

the liquid inside the packet heats up. The packet captures the foods’ juices, which become a natural sauce for the finished dish. This technique allows you to cook an entire meal (protein, vegetables and sauce) in one step, facilitating cleanup. Another feature is that, when opened at the table, the packets release their fragrant steam, making a particularly dramatic presentation.

Adapted from *Williams-Sonoma Essentials of Healthful Cooking*, by Mary Abbott Hess, Dana Jacobi & Marie Simmons (Oxmoor House, 2003).

Salmon *en Papillote*

The steam that forms inside the paper envelope infuses the fish with the flavor of the seasonings and keeps it moist and tender. You could serve your guests the unopened packets and let them unwrap them at the table, releasing the fragrant steam. Or you could open the packets in the kitchen and transfer the fish and sauce to dinner plates.

Preheat an oven to 400°F.

In a small bowl, stir together the tomatoes, shallots, marjoram, lemon juice, the 2 Tbs. olive oil, salt and pepper.

Rinse the fish and pat dry. Cut 6 sheets of parchment about 12 inches square. Fold each sheet in half, open like a book and brush the paper to one side of the crease with olive oil. Place a fillet on each oiled side. Spoon the tomato mixture over the fish, dividing it evenly.

Fold the parchment paper over the fish. Tightly seal each package by folding the edges over several times and creasing firmly. Place the packages on 2 baking sheets.

Bake until the salmon is opaque throughout, about 15 minutes. To check for doneness, open a package and pierce the fish with a knife. Slide the packages onto individual plates and allow the diners to open their own packages. Serves 6.

Adapted from *Williams-Sonoma Savoring Series, Savoring Italy*, by Michele Scicolone (Time-Life Books, 1999).

Steamed Tofu with Greens and Peanut Sauce

In a blender, combine the peanut butter, coconut milk, lime juice, brown sugar, soy sauce and chili paste and process until smooth. Transfer the peanut sauce to a bowl and set aside.

Set a steamer rack inside a large pot filled with a couple inches of water. Place the cabbage in the rack and bring the water to a boil over medium-high heat. Cover the pot and steam until the cabbage is wilted, about 7 minutes. Place the spinach leaves and tofu on top of the cabbage. Cover and steam until the spinach is wilted and the tofu is heated through, about 5 minutes more.

Mound the cabbage, spinach and tofu on individual plates and drizzle each with about 2 Tbs. peanut sauce. Serves 4.

Adapted from *Williams-Sonoma Eat Well*, by Charity Ferreira (Oxmoor House, 2008).

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How to Sauté

1. Choose the correct size pan. The pieces of food should fit easily in the pan with about 1 inch of space on all sides. More space could cause the oil to burn. Packing the food too tight could trap moisture, resulting in steaming rather than browning.

2. Preheat the pan over medium-high heat or the heat level specified in the recipe. This ensures that a nice crust will form on the food when it is added to the pan.

3. When the pan is hot, add a small amount of oil. The more natural fat present in the food, such as oil-rich fish, the less oil will be needed. Well-seasoned or nonstick pans may not need added fat. When the oil is hot—rippling will be visible on the surface—add the food to the pan, starting presentation side down if indicated in the recipe.

4. Let the food sit undisturbed for 30 seconds or so, depending on its size and thickness. Larger pieces of food are usually ready to turn when golden brown underneath.

5. As foods are sautéed, they release their natural juices into the pan. You can make an easy pan sauce by adding liquid and deglazing the pan.

6. Searing, a variation of sautéing, calls for browning foods quickly over medium-high or high heat. It has two main uses in a healthful cooking repertory: to develop a flavorful caramelized surface on foods that will be sautéed, braised, stewed or roasted, and to cook foods, such as salmon or tuna, that are meant to be served rare. When searing meat or fish, it is advisable to pat it dry with paper towels; this removes moisture that will hinder browning.

Adapted from *Williams-Sonoma Essentials of Healthful Cooking*, by Mary Abbott Hess, Dana Jacobi & Marie Simmons (Oxmoor House, 2003).

WILLIAMS-SONOMA

Technique Class: Healthy in a Hurry, Part 2: Sauté & Steam

Many techniques that you probably use in your everyday cooking are sound methods for healthy cooking. As you prepare the recipes in this brochure and master the cooking techniques of sautéing and steaming, you will develop the skills required to make all your meals healthful.

Dealing with fat is one of the biggest challenges in healthful cooking. In deciding to limit the amount of fat you use or to substitute another type of fat, consider three key factors. First, determine whether a solid fat or a liquid oil is needed. This choice often comes into play when making baked goods.

Second, decide if the particular flavor of a fat or oil is desired. Whereas a distinctive aromatic nut oil such as walnut is appreciated in a salad dressing, it may not be appropriate for other recipes, where a more neutral-tasting oil or a small amount of butter is preferred because it will not compete with the dish’s dominant flavors.

Third, consider the temperature to which an oil or fat will be heated before it begins to break down and smoke. This is known as the oil’s smoke point. Sautéing and stir-frying use particularly high heat and therefore require oil with a high smoke point, such as canola or peanut.

Sautéing

Sautéed foods are quickly cooked, usually over medium or medium-high heat, in a small amount of fat. Foods are turned, tossed or stirred in the pan, cooking the outside evenly without overcooking the inside, and then are promptly served. Sautéed foods have a nutritional advantage over most foods that are cooked and held before serving.

Foods for sautéing should be naturally tender, portion sized or smaller, and relatively thin. If you want the foods to brown lightly, make sure they are relatively free of moisture, and do not crowd them in the pan.

Patience is also important when sautéing. Resist the urge to move the food before it has taken on color, or you could tear or otherwise mar the surface. If the food appears to be sticking to the pan, do not worry. When it is sufficiently browned, it will release easily.

Ingredients for Chicken Sauté with Thyme, Lemon and Chili

2 Tbs. olive oil

¾ lb. chicken breast cutlets

Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

1 large shallot, minced

2 tsp. minced fresh thyme

½ to 1 serrano chili, minced

⅓ cup dry white wine

2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

Ingredients for Chicken Sauté with Sugar Snaps and Asparagus

All-purpose flour for dredging

10 oz. chicken tenders

Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

2 Tbs. olive oil

1 bunch thin asparagus, about ½ lb., ends trimmed

½ lb. sugar snap peas, strings removed

1 cup low-sodium chicken broth

1 Tbs. minced fresh thyme, plus more for garnish

1 Tbs. minced fresh chives, plus more for garnish

2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

Lemon zest strips for garnish (optional)

Chicken Sauté with Thyme, Lemon and Chili

In this simple dish, thin chicken cutlets are quickly sautéed, and then a quick pan sauce is created by cooking together fresh herbs, tart lemon juice and hot chilies. Serve with mashed potatoes and sautéed savoy cabbage.

In a large fry pan over medium-high heat, warm 1 Tbs. of the olive oil. Season the chicken with salt and pepper and add to the pan. Sauté until the chicken is cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to 2 warmed plates.

Add the remaining 1 Tbs. olive oil to the pan. Add the shallot, thyme and chili and sauté until the shallot begins to soften, about 1 minute. Add the wine and lemon juice and boil, stirring to scrape up the browned bits from the pan bottom, until the sauce is syrupy, about 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat. Add any juices from the plates holding the chicken to the sauce and stir well. Adjust the seasonings with salt and pepper. Spoon the sauce over the chicken and serve immediately. Serves 2.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Weeknight Fresh & Fast*, by Kristine Kidd (Weldon Owen, 2010).

Chicken Sauté with Sugar Snaps and Asparagus

Sautéing the ingredients quickly in a small amount of oil keeps everything tasting clean. Serve over brown aromatic rice.

Spread flour on a plate. Cut the chicken tenders in half crosswise. Season the chicken with salt and pepper, then dredge in the flour.

In a large nonstick fry pan over medium-high heat, warm 1 Tbs. of the olive oil. Add the chicken and sauté until just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Add the remaining 1 Tbs. olive oil to the pan and reduce the heat to medium. Add the asparagus and sauté for 1 minute. Add the sugar snap peas and increase the heat to medium-high. Season the vegetables with salt and pepper and sauté for 1 minute. Add the broth and bring to a boil, stirring to scrape up the browned bits from the pan bottom. Cover the pan and boil until the vegetables are almost crisp-tender, about 3 minutes.

Return the chicken to the pan. Add the 1 Tbs. thyme, the 1 Tbs. chives and the lemon juice. Simmer uncovered, stirring almost constantly, until the sauce thickens and coats the chicken, about 2 minutes. Adjust the seasonings with salt and pepper.

Divide the chicken and vegetables between 2 warmed plates, and garnish with thyme, chives and lemon zest strips. Serve immediately. Serves 2.

Quick Tips: This recipe is a basic format for a quick sauté and lends itself to endless variations, so you can use what’s on hand in your refrigerator. Tarragon or basil would make tasty substitutes for the thyme (if using tarragon, use a little less). Fresh peas are a good alternative to the sugar snap peas, and zucchini can replace the asparagus.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Weeknight Fresh & Fast*, by Kristine Kidd (Weldon Owen, 2010).

Fresh Ideas for Sautéing

Garlic Spinach: Puree 2 garlic cloves with 1 cup water. Cut savoy or regular spinach, including tender stems, into wide strips and sauté in olive oil until wilted. Add the garlic water and cook until tender. Season with salt and pepper.

Brussels Sprouts with Capers and Lemon: Sauté thinly sliced brussels sprouts in oil until bright green. Add a generous splash of chicken broth and continue cooking until the sprouts are crisp-tender. Mix in rinsed capers, some lemon zest, a squirt of lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma New Healthy Kitchen Series, *Sautéing*, by Dana Jacobi (Weldon Owen, 2006).

Steaming

Steaming involves cooking food over boiling or simmering water in a covered pan. The same term is used for cooking some foods, such as mussels and clams, in a small amount of simmering liquid in a covered pan. Water is the most common steaming liquid, sometimes with the addition of herbs, spices, onion, garlic or other aromatics.

Because it is a gentle cooking method, steaming is well suited to such delicate foods as seafood and certain vegetables. It helps the food to retain its shape, color, flavor and texture better than boiling, simmering or even poaching. Steaming is also the most healthful of all cooking techniques, as it uses no added fat and preserves more of these nutrients.

How to Steam

1. If you are using a collapsible steamer basket or a colander, fill a saucepan with water to a depth of about ½ inch. If you are using a steamer pan, fill the pot with at least 3 inches of water. Bring the water to a boil over high heat.
2. If using a collapsible steamer basket or a colander, set it in the pan, taking care not to burn yourself with the hot water or steam.
3. Place the food in the basket, allowing enough room for the steam to circulate freely. You will need to arrange pieces such as fish fillets or potatoes in a single layer and not touching for efficient cooking.
4. Cover the pan tightly and adjust the heat so the food cooks at a moderate, steady pace. Check occasionally to make sure that the liquid is not bubbling too fast or too slow.
5. Starting at the earliest point indicated in the recipe, check the food for doneness, following the cues provided. If the food is not ready, replace the lid and continue to steam. Note that removing the lid will cause the temperature in the steamer to drop, extending the cooking time, so check only as often as necessary.
6. Cooking in a parchment-paper packet—known as cooking *en papillote*—is a perfect way to steam fish, vegetables and other delicate items in the oven. The foods, encased in the paper, are cooked by trapped steam, which forms when

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Notes

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