



Macular
Disease
Foundation
AUSTRALIA

Macula Menu

Mediterranean-style dishes for eye health



More than one 1.5 million Australians are affected by age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and it is the country's leading cause of vision loss. That's one in seven Australians over the age of 50 and as our population ages, the numbers are increasing.

There is no cure for AMD. While there are treatments available in Australia for neovascular AMD (wet AMD), and new treatments in the pipeline for people living with geographic atrophy (dry AMD), there is some evidence that shows that maintaining a macula-friendly diet may assist in slowing the progression of the disease.

My father had AMD and lost his central vision. Given that I have a 50% familial risk of developing macular degeneration, I have been incredibly conscious of my food choices for a long time, so much so that in 2009, Vanessa Jones and I wrote *Eating for Eye Health: The Macular Degeneration Cookbook* to highlight the foods that promote good eye health and help reduce the risk of age-related macular degeneration. You'll find one of these recipes in this edition of Macula Menu.

The recipes in this booklet reflect the latest nutrition research undertaken by Macular Disease Foundation Australia, which provides simple and practical advice for an overall healthy eating pattern that helps lower your risk of other long-term health conditions. The latest research also reaffirms the importance of consuming fish containing omega-3 fatty acids, and the Foundation recommends people should aim to eat fish at least twice a week.

In this Mediterranean edition of Macular Disease Foundation's Macula Menu series, we have celebrity chefs Silvia Colloca, Luca Ciano, and nutritionist Rosemary Stanton contributing delicious eye-healthy recipes from their collections. Additionally, we are joined by Shane Somerville, a community member who is legally blind due to macular dystrophy, as well as macular disease researchers, Professor Alice Pebay, Dr Xavier Hadoux, and MDFA's CEO, Dr Kathy Chapman.

We hope you enjoy these eye-healthy recipes.



Ita Buttrose, AC OBE
Patron
Macular Disease Foundation Australia



Recipe by Ita Buttrose, AC OBE

Poached Salmon with Grilled Asparagus and Poached Eggs

Serves 2

Ingredients

- 4 spears asparagus, woody stalks trimmed
- Olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 200g poached salmon, flaked
- 2 soft poached eggs
- 25g parmesan cheese, shaved
- ½ bunch chervil, leaves washed, picked and chopped

Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to moderate, 180°C (350°F) Gas Mark 4.
2. Lightly blanch the asparagus for 4 minutes. Drain and refresh in cold water.
3. Pre-heat the griddle plate until smoking. Coat the asparagus in olive oil, a little salt and pepper and cook on griddle plate for 5 minutes. Place the salmon on a tray and reheat in the oven for 5 minutes or until warmed through.
4. Arrange the asparagus on warmed plates and top with the salmon. Place the poached egg beside the salmon. Sprinkle the shaved parmesan over the egg, then sprinkle the chopped chervil over the entire dish and serve.

How to perfectly poach an egg

Bring a small saucepan of water and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar to the simmer.

Crack an egg into a bowl and gently slide it into simmering water. Allow to cook for three minutes and remove with a slotted spoon.

Note

Use a vegetable peeler to shave the cheese. Chervil is not available all year round especially in the warmer months; parsley is a perfect substitute.

Poached eggs need to be quite soft when serving with fish and vegetables. When poaching eggs to serve on toast for breakfast, cook them for at least 5 minutes or to your liking.



Recipe by Silvia Colloca



Lemon and Caper Chicken Scaloppine with Cucumber and Avocado Salad

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 4 x chicken breast fillets, pounded to ½ cm thick
- 3 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- plain flour (or rice flour for a gluten free version) for dredging
- salt and pepper for seasoning
- juice and zest of 2 lemons
- 1 tablespoon baby capers in vinegar, rinsed

Salad

- 1-2 cucumbers cut into cubes
- 1 large Hass avocado cut into cubes
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons of extra -virgin olive oil
- juice of ½ lemon
- salt and pepper for seasoning

Instructions

1. Start by mixing avocado, cucumbers, olive oil, lemon juice, and radishes in bowl, season with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Dredge the chicken in flour and shake off the excess.
3. Heat up the oil and 1 tablespoon of butter over medium heat, add the chicken, season with salt, pepper, add capers and sear on both sides for 1–2 minutes or until golden.
4. Pour in the lemon juice and the second tablespoon of butter and cook over medium-low heat for 1 minute or until the sauce is thick.
5. Serve the scaloppine drizzled with sauce and with the avocado and cucumber salad.

With thanks to Essteele Cookware
www.essteele.com.au



Recipe by Luca Ciano

Insalata di Tonno e Fagioli – Borlotti Bean Salad with Tuna and Onion

Serves 4–5

Ingredients

- 250g dried borlotti beans or 400g tinned borlotti beans
- 1 onion, chopped to taste
- 1 celery stick, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, bruised or slightly crushed
- 1 rosemary sprig
- 1 bay leaf
- 185g tin of good quality tuna in olive oil, drained
- 1 red onion, halved, thinly sliced, or in rounds
- 80ml extra virgin olive oil
- Oiled oregano leaves to garnish
- 4-5 slices lightly toasted bread, for serving

Note

If using fresh borlotti beans, 6 hours soaking followed by 40 minutes cooking.

Instructions

1. If using dried beans, place beans in a large bowl, cover with water and soak for 6 hours, or overnight.
2. Drain beans and rinse well. Place in a large saucepan and add onion, celery, carrot, garlic, rosemary and bay leaf. Cover with water and bring to the boil on a high heat. Reduce heat to medium and cook for 40–45 minutes, until beans are tender. Drain, discarding vegetables and herbs.
3. If you're using tinned beans, drain and rinse under water.
4. Place beans in a bowl. Add tuna, red onion and oil. Season and toss to combine. Let stand for 10–20 minutes to allow the flavour to infuse.
5. Scatter oregano over the top and serve with toasted bread slices.

**Luca's Culinary Journey,
Three Generations of Italian
Family Cooking – by Luca Ciano,
New Holland Publishers
www.newhollandpublishers.com**



Recipe by Rosemary Stanton



Tabbouli

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup burghul (also called bulgur or cracked wheat)
- 1 ¼ cups boiling water
- 2 cups chopped parsley
- 1 cup chopped mint
- ½ cup finely sliced chives or spring onions
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- freshly ground black pepper
- 500g tomatoes, diced

Instructions

1. Place the burghul in a bowl. Pour over the boiling water, cover tightly and leave to cool (the water will be absorbed and the burghul will be quite dry).
2. Add the parsley, mint and chives (or spring onions) and mix gently using a fork.
3. Combine the oil, lemon juice and black pepper and pour over the burghul. Just before serving, add the tomatoes and mix gently with a fork.

Hummus

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup raw chickpeas*
- 4 cups water
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ⅓ cup tahini
- ¼ cup lemon juice

*If using cooked chickpeas, use 2 ½ cups. Start from instruction 3.

Instructions

1. Bring chickpeas and water to the boil. Cook for 1 minute, cover tightly, leave to stand for 1 hour. If leaving longer than 1 hour, place saucepan in refrigerator so that peas do not ferment.
2. Drain chickpeas and cover with fresh water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for 1 hour. Do not discard cooking liquid.
3. In a food processor or blender, process chickpeas with garlic, tahini and lemon juice, adding enough of the chickpeas cooking liquid to make a thick paste.



Recipe by Shane Somerville

One Pot Orecchiette

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 garlic gloves (crushed)
- 1 brown onion (sliced)
- 1 small red chilli chopped fine (optional)
- 1 red capsicum chopped
- 1 x 440g tin chickpeas drained and patted dry
- 2 teaspoons smokey paprika
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- Handful parsley (roughly chopped)
- Zest of 1 lemon (use fine grater on square grater or micro plane)
- 125 grams green (or black) olives chopped (get pitted ones from the supermarket deli)
- 1 punnet of cherry tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons of caster sugar
- 250 grams dried orecchiette pasta (they look like small ears)
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar (a squeeze of lemon juice is also ok if you don't have balsamic vinegar)
- 500ml vegetable stock (chicken stock is also fine)
- 1 bag spinach leaves
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Heat oil in the pan to medium high, add garlic, onion and chilli, capsicum, chickpeas, paprika, cumin and tomato paste and sauté for 12 minutes, stir regularly until chickpeas are brown. Reduce the heat if it gets too hot.
2. Add parsley, lemon zest, olives, cherry tomatoes and sugar and cook for 2 minutes stirring regularly.
3. Add dry pasta and stir, then add vinegar and stock.
4. Bring to a simmer and turn back heat to medium. Add a good pinch of salt and pepper. Cover with lid and cook for 12 – 14 minutes. (remove the lid for the last 5 minutes.)
5. Fold in bag of spinach leaves and cook for 2 minutes.
6. Serve.

Note

Double the recipe to serve 8 or to have some left overs.

**This dish is simple, tasty
and nutritious, and
cooks in one pot.**



**Recipe by Professor
Alice Pebay**



A take on Ratatouille

French-born Professor Alice Pebay, adds some twists to the traditional recipe by adding red chilli during cooking, dry raisins at the end, ginger and/or lemon myrtle for variation. Alice suggests serving this with whole grain rice (brown/red/wild blend all good) or other grains.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 eggplant, diced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 red capsicum, diced
- 1 yellow capsicum, diced
- 1 green capsicum, diced
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2–3 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (used in stages)
- 1 teaspoon Herbes de Provence (or mix of thyme, oregano, rosemary)
- Salt + black pepper

Optional flavour variations

- 1 small red chilli, finely chopped (add with onion – for heat)
- 1–2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated (add with onion – adds a warm, bright note)
- ¼–½ teaspoon dried lemon myrtle (add near end of cooking – citrusy lift)
- 2 tablespoons dry raisins (add right at the end – subtle sweetness)

Instructions

1. Prep eggplant (optional): salt lightly, let sit 10–15 minutes, rinse and pat dry – helps reduce bitterness and oil absorption.
2. Using a large pan or heavy pot, cook each vegetable separately:
 - Sauté eggplant in 1 tablespoon olive oil until soft and golden (8–10 minutes). Set aside.
 - Same for zucchini (5–7 minutes).
 - Then cook onion with garlic, and any/all of: chilli, ginger. Add capsicums. Cook until softened (10 minutes).
3. Return all veggies to pot. Add tomatoes and herbs. Stir gently. Cover and simmer low for 20–30 minutes.
4. Add raisins and lemon myrtle in last couple of minutes if using. You can add a little bit of water if veggies are dry or if things start to burn.
5. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve warm over rice.

Notes

- Ginger adds warmth and energy – great if craving something a bit brighter.
- Lemon myrtle brings a soft citrus layer, must be added at the end to retain flavour.
- Letting it sit for a few hours (or next day) deepens the flavour.
- Keeps well – fridge 3–4 days, freezer-friendly.



Recipe by
Dr Xavier Hadoux

Provençal Fish en Papillote

Serves 2

Ingredients

- 2 firm white fish fillets (e.g. snapper, barramundi) or salmon fillets (about 150–180 g each)
- 2 cups fresh spinach (or other dark leafy greens, such as kale)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved (or 1 large tomato, diced)
- ¼ cup pitted black olives, sliced
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced (optional if you like a stronger Provençal flavour)
- 2 teaspoons fresh herbs (e.g. thyme or rosemary), chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 sheets of baking paper or foil (large enough to wrap each fillet)

Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 200°C (390°F).
2. Prepare the Packets:
 - Place each fish fillet in the centre of a sheet of baking paper or foil.

- Arrange equal portions of spinach, cherry tomato halves, black olives, and red onion around (and on top of) each fillet.
 - Scatter the minced garlic and herbs.
 - Drizzle each portion with 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice.
 - Season lightly with salt and pepper.
3. Seal the Packets:
 - Fold the edges of the paper (or foil) over the fish and vegetables to form a sealed pouch (known as en papillote).
 - Crimp or fold the edges carefully to ensure steam is trapped inside during cooking.
 4. Bake:
 - Place both packets on a baking tray.
 - Bake for approximately 12–15 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish fillet (a thicker fillet might take a few minutes more).
 - The fish should be opaque and easily flake with a fork when done.
 5. Serve:
 - Carefully open the packets (watch out for hot steam!), then slide the contents on to a plate.
 - Spoon any juices over the top for extra flavour.
 - Serve with a side of wholegrain bread or a small portion of brown rice, plus an additional leafy green salad if you like.



Dr Kathy Chapman



One-pan Eggs and Capsicum

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 onions, sliced
- 1 capsicum de-seeded and sliced
- 1-2 red de-seeded chillies, optional
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1-2 teaspoons caster sugar
- 4 eggs
- small bunch parsley, roughly chopped
- 6 tablespoons thick, creamy yoghurt
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a heavy-based frying pan. Stir in the onions, capsicum and chillies.
2. Cook until they begin to soften. Add the tomatoes and sugar, mixing well. Cook until the liquid has reduced, season with salt and pepper.
3. Using a wooden spoon, create 4 pockets in the tomato mixture and crack the eggs into them.
4. Cover the pan and cook the eggs over a low heat until just set.
5. Beat the yoghurt with the garlic and season with salt and pepper.
6. Sprinkle with parsley and serve from the frying pan with a dollop of the garlic flavoured yoghurt.

No mess, no hassle. This one pan dish is perfect for breakfast, brunch, lunch or dinner. Red capsicum are high in vitamin C and eggs contain lutein and zeaxanthin.



Mediterranean Sardine Dip

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 100g sardines in oil, drained
- 110g soft cream cheese
- 30g chopped celery
- 40g red onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard
- wholegrain crackers or
- vegetables to serve

Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, combine sardines, cream cheese, celery, onion, dill, and mustard. Mix well.
2. Refrigerate, covered for up to two days.
3. Put mixture in a serving bowl and surround with vegetables to dip or wholegrain crackers.

Variations

Use vegetables to dip into the spread for a healthy snack.

Choose sardines with bones to increase your calcium.

Feeling like a healthy snack?

This dip contains Omega-3 rich sardines, which are great for eye health.

Whip up this dip and keep it in the fridge for when hunger strikes and you need an eye-healthy snack.

Serve with sliced vegetables to help reach your five serves of vegetables a day.



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