

# 5 for under \$5

*Whipping up a wholesome meal just got easier – and cheaper – with these brilliant ideas.*

BY LI YULING & ESTELLE LOW  
PHOTOGRAPHY WONG WEI LIANG & JASPER YU

Preparing a healthy meal doesn't have to be troublesome, time-consuming and expensive. Save yourself the hassle with these simple recipes by chefs Shalu Asnani from The Little Green Kitchen, and Irene Jansen from Culinary Adventures. Their one-dish meals with fresh ingredients aren't just nutritious and flavourful, but are budget-friendly too. The price for each one: no more than \$5!





**Chef Shalu Asnani** is the founder of Little Green Kitchen ([www.littlegreenkitchen.com.sg](http://www.littlegreenkitchen.com.sg)), a cooking studio and food consultancy specialising in creative vegetarian cooking classes, private dining and menu consulting.

## Spicy tofu with lemongrass and basil

**SERVES: 2**

**COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES**

**TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES**

### For marinade

- > 2 stalks fresh lemongrass
- > 1 tbsp light soya sauce
- > 2 Thai chilli padi, finely chopped
- > 1 tsp sugar
- > 1 tsp ground turmeric
- > ½ tsp salt
- > 2 tsp vegetable oil

### For tofu

- > 200g firm tofu (tau kwa)
- > 4 tbsp marinade
- > 1 tbsp vegetable oil

- > 1 small red onion, finely sliced
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 40g Thai or sweet basil leaves
- > 2 tbsp roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped
- > 2 tsp fresh lime juice

**1.** Crush lemongrass to loosen layers. Slice off ends, then peel and discard tough outer layers. Finely chop tender white portions only.

**2.** To make marinade, mix chopped lemongrass, soya sauce, chillies, sugar, turmeric, salt and oil.

**3.** Rinse tofu and pat dry with paper towels. Slice into 1cm thick blocks, and then diagonally across to form triangles. Arrange in single layer on large plate without any gaps in between.

**4.** Pour marinade over tofu slices and spread evenly. Let sit for 15 minutes – or up to 60 minutes.

**5.** Heat oil in wok over medium and saute onion as well as garlic until soft and fragrant. When done, push to one side.

**6.** Add tofu and stir gently, then mix with onion and garlic. Cook over medium heat for about five to seven minutes, stirring occasionally until tofu is browned around the edges and onion is soft.

**7.** Stir in basil and chopped peanuts. Turn off heat and drizzle with lime juice. Serve with steamed jasmine rice.

### \* Nutrition score per serving

367 calories, 27.3g fat (2.8g saturated), 9.6g carbs, 20.1g protein, 5.5g fibre, 886mg sodium, 0mg cholesterol

### • LEMONGRASS

(\$1 FOR 100G)  
2 STALKS (ABOUT 50G) = \$0.50

### • CHILLI PADI

(\$0.80 FOR 100G)  
2 CHILLI PADI (ABOUT 6G) = \$0.05

### • TAU KWA

(\$0.85 FOR 400G)  
200G = \$0.43

### • BASIL

(\$2.99 FOR 30G)  
40G = \$3.99

### • ROASTED PEANUTS

(\$2.90 FOR 300G)  
10G = \$0.10

### • LIMES

(\$1 FOR 250G)  
50G (TO YIELD 2 TSP JUICE) = \$0.20

ESTIMATED COST PER

RECIPE: \$5.30

ESTIMATED COST PER

SERVING: \$2.60



"THIS DISH  
CAN BE SERVED  
FAMILY-STYLE  
AND IS GREAT  
FOR USING  
UP LEFTOVER  
VEGETABLES."

CHEF SHALU

•CHERRY TOMATOES  
(\$1.65 FOR 250G)  
6-7 (100G) = \$0.65

•ASPARAGUS  
(\$2.60 FOR 250G)  
100G = \$1

•BUTTON MUSHROOMS  
(\$3.90 FOR 200G)  
100G = \$1.95

•FRESH PARSLEY  
(\$0.90 FOR 50G)  
4 SPRIGS = \$0.30

•ALMOND FLAKES  
(\$4.05 FOR 100G)  
2 TSP = \$0.20

•LEMON  
(\$1.55 FOR THREE)  
¼ LEMON = \$0.15

ESTIMATED COST PER  
RECIPE: \$4.30  
ESTIMATED COST PER  
SERVING: **\$2.15**

## Garden vegetable paella

**SERVES: 2**

**COOK TIME: 20 MINUTES**

**TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES**

- > 100g cherry tomatoes, sliced lengthwise
- > 4 tbsp olive oil
- > 100g basmati rice
- > 1½ cup water
- > ½ tsp ground turmeric
- > ½ yellow onion, sliced
- > 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- > 100g asparagus spears, cut into 5cm pieces
- > 100g button mushrooms, sliced
- > 2 tsp tomato paste
- > Salt to taste
- > 4 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped
- > 2 tsp almond flakes, toasted
- > ¼ lemon cut into two wedges, for garnish

**1.** Toss cherry tomatoes in two tablespoons olive oil. Roast in oven at 150 deg C for 10 minutes until slightly wrinkly.

**2.** Place rice in large pan of water and bring to boil. Add turmeric. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for about seven to 10 minutes, or

until rice is almost cooked but still al dente, then drain.

**3.** Heat two tablespoons olive oil in large frying pan over medium. Add onion and then garlic, gently fry for five minutes, or until fragrant.

**4.** Add asparagus and continue to cook for two more minutes, or until tender.

**5.** Add mushrooms, saute for a few minutes, and then add cooked rice.

**6.** Add tomato paste. Mix well so rice is evenly coated. Season with salt.

**7.** Add roasted tomatoes and chopped parsley. Gently toss, taking care not to smash tomatoes.

**8.** Serve on large plate and garnish with toasted flaked almonds, plus wedge of lemon on side.

### \*Nutrition score per serving

357 calories, 29.5g fat (4.5g saturated), 17.3g carbs, 5.5g protein, 5.1g fibre, 243mg sodium, 0mg cholesterol

## Grilled avocado wrap with spicy tomato salsa

**SERVES: 2**

**COOK TIME: 3 MINUTES**

**TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES**

### For the salsa

- > 12 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- > 1 tbsp olive oil
- > 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- > ½ tsp sugar
- > 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- > 1 tbsp fresh coriander, finely chopped
- > Salt to taste

### For the wrap

- > 1 ripe avocado, diced
- > ½ red bell pepper, finely chopped
- > 2 tsp pumpkin seeds, lightly toasted
- > 2 tsp fresh lime juice
- > Salt and pepper to taste
- > Two 20cm flour tortillas

1. Combine ingredients for salsa in bowl and season with salt.

2. For the wrap: In separate bowl, combine avocado, red pepper, toasted pumpkin seeds, lime juice, salt and pepper. Mix well.

3. Place half of mixture across middle of one

tortilla. Roll from bottom up, tucking in sides so filling is enclosed in long flute. Repeat for other one.

4. In non-stick frying pan, gently grill wrap on each side over low heat for about two to three minutes, or until crispy.

5. Carefully slice wraps in half, and place one half on top of the other on each plate. Serve warm with tomato salsa.

### \*Nutrition score per serving

428 calories, 37.9g fat (7.8g saturated), 15.7g carbs, 6g protein, 6.7g fibre, 497mg sodium, 0mg cholesterol



•CHERRY TOMATOES  
(\$1.65 FOR 250G)  
12 (ABOUT 180G) =  
\$1.20

•CHILLI  
(\$1.70 FOR 200G)  
1 (ABOUT 10G) =  
\$0.10

•CORIANDER  
\$0.90 FOR 50G)  
1TBSP = \$0.30

•AVOCADOS  
(\$4.45 FOR THREE)  
1 = \$1.48

•RED BELL PEPPER  
(\$0.55 FOR 100G)  
½ BELL PEPPER =  
\$0.55

•PUMPKIN SEEDS  
(\$2.70 FOR 100G)  
1 TSP = \$0.20

•LIMES  
(\$1 FOR 250G)  
50G (TO YIELD 2 TSP  
JUICE) = 20 CENTS

•FLOUR TORTILLA  
(\$5.70 FOR 12)  
2 = \$0.95

ESTIMATED COST PER  
RECIPE: \$5  
ESTIMATED COST PER  
SERVING: **\$2.50**