

WHERE STYLE MEETS SUSTAINABILITY

# Naturally,

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## The Big Change Issue



**It's Drew  
Barrymore!**

**Friendship,  
Fun & Her  
Fave Finds**



### ***Feel Your Best***

- \* **Healthy Comfort Food**
- \* **Booze-Free Cocktails**
- \* **19 Plant-Based Dinner Ideas**

**+ The Perfect Weekend Away** PG 76

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# Viva

# the



The Ranch Malibu is a famed California wellness retreat adored by celebrities, moguls, and health-obsessed guests who want a reset. Now, it has exported its intense but pampering, low-cal but high-flavor program to the hills of Italy. Here's a taste of what you can expect.

Photographs by  
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# Ranch!

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# THE

Ranch Malibu is famous (and maybe a bit infamous) for its grueling hikes and workout regimens, fueled by a low-cal but high-flavor plant-based diet. Gluten and sugar are verboten—and cappuccinos are most definitely out. Even vino. So how will this program fly in *la dolce vita* country? By employing the same formula it has in Malibu: stunning location plus first-class pampering plus undeniable results.

The setting is the stuff of dreams. The Ranch Italy is situated in the Apennine Mountains among stunning natural beauty. It's less than an hour from Rome and housed in the recently restored Palazzo Fiugi. The property, indeed the whole area, has a centuries-old history of healing and restoration, thanks to its therapeutic waters and clean air. Heck, even Michelangelo is said to have taken in the waters.

The Palazzo—home to Europe's first swimming pool—is a luxe mix of Roman spa and state-of-the-art fitness facility. Once guests complete a grueling four-hour morning hike, the spa and its endless treatment options await them. Nap time is worked into the day and so is strength training. It's all about balance at The Ranch.

The signature gourmet health food is packed with flavor and nutrition but, let's face it, it isn't rich sauces ladled over perfect pasta. (The noodles here are made with kelp, not semola flour.) But not to worry, it's every bit as delicious, satisfying, and decidedly Italian. The low-cal menu is overseen by The Ranch Malibu's Executive Chef Meredith Haaz and prepared by three-star Michelin Chef Heinz Beck.

Chef Meredith Haaz let us in on a little secret that explains her strategy for developing delicious recipes that don't leave guests wanting more. "One of the biggest concerns I hear at the beginning of the week is 'Will this be

enough food?'" she says. "But by the end of the week, I hear 'I was never hungry!' The food we serve is filling—full of fiber and protein—and it's satisfying. Part of the goal is changing the idea of feeling full. Guests do not leave these meals feeling stuffed, they leave feeling satiated."

Finally, it's the program's results that often coax guests to invest about \$10,000 per week to work out and rest up. Guests reportedly lose an average

of 3 to 6 percent of their body weight, feel more energized, and walk away with tools needed to maintain the good habits and wellness gains they made. (Even if finding a plate of pasta is the first order of business post checkout.)

Chef Meredith shares a day's menu of recipes from The Ranch Italy. So, if your travel plans—and budget—don't include a dream trip to the Palazzo right now, you can bring a taste of it to your kitchen. *Buon appetito!*



## CHICKPEA FRITTATAS

MAKES 12 FRITTATAS

### GATHER

#### FOR FRITTATAS:

- ½ cup chickpea flour
- 3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup water
- 4 teaspoons neutral-flavored oil
- 1 cup chopped veggies (we use zucchini, mushrooms, and peppers)
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- Tomato slices, one per frittata
- Dried basil and oregano

#### FOR SALSA VERDE:

- 1 pound tomatillos, husked, rinsed, and halved
- ½ jalapeño, seeded and chopped (leave the seeds in if you like spicy)
- ½ avocado
- ¼ cup cilantro leaves
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt and pepper to taste

### MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly oil a 12-cup silicone muffin pan.
2. In a large bowl, whisk the chickpea flour, nutritional yeast, spices, and salt. Pour in water and oil and whisk until smooth.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the chopped vegetables with the chopped basil.
4. Fill each muffin cup halfway with the vegetable/basil mix. Top with a ladle of the chickpea batter. Once all the cups are full, mix with a spoon to ensure the batter and veggies are distributed evenly.
5. Top each cup with a tomato slice. Lightly sprinkle tops with dried oregano, basil, salt, and pepper.
6. Bake 20-25 minutes.
7. *To make salsa verde:* Place tomatillos in food processor or blender. Add jalapeño, avocado, cilantro, and lime juice. Process until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside until ready to use.
8. Cool completely. Serve with salsa verde and arugula.

## BREAKFAST



## ZUCCHINI BANANA MUFFINS

MAKES 6 MUFFINS

### GATHER

- 1½ cups almond flour (substitute sunflower seed flour for nut-free)
- ½ cup oat flour
- ½ cup rolled oats
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ banana, mashed (or ¼ cup applesauce)
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 chia 'eggs'
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup almond milk
- ½ cup zucchini, shredded
- ½ tablespoon apple cider vinegar or lemon juice

### MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Line a muffin pan with 6 muffin liners.

3. First, make the chia 'eggs' by mixing 2 tablespoons chia seeds and 6 tablespoons water in a small bowl and set aside.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together the almond milk, oat flour, rolled oats, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and vanilla.
5. Wring out any excess moisture from the zucchini in a dish towel.
6. In a separate bowl, mix the mashed banana, oil, chia eggs, maple syrup, almond milk, drained zucchini, and apple cider vinegar.
7. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir together until just combined.
8. Using a ½ cup measure, scoop the dough into the prepared muffin pan.
9. Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown on top. Cool completely before serving. Serve with jam and choice of nut or seed butter.

# LUNCH



## MINISTRONE SOUP

MAKES 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

### GATHER

- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 medium carrots, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 zucchinis, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- 4 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 3 cups water
- 1 teaspoon each dried oregano and basil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1½ cups cooked cannellini beans or garbanzo beans
- 2 cups chopped fresh kale, Swiss chard, or cabbage
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

### MAKE IT

1. In a large stockpot, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add diced onion, carrots, and celery; sauté for about 5 minutes, until softened. Add in zucchini, garlic, and red pepper flakes; cook for 1 minute longer.
2. Add vegetable stock, crushed tomatoes, water, dried herbs, season with salt and pepper to taste and bring mixture to boil. Then, reduce heat to medium and allow soup to simmer, uncovered for about 20 minutes until all the veggies are soft.
3. Add cannellini or garbanzo beans, kale, nutritional yeast, parsley, and lemon juice and cook, uncovered, until kale has wilted, about 5-8 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

# DINNER



## CAULIFLOWER PIZZA CRUST

MAKES 4-5 INDIVIDUAL PIZZAS

### GATHER

- 2 cups cauliflower, shredded to rice-size pieces
- ¼ cup chia seeds
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup almond flour
- ½ cup gluten-free oat flour
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon each dried oregano and basil
- Salt and pepper

### MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 385°F.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the chia seeds and water. Set aside 5-10 minutes until all the water is absorbed.
3. In a large bowl, combine the shredded cauliflower, flours, yeast, dried herbs, and a sprinkle of salt and pepper.
4. Add in the chia mixture and mix until well combined. Season with salt and pepper. Using a 4-ounce ice cream

- scoop, place pizzas on a baking sheet lined with a Silpat (silicone-mat) and, using your fingers, press each scoop into a circle.
5. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden brown. Cool. Top with pesto and your choice of grilled veggies and pop back in the oven for 5-8 minutes to warm everything through. Top with arugula and a drizzle of aged balsamic vinegar.



## RATATOUILLE WITH POLENTA

MAKES 3 SERVINGS

### GATHER

#### FOR THE RATATOUILLE:

1 medium eggplant, diced  
 1 yellow squash, diced  
 1 zucchini, diced  
 1 red bell pepper, diced  
 ½ red onion chopped  
 2 teaspoons olive oil  
 1 teaspoon dried oregano  
 1 teaspoon dried basil or 2 tsp fresh basil  
 ½ teaspoon dried thyme  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper  
 1 (15-ounce) can of organic diced tomatoes or 3 tomatoes, chopped  
 ¼ cup each fresh basil and parsley, chopped

#### FOR THE POLENTA:

2 cups water or vegetable broth  
 ½ cup organic polenta  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 2 teaspoons nutritional yeast

### MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Chop the eggplant, yellow squash, zucchini, bell pepper, and onion and add to a baking dish. Use a baking dish that is large enough that all the vegetables are in a single layer.
3. Drizzle the oil all over, then mix. Add in the herbs, salt, and pepper, tossing well to combine.
4. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the eggplant is almost done.
5. Add in the tomatoes, mix in, and bake for another 10-15 minutes so that the tomatoes start to get tender.
6. Meanwhile, make the polenta by bringing the water or vegetable broth up to a boil, then add in the salt and polenta gradually while whisking. Turn down the heat to medium/low and continue cooking and whisking the polenta until cooked, about 20 minutes. Whisk in the nutritional yeast and season to taste with salt and pepper.
7. Remove the baking dish from the oven, stir in the fresh herbs and season to taste with salt and pepper.
8. Serve the baked ratatouille over the polenta.

## EGGPLANT PARMIGIANA STACKS WITH MACADAMIA RICOTTA

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

### FOR PESTO:

#### GATHER

2 cups basil leaves  
 1 cup kale or arugula  
 2 tablespoons pine nuts or pistachios  
 1 clove fresh garlic  
 ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil  
 water or vegetable stock, as needed  
 salt and pepper, to taste

### MAKE IT

1. Combine the basil, kale or arugula, nuts, and garlic in a food processor or Vitamix and process the mixture to combine.
2. Slowly add in the olive oil. Begin adding water by the tablespoon until the pesto is smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Set aside until ready to use.

### FOR MACADAMIA RICOTTA:

#### GATHER

1 cup raw macadamia nuts, soaked at least 4 hours or overnight  
 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast  
 2 tablespoons lemon juice  
 ½ teaspoon onion powder  
 ½ to 1 cup water  
 salt and pepper

### MAKE IT

1. Drain the macadamia nuts and add to a blender with the rest of the ingredients and ½ cup of water and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Blend on high to combine. Stop the machine and scrape down the sides as needed.
2. Puree until the mixture is thick and smooth, adding the other ½ cup of water as needed. Remove and set aside.



### FOR EGGPLANT PARMIGIANA:

#### GATHER

2-3 eggplants, cut into 18 round slices  
 1 tablespoon oil  
 Salt and pepper  
 2 cups cooked quinoa  
 2 cups tomato sauce  
 1 cup arugula  
 2 tablespoons aged balsamic vinegar

### MAKE IT

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Lay the eggplant slices out onto a baking sheet. Lightly brush with the oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for 25 minutes, flipping halfway through, until golden brown. Lower heat to 375°F.
3. In a bowl, mix the cooked quinoa with the pesto, season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. In a pot, heat the tomato sauce.
5. In a small bowl, combine the arugula with the balsamic vinegar.
6. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. To assemble, begin with one eggplant slice on bottom, top with a ¼-cup scoop of the pesto-quinoa. Top with another eggplant slice, pressing down slightly. Top with a scoop of the macadamia ricotta and top with a final piece of eggplant. Again, press down slightly.
7. Repeat with the remaining ingredients, creating six stacks total. Place in the oven and bake for 10-12 minutes until heated through. Remove from the oven.
8. To serve, place a ladle of warm tomato sauce on the bottom of six plates. Using a spatula, gently place one stack on top. Top with arugula.