

“This is the most sensible advice on cooking for kids I’ve ever seen.” —RUTH REICHL

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a 30-day plan for mastering  
**THE ART OF THE FAMILY MEAL**

includes  
**80+**  
**RECIPES**  
for real life



# **DINNER**

**the playbook**

**Jenny Rosenstrach**

*author of DINNER: A LOVE STORY*

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# **A MEAL PLAN**

**From**

**Jenny Rosenstrach**

**Author of**

# **DINNER**

**the playbook**



*Available wherever books are sold*

**AUGUST 26, 2014**

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## SUNDAY

### ADOBO BRAISED PORK WITH POLENTA AND AVOCADO & TOMATO SALAD



**WHY?** *Because it's grand enough to feel Sundayish, and because the leftovers freeze well. A freezer bag of shredded pork is a great thing to have on hand all week if you have to make a quick serves—one meal for an athlete who needs to eat before or after a game or practice. Or a spouse who staggers in late after everyone has eaten. Or a picky eater who won't touch whatever it is you are serving and is offended on every level that you would attempt debuting tofu. (See Thursday)*

#### Adobo Braised Pork

2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil

2 ½-pound pork loin, seasoned with salt and pepper

1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes, with their juice

1 tablespoon dried oregano

½ teaspoon ground cumin

1 bay leaf

1 chipotle in adobo (not the sauce, just the dripping single pepper; you can freeze the rest)

½ cup cider vinegar (or store-bought vinegar-based barbecue sauce such as Shealy's)

2 garlic cloves, halved

1 medium onion, chopped

#### Polenta

1 cup medium or fine cornmeal

1 tablespoon butter

½ cup grated sharp cheddar cheese

handful of chopped fresh cilantro leaves

salt

▶ Preheat the oven to 350°F.

▶ In a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed ovenproof pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Brown the pork on all sides in the hot oil, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Remove the pork and add the tomatoes, oregano, cumin, bay leaf, chipotle, cider vinegar, garlic, onions, and ¼ cup water, whisking to combine. Return the pork to the pot; it should be about two-thirds immersed in liquid. Bring to a boil, cover, and place in the oven for 2 ½ to 3 hours. (The pork should be practically falling apart when finished.)

▶ While the pork is braising, make the polenta: Bring 4 cups salted water to a boil in a heavy saucepan over high heat. Pour the cornmeal into the pot slowly, whisking as you go. The mixture will thicken after 2 or 3 minutes. Reduce the heat and let the mixture bubble on the stovetop for another 40 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes and adding water if it becomes too thick for your liking. Before serving, remove the polenta from the heat and stir in the butter and cheddar.

▶ Move the pork from the pot to a cutting board or platter, shred with two forks, and toss back in the braising liquid. Remove the bay leaf.

▶ Sprinkle the cilantro over the pork and serve with the polenta.

#### Side Dish: Avocado & Tomato Salad

▶ Halve 1 avocado, remove the pit, peel, and cut into chunks. In a medium bowl, toss with about 1 ½ cups halved grape tomatoes, 3 chopped scallions (white and light green parts only), a generous drizzle of olive oil, salt and pepper, a spritz of lime juice, and chopped fresh cilantro to taste.

**MONDAY**

**SHRIMP ROLLS WITH SLAW**



**WHY?** *Because if you are using fresh shrimp, you want to use it up early in the week. (Note: If you are using frozen shrimp, that's fine, too.) Whatever cabbage you don't use for the slaw here will be used up on Thursday.*

**Shrimp Rolls**

1 ¾ pounds medium shrimp (buy them shelled)

¼ cup mayonnaise

1 small celery stalk, peeled and finely chopped

2 teaspoons prepared horseradish

4 scallions (light green and white parts only), chopped

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

¼ teaspoon paprika

salt and pepper to taste

1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped

6 hot dog buns, preferably potato rolls

butter, at room temperature

▶ Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the shrimp and cook until the water returns to a boil, about 4 minutes. Drain the shrimp and rinse them with cold water. Once they are cool enough to handle, chop them into bite-size pieces.

▶ In a large bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, celery stalk, horseradish, scallions, lemon juice, vinegar, paprika, salt and pepper, and dill. Toss with shrimp. (If you have time to chill the salad, cover the bowl and place it in the refrigerator for up to one day.)

▶ When you are ready to eat, toast the hot dog buns and spread each with a thin layer of butter. Top with shrimp salad.

*Side Dish: Slaw*

▶ In a medium bowl, whisk together ⅓ cup cider vinegar, 3 tablespoons mayonnaise, ½ teaspoon celery seed, 1 ½ teaspoons honey, a handful of chopped fresh cilantro or chopped dill (or a combo), salt, and pepper. Shred ½ head of red cabbage (about 5 cups) and toss with the dressing.

**TUESDAY**

**SPAGHETTI WITH MINT-PEA PESTO**



**WHY?** *It's easy, fast, meatless, and requires a minimal number of pots. In other words, total keeper.*

1 ½ cups frozen peas

1 cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves,  
washed

3 tablespoons freshly grated  
parmesan, plus more for serving

juice from ½ lemon

⅓ to ½ cup olive oil

salt to taste

1 pound spaghetti

- ▶ Bring a large pot of water to boil on the stove. Whirl remaining ingredients (except spaghetti) in a food processor. Taste and adjust as you go. (Don't over process or it will be too emulsified.) Consistency should be somewhere between smooth and chunky guacamole.
- ▶ Add pasta to the pot and about halfway through cooking it, scoop out about a cup of hot water. Set aside. Drain pasta once cooked. Scrape pea mixture into the empty hot pot, then start drizzling reserved pasta water into the dip, whisking until it has the consistency of a creamy sauce. Toss pasta in sauce and serve with freshly grated parmesan and some torn mint leaves if you're feeling fancy.

WEDNESDAY

## GRILLED CHICKEN SAUSAGES WITH KALE AND AVOCADO SALAD



**WHY?** *It's your mid-week reminder that you do not have to cook every single thing from scratch every single night. (What is that expression? "Perfect is the Enemy of Good"?) This is especially true given all the options for quality sausages out there that you can feel good about giving the kids. Plus: Kale. If you have that on the plate, it's game over.*

1 ¼ to 1 ½ pounds good-quality chicken sausages

1 bunch of kale (preferably flat-leaf such as Lacinato/ Tuscan, which is more tender and less likely to cause a kid-led revolt), about 4 to 4 ½ cups

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 small shallot (or 3 to 4 scallions), chopped

squeeze of fresh lemon juice

salt and pepper to taste

¼ cup freshly shredded parmesan or pecorino

1 avocado, cut into chunks

whole-grain mustard to taste

- ▶ In a skillet over medium heat (or on a grill over medium-hot coals), fry the sausages for 12 to 15 minutes, turning occasionally, until brown and cooked through.
- ▶ While the sausages are frying, slice the kale into shreds. In a large bowl, toss the kale with the olive oil, shallots, lemon juice, salt and pepper, cheese, and avocado.
- ▶ Serve the sausages and kale salad with a dollop of whole-grain mustard.



## THURSDAY

### SHREDDED ASIAN CABBAGE WITH TOFU



**WHY?** *Because what else are you going to do with the half a head of red cabbage in your fridge? We usually have tofu on a Thursday or a Friday because unlike meat or fish, which comes with use-it-or-lose-it pressure, its three-week shelf life gives you a little breathing room. Another reason to make this? It's so freaking good! If someone protests on the grounds of tofu (as my children still do) heat up that extra pork from the freezer and slap it on a sandwich. Or replace the tofu with shredded chicken.*

#### Dressing

.....  
3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
.....  
1 teaspoon light brown sugar, lightly packed  
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salt to taste  
.....  
1 teaspoon fish sauce (available at Asian specialty stores and better supermarkets)  
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juice of ½ lime (about 1 tablespoon)  
.....  
1 teaspoon peeled, minced fresh ginger (crucial)  
.....  
1 drop hot sauce or 1 teaspoon minced jalapeño  
.....  
⅓ cup neutral oil such as grapeseed or vegetable oil  
.....

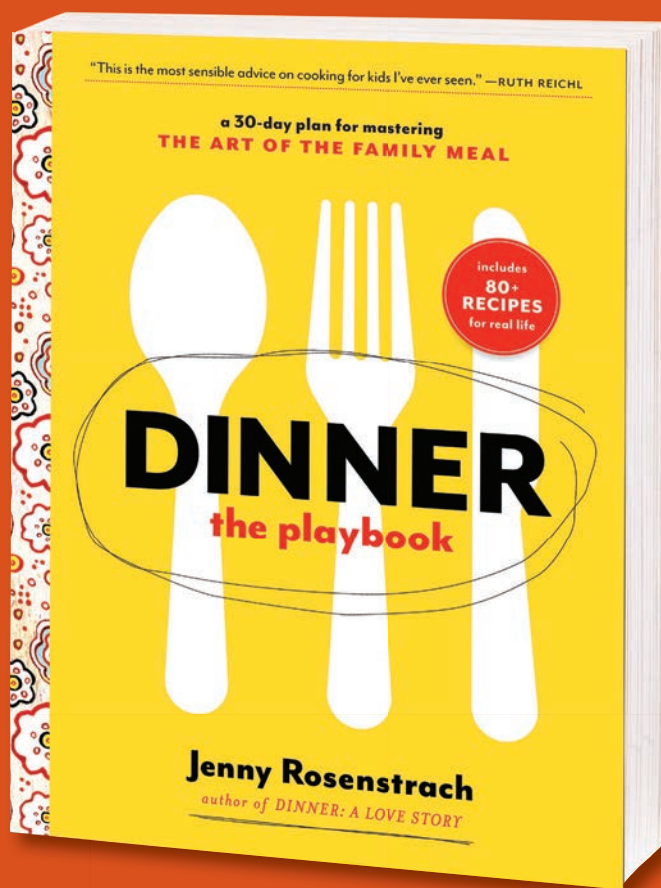
#### Salad

.....  
2 to 3 large handfuls of shredded red cabbage (½ medium head)  
.....  
½ handful of shredded baby spinach  
.....  
½ cup shredded carrots  
.....  
1 cup raw sugar snap peas, trimmed and chopped into bite-size pieces  
.....  
4 scallions (white and light green parts only), chopped  
.....  
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
.....  
handful of chopped peanuts (optional)  
.....  
6 ounces of tofu that has been cubed, dredged in flour, salt and pepper and fried in canola oil until crispy, about four minutes total (or shredded chicken from 2 split chicken breast halves)  
.....

▶ In a large serving bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients. Add the salad ingredients and toss until combined. If you are afraid your kids won't touch it, separate out the elements you are sure they will like and reserve some dressing for them as a dip.



**FRIDAY:**  
**GO OUT OR ORDER IN.**  
Whatever you do, take the night off!



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