

# CALM CHRISTMAS RECIPES

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# MOCKTAILS

## Sparkling Pomegranate & Mint Spritz (pitcher)

Serves: 6 • Time: 5 min • DF/GF/V

### You'll need:

- 2 cups 100% pomegranate juice (chilled)
- 1.25 L soda water (chilled)
- 1 apple, very thinly sliced
- ½ cup pomegranate arils (optional)
- Big handful fresh mint, lightly crushed
- Ice

### Do:

1. In a jug: muddle mint gently with a splash of juice.
2. Add remaining juice, apple slices, arils and ice.
3. Top with soda just before serving; stir once.

**Make-ahead:** Combine everything except soda up to 8 hrs ahead; keep chilled.

**Why it works:** Hydration; festive without the sugar hit of soft drink.



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## Apple-Ginger Sparkler

Serves: 4 • Time: 10 min • DF/GF/V

### You'll need:

- 750 ml sparkling mineral water (chilled)
- 2 cups cloudy apple juice (chilled)
- 2-3 cm fresh ginger, sliced (or 1-2 tsp ginger juice)
- Fresh mint or basil, to serve
- Ice

### Do:

1. Steep ginger in apple juice 5-10 min (in fridge).
2. Strain to taste; pour over ice.
3. Top with sparkling water; add mint/basil.

**Make-ahead:** Steep the ginger in juice up to 24 hrs for more zing.

**Swap:** Add a dash of apple cider vinegar for extra tartness if you like.



# PARTY PLATTERS

## Protein & Crunch Platter + Herby Yoghurt (or DF) Dip

Serves: 6-8 · Time: 15 min · DF option/GF

### You'll need:

- 400-500 g cooked chicken (rotisserie, shredded; or sliced roast beef/ham)
- 150 g firm cheese or DF cheese (optional)
- Seeded/GF crackers + roasted nuts
- Veg sticks: cucumber, capsicum, carrots, celery
- Dip: 1 cup Greek yoghurt or coconut yoghurt, 1 tbsp olive oil, 1 tsp dried dill, 1 tsp garlic powder, salt & pepper

### Do:

1. Mix dip; drizzle oil; season to taste.
2. Arrange protein at centre; surround with veg, crackers, nuts.
3. Add dip bowl; finish with olive oil crack + pepper.

**Make-ahead:** Prep veg + dip 24 hrs ahead. Assemble just before serving.

**Why Calm:** Balanced across protein/fibre/fats = sustained energy, fewer cravings.

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## Mezze-Style Veg Platter + Beet Hummus

Serves: 6-8 · Time: 15 min · DF/GF/V

### You'll need:

- 2 cups beet hummus (store-bought or blitz: 1 can chickpeas, 1 small cooked beet, 2 tbsp tahini, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 small garlic clove, salt)
- Roast capsicum strips (jarred), cucumber rounds, radishes, carrots
- Olives, artichokes (jarred), grape/mini cucumbers
- GF pita or grainy crackers; roasted almonds

### Do:

1. Spread beet hummus in a shallow bowl; olive oil swirl.
2. Arrange veg, olives, artichokes, crackers, nuts around.
3. Finish with cracked pepper.

**Make-ahead:** Hummus 3 days ahead; veggies cut 24 hrs ahead.

**Protein boost:** Add falafel or edamame for extra protein if desired.



# MAIN MEALS

## One-Pan Summer Chicken Thighs with Potatoes & Greens

Serves: 4 • Time: 45-50 min • DF/GF

### You'll need:

- 6-8 chicken thighs, skin-on or off
- 600 g baby potatoes, halved
- 2 capsicums, thick slices
- 1 red onion, wedges
- 2 tbsp olive oil, 2 tsp smoked paprika, 1 tsp garlic powder, salt & pepper
- 120 g baby spinach or green beans to finish
- (Optional) lemon-free herb sprinkle: chopped parsley + chives

### Do:

- Heat oven 200°C (fan 180).
- Toss potatoes, capsicum, onion with 1 tbsp oil + spices; salt/pepper.
- Add to lined tray; nestle chicken; brush with remaining oil; season.
- Roast 35-40 min (golden, juices clear).
- Toss through spinach/beans to wilt; herb sprinkle.

**Make-ahead:** Marinate chicken + veg in spices/oil 24 hrs ahead.

**Balanced plate:** Serve with extra salad if you want more veg volume.

## Sheet-Pan Maple-Mustard Salmon, Beans & Potatoes

Serves: 4 • Time: 25-30 min • DF/GF

### You'll need:

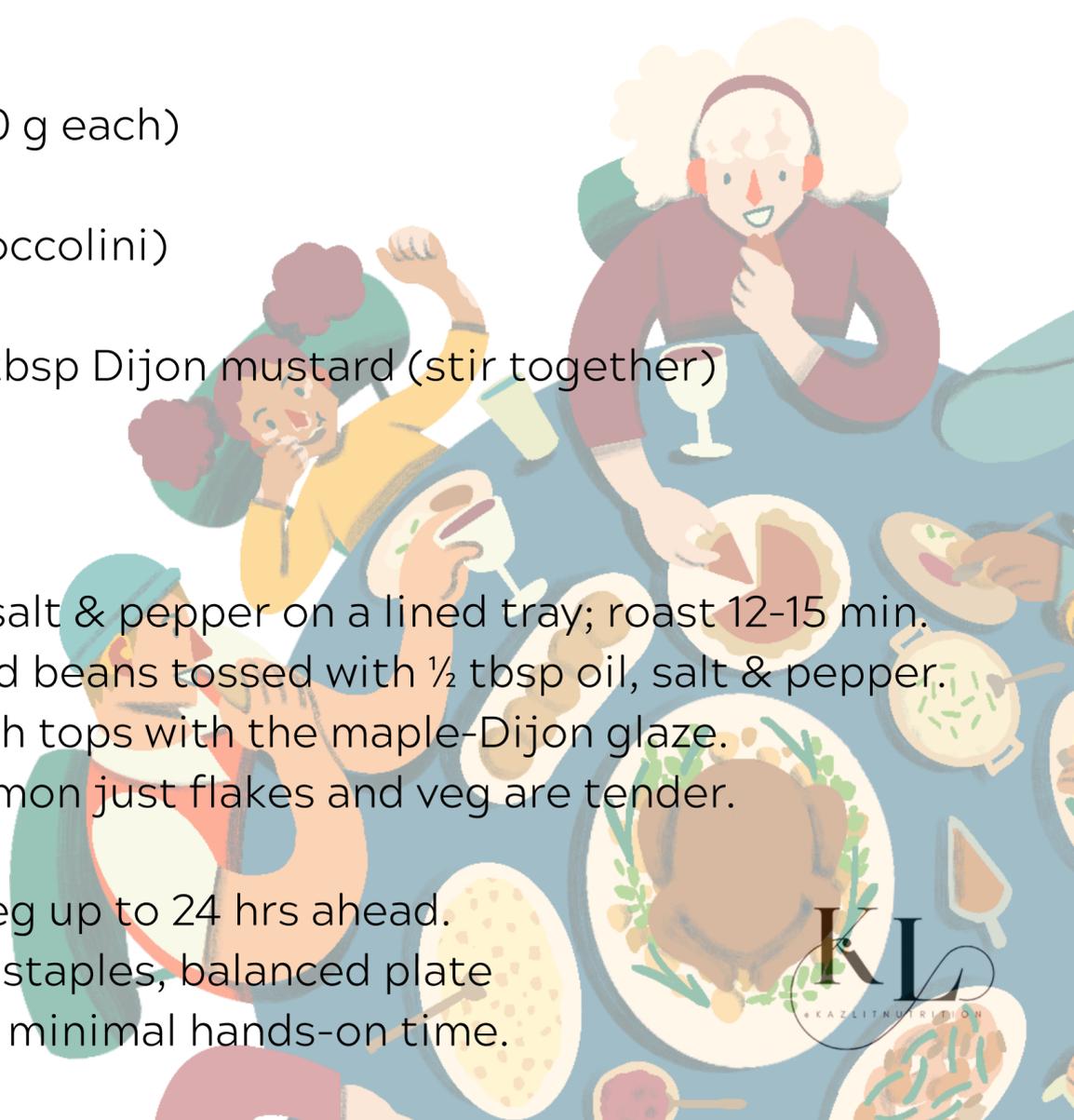
- 4 salmon fillets (about 150-180 g each)
- 600 g baby potatoes, halved
- 250-300 g green beans (or broccolini)
- 1½ tbsp olive oil, salt & pepper
- Glaze: 2 tbsp maple syrup + 2 tbsp Dijon mustard (stir together)

### Do:

1. Heat oven to 200°C (fan 180).
2. Toss potatoes with 1 tbsp oil, salt & pepper on a lined tray; roast 12-15 min.
3. Push potatoes to one side; add beans tossed with ½ tbsp oil, salt & pepper.
4. Place salmon on the tray; brush tops with the maple-Dijon glaze.
5. Roast 8-10 min more, until salmon just flakes and veg are tender.

**Make-ahead:** Mix glaze and cut veg up to 24 hrs ahead.

**Why calm:** One tray, supermarket staples, balanced plate (protein + veg + smart carbs) with minimal hands-on time.



# DESSERTS

## Dark Chocolate Almond & Berry Bark

Serves: 10-12 (snack squares) • Time: 15 min + chill • DF/GF/V

### You'll need:

- 300 g dark chocolate (70%+), chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup roasted almonds, roughly chopped
- 1 cup mixed berries (fresh or well-dried frozen)
- Pinch sea salt

### Do:

- Melt chocolate (microwave in 30-sec bursts or bowl over simmering water).
- Stir in almonds; spread 5-6 mm thick on lined tray.
- Press berries on top; sea salt pinch. Chill 30-40 min; break into shards.

**Make-ahead:** 1 week in an airtight container (fridge).

**Swap:** Use pepitas + coconut if nut-free needed.

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## Coconut-Mango Chia Cups

Serves: 6 • Time: 10 min + chill • DF/GF/V

### You'll need:

- 1 × 400 ml can coconut milk (full-fat for creaminess)
- 1 cup coconut or almond milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chia seeds
- 1-2 tbsp maple syrup (to taste)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups ripe mango, diced (or thawed frozen, well drained)
- Toasted coconut flakes (optional)

### Do:

1. Whisk milks + maple
2. Stir in chia; rest 10 min; whisk again.
3. Spoon into cups; chill 2-3 hrs (or overnight).
4. Top with mango + coconut flakes.

**Make-ahead:** 3 days in fridge (add fruit just before serving).

**Flavour twist:** Add vanilla or cardamom to the chia base.

