

## **December Meal Plan 1**

#### **OVERVIEW**

#### Here's what's on the dinner menu this week:

Day 1: Coconut Lime Chicken // White Rice // Roasted Zucchini

Day 2: Greek Vegetable Salad with Chickpeas // Yellow Rice

Day 3: Chicken and Rice Soup // Side Salad + House Dressing

Day 4: Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken // Thai Peanut Sauce

Day 5: Instant Pot Shrimp // Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls // Thai Peanut Sauce

(These links should be used for reference only. The step-by-step cooking instructions for each meal are below.)

#### **GET AHEAD ACTION PLAN**

Anytime you're in the kitchen, you should be doing SOMETHING. This **Get Ahead Action Plan** (**GAAP**) helps you do just that, whether it's dicing one extra onion or freezing an entire meal. Everything listed below is optional, therefore any extra ingredients are not included in the shopping list.

Be sure to update your shopping list accordingly if you choose to follow any GAAP ideas!

Day 1: Coconut Lime Chicken // White Rice // Roasted Zucchini

- 2x or 3x Coconut Lime Chicken for leftovers
- 3x or 4x White Rice for leftovers or to freeze
- 2x Roasted Zucchini for leftovers or to freeze

Day 2: Greek Vegetable Salad with Chickpeas // Yellow Rice

- 2x Greek Vegetable Salad with Chickpeas for leftovers
- Alternatively: 3x or 4x **Yellow Rice** (above for leftovers or to freeze)

Day 3: Chicken and Rice Soup // Side Salad + House Dressing

- 2x or 3x **Chicken and Rice Soup** for leftovers or to freeze
- 2x Side Salad for leftovers
- 2x or 3x **House Dressing** for leftovers

Tip: The House Dressing makes a great meat marinade!

Day 4: Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken // Thai Peanut Sauce

- 2x or 3x Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken for leftovers
- 3x or 4x **Thai Peanut Sauce** for leftovers

Day 5: Instant Pot Shrimp // Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls // Thai Peanut Sauce

- 2x or 3x **Instant Pot Shrimp** for leftovers
- 2x **Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls** for leftovers

## **WEEKLY**

## Mise En Place

#### **Instant Pot Whole Chicken**

- 1 5-6 lb whole chicken thawed or frozen
- 1 cup water
- 1 onion quartered
- 2 carrots cut in 2-inch pieces
- 2 celery ribs cut in 2-inch pieces
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 tsp coriander

#### White Rice

- 4 cups Jasmine rice
- 8 cups water
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 tsp salt

## Quinoa

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups quinoa

## **Dry Homemade Greek Salad Dressing**

- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp onion powder

#### **Coconut Lime Sauce**

- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 2 Tbsp fish sauce
- 1/4 cup full fat coconut milk (solid / creamy stuff in a can for a creamier sauce)
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp lemongrass paste (or fresh grated lemongrass, if you have access!)
- ½ jalapeño pepper ribs and seeds removed
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 bunch fresh mint

## Thai Peanut Sauce (2x)

- ½ cup peanut butter
- 4 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 4 Tbsp lime juice (about 1½ limes)
- 6 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce (I use liquid aminos)
- 2 tsp salt
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper (!)
- 2 inch fresh ginger sliced
- 2 Tbsp minced garlic (about 5–6 garlic cloves)
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 4 Tbsp honey
- ½ cup cilantro (1 bunch)

## **Vegetables**

- ½ red onion
- 2 onions
- 3 bell peppers
- 4 carrots
- 3 ribs celery
- 4 zucchinis
- 1 cucumber

- 2 heads broccoli
- 1 head purple cabbage

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Large baking sheet
- 2 medium saucepans (or Instant Pot)
- Small jar
- 16 oz mason jar
- Measuring cups + spoons
- Immersion blender (optional)

#### Step-by-Step

**1. Make the Chicken.** Place the vegetables in the bottom of the Instant Pot. Place the wire rack that came with the IP on top. Place the chicken on the wire rack. Add water to the bottom of the Instant Pot. Sprinkle the chicken liberally with seasonings.

Turn the pressure valve to "sealed." Press "manual" or "pressure cook," make sure the setting is on "high" and cook for 6 minutes per pound of bird. My bird was just over 5 pounds, so I set the timer for 30 minutes.

Make sure the "keep warm" function is NOT set and use the natural pressure release method. When the pressure valve is down, the chicken is done.

Shred the chicken with two forks. Place 2 cups in a large bowl for Day 1.

Reserve 2 cups for Day 3 and 2 cups for Day 4.

2. Start the White Rice. Fill a medium pot with 8 cups water and bring to a boil. Add 1 tsp salt, 4 Tbsp butter and allow the butter to melt. When the water has returned to a boil, stir in the rice. Let the water return to a light simmer. Stir again, cover the pot and turn the heat down to low.

Keep the rice simmering slightly, and keep the pot covered (you may have to peek after a few minutes to make sure the heat is at the correct temperature, but then let it cook, covered). Set a kitchen timer for 17 minutes and see if the rice is tender and all of the liquid is absorbed. It may take up to 25.

When the rice is cooked, turn off the heat and let it sit for another couple of minutes to finish absorbing any liquid. Take off the lid, fluff the rice with a fork and let it sit for another 2 minutes or so, so that some of the excess moisture in the rice dries off.

**3. Cook the Quinoa.** Measure the quinoa into a fine mesh sieve and thoroughly rinse the quinoa under running water for one full minute. Then place the rinsed quinoa into the Instant Pot inner pot. Add the water and place the inner pot into the Instant Pot. Place the lid on top and seal it, and turn the venting knob to "sealing."

Press "pressure cook" or "manual" on high and adjust the timer to 1 minute. Let the quinoa cook and when the timer goes off, let the pressure release on its own naturally. Place in the fridge to cool.

- 4. Make your Greek Salad Dressing by combining the dry ingredients in a small bowl or jar.
- **5. Make your Coconut Lime Sauce** with a food processor, blender, or immersion blender by mixing all ingredients.

Tip: Just do a quick rinse on whatever tool you use to combine ingredients since the Coconut Lime Sauce has similar ingredients to the Thai Peanut Sauce. (The Peanut will drastically change the Coconut Lime Sauce so it won't work in reverse order.)

**6. Make the Thai Peanut Sauce** by combining all ingredients except the cilantro. Stir well or use an (immersion) blender to mix.

#### Step 7: Prep your vegetables

- Bell Pepper: Dice 2 for Crunchy Quinoa Bowls
- Bell Pepper: Dice 1 for Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls
- Carrot: Slice 3 for Chicken and Rice Soup
- Carrot: Dice 1 for Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls
- Carrot: Set tips and tops (if you have them) in bone broth.
- Celery: Slice 3 ribs for Chicken and Rice Soup
- Celery: Set base in bone broth.
  - Tip: You can add a little more carrots and celery to the Chicken and Rice soup. You can also pack them in lunches with a fun dip like peanut butter or my Homemade Ranch Dressing so you don't waste the rest of the package.
- Zucchini: Cut 4 into ⅓ inch slices for Coconut Lime Chicken // White Rice // Zucchini

  Tip: For crunchier zucchini, lay zucchini on a kitchen towel and cover by folding the towel

  in half.. Store it on the bottom shelf of your fridge.

- Red Onion: Slice ½ red onion for Vegetable Greek Salad
  - Tip: Set end and peel aside to put in bone broth
- Onion: Slice 1 for Chicken and Rice Soup
- Onion: Dice 1 for Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken
- Onion: Set ends and peels aside to put in bone broth
  - Tip: These are a lot of onions to cut. Save your eyes by wearing swim goggles to prevent irritation, especially if you don't wear contacts.
- Cucumber: Dice 1 for Greek Vegetable Salad
- Cucumber: Slice 1 for Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken
- Broccoli: Dice 1 for Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls
- Purple Cabbage: Shred 3-4 cups for Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls

## Step-by-Step Cooking Instructions

## Day 1: Coconut Lime Chicken // White Rice // Roasted Zucchini

#### Mise en Place

#### **Instant Pot Whole Chicken**

- 1 5-6 lb whole chicken thawed or frozen
- 1 cup water
- 1 onion quartered
- 2 carrots cut in 2-inch pieces
- 2 celery ribs cut in 2-inch pieces
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 tsp coriander

#### **Coconut Lime Sauce**

- ½ cup lime juice
- 2 Tbsp fish sauce
- 1/4 cup full fat coconut milk (solid / creamy stuff in a can for a creamier sauce)
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp lemongrass paste (or fresh grated lemongrass, if you have access!)
- ½ jalapeño pepper ribs and seeds removed
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 bunch fresh mint

## White Rice (2x for Day 2 + Day 3)

- 4 cups Jasmine rice
- 8 cups water
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 tsp salt

#### **Roasted Zucchini**

- 4 zucchini sliced
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Kitchen shears
- 2 cookie sheets
- Aluminum foil
- Cooling rack
- Measuring cups + spoons
- Large stock pot or Instant Pot
- Food processor or blender
- Meat thermometer

#### Step-by-Step

**1. Make the Chicken.** Place the vegetables in the bottom of the Instant Pot. Place the wire rack that came with the IP on top. Place the chicken on the wire rack. Add water to the bottom of the Instant Pot. Sprinkle the chicken liberally with seasonings.

Turn the pressure valve to "sealed." Press "manual" or "pressure cook," make sure the setting is on "high" and cook for 6 minutes per pound of bird. My bird was just over 5 pounds, so I set the timer for 30 minutes.

Make sure the "keep warm" function is NOT set and use the natural pressure release method. When the pressure valve is down, the chicken is done.

Shred the chicken with two forks. Place 2 cups in a large bowl for dinner tonight.

Reserve 2 cups for Day 3 and 2 cups for Day 4.

Tip: It's faster to debone a chicken when it's still warm verses when the carcass has been refrigerated.

If desired, try making your own bone broth by setting the carcass in a stock pot or Instant Pot with the veggie scraps (like kale stems, onion peels and ends, carrot tops, celery base, and zucchini ends.) It'll work perfectly for Day 3's stock.

**2. Start the White Rice.** Fill a medium pot with 8 cups water and bring to a boil. Add 1 tsp salt, 4 Tbsp butter and allow the butter to melt. When the water has returned to a boil, stir in the rice. Let the water return to a light simmer. Stir again, cover the pot and turn the heat down to low.

Keep the rice simmering slightly, and keep the pot covered (you may have to peek after a few minutes to make sure the heat is at the correct temperature, but then let it cook, covered).

Set a kitchen timer for 17 minutes and see if the rice is tender and all of the liquid is absorbed. It may take up to 25. When the rice is cooked, turn off the heat and let it sit for another couple of minutes to finish absorbing any liquid. Take off the lid, fluff the rice with a fork and let it sit for another 2 minutes or so, so that some of the excess moisture in the rice dries off.

Serve the rest with dinner tonight.

3. Cook the Zucchini. Preheat oven to 450F.

On a large cutting board, slice your zucchini. Place in a large bowl and toss with melted coconut oil.

Place on a large baking sheet and roast for 15-20 minutes. Flip about halfway through.

- **4. Make your Coconut Lime Sauce** with a food processor, blender, or immersion blender by mixing all ingredients. Pour about half the sauce over 2 cups shredded chicken while the rest of dinner cooks. Serve the rest at the table over the chicken and rice.
- **5. When the White Rice is done**, set  $\frac{1}{3}$  aside for Day 2 and  $\frac{1}{3}$  aside for Day 3.

Tip: If you have time, gather Turmeric Rice ingredients and let the flavors meld overnight in that container. For your reference, they are:

- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp onion powder
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp thyme
- ½ tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1 bay leaf

## Day 2: Greek Vegetable Salad with Chickpeas // Yellow Rice

#### Mise en Place

#### **Yellow Rice**

- 2 cups of Reserved White Rice
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp onion powder
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp thyme
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 1 bay leaf

## **Greek Vegetable Salad**

- 1 large English cucumber sliced (about 2 cups)
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes halved (about 1 cup)
- ½ red onion sliced (about ½ cup)
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup feta cheese
- 1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

## **Dry Homemade Greek Salad Dressing**

- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp onion powder

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Stock pot
- Strainer
- Measuring cups + spoons
- Can opener
- Large bowl

## Step-by-Step

- **1. Mix your Turmeric Rice** spices into the reserved White Rice. Reheat it with 2 Tbsp water in a stock pot.
- **2. Slice your vegetables** for the Vegetable Greek Salad. Place in a large bowl. Drain and rinse chickpeas before adding.
- **3. Make your Homemade Greek Salad Dressing.** In a small bowl, mix the dry seasoning blend:
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp onion powder

Add 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar and 1 Tbsp olive oil to the dry mix. Mix into the Greek Vegetable Salad and toss so the vegetables and chickpeas are coated. Top with feta cheese.

**4. Stir the White Rice and serve** when it's heated alongside your Greek Vegetable Salad.

## Day 3: Chicken and Rice Soup // Side Salad + House Dressing

#### Mise en Place

## **Chicken and Rice Soup**

- 3 large carrots cut into coins (about 2 cups)
- 3 celery ribs sliced (about 2 cups)
- 1 onion diced (about 1 cup)
- 6-8 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups cooked rice (use reserved portion)
- 2 cups reserved shredded chicken
- 4 cups loosely packed spinach
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- 1½ tsp onion powder
- 1½ tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 2 oz Parmesan cheese, shredded (optional)

## Quinoa (for Day 4)

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups quinoa

#### Side Salad

- 1 head lettuce
- 1 cucumber
- ½ pint tomatoes (grape or cherry)
- 12 black olives
- 2 oz shredded carrots

## **House Dressing**

- 1 tsp mustard
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½cup apple cider vinegar

- 1 tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Large stock pot
- Measuring cups + spoons
- Medium saucepan or Instant Pot

#### Step-by-Step

**1. Make the Soup.** Bring 6-8 cups of chicken stock (or homemade bone broth you made from the chicken carcass) to a boil. Slice your 1 onion, 3 carrots, and 3 celery ribs. Add onion immediately to the stock pot. Add seasonings to the mixture and cover with a lid. When it is boiling, turn it down to a simmer.

Set a timer for 15 minutes. Shred the chicken as needed and add to the soup. When the timer goes off, add the rice to the soup and stir well. Set a timer for 5 minutes. Top with parmesan cheese, if desired.

**2. Cook the Quinoa.** Measure the quinoa into a fine mesh sieve and thoroughly rinse the quinoa under running water for one full minute. Then place the rinsed quinoa into the Instant Pot inner pot. Add the water and place the inner pot into the Instant Pot.

Place the lid on top and seal it, and turn the venting knob to "sealing." Press "pressure cook" or "manual" on high and adjust the timer to 1 minute. Let the quinoa cook and when the timer goes off, let the pressure release on its own naturally.

Reserve for Day 4.

**3. Make a Side Salad + House Dressing.** Begin by slicing your head of lettuce into bite sized strips and place into individual bowls or a large salad bowl. Cut your cucumbers into slices and top with cherry tomatoes and black olives. Mix dressing in a small jar or bowl. Drizzle salad dressing on individual salads when serving.

Pull out 1½ cups frozen corn so it will thaw for tomorrow.

## Day 4: Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken // Thai Peanut Sauce

#### Mise en Place

## **Crunchy Quinoa Bowls**

- 2 cups reserved chicken
- 4 cups reserved quinoa
- 1½ cups pineapple diced
- 1½ cups frozen corn kernels thawed or frozen
- 1 green bell pepper diced
- 1 orange bell pepper diced
- 1 onion diced
- 1 cucumber
- 4 oz cherry tomatoes quartered
- 1/2 cup peanuts optional
- 1/2 bunch cilantro chopped optional

## **Thai Peanut Sauce** (2x)

- ½ cup peanut butter
- 4 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 4 Tbsp lime juice (about 1 1/2 limes)
- 6 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp salt
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper (!)
- 2 inch fresh ginger, sliced
- 2 Tbsp minced garlic (about 5–6 garlic cloves)
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 4 Tbsp honey
- ½ cup cilantro (1 bunch)

## Equipment

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Medium saucepan
- Measuring cups + spoons
- 16 oz mason jar
- Immersion blender (optional)
- Large bowl

#### Step-by-Step

**1. Cook the Quinoa** if needed. Measure the quinoa into a fine mesh sieve and thoroughly rinse the quinoa under running water for one full minute. Then place the rinsed quinoa into the Instant Pot inner pot. Add the water and place the inner pot into the Instant Pot.

Place the lid on top and seal it, and turn the venting knob to "sealing." Press "pressure cook" or "manual" on high and adjust the timer to 1 minute. Let the quinoa cook and when the timer goes off, let the pressure release on its own naturally.

**2. Make the Thai Peanut Sauce.** Add all the ingredients, except the cilantro, to the blender or food processor. Blend until all the ingredients are smooth and creamy. Add the cilantro and pulse until the cilantro is in very small pieces.

Reserve half the Thai Peanut Sauce for Day 5.

**3. Make the Quinoa Salad.** Chop all of the vegetables as necessary. Combine the quinoa and vegetables in a large bowl and toss together well so everything is evenly distributed. Add reserved chicken.

Pour about half of the sauce over the salad and toss again very well. Taste, adding more sauce if desired. Sprinkle with peanuts and cilantro and serve.

Day 5: Instant Pot Shrimp // Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls // Thai Peanut Sauce

#### Mise en Place

## **Instant Pot Steamed Shrimp**

- 1 cup of water
- 1–2 pounds of shrimp
- Lemon juice, lime juice, and/or Old Bay Seasoning, if desired (optional)

## **Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls**

- 1 red bell pepper
- 3-4 cups chopped purple cabbage
- 1 carrot
- 2 cups of small broccoli florets
- 10 oz soba noodles
- fresh cilantro to taste
- ½ cup crushed peanuts for topping
- Reserved Thai Peanut Sauce

## Equipment

- Cutting board + sharp knife
- Medium saucepan
- Serving bowls
- Measuring cups + spoons

#### Step-by-Step

**1. Make the Shrimp.** Pour water into the Instant Pot. Place the shrimp in a steaming basket, place the steaming basket in the Instant Pot. Place a glass lid on top and press the "steam" function. If your Instant Pot automatically turns on the "keep warm" function, press the button to turn it off.

Set the kitchen timer for 5 minutes and let the shrimp steam, undisturbed.

When the timer goes off, check the shrimp. If your shrimp are small or medium, they may be done. The shrimp is considered done when they are pink and slightly curled. They do NOT need to be fully curled in order to be considered done. (In fact, if they're fully curled they're likely over-done.)

**2. Make the Noodle Bowls.** Cook the noodles according to package directions (usually just boiling for a few minutes). Chop the red pepper, cabbage, and cilantro to your desired size for the salad.

Toss everything together with enough Thai peanut sauce to generously coat everything. Top with steamed shrimp.



# DECEMBER MEAL PLAN 1

Day 1: Coconut Lime Chicken // White Rice // Roasted Zucchini

Day 2: Greek Vegetable Salad with Chickpeas // Yellow Rice

Day 3: Chicken and Rice Soup // Side Salad + House Dressing

Day 4: Crunchy Quinoa Bowls with Chicken // Thai Peanut Sauce

Day 5: Instant Pot Shrimp // Spicy Peanut Noodle Bowls // Thai Peanut Sauce

#### Cold Case butter 1tbsp Parmesan 2 oz feta cheese 0.25 cup Frozen ☐ frozen corn 1.50 cups Meat shrimp 1 lb whole chicken 5 lb Pantry □ apple cider vinegar\* 0.25 cup □ lime juice (optional) 1 tbsp maple syrup black olives 12 1 tsp mustard brown sugar 1tsp 1 tsp can chickpeas\* olive oil 1 (15 oz) 1 cup can full fat coconut milk 0.25 cup peanut butter 0.75 cup chicken stock or broth\* 7.50 cups peanuts 1 cup coconut oil 2 tbsp red wine vinegar 2 tbsp fish sauce 2 tbsp rice vinegar 6 tbsp honey soba noodles 10 oz 6 tbsp jasmine rice 2 cups soy sauce or aminos 3 tbsp □ lemon juice (optional) 3 tbsp 1 tbsp sugar lemongrass paste 1 tbsp white rice 1 cup

	lime juice	0.25 cup + 6 tbsp			
Pre-Made					
	cooked quinoa	4 cups			
Produce					
	bell pepper, green	1		fresh mint	1 bunch
	bell pepper, orange	1		garlic	7 cloves
	bell pepper, red	1		jalapeno	0.5
	broccoli	2 cups		lettuce	1 head
	carrot	6		onions	3
	celery	5 ribs		red onion	0.5
	cherry tomatoes	2 pt		pineapple	1.50 cups
	cilantro	2 bunches		red cabbage	3 cups
	cucumber	2		shredded carrots	2 oz
	English cucumber	1 large		spinach	4 cups
	ginger	3 inch		zucchini	4
Spices					
	bay leaf	1		onion powder	2.50 tsp + 1 tbsp
	coriander	1tsp		oregano	2 tsp
	crushed red pepper (!)	1.50 tsp		pepper	2 tsp
	dried basil	2 tsp		salt	7 tsp
	garlic powder	3 tsp		thyme	1 tsp
	Old Bay Seasoning (optional)	1 tbsp		turmeric	2 tsp

Note: Items marked with \* can be made from scratch if you have the time. Go to the recipe in 30 Minute Dinners to find the from scratch version.