

# Cooking for



# Your Brain

Cookbook published by Eat2beNICE

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## Cookbook

published by



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## Introduction

The recipes in the Cooking for your Brain Cookbook are based on the traditional Mediterranean diet. All of the recipes have photos of the finished plate and accompanying videos.

The Mediterranean diet is associated with many general health benefits, such as protection against cardiovascular disease and type-2 diabetes. Evidence seems to indicate that this diet is also linked with good mental health, for instance a lower risk of Alzheimer [1] or depression [2]. See also our [tip sheets on the association between the Mediterranean diet and depression](#).

The Mediterranean diet contains a lot of plant-based foods (fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole cereals) and virgin olive oil. It also contains moderate amounts of fish and poultry and low amounts of dairy products (mainly cheese and yoghurt) and red meat. Another important aspect of this diet is to eat together with friends or family, as research has shown your dietary intake and eating behaviors are healthier when you are not eating on the run and by yourself.[3]

## About the Eat2beNICE Project

The Eat2beNICE Project is a consortium of 18 European universities, medical centers and agencies performing ground-breaking research and clinical trials to discover and confirm the connections between what we eat, our lifestyle, and our mental health.

The brain and gut are closely connected and work with each other in maintaining health. Our gut health is influenced by many factors, including our diet. A poorly performing gut will have negative impacts on brain function. A healthy diet contributes to a healthy gut and healthy brain.

**Sebastian Lege** is our Celebrity Chef from Dusseldorf, Germany. He translates scientific findings into easy-to-use recipes.

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Eat2beNICE disseminates our information in the form of a website, blogs, online classes, research updates, and recipes under the brand name New Brain Nutrition. You may join the website and learn for free at:

<https://newbrainnutrition.com>

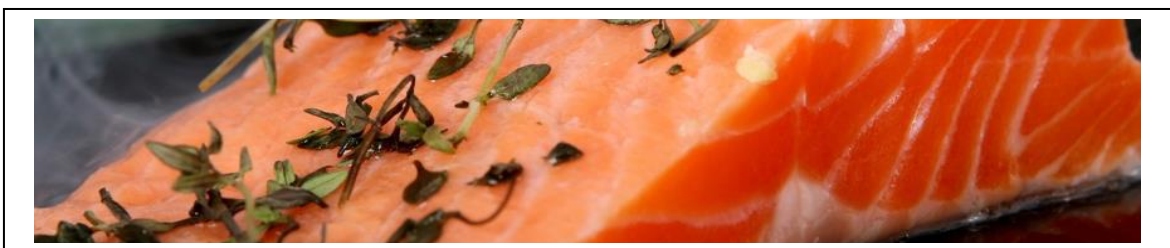
## Key Mediterranean Diet Ingredients We Have Used in These Recipes

**1. Virgin olive oil** is one of the key components of the Mediterranean diet.

Virgin olive oil contains high amounts of good fats. These are called mono-unsaturated fatty acids. But olive oil is more than just healthy fats. Virgin olive oil also contains vitamin E and several antioxidants. These reduce inflammation in your body. Inflammation produces substances that are harmful for your body, and also for your brain. The combination of good fats, vitamins and antioxidants is probably why virgin olive oil is linked to healthy brain functioning [4]. Refined olive oil does not contain vitamins and antioxidants because it's processed after the pressing. That is why virgin olive oil is healthier than refined olive oil.

**2. Lentils** are part of the legumes family that also includes beans, peas and chickpeas. These foods contain a lot of fiber and vegetable protein. 100g of dry lentils contains 5 gram of fiber and 10 grams of protein. Fiber is healthy because it gives you energy slowly and for a long period. Also, the good bacteria in your gut really like fibers. So, if you eat legumes, your gut bacteria will produce a lot of healthy substances such as short-chain fatty acids. These substances are important for your brain health. Other healthy substances in legumes are vitamin B and minerals such as iron, calcium and potassium.

Some scientific studies [5] have found that elderly people who eat a lot of legumes show less cognitive decline. We think that this is because of the high fiber, vitamin and mineral content of the legumes.



**3. Fish** is consumed in The Mediterranean diet in moderate amounts. These include fatty fish such as tuna, mackerel, sardines, salmon, herring and shellfish. These fish contain high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids. These are important fats for your brain cells. Scientific studies have shown that people who have low levels of omega-3 fatty acids have a higher risk for developing Alzheimer's disease [6].



**4. Whole grains** contain all parts of the grain: the endosperm, germ, and bran. These parts contain a lot of fiber but also vitamin B, E, zinc and selenium. Fibers give you energy for a long time. They are also fermented by the bacteria in your gut that produce many healthy substances for your body and brain. Eating whole grain foods reduces your risk for developing type 2 diabetes, certain cancers and cardiovascular diseases. It also reduces inflammation in your body [7]. Inflammation produces substances that are harmful for your body and brain.

**5. Nuts** are also a key element of the Mediterranean Diet. For instance: pine nuts, hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, pistachios. Nuts contain a lot of good fats (unsaturated fatty acids), fibers and antioxidants. This gives your body energy and reduces inflammation which is harmful for your body and brain. Scientific studies have shown that people who eat a lot of nuts have less inflammation and better cognitive function [8]. Cognitive function refers to a broad range of mental functions, such as thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving and decision making.



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# The Recipes



Celebrity Chef Sebastian Lege buying vegetables for our recipes.

# Lentil tomato soup



## Recipe Lentil tomato soup (2 persons)

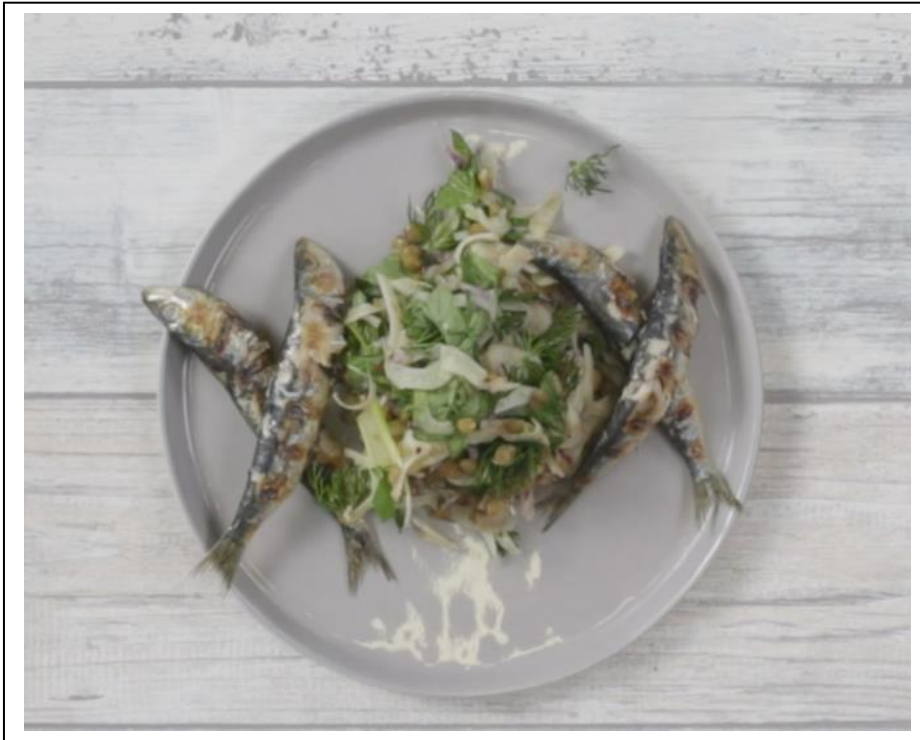
1 shallot	200 g piecemeal tomato (can)
1 garlic cloves	1/2 l vegetable broth
1/2 piece ginger (20 g)	Salt
1/2 small red chili pepper	Pepper
1 carrot (200 g)	1/4 tsp Mediterranean spice
1 tbsp virgin olive oil	1/4 bunch of parsley (10 g)
100 g red lentils	1 tbsp yoghurt (40 g)

1. Peel and chop the shallots, garlic and ginger. Cut the chili pepper in half, remove the seeds, wash and chop. Clean the carrots and tomatoes, peel and dice in small pieces.
2. Heat the virgin olive oil in a saucepan. Sauté the shallots for 2 minutes. Add carrots, tomatoes, garlic, ginger and chili and cook for another 4 minutes.
3. Add lentils, tomatoes and broth, season with salt, pepper and Mediterranean spices and simmer for 25 minutes over low heat. Then use a hand blender to briefly mash (optional).
4. Meanwhile, wash parsley, shake dry and chop. Distribute the soup in bowls, add some yoghurt and parsley.

Watch the Recipe video here: <https://youtu.be/QNpRxJNwH8A>



## Grilled sardines and lentil fennel salad



### **Recipe: grilled sardines with lentil fennel salad (2 persons)**

1 clove garlic	6 sardines ready for cooking
1 1/2 stems basil	100 g brown lentils
1 1/2 stems dill	1/2 fennel
1/2 lemon juice and zest (grated)	1/2 red onion
Salt	1 tbsp virgin olive oil
Pepper from the mill	1 1/2 tbsp blood orange juice

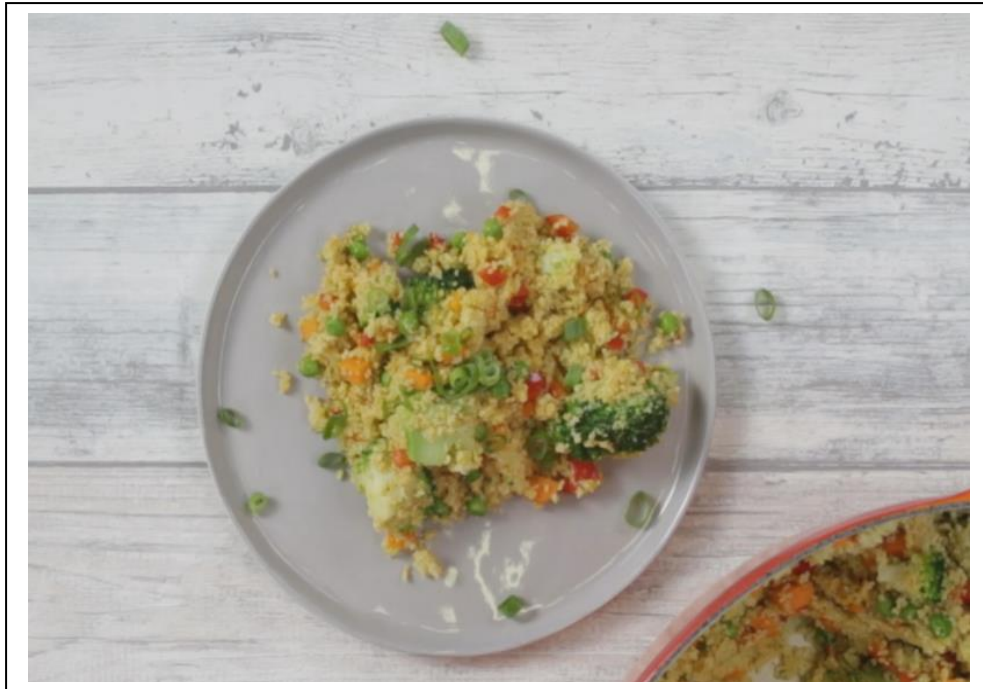
1. Preheat the oven grill. Peel off the garlic and chop in small pieces. Wash the herbs, pat dry, peel off the leaves and chop finely. Mix the garlic with the lemon juice and zest and the herbs and season with salt and pepper.

2. Wash the fish, pat dry, cut the skin with a knife and brush the fish with the marinade. Let it rest for 30 minutes. Rinse the lentils in cold water and cook in boiling salted water for 25-30 minutes. Meanwhile, clean the fennel, wash if necessary, remove the hard stalk and cut the fennel into strips. Peel the onion and cut into strips.

3. Mix the oil with the orange juice and season with salt and pepper. Drain the lentils and quench with cold water. Mix the fennel with the lentils, the onion and the vinaigrette and fill in small bowls. Place the fish on a baking sheet covered with baking paper and bake under the grill for 3-5 minutes from each side. Take out and serve with salad.

**Watch the Recipe video here:** <https://youtu.be/WJP9cWrMShc>

## Couscous vegetable pan



### **Recipe: Whole grain couscous vegetable pan with olive oil (2 persons)**

250 g broccoli	1 tsp harissa
1 red pepper (approx. 200 g)	Salt
1 carrot (approx. 100 g)	Pepper
1 clove garlic	200 ml classic vegetable stock
2 tbsp virgin olive oil	100 g whole grain couscous
75 g peas (deep-frozen)	2 spring onions
1 tbsp curry powder	

1. Wash and clean the broccoli. Cut off the thick stalk, peel and cut into 1 cm cubes. Cut the remaining broccoli in florets. Quarter the pepper, remove the seeds, wash and cut into dices of 1 cm. Wash the carrot, peel and cut into 5 mm cubes. Peel the garlic and cut into thin slices
2. Heat the virgin olive oil in a pan. Roast the broccoli, paprika, carrot and garlic over medium heat for about 5 minutes.
3. Add peas and the couscous and mix well with the vegetables. Add the broth, bring to boil and then cover the pan and let it simmer for 5 – 10 minutes. Meanwhile, wash the spring onions, clean and cut into fine rings.
4. At the end of the cooking time, gently loosen the couscous with a fork. Then add curry and harissa. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the couscous vegetable pan with the spring onions and serve.

**Watch the Recipe video here:** <https://youtu.be/whSi4EVXlt8>



## Baked cut beans, chili breadcrumbs and hazelnuts,

### Recipe: Baked green beans with chili breadcrumbs and hazelnuts (2 persons)

400 g string or green beans	2 tbsp virgin olive oil
Salt	25 g hazelnuts
1/2 lime (or lemon)	2 stalks parsley
1 small dried chili pepper flakes	1 clove garlic
2 tbsp breadcrumbs	Pepper

1. Clean, wash and boil the beans in boiling salted water for 6 minutes, drain and chill with cold water.
2. Roughly chop the hazelnuts, peel and chop the garlic. Wash the parsley and shake dry, peel off the leaves and chop.
3. Heat virgin olive oil in the pan and briefly bake the hazelnuts. Then add garlic, breadcrumbs, beans, salt, pepper and chili flakes. Bake for 20 minutes.
4. Put the mixture in a bowl and season with lime juice and parsley.

Watch the Recipe video here: <https://youtu.be/a3aOf60XO68>



# The Eat2beNICE Annual Team Meeting in Lisbon (November 2019)



MDs, PhDs, Psychologists, Nutritionists, Researchers, Chefs,  
Publicists  
and Next Generation Scientists  
from England, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands,  
New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden.

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**Note:** We are a research organization and do not give medical recommendations to individuals. Our goal is to conduct research and educate on results.