

# Summer Lovin'

## Super charge your Summer Food Service

Summer Food Service for supermarkets, hypers and hybrid wholesale/retail outlets is all about providing your shoppers with an array of ready- or partially prepared meal solutions that offer convenience, value-for-money, a break from their meal routines, exciting flavour combinations and tantalising displays.

Work with your suppliers and staff to generate ideas for your bakery, fresh produce, salad bar, deli, hot food, takeaway and HMR, as well as your fish, poultry, and meat counters. You can also extend the concept and sales opportunities to your cheese bar, cold beverages and fresh produce departments.

To attract and retain customers, consider increasing your convenience and looking at product innovation, with take-and-bake meals, pre-packaged meals, and pre-prepped ingredients for those consumers who still want to cook at home but prefer to spend less time to spend on meal preparation.

Developing and advertising fresh and exciting summer menus can help shoppers plan ahead and provide meal inspiration, as well as opportunities for your store to cross-merchandise across departments.



Image courtesy of Sunsetoned, Pexels

### **Convenience, comfort food, bolder flavours and exotic dishes**

Even before the pandemic, buyer behaviour studies and consumer analysis showed that time-constrained shoppers are eager for convenience.

This is not a new trend, but still one that has great influence. The convenience factor includes child- and family-friendly meals as well as celebratory options for fancier feasts. Comfort food that doesn't take hours of prep continues to gain popularity, from pulled pork to southern fried chicken, rack of lamb, and beef Wellington.

In addition to this, post-pandemic consumers are craving bolder flavours and exotic dishes. They want to eat the world, but they no longer have hours of lockdown time on their hands to create these dishes. Asian-inspired salads, sushi, and tapas with a middle eastern flair are popular choices for assembling at home or as ready-made deli purchases. These trends can be incorporated into your Summer Food Service offering to deliver innovation and pique the interest of your customers.

The challenge here is understanding your demographic – do you keep it safe and stick to traditional or well-known dishes, branch out with exciting and unexpected dishes, or offer a combination of both that speaks to a range of shoppers?

Up to date data and effective analytics are crucial to keeping track of the ever-changing needs and desires of today's consumer, and will allow you to tailor-make your Summer Food Service offer accordingly.





Serves: 6  
Preparation time: 10 minutes  
Cooking time: 30 minutes

## GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Drumsticks and Thighs

### INGREDIENTS

#### Chicken:

- 12 Pieces Goldi Mixed Portions
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) Chicken spice, you can substitute with half a cube of chicken/veg stock, optional
- 1 cup (250ml) Amasi

### INGREDIENTS

#### Tomato Relish:

- 1 Tbsp (15ml) oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 3 tomatoes diced, or 1 can of tomatoes
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1 tsp (5ml) of sugar
- 1 tsp (5ml) of salt
- To serve, 8 Slices of stale bread

## AMASI BRAAIED CHICKEN WITH CHARRED LEFTOVER BREAD & TOMATO RELISH

### Method:

#### Chicken:

In a bowl, combine amasi and chicken spice, or ½ stock cube if using. Mix until the chicken spice is incorporated. Add the chicken pieces to the amasi and evenly coat. Marinate for 2 hours, and a minimum of 30 minutes.

Remove chicken from marinade, shake off any excess marinade, but keep the amasi for basting. Over a medium hot fire, place chicken bone side down. Cook for 12 minutes (if possible covered). Turn chicken, baste, and cook for a further 8 minutes. (to test if the fire is ready; hold your hand above the coals for 5 - 8 seconds, if you have to pull your hand away sooner, the fire is too hot.)

While the chicken is cooking, make your tomato relish. In a cast iron pan over the fire, or on a stove, add oil to the pan, and gently fry onions for 8 minutes, until golden in colour.

Add your chopped tomatoes, sugar, salt and grated carrots and let simmer for about 2 minutes. Lightly char bread over the fire.

To serve, add a dollop of the relish to bread and top off with chicken.



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## Summer Foods: an array of opportunities

Summer in South Africa calls for outdoor entertaining, festive foods, fresh dishes on hot and muggy nights, spices to add some heat on rainy days, and load shedding-friendly meals.

Fresh produce is, of course, key, but for many consumers, chilled, frozen, and even canned options are more budget-friendly and longer lasting. Pre-mixed spices, spice pastes and cook-in sauces are convenient and bring that touch of excitement that many home-cooks are looking to add to their kitchen, while a fresh herb offering gives your shoppers more choice. Optimising ready-made and deli dishes for load shedding mealtimes for the whole family should also be a priority.

South Africa is the braai nation, and shisa nyama truly kicks into a higher gear in the warmer (and in some instances, much wetter) months. Many South Africans eschew traditional end-of-year festivities in favour of a braai, and some have even been known to braai their Turkey on Christmas Day.

With the price of meat increasing steadily, in-store butcheries are including cheaper cuts of meat alongside their premium offerings, and bulk-buying promotions are becoming more and more popular.

At the same time, consumers who can afford it are looking for high-end cuts as well as grass-fed, free-range, antibiotic-free meat. Ready prepared, deboned, marinated braai meats are a highly desirable summer food, as are marinades, rubs, and spices for those braai masters with a little more time on their hands.

Image courtesy of Township Economy\_Stories by Thuletho Zwane



Globally, we are seeing a rise in vegetarian and flexitarian diets. Braai-loving consumers looking to reduce their animal-based protein consumption are happy to try meat-free braai alternatives and can often use many of the same condiments and spices that meat lovers enjoy.

By including these options near or alongside a braai display, retailers can take advantage of cross merchandising and shared displays. Consumers are becoming increasingly open to new tastes and flavours for their braai recipes and there are opportunities to offer a range of ready-to-braai starters, mains, breads, and desserts, with tempting vegetarian options such as halloumi kebabs, stuffed butternut, or mushrooms and vegetables in foil finding their way onto the braai grill.

Fish braais are not as common as meat braais, but consumers are becoming more willing to trust in-store fish mongers when it comes to whole fish for the braai, prawns and other seafood. As these are not traditional braai or festive season solutions for most consumers, it would be helpful to provide recipe suggestions which have the benefit of bolstering sales in other departments as well.

Your fish counter will have many offerings for summer entertaining, so optimise this value through signage that tell your customers what you have and how they can use it, such as scallops, fresh calamari, shrimps, mussels and clams, which have all the makings of a traditional seafood paella or pasta.

Seafood is an excellent summer food option, and it pairs very well with fresh flavours such as citrus. Fish also features heavily in Asian and Mediterranean



dishes and can be used as a standout ingredient in South American and European recipes as well, making it a versatile summer protein for your shoppers

### Store design and Summer product displays

When it comes to your Summer Food Service, don't underestimate the power of fresh fruit and vegetables, smoothies, pressed juices, vitamin shots, and chilled displays, which are visually incredibly attractive and have significant health and nutrition appeal.

Use these bright colours and natural, interesting shapes to complement senses such as smell and taste to catch the attention of your shoppers. This means ensuring your lighting is optimal and your chillers, fridges, freezers, and fresh produce stands look sleek, clean, and contemporary.

The aim is to provide a comfortable, enticing shopping experience. While natural lighting is not always an option, improved LED lighting can mimic natural lighting to bring out the best in your merchandise.

A market-style shopping experience does require more space for product displays, but it has been proven to encourage browsing and impulse buys, while also slowing shoppers down. Subtle flooring patterns can also guide and direct consumers, to maximise those enticing product displays.

### Food safety and hygiene – keeping consumers and staff safe during the hot Summer months

Many of the health and hygiene procedures put in place during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic remain relevant today.

Image courtesy of OBC North Park Mall



Cleaning standards underwent a much-needed overhaul, and consumers have become accustomed to a higher standard of cleanliness. This is a good thing, as even a perceived lack of hygiene can cost a store business. The hotter months of Summer create more opportunities for foodborne germs to thrive and particular attention must be paid to the integrity of your food chain, from delivery to sell by dates.

All staff should be educated on the dangers of cross-contamination, and packers should know to pack meat, poultry, and fish/seafood in separate bags. All departments selling ready- or partially ready prepared foods should be following a rigorous food safety protocol. Handwashing is an absolute necessity, and customers should be encouraged to sanitise their hands on entry into the store.

Staff must wear the appropriate protective clothing when handling food, and all prep and display areas should be 100% clean at all times. It is imperative, particularly when dealing with fresh produce and other food products, that any source of bad odour be identified and dealt with promptly, as this is something that can endanger your entire store.

### Online shopping: Summer Food Service, ready-made and delivered

Convenient, safe, and often benefitting from online-only deals and offers, online shopping is certainly here to stay. Most major supermarket groups have either initiated online shopping and delivery options or expanded on their already existing platform.

When it comes to ready meals, deli options, takeaways and other food service deliveries from your store, speed is of the essence. Retailers known for fast, efficient delivery with plenty of options on offer will certainly win out over slower, less efficient players.

Ensuring your online platform is user-friendly, reliable, and efficient plays a critical role in





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retaining online custom. This includes multiple payment options, an attractive and intuitive interface, and a responsive customer service team that is able to quickly resolve queries or complaints across the board, from pricing and payment to product availability and freshness, as well as any tech-related issues that may arise.

Communication with consumers is key to e-commerce success. However, while speed matters, other factors such as product integrity, no spills or leakage, and the correct order count just as much. It is imperative that packers and delivery drivers maintain food quality, contents, packaging, and safety.

### Load shedding and the impact on Food Services

Load shedding has had an undeniable impact on the retail sector. During summer months, the food service category is particularly at risk as the cold chain needs to be maintained, without interruption, in order to guarantee food safety. This requires an effective load shedding contingency plan to be in place, with a seamless transition from grid power to a power alternative.

It is important to include lighting in your load shedding management plan, as shoppers are deterred by darker spaces and not being able to clearly see the product or packing.

On a positive note, consumers looking for a dinner-during-load-shedding answer will look to readymade meals and dishes that can be prepared at home, using appliances that can be run on inverters and battery systems. For your

Image courtesy of OBC North Park Mall



Summer Food offering (and all year round), include microwave and air fryer meals, food that can be cooked or heated using gas stovetops, and of course, anything that can be braaied. Ready meals such as salads that can be eaten cold are, as always, popular during the hot summer months, and this is naturally a particular benefit when it comes to load shedding.

### Summer Food Service trends

Your Summer Food Service offering will be all the better if you include fun, refreshing, and innovative elements. Local fresh produce lends itself to bright, cheerful displays, and the health benefits of summer

crops are a real bonus when it comes to attracting consumers. Even the most traditional of dishes needs to be presented appealingly if you want to tempt your customers into making a purchase. The entire shopping experience comes into play, so supermarkets and retailers need to be at the top of their game in this fiercely competitive space. Staying abreast of current and upcoming trends is one way of doing this. These are the national and international trends and developments to watch.

International inspiration, from bold flavours and interesting ingredients to innovative recipe development, are part and parcel of the local South African market.

“ Load shedding has had an undeniable impact on the retail sector. During summer months, the food service category is particularly at risk as the cold chain needs to be maintained, without interruption – with a seamless transition from grid power to a power alternative – in order to guarantee food safety. ”



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In her article titled *Local tastemasters on African-inspired festive tables and future food trends*, Zodwa Kumalo-Valentine writes about several new international trends that we are already beginning to see on South African shores. These include “celebrating African roots, reclaiming spices, creating indigenous fusions, and restaurants at home.”

After the uncertainty of the last few years, consumers are turning to nostalgia to foster a sense of belonging. Festive fare is no different. Kumalo-Valentine writes, “That emotional connection we seek often finds expression in our need to make the default seven colours or boereboontjies and bobotie, but ‘our summer season allows our Christmas food to reflect our farming heritage,’ says Tandi Oosthuizen, head of e-commerce at Babylonstoren. ‘We can swap the cranberry sauce for the colder world of seasonal fresh berries such as blueberries and blackberries, and for fresh salads with sun-ripened tomatoes and basil, and pumpkin pie and malva pudding for thick slices of watermelon with mint, juicy plums and buffalo yoghurt [a Greek-style dense rich yoghurt made with buffalo milk] for dessert.’”

Seafood is a big part of the South African festive season, but a growing understanding of the issues around sustainable fishing, fish farming practices, and bycatch of other fish is causing consumers to shop more selectively. Retailers have an ethical responsibility to ensure their fish offering is SASSI Green (<https://wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-list/>) and has been sourced from sustainable fishing practices.

Hyperlocal or endemic foods and products are very popular amongst South African consumers.

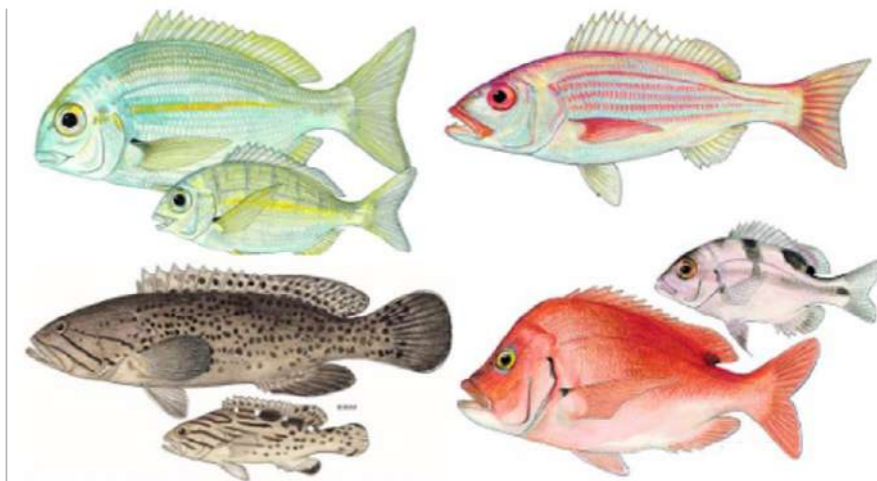
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“ Local fresh produce lends itself to bright, cheerful displays, and the health benefits of summer crops are a real bonus when it comes to attracting consumers. Even the most traditional of dishes needs to be presented appealingly if you want to tempt your customers into making a purchase. ”

This is from a sustainability perspective as well as the rediscovery of traditional flavours, ingredients, and dishes. From Karoo lamb to Kalahari truffles, kapokbos (wild rosemary), sour fig, and nastergal jam, searching for innovation in our own country is an obvious choice.

Plant-based alternatives are becoming more readily available and the range of food solutions on offer is astonishing. Pumpkin, butternut and sweet potatoes, nuts and seeds, legumes (chickpeas, lentils, beans) and grains (rice, quinoa, spelt), tofu – the list is endless and your Summer Food Services would do well to incorporate solutions that include these options. Consumers with certain dietary restrictions, as well as those looking to reduce their environmental impact and live more sustainably, are driving growth in this sector. This trend seems set to continue across all consumer segments. **SR**



Find out about sustainable fishing practices\_Image courtesy of <https://wwfsassi.co.za/sassi-list/>



**Ann Baker-Keulemans** is a highly experienced B2B and B2C journalist, writing on topics related to business, lifestyle, technology, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature (British and Commonwealth) and Media Studies and is a member of the Golden Key Honour Society. Contact [annbk@wilkinsross.co.za](mailto:annbk@wilkinsross.co.za) | [www.wilkinsrossglobal.com](http://www.wilkinsrossglobal.com)





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Cooking time 90 minutes | Serves 4–6

**Ingredients**

**QUICHE:**

- Sump 500 g
- Water 1,5 litre
- Vegetable stock 1,5 litre
- Virgin olive oil 2 Tbsp (30 ml)
- Medium onion, chopped 1
- Garlic cloves, thinly sliced 2
- Thyme 1 Tbsp
- Mushrooms, cut in quarters 250 g
- Lucky Star Middlecut 2 cans (400 g each)
- Fresh cream 1 cup (250 ml)
- Dill or fennel 1 Tbsp
- Orange zest or juice 1 Tbsp (optional)
- Butter 2 Tbsp (30 ml)
- Parmesan cheese or any hard cheese 100 g
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Method**

- Soak the samp in 1 litre of water for at least 2 hours, or preferably overnight.
- Drain the water & rinse with the remaining 500ml water, rubbing the samp between flat palms while removing the kernel coating.
- In a deep heavy-based pot, pour in samp and cover with 1-litre vegetable stock and bring to the boil.
- Lower the heat to medium and cook samp till al dente, topping up with stock and stirring occasionally, until all the stock has been fully absorbed.
- In a medium saucepan over medium heat add oil and fry onion for 5 minutes, add the mushrooms, garlic, salt, pepper, orange zest and cook for a further 3 minutes, then add to the fish together with the cream and simmer for a further 5 minutes, while stirring occasionally.
- Add orange juice and stir till well combined (optional).
- Top with butter and parmesan cheese and serve.



**Chicken, green pepper and onion kebab, with flatbread**

Prep time 20 min  
Cook time 20 min  
Serves 2

Goldi's perfectly portioned kebabs are an easy braai day essential.

**Ingredients**

- 1kg Goldi Chicken Kebabs
- 2 onions, quartered
- 2 green peppers, cut into 2 cm cubes
- 2 Tbsp (30ml) oil
- 1 ¼ cup (180g) Flour
- 1 tsp (5ml) salt
- 2 tsp (10ml) baking powder
- 4 Tbsp (60 ml) oil
- 150ml Amasi

**FLATBREAD**

- To make flatbread, combine dry ingredients in a bowl and mix.
- Make a well in the centre and add amasi and oil.
- Slowly incorporate until a dough is formed, and knead for 5 minutes. The dough will be wetter than regular bread dough.
- Let the dough rise for 10 minutes.
- Divide dough into 6 portions and roll out to about 0,5–1 cm thickness.
- Dry fry the flatbread for 3 minutes a side. Flatbread can also be cooked on the fire for some extra smokey flavour.

**Method**

- Remove the chicken from the skewer.
- To make kebab, start by skewering onion, then chicken, followed by pepper. Repeat this process until you have 4 pieces of chicken on each skewer.
- Before cooking kebabs, oil the grill.
- Add the chicken to grill for 25–30 minutes, flipping every 5 minutes to keep it from burning.
- Remove and serve with flatbread and coleslaw.





### Broccoli and pea slaw

Prep 4 min | Cook 0 min | Serves 10

#### Ingredients

- 3 cups Broccoli
- 1 tin KOO Fresh Garden Peas
- 1 small Purple Cabbage, shredded
- 1 small Green Cabbage, shredded
- 1 Onion, sliced
- 2 cups Spinach, shredded

#### HONEY MUSTARD DRESSING:

- Lemon, zest and juice
- ¼ cup Oil
- 1 tsp Salt
- ½ tsp Pepper
- 1 tsp Mustard
- ½ cup Yogurt
- ½ cup Crosse & Blackwell Tangy Mayonnaise

#### To make the dressing

- Blend together all the ingredients and season to taste.
- In a large bowl stir together the broccoli, cabbage, onion, spinach and peas.
- Then stir in the dressing to coat the salad evenly and serve.



### Sasko black forest pancake cake

Prep 1 hour | Serves 8–10

#### FOR THE PANCAKES

- 500 g Sasko pancake mix
- 50 g cocoa powder
- 2 extra large eggs
- 1 litre water
- 50 ml vegetable oil
- 40 ml brown vinegar

#### FOR THE FILLING AND TOPPING

- 400 g cherry jam
- 80 g milk chocolate (coarsely grated)
- Icing sugar for dusting
- Fresh or canned cherries for garnish (optional)
- Extra grated chocolate for garnish (optional)

#### FOR THE CRÈME FRAICHE ICING

- 250 g crème fraiche
- 50 g castor sugar
- 5 ml vanilla extract

#### Method

- Mix the cocoa powder with Sasko pancake mix and continue with the recipe as per instruction on the package. Set the chocolate pancakes aside to cool.
- To make the icing, whisk the crème fraiche, sugar and vanilla in a bowl until thickened.
- To assemble the cake, start with one chocolate pancake and spread some cherry jam onto it, following with a sprinkle of grated chocolate. Stack another chocolate pancake on top and continue until all the pancakes are stacked with a jam and chocolate filling in between. Do not spread jam on the top layer of the pancake stack.
- Make sure all the pancakes are stacked neatly and tightly, and keep cold in the fridge until ready to finish.
- If the edges of the cake are uneven, trim off the excess to create a smooth and neat edge.
- If using canned cherries, be sure to drain and dry the cherries on paper towel before using.
- Using a palette knife, spread the icing evenly on top of the pancake stack and decorate with cherries and grated chocolate (optional).
- Slice and serve with extra icing on the side (optional).





Cook time 45 minutes | Serves 4

**Ingredients**

**MEATBALLS**

- Lucky Star Pilchards in Tomato Sauce 2 cans (400 g each)
- Eggs 2
- Breadcrumbs 1 cup (250 ml)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh basil to garnish (optional)
- Parmesan shavings to garnish (optional)

**SAUCE**

- Olive oil 2 Tbsp (30 ml)
- Medium onion, thinly sliced 1
- Spaghetti 300 g
- Garlic cloves, crushed 2
- Whole tomatoes in sauce 1 can (410 g)
- Pinch of salt

**Method**

**MEATBALLS:**

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Remove only the pilchards from the can, reserving the tomato sauce, and place them into a bowl.
- Debone and flake. Combine with remaining pilchard meatball ingredients and mash with a fork.
- Roll a tablespoon of mixture into small meatballs with your hands.



**Garlic roasted chicken thighs with bacon, butter beans & green beans**

Prep time 15 min | Cook time 45 min | Serves 2

**Ingredients:**

- 1 x County Fair Chicken Thighs (4pcs)
- 2 Tbsp (30ml) olive oil
- 50g butter, melted
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 100g diced bacon
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) butter
- 1 x 400g tin butter beans, drained
- 150g green beans, trimmed and steamed
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and milled black pepper
- Fresh parsley, roughly chopped

**Method:**

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Season the chicken pieces with salt and pepper and place in a small roasting dish.
- Whisk the olive oil, butter, garlic and lemon juice and zest together. Pour over the chicken the place in the oven to roast for 40-45 minutes, until cooked through and golden.
- While the chicken is cooking, add the bacon to a pan over a medium heat and allow to cook, stirring often until golden and crisp. Add the butter to the pan, and once melted, add the butter beans and green beans. Sauté for 5 minutes then season with the juice and zest of the lemon and a generous sprinkle of black pepper.
- Garnish with freshly chopped parsley. Serve the roasted chicken thighs with the warm bacon and bean side.



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### Sasko cheesy masala bread and egg bhurji

15 minutes | Serves 2

#### Ingredients

- 4 slices Sasko low GI soy & linseed white bread, cut into cubes
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp masala spice mix
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 tbsp spring onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### Method

- In a bowl, beat the eggs, milk and masala spice until well combined.
- Heat up a non-stick pan over medium and add the butter.
- Fry the Sasko low gi soy & linseed white bread cubes in the butter for a few minutes before adding the egg mixture.
- Once the egg mixture has been added, scramble everything together to combine and cook.
- Add the cheese and spring onion, season with salt and pepper and take the pan off the heat. Let the cheese slowly melt.
- Sprinkle the parsley over the top and serve



#### Ingredients:

- 1 x County Fair Drumsticks (6pcs)
- ½ tsp (3ml) salt
- pinch ground black pepper
- 1 tsp (5ml) dried oregano
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 3 Tbsp (45ml) olive oil
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp (15ml fresh oregano, finely chopped (or dried)
- 1 cup (250ml) basmati rice
- 2½ cups (625ml) chicken stock
- 1 lemon, plus extra slices for garnish
- 150g green olives
- 100g feta cheese
- A small handful fresh parsley, chopped

### One-tray Greek chicken with rice and olives

Prep time 15 minutes | Cook time 40 mins | Serves 4

#### Method:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- Season the chicken drumsticks with salt, black pepper, oregano and lemon zest.
- Heat the olive oil in a skillet or heavy-based pan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken skin side down and caramelize until golden; turn over and repeat on the other side. Remove from the pan and reduce the heat to low.
- Add the onion to the same pan and sauté for 5 minutes until slightly softened. Add the garlic and oregano and sauté for 3 minutes more.
- Add the rice and chicken stock, stir to combine, and place the chicken pieces on top.
- Place the skillet in the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, until the rice and chicken are cooked through.
- Once cooked, remove from the oven. Grate over the lemon zest and squeeze over the juice. Scatter over the olive and crumble the feta. Finish with freshly chopped parsley and lemon slices. Serve. **SR**





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