

# Back To School Means Quick Dinners

BY **LISA ABRAHAM**  
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Here are five quick dinners (Monday through Friday) to help you beat the rush this school year. We have fish, chicken, pork, pasta and meatless, and not an ounce of ground beef among them. With the right amount of planning, each dinner can be on the table in about 30 minutes.

**CORNMEAL-DUSTED COD HOAGIES**

- 1 lb. fresh cod, 4 small fillets or 2 large, cut in half (see note)
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- Canola oil for frying
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Paprika, to taste
- 4 whole-wheat hoagie rolls
- Lettuce and tomatoes, for serving, if desired
- Prepared tartar sauce, for serving, if desired

Pat fish dry with paper towels. Dredge fillets in flour, then in cornmeal, pressing cornmeal onto the fish. Season fish with salt, pepper and paprika.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan, and heat until bubbling, but not smoking. If skillet is small, fry the fish two fillets at a time.

Add fish to pan and fry until fillets are well-browned on one side. Flip and fry until second side is well-browned. If oil is properly heated, cooking time is 2 to 3 minutes per side, depending on thickness of fillets.

Serve fish on whole-wheat hoagie rolls. Top with lettuce, tomato and tartar sauce, if desired.

Serve with cabbage slaw (recipe follows) or top sandwiches with slaw instead of lettuce.

Makes 4 hoagies.

Note: Feel free to substitute other fish in the recipe, including catfish or tilapia. —Lisa Abraham

**CABBAGE SLAW**

- 1 medium head cabbage, sliced finely or shredded (about 12 cups)
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 1/4 tsp. pepper

Place shredded cabbage and grated carrot in a large bowl.

In a glass jar or plastic container with a very tight-fitting lid, pour vinegar. Add sugar, salt, pepper and onion powder. Shake well to combine. Add oil and shake vigorously until dressing is well-combined and sugar has dissolved.

Pour over cabbage and mix well to coat. Cover and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Makes 12 servings.

Note: Slaw is ready to eat after about 15 minutes of marinating. However, this slaw can be made a day or two ahead. For crunchier slaw, eat within two hours of making, as cabbage will continue to wilt the longer it marinates.

—Lisa Abraham

**SMOTHERED PORK CHOPS**

- 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. chili powder, divided
- 2 (1/2-inch thick) boneless pork loin chops
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- 1/4 cup bottled barbecue sauce
- 2 tbsp. chopped onion (fresh or frozen)
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- Prepared rice (see note)

Combine flour, salt, pepper and 1/2 teaspoon chili powder in a shallow dish; dredge pork chops in flour mixture.

Cook pork chops in hot oil in a medium-size nonstick skillet over medium-high heat 2 minutes on each side, or until golden.

Stir together barbecue sauce, onion, 2 tablespoons water and remaining 1/2 teaspoon chili powder in a bowl; pour over chops. Cover, reduce heat to medium and simmer 8 minutes, or until chops are done. Remove chops from pan and keep warm.

Stir together cornstarch and 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl, stirring until smooth. Add cornstarch mixture to sauce in pan, and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, 1 minute or until thickened.

Divide rice between 2 plates; place chops over rice, and spoon sauce over chops.

Makes 2 servings.

Note: For quickest options, select boil-in-bag white rice or microwave steam bags of white or brown rice.

Adapted from “Southern Living What’s for Supper: 30-Minute Meals Everyone Will Love”

**TEX-MEX CHICKEN WITH CHILES AND CHEESE**

- 1 1/4 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, trimmed and sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 1/4 tsp. kosher salt

- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup unbleached, all-purpose flour
- 3 1/2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or thawed frozen corn kernels
- 1 medium jalapeno, seeded (if desired) and thinly sliced
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 to 3 medium limes (1 or 2 juiced to yield 3 tbsp. lime juice, and 1 cut into wedges)
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese

Position a rack 4 inches from

the broiler and heat the broiler to high. Toss the chicken with the chili powder, cumin, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and the black pepper. Lightly dredge the chicken in the flour and shake off any excess.

Melt 2 1/2 tablespoons of the butter in a 12-inch ovenproof skillet (preferably cast iron) over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter, corn, jalapeno, garlic, and remaining 3/4 teaspoon of salt. Cook, stirring until the corn begins to brown lightly, 2 to 3 minutes.

Add the chicken, lime juice, oregano and 1/2 cup water. Cook, stirring, until the chicken is just cooked through, about 2 minutes. Sprinkle with the cheddar cheese and transfer the skillet to the broiler. Broil until the cheese melts and browns on top, about 3 minutes. Serve with lime wedges.

Note: Serve with rice or wrap the chicken in warm corn tortillas. Makes 4 servings.

Adapted from “Fine Cooking: Make It Tonight,” recipe by Tony Rosenfeld

- FETTUCINE WITH GREEN PEAS AND FRESH MINT**
- 1 (9-oz.) package refrigerated fettuccine (fresh pasta)
  - 1 tbsp. butter
  - 3/4 cup frozen baby sweet peas
  - 2/3 cup half-and-half
  - 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
  - 1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
  - 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
  - 2 garlic cloves, minced
  - 1 tsp. lemon zest
  - 1/4 tsp. salt
  - 1/4 tsp. pepper

Prepare pasta according to

package directions. Keep warm.

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add peas and all remaining ingredients. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes or until cheese is melted. Stir in pasta and serve immediately. Garnish, if desired, with additional shaved Parmesan and fresh mint sprigs.

Makes 3 to 4 servings.

Adapted from “Southern Living What’s for Supper: 30-Minute Meals Everyone Will Love”

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