Red chutney: this pairs really well with meats, but is also a great way to spice up your eggs in the morning or boost flavour in sandwiches, jaffles or salads. *Recipe page 86*



Curry paste: this is a very versatile paste. I use it for both fish and chicken curries, and for marinating lamb. *Recipe page 40*



Yoghurt marinade: this is a tasty marinade for chicken curries, but will also work brilliantly to create a lamb curry. *Recipe page 35*



Yuzu dressing: use this intensely citrusy dressing through cold noodles or with your favourite rice paper rolls, or over cooked fresh fish. *Recipe page 49*



Salsa verde: use this classic sauce with anything, from cooked fish and meats to coating pasta. *Recipe page 81*



Coriander chutney: this is a great dipping sauce for a BBQ, but you can use it to marinate your meats too. *Recipe page 28*



“ There are lots of **flavours** going on in this book—including Middle Eastern, Indian, Thai, Vietnamese and Japanese. That’s what I wanted it to be, because I think most people believe that if you’re cutting back on fats and sugar then you’re sacrificing flavour. ”



“ The big discovery for me on WW was learning how to maximise the flavour without adding loads of SmartPoints. I’m getting flavour from other places—creating a little bit of magic with herbs, spices and combos of flavour. ”





Meat

“As a chef, I always advise people to shop differently if they want to feel inspired in the kitchen. I’d encourage you to step out of your comfort zone once in a while and buy different cuts of meat or even offal if you feel brave enough. Variety is the spice of life after all. But, knowing most of us aren’t that adventurous when it comes to our midweek meals, in this section I’ve used sauces, spices and aromatics to boost the flavour of everyday ingredients. Have fun!”

Meat

Shredded pork summer rolls

serves: 4 prep: 25 minutes cooking: 1 hour 30 minutes



“We love fresh rice rolls in our house. We arrange everything along the kitchen bench so everyone can build their own. This way, each person can decide what they want in—or, more importantly for some, what they leave out. Without the rice paper wrappers, the pork and vegetables make a great fresh and tasty salad or slaw.”

12 x 10g rice paper sheets
2 cups (170g) shredded wombok cabbage
1 red onion, very thinly sliced
1 Lebanese cucumber, cut into matchsticks
1 long fresh red chilli, deseeded, very thinly sliced
2 spring onions, shredded
1 cup fresh coriander leaves

Shredded pork
500g skinless pork shoulder, fat trimmed, cut into 3cm pieces
3 garlic cloves, chopped
1 tbs chopped fresh ginger
¼ cup chopped fresh coriander stems
2 spring onions, finely chopped
2 tbs soy sauce
1 star anise
1 tbs lime juice, plus extra wedges to serve

Dipping sauce (makes ⅓ cup)
1 tbs crispy chilli oil (see tip)
2 tbs black vinegar
1 tbs lime juice
1 tsp sesame seeds, toasted

- 1** For the shredded pork, lightly spray a medium heavy-based saucepan with oil and place over high heat. Cook pork, turning, for 5-6 minutes or until golden brown. Add garlic, ginger, coriander stems and spring onions, and cook, stirring, for 1-2 minutes or until fragrant. Add soy sauce, star anise, and 2 cups (500ml) water and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for 1 hour 30 minutes or until pork is tender and sauce thickens. Discard star anise. Use 2 forks to coarsely shred meat. Add lime juice and season with salt and pepper.
- 2** Working with 1 sheet at a time, soak rice paper in a medium bowl of hot water for 10–20 seconds or until just softened. Place on a clean kitchen cloth to absorb excess water. Add ¼ cup of the prepared vegetables and 1 tablespoon of pork mixture. Fold over the bottom edge of the rice paper, then roll from the side to enclose filling, leaving the top open. Place roll on a serving plate and cover with a slightly damp cloth to prevent drying out. Repeat to make 12 rolls.
- 3** For the dipping sauce, combine all ingredients and 1 tablespoon water. Serve dipping sauce with rolls.

9 SmartPoints value per serve

Gary's kitchen tip

Crispy chilli oil is available in supermarkets and Asian stores. It's a delicious mix of numerous ingredients like crispy onion, chilli and peanuts.



Lamb seekh kebab, red chutney & lime

serves: 4 prep: 20 minutes plus chilling cooking: 15 minutes



“I bought about 10 metal skewers 10 or so years ago and they’ll last a lifetime. They also won’t burn on the barbecue and you simply wash them when you’re done. When I make this mixture, I get the best results by kneading it in a bowl with all the seasonings until it’s a little sticky. Forming the meat mixture around the skewers may take practice. Divide into equal-sized portions first, then wet your hands and shape along the skewer. Try to form the kebab as tightly around the skewer as possible for the best results.”

1 brown onion, coarsely grated
500g lean lamb mince
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tsp garam masala
2 tsp Kashmiri chilli powder (see tip)
1 tsp salt flakes
1 cup coriander chutney (see recipe page 28)
1 red onion, thinly sliced into rings
Lime wedges

Red chutney (makes 1½ cups)
½ cup (100g) chana dal (see tip)
1 tbs cumin seeds
4 garlic cloves
4 long fresh red chillies, deseeded
1 tbs lemon juice
½ tsp salt

Katchumber (serves 4 as a side)
5 heirloom tomatoes, cut into wedges
1 large lebanese cucumber, chopped
1 red onion, thinly sliced
2 tbs lime juice
1 long fresh red chilli, deseeded, thinly sliced
¼ tsp ground cumin
2 tbs fresh coriander leaves
2 tbs watermelon seeds, toasted (see tip)

- For the red chutney, place chana dal in a medium frying pan over medium heat and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until golden. Add cumin seeds and toast for a further 30 seconds or until fragrant. Transfer to a high-speed blender with remaining ingredients and add ¾ cup (180ml) water. Process for 2 minutes or until a thickened smooth sauce forms, adding a little more water if required. Chill until required.
- For lamb kebabs, squeeze onions in a clean tea towel or cloth to remove excess liquid. Combine lamb mince, garlic, garam masala, kashmiri chilli powder, salt and onions in a large bowl. Use clean hands to knead mixture for 5 minutes or until sticky and very well combined. Shape mixture around 8 metal skewers. Transfer to a plate, cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes or until slightly firm.
- Preheat chargrill or barbecue over high heat. Lightly spray kebabs with oil. Cook for 6-8 minutes or until charred and cooked through. Serve kebabs with coriander chutney, red chutney, onion rings and lime wedges.
- For the katchumber, combine all the ingredients except watermelon seeds in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper and set aside to pickle slightly. Serve scattered with toasted watermelon seeds.

6 SmartPoints value per serve

Gary’s kitchen tip

Kashmiri chilli powder, chana dal and watermelon seeds are available from Indian grocers.



Meat

Chipotle pork & black bean tacos with slaw

serves: 4 prep: 15 minutes cooking: 40 minutes



“I love corn tortillas. They’re delicious and the texture is more interesting than flour tortillas. Look for a good quality tortilla and you’ll become a convert, too. I love to reheat them on the BBQ bars, using a pair of tongs to turn them over after about 15 seconds. It gives them a little char and often puffs them up ready to be filled with yummy ingredients.”

1 tbs extra-virgin olive oil
250g lean pork mince
1 small brown onion, finely chopped
1 small fennel bulb, finely chopped
¼ cup chopped fresh coriander stalks
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
½ tsp fennel seeds, lightly crushed in a mortar and pestle
6 sprigs of fresh thyme, leaves picked
2 tbs tomato paste
2 tbs finely chopped chipotle in adobo sauce
1 tsp smoked paprika

2 fresh bay leaves
2 tbs sherry or red wine vinegar
400g can whole tomatoes
400g can black beans, rinsed, drained
1 beetroot, peeled, coarsely grated
2 cups (170g) red cabbage, thinly sliced
1 corn cob, husks removed
1 tbs lime juice
12 (120g) mini corn tortillas, warmed
1 cup fresh coriander leaves
½ cup (120g) 99% fat-free yoghurt

1 Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add mince and cook, breaking up with a spoon, for 5 minutes or until browned. Remove with a slotted spoon and reserve until required. Return pan to heat and add onion, fennel and coriander stalks. Season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring, for 4-5 minutes or until starting to caramelize. Add garlic, fennel seeds and thyme, and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until fragrant. Add tomato paste, chipotle and paprika, and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until slightly darkened. Add bay leaves, half the sherry vinegar, tomatoes and ½ cup (125ml) water. Bring mixture to a simmer then return pork to pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes or until reduced slightly. Add beans and stir to warm through. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

2 Meanwhile, for slaw, combine beetroot, cabbage and remaining vinegar. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside to pickle slightly. Preheat a chargrill or barbecue over high heat. Cook corn, turning, for 8 minutes or until charred. Cut off kernels then toss in lime juice and season.

3 Serve mince mixture in warmed tortillas with beetroot slaw, topped with charred corn, coriander leaves and a dollop of yoghurt.

7 SmartPoints value per serve



Gary's kitchen tip

Dried and smoked chipotle, as well as chipotle sauces, are available at the supermarket. My preference is whole chipotle steeped in adobo sauce—they're delicious. You can blend the whole lot for sauces, vinaigrettes and marinades. Alternatively, fish out the whole peppers and chop separately for salads and dishes for added flavour.



“As a chef, I am in the flavour business: identifying, extracting, developing and accentuating everything you possibly can to get the best result. Maximum flavour = happy customer.”



Behind the scenes

“We’ve had fun making this book, making lots of delicious things for you to enjoy. So make the most of it—cook for your family, eat healthily, be good... most of the time, just like me.”

