

Lorraine's Cookbook

LORRAINE MARINO

CHAPTER THREE

FREE CHAPTER



Sheet Pan Dinners

Everything roasts together on one lined pan

3

In the hotel kitchen we roasted on sheet pans two feet long, a whole banquet at a go. Yours is the quarter sheet pan, 9×13 inches, and it holds exactly one dinner: the meat, the potato and the vegetable, side by side, done together. Dinner for two wants more room than that: a half sheet pan (13×18 inches), or two quarter sheet pans side by side on the middle rack, one plate's worth on each.

Three rules hold for every dinner in this chapter.

Line the pan with parchment, trimmed so nothing hangs over the rim. After supper the paper goes in the trash and the pan gets a rinse.

Give the food room. One layer, a little space between the pieces. Crowded food steams and stays pale. Food with room browns.

Wait for the oven. The pan goes on the middle rack of a fully hot oven, never a warming one. I don't go above 425°F, because that's as hot as most parchment is made to take. A toaster oven that holds the pan works at the same temperature.

And whatever takes longest goes in first. Set the timer. That's the whole trick, neighbor.

1 Chicken Thigh with Potatoes and Carrots

The night a family pack comes home, one thigh stays out of the freezer. (How to portion and freeze the rest of the pack is in the front of the book, under Buying for One.) The skin crisps, the fat runs into the potatoes, and I leave it alone for forty minutes.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 55 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST pocket change

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Bone-in, skin-on chicken thigh	1 (6 to 8 ounces)	2
Gold or red potato, in 1-inch chunks	1 medium (6 ounces)	2 medium
Baby carrots	1 cup	2 cups
Olive oil	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Paprika	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Garlic powder	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.

- 2 Pile the potato and carrots on the pan. Toss with the oil and half of the salt and pepper, then spread them out.
- 3 Pat the chicken dry; don't rinse it. Rub on the paprika, garlic powder and remaining salt and pepper. Set it skin side up in the middle. Wash your hands.
- 4 Roast 40 minutes; set the timer.
- 5 It's done when the skin is crisp, a fork slides into a potato, and the thigh reads 165°F in the thickest part, away from the bone. If not, 5 to 10 minutes more.

For two One quarter sheet pan is too crowded to brown two dinners. Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with a thigh and half of the vegetables on each. Same 40 minutes; check both thighs for 165°F.

Tomorrow Into the fridge within two hours; it keeps three or four days. Reheat until steaming hot all the way through, 165°F.

2

Kielbasa, Cabbage and Potatoes

The Midtown lunch counter put this on the steam table once the weather turned. The kielbasa comes fully cooked, so the oven only has to brown it and soften the cabbage.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 50 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST pocket change

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Gold or red potato, in 3/4-inch pieces	1 medium (6 ounces)	2 medium
Olive oil	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Green cabbage, in 1-inch chunks	1/4 small head (6 to 8 ounces)	1/2 small head
Fully cooked kielbasa, in 1/2-inch coins	4 to 5 ounces	8 to 10 ounces
Mustard	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.
- 2 Toss the potato on the pan with half of the oil and all of the salt and pepper. Spread it out and roast 15 minutes; set the timer.

- 3 Add the cabbage, kielbasa and remaining oil. Turn everything with a spatula; spread it out.
- 4 Roast 18 to 20 minutes more, until a fork slides into a potato, the cabbage is limp with brown edges, and the kielbasa is browned and steaming hot all the way through, 165°F.
- 5 Put the mustard on the plate for the kielbasa.

For two

Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with half of everything on each. The times don't change. Turn the cabbage once more, halfway through the second roast.

Tomorrow

Leftovers go in the fridge within two hours, keep three or four days and reheat to steaming hot, 165°F. Opened kielbasa keeps a week in the fridge, wrapped tight, or freeze it. Chapter 6 of the book has a kielbasa and pierogi dinner for the rest of the ring.

3

Chicken Fajita Pan with a Warm Tortilla

The hotel sent fajitas out on iron platters you could hear across the dining room. At home the oven does it quietly, and the tortillas warm on the same pan.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 35 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Boneless, skinless chicken, in finger-wide strips	5 ounces (3 tenders)	10 ounces
Bell pepper, sliced	1 small	2 small
Onion, sliced	1/2 medium	1 medium
Olive oil	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Chili powder	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Ground cumin	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Garlic powder	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Flour tortillas, 6-inch	2	4
Salsa or sour cream	2 tablespoons	1/4 cup

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan. Wrap the tortillas in foil.
- 2 Put the chicken, bell pepper and onion on the pan. Toss with the oil, chili powder, cumin, garlic powder and salt, then spread in one layer. Wash your hands.
- 3 Roast 12 minutes; set the timer. Turn everything with a spatula and set the foil packet on a corner.
- 4 Roast 6 to 8 minutes more, until the peppers are soft with dark edges and the thickest strip of chicken reads 165°F, with no pink inside.
- 5 Fill the warm tortillas and top with the salsa or sour cream.

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with half on each. Same times. Check the thickest strip on each pan.

Tomorrow Frozen pepper-and-onion strips, 2 cups a plate, save the slicing. Leftovers go in the fridge within two hours, keep three or four days and reheat to steaming hot, 165°F.

4 Salmon with Broccoli and Lemon

Fish scares people. It shouldn't. A piece of salmon is done in about the time it takes to set the table, and the thermometer tells you exactly when it's ready.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 35 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a small treat

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Broccoli florets, bagged	2 cups	4 cups
Olive oil	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Garlic powder	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Salmon fillet, 1 inch thick	1 (5 to 6 ounces)	2
Butter	1 teaspoon	2 teaspoons
Lemon	1/2	1

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 400°F. Line the pan.
- 2 Toss the broccoli on the pan with the oil, garlic powder and half of the salt and pepper. Spread it out and roast 8 minutes; set the timer.

- 3 Pat the salmon dry and season it with the remaining salt and pepper. Cut 2 thin lemon slices per fillet.
- 4 Push the broccoli aside. Set the salmon in the middle, skin side down, with the butter and lemon slices on top.
- 5 Roast 12 to 15 minutes more, until the salmon flakes under a fork and reads 145°F in the thickest part. A thin tail piece cooks faster; check it at 10 minutes.
- 6 Squeeze on the remaining lemon.

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with a fillet and half of the broccoli on each. The times don't change. Check each fillet for 145°F; no two are the same thickness.

Tomorrow Leftover salmon goes in the fridge within two hours and keeps three or four days. Eat it cold, or reheat it until steaming hot, 165°F.

FROM MY KITCHENS

Elbow room

The hotel banquet kitchen ran on sheet pans. Racks of them on wheels, taller than I was. Hector worked the ovens, and he had one rule he said out loud at least twice a shift: don't crowd the pan. A new kid would pack the chicken on shoulder to shoulder to save himself a trip, and Hector would pull the pan and make him do it over. "Lo," he told me, "food wants elbow room. Same as you on the train." Crowd a pan and it steams. He was right. He usually was.

5

Pork Chop with Sweet Potato and Apple

A fall dinner, made in June too. Pork, sweet potato and apple like each other and roast at the same heat. The sweet potato is slow, so it goes first.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 45 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Sweet potato, peeled, in 3/4-inch cubes	1 small (8 ounces)	2 small
Olive oil	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Boneless pork chop, 3/4 inch thick	1 (5 to 6 ounces)	2
Paprika	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Onion powder	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Apple, cored, in wedges	1 small	2 small

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.

- 2 Toss the sweet potato on the pan with half of the oil, salt and pepper. Spread it out and roast 12 minutes; set the timer.
- 3 Rub the pork with the paprika, onion powder and remaining salt and pepper. Wash your hands.
- 4 Push the sweet potato to one end. Set the pork in the middle with the apple beside it, drizzled with the remaining oil.
- 5 Roast about 15 minutes more, until the pork reads 145°F in the middle and the sweet potato is fork-soft. Pork under? Give it 3 to 5 minutes more.
- 6 Rest the pork 3 minutes before cutting.

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with a chop and half of the sweet potato and apple on each. The times don't change. Check each chop for 145°F.

Tomorrow Into the fridge within two hours; it keeps three or four days. Slice the pork cold for sandwiches, or reheat it until steaming hot, 165°F.

THE LINE COOK'S MOVE

A raw sweet potato fights the knife. Poke it a few times with a fork, microwave it 2 minutes, and let it cool until you can hold it. Now it cuts easy. Or buy the bag of pre-cut cubes and skip the knife.

6 Meatballs and Green Beans

In the Brooklyn place we rolled meatballs by the hundred and fried them. For one plate, five on a sheet pan do it, with no spatter and the beans alongside.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 15 minutes	START TO TABLE about 40 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Plain dry breadcrumbs	2 tablespoons	1/4 cup
Milk	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Ground beef	5 ounces	10 ounces
Grated Parmesan	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Dried Italian seasoning	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Salt	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/8 teaspoon	1/4 teaspoon
Trimmed green beans	2 cups	4 cups
Olive oil	2 teaspoons	4 teaspoons
Marinara	1/3 cup	2/3 cup

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 400°F. Line the pan.

- 2 Stir the crumbs and milk in a bowl; wait 1 minute. Mix in the beef, Parmesan, Italian seasoning, pepper and half of the salt, just until it holds together.
 - 3 Roll 1 1/2-inch meatballs, 5 to a plate. Set them on half of the pan, not touching. Wash your hands.
 - 4 Toss the green beans with the oil and remaining salt on the other half.
 - 5 Roast 18 to 20 minutes; set the timer. They're done when a meatball reads 160°F in its center and the beans are tender.
 - 6 Spoon on the marinara, warmed 45 seconds in the microwave.
-

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with half on each. Same size meatballs, same time. Check a meatball on each pan for 160°F.

Tomorrow Cooked meatballs go in the fridge within two hours and keep three or four days, or freeze them. Reheat until steaming hot, 165°F.

7 Fish-and-Chips Night with Peas

Friday at the diner was fish fry, and I worked that fryer for years. I don't fry at home. A frozen breaded fillet and a hot oven get close enough.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 5 minutes	START TO TABLE about 40 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Frozen thick-cut fries	2 cups (6 ounces)	4 cups (12 ounces)
Frozen peas	1/2 cup	1 cup
Butter	1 teaspoon	2 teaspoons
Salt	a pinch	2 pinches
Frozen breaded fish fillets	4 to 5 ounces (1 or 2)	8 to 10 ounces (3 or 4)
Lemon wedges	1	2
Tartar sauce	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.
- 2 Spread the fries on half of the pan in one layer. Bake 8 minutes; set the timer.
- 3 Fold the peas, butter and salt into a square of foil; crimp it shut.

- 4 Set the fish, still frozen, on the open half and the pea packet in a corner. Bake 10 minutes.
- 5 Turn the fish and fries over. Bake 8 to 10 minutes more, until the fish is crisp and golden and reads at least 145°F in the middle; if your box asks for a higher number, the box wins.
- 6 Serve with the lemon and tartar sauce.

For two

Fish and fries for two won't crisp on one small pan. Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with half on each. Same oven times. Check a fillet on each pan.

Tomorrow

Breaded fish doesn't reheat well; cook only what you'll eat. Any leftovers go in the fridge within two hours, keep three or four days and reheat to steaming hot, 165°F.

8

Eggs Baked in Hash Brown Nests with Ham

Breakfast for supper was the best seller on the diner's night shift, and nobody ordering it at midnight apologized. Two potato nests, crisp at the edges, an egg in each.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 15 minutes	START TO TABLE about 55 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST pocket change

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Frozen shredded hash browns, thawed in the fridge	2 cups	4 cups
Butter, melted	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Shredded cheddar	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/8 teaspoon	1/4 teaspoon
Thin-sliced deli ham	2 slices	4 slices
Large eggs	2	4

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.
- 2 Squeeze the hash browns dry in a clean dish towel. Toss them with the butter, cheddar, salt and pepper.

- 3 Press them into 2 nests on the pan, each 5 inches wide. Press the bottom of a glass into each to make a 3-inch well with a 3/4-inch rim. Leave a solid floor of potato.
- 4 Bake 20 minutes, until the edges are golden brown; set the timer.
- 5 Press the wells down again with a spoon. Press a slice of ham into each to make a cup; the ham holds the egg.
- 6 Crack an egg into each ham cup. A little white over the edge sets where it lands.
- 7 Bake 12 to 14 minutes more, until the whites are set and the yolks are firm, with no jiggle.

For two

Four nests need a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with two nests on each. The times don't change. Check all four yolks.

Tomorrow

Eat these hot. Leftovers go in the fridge within two hours, keep three or four days and reheat to steaming hot, 165°F.

THE LINE COOK'S MOVE

Wet potatoes steam and dry potatoes brown. Twist the thawed hash browns in the towel over the sink until no more water comes out. That one squeeze is the difference between a crisp nest and a pale one.

9 Turkey Cutlet with Stuffing and Green Beans

At the senior center, people lined up for this in November and asked about it in March. The turkey roasts beside the stuffing, not on it.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 35 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Chicken broth	1/2 cup	1 cup
Butter	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Dry stuffing mix	1 cup	2 cups
Trimmed green beans	1 1/2 cups	3 cups
Olive oil	2 teaspoons	4 teaspoons
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Turkey breast cutlets	4 to 5 ounces	8 to 10 ounces
Paprika	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/8 teaspoon	1/4 teaspoon

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 400°F. Line the pan. Microwave the broth and half the butter in a mug until steaming, about 1 1/2 minutes.

- 2 Toss the stuffing mix with the hot broth in a bowl until damp. Mound it at one end, 1 inch high.
 - 3 Toss the green beans with the oil and half of the salt at the other end.
 - 4 Lay the turkey in the middle, not touching the stuffing. Add the paprika, pepper, remaining salt and remaining butter. Wash your hands.
 - 5 Roast 15 to 18 minutes; set the timer. It's done when the turkey and the middle of the stuffing both read 165°F. Under? 3 to 5 minutes more.
 - 6 A thin cutlet can be done at 10 minutes; lift it out at 165°F.
-

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans, a plate's worth on each. Same times. Check every cutlet and each stuffing mound for 165°F.

Tomorrow Into the fridge within two hours; keeps three or four days. Reheat until steaming hot, 165°F.

10 Roasted Vegetables and Chickpeas with Feta

No meat tonight, and I don't miss it. The chickpeas come out of a can and go golden, the tomatoes burst, and the feta goes on last, cold and salty.

MAKES 1 plate	HANDS-ON about 10 minutes	START TO TABLE about 40 minutes
PAN quarter sheet pan, parchment		COST a few dollars

What you need

	FOR 1	FOR 2
Zucchini, in 1/2-inch half-moons	1 small	2 small
Red onion, in thick slices	1/2	1
Cherry tomatoes	1 cup	2 cups
Canned chickpeas, drained, patted dry	3/4 cup (half a can)	1 1/2 cups
Olive oil	1 1/2 tablespoons	3 tablespoons
Dried Italian seasoning	1/2 teaspoon	1 teaspoon
Garlic powder	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Salt	1/4 teaspoon	1/2 teaspoon
Black pepper	1/8 teaspoon	1/4 teaspoon
Crumbled feta	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Crusty bread	1 slice	2 slices

How it goes

- 1 Heat the oven to 425°F. Line the pan.
 - 2 Pile the zucchini, onion, tomatoes and chickpeas on the pan. Toss with the oil, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, salt and pepper, then spread in one layer.
 - 3 Roast 15 minutes; set the timer. Turn everything with a spatula.
 - 4 Roast 8 to 10 minutes more, until the zucchini is soft with brown edges, the tomatoes have burst and the chickpeas are golden.
 - 5 Scatter on the feta. The bread takes care of the juices.
-

For two Use a half sheet pan, or two quarter sheet pans with half on each; piled on one, it stews. The times don't change.

Tomorrow The other half-can of chickpeas keeps three or four days in a covered container in the fridge; the chopped salad in Chapter 12 of the book uses it. Leftovers go in within two hours, keep as long, and reheat to steaming hot, 165°F.

THAT WAS 1 CHAPTER OF 13

Lorraine's Cookbook

1 Loaf Pan Dinners

3 Sheet Pan Dinners

5 Small Slow Cooker Dinners

7 Soups That Eat All Week

9 Muffin Pan Dinners for the Freezer

11 Breakfasts Worth Getting Up For

13 Something Sweet for One

2 One-Skillet Dinners

4 Dump-and-Bake Dinners

6 Three-Ingredient Dinners

8 Too Tired to Cook

10 Diner and Deli Plates for One

12 Lunch Plates and Sandwiches

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