



Wendy Blume

vegie smugglers Vegetarian

30 vegetarian recipes from Vegie Smugglers book 1 & 2






SAMPLE



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Feeding time at the zoo

In thousands of homes around Australia, dinnertime is a nightmare. Putting in effort to prepare nutritious meals for the little lovelies to reject is a miserable experience. Eventually parents give up, preferring to serve what they know will be eaten. Menus become limited and mealtimes a chore.

Feeding my kids had become a mission. Things eaten one day would not be eaten the next – my son was so fickle and my daughter only ate cheese and pasta. Both of them liked noodles but refused greens. Even yoghurt was a risky proposition.

I'm sure your house is just the same as mine. And I'm sure, like me, you're not a chef, but most days you're in the kitchen trying to put together nutritious and tasty meals for your children. Time-poor parents like us are happy to put in a bit of effort to keep the kids healthy and happy. But time-poor parents like us only want to spend our time cooking food that will be EATEN. There is nothing more frustrating than wasting time cooking meals that get thrown in the bin.

I was determined to get dinnertime back on track. After much struggle and many attempts, Vegie Smugglers is my collection of family meals for fussy eaters of all ages – tried-and-true recipes that aim to take the tension out of mealtimes.

May your meals be happy
and eaten,

Wendy



WIPIL





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Is smuggling vegies the right strategy?

Kids do need to learn to eat a variety of flavours and healthy foods. They need to learn that vegetables and fruit are delicious and an essential part of every day.

I always serve my meals with a few pieces of identifiable bite-sized fresh produce on the side. Occasionally this gets eaten, but usually it is pushed aside.

So while my kids continue to learn to love healthy food, I'm happy to smuggle the good stuff in wherever I can.





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Which vegetable? Why?

Cooking with a range of foods ensures that you get all the nutrients you need and keeps meals interesting. Use this guide to be inspired and to take a refresher about what our bodies need to be at their best.

Most supermarkets have all vegetables available year-round. However, buying in season ensures tastier, cheaper produce. These symbols are a guide for the best time.

Summer ☀️ Autumn 🍂 Winter ❄️ Spring 🌸



Beans ☀️ 🍂

Green beans are a perfect raw snack, crammed full of vitamins and fibre. Their vitamin K levels are huge and they are one of the few vegetables that contain omega-3 fatty acids. Cooking does diminish their benefits, so opt for quick cooking and add them to a dish at the last minute. Try oven-baked risotto, page 61.

Beetroot 🌸 ☀️ 🍂 ❄️

is known to have been eaten in the earliest Middle Eastern cultures. All of the plant can be eaten; the leaves are usually found in pre-mixed salad leaves. The bulb can be eaten raw, boiled or roasted. Nutritionally, it's a great source of fibre, potassium and folate. Try beetroot tzatziki, page 115.



Asparagus 🌸

Considered a delicacy by the Egyptians and Greeks, asparagus was used to treat urinary tract infections (some people still swear it affects their wee). It is high in folic acid and has good amounts of calcium, iron and fibre. Slice it finely for stir-fries, or microwave it whole and use as a posh dipper with hummus. Try asparagus rolls, page 110.

Avocado 🌸 ☀️ 🍂

The buttery texture of avocado is due to its high level of mono-unsaturated fats, which gives it mixed reviews among nutritionists. Some claim the fat level is higher than can be justified; other folk prefer to eat them infrequently to benefit from the high quantities of minerals and vitamins. Avocado is invaluable in healthy, kid-friendly dips and salads. Try beef & lentil fajitas, page 26.

Broccoli 🍂 ❄️

A nutritional superfood containing mountains of everything good, such as most vitamins including K, minerals and anti-cancer flavonoids. Smuggle in as much as possible. Try cheesy pots, page 64.



VITAMIN K is essential for assisting blood clotting and the absorption of calcium. Babies are injected with it at birth to boost newborn levels. **ALSO FOUND IN** avocado, beans, spinach, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and kiwifruit.

Traffic light swirls

These little munchies are perfect for parties - a nice yummy crunch with a few vegies thrown in.

3 sheets frozen
puff pastry

Red

½ cup roasted
capsicums

½ cup semi-dried
tomatoes

Amber

125g can creamed corn

1 small carrot, peeled,
grated

Handful of grated
cheese

Green

2–3 tbsp pesto

1 small zucchini, grated

1 egg, whisked,
for glazing

Preheat oven to 200°C. Line two baking trays with baking paper.

Separate the pastry sheets and leave for a few minutes to thaw.

For the red, use a stick blender to blitz together the capsicum and tomato. Spread over one pastry sheet.

For the amber, use a stick blender to blitz together the corn and carrot. Spread over one pastry sheet. Scatter over the cheese.

For the green, spread the pesto over the remaining pastry sheet. Scatter over the zucchini.

Use the plastic backing on the pastry sheets to help roll them up into long rolls. Discard the plastic backing. Cut the rolls into 15–20mm slices. Place the slices on the trays (so they look like little sushi rolls). Brush with the egg. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until golden.

MAKES 30

Morning prep plan

1. Make the rolls, cover firmly with plastic wrap and refrigerate (they will keep in the fridge for 24 hours).

2. That night, remove wrap, cut into slices and bake as directed.



Rate it
☆☆☆☆☆
Comments



EXAMPLE

TIME ON YOUR SIDE
Making these ahead is best
- they're easier to slice
after a couple of hours
firming in the fridge.



Pumpkin, corn & lentil soup

Red lentils are the holy grail of vegie-smuggling recipes. It took about 18 months to find a recipe that the kids loved. Enjoy!

1 kg butternut pumpkin,
peeled, chopped into
1.5cm cubes

Olive oil

1–2 tsp Moroccan
spice mix

1 onion, finely chopped

1 tsp minced garlic

1 litre good-quality
chicken stock

¼ cup red lentils, picked
over, rinsed

420g can creamed corn

Baguette

Grated cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 220°C.

Line a baking tray with baking paper and top with the pumpkin in a single layer. Drizzle with oil and as much spice mix as suits your family. Toss to combine and bake for 15–20 minutes until the pumpkin is soft but without too much colour.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tbsp oil in a large saucepan over medium–low heat. Add the onion and cook for 6–8 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Add the pumpkin, stock and lentils to the pan. Stir well and cover. Bring to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes until the lentils are tender.

Stir through the corn and black pepper. Remove from the heat and use a stick blender to blend until creamy.

Slice the baguette, scatter with cheddar and grill under a preheated grill on medium until it is melted and golden. Cut some slices into cubes and keep some whole.

Serve the soup in cute bowls, with both cheesy cubes hidden throughout and a large slice on top.

SERVES 2 ADULTS & 2 KIDS

Storage

Keep the soup in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 48 hours. Cook the cheesy bread slices as you reheat the soup in the microwave.





Rate it



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MELT THE CHEESE on the bread under the grill.
Keep the underneath untoasted so the soup soaks in.

Cauliflower & haloumi pancakes with roast tomato sauce

The haloumi is a flavour zap that hides a good amount of cauliflower. Find besan (chickpea) flour at health food shops.

4 tomatoes (try roma),
halved

Olive oil

Dried Italian herbs

1½ cups cauliflower
florets

½ cup self-raising flour

½ cup besan
(chickpea) flour

½ tsp baking powder

4 spring onions,
thinly sliced

1 tbsp chopped herbs
(parsley and chives
are good)

2 eggs

1 cup milk

100g haloumi, grated
(or finely diced)

½ cup grated parmesan
cheese

Olive oil

Lettuce and cucumber
slices, to serve

Preheat oven to 180°C.

For the tomato sauce, place the tomatoes on a baking tray. Drizzle with oil, sprinkle with the herbs and season with a little salt and lots of black pepper. Bake for 40 minutes. Cool slightly then blitz with a stick blender.

For the pancakes, steam or microwave the cauliflower until soft. Chop or blitz the cauliflower to a texture that suits your family. Finely chopped suits mine.

Sift the flours and baking powder into a large mixing bowl. Add the cauliflower, spring onion and herbs.

Whisk the eggs lightly and add the milk. Stir into the dry ingredients. Add the haloumi, parmesan and black pepper and combine well.

Heat a large frying pan over medium heat. Add a little oil to lightly grease. Dollop large spoonfuls of the mixture into the pan. Cook for 2–3 minutes until the tops are bubbling. Turn and cook the other side for another minute or two until golden and cooked through. Repeat with the remaining mixture.

Serve the pancakes with lettuce and cucumber slices and drizzled with the tomato sauce.

MAKES 12–14

Storage

Store the sauce and the cooked pancakes in separate airtight containers in the fridge for up to 48 hours. Reheat both in the microwave until piping hot.





Rate it



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MEAT-FREE MONDAY Choosing to eat a vegetarian meal once a week has huge benefits for the environment.



Rate it



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You can easily adapt this recipe to suit your family's tastebuds. Try dried apple, figs and hazelnut meal.

Fruit bikkies

These are a quick and fun recipe, perfect for kids who want to get into the kitchen for a bit of sifting and mixing time.

1 cup self-raising flour

¼ cup brown sugar

½ cup rolled oats

½ cup All-Bran
(or bran flakes)

½ cup currants

½ cup finely chopped
dried pear

½ cup pitted dates,
finely chopped

½ cup flaked almonds

50g unsalted butter,
melted

140g tub apple puree

1 tbsp honey

1 egg, lightly whisked

Preheat oven to 170°C. Line a biscuit tray with baking paper.

Sift the flour into a large mixing bowl. Add the sugar, oats, bran, dried fruit and almonds and mix lightly.

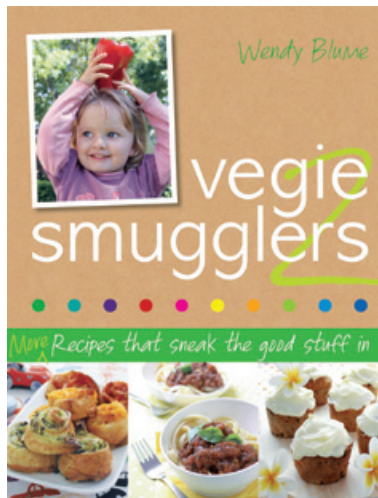
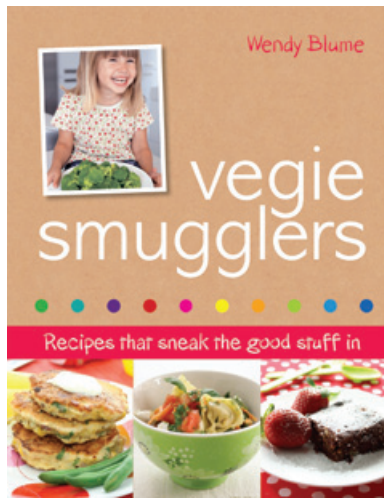
Pour the melted butter into the dry ingredients. Add the puree, honey and egg. Mix to combine well.

Use your hands (wear gloves – the mixture is sticky) or spoons to divide out ping pong-ball-sized amounts of mixture (this is a sticky but fun job). Place on the tray, flattening slightly. Allow room between each for spreading.

Bake for 12–15 minutes until golden. Place on a wire rack to cool.

MAKES 20





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