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Men's Health

EXCLUSIVE

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Four Brothers star
Mark Wahlberg

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PROGRAM HER DIRTY MIND (p. 186)

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The Quick and Easy
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09> September 2005

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Get your food on the table quicker

ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS SHANE TISDALE leads a kitchen that prepares meals for 200 hungry soldiers every day at Fort Lee, Virginia. "Cooking is not just preparing a great meal on time," he says. "It's about preparing for those mistakes that can happen along the way."

► **KNOW YOUR MENU.** You don't have to memorize recipes, but you do have to plan. Is the meat thawed or still frozen? Has the cheese you bought last week gone bad?

► **GATHER INGREDIENTS.** In one spot, collect the items you'll use. You can even measure out the spices ahead and have them ready to grab, "so you're on autopilot on the day of cooking," says Sgt. Tisdale.

► **PREHEAT WATER IN THE MICROWAVE.** Put water (or pasta sauce, or whatever you need to heat) in a bowl and nuke it for a couple of minutes. It'll come to a boil quicker than on a stove top.

► **STORE KNIVES ON A MAGNET STRIP.** They'll stay sharper than if they're banging around in a drawer. Sharp knives make cutting easier and reduce first-aid incidents.

► **USE A FOOD PROCESSOR.** It can turn that onion into neat little squares faster than you ever will. "You're taking 10 to 15 minutes off your prep time," Sgt. Tisdale says.

► **CLEAN AS YOU GO.** Use downtime to wipe up spills, rinse bowls, and keep your work area clear. It'll make the final cleanup easier. So will soaking pans to cut down on scrubbing. —DENNIS WATKINS

EXTRA CREDIT: Use red wine instead of chicken stock for a more sophisticated flavor.

EAT WITH: 1½ c steamed broccoli

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

PER SERVING, INCLUDING BROCCOLI:
507 calories, 49 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates,
31 g fat (12 g saturated), 3 g fiber, 267 mg sodium

5 TOMATO-AND-ZUCCHINI-SAUCE CHICKEN

YOU'LL NEED:

2 chicken breasts, 4–5 oz each, pounded to an even ¼" thickness

1 tsp olive oil

¾ c chopped zucchini

¾ c no-salt-added canned tomatoes

Plus: Salt and pepper; 1 clove garlic, crushed; ½ tsp dried basil

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Sear the chicken in a skillet on medium-high heat (about 4 to 5 minutes per side), seasoning each side with a pinch of salt and pepper as the other side cooks. Remove the breasts from the skillet, and reduce the heat to medium.

2. Add the olive oil and garlic to the skillet, stirring frequently and scraping with a spoon to release the brown bits left behind by the meat (about 30 seconds).

3. Add the zucchini and basil. Let the mixture rest for 1 minute.

4. Stir in the tomatoes and place the chicken breasts back in the skillet.

5. Cover and cook for 2 minutes more.

EXTRA CREDIT: Use a vegetable peeler to shave a little Parmesan onto each breast.

EAT WITH: 1 c whole-wheat pasta

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

PER SERVING, INCLUDING PASTA:
523 calories, 42 g protein, 79 g carbohydrates,
7 g fat (1 g saturated), 13 g fiber, 400 mg sodium

6 SPICY FISH AND TIPS

YOU'LL NEED:

1 Tbsp olive oil

2 c lightly packed baby spinach

10–12 asparagus tips

2 tilapia fillets, 3–4 oz each

Plus: ½ tsp red-pepper flakes; 2 scallions, sliced; ½ lime; salt and pepper

HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. In a small bowl, mix the oil and red-pepper flakes and microwave for 30 seconds to make chile oil. Set aside.

2. Tear off two 18" sections of foil and smooth them flat. Arrange an equal amount of spinach and asparagus in the center of each piece of foil. Place a fillet on top of each pile. Then top each fillet with scallion slices and chile oil. Halve the lime half, and squeeze the juice from each piece over the fish. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper, and seal the foil (fold up and over the fillets, then crease the sides to form a tent—the fish will bake and steam simultaneously).

3. Bake in a 450°F oven for 10 to 12 minutes.

EAT WITH: 1 c Uncle Ben's Ready Rice, Whole Grain Brown

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

PER SERVING, INCLUDING RICE:
396 calories, 28 g protein, 45 g carbohydrates, 12 g fat (2 g saturated), 3 g fiber, 142 mg sodium **MHI**

