

Chestnut & mushroom soup

Preparation 15 mins • Cooking 45 mins • Serves 4

Note, this soup thickens on standing, if necessary, add extra stock.

1 tbs olive oil

1 medium leek, trimmed, halved lengthways and finely sliced

350g button mushrooms, diced

400g cooked and peeled chestnuts

5 cups chicken stock

Cream or natural Greek-style yoghurt, to serve

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat. Add leek and cook, stirring often, for 3-4 minutes until tender. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring often, for 3 minutes until softening. Stir in chestnuts and stock, cover and bring to the boil.

Reduce heat and gently simmer, uncovered, for 30-35 minutes or until chestnuts are soft. Remove from heat.

Using a hand blender, blend soup until smooth. Simmer over low heat until hot. Season to taste. Ladle into serving bowls. Drizzle with cream or top with a dollop of yoghurt and serve. Top with pan-fried sliced chestnuts for a crunchy garnish, if desired.



Chestnuts

Make everyday meals special with chestnuts.



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It's time to enjoy Aussie-grown chestnuts

Chestnuts have a delicious, unique nutty taste and texture. Delectably different from other nuts, their natural goodness is obtained through cooking. They are low in fat and add a delicate flavour to so many sweet and savoury dishes.



in season

Chestnuts are available from mid-March to July. Stock up your freezer so you can add that special wintery touch to meals year-round.

to select

The freshest chestnuts have a glossy brown, firm shell and feel heavy for their size.

to store

Refrigerate uncooked chestnuts in a paper bag in the crisper for 2 to 3 days or in an airtight container for up to 10 days.

Cooked chestnuts can be kept in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 4 days. For longer storage, freeze cooked and peeled chestnuts in small freezer bags for up to 6 months.

health benefits

Chestnuts are so nutritious!

- Good source of low GI carbohydrate
- Gluten-free
- Provide dietary fibre
- Low in total fat and saturated fat
- Contain folate, potassium, vitamin C and antioxidants
- A 30 gram serve provides 217 kJ (52 Cal)



Preparing chestnuts

When baking, microwaving or roasting, firstly cut a shallow cross into the flat side of the shell, which prevents the nut from overheating and bursting while cooking.

When boiling, cut the chestnuts in half across the width of the chestnut before cooking.



Cooking chestnuts

4 EASY METHODS



to roast

Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan-forced). Place prepared chestnuts onto a baking tray and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until the shells split open.

to grill or barbecue

Place prepared chestnuts on a tray under a moderate to hot grill, or place chestnuts directly onto the barbecue grill, turning a couple of times, for approximately 15-20 minutes or until the shells blacken and split open.



to boil

Place prepared chestnuts into a pan of cold water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until the flesh is tender and easily separates from the shell.

to microwave

Place 6 to 8 prepared chestnuts in a single layer on a microwave-safe plate. Cook, uncovered, on full power (850 watts or High) for 2 to 3 minutes or until the flesh is tender. Timing can vary depending on chestnut size and microwave power.

Peeling chestnuts

Peel chestnuts while they are still warm because they can be tricky to peel when cooled.

Once cooked, remove chestnuts from the heat and wrap in a clean tea towel for 5 to 10 minutes and then quickly peel off the outer brown shell and remove the papery thin skin underneath. If boiled, there's no need to wrap the chestnuts in a tea towel; simply remove the chestnuts one at a time from the water to peel.

Some varieties are easier to peel than others, check with your greengrocer or visit www.chestnutsaustralia.com.au for more information.

How much does 1 kg of chestnuts yield in peeled chestnuts?

1 kg of chestnuts yields approximately 700g of peeled chestnuts.



Chestnut, Italian sausage & fennel spaghetti

Preparation 20 mins • Cooking 20 mins • Serves 4

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| 2 tbs olive oil | ½ cup dry white wine |
| 400g Italian style pork sausages | 250g cooked and peeled chestnuts |
| 1 medium brown onion, finely chopped | 350g spaghetti |
| 1 long red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped | 1 tbs lemon juice |
| 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped | ½ cup flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped |
| 1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed, halved and very thinly sliced | Lemon wedges, to serve |
| | Extra virgin olive oil, to serve |

Heat 1 tbs oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Cut casings from sausages and drop small pieces of the sausage filling into pan. Cook, turning often, until browned. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Set aside.

Heat remaining 1 tbs oil in the pan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, for 3 minutes until soft. Add chilli, garlic and fennel, cook, stirring for 2 minutes. Add wine and simmer for 1 minute. Add sausage and chestnuts and cook for 10 minutes, tossing often.

Meanwhile, cook spaghetti in a large saucepan of boiling water following packet directions. Drain and return to pan. Gently toss through chestnut mixture, lemon juice and parsley. Season to taste. Serve with lemon wedges and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.



Sweet chestnut cream

Preparation 15 mins • Cooking 45 mins • Makes about 2½ cups

200g cooked and peeled chestnuts
450ml carton pouring cream
½ cup milk
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 tbs caster sugar

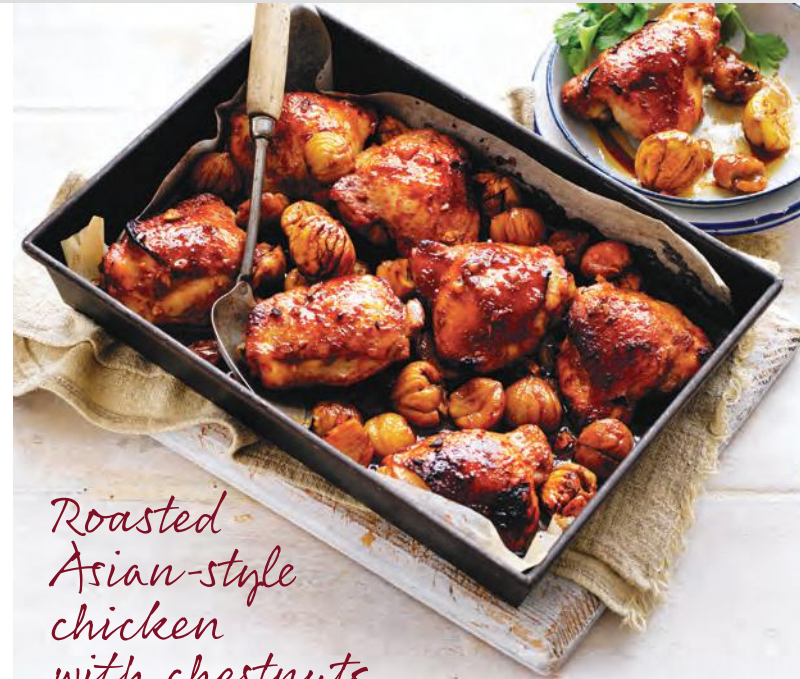
Combine chestnuts, 300ml cream, milk, vanilla and sugar in a medium saucepan. Bring to the boil, stirring until sugar dissolves, over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer (do not boil), stirring occasionally, for 30-35 minutes until chestnuts are very tender. Remove from heat and cool slightly.

Using a hand blender, blend until smooth. Transfer to a bowl, cover and chill until cold. Whip remaining cream in a bowl until soft peaks form. Fold cream through chestnut mixture and serve.

Serving suggestions for sweet chestnut cream:

- Layer with crumbled Anzac biscuits, diced strawberries and grated chocolate in serving glasses.
- Use in a filling for sponge cake or butterfly cakes.
- Spoon over poached pears or quinces.
- Serve with biscotti and fresh sliced pear.

Note: Store chestnut cream in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 days.



Roasted Asian-style chicken with chestnuts

Preparation 20 mins + marinating time • Cooking 30-35 mins • Serves 4

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| ¼ cup kecap manis | 2 tbs lime juice |
| ½ cup sweet chilli sauce | 8 chicken thighs (bone in), fat trimmed |
| 1 tsp sesame oil | 400g cooked and peeled chestnuts |
| 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped | ¼ cup coriander leaves |
| 2 tsp finely grated fresh ginger | Steamed rice and Asian greens, to serve |

Combine kecap manis, sweet chilli sauce, sesame oil, garlic, ginger and lime juice in a bowl. Place kecap manis mixture, chicken and chestnuts into a large snap lock plastic bag. Toss to coat chicken and chestnuts in mixture. Seal and refrigerate for 1 hour (or longer if time permits).

Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Transfer chicken and chestnut mixture to a large baking pan lined with non-stick baking paper. Roast, turning occasionally, for 30-35 minutes or until chicken is golden and cooked through in the thickest part. Sprinkle with coriander. Serve with steamed rice and Asian greens.

Delicious ways to enjoy chestnuts everyday

Adding pre-cooked chestnuts to everyday meals is easy and delicious, so give these ideas a try.

- Jazz up traditional spaghetti Bolognese, hamburgers or san choy bow with a handful of chopped chestnuts.
- Toss chestnuts into a roasting pan with seasonal fresh veggies.
- Enrich your favourite casserole with flavoursome chestnuts.
- Add chopped chestnuts to stir-fries and salads.
- Blend chopped chestnuts, dried apricots, sage, sautéed onion and a little milk to make a tasty stuffing for chicken, turkey or pork.
- Blend pureed chestnuts with mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes.
- Stir chopped chestnuts through your favourite lentil, barley or risotto dishes for a nutty flavour and texture.
- When fresh chestnuts are out of season, ready to use peeled Australian chestnuts and other Australian chestnut products are available from selected stockists. Visit www.chestnutsaustralia.com.au for more information.



Chestnut & bacon green beans

Preparation 15 mins • Cooking 10 mins • Serves 4

The chestnut & bacon mixture also teams well with steamed cauliflower, carrots, Brussels sprouts and broccolini.

- 1 tbs olive oil**
- 125g rindless bacon, finely chopped**
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped**
- 200g cooked and peeled chestnuts, roughly chopped**
- 350g green beans, trimmed**
- 1 tsp finely grated lemon rind**

Heat oil into a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add bacon and cook, stirring often, for 3 minutes. Add garlic and chestnuts and cook, stirring often, for 2-3 minutes or until chestnuts are golden and bacon is crisp.

Meanwhile, plunge beans into a medium saucepan of boiling water, cover and bring to the boil. Cook beans for 2-3 minutes or until just tender. Drain beans. Add beans to chestnut mixture. Toss over heat until well combined. Season to taste. Sprinkle with lemon rind and serve.