



10 Recipes using Leftovers or Soon-to-Expire Foods

We've put together a list of simple, delicious recipes that you and your family will love. Each one is perfect for using up leftovers or food that's close to expiring. Best of all - it's reducing waste; food waste and wasted money.



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Easy Leftover Risotto Balls (Arancini)

Prep: 15 mins | Cook: 15 mins | Serves: 30 balls

Ingredients:

- › 4 large eggs (separated)
- › 3 to 4 cups cold leftover risotto/rice
- › 2 cups all-purpose flour
- › 3/4 tsp salt
- › 2 cups fine dried breadcrumbs
- › 2 oz mozzarella, cut into small cubes
- › 2 cups vegetable oil for frying
- › Parmesan cheese, marinara sauce (for serving)

Instructions:

Separate eggs. Whisk the whites in a bowl. Mix 2 yolks with risotto until combined. (Save remaining 2 yolks for something else.)

Mix flour and salt in one bowl, breadcrumbs in another. Line a baking sheet with paper towels.

Divide risotto into 2-tbsp portions and form 1.5-inch balls. Insert a mozzarella cube into the centre of each.

Roll each ball in flour, then egg whites, and finally breadcrumbs, ensuring each is coated evenly and shaped smoothly.

Pour oil into a skillet (about 1/2-inch deep). Heat to 175°C (test with breadcrumbs).

Fry 8 balls at a time, 2-3 minutes per side, until golden-brown.

Drain on paper towels for 2 minutes. Serve with Parmesan and marinara.

Form and bread balls up to 1 day ahead.

Store leftovers in the fridge for up to 3 days. Re crisp at 200°C for about 8 minutes.

Credit: [Kitchn](#)



Leftover Roast Beef Curry

Prep: 15 mins | Cook: 15 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- › 2 tbsp olive oil
- › 2 onions (red or white), finely diced
- › 4 cloves garlic, minced
- › 2 cm fresh ginger, grated
- › ½ - 1 tsp chilli flakes (to taste)
- › 2 tsp each: ground cumin, ground coriander, turmeric, paprika, garam masala
- › 2 tbsp tomato paste
- › 1 small sweet potato (about 250g), chopped into 1 cm cubes
- › 1 red capsicum, chopped into 1 cm chunks
- › 1 tin (400 ml) coconut milk
- › Salt and pepper to taste
- › 600 g leftover roast beef, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- › Juice of ½ lime, plus extra for garnish
- › 2 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped, plus extra for garnish
- › Rice and/or naan to serve.

Instructions:

Heat oil in a large pan over low heat and cook onions for 5 minutes until soft. Add garlic, ginger, chilli, and all the spices, cooking for 1 minute and adding a splash of water if needed. Stir in tomato paste, sweet potato, capsicum, coconut milk, salt, and pepper. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes until the sweet potato softens. Add beef and cook for 3-5 minutes until heated through. Stir in lime juice and coriander. Serve with rice or naan, garnishing with extra lime and coriander.

Credit: [Easy Peasy Foodie](#)



Banana Bread Supreme

Prep: 15 mins | Cook: 30 mins | Serves: 12

Ingredients

- › 3 very ripe bananas, mashed (or 2 large)
- › 2 tbsp golden syrup
- › 1/4 cup caster sugar
- › 1 egg
- › 1 cup self-raising flour
- › Pinch of salt
- › 1 tbsp cinnamon sugar (to taste)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 180°C and grease and line the base of a loaf tin.

Mash the bananas in a medium-sized bowl and add the golden syrup, mixing well.

Add the caster sugar and stir until combined.

Mix in the egg, sifted flour, and salt, and stir lightly until just combined.

Pour the mixture into the prepared loaf tin and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon sugar.

Bake for 30 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

Credit: [Best Recipes](#)



Bread and Butter Pudding

Serves: 8 | Prep: 45 mins | Cook: 45 mins

Ingredients

- › 1 1/2 cups (375ml) milk
- › 2 cups (500ml) cream
- › 1/3 cup (75g) caster sugar
- › 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- › 4 eggs
- › 6 slices (270g) white bread
- › 40g butter, softened
- › 1/2 cup (80g) sultanas
- › 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 160°C (140°C fan-forced) and grease a shallow 2-litre (8-cup) ovenproof dish. To make the custard, combine the milk, cream, sugar, and vanilla extract in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. Whisk the eggs in a large bowl, then gradually add the hot milk mixture to the eggs, whisking constantly.

Trim the crusts from the bread and spread each slice with butter, then cut into four triangles. Layer the bread in the dish, overlapping slightly, and sprinkle with sultanas. Pour the custard over the bread and sprinkle with nutmeg.

Place the ovenproof dish into a large baking dish and add enough boiling water to come halfway up the sides of the ovenproof dish. Bake for about 45 minutes or until the pudding is set. Remove from the baking dish and let it stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Dust with sifted icing sugar if desired.

Credit: [Womans Weekly Food](#)



Leftover Chicken Quesadillas

Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 15 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- › 8 soft corn tortillas
- › 1 cup salsa (mild, medium, or hot)
- › 1 cup leftover rotisserie chicken, shredded
- › 2 cups shredded cheese (your choice)
- › 1 tbsp chipotle sauce (see Notes for recipe link)
- › 1 ripe avocado, for serving
- › Sour cream, for serving
- › Olive oil (spray)

Instructions

Lay one corn tortilla flat and spread 3-4 tablespoons of salsa on it. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of cheese on top of the salsa, then add about 1/4 cup of shredded chicken. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of chipotle sauce over the chicken. Place a second tortilla on top and press lightly.

Cook in a panini press or non-stick pan until the tortilla is brown, and the cheese is melted. If using a frying pan, spray with olive oil and cook on medium-high heat, frying each side until browned and the cheese is fully melted.

Serve hot with mashed avocado, sour cream, and chipotle sauce for dipping or drizzling.

Credit: [Forkly](#)



Vanilla Rice Pudding

Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 55 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- › 100g (1/2 cup) sugar
- › 1/2 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped
- › 950ml (4 cups) whole milk, plus extra to adjust consistency
- › 200g (1 1/3 cups) cooked left over long or medium-grain white rice
- › Pinch of salt.

Instructions

In a small bowl, combine the sugar and vanilla seeds, rubbing the sugar between your fingertips to evenly disperse the seeds. Sift the mixture into a 3-litre saucepan to remove any fibrous remnants from the vanilla pod. Add the milk and whisk until the sugar dissolves. Stir in the cooked rice and salt.

Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, then immediately reduce the heat to a simmer.

Cook, stirring and scraping the bottom and sides of the pot every few minutes with a rubber spatula to prevent sticking, adjusting the heat as needed to maintain a gentle bubbling. Continue cooking until the mixture begins to thicken, about 45 minutes.

Stir every minute for the next 10 minutes, until the pudding thickens to a yogurt-like consistency and coats the back of a wooden spoon. Remove from heat.

Credit: [SeriousEats](#)



Leftover Roast Chicken Risotto

Serves: 4 | Prep Time: 10 mins | Cook Time: 2hr 20 mins

Ingredients

For the Chicken Stock:

- › Whole chicken carcass
- › 4 garlic cloves, crushed but unpeeled
- › 3 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- › 2 carrots, roughly chopped but unpeeled
- › 1 onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- › Salt and pepper, to taste

For the Risotto:

- › 1 tbsp oil
- › 1 onion, finely diced
- › 300g risotto rice
- › 1 litre chicken stock
- › 150g leftover roast chicken
- › 150g leftover cooked vegetables
- › 75g frozen peas
- › 1/2 red capsicum, finely diced
- › 40g grated parmesan cheese

Instructions

To make the chicken stock, place the chicken carcass, garlic, celery, carrots, onion, salt, and pepper into a large pot. Cover with water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 2 hours. Strain the stock and discard the solids.

For the risotto, heat the oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the diced onion and cook until softened. Stir in the risotto rice and cook for 1-2 minutes until lightly toasted.

Gradually add the chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring frequently, until the liquid is absorbed, and the rice is cooked through (about 20 minutes).

Stir in the leftover roast chicken, cooked vegetables, frozen peas, and red capsicum. Cook for a further 5 minutes until heated through. Stir in the grated parmesan and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Credit: [MyFussyEater](#)



Sweet Potato Hummus

Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 40 mins | Serves: 4 (as a snack)

Ingredients

- › 2 sweet potatoes that are close to expiring, peeled/ cut into 2 cm cubes
- › 3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- › 1/2 tsp chilli flakes, plus extra to serve (optional)
- › 1 tsp smoked paprika
- › 3 garlic cloves, unpeeled
- › 2 tbsp tahini
- › Juice of 1 lemon
- › Vegetable crudité, breadsticks, or crackers, and pitted olives, for serving.

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). Spread the sweet potatoes on a baking tray, drizzle with 1 tbsp olive oil, and toss with the chilli flakes and paprika. Nestle the unpeeled garlic cloves among the potatoes. Roast for 30-35 minutes, tossing halfway through, until the potatoes are soft.

Let the sweet potatoes cool, then transfer to a food processor. Squeeze in the roasted garlic. Add tahini and lemon juice, and blitz for 1 minute. With the motor running, slowly pour in the remaining olive oil, and blitz until smooth.

Add 50-60ml cold water to loosen, blitz again, and season to taste. Spoon into a bowl, drizzle with extra olive oil, and sprinkle with more chilli flakes if desired. Serve with your choice of crudité, breadsticks, or crackers.

Credit: [goodFOOD](#)



Bubble and Squeak

Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 12 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- › 1 tbsp butter
- › 4 rashers streaky bacon, chopped
- › 1 onion, finely sliced
- › 1 garlic clove, chopped
- › 15-20 cooked Brussels sprouts, sliced (or leftover boiled cabbage, shredded)
- › 400g cold leftover mashed potato (or cold crushed boiled potatoes)
- › 1 egg, lightly beaten (optional, for binding)

Instructions

Melt 1 tbsp butter in a non-stick pan over medium heat until hot, then add the chopped bacon. As it starts to brown, add the sliced onion and chopped garlic.

Next, add the sliced cooked Brussels sprouts (or shredded cabbage) and allow them to colour slightly, cooking for 5-6 minutes.

Add the cold mashed potato and, if desired, stir in the beaten egg to help bind the mixture. Mix everything together in the pan and press the mixture down so it covers the base of the pan.

Let the mixture catch slightly on the base before turning it over and repeating. The crispy bits of potato are what define 'bubble and squeak', so allow it to colour.

Cut into wedges and serve hot.

Credit: [goodFOOD](#)



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Leftover Roast Turkey (or Chicken/Tofu) Nachos

Prep: 15 mins | Cook: 15-20 mins | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- › 250g leftover roast turkey, chicken, or crumbled tofu
- › 1½ tsp fajita seasoning
- › ½ lime, juiced (optional)
- › 170g lightly salted tortilla chips
- › 200g tomato salsa
- › 150g cheddar, grated
- › 4 spring onions, sliced
- › 150g soured cream
- › 50g pickled jalapeños

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan). In a bowl, combine the shredded turkey, chicken, or tofu with fajita seasoning and lime juice (if using). Set aside.

Arrange half the tortilla chips on a large baking tray in an even layer. Spoon over half the turkey/chicken/tofu mixture, half the salsa, half the cheese, and half the spring onions. Top with the remaining tortilla chips and repeat with the rest of the turkey/chicken/tofu mixture, salsa, cheese, and spring onions.

Bake for 15-20 minutes until the cheese is melted and everything is warmed through.

Remove from the oven and top with soured cream and pickled jalapeños before serving.

Credit: [goodFOOD](#)