Recipes From Life is Precious
ABOUT COMUNILIFE

Founded in 1989, Comunilife is a health and human services agency whose mission is to improve the quality of life and create a healthier tomorrow for children, adolescents, adults, families and seniors living with mental illness and/or HIV/AIDS in New York City’s underserved, diverse communities. Our goal is to help those we serve achieve self-sufficiency and independence while remaining in their communities. Comunilife annually serves some 2,500 New York City residents throughout the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan.

ABOUT LIFE IS PRECIOUS™

Life is Precious™ (LIP) is Comunilife’s family-centered, culturally-relevant mental health and youth development program aimed at reducing suicide among Latina adolescents. The program addresses unique forces—acculturation stress associated with immigration, socio-economic stress, physical environment, poverty, discrimination, Hispanic culture, family functioning and educational achievements—as well as underlying psychological causes.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported this crisis in 2006, motivating Comunilife to create Life is Precious™ two years later. According to a 2009 study by the CDC, statistics: in New York City one in seven Latina adolescents attempted suicide—a rate far higher than their non-Latina peers in the city and Latinas in other parts of the U.S. - while one of every five Latina teens in Brooklyn attempted suicide—a rate almost double that of just two years earlier.
Natalie’s Salsa

Ingredients:
1 can of tomato sauce
1 garlic clove chopped
1 small tomato chopped
1 tbs of adobe
1 pinch black pepper
¾ tbs paprika
1 tbs curry powder
2 tsp olive oil
1 lime

Add curry and paprika into a large bowl, add tomato sauce and mix thoroughly. Add onions, garlic, adobo and olive oil. Mix again. Add chopped tomato and squeeze lime juice and stir.

Serve as a dipping sauce with plantains, tacos or chips.
Destiny’s Pork Chops

Ingredients:

4 pork chops
adobo powder
cumin powder
black pepper
oregano
small packet of Sazon
olive oil
garlic, fresh and powder
1 onion

Mix together spices: adobo, cumin, black pepper, oregano, garlic powder and sazon. Spread on all four chops, both sides. Add olive oil to pan, and fry onion and freshly chopped garlic. Turn heat down and add chops to oil and fry each side for about ten minutes.

Serve with salad and string beans.
Herbal Pizza

What you need:

- Whole wheat pita
- Sodium free tomato paste
- Lots of your favorite veggies (I used spinach, thin slices of garlic and onions for this version. I would also recommend olives, peppers and/or squash.)
- Herbs (basil is bomb)
- Low fat Mozzarella cheese (optional)
- Pepper
- Salt… if you must

What you do:

- Spread the tomato paste over pita
- Slice the veggies (again, use anything you like – tomato, squash, etc.)
- Add herbs (fresh or dried basil helps the flavor pop, oregano too)
- Add salt and pepper
- Add cheese (be easy)

Bake until cheese melts (usually at 400 degrees for 10 minutes)
Garlic Roasted Sesame Seed Hummus

Here’s what you need:

- 2 cups of cooked chickpeas
- 2 tablespoons of tahini
- 1/2 head of garlic
- 4 tablespoons of lime juice
- 1/2 cup of water
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- salt
- 1 tablespoon of toasted sesame seeds (to toast seeds, simply put seeds into dry heated pan under medium flame. It takes about 5 minutes for seeds to get brown)

Here’s what you do:

- Take garlic head, and thinly slice off tip to expose the tippy top of the garlic cloves
- Place garlic on aluminum foil, lightly drizzle exposed tip with olive oil, and then cover entire garlic with aluminum. Place in oven for 20 min under 375 degrees
- After garlic is roasted, remove from oven, let cool, and peel off skin
- In blender, insert all ingredients except sesame seeds. Use a spoon in between blending to move around mixture, and get even blending. If you like a smoother hummus, you can some more water to soften it up
Black Bean and Corn Salad

Here’s what you need:

- 3 heads of corn
- 1 cup of cooked black beans
- 1/4 cup of chopped fresh basil
- 1 cup of chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 cup of chopped green bell peppers
- 1/4 cup of chopped onion (optional)

Here’s what you do:

- De-husk the corn by simply ripping off the outer skin
- When corn is completely exposed, take a knife and cut in a downward motion to get the corn off. To make things easier, you can cut half way down, and then flip over your corn cob and cut the other half in a downward motion
- Place your corn in a bowl, and add all chopped ingredients…mix and enjoy!
- You may be a little surprised that no cooking was involved here. Raw corn is actually really sweet and juicy, and doesn’t require any heat. Little to no salt is needed because all of these ingredients are super flavorful and sweet!
Black Bean and Sweet Potato Burrito

Here’s what you need:

- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 can of low sodium black beans
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 4 whole wheat tortillas
- 1/4 cup of tomato salsa
- 1 onion
- 1 avocado
- pepper and cayenne pepper to taste (about 1 teaspoon)

Here’s what you do:

- Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees
- Chop sweet potatoes in cubes
- Add to baking pan
- Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- Cook for about 15+ minutes, or until you can penetrate easily with a fork!
- Saute onions in 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add black beans and 1 teaspoon of pepper and cayenne pepper
- Add 1/4 cup of beans, 1/3 cup sweet potatoes, 2 tablespoons of salsa and 2-3 slices of avocado to each burrito
Caramelized Onion and Kale

Here’s what you need

- 5 cups of kale
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1/4 cup of red onions
- 1 teaspoon of white sugar
- Pinch of salt & pepper
- Optional: Garlic

Here’s what you do

- In semi-deep pan, heat olive oil under low flame for about 1-2 minutes
- Add sugar to oil, and wait until it starts browning (3-5 minutes)
- When sugar has a deep brown color, add onions (and garlic-optional) and cook in sugared oil for about 3-4 minutes
- Add in your kale and cook slowly on low heat for about 7-10 minutes
- Make sure your kale doesn’t overcook and become soggy
- Serve, and sprinkle with salt and pepper to your liking
**Vegan Pesto**

**Here’s what you need**

- 2 cups of fresh basil
- 3-5 cloves of garlic
- 1/4 cup of almonds
- 1/4 cup of olive oil
- 1 cup of water
- 1 teaspoon of salt

**Here’s what you do**

Peel your garlic  
Put all ingredients into blender.  
If you see that things aren’t blending quite smoothly, get in there with a spoon and stir.  
Keep blending until you have desired texture. (If you want a more liquidy texture, just keep adding more water and blend.)

**Wa-la! Yummy pesto.**
Tortilla chips

Here's what you need:

- Your favorite spices (examples: oregano, chili powder, whatever you like)
- 6 to 10 corn tortillas
- 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil

Here's what you do:

- Pre-heat oven @ 375
- Cut tortillas into 6 small triangles
- Use brush to paint each tortilla with a tiny bit of oil on each side
- Add your favorite spice
- Bake chips for about 3 to 5 minutes or until they look crispy
Olive Dip

Here’s what you need:

- 1 teaspoon fresh parsley
- 1 cup of Spanish olives
- 1/4 cup of olive oil

Here’s what you do:

- Blend ingredients, but only for a couple of seconds. You want it to remain chunky!
Refreshing Summer Spinach Salad

Here’s what you need

- 3 cups of spinach
- 2 tablespoons of chopped onion
- 1 orange
- 1/3 cup of walnuts
- 1/3 cup of cranberries
- 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- Pinch of salt

Here’s what you do

- Thoroughly wash your spinach with cold water
- If desired, chop spinach into wanted size
- Peel orange, and chop up into half wedges
- In large bowl, mix first 6 ingredients thoroughly
- Slice and squeeze lemon over salad
- Finish off with olive oil drizzle, and salt sprinkle
Grandma’s Soothing Tea

Serves four

Ingredients:
2 cups water
1 inch ginger with skin
2 cinnamon sticks
1 inch lime peel
1 lime cut in half
Honey

First boil water on stove, and add ginger. Break the cinnamon sticks and add to the boiling water. Throw in the small piece of lime peel. Simmer for three minutes then bring it back to boiling point. Squeeze lime juice into four cups. Add flavored boiling water to cups and then stir in a teaspoon of honey to each.
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At Life is Precious, we’ve been making efforts to live healthier. We’ve been changing our eating habits and learning more about why it’s important to live a balanced life.

We haven’t just focused on improving how we eat, but also how we feel. We hope that with this book, you too can improve your lifestyle. Besides, haven’t you heard about how cool you are if you’re seen eating healthy???

— LIP
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