

EVERY DAY

with RACHAEL RAY

rachaelraymag.com

HELP for the
HOLIDAYS
5 THINGS
EVERY COOK
NEEDS p.82

525
new recipe
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the new
fast food

➔ supermarket101

single-serve frozen dinner



Name aside, these meals aren't just suited for singles. If you've got a hubby who wants one thing and a kid who wants another, these meals are instant sanity-savers, says consumer psychologist Kit Yarrow. Plus, you've got portion control in a box. Stick with meals that contain no more than 30 percent of your recommended daily value of sodium and saturated fat, says Dawn Jackson Blatner of the American Dietetic Association.

OUR PICK Kashi All Natural Veggie Chana Masala

Five minutes in the microwave turns out a lentil-based Indian vegetable dish over fiber-rich whole grain pilaf. (\$4.09 for a 9.5-ounce package, at grocery stores)

DINNER FOR TWO Divide the goods between 2 whole wheat tortillas and roll into wraps. Serve with a mixed greens salad.

skillet kit for two



Calling all creative, time-starved cooks! These meals are ideal, says Harry Balzer of consumer research firm The NPD Group. The dirty work's been done—no need to peel and shred carrots or measure out ingredients for a complicated sauce—but you can still “add a personal touch by throwing in extra items or leaving things out,” says Yarrow.

OUR PICK Putney Pasta Chicken Alfredo Skillet

A rotini pasta dish with pan-seared, sliced chicken breast, crisp broccoli and a rich, tangy cheese sauce—all in 8 minutes! Bonus: It has half the sodium of most products in this category. (\$8.99 for an 18-ounce package, at grocery stores)

DINNER FOR FOUR Add one 10-ounce bag of your favorite frozen vegetables when cooking and stir in an additional 2 cups cooked whole wheat rotini pasta just before serving.

meaty main course



You crave ribs and roasts but could live without making them from scratch. These meals let you have at it, in a fraction of the time. You'll likely get “extra-tender results,” says Atlanta-based supermarket consultant Joe Hynes, thanks to “advanced cooking techniques like *sous vide*, a form of pressure-cooking.” Blatner recommends rounding out the meal with healthy sides.

OUR PICK Hormel Slow Simmered Balsamic Rosemary Pork Roast

This flavorful, precooked pork roast takes only about 4 minutes in the microwave. Lower in sodium than most, it's also preservative- and trans-fat-free. (\$6.49 for a 17-ounce package, at grocery stores)

DINNER FOR SIX Shred the meat and divide among 6 quesadillas packed with spinach and shredded Swiss cheese. Serve with steamed veggies drizzled with the pork drippings.

ready-to-bake seafood multipack



We get it: You want to eat healthfully, but you're not about to give up taste. No need to. “Many of these products now use fresh herbs and quality ingredients like true lump crab meat,” says Hynes. That, of course, comes at a cost, and these tend to be the priciest of the convenience foods. So keep them to once a week.

OUR PICK SeaPak Culinary Classics Sun-Dried Tomato Wild Salmon

About 20 minutes in the oven gets you a roasted salmon fillet with a light and savory crust. This option is more wallet-friendly than most. (\$6.88 for four 4-ounce fillets, at Walmart)

DINNER FOR TWO Flake a single portion into a mixed greens salad made with chopped tomatoes, capers, sliced olives, toasted almond slivers and feta cheese crumbles.

family-style meal



Well, hello there, comfort-food fan! “Italian-American classics rule in this category,” says Balzer. And the price is right: “These dinners typically offer a home-cooked-style entrée that feeds four for less than \$10,” says Craig Rosenblum of grocery store consulting firm Willard Bishop. Just beware the tendency to eat supersize portions. “Since many family-style products are not portioned out, it's easy to eat two or more servings,” says Blatner.

OUR PICK Stouffer's Easy Express Cheesy Garlic Lasagna with Meat Sauce

A microbake tray yields gooey cheese and lasagna noodles with bite, all in 18 minutes. (\$7.39 for a 35-ounce package, at grocery stores)

DINNER FOR SIX Slice into 6 portions instead of the suggested 4.5 and serve with sautéed zucchini and onions tossed with chopped fresh thyme.



DID YOU KNOW?

Our readers eat an average of 5 frozen dinners each month.



Organic food really adds up. Good thing six readers each will win a year's supply of Organic Valley products, for a total value of \$2,100. Enter to win at rachaelraymag.com/giveaway. See page 165 for rules.