

# Five of the best



**Sarah Wheeler**, a Norland Nanny and mother of four, offers her top recipes for speed, flavour and popularity with the kids

**I often work as a night nanny so I always need quick recipes that everyone - parents and children alike - can eat together without requiring hours of preparation.**

Two of my fastest and tastiest recipes are Smoked Salmon Pasta and Maple Syrup Chicken. Less quick - but just as tasty - is my Shepherd's Pie. The trick here is to use the quantities specified so that you can make one large pie (suitable for a family of six) and a medium pie to feed four children, or four or more smaller pies. It also freezes really well giving you handy spares to whip out as and when.

DIY Pasta is especially good for fussy eaters. Most children are happy to eat plain pasta, and they really enjoy being able to help themselves to their own toppings. I try and encourage mine to have at least one protein and one vegetable topping - with varied success!

Finally, my Chocolate Crispy Cakes are high in sugar but they also high in yumminess and an instant hit with little ones. Sometimes if I'm feeling brave I'll cook these with the children - they're quick to make and even quicker to eat!

**Visit Sarah's website at**  
[www.thematernitynanny.co.uk](http://www.thematernitynanny.co.uk)

## Smoked Salmon Pasta

- 300g Sour Cream
- 200g smoked Salmon, chopped into medium pieces
- 1 lemon juiced
- Pasta for four people
- Freshly ground black pepper.

Cook the pasta, drain and return to the pan. Add the sour cream, lemon juice, smoked salmon and pepper. Return to a gentle heat. Stir until all ingredients are warm. Serve immediately with salad or fresh veg.

## Maple Syrup Chicken

- 4 chicken fillets cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed

- Juice of half a lemon
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp mustard (Dijon or grainy)
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs or fresh chopped rosemary

Place the chopped chicken into an oven-proof dish. Add all the other ingredients. Mix well. Cook immediately or, if time, leave to marinate in the fridge for two hours. Cook at 180°C for 25 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through and turning a little golden. My children love this with rice and veg, but it also works with pasta or potato.

## Shepherds Pie

- 750g minced beef (you could also use lamb or quorn mince) 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 4 tbsp tomato ketchup
- 3 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 beef stock cube (veg stock if using quorn) in 500ml water
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs
- 1 can sweetcorn (optional)
- 2kg potatoes

In a large saucepan or deep frying pan fry

the mince and onions until the mince is brown. Add the chopped carrots, ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, stock cube, water and herbs. Mix all the ingredients and bring to the boil. Turn down the heat to a simmer and allow the liquid to reduce to a thick sauce (approx 20 mins). Whilst the mixture is simmering, peel and chop the potatoes and boil until soft. Drain, add butter and a splash of milk, and mash until smooth and fluffy.

Once the meat mixture is ready, add the drained sweet corn and spread in an oven proof dish. Add mashed potato on top. Bake at 180°C until golden brown and hot all through..

## DIY Pasta

- Grated Cheese
- Chopped up Ham or chicken
- Tin of sweetcorn
- Carrots/Broccoli/Peas (or any veg that needs eating up) rosemary

Cook the pasta shapes with a little olive oil in the water to prevent them sticking. Meanwhile prepare each of the toppings and place in small bowls on the table. The children can help themselves to whichever toppings they like.

## Chocolate Crispy Cakes

- 30z Rice Krispies or Cornflakes
- 1 tbsp Golden Syrup
- 40z Caster Sugar
- 1 tbsp Cocoa Powder
- 2oz Butter
- Paper cases

In a saucepan melt the butter, golden syrup, caster sugar and cocoa powder over a gentle heat. Allow to boil for two minutes. Take off the heat and add the Rice Krispies or cornflakes. Spoon the mixture into individual paper cases. Place in the fridge or a cool place to set.

**GOT A CROWD PLEASER?**  
**Want to share?**

Why not email us your favourite family recipes at [multiplematters@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:multiplematters@hotmail.co.uk) - feel free to include a picture of your little ones tucking in!

