MASTERING YOUR KITCHEN

High-Performance Blender

Techniques, Recipes, and More

WOLF GOURMET



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WELCOME TO WOLF GOURMET

Since joining Sub-Zero, a third-generation family-owned company, in 2000, Wolf has brought its professional-quality ranges to people like you: passionate home cooks. We know you can think of no better way to spend a day than preparing a meal for your friends and family. With Wolf Gourmet, we're thrilled to bring our trademark level of workmanship, attention to detail, and sleek design to other parts of your kitchen. Through relentless testing and tweaking by designers and engineers who love to cook as much as you do, we have created a line of knives, cookware, and countertop appliances to help you cook better and more joyfully than you ever thought possible.

INTRODUCTION: **FROM SMOOTHIES TO SOUPS, SAUCES, AND MORE**



Perfectly crushed cocktail ice, impossibly silky soup, foolproof hollandaise, homemade almond milk. The Wolf Gourmet blender will change the way you use your blender. Of course, it's great for smoothies, but our blender is so versatile, you can use it to make any meal or even a multicourse dinner.

Its power also allows you to grind grains for flour and nuts for nut butter. You can even make hummus without having tahini around—just purée whole sesame seeds with the chickpeas and other ingredients (see the recipe on page 43). The blades move at an incredibly high speed, which ensures creamy and smooth results.

Coupled with this power is also grace. Its sleek profile features a base and jar mindfully designed to fit under a standard cabinet. You can choose whether you want the blender to run continuously or just in quick bursts—either way, rest easy knowing when the blender is running at its highest speed, it won't wobble or wander. You can walk away from a carrot purée midway through blending to finish off a pan sauce for a roast.

The digital display shows you whether the blender is at LO or HI or somewhere in between, and it includes a timer, so you can track blending progress (this is key if you're trying to keep something cold). A timer counts down when you're running one of the preset programs.

The program settings offer walk-away convenience for common blending tasks: SMOOTHIE, SOUP, PUREE, and ICE CRUSH. We've also added a manual mode, so you can have complete control over the blender speed and timing. We hope that the recipes here will be a springboard for you to create your own spectacular drinks and dishes.

SMOOTHIES & JUICE

Making smoothies = an easy and delicious way to get more fruits and veggies into your life.

When you make smoothies at home, you can control everything from the texture to the sweetness level. Unlike drinks made in a juicer, which strains out the skins, seeds, and other solids, your smoothies will be rich with fiber but still silky smooth.

We know that smoothies are one of the most popular ways to use a blender, so we spent endless hours tweaking this setting. When you choose the SMOOTHIE mode, the blender pulses five times to chop up ice and frozen ingredients, then ramps up to HI; the program runs for a total of 45 seconds. Most smoothies will be perfect in this time. If you find any stubborn bits (this might happen with large ice cubes, whole nuts, or berry seeds), just run the cycle one more time or turn the blender to manual mode and crank it to HI, then let it run for a few more seconds.

In this section, you'll find some great recipes, but first, we'll teach you the basic formula and techniques for building a great smoothie. That way, you can create your own concoctions, all while keeping your blender working happily.

Smoothie Building Blocks

Smoothie ingredients can be divided into five broad categories. The first two categories—liquid and primary ingredients—are essential components. The other three categories—protein, sweetener, and intensifier—help enhance the flavor and nutritional value of your drinks.

1. THE LIQUID You need a liquid to keep things moving so the blender doesn't cavitate (see page 53). Liquids include all types of milk (such as dairy, soy milk, or almond milk), coconut water, yogurt, kefir, coffee, tea, herbal tea (like hibiscus or chamomile teas), and fruit and vegetable juices. Some fruits, like grapes and citrus, contain enough liquid to be counted as a liquid ingredient in the smoothie formula.

2. THE PRIMARY INGREDIENTS These are your main ingredients and usually include a mix of fresh or frozen fruits and/or vegetables and ice.

3. THE PROTEIN Many smoothies incorporate some sort of protein to thicken it and make it more filling. Proteins can include dairy (which can double as a liquid), nuts and nut butters, seeds (including chia seeds, flaxseeds, and sesame seeds), protein powders, oats or oatmeal, beans, and chlorella and spirulina (two plant-based protein sources).

4. THE SWEETENER Sweeteners aren't always necessary but they can help make the flavors pop. Refined sugar isn't your only option. You can try honey, molasses, maple syrup, malt syrup, brown rice syrup, agave syrup, stevia, palm or date sugar, Medjool dates, or overripe bananas.

5. THE INTENSIFIER Flavor enhancers, like herbs, spices, and extracts, can take your smoothie from good to great and can really inspire creativity. Try tender herbs, like basil, mint, or cilantro; spices, like cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, cloves, or ground or fresh ginger; or extracts, like vanilla, almond, or coconut.

DID YOU KNOW?

The blender jar has distinctive, easy-to-read ounce, cup, and milliliter markings, so you can measure your fruits, liquids, and other ingredients right in the jar.

MASTER SMOOTHIE RECIPE

Makes two 12-ounce smoothies

The great thing about a smoothie is that you can put just about anything into it. That includes nuts, beans, coffee, kale . . . you name it! Building a great smoothie that blends together with ease requires a little bit of strategy. Here is how we get the smoothest of smoothies along with our basic framework for creating your own drink.

- 1 cup liquid (or up to 1½ cups liquid if using frozen fruit)
- 2 cups mixed fresh or frozen fruit and/or vegetables
- Protein (optional)
- Sweetener (optional)
- Intensifier (optional)

1. Place the liquid in the blender first, which will keep things moving at the bottom. Add soft fruits and vegetables, followed by hard vegetables and frozen fruit or ice.
2. Top with the protein, sweetener, and intensifier (if using).
3. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or add a little more liquid and blend longer.

HOW TO MAKE A GREAT GREEN SMOOTHIE

Makes two 12-ounce smoothies

Greens lend tons of vitamins and beneficial phytochemicals to a smoothie. When balanced with fruit, you get all the nutritional benefits of the greens plus a sweet note that tempers the savory quality of the vegetables. As for the choice of greens, you have lots of options that you can change with the seasons. In addition to the ever-popular spinach and kale, try arugula, parsley, collard greens, bok choy, Swiss chard, romaine lettuce, dandelion greens, sorrel, celery, cilantro, or carrot tops. If you add a lot of leafy greens to your smoothie, after blending on the SMOOTHIE setting, you may want to blend for 20 seconds longer to get an extra silky smoothie.

- 1 to 2 cups liquid (depending on how thick you like your smoothies)
- 2 cups lightly packed leafy greens
- 3 cups fresh or frozen fruits and/or vegetables
- Ice (unless using frozen fruit)
- Nuts or seeds
- Sweetener (optional)
- Intensifier (optional)

1. Place liquid in the blender first, followed by the greens and soft or fresh fruits. Add the frozen fruit and/or ice cubes, followed by nuts or seeds. Top with sweetener and intensifier (if using). (Remember that grapes and some citrus fruits can count as a liquid ingredient.) Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or add a little more liquid and blend longer.

BERRY TART SMOOTHIE

Makes 2 smoothies

Berries and pomegranates are rich with antioxidants. When blended with vanilla yogurt, they make for a delicious, sweet breakfast. Some grocery stores sell frozen mixed-berry blends; if you can find one, feel free to try that here.

1 cup pomegranate or cranberry juice
1 cup frozen blueberries
1 cup frozen blackberries
1 cup frozen raspberries
1 cup vanilla yogurt

1. Place the pomegranate (or cranberry) juice in the blender, followed by the blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and yogurt. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add a little more liquid and blend longer.

USING FROZEN FRUIT

We all love a cold smoothie, but adding ice can be counterproductive. Yes it chills the smoothie, but it sometimes also dilutes the flavor. Frozen fruit is a better choice and is the secret for making a cold, thick, and extra flavorful smoothie. Individually quick frozen fruit is picked at the peak of ripeness and then flash frozen, so it's just as flavorful as the fresh stuff. It's a bit less expensive to boot.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Wolf Gourmet blender has blades that move at more than 210 miles per hour when they reach the highest setting (that's 20,000 rotations per minute!), meaning your drink will be silky smooth.



LIME-MELON SMOOTHIE

Makes 2 smoothies

This refreshing smoothie is vibrant and hydrating on a hot summer day. It's also easy to turn into a cocktail: just add 3 ounces of vodka or white rum.

- 2 cups diced watermelon
- 1 cup diced honeydew
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 or 3 limes)
- ¾ cup ice cubes

1. Place the watermelon and honeydew in the blender, followed by the lime juice and ice. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add a little more liquid and blend longer.

PEANUT BUTTER AND BANANA SMOOTHIE

Makes 2 smoothies

This smoothie is rich like a milkshake. To give the smoothie a boost of omega-3 fatty acids, add the flaxseeds.

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 cup fresh pineapple chunks
- 2 frozen bananas, quartered crosswise
- 2 tablespoons smooth peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon flaxseeds (optional)
- 1 tablespoon honey

1. Place the coconut milk in the blender, followed by the pineapple, bananas, peanut butter, flaxseeds (if using), and honey. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add a little more liquid and blend longer.

USING OVERRIPE BANANAS

Overripe bananas are perfect for smoothies, and grocery stores often mark them down for quick sale. Peel them as soon as you get home, transfer them to a resealable plastic bag, and freeze them for when you need them (frozen bananas add a creamy texture to a smoothie). Add a whole banana or just a chunk whenever you want to thicken or naturally sweeten a smoothie.



CARROT, APPLE, AND GINGER SMOOTHIE

Makes 2 smoothies

Adding vegetables to your smoothies increases the vitamin quotient and makes them taste more complex. Ginger adds a spicy, warming flavor, so it's a great addition to fall and winter smoothies.

- 1 cup coconut water
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and quartered lengthwise
- 2 crisp, firm apples (such as Fuji, Honey Crisp, or Pink Lady), cored and quartered
- 1 orange, peeled, halved, and seeded
- 2 cups lightly packed baby spinach
- 1 (½-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled
- 1 cup ice cubes

1. Place the coconut water in the blender, followed by the carrots, apples, orange, spinach, ginger, and ice. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or add a little more liquid and blend longer.

PRO TIP

If you like the bite of fresh ginger, then you should try fresh turmeric in your smoothie. Turmeric is a superb anti-inflammatory ingredient and a healthful addition to smoothies. Like fresh ginger, a little goes a long way. Many health food stores and Indian markets sell fresh turmeric root, which looks a lot like ginger until you cut it to reveal its saffron-colored flesh. Add a ½-inch peeled piece to your smoothie to start. (If the smoothie tastes bitter or astringent, use less next time.) If you can't find the fresh root, add a pinch of ground turmeric.

KIWI-LIME JUICE

Makes 2 cups

This jade-colored juice is both sweet and citrusy. It's a perfect afternoon or happy hour sipper, perhaps with a shot of tequila.

1 teaspoon finely grated lime zest plus 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 cup green grapes
3 kiwifruit, peeled and halved
1 medium green apple, cored and quartered

1. Place the lime zest and juice in the blender, followed by the grapes, kiwifruit, and apple. Blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add a little more liquid and blend longer. Serve immediately.

VARIATION: KIWI-LIME SLUSHY

Add 1 cup ice cubes and select the SMOOTHIE setting, or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth.

PRO TIP

If you don't have a green apple, just peel a red one to maintain the intense green color of the juice.



SPINACH, MELON, AND LIME GREEN SMOOTHIE

Makes 2 smoothies

Thanks to the two types of melon and the coconut water, you'd never know there were spinach leaves in this smoothie. Because it's so sweet and mellow, this recipe is a great intro to green drinks.

- ½ to 1 cup coconut water or brewed green tea
- 1 cup roughly chopped cantaloupe
- 1 cup roughly chopped honeydew
- 1 medium cucumber, peeled and quartered crosswise
- 1 cup roughly chopped romaine lettuce
- 1 cup lightly packed baby spinach
- 1 lime, peeled and halved
- ½ cup ice cubes

1. Place ½ cup of the coconut water (or green tea) in the blender, followed by the cantaloupe, honeydew, cucumber, lettuce, spinach, lime, and ice cubes. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add up to ½ cup more coconut water (or green tea) and blend longer.

VARIATION: KALE AND APPLE SMOOTHIE

Substitute 1 cup apple juice for the coconut water and reduce the cucumber to ½ cucumber. Substitute baby kale for the spinach and substitute 1 orange, peeled and halved, for the lime. Add 2 peeled, cored, and halved Granny Smith apples and increase the ice cubes to 1 cup.

PRO TIP

Making smoothies is a terrific way to use up bruised, limp, or less than perfect produce. In fact, to reduce food waste, some markets are now selling subpar fruits and vegetables at a discount just for smoothie and juicing purposes.



SOUPS

Whether served hot or cold, your soups will be silky, no straining required.

Imagine: You come home from work, quickly sauté one or two vegetables, add them to the blender with some broth, and walk away. In the time it takes you to change out of your work clothes, you come back to the kitchen for a beautiful and comforting bowl of hot soup straight from the blender. The Wolf Gourmet blender's SOUP setting runs for 5 minutes and 45 seconds—long enough to make the soup ridiculously creamy and heat it to a perfect serving temperature, thanks to the friction between the ingredients and the blades, which heats the soup.

When using the SOUP setting, add up to 7 cups of room-temperature ingredients to the blender. At the end of the cycle, carefully remove the lid from the blender jar—the resulting soup will be steaming hot and ready to serve.

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER SOUP WITH CURRY AND LIME

Serves 6

Yogurt, lime juice, and lime zest brighten this curried vegetable soup. Instead of cauliflower, you could also make this soup with broccoli.

Extra-virgin olive oil, for greasing
2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
½ medium shallot, peeled
1½ cups plain Greek yogurt
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lime
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 tablespoon ground cumin
2¼ teaspoons kosher salt
2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon garlic powder
¼ teaspoon curry powder
1 large head cauliflower, cut into large florets
2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 cup heavy cream

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Using your fingers, lightly grease a rimmed baking sheet with a little oil, then lightly grease the garlic and shallot and place on the baking sheet.
2. Whisk together the yogurt, lime zest and juice, chili powder, cumin, salt, pepper, garlic powder, and curry powder in a large bowl. Add the cauliflower and toss to coat with the yogurt mixture. Transfer the cauliflower to the baking sheet with the garlic and shallot. Roast until the cauliflower is lightly browned, 30 to 40 minutes. Set aside to cool. When cool enough to handle, squeeze the garlic out from their skins.
3. Place the chicken broth in the blender, followed by the garlic, shallot, and cauliflower. Select the SOUP setting. Once the cycle finishes, slowly add the cream to the emulsion cup so it blends in while the blender is running (1 cup of cream won't fit in the emulsion cup all at once so it needs to be added gradually). Select MANUAL/LO, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 8 and blend, 30 to 40 seconds. Season with salt and pepper. Divide the soup among bowls and serve.

VARIATION: CAULIFLOWER-COCONUT SOUP

Substitute coconut milk for the heavy cream. For a vegetarian version, substitute low-sodium vegetable broth for the chicken broth.

PRO TIP

Topping soups with garnishes, like the crumbled goat cheese in the Provençal Tomato Soup (page 25) and the chipotle sour cream in the Corn Soup with Chile Cream (page 27), really takes them to the next level. For this cauliflower soup, try adding a sprinkle of curry powder stirred into plain yogurt, a few fresh cilantro leaves, or a couple of roasted cauliflower florets that you hold back from the blender.



PROVENÇAL TOMATO SOUP

Serves 4

Fresh goat cheese, crumbled on top, adds a surprising tangy creaminess and elevates this simple soup into something that is definitely worthy of a dinner party. If you prefer, you can sprinkle the soup with feta or grated Parmigiano-Reggiano instead.

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, quartered
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 2 pounds tomatoes, halved, seeded, and roughly chopped, or 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with basil (with juice)
- ¼ cup dry vermouth
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 6 fresh basil leaves
- Crumbled goat cheese, for serving

HOMEMADE BUTTERY CROUTONS

Cut white sandwich bread or bakery bread into ¾-inch pieces and add to a large bowl. Drizzle with melted unsalted butter, season with salt, and spread out on a rimmed baking sheet. Toast in a 350°F oven until crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool before sprinkling over soup or salad, or crush and sprinkle over your favorite pasta dish.

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan or soup pot over medium heat. Once it shimmers, add the onion and cook, stirring often, until lightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Turn off the heat.
2. Place the chicken (or vegetable) broth, tomatoes, vermouth, tomato paste, salt, dried basil, fennel seeds, oregano, thyme, pepper, sugar, fresh basil, and the sautéed onion and garlic in the blender. Select the SOUP setting. Once the cycle finishes, divide the soup among bowls. Sprinkle goat cheese over the top and serve.

POTATO-LEEK SOUP (VICHYSSOISE)

Serves 8

Served hot and left chunky, potato-leek soup is a rustic midwinter dinner. When puréed smooth, blended with cream, and chilled, you get vichyssoise, the elegant and refreshing French soup. Try swapping in carrots, broccoli, spinach, or parsnips for some of the potatoes, and you can absolutely serve the soup hot, if you prefer.

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil
¼ pound thick-cut bacon, cut into ¼-inch cubes
3 medium leeks, white part only, trimmed, cleaned, and cut into ⅛-inch slices
½ large yellow onion, chopped
6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
¾ cup sweet vermouth
4 medium or 3 large russet potatoes, peeled and chopped
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper (or white pepper)
1 cup heavy cream (optional)
Finely diced red bell pepper, for serving
Finely chopped fresh chives or flat-leaf parsley, for serving
Homemade Buttered Croutons (see page 25), for serving

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan or soup pot over medium heat. Once it shimmers, add the bacon and cook, stirring often, until crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. If the bacon starts to get too dark, reduce the heat to medium-low.
2. Add the leeks and onion and cook, stirring often, until they are very soft and the leeks have reduced in volume by about half, 10 to 15 minutes. Pour in the chicken broth and vermouth, then add the potatoes and season with salt and black (or white) pepper to taste. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer until the potatoes are tender enough to fall apart, about 20 minutes. Let cool slightly in the pot.
3. Working in batches, transfer the soup to the blender, never filling it more than halfway. Remove the filler cap and purée on MANUAL/LO, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10 (don't fill the blender more than halfway full and always remove the filler cap of the emulsion cup when blending hot mixtures). Blend until completely smooth, about 2 minutes. Remove the emulsion cup and add ½ cup of the cream (if using). Replace the emulsion cup and select MANUAL/SPEED 2. Pulse 5 or 6 times to combine. Season with salt and black (or white) pepper to taste, and pour the soup into a clean 2-quart airtight container. Repeat with the remaining soup and cream and refrigerate until well chilled, then serve with the bell peppers, herbs, and croutons.

CORN SOUP WITH CHILE CREAM

Serves 4

Roasting or grilling corn accentuates its sweetness and depth. Paired with a smoky chile cream, this velvety soup showcases homey, comforting Tex-Mex flavors.

CHILE CREAM

½ cup sour cream
2 teaspoons finely chopped chipotle chile in adobo sauce
1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

SOUP

4 ears corn
½ medium yellow onion, peeled
2½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 garlic clove, peeled
1 cup heavy cream
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Make the chile cream: Stir together the ingredients for the chile cream, cover, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
2. Make the soup: Heat a charcoal or gas grill to medium-high heat leaving one area on medium-low heat (if using charcoal, then bank the charcoal to one side of the grill), or preheat the oven to 400°F. Strip away all but the innermost layer of the corn husk, pull back the husk and remove the silk. Put the husk back in place, then cover with room temperature water for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the corn from the bowl, shaking off any excess water.
3. Grill the corn and onion until grill-marked on all sides. If using a charcoal grill, move the corn and onion to the cooler side of the grill; if using a gas grill, lower the heat to medium-low. Close the lid and grill-roast the vegetables until the onion is soft and deeply browned and the corn kernels are visible beneath the husk, about 15 minutes.
4. If using an oven, roast the corn and the onion on a rimmed baking sheet, cut side up, until the onion is soft and the corn husk is brittle and fragrant, 30 to 40 minutes.
5. Once the corn is cool enough to handle, discard the corn husks. Slice the kernels off the cobs into a large bowl; you should have about 4 cups. Holding 1 cob over the bowl with the kernels, use the spine of a chef's knife to scrape any remaining pulp from the cob. Slice the onion into quarters.
6. In the blender, place the chicken stock, followed by 3½ cups of the corn, the onion, and garlic. Select the SOUP setting. Once the cycle finishes, remove the emulsion cup and add the cream and the remaining corn kernels. Replace the emulsion cup and select MANUAL/SPEED 2. Pulse to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Divide the soup among bowls. Dollop chile cream on the top and serve.

DRESSINGS

Add pop to salads, grilled foods, and more with quick and easy homemade dressings

Sure, you can whisk your vinaigrettes and mayonnaise by hand, but the blender helps you make perfectly creamy dressings in a snap. Best of all, the included emulsion cup, which works like a funnel, is designed to drizzle in the oil at the perfect speed, ensuring your dressing is creamy and luscious without you having to think twice. The emulsion cup twists into the lid and fits in securely; the filler cap snaps onto the emulsion cup so it can be removed from the lid easily. The filler cap has measurement marks on its side, so it doubles as a measuring cup and can be used to pour oil or other liquids into the emulsion cup.

The three dressings we make in this chapter—vinaigrette, ranch dressing, and mayonnaise—can serve as templates for you to make almost any dressing you can dream up! From these three formulas, you can create thousands upon thousands of dressings to complement whatever you are making.

Your Formula for Perfect Vinaigrette

Oil + Acid + Emulsifier + Aromatic = Vinaigrette

Vinaigrette is the little black dress of the kitchen. So much more than a salad dressing, a vinaigrette can also be used as a sauce or marinade for everything from vegetables to fish to meat. You can also toss it with fish or shellfish to make ceviche.

The ratio of the traditional vinaigrette is three parts oil to one part acid but you can play around with this a bit. To make the vinaigrette creamy and rich, an emulsifier is added to bind the oil and vinegar and prevent them from separating. Some common emulsifiers are creamy mustard, ripe avocado, a touch of mayonnaise, sour cream, or a raw egg yolk (as in Caesar dressing). Aromatics are key to a well-balanced vinaigrette, adding flavor, nuance, and brightness. Aromatics can include alliums such as shallots, garlic, or chopped scallion; chopped fresh tender herbs such as basil, dill, or tarragon; dried herbs like oregano and thyme; or ground or whole spices and even dried chiles. And, of course, don't forget, a little salt and pepper.

OIL: Extra-virgin olive oil is a favorite, but a neutral oil, like canola or grapeseed, is a good choice when you don't want the flavor of the oil to overwhelm other ingredients. You can also try toasted nut and seed oils, such as walnut oil or pumpkin seed oil. Since these oils can be strong, you may choose to use them in tandem with a neutral, less intense oil.

ACID: Any vinegar works well, as will citrus juice, verjus (the juice from unripe wine grapes), fruit juices, and even pickle brine.

AROMATICS: Shallots are the classic choice but you can also add garlic, scallions, capers, herbs, anchovies, and/or ground spices, such as cumin or coriander.

EMULSIFIER: A straight vinegar-and-oil vinaigrette tastes great but separates quickly. If you'd like it to stay suspended longer, add an emulsifier. Mustard, which adds some zing along with its thickening properties, is a popular choice. Egg yolks (both raw and cooked), mayonnaise, sour cream, buttermilk, avocado, Greek yogurt, and crème fraîche are also terrific emulsifiers.

WHEN TO REMOVE THE EMULSION CUP

Leave the emulsion cup in place even when you don't plan to use it, as long you're not going to use the tamper or don't plan on adding extra ingredients to the blender while the motor is running. If you need to use the tamper or decide to add a few items to the blender, simply twist the emulsion cap according to the arrows on the lid.



CLASSIC VINAIGRETTE

Makes about 2 cups

This is the vinaigrette you'll find on every French family's table. It's lovely with leafy salads, steamed asparagus, or roasted vegetables.

½ cup vinegar, lemon juice, or a combination of the two
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard (or 2 teaspoons dried mustard powder)
1 small shallot, halved
1 garlic clove
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1½ cups extra-virgin olive oil or neutral oil (such as canola or grapeseed)

1. Place the vinegar (and/or lemon juice), mustard, shallot, garlic, salt, and pepper in the blender. Select MANUAL/SPEED 5. Remove the filler cap and use the emulsion cup to slowly drizzle in the oil while the blender is running and blend until the vinaigrette is creamy and thick. (Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week. Shake—or blend—to emulsify before using.)

VARIATION: SESAME VINAIGRETTE

Add 3 tablespoons soy sauce. Substitute 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil for 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. A few nice (but optional) additions include 1 tablespoon roughly chopped peeled fresh ginger, a pinch of red pepper flakes, a squeeze of Asian-style hot sauce (such as sambal oelek or Sriracha), a splash of mirin, or a squeeze of honey.

VARIATION: LEMON-PEPPER VINAIGRETTE

Substitute the finely grated zest of 1 lemon and ½ cup fresh lemon juice (from 3 or 4 lemons) for the vinegar. Add 1 tablespoon honey and increase the freshly ground black pepper to 1 tablespoon.

VARIATION: RASPBERRY-WALNUT VINAIGRETTE

Use balsamic vinegar or raspberry vinegar; don't use any lemon juice. Use canola oil, or 6 tablespoons walnut oil and 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons canola; don't use any olive oil. Reduce the Dijon mustard to 1 tablespoon or use 1 teaspoon dried mustard powder. Add 1 cup fresh raspberries to the blender. Select the PUREE setting. Once the cycle finishes, select MANUAL/SPEED 3. Add ½ cup toasted walnuts and PULSE to blend. For more sweetness, pulse in 1 to 2 tablespoons honey.

PRO TIP

Like salt, acid is a key component of great flavor. If a dish tastes flat and doesn't need more salt, a little lemon juice or a hit of vinegar will usually brighten it up. This is true for vinaigrettes as well as soups, pan sauces, and pasta sauces.

RANCH DRESSING

Makes 2 cups

At its heart, ranch dressing is little more than buttermilk blended with mayonnaise (or sour cream or Greek yogurt). If you do nothing more than season this creamy, tangy mixture with salt and pepper, you will have an excellent dressing. Of course, fresh or dried herbs and a hit of garlic powder turn it into a true ranch.

- 1 cup store-bought or homemade mayonnaise (page 35)
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon chopped flat-leaf parsley (or celery leaves)
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Place the mayonnaise in the blender, followed by the buttermilk, parsley (or celery leaves), garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Select MANUAL/LO and blend, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 6, until you reach the desired consistency.

PRO TIP

The consistency of creamy dressings depends on the ratio of buttermilk to mayonnaise. A good rule of thumb: if you want a thinner dressing, add more buttermilk; for a thicker one, add more mayonnaise. A 2 to 1 ratio of buttermilk to mayonnaise creates a thinner, pourable salad dressing. If you go 1 to 1, you get a thicker dressing that's closer to store-bought versions. At a 1 to 2 ratio of buttermilk to mayonnaise, you get something so thick that it's more like a dip.

VARIATION: HERB-RANCH DRESSING

Substitute ½ cup plain Greek yogurt for ½ cup of the mayonnaise. Increase the amount of parsley (or celery leaves) to 1 tablespoon (or substitute cilantro or dill for the parsley). Add 3 chopped scallions, 1 minced small garlic clove (omit the garlic powder), 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard, and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Increase the salt to ½ teaspoon.

VARIATION: CREAMY BLUE CHEESE DRESSING

Substitute ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt for ½ cup of the mayonnaise and reduce the buttermilk to ½ cup. Add 1 heaping cup crumbled blue cheese and 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice.





HOMEMADE MAYONNAISE

Makes 2½ cups

Store-bought mayonnaise is fine for sandwiches, but you'll find that homemade mayonnaise is a sauce unto itself. While our recipe is nearly foolproof, it's always helpful to have a troubleshooting cheat sheet in your hip pocket just in case (see How to Fix Broken Mayonnaise, below).

- 1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 large egg plus 1 large egg yolk
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard (or 2 teaspoons dried mustard powder)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 2 cups canola or neutral oil

1. Place the lemon juice, vinegar, egg and yolk, mustard, salt, and sugar in the blender. Select MANUAL/SPEED 3 and pulse to combine. Remove the filler cap, return to SPEED 3, and use the emulsion cup to slowly drizzle the oil into the blender while the blender is running, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10. (The emulsion will begin to thicken once the amount of oil is increased.) If you hear the blades spinning but don't see the mayonnaise moving, you have an air pocket; stop the blender, scrape down the sides of the jar, then pulse to continue. Once the mayonnaise is thick and glossy, stop the blender. (Transfer to an air-tight container and refrigerate for up to 3 days).

VARIATION: SRIRACHA MAYO

Add 1½ teaspoons (or more to taste) Sriracha (Asian-style hot sauce) and ½ teaspoon soy sauce to the blender with the other ingredients.

VARIATION: AIOLI

Add 4 or 5 minced garlic cloves to the blender with the other ingredients.

HOW TO FIX BROKEN MAYO

When the blender's blades spin for too long, they can cause the sauce or spread to get too hot or overly blended. The dressing can then break—the oil will float to the top while the solid fats sink to the bottom. If you find yourself with a broken mayonnaise, here's how to fix it:

1. Transfer the broken mayonnaise to a liquid measuring cup.

2. In the blender jar, place 1 tablespoon of water, lemon juice, or vinegar, and 1 egg yolk. Pulse to combine.

3. With the motor running, very slowly add your broken mayonnaise to the blender, starting with just a couple of drops and gradually increasing to a thin stream as it thickens.

SAUCES

Hollandaise becomes a weeknight sauce with this blender.

Using the Wolf Gourmet blender turns sauce making into fast and easy work. The emulsion cup helps you drizzle melted butter into notoriously finicky sauces like the classic Hollandaise at exactly the right rate. The blender can also help you whip up a perfect pesto or hummus in seconds, no mortar or pestle required.

HOW TO USE BÉCHAMEL

Béchamel is the secret to some of the world's great comfort foods. It's often incorporated into baked dishes because it stays so creamy and moist in the oven. Here are five ways to use béchamel.

Lasagna and baked ziti. Instead of ricotta, many cooks enrich their baked pasta dishes with béchamel.

Gratins. Pour the white sauce over steamed greens or thinly sliced parboiled potatoes and bake until the top is browned for a rich and delicious side dish.

Macaroni and cheese. Most baked macaroni and cheese recipes start with a white sauce base. The flour-milk mixture keeps the cheese sauce extra silky and luscious.

Casseroles. Before "cream of" condensed soups were the go-to casserole bases, there was béchamel. Use white sauce in place of the canned stuff in any recipe.

Soufflé. When blended with egg yolks, beaten egg whites, and your choice of mix-ins (cheese, most likely!), you get a savory soufflé.

BÉCHAMEL SAUCE

Makes 2 cups

A good béchamel sauce, which is a classic French sauce (as is hollandaise on page 38), is a must-have in any cook's repertoire (see How to Use Béchamel, at left). When you use the blender to make it, you eliminate the risk of lumps forming in the sauce. Even better, the SOUP setting on the Wolf Gourmet blender heats up the sauce for you so you don't even have to dirty a saucepan.

1½ cups whole milk (plus more if needed)
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup plus 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. Place the milk in the blender, followed by the softened butter, flour, and salt. Select the SOUP setting. Once the cycle finishes, use the sauce immediately. (Transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 2 days.)

VARIATION: CHEESE SAUCE

Make the Béchamel Sauce. Once the cycle finishes, add ½ to ¾ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (or another cheese of your choice). Select MANUAL/SPEED 5 and pulse several times until the cheese is blended in. Adjust the consistency of the sauce, if you like, by adding more cheese to thicken it or more milk to thin it.

VARIATION: ROASTED GARLIC SAUCE

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut the top third off a head of garlic to expose the cloves. Place the garlic head in the center of a large square of aluminum foil. Drizzle with olive oil, then gather and twist the ends to enclose the garlic in a leakproof bundle. Set the garlic on a baking sheet. Roast the garlic for 30 minutes. Set aside to cool. When cool enough to handle, squeeze the garlic cloves out from their skins. Make the Béchamel Sauce, adding 5 roasted garlic cloves and pinch of good nutmeg to the blender with the other ingredients. Increase the salt to ¾ teaspoon.

HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

Makes about 1 cup

Hollandaise is a luscious sauce most often served over eggs. In this recipe, instead of whisking cool butter into warm egg yolks set over a bain-marie (double boiler), you add hot butter to cool yolks and let the spinning blender blades do the hard work. Thanks to the blender, the sauce is that much more foolproof. In fact, even star chefs now make hollandaise this way. Whether you pour it over eggs, grilled fish, steamed asparagus, or blanched green beans, your guests will be impressed by your prowess with this classic French sauce.

3 large egg yolks
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from about 1 lemon)
1 teaspoon sugar (optional)
⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
12 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
Warm water, for loosening
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Place the egg yolks in the blender, followed by the lemon juice, sugar (if using), and cayenne. Blend on MANUAL/LO, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 4 over the course of 1 minute.
2. Remove the filler cap. Select MANUAL/LO and use the emulsion cup to slowly add the melted butter (only add the golden butter, not the milk solids that sink to the bottom of the cup; melted butter should be about 145°F) while blending, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 6, for 2 minutes or until you reach the desired consistency. If the hollandaise is too thick, add a little warm water to loosen it. Season with salt and black pepper. Serve immediately or keep warm in a thermos for up to 1 hour.

VARIATION: RED WINE & SHERRY HOLLANDAISE

Substitute 1½ tablespoons red wine and 1½ tablespoons sherry vinegar for the lemon juice.

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR BLENDER

The blender lid and emulsion cup can go in the dishwasher but the jar should be hand washed only. A bottle brush is helpful to clean under the blade. If anything stubborn sticks to the jar, like hummus or nut butter, add a few drops of soap and fill the jar halfway with warm water. Blend on HI for 30 seconds, then rinse and dry thoroughly. To clean the base, just wipe it with a damp cloth; you can lift the jar pad as needed to clean underneath.



BASIL PESTO

Makes about 1 cup

When making pesto, add the liquid ingredients to the blender first (just like when making smoothies). This helps pull the solid ingredients down toward the blade so everything gets chopped at a uniform rate. This recipe makes enough for you to toss with one pound of pasta, serve over four servings of chicken breast, or spread on two or three pizzas.

½ cup pine nuts
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 cups tightly packed torn fresh basil leaves
2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Ice water (optional)
½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

1. Heat a small skillet over medium heat, add the pine nuts, and toast them, shaking the pan often, until they are golden brown and fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer the nuts to a plate to cool.
2. Place the oil in the blender, followed by the basil, toasted pine nuts, garlic, and salt. Select MANUAL/LO and blend, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10 and stopping to scrape down the sides of the blender as needed, until combined. If the outside of the blender jar starts to get warm, add ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, to the pesto mixture to keep it cool and help it blend.
3. Transfer the pesto to a medium bowl and stir in the Parmigiano-Reggiano and butter. Use immediately or store in an airtight container (set a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface of the pesto to keep it from discoloring) and refrigerate for up to 1 week; or transfer to a resealable plastic freezer bag and freeze for up to 1 month.

VARIATION: PISTACHIO-MINT PESTO

Substitute pistachios for the pine nuts and substitute fresh mint for the basil.

VARIATION: WALNUT-PECORINO PESTO

Substitute walnuts for the pine nuts. Substitute 1½ cups parsley leaves for 1½ cups of the basil and substitute Pecorino-Romano for the Parmigiano-Reggiano.

PRO TIP

To keep the pesto from turning brown, blanch the basil leaves before adding them to the blender. Just dunk them in boiling water for no more than a second or two, then plunge into an ice bath to cool.





TOASTED SESAME HUMMUS

Makes about 4 cups

This hummus recipe is special because it is made with freshly ground tahini, the Middle Eastern sesame paste nearly essential to hummus. The power of the blender blades grinds the sesame seeds into a silky purée, lending a wonderfully rich elegance to the chickpeas, lemon, and garlic.

⅔ cup sesame seeds
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
4 cups cooked chickpeas or 2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, rinsed
4 garlic cloves, peeled
½ cup fresh lemon juice (from 3 or 4 lemons)
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup water or 1 cup reserved chickpea cooking liquid
Sweet paprika, for serving
Pita breads, sesame crackers, or raw vegetables, for serving

1. Heat a small skillet over medium heat, add the sesame seeds, and toast them, shaking the pan often, until they are brown and fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer the sesame seeds to a plate to cool.
2. Place the sesame seeds in the blender, followed by the olive oil, sesame oil, chickpeas, garlic, lemon juice, cumin, salt, and ½ cup water (or chickpea cooking liquid). Select MANUAL/SPEED 3 and pulse to roughly combine.
3. Select the PUREE setting, using the tamper as needed to stir the mixture. Once the cycle finishes, adjust the consistency of the hummus, if you like, by adding up to ½ cup more water to thin it. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and lemon juice as needed. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle paprika on top, and serve with pita, crackers, or vegetables.

VARIATION: BLACK BEAN HUMMUS

Reduce the sesame seeds to ⅓ cup and reduce the toasted sesame oil to 1 teaspoon. Substitute 2 cups cooked or 1 (15-ounce) can black beans (with their liquid) for 2 cups or 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas. Substitute lime juice for the lemon juice, decrease the cumin to 1½ teaspoons, and add 1½ teaspoons chili powder. Sprinkle with chopped fresh cilantro and serve.

VARIATION: TOMATO-BASIL HUMMUS

Add ½ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes, 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil, and ¼ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese to the blender with the other ingredients.

FROZEN DRINKS & DESSERTS

How do you turn any day into a party?
Make a frozen cocktail, of course!

For perfectly crushed ice for frozen cocktails, choose the ICE setting. The result: You can take any type or shape of ice cube and get a blizzard of shaved ice that has beautiful, uniform crystals in just one minute.

In addition to the icy cocktails in this chapter, we cover making "adult" milk shakes as well as sorbets that don't even require an ice cream maker.

COCONUT, MANGO, AND PINEAPPLE SHAKE

Makes 2 shakes

This all-ages take on the piña colada is perfect for sipping in the garden. You can find Coco Lopez cream of coconut at most grocery stores, either in the baking section or with the other drink mixers.

- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 cup cream of coconut (such as Coco Lopez)
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 or 3 limes)
- 1 cup fresh chopped mango
- 2 cups ice cubes

1. Place the pineapple juice in the blender followed by the cream of coconut, lime juice, mango, and ice. Select the SMOOTHIE setting; or blend on MANUAL, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, and blending until smooth. Use the tamper as needed to stir the mixture or to add a little more liquid and blend longer.

VARIATION: TROPICAL RUM SHAKE
Add 4 ounces white rum to the blender along with the other ingredients.

HOW TO USE THE TAMPER

The tamper is your ally when blending very thick or frozen mixtures. When you insert it into the blender, it removes trapped air bubbles that can cause the mixture to stop circulating and pushes down thick mixtures that stick to the sides of the jar. Only use the tamper that came with your blender.

Some tips for using the tamper:

1. Be sure the emulsion cup and filler cap are removed.
2. Make sure the blender jar is no more than two-thirds full.
3. Only use the tamper with cold or room-temperature liquids.
4. Insert the tamper and point it toward the side or corner of the container rather than down. The tamper will not touch the blades.

MOSCOW MULE

Makes 2 cocktails

Traditionally served in a copper mug, this zingy 1940s-era summery cocktail has recently made a resurgence. This version uses crushed ice rather than ice cubes for a smoother drink. The key to a good Moscow Mule is real ginger beer, which is spicier than ginger ale.

2 cups ice cubes
Finely grated zest of 2 limes plus ¼ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 or 3 limes)
½ cup vodka
1 to 1½ cups ginger beer
1 lime, cut into wedges

1. Place the ice and lime zest in the blender and select the ICE setting to create crushed ice.
2. Once the cycle finishes, fill each glass two-thirds full with the shaved lime ice. Top each glass with ¼ cup of the vodka, 2 tablespoons of the lime juice, and ½ to ¾ cup of the ginger beer. Garnish each glass with a lime wedge and serve.

PRO TIP

Pulsing the lime zest with the ice cubes enhances the bright citrus flavor of the drink.



CHOCOLATE-COFFEE SHAKE

Makes 2 shakes

By mixing chocolate ice cream with chocolate gelato or sorbet, you get a double chocolate hit without too much richness. If you can't find the gelato or sorbet, however, you can use all ice cream to make this grown-up dessert drink.

½ cup cold espresso or double-strength coffee
3 scoops chocolate ice cream
3 scoops chocolate gelato or sorbet
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
3 tablespoons coffee liqueur (optional)

1. Place the espresso (or coffee) in the blender, followed by the chocolate ice cream, gelato (or sorbet), vanilla, and coffee liqueur (if using). Select MANUAL/SPEED 3 and pulse to combine, scraping down the sides of the blender as needed. Select MANUAL/LO, gradually increase the speed to SPEED 7, and blend until the milkshake moves fluidly in the blender, about 1 minute. Divide between 2 glasses and serve.

VARIATION: MEXICAN CHOCOLATE SHAKE

Add ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon and ¼ teaspoon almond extract to the blender along with the other ingredients. Or make ½ cup double-strength Mexican hot chocolate, refrigerate it until cold, and then substitute it for the espresso (or coffee).

VARIATION: AMPLIFIED RASPBERRY SHAKE

Substitute ¾ cup whole milk for the chilled espresso (or coffee). Substitute raspberry or black raspberry ice cream for the chocolate ice cream and substitute raspberry gelato or sorbet for the chocolate gelato (or sorbet). Substitute 1 tablespoon raspberry jam or preserves for the vanilla. Omit the coffee liqueur.



STRAWBERRY-BASIL SORBET

Makes 1 pint

The blender purées the strawberries into such a smooth blend that all you need to do to make sorbet is freeze the purée. A drizzle of balsamic vinegar on top is an inspired touch.

3 cups fresh strawberries, hulled
4 or 5 large fresh basil leaves, torn, plus small leaves for serving
1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon vodka
1 cup ice cubes
Aged balsamic vinegar (optional), for serving

1. Place the strawberries, basil, sugar, lemon juice, vodka, and ice in the blender and select the PUREE setting. Once the cycle finishes and the sugar dissolves, transfer the mixture to a shallow dish, cover with plastic wrap, and freeze until it is hard enough to scoop, 2 to 3 hours.
2. Scoop the frozen sorbet into bowls. Top with a few small basil leaves, drizzle with balsamic vinegar (if using), and serve.

VARIATION: STRAWBERRY-BASIL GRANITA

Make the strawberry-basil purée, then pour the mixture into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and freeze until it starts to crystallize, 30 to 60 minutes. Use a fork to break up the mixture, making sure to get into the corners of the pan. Return the pan to the freezer and repeat every 30 minutes until the mixture is completely icy and frozen, about 3 hours. Fluff with a fork one last time and freeze 30 minutes longer before serving.



LEMON-BLUEBERRY SORBET

Makes 1 pint

The blueberry syrup intensifies the berry flavor in the sorbet. You can find the syrup at specialty shops or make your own (see page 58).

6 cups frozen blueberries (about 2 pounds)
2 teaspoons freshly grated lemon zest plus ½ cup fresh lemon juice (from 3 or 4 lemons)
1 cup water
1 cup sugar
¼ cup blueberry syrup
2 tablespoons vodka

1. Place the frozen blueberries in the blender, followed by the lemon zest and juice, water, sugar, blueberry syrup, and vodka. Select the SMOOTHIE setting. Once the cycle finishes, transfer the mixture to a shallow dish, cover with plastic wrap, and freeze until it is hard enough to scoop, 2 to 3 hours. Scoop the frozen sorbet into bowls and serve.

PRO TIP

Vodka in the sorbet base slows down the freezing process, making the ice crystals smaller and giving the sorbet a creamier mouthfeel. The vodka also makes the sorbet easier to scoop.

VARIATION: LEMON-BLUEBERRY GRANITA

Make the blueberry-lemon purée, then pour the mixture into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and freeze until it starts to crystallize, 30 to 60 minutes. Use a fork to break up the mixture, making sure to get into the corners of the pan. Return the pan to the freezer and repeat every 30 minutes until the mixture is completely icy and frozen, about 3 hours. Fluff with a fork one last time and freeze 30 minutes longer before serving.

PRO TIP

The frozen blueberries help chill down the sorbet base faster and eliminate the need to use ice cubes.

UNEXPECTED WAYS TO USE YOUR BLENDER

Efficiency + Power = Fresh-Milled Grains, Homemade Nut Milks, and Creamy Nut Butters

In this section, you'll discover fun and surprising recipes for DIY pantry ingredients that will taste fresher than anything you can buy at the store. We hope that this section inspires you to use your blender for much more than smoothies and soups.

A FEW TIPS FOR BLENDING WITH EASE

When the blender blades spin at such incredible speeds, air pockets can occasionally form, causing your ingredients to stop blending. In technical terms, this phenomenon is called cavitation. Here's how to work around it.

1. Use enough liquid (and add liquids first) when making smoothies and soups: Liquid pulls the solid ingredients toward the blades so the mixture keeps moving. If the goal is a pourable consistency, you'll need at least 1 cup of liquid. If an air pocket forms and the blending action stops, try turning off the blender, adding more liquid, and starting it again.

2. Gradually increase the blender speed: When you're in manual mode, start at a lower speed to chop the ingredients, then move to a higher one to purée. (The program settings, such as PURÉE, SOUP, and SMOOTHIE, will automatically do this for you.)

3. Break out the tamper: For very thick mixtures, like peanut butter, you may need to use the tamper to push the ingredients toward the blades. (For more tips on using a tamper, see page 45.) Using the tamper is more efficient than scraping the blender jar with a spatula since you don't have to stop the blender to tamp down the ingredients inside. Additionally, the tamper is designed to fit perfectly inside the opening in the jar's lid and will never come into contact with the blender's spinning blades.

ALMOND MILK

Makes 2 cups

Ever try homemade almond milk? It's fresh and creamy with a subtle almond essence that is free of the stabilizers and preservatives found in many commercial brands. The vanilla bean and dates in this recipe enhance the natural sweetness of the almonds, but you can leave them out if you prefer an unsweetened nut milk.

1 cup whole almonds
1 vanilla bean or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2½ cups filtered water
3 pitted dates

1. Place the almonds in a bowl, cover them with tap water (not the filtered water), and soak them for 12 to 24 hours. Discard any almonds that float to the top. Use a paring knife to split the vanilla bean (if using) lengthwise and scrape out the seeds; discard the pod. Drain the almonds.
2. Place the almonds in the blender, followed by the filtered water, scraped vanilla bean seeds (or vanilla extract), and the dates. Select MANUAL/LO and blend, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10, until the milk is totally smooth, about 2 minutes.
3. Strain the almond milk through a fine-mesh sieve lined with cheesecloth or a fine-mesh nut milk bag (a flour sack towel works too) set over a large bowl. Wring out the cloth to extract as much liquid as possible (discard the solids). Transfer to an airtight container or glass jar and refrigerate until well chilled before serving (the almond milk will keep fresh for up to 3 days).

VARIATION: CASHEW MILK

Substitute cashews for the almonds. Because the cashews blend so cohesively into the liquid, you can skip the straining step.

PRO TIP

Vanilla bean pods retain an incredible fragrance and flavor even after you scrape out the seeds. Instead of discarding the pod, you can steep it in vodka or bourbon to make homemade vanilla extract; let it hang out for a few weeks in your sugar bowl to make vanilla sugar; or cut it into pieces and brew it with some black loose-leaf tea for an afternoon pick-me-up.

COCONUT MILK

Makes 2 cups

Coconut milk is a terrific dairy alternative. Blend it into soups when you might otherwise use cream, add it to smoothies instead of yogurt, or use it instead of milk to make rice pudding. It's also terrific in fragrant Thai and South Indian curries.

1 coconut
2 cups warm water

1. Pierce the coconut's "eyes" with a screwdriver and pour the coconut water into a small bowl. Place the coconut on a cutting board and use a hammer to crack around the equator of the coconut until the shell separates and you can crack it open. Peel off the shell and remove the brown "skin" using a vegetable peeler or paring knife. Use a food processor to grate the coconut; you should have about 2½ cups.
2. Place the coconut flesh in the blender, followed by the water. Select MANUAL/SPEED 3 and pulse a few times to chop the coconut, then blend for 2 minutes, gradually increasing the speed to SPEED 10.
3. Strain the coconut purée through a fine-mesh sieve lined with cheesecloth or a fine-mesh nut milk bag (a flour sack towel works too) set over a large bowl. Wring out the cloth to extract as much liquid as possible (discard the solids). Transfer to an airtight container or glass jar and chill before serving (the coconut milk will keep fresh for up to 5 days.)

VARIATION: COCONUT KULFI (INDIAN-STYLE ICE CREAM)

Place 1 cup coconut milk in the blender, followed by 1 cup heavy cream, ½ cup sugar, 1 tablespoon vodka, ½ teaspoon finely grated lime zest, ½ teaspoon ground cardamom, and a pinch of salt. Select MANUAL/LO and blend, gradually increasing the speed to speed 8, until the sugar dissolves. Transfer the mixture to an airtight container and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled (40°F or colder). Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions, or pour into a 9-by-13 inch baking dish and freeze until it starts to crystallize, 30 to 60 minutes. Use a fork to break up the mixture, making sure to get into the corners of the pan. Return to the freezer and repeat every 30 minutes until the mixture is completely icy and frozen, about 3 hours. Fluff with a fork one last time and freeze 30 minutes longer. Divide into bowls, sprinkle with finely chopped pistachios or almonds, and serve.



TAQUERIA-STYLE PICKLED CARROTS

Makes 1 quart (2 pints)

Pickled carrots, onion, and jalapeño is a traditional taco garnish. In this recipe, the blender chops the ingredients into a spicy slaw-like consistency that is great on tacos as well as in sandwiches and wraps.

- 1 pound carrots, peeled and cut into 2- to 3-inch lengths
- 1 or 2 jalapeños, quartered (seeded for less heat)
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- ½ small red onion, quartered, or 1 medium shallot, quartered
- ¼ cup kosher salt
- 3¾ cups water
- ¾ cup distilled white vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (preferably Mexican oregano)
- ½ teaspoon toasted cumin seeds
- ¼ teaspoon lightly crushed black peppercorns
- ⅛ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- Juice of 2 limes
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

1. Place the carrots in the blender, followed by the jalapeño, garlic, onion (or shallot), 3 tablespoons of the salt, and 3 cups of the water. Select MANUAL/SPEED 3 and pulse until the mixture resembles a coarse carrot slaw. Transfer the mixture to an airtight container and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight.
2. Combine the remaining ¾ cup water, the vinegar, the remaining 1 tablespoon salt, the oregano, cumin seeds, black peppercorns, and red pepper flakes in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, then turn off the heat.
3. Divide the lime juice and cilantro (if using) between 2 pint jars, followed by the vegetables. Pour the hot vinegar mixture over the vegetables, leaving ½ inch of headspace at the top of the jars. Wipe the rim clean, close the lids, and refrigerate for at least 24 hours and up to 1 month.

BLACKBERRY SYRUP

Makes 2 cups

Using the PUREE setting followed by the SOUP setting, you can create a warm fruit syrup to drizzle over waffles, pancakes, or ice cream (like the sorbets on pages 50 and 51). Or chill the syrup and add to cocktails or smoothies for a berry note.

½ cup water
3 cups fresh blackberries
¾ cup sugar
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1. Place the water in the blender, followed by the blackberries, sugar, and lemon zest and juice. Select the PUREE setting. Once the cycle finishes, strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve set over a medium bowl, then pour back into the blender. Select the SOUP setting and blend until the syrup is warm. Serve immediately. (Transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks; note that the syrup will thicken as it cools.)

VARIATION: BLUEBERRY SYRUP
Substitute blueberries for the blackberries.



PEANUT BUTTER

Makes 2 cups

Yes, you can make (and customize!) your own nut butters at home. The variations are endless. We've given you a few suggestions below but feel free to experiment.

1 pound roasted peanuts
(preferably honey-roasted)

1. Place the peanuts in the blender, select MANUAL/LO, and blend. As the peanuts become finer in texture, gradually increase the speed to SPEED 8. Use the tamper as needed to stir the peanut mixture and push it down (the peanuts will move up the sides of the blender as they are processed).
2. Once the peanut butter is visibly smooth along the sides of the jar and there is a mass of chopped nuts rotating around on the blades, gradually reduce the speed to SPEED 4. Once a vortex forms in the center of the peanut butter, add your mix-ins (if using, see the variations that follow). Once the peanut butter reaches your desired smoothness, stop the blender.

VARIATION: CHOCOLATE

Stir together ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder and ½ cup turbinado sugar in a small bowl. Once a vortex forms in the center of the peanut butter, add 3 tablespoons peanut oil and the cocoa mixture, ¼ cup at a time.

VARIATION: CINNAMON

Once a vortex forms in the center of the peanut butter, add 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon.

VARIATION: PEANUT-CASHEW

Once a vortex forms in the center of the peanut butter, add 2 tablespoons peanut oil and 8 ounces roasted cashews. Continue to blend until the cashews are fully incorporated and the peanut-cashew butter reaches your desired smoothness.

VARIATION: MAPLE WALNUT

Substitute roasted walnuts for the peanuts. Once a vortex forms in the center of the walnut butter, add 1 tablespoon peanut oil, 3 tablespoons maple syrup, and ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.

PRO TIP

Nut butters made without stabilizers naturally separate. To reincorporate the oil into the nut better, stand the sealed jar or container on its side for a few minutes. The oil will settle on the side, making it easier for you to insert your knife under the butter and give it a stir.





FRESH-MILLED FLOUR

Makes 1 pound

At top speed, the Wolf Gourmet blender is strong enough to act as your personal flour mill. Your whole-grain baked goods will taste incredible when you grind the flour yourself. You can use this method to grind any grains or seeds for flour or meal. To grind almond flour, start with blanched sliced almonds and add a tablespoon or more of sugar or another flour; this will keep it from clumping and becoming almond butter. (Note that grinding grains may scratch and/or discolor the blender jar. If you plan on grinding a lot of grains, you may consider purchasing a second blender jar specifically for this purpose.)

1 pound wheat berries, popcorn, or quinoa

1. Place the wheat berries (or popcorn or quinoa) in the blender. Select the PUREE setting. Once the cycle finishes, check the texture and continue to run additional cycles until the flour reaches your desired fineness (quinoa is the quickest to mill; wheat berries take the longest).

PRO TIP

When you grind popcorn, you get cornmeal, and fresh cornmeal yields delicious polenta. To make polenta right in the blender, add some room-temperature stock and heavy cream to your ground popcorn (use two cups of stock and one cup of cream for one cup of cornmeal), and select the SOUP setting. Once the cycle finishes, you'll find hot polenta waiting for you.

PRO TIP

Whole-grain flours can go rancid quickly, which is why it's best to grind them fresh. If you have a little left over, just store it in a resealable plastic bag and freeze for 6 to 12 months.

MENUS

Simple, Elegant Dinner Party

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Green Salad with Classic Vinaigrette (page 31)
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Strawberry-Basil Sorbet (page 50)

Homey Supper

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Indulgent Brunch

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