

The Bank Cook




Recipe book for Food banks' users

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A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a dark, thick soup, resting on a matching white saucer. A single green leaf is placed on the saucer to the left of the bowl. The entire scene is set against a dark, textured background.

*“Honey seems tasteless to a person who is full, but
even bitter food tastes sweet to the hungry.”*

Proverb 27 verse 7

As a regular visitor to food banks the table represents the contents of your typical parcel. In the next few pages we are going to explore recipes and see how to prepare the best meals from what you are given. While using some ingredients from your cupboards .

The typical food bank parcel for 3-day supply will include the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>*1L powdered milk</i> | <i>*Biscuits / snacks / Chocolate</i> |
| <i>*500g sugar</i> | <i>*Tinned spaghetti</i> |
| <i>*Fruit juice carton</i> | <i>*Baked beans</i> |
| <i>*Soup</i> | <i>*Tinned vegetables</i> |
| <i>*Pasta sauce</i> | <i>*Tinned fruits</i> |
| <i>*Sponge pudding</i> | <i>*Jam</i> |
| <i>*Cereals</i> | <i>*Tinned meat / fish</i> |
| <i>*Rice pudding</i> | <i>*Rice</i> |
| <i>*Tea bags</i> | <i>*Pasta</i> |

Basics to have in the house at all times.

In order to complete, stretch and cook the food provided in the parcels by your local food bank, here is a list of basics to have in the house at all times. With these you can make a meal out of anything that is in the parcel.

◆ **Onions:** They make any thing taste better. They can be found at your local corner shop from 50p for 6 medium onions to £1.49 or £1.99 for a bag of 5kgs.

◆ **Potatoes:** they can be found in Lidl, Tesco's or Sainsbury's from 89p or £1 /kg. Potatoes can be eaten mashed, boiled, roasted, as salad or as chips.

◆ **Ground black pepper** and **garlic granules:** These cost between 39 and 69p. Shop around.

◆ **Salt:** If you shop around you can find white salt for under 50p/kilo.


◆ **Cooking oil:** You can buy 1L Rapeseed, Sunflower, vegetable oil or even 500ml Olive oil at the 99p or £1 store.

◆ **Sliced bread:** Lidl sells 400g brown bread for under 60p. If you like the branded bread visit Tesco or Sainsbury's after 8pm and you will find the branded or baked-on-the-day bread at reduced price. You can then freeze them and use as in when needed.

◆ **Plain or self raising flour** for sauces, dumplings and baking both under 60p from any supermarket if buying own brand.

◆ **Fresh vegetables:** Things like carrots, parsley, cabbage, tomatoes can be found in the corner shop under 50p or £1. One of each of the listed vegetables can serve to cook 2 or 3 meals if used without wasting. If your local supermarket reduces items before closing, take note and pay them a visit at that time to restock. The bargain corner is always useful.

In the next few pages you will find recipes for dishes created with the above ingredients and then some. The aim will be to keep any additional ingredients under £1 for a couple or £2 for a family. This will allow you, even on a £5 weekly food budget to eat at least one nutritious warm meal per day.

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with a dark, thick soup, resting on a matching white plate. A single green leaf is placed on the left side of the plate. The background is a dark, textured surface.

*"A hungry belly has no ears".
Author unknown*

Do not go hungry because you've no time to cook. If you are short on time, cook at week ends and warm up during the week.

Sausage fried rice

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 350g rice
- ◇ 3 tined hotdogs - Sliced
- ◇ 3 medium carrots - chopped
- ◇ 1 medium onion - Thinly cut
- ◇ Salt & pepper
- ◇ Garlic granules
- ◇ Fresh Parsley - chopped
- ◇ Vegetables oil
- ◇ 1 stock cube



Start by peeling, chopping and cutting everything that needs to be prepped before starting.

Method:

Rinse the rice and place it in a deep pan with 350ml water, a bit of salt and a table spoon of vegetable oil. Cover the pot and leave to cook for 8 minutes. Once the water has evaporated, stir the rice, cover it and turn the heat right down to allow it to finish cooking with steam alone for another 10 minutes.

Once the rice is ready and the other ingredients prepared, heat 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil in a wok. Fry the onions for 2 minutes. Add the cut hotdogs and fry until brown with crisp edges. Now add the carrots, a dust of garlic granules and salt. Stir well and cover for 1 minute to soften the carrots. Now, fold in the rice with 1 crushed vegetable stock, black pepper and 50ml of water. Stir and cover. Cook on medium heat for 5 minutes to allow all liquid to evaporate and the rice to absorb the flavours. Remove from heat and add in the finely chopped parsley before serving.

From the parcel: Rice & Hotdogs tin.

Shopping tips: buy 1kg of carrots from 89p at Lidl or £1 at Sainsbury or Tesco. 1kg bag contains minimum 12 to 16 carrots. Use them over the week in salads, sauces and stir-fries.

⇒Did you know? **Parsley** is a great source of vitamin K, Vitamin C & Vitamin A? It can be used everywhere and makes any dish look fresh. Buy it at the corner shop from 50p a bunch.

Rice pudding ice cream

Ingredients for 1 litre :

- ◇ 190g rice pudding
- ◇ 300g peach slices - drained
- ◇ 1 teaspoon of vanilla essence
- ◇ 500g natural yogurt
- ◇ 20g sugar
- ◇ Shavings of white & dark chocolate
- ◇ Crushed ginger biscuits



Method:

In a mixing bowl, pour the natural yogurt and the sugar mix until the sugar has melted.

In a separate mixing bowl place the peach slices and the rice pudding then blend until really smooth.

Gently fold in the yogurt and sugar mix.

Now, pour the mix in a tub and place in the middle section of the freezer for 5 hours.

Once it is ready, serve with chocolate shavings or the crushed ginger biscuits.

This is a great recipe to create with children. Get them involved. They'll have fun.

From the parcel: Rice pudding, peach slices and chocolate tablet.

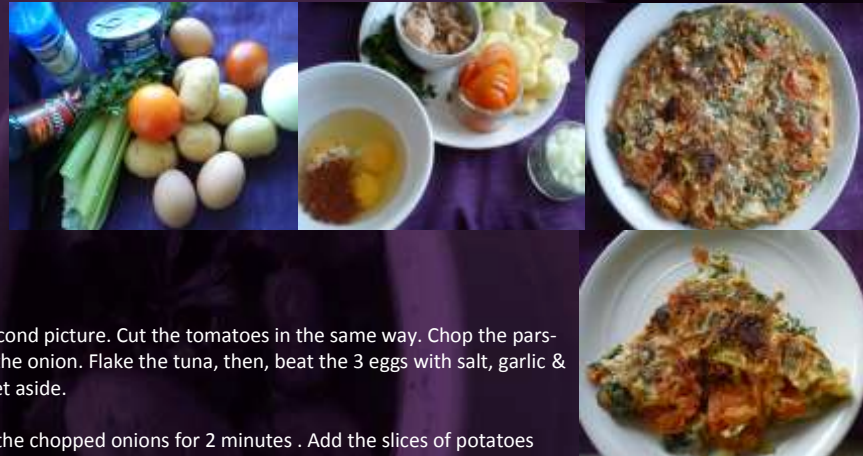
Shopping tips: If you do not receive chocolates in your food parcels, shop around and you will find chocolate tablets from 56p at Lidl or 40p for a white tablet at Sainsbury's. You can also find 74% dark chocolate tablet for 89p/100g at Lidl.

⇒*Did you know?* **Dark chocolate** is good for you. Choose 70% coco content and above to nibble on. It is bitter and you will not abuse it. Give it to the kids for snack and they will learn to hate chocolates! Dark chocolate is full of vitamin A B C & E.

Potatoes, leek & tuna frittata

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 6 small potatoes
- ◇ 2 medium fresh tomatoes
- ◇ Fresh parsley & celery
- ◇ 1 small onion
- ◇ Salt & pepper
- ◇ Garlic granules
- ◇ 3 eggs
- ◇ Tuna chunks (150g drained)
- ◇ Vegetable oil
- ◇ Dry chilli pepper



Method:

Peel the potatoes and slice them very thinly like on the second picture. Cut the tomatoes in the same way. Chop the parsley and celery thinly and set them aside. Do the same for the onion. Flake the tuna, then, beat the 3 eggs with salt, garlic & pepper granules and black pepper. Add tuna to the mix, set aside.

In a large frying pan, heat 3 tablespoons of oil and brown the chopped onions for 2 minutes . Add the slices of potatoes and allow to brown and soften for 2 minutes on each side, then add the celery, stir for 1 minutes. Now, lay the slices of tomatoes on top of the mix, spread the chopped parsley on top of the tomatoes. Then, evenly distribute the beaten eggs and tuna mixture in the pan. Slightly shake the pan to make sure that the eggs reach the bottom. Allow two minutes for the omelette to form at the bottom. Using another pan or a large plate, cover the frying pan and turn the content upside down. Place the pan back on the hob for another two minutes to allow the other side of the frittata to cook through. Allow 1 or 2 more minutes each side if you do not like your eggs runny. Your frittata is ready to serve. Enjoy it on its own or with a little green salad.

From the parcel: Tuna chunks.

Shopping tips: If you love eggs, do not always buy them from the supermarket where 6 eggs can cost over £1 at times. Look in your local ethnic corner shop where you will find 30 from £1.99 . Use them for breakfast, eleven's, lunch and dinner... boiled, poached, fried, raw. Egg is an all rounder. It is always useful to have them handy

⇒Did you know? **Eggs** are low in carbo-hydrates and a great source of protein, vitamin D, A and B2. you can eat as many as you want. Unless you have a high cholesterol. Watch out for salmonella... Handle with care.

Fusilli in mushroom cream

Ingredients for 5 portions :

- ◇ 500g fusilli - Precooked
- ◇ 300g bacon
- ◇ 2 carrots
- ◇ 1 medium onion - Finely chopped
- ◇ Salt & pepper
- ◇ 3 garlic cloves - Finely chopped
- ◇ Vegetables oil



Method:

Peel both carrots, cut one like carrot sticks (julienne), cut the other one length way paper-thin (use the potatoes peeler for this). Keep them separately. Cut the bacon as on the picture to the size of carrot sticks, set aside. Your pasta should be precooked by this time. Now time to combine all the ingredients.

In a large sauce pan, heat 3 table spoons of sunflower oil. Fry the bacon for 5 to 7 minutes until crisp. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Without cleaning the pan, fry the chopped onions, with the garlic and carrot sticks. Stir for 3 minutes, then, pour in the whole tin of cream of Mushroom soup. Add black pepper and leave to simmer for 3-5 minutes until the soup becomes much creamier and begins to stick to the sides of the sauce pan. Don't forget to stir.

Add the bacon back in the now creamier mushroom soup and stir for another 2 minutes to allow the bacon absorb a bit of the mushrooms.

Now fold in the precooked pasta, mix well, to make sure that the cream has covered the pasta, adjust the seasoning, cover and leave on medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes. If you've got some cheddar in the fridge, this will be the time to grate some and add to the mix.

Now remove from heat and gently mix in the paper-thin carrot slices. Cover the pan and allow another 5 minutes before serving. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Pasta (fusilli), Cream of mushroom (tin).

Shopping tips: Buy 700g of cooking bacon from Sainsbury's at £1.15 (own brand). After using the quantity necessary for the dish of the day, portion the rest and freeze. Use for soups, fry-ups, breakfast or as a top up for salads.

⇒Did you know? **Garlic and Onions** are both a great source of antioxidants? They also help keeping at bay many infections and have healing powers. Garlic especially helps to lower cholesterol. Include them both in all your meals and you may just be able to avoid your GP for a long time.

Baked beans lunch

Ingredients for 2 portions :

- ◇ Baked beans 150g (small tin)
- ◇ 50g onion - thinly cut
- ◇ 50g leek - thinly cut
- ◇ Handful of sliced mushrooms (tin)
- ◇ Vegetables oil
- ◇ Salt
- ◇ 4 slices of bread

Method:

Thinly cut the onion, leek and mushrooms to the same size.

In a small frying pan, heat 1 table spoon of sunflower oil and fry the onion and leek together for 2 minutes. Add the mushrooms to the mix, stir for one minute, then add the baked beans. Stir for 2 minutes the time for the beans to soak in the flavours and heat up. Adjust the seasoning then serve on lightly tasted brown slices.

This is a great way to stretch baked beans and make a tin go further. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Baked beans tin, mushroom tin.

Shopping tips: To have a great variety of breads in your house, visit big supermarkets after 8pm and you will be able to buy brown bread, seeded breads and other baked-on-the-day for less than £1. Freeze and use as needed.

⇒Did you know? **Baked beans** are not baked, but stewed? They are a great source of fibre for the body. Be mindful of the sugar content in the brands being used. Where possible, home made baked beans are preferable. Vegans & vegetarians use beans as one of their main sources of protein and they also contain vitamin B, Iron and potassium.



Marmalade sponge sandwich

Ingredients for 5:

- ◇ Tesco values sponge mix
- ◇ 100g dark chocolate tablet
- ◇ 20ml vegetable oil (or hazelnut oil)
- ◇ 1 orange
- ◇ 150g marmalade
- ◇ 1 egg
- ◇ Butter for greasing



Method:

Carefully follow the instruction on the sponge mix package to prepare the two halves of the sandwich. Before pouring the mix to bake, grate and mix in the zest of 1 orange. Once the halves are baked, leave to cool for few minutes and turn both of them upside down. Score the base of both cakes and evenly spread the jam on them making sure that it is well absorbed. Now put both cakes on top of each other on the jammed side. Set aside.

Preparing the chocolate covering. Break the tablet of chocolate in small pieces and place them in a heat-proof bowl. Add the 20ml of oil. Now, in a small sauce pan, boil 300ml of water and place the bowl containing the chocolate pieces in it while it is still simmering. Gently stir the content of the bowl until all the pieces of chocolate are melted and all what is left is a very smooth, rich and shiny chocolate sauce.

Now place the sponge sandwich on a rack or a plate, then pour the chocolate sauce on it making sure to cover all the top and the sides of the cake too. One single layer of the sauce is just enough to keep it light. Decorate the cake before placing it in the fridge to allow the chocolate to harden. 30 minutes to 1 hours should be enough depending on the thickness of the chocolate covering.

The cake above was decorated with heart shapes filled with white chocolate shavings on the outer and poppy seeds in the inner heart. The fresh orange piece were lightly dipped in caramel before being placed on the edges of the cake. Make sure to decorate your cake before placing it the fridge to harden. This would be a great birthday cake or one to offer to friends.

From the parcel: Chocolate tablet, Jam.

Shopping tips: Whenever possible buy readymade cake mix from the supermarket. The sponge mix used here cost 28p from Tesco. You can also buy own brand crumble mixes and sponge mixes from Sainsbury's for under 50p. Having them in the house is always handy if visitor pop in... just add fruits as they say.

⇒Did you know? **Orange peels** can be dried and used to season meats or plain rice? If you consume a lot of oranges, just slice the peels thinly and put them to dry for 30 to 60 days then keep them in a jar to season your savoury or sweet creations.

Corn beef pizza

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 6 slices of brown bread
- ◇ 150g Corn beef
- ◇ 100g tinned mushrooms - Sliced
- ◇ 2 mozzarella balls - thinly cut
- ◇ 100ml tomato sauce
- ◇ 1 big potato (or 2 depending on size)
- ◇ Paprika - 1 teaspoon
- ◇ Vegetable oil

Method:

Preheat the oven at 180C.

Start by preparing all the toppings and set aside ready to use. Then, remove the crusts from the bread and cut the slices in triangle (from corner to corner).

Lay the bread on the oven tray ready to add the toppings.

For each piece of bread add toppings in the following order: tomato sauce, corn beef, mozzarella pieces. Once it is all done, set aside to prepare the potatoes wedges.

Rinse and cut the unpeeled potato, cut it into wedges. Add a teaspoon of paprika, a pinch of salt and 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil. Mix well and precook for 5 minutes, then, spread the wedges an oven dish.

Now, place both (potatoes and pizza) dishes in the oven for 25 minutes at 180C. Leave to cool for 5 minutes before serving with ketchup or mayonnaise. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Tomato sauce, mushroom, corn beef.

Shopping tips: If buying potatoes, It is best to buy a bag with mix sizes as you can just dip in it fish potatoes for mash, roasting, salad or chips. Sainsbury's basic potatoes 4kg cost just £1.90.

⇒Did you know? **Mushrooms** are often used instead of meat by vegetarians and vegans. They are very low in calories, are a good source of B vitamins and when exposed to the sun, they can also be a source of vitamin D.



Veggies & sausage parcel with beetroot coleslaw

Ingredients for 5 portions :

- ◇ 3 medium parsnips,
- ◇ 4 medium carrots
- ◇ 1 large sausage or 4 hot dogs
- ◇ 1 large leek
- ◇ 1/2 tin of tomato soup
- ◇ 1 onion
- ◇ 2 beetroots
- ◇ Mayonnaise
- ◇ 1 Jus-Rol short crust sheet
- ◇ Vegetable oil



Method:

Preheat the oven at 200C before starting the prep.

Cut the medium onion in 2. Keep one half for frying and one half for later. Peel 2 carrots, the 3 parsnips then, cut each of them in 4 length way. Cut the leek same way. Place them all in a large bowl.

In a frying pan, heat 2 tablespoon of vegetable oil. Fry one half of onion that has been diced, then lightly brown every side of the browned sausage. Once that is done, pour the content of the frying pan on the vegetables. Also add the 200ml of tomato soup, salt and Pepper. then crush 1 stock cube on the mealange before mixing all the ingredients together. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.

Spray a bit of oil on the oven tray and lay on it the pastry sheet. Then, carefully place on its middle all the vegetable and the sausage. Making sure that the sausage is placed at the heart of the vegetable heap. Now bring up the sides of the pastry so the content will not fall to the side. If necessary, cover it all with foil to maintain the shape. Place the parcel in the oven for 40 minutes at 200C. Serve with a small beetroot slaw.

Preparing the coleslaw: peel and grate the beetroots, and the 2 remaining carrots. Also grate the leftover onion. Place all in a bowl. Add salt and pepper, plus 3 full tablespoons of mayonnaise. Mix and set aside. The onion can be replaced by white or red cabbage. If you are not fan of coleslaw just serve the parcel with a simple green salad.

From the parcel: Tomato soup, sausage.

Shopping tips: short crust pastries are easy to make if you have space to roll them. If not, just buy them when they are on offer and freeze them. I got mine on offer from Tesco at £1 each. Short crust or puff are both suitable for sweet and savoury baking.

⇒Did you know? **Parsnips** are high in fibres, vitamins, minerals, potassium and antioxidants. Its consumption can prevent constipation and reduce blood cholesterol. Parsnips can be used instead of potatoes in many recipes.

Beef casserole

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 100g celery - chopped
- ◇ 1 big onion - cut
- ◇ 600g baby potatoes - rinse and roughly cut
- ◇ 400g Beef casserole
- ◇ Vegetables oil
- ◇ Salt & pepper
- ◇ 1 beef stock cube
- ◇ thyme



Method:

In a deep pan, heat 3 tablespoons of rapeseed oil. Fry together thyme, onion and celery for 2 minutes, then add all the potatoes and brown for 5 minutes. Now add 700ml of stock, cover and leave to simmer for 20 minutes until the potatoes soften. Now add the content of the casserole tin over the potatoes, adjust the seasoning and Cover for another 10 to 15 minutes on high heat. Check that the potatoes are firm, but, starting to dissolve. If not, leave for another 5 minutes but, stir to make sure that the bottom of the pot isn't burning. The casserole is ready.

Generally there aren't many pieces of meat in tinned casseroles. So, if you've got some bacon in the house, feel free to add them from the beginning of the cooking process.

Bon appetit!

From the parcel: tin of beef casserole.

Shopping tips: Celery, leeks are great ingredients to always have in the house. Lidl often has these two on offer and 3 large leeks can be bought as a bundle from 89p - £1.

⇒Did you know? **Celery** can be used not only in salads, but also as flavouring. Nothing is wasted on the celery; the seed, the stalk and the leaves are all edible. Before using it, make sure that no one in the house is allergic to it in the same way that some people are allergic to peanuts. Celery is a great source of fibre and helps the transit.

Couscous

Ingredients for 6 portions :

- ◇ 1/2 medium aubergine
- ◇ 1 red and 1 green pepper
- ◇ 250g chickpeas (300g)
- ◇ 1 tin vegetable soup (400g)
- ◇ 1 medium onion
- ◇ Garlic granules
- ◇ 1 vegetable stock
- ◇ Vegetable oil



Method:

This dish is meatless so, roughly cut the aubergine, peppers and onion in big pieces and set aside. Rise the chickpeas and open the vegetable soup. Set aside ready to use.

In a deep sauce pan, heat 3 tablespoons of sunflower oil, then, soften and brown the aubergines and onions together with a pinch of dry thyme (2-3 minutes).

Now add the peppers and chickpeas and cover the lot with 500ml of vegetable stock. Cover and leave to simmer for 15 minutes on medium heat.

After the 15 minutes, empty the content of the tin soup in the pot with garlic, salt black pepper. Stir, cover and leave to simmer for another 10 minutes on medium heat still, making sure to stir occasionally to avoid burns.

Meanwhile prepare the couscous. Put 250g of couscous in a deep pan with a 25g knob of butter or 2 table spoons of oil and a pinch of salt. Place the pan on medium heat to brown the couscous a bit. This should take only about 5 minutes do not leave this unattended as the couscous burns very quick. Stir constantly for the whole 5 minutes. What we are looking for is a nuttier taste to the couscous. So, when this is done, remove from the hob and pour on it 250ml of boiled water. Stir to make sure that water has covered every single grain, then cover the pan with its lid. Leave to rest for about 10 minutes, the time for the couscous to absorb the water and double in volume.

Using a fork, fluff the couscous which by now should not be wet. then serve as suggested.

From the parcel: Chickpeas, vegetable soup.

Shopping tips: If you do not receive chickpeas in your parcel, they can be bought in Lidl from 33p or simply replace them with kidney beans which are sold at 25p in Lidl also. Couscous are a great alternative to rice and they are sold in Sainsbury's at 70p for 500g.

⇒Did you know? **Couscous** is made out of Durum wheat flour its origins are North African and it is said that it contains less calories than rice or even quinoa. It is one of the easier cereals to cook; simply use the same ratio of boiled water to the quantity of couscous: 50g of couscous? 50ml of boiled water.

Homemade biscuits

Ingredients:

- ◇ 400g self raising flour
- ◇ 2 tablespoons dry milk
- ◇ 1 egg
- ◇ 50g butter
- ◇ 1 lemon zest
- ◇ 50g sugar
- ◇ Pinch of salt (not if you are using salted butter)
- ◇ Dark chocolate
- ◇ White chocolate
- ◇ Vegetable oil



Method:

Preheat the oven at 180C and place the butter in it for 3 minutes to melt.

Dissolve the milk in 50ml of water, then, beat together the melted butter, milk, salt, sugar and whole egg. Beat them until the sugar granules are completely dissolved. Now sieve into the mix the flour. Add the lemon zest and work the dough with your hands until it becomes a soft non stick ball.

Wrap the dough in cling film and leave it to rest for about 10 minutes while you tidy up and create a space to roll and shape the biscuits.

Using a rolling pin or a clean full size wine bottle, flatten a portion of the dough on surface dusted with flour. Thinner the dough, crunchier will the biscuits be. After flattening the dough, slice it and create shapes. If there are children about, this is the time to let them loose. Let them shape the biscuits.

Once they are all shaped, place them on the oven tray and put it in the oven for 15-20 minutes at 180C depending on how thin the biscuits are. If your oven tray is scratch free, there is no need to butter or grease it before hand as the biscuits are dry enough not to stick.

Once all the biscuits have been in the oven, it is time to decorate them. Make a chocolate sauce like the one made for the sponge cake, divide the biscuits. For some of them, just lay them flat on a dish and drizzle chocolate over them in patterns. For the other set, dip one side in the chocolate then, dust with white chocolate shavings and for the other set, just leave it plain. That's it. See more details on this receipt on www.theBankCook.com

From the parcel: dry milk, sugar, dark chocolate.

Shopping tips: Always have plain and self raising flour in the house as they will serve to make treat for the kid and adult, but also serve in sauces or even to make bread for breakfast you will find them in Sainsbury's and Lidl from 55p.

⇒Did you know? **Oil** can be used to replace the butter in most baking recipes? The butter is melted any ways so, just measure up the butter quantities in ml and use oil if you do not have any in the house. If the recipe requires 25g butter, use 25ml oil. Will you be using a lot of oil in baking, buy hazelnut or walnut oil the ethnic stores where they are cheaper.

Tuna & sweet corn

Ingredients for 2 portions :

- ◇ 250g drained sweet corn
- ◇ 110g drained tuna in brine
- ◇ 2 medium tomatoes
- ◇ mayonnaise
- ◇ parsley
- ◇ 1 Garlic bread



This dish is one of the easiest to make in this book.

Method:

1. Open the tin of corn , drain and pour the corn in a mixing bowl.
2. Open the tin of tuna drain and pour the tuna with the corn
3. Cut the tomato in very small pieces and add to the corn and tuna
4. Add 3 full able spoons of mayonnaise with a pinch of salt and a bit of back pepper
5. Mix well with a spoon
6. Chop the parsley very finely and add it to the mix

Now just prepare the garlic bread in the oven following the instructions on the package.
Serve. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Sweet corn, tuna.

Shopping tips: Garlic bread are very easy to make although is it better to buy them ready made. The cheapest is found in Lidl at 45p for a pack of 2 mini baguettes. They are really handy and can also be frozen and used as in when needed.

⇒Did you know? **Mayonnaise** is 100% fattening? Just consume it in moderation rather than going for the Mayo light which is most likely to make you sick. According to Food Unwrapped on Channel 4 ep6 22/10/2012 one of the ingredients used to make the mayo light is a bacteria grown on rotting cabbage... yup...! check out the episode C4 website..

My Rice puddings

Ingredients for 2 portions :

- ◇ 120g Ambrosia rice pudding
- ◇ 3 Kiwis
- ◇ 3 short bread biscuits or ginger biscuits
- ◇ Jam or Marmalade
- ◇ Plain pumpkin seeds



There are many ways to make rice pudding more appetising and enjoyable. Just find your preferred ingredients around the house and create until you find the best way you like your pudding.



The one above has liquidised kiwis topped with rice pudding and crushed shortbread.



This one was simply served in a wine glass with marmalade and poppy seeds. Any jam will do.



This one was simply layered in the following order: Rice pudding, diced kiwi, chopped seeds.

From the parcel: Rice pudding, biscuits, jam.

Shopping tips: At times it is better to buy some fruits loose. Instead of buying a whole pack of Kiwis at £1 or £1.50 in the supermarket, you can buy them loose at 14p or 20p each. Especially when you only need very few. Don't fall for the buy one get one free, they are not always in your favour.

⇒Did you know? **Pumpkin seeds** are a very popular ingredient in Mexican and west African cuisine? In Cameroon for example, the seeds are dried then, turned into a flour that will be used to cook a savoury loaf in the style of a meat loaf. The seeds can be used also to make dumplings in some sauces. These seeds are very, very high in Iron.

Spaghetti & meatballs

Ingredients for 5 portions :

- ◇ 500g spaghetti
- ◇ 400g mince beef
- ◇ 3 garlic cloves
- ◇ 3 spring onions
- ◇ 1 stock cube
- ◇ 1 big onion
- ◇ Salt & pepper
- ◇ Ketchup
- ◇ Vegetable oil



Method:

Cut the onion in two, grate one half and finely chop the other half. Keep both separate. Chop the spring onions and set aside.

To make the meatballs, put the mince meat in a mixing bowl, using a garlic press, mash the garlic into the mince, add the grated onion, salt and black pepper. Also add 2 table spoons of oil to the mix then, Using you hands, mix together all the elements and form the meatballs. Put the balls in a sauce pan , cover and place on high heat for 5 minutes. This will extract the water from the meat and when there is no more water coming our of the meat, the great from it will take over and the meat will start browning. So, after 5 minutes, turn over the meatballs from sides to side to allow it the brown on all sides. Once this is done, remove the meat from the pan and set aside to rest.

Without rinsing the sauce pan, fry the chopped onions in the meat residues. Brown for 2 - 3 minutes, add the spring onions and the tomato. Season with salt and pepper, then, cover for 10 minutes the time for the juice from the tomato to evaporate. Now put the meat balls back in the sauce with a tablespoon of ketchup and 100ml water, then cover for anther 10 minutes.

In the meantime, cook the spaghetti according to the instructions on the package. Serve as suggested and enjoy.

From the parcel: Spaghetti, tomato tin.

Shopping tips: Buy the mince meat at Sainsbury's for £1.46/400g. Lidl sells 500g at £1.99, but you might just need the 40 odd pence difference for the pre cooked bread for the next meal.

⇒*Did you know? Beef is a great source of complete protein and minerals. So, if you are looking for Iron and B vitamins, look no further. If possible have beef and other red meats in your diet twice a week. Don't overdo it in red meats as you may be building yourself up for a coronary or cardiovascular disease .*



The Vegan selection

"Vegans & Vegetarians are muesli munching hippies."

(quote heard on a local radio)

"I strongly disagree!"

Hortense

Potatoes rostis & beetroots

Ingredients for 2 portions :

- ◇ 200g sweet corn
- ◇ 2 medium precooked beetroots
- ◇ 100g leek and 50g celery (optional)
- ◇ 1 big potato or 2 medium ones
- ◇ 1 small onion
- ◇ Salt & Pepper
- ◇ Garlic granules & Ginger powder
- ◇ Dry thyme
- ◇ Sunflower oil



Method: Peel the beetroot and cut it into small pieces, cut the leek and onion in the same size, set aside separately. Drain and rinse the sweetcorn, set aside. Peel and grate the potato length way to obtain the longest possible straws. Squeeze out the extra water coming out of the potato, lightly dust with salt and pepper mix well, set aside. You will need a frying pan and a wok to cook this meal.

In the wok, heat 2 tablespoons of oil, and brown the chopped onions with a pinch or two of thyme. This should take about two minutes. Now, add the leek and celery then stir for 3 minutes. Time to add the beetroot, corn, a bit of garlic granules, a bit of ginger and salt. Stir all to mix well. Adjust seasoning. Now add 3 to 4 tablespoons of water then, stir continuously for 4 to 5 minutes the time for the water to dry out and for the beetroots to absorb the other ingredients. Once this part is done, remove the wok from the hob, cover and leave aside.

Now onto the potatoes rostis, also called “pomme paillasson” in French. These are simply small potatoes pancakes and with a big baking potato for example, you can easily obtain 4 small pancakes.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil and make sure the surface of the frying pan is covered. When the pan is hot enough, divide the potatoes straws in 4 little mounts and place them on the pan. Gently flatten each one and fry each side for 2 to 2.30 minutes. Only use a thin spatula or a large bread knife to turn the rostis over. Serve as suggested.

From the parcel: Sweetcorn.

Shopping tips: See the potatoes tip page 13. If you do not get sweetcorn in your parcel, buy them in Lidl from 30p. The pack of 4 to 5 beetroot cost 45p.

⇒Did you know? **Beetroots** can be consumed as a fruits or vegetables? They are a great source of folic acids for those suffering with anaemia. It is also said that beetroots can help enhance the circulation of blood to the brain for older people. In so doing reducing the risk of dementia. Do not over do it as it also contains Nitrate..

Chilli con carne

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 200g Barley
- ◇ 1 kidney beans tin
- ◇ 100g mince soya meat
- ◇ 1 chopped tomato in
- ◇ 50g leek
- ◇ 1 medium onion
- ◇ 1 scotch bonnet (chilli) pepper
- ◇ 1 teaspoon of Paprika powder, coriander powder & cumin powder
- ◇ 3 garlic cloves



Method:

Start by soaking the soya mince in boiled water for 10 minutes. When rehydrated, the mince will double in volume. Drain, squeeze out the water and set aside. Also put the barley to soak in cold water for 20 - 30 minutes.

Chop and blend 1/4 onion with the tomato, leek, the chilli pepper and garlic cloves. Set aside.

Finely chop the rest of onion and fry it in a sauce pan with 3 table spoons of oil. Once the onion is browned, add the now rehydrated soya mince and with salt and black pepper. Stir fry for 3 minutes until the mince takes a bit of colour. Now add the blended ingredients and stir well with a spatula, then cover for 10 minutes. Remember to stir from time to time to avoid burns. All you should hear by this time is frying noises from the pan. This means it is the time to add the kidney beans with the coriander, paprika and cumin. Stir, then pour in 400ml of water. Cover the pan and leave it to simmer for 20 minutes.

In the mean time, rinse the barley and place it on the hob with 250ml of water, 1 table spoon of oil and salt. Living the pot uncovered on high heat, allow the water to evaporate for 20 minutes. Once the water has evaporated, fluff the barley and add another 10ml of water, then cover. This time, cook on low heat for 10 minutes to complete the cooking process with steam only. By this time the chilli con carne should be ready. Serve and enjoy.

Barley is a good alternative for those who do not like rice, cooking it without soaking before hand can take up to 80 minutes, it is therefore best to soak it before hand to save on energy.

From the parcel: tomato tin, barley and kidney beans.

Shopping tips: To eat healthy and vegan, there is no real need to shop at Wholefood shops as their prices are often too high. Instead, check out the exotic aisles of your local supermarket and also visit the corner shops where prices are much lower. Find barley in Tesco from 40p/500g. The corner shop sells 300g soya mince at £1.49. 300g of mince soya will serve for 3 to 5 meals depending on the size of the household. Remember once rehydrated they double in volume.

⇒ *Did you know? Soya meat is high in protein and very popular in the Asian diet. It is highly recommended for vegan and vegetarian cooking. As opposed to the tofu, soya meat absorbs very well flavours during the cooking process and is as chewy as beef or chicken would be. Give it a try if you are not vegan and treat it just like meat after soaking.*

Closed pie with pear & dark chocolate

Ingredients for 5 portions :

- ◇ 100g Dark chocolate
- ◇ Tin pear
- ◇ 100g almond powder
- ◇ 100g sugar
- ◇ 1 lemon zest
- ◇ 10ml corn or any vegetable oil
- ◇ 1 Just-roll puff pastry sheet

Method:

Preheat the oven at 180C.

Drain the halved pears and cut them in 2 making each piece a quarter. Dry every quarter with paper towel and set them aside.

Mix the almond powder, lemon zest and sugar, together and set the mix aside.

Now prepare the chocolate sauce in the same way as for the sponge mix covering page 12.

Spray some vegetable oil on the oven baking tray and lay the puff pastry flat on it.

Cover the pear quarters in chocolate and gently place them length way on the pastry sheet. Now, cover the pears with the almond, zest and sugar mix like on the third photo on the top. All you have to do now is just fold the pastry over the pears to create an envelope. With a knife or fork score the edges of the pastry to seal the envelop. Using a baking brush, gently brush the top of the pie with some vegetable oil before placing it in the oven for 40 minutes at 180C.

Once the pie is ready, let it cool down for at least 10 minutes before serving . The dark chocolate can be very bitter for children, so, serve it to them with an ice cream or a fruit sauce. Enjoy!

From the parcel: Pear, Chocolate, sugar.

Shopping tips: Jus-Rol pastries are often made with vegetable oil which makes it suitable for vegan. They are at time on offer at £1 in major supermarket so, buy and freeze when possible. Short crust or puff are suitable both sweet and savoury. So, go create!



Stuffed aubergines with peanut butter sauce

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 2 medium aubergines - Halved and hollowed
- ◇ 2 red peppers - Grated
- ◇ 50g leek - grated
- ◇ 1 scotch bonnet - finely chopped
- ◇ 3 small parsnips - peeled and grated
- ◇ Peanut butter
- ◇ 1 ripe plantain - peeled
- ◇ 2 garlic cloves - finely cut
- ◇ 1 small onions
- ◇ Salt & pepper + Vegetable oil

Method:

Preheat the oven at 180C.

After hollowing the aubergines, set the skins aside and grate its meat.

Cut the onion in half, chop one half for the peanut sauce and grate the other for the stuffing.

In a bowl, mix together the grated aubergine meat, and everything that has been grated. Add in the garlic, salt, pepper and two tablespoons of oil. Taste and adjust the seasoning before scooping the mix into the aubergine skins. Place the stuffed aubergines into a Pyrex dish, then into the oven for 1 hour at 180C.

Cut the plantain in 4, place in a baking tin, drizzle with oil, salt and put it in the oven with the aubergines for 25 minutes (preferably in the last 25 minutes).

In the meantime, prepare the sauce . Simply fry the chopped onion in one tablespoon of oil for 2 minutes, then, scoop in 2 tablespoons of peanut butter. Stir to dilute for 1 minute then pour in 400ml of water. Leave to gently simmer and reduce for 7 to 10 minutes.

Serve as suggested with the peanut sauce on the side or bottom as it may overpower the taste of the aubergine. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Peanut butter.

Shopping tips: Plantains are much likely to be found in ethnic shops rather than supermarkets. Singly, they cost 20 to 30p, but usually sold by 3 or 4 at a £1.

⇒Did you know? **Aubergines** are beautiful, taste good, but have absolutely no great nutritional value? If anything, they contain more nicotine (as in cigarette) than any other edible vegetable. So, if you are addicted, that is why.



Split peas & parsnips chips

Ingredients for 3 portions :

- ◇ 200g split peas (green & yellow mix)
- ◇ 1/2 red pepper, 1/2 green pepper
- ◇ 2 parsnips
- ◇ 10g fresh ginger
- ◇ 1 small onion
- ◇ Garlic granules
- ◇ Paprika
- ◇ Vegetable oil
- ◇ Salt



Method:

Soak the peas for 2 hours before the cooking.

Chop the onions and pepper, grate the ginger. Peel and cut the parsnips in chips sticks, set aside.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil and brown the onions for 2 minutes, then add the peas, ginger, salt, garlic and 200ml of water cover and leave the peas to soften for 20 minutes. Don't forget to stir from time to time. After the 20 minutes, add the peppers, 1/2 teaspoon of paprika, 200ml water, adjust the seasoning and cover for another 8-10 minutes on medium heat.

Now on to the parsnips chip. They are to be treated the same as potatoes chips, so feel free to use your regular chip pan. Frying for 5 to 7 minutes suffice to have them cooked through from raw. Add a slice of onion in the chip oil to add more taste to the chips.

Once the chips are ready, salt and serve.

Remember. The colder the chips get before serving, more wrinklier they get. Enjoy

From the parcel: dry peas.

Shopping tips: Any dry peas and lentils can be used for this dish. If you do not receive peas in your parcels, they can be found in Lidl at 95p/500g. Parsnips also are at times cheaper than potatoes at Lidl where 4 are sold at 50p.

⇒Did you know? **Ginger** is an effective relief against nausea? It is very versatile and can be used in sweet and savoury dishes. Ginger is also found in soft drink form and teas.

Pumpkin seeds & oats cake

Ingredients for 7 - 8 portions :

- ◇ 100g pumpkin seeds
- ◇ 100g breakfast oats
- ◇ 100 self raising flour
- ◇ 50g sugar
- ◇ salt
- ◇ 50g dairy free butter - melted
- ◇ 200ml rice milk
- ◇ 175g mandarin segments
- ◇ 1 teaspoon baking powder



Method:

Heat the oven at 200C.

Drain the mandarin segments and set them aside. Do not throw away the syrup.

Using a blender, blend together at once, the pumpkin seeds, oats, 40g sugar, melted butter, 200ml milk. Once that is done, pour the mix in a bowl and sieve in the self raising flour and the baking powder. Add in a pinch of salt and mix until the batter is completely lumps free. If you've got ramekins, grease them then spoon in each of them 3 to 4 tablespoons of the cake mix.

Place a segment of mandarin in some of the ramekins before putting them in the oven at 200C for 25 minutes. Leave to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

In the meantime, prepare the mandarin sauce with a pinch of dried ginger powder. Melt the remaining 10g of sugar in a small milk pan. Let it go slightly golden then add in the mandarin segments with ginger and 3 table spoons of the mandarin syrup. Keep stirring until the liquid has evaporated and the remaining liquid is slightly heavy. This should take about 5 minutes.

Serve as suggested and allow the cake to soak in a bit of the sauce. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Mandarin segments (tin), sugar, oats.

Shopping tips: There are more and more dairy free products available on the market for vegans. Given their prices at times, the best move is to try them when they are on offer at various supermarkets. The sunflower butter is normally price is £1.60 and often on offer in Sainsbury's at £1/500g.

Stir fried rice

Ingredients for 4 portions :

- ◇ 250g white rice
- ◇ 250g broccoli
- ◇ 100g aubergine
- ◇ 50g leek
- ◇ 50g celery
- ◇ 1 and half fresh tomato
- ◇ 1 onion
- ◇ Garlic granules
- ◇ 1 chilli pepper (optional)
- ◇ Soy sauce
- ◇ Vegetable oil
- ◇ Dry lemongrass powder
- ◇ Salt



Method:

Precook the rice following the instructions on the package.

Floret the broccoli, cut the aubergines and tomatoes, cut the celery and leek, dice the onion, set all that aside.

In a wok, heat 3 tablespoons of oil, then fry onions, aubergine, Leek and celery at once for 4 minutes stirring continuously. Now add the tomatoes, broccoli, chilli and lemon grass. Stir, then add the precooked rice and 2 tablespoons of dark soy sauce. Mix well, adjust the seasoning, stir from bottom to top of the wok for 5 minutes. Take away from the heat and serve. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Rice.

Shopping tips: Stir fried are a great way to get rid of old vegetables, so, before buying a new set, make sure that the old ones are used . If you are in a big household, buy the vegetables from your local fruits and veg market because of the volume per £1. Otherwise, it is much better to buy the vegetables loose and don't fall for the buy one get one free as you might end up wasting some.

⇒Did you know? **Broccoli** is a super food? Vitamin A, C, mineral, zinc are all packed in this vegetable. It tastes better in salads, which makes it practical for work lunches. Because of its smell when cooked I recommend that you cook it and only reheat it at home where no one will attack you because of the smell.

Golden coconut thins

Ingredients :

- ◇ 100g desiccated coconut
- ◇ 150g sugar
- ◇ 10 hazelnut - roasted and crushes
- ◇ salt

Method:

Spray a bit of oil on the flat tray that will be used to cool down the thins.

Mix the crushed hazelnuts to the coconut.
Melt the sugar on high heat, then stir until it becomes golden and really clear.

Add a pinch of salt the to melted sugar, then put in the coconut and hazelnut. Mix very quickly with a spatula until the sugar is completely absorbed. This process should take 1 minute max... it has to be done very quickly.

Remove from the hob and lay the mix very flat on a dish prepared for it. Using a rolling pin or the back of the spatula, continue to flatten the mix, then create tracks as above on the middle picture.

The tracks you have created will allow you to easily break off the thins once the mix has cooled down and hardened.

If you rather make balls and have a high heat tolerance. You will have to move very quickly as the mix can cool down and harden within a minute... The balls can only be rolled by hand.



From the parcel: Sugar.

Shopping tips: Desiccated coconuts cost just 69p at Lidl.

⇒Did you know? **Nuts & Seeds thins** can be roughly grinded and used as toppings for various desserts? Used in this way, they are often called praline. So, you can now make your own.

Homemade tomato soup

Ingredients for 2 portions :

- ◇ 2 precooked mini baguettes
- ◇ 1 scotch bonnet
- ◇ 4 garlic cloves
- ◇ 50g leek
- ◇ 1 tomato tin
- ◇ Vegetable oil
- ◇ Dry basil
- ◇ Salt

Method:

Peel the potato and cut it very finely. Cut the leek, onion and garlic too.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a saucepan, fry onion and potato until brown, then, add the leek and 3 chopped garlic to wilt, stirring continuously for 1 minute. Now pour in the tomatoes and add the scotch bonnet. Also add in 200ml of water and cover for 20 minutes. What we are looking for here is for the potatoes pieces to be completely soft. After that, blend the content of the pan while it is still hot.

For the bread, preheat the oven at 180C.

Cut the bread into wedges, mash the remaining garlic and rub it on the wedges. Place the bread on a baking dish and drizzle with oil. Sprinkle on some dried basil and bake for 8 to 10 minutes. Done. Serve. Enjoy.

From the parcel: Tomato tin.

Shopping tips: Scotch bonnets always add kick to any dish. If you like spicy, have them handy in the freezer. If there are ethnic shops on your street, get your peppers from them. You can buy up to 10 fresh scotch bonnets at 50p while all the other supermarkets sell 3 at £1 for just under.

⇒*Did you know? **Scotch bonnets** help to combat nausea? They are much more fiery than the small chilli peppers and are widely used in the West Indies and in Africa. Use sparingly as not everybody can tolerate it in meals. Especially children.*



About the author



My full name is Hortense Julienne Nguenpang-Ntepdie. I was born in Yaoundé, Cameroon and lived in France from my teens. Cameroon is my heart, I love Paris, and home is London.

I have been living in Croydon for the last 12 years and it is a town that I really love.

Since arriving in London in 2001, aged 26, I have been a dinner lady, worked in a pub, been a hairdresser, a barber, and a shop cleaner. I worked really hard in all these jobs. I had to prove that my disappearing to another country was not a waste of time! Besides at the time, I was the only girl in our household who had decided to leave the safety of Paris and the family behind!

My first proper job came when I dared to apply for a position at Mailboxes Etc... in Croydon and fortunately I got the job! For the next 3 years I learnt graphic design and improved my English too; I told customers who had become regulars to correct me when I used words incorrectly and I stayed away from French speaking people as I was determined to lose the accent!


I was getting better at English and was adding value to myself and my CV. I Worked in several retails including being a branch manager at Girl Heaven - Children's version of Claire's Accessories.

I also worked as an International Auctions Coordinator for 3 years and it was one of the best jobs I ever had!

Currently I work for a Media company co-ordinating relationships with a range of partners and supporters and organising events.

My passion for cooking came from my adoptive father and my stint in Brioche Doree kitchens. I LOVE food and spend my quiet time trying out random stuff. I once bought about 5kgs worth of clementines and about half way through them, I thought I was wasting the peels so I dried them to use in some of my dishes. A few weeks later I walked into an Indian shop and saw that, dried orange peels were on sale. I was baffled. In the same way once I decided to caramelize my citrus peels and visited shops only to find them on sale as sweets! I wasn't reinventing the wheel but was definitely on my way to. That is how much I love food. I don't like to waste a thing!

This book came about because I believe that my creativity came from the Master Creator who I believe kept me safe all these years. He has given me a passion for the less fortunate and especially for the homeless. The only way to honour Him was to display His gifts in this booklet and give it away. I do hope that it will be useful to those who receive from various food banks around the UK. And I hope that the quality of the work done within the pages will make the user feel valued.




"This Gift was never mine to keep."

Hortense

Did you know about...?

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A purple-tinted photograph of a plate with a bowl of food, overlaid with a white text box. The background is a dark purple gradient. The plate is white and contains a bowl of food, possibly a salad or a soup. The text box is white and contains the text "Local food bank details here:". The text is in a simple, sans-serif font.

Local food bank details here: