

SEASONED

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Seasoned Newsletter, which is now monthly. This is #11. (If you missed #10, it's [here](#).)

It's still summer, says the calendar, so we've got three recipes that require no active cooking (though you do need leftover chicken for one). The fantastic Double-Melon Salad, in particular, is one you'll want to make right away, while good melons are still around. We've also got a mind stretcher, an exercise to improve balance, and a tool that belongs in the kitchen of every person with joint issues. Now that we're monthly, we going to start including basic kitchen skills, too. This time, it's how to cook brown rice, a reliable, healthy, and delicious staple.

Let's get started!



Double-Melon Salad

If you've never tried feta and melon together, you're in for a treat. There is something uniquely satisfying about the combination of the salty cheese and the sweet, juicy melon. Of course you can use just one type of melon if that's what you have. You can easily double this recipe, and it will keep for a day in the refrigerator.

HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES MAKES: 2 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup watermelon cubes
- 1 cup cantaloupe or honeydew melon cubes
- ½ cup cubed or crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint or basil leaves
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime or lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons olive or vegetable oil
- Pinch kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all the ingredients in a medium bowl and toss gently. Serve right away, or cover and refrigerate up to overnight (if you want to serve it later, keep the feta out and add it just before serving).



Other Ways to Use Feta

Tangy feta cheese not only tastes great, it also has fewer calories than most other cheese. Here are a few other ideas for how to use it.

- Crumble it on top of green salads.
- Toss it with grains, pasta, or roasted vegetables.
- Stir it into mashed potatoes.
- Crumble it and stir it into scrambled eggs.
- Slice it and serve it along with olives and flatbread as a light lunch



No-Bread Roll-Ups

There is really no simpler lunch than this, but it has plenty of flavor. If you are a fan of bread-and-butter pickles, make sure that you buy spears rather than slices when you're at the store, since they work much better in the roll-ups. You can easily increase this recipe to feed as many eaters as you want, rather than just one.

HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 10 MINUTES MAKES: 1 SERVING



INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices provolone, Swiss, or cheddar cheese
- 2 slices turkey deli meat
- Dijon mustard (optional)
- 1 bread-and-butter or dill pickle spear
- 1 or 2 strips red, green, or yellow bell pepper (optional)
- Kosher salt and black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lay out the cheese slices on top of each other.
2. Put the turkey on top of the cheese and spread with mustard, if using.
3. Lay the pickle spear and bell peppers, if using, in the center of the turkey. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Roll up the cheese and turkey around the pickle and serve right away.

Or Try This

- Add arugula, baby spinach, shredded lettuce, or other delicate salad greens.
- Add a bit of mayonnaise to the mustard before spreading.
- Add a few drops of your favorite hot sauce.

Mexican Chicken Salad

This salad is inspired by some of our favorite Mexican flavor combinations: avocado and lime, corn and tomato. Even though we call this a chicken salad, you can actually skip the chicken and substitute a can of black beans (drained and rinsed) to make an equally delicious vegetarian version. This recipe can easily be doubled.

ACTIVE TIME: 30 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES MAKES: 2 CUPS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup leftover diced or shredded chicken meat (1 to 2 pieces, depending on the size) *
- 1 medium tomato, cored and diced
- 1 ripe avocado, pitted, peeled, and diced
- ½ cup corn kernels, frozen and thawed or cut from a leftover boiled, steamed, or grilled cob
- 1 scallion, greens and whites, chopped, or 1 tablespoon chopped red onion
- 1½ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put all the ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix gently.
 2. Serve right away, or cover and refrigerate up to 2 hours.
- * The chicken can be roasted, poached, or grilled—or use a rotisserie chicken from the supermarket. To shred, remove the skin and bones, then use your hands or two forks to pull the meat apart in opposite directions.

Or Try This

Add any (or all) of the following to boost the flavor.

- ½ cup crumbled queso fresco or feta cheese or shredded cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
- ½ cup chopped bell pepper (any color is fine)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro or basil leaves
- 2 teaspoons fresh or pickled jalapeño pepper slices
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin



Kitchen Skill: Cooking Brown Rice

If you're used to eating white rice, you'll grow to prefer the nutty flavor of brown rice—an added bonus, since brown rice provides way more fiber and other nutrients than white rice. Different brands of rice cook more or less quickly than others, so start checking your rice after about 40 minutes of cooking.

HANDS-ON TIME: 5 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup long-grain brown rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the rice in a strainer or sieve and rinse under cold running water until it runs clear.
2. Put the rice, water, and salt, if using, in a medium-sized saucepan with a tight-fitting lid and bring to a boil over high heat.
3. Cover, turn the heat down to low, and simmer undisturbed until the rice is tender, 40 to 50 minutes. To check for doneness, use a fork to look down at the bottom of the saucepan; there should be no remaining liquid.
4. Remove from the heat and let sit, covered, to steam for 10 minutes more. Fluff with a fork and serve right away.

Or You Could

For some recipes (like the Avgolemono Soup in Newsletter #9), white rice works better than brown. In those cases, you can use this same recipe, but you'll only need to cook the rice for about 15 minutes.

Eat it Later

Go ahead and make more than you need—cooked brown rice freezes well. Simply measure portions of the cooled rice into freezer bags and label them “½ cup brown rice” along with the date. Reheat the rice in a covered dish in the microwave—or add the frozen contents of a bag to a pot of soup or stew.



A Trick, a Tool, an Exercise

For Balance: Toe Lifts

1. Stand behind a chair or counter with your hands on the surface for support.
2. Push yourself up onto your toes as high as possible, then slowly return to the starting position.
3. Repeat ten times.



Jar Opener

We know, we know. The last thing you need is drawers cluttered with single-use gadgets. But here's one you can't—and shouldn't—live without: a really good jar opener. Because some jars seem to be specially designed not to be opened by human hands. There are lots of different jar openers on the market, but our favorite style has a wedge-shaped series of metal teeth that grip the jar when you slide it in. These tend to accommodate the widest range of lid sizes, and are easy to maneuver.



Mind Stretcher

Two boxers are in a match scheduled for 12 rounds. (Boxing only—no kicking.) One of the boxers gets knocked out after only six rounds, yet no man throws a punch. How is this possible?

[Answer: Both boxers are women.]

