



Cookbook

For people and families living with ADHD









Index

Preface	2
Why is healthy eating important?	3
What is Healthy eating?	3
Why is healthy eating extra important for people living with ADHD?	5
Boosting your diet with micronutrients and probiotics	6
Tipsheet grocery shopping	9
Tipsheet mealplanning	10
Tipsheet Cooking	11
Tipsheet leftovers	12
Breakfast	13
Vegan porridge with apricots and nuts (2 persons)	13
Sandwich with avocado, smoked salmon und nut pesto (2 persons)	14
Whole grain rice pudding (2 Persons)	15
Lunch/Dinner	17
One pot pasta with white beans (2 persons)	17
Oven-baked Mediterranean chicken legs (2 persons)	18
Salmon steak with wholegrain risotto (2 persons)	19
Lentil curry (2 persons)	21
Dessert	23
Pineapple lasagne (2 persons)	23
Acknowledgements	25

Preface

Why is healthy eating important?

Have you heard of the saying "we are what we eat"? The types and amounts of food that you eat have an influence on your overall health, both in a positive and in a negative way. Scientific research shows that what you eat can increase or reduce your risk for developing chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, and even some forms of cancer. If you have an unhealthy lifestyle, the chance of getting such a chronic disease is much higher. An unhealthy lifestyle includes eating a lot of processed foods and "bad" fats, drinking too much alcohol, smoking, and not eating enough fruits and vegetables. A lack of exercise, too little sleep and having very few social contacts also contribute to an unhealthy lifestyle. On the contrary, adopting a lifestyle that includes a healthy diet, plenty of sleep, regular exercise and social involvement improves your everyday health and longevity.

But did you know that these lifestyle factors are also beneficial for <u>mental health</u>? The brain is an organ in our body, just like the heart, liver, lungs and gut. So, taking good care of your body means also taking good care of your brain. For optimal functioning, the brain needs



many elements that come from the food we eat. The typical Western diet of ultra-processed foods does not adequately meet the brain's nutritional requirements. Essentially, a healthy diet is important for a healthy brain. Research shows that adhering to a whole-foods diet can improve emotional resilience and lower the risk of developing mental health problems.

The connection between diet and mental wellbeing stems from the close relationship between the brain and the gut. Our intestines are home to billions of microorganisms, called gut microbiota. The gut bacteria help us to digest our food and produce essential elements that our body – including our brain – needs. *Eating healthy food promotes the growth of "good" bacteria, which in turn positively affect our health*. A steady diet of junk food, on the other hand, can cause inflammation and harm the gut. Disturbances in the gut can lead to changes in brain function, and through that our mood and cognition.

What is Healthy eating?

When we say that a healthy diet is important, what do we mean? A healthy diet is one that allows us to maintain a healthy weight, covers the requirements of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and water, according to the needs of our body, tastes, culture, lifestyle, physical activity, etc. So, the definition of a healthy diet is rather complex and differs from person to

person. However, there are some general guidelines that apply to most people. For personal dietary advice, that fits your body and lifestyle, we recommend you seek advice from a dietician.

A healthy diet:

- Allows you to maintain a healthy weight
- Is varied and balanced
- Includes all required nutrients, vitamins, minerals and water that your body needs

Common recommendations include eating plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grain products, and choosing foods that are lower in saturated fat, salt and sugar. Although the details may vary between countries and cultures, the basic principles of a healthy diet remain the same.



Basic principles of a healthy diet, recommended by the World Health Organisation

- Keep salt intake to less than 5 g per day
- Avoid free sugars (e.g. added sugars). They should be less than 5% of your total energy intake
- Eat fruits, vegetables, legumes (e.g. lentils, beans), nuts and whole grains (e.g. unprocessed maize, millet, oats, wheat, brown rice) every day.
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day (at least 400 g). Potatoes, sweet potatoes, cassava and other starchy roots are not classified as fruit or vegetables
- Red meat can be eaten 1–2 times per week (preferably less than 1x per week), and poultry 2–3 times per week.
- Use unsaturated fats (e.g. found in fish, avocado, nuts, sunflower, canola and olive oils. Limit the use of saturated fats (e.g. found in fatty meat, butter, palm and coconut oil, cream, cheese, ghee and lard).

Is eating a salad healthy? Yes, if it contains for instance a variety of vegetables, and some legumes or nuts. But what if we would eat the same salad every day, would we be having a healthy diet? No, a varied diet is important for healthy eating. Our cookbook recipes help you to try out something new, and keep your diet varied.

Do you want to know more? The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) has developed Food-Based Dietary Guidelines that have been established by many countries throughout Europe, tailored to national culture, food preferences, and food availability. You can find a

lot of science-based information about healthy eating on their website: https://www.eufic.org/en/.

The Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet is one type of healthy diet, that is especially linked to countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The diet is very similar to the basic principles that we discussed before. The Mediterranean diet contains a lot of plant-based foods (fruits, vegetables, nuts and cereals) and extra 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 eating together with friends or family. We must not forget that a healthy diet also implies enjoying food, savouring a pizza or a delicious dessert every once in a while with family and friends.



Why is healthy eating extra important for people living with ADHD?

A healthy diet is important for everyone, whether you have <u>ADHD</u> or not. But there are 2 reasons why we target our online cookbook specifically to people and families living with ADHD:

- 1) We know from <u>our research</u> that on average, individuals with ADHD eat less healthy than those without ADHD. This could be either a cause or a consequence of ADHD, or a mix of both.
- 2) The symptoms of ADHD can make it more <u>challenging</u> to follow a healthy diet. For instance, to buy healthy products in the supermarket you need impulse control, planning ahead, and remembering what you need. For cooking, you need focused attention and not getting distracted. Medication can also interfere with your appetite.



So, we want to help people with ADHD to eat healthier by creating delicious, simple and clear recipes. The recipes are of course also suitable for everyone without ADHD.

We should be very clear about one thing: *diet does not cause or cure ADHD*. ADHD is caused by a complex mix of the genes you are born with and factors in your environment. We still don't fully understand the causes of ADHD, and they likely differ between individuals. If you have ADHD, it's important that you discuss treatment options with your doctor.

What can a change in diet do for someone with ADHD? We know from our scientific research that following a healthy diet can reduce symptoms and improve quality of life of individuals with ADHD. For some, this can also mean that they need less medication while on a healthy diet. Other studies have shown that eating healthy can lower impulsivity.

You can learn more about the findings from our research here:

- Research summary: "ADHD symptoms correlate with eating unhealthy food types"
- Article "Can dietary interventions help treat children with ADHD?"
- Webinar about our research comparing an elimination diet and healthy diet for children with ADHD

Boosting your diet with micronutrients and probiotics

Wouldn't it be easier if instead of following a healthy diet, we could just take some pills that contain all the nutrients that we need? Perhaps, but that is unlikely to happen. Food supplements such as multivitamins cannot replace a healthy diet. They can however be used as an addition to your diet, to make sure that you take all the micronutrients in that your body needs.

Micronutrients

Micronutrients, such as vitamins and minerals, are needed by the body in small amounts. They are very important for healthy brain function. If you eat a healthy diet, your intake of micronutrients should be adequate. However, micronutrient intake and requirements can vary, and this can depend on many factors (e.g., genes, gut health, agricultural practices and others). Although we do not yet adequately understand the mechanisms behind it, many

scientists believe that some people (for example, with certain mental health issues) have increased micronutrient needs and may benefit from taking supplemental micronutrient supplements.



However, it seems that taking single micronutrients is not very helpful, whereas a combination of a broader range of vitamins and minerals might be. Thus, in the last two decades, several studies have investigated broad-spectrum micronutrients as a possible (additional) treatment for example for ADHD. Some results support the hypothesis that taking such micronutrient supplements may reduce ADHD symptoms and emotion regulation problems in both children and adults. You can read more about this research on our blog.

While there may not yet be enough studies to make clear recommendations here, that may change in the future. Researchers are working to study this field in more detail. The most robust studies (i.e. those that have used blinded evaluations and a placebo as the control) have been done on a supplement called Daily Essential Nutrients. However, there is no magic in the formula, it simply provides the breadth of nutrients at doses higher than a typical multivitamin formula purchased in the supermarket. Over time, other formulas will be studied and provide greater choice for the consumer.

Probiotics

<u>Probiotics</u> are living microorganisms, such as bacteria, that have a beneficial effect on our health. Many fermented foods such as yogurt, sauerkraut, kombucha, tempeh, kimchi are probiotics. Apart from food, probiotics can also be obtained as supplements that are commercially available. Probiotic supplements can contain one strain of microbe or a combination of microbes.

The reason why probiotics are healthy, is that these microorganisms improve our gut health. If you eat yoghurt, you don't just get the nutrients in the yoghurt (proteins, carbohydrates, fats), but also the bacteria in the yoghurt. These bacteria, called *Lactobacili*, are needed to convert milk into yoghurt. These bacteria are not only good for making yoghurt, but they are also very useful in our own intestines. Here they help to digest the food we eat, and they fight off "bad" bacteria that can harm us.

Research has shown that, on average, individuals with ADHD have a different <u>gut microbiome</u> compared to individuals without ADHD. We therefore think that improving the gut health of individuals with ADHD, may help to reduce symptoms. Eating healthy, and especially eating a lot of fibers via whole grains and legumes, is good for your gut bacteria. Perhaps we can give

some additional 'boost' with probiotic supplements? This is what we are currently

investigating.



TIPS FOR MEAL PLANNING

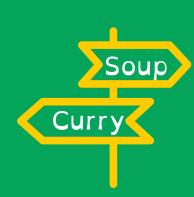


Planning meals can help to get some stress of cooking, for example by knowing what to buy at the supermarket, and knowing what to cook. However, planning and ADHD don't always go together, and motivation, medication use and other factors can make meal planning hard if you live with ADHD. Below we share some tips that might help you!

1

Keep your options open

- Plan ingredients, rather than meals. Based on what you want in the moment, make a meal with the ingredients.
- ingredients.
 Have a few different batch-cooked dishes in your fridge/freezer to choose from.
- Keep a well-stocked panty, so there are always some basic meals you can cook.



Big batches

- Make a recipe twice or three times the amount and put the rest in the fridge or freezer.
- You can apply the same to components of a meal, for example when making pasta sauce.
- Turn a big batch into different meals. For example, sheet pan roasted vegetables can be eaten as a side dish, pureed into soups or sauces or mixed into a salad.



3

Have recipes to rotate

- Keep a notebook, list or online document of recipes you like to eat and are easy to cook.
 Schedule recipes from this list for
- Schedule recipes from this list for one or multiple weeks
- Some people plan recipes for 4-5 weeks and afterwards restart the rotation.



Don't do it alone

- If you live with someone who is better at meal planning, do it together.
- Use an app for planning your meals.
- Use a meal planning service.



Do you want to know more? Visit our website: www.newbrainnutrition.com

TIPS FOR GROCERY SHOPPING



Grocery shopping can be hard. In our survey more than 80% of people with ADHD struggle with grocery shopping. You are not alone! Here we share the tips from people with ADHD!

Shop groceries online

Shopping online has several advantages:

- No need to go to the supermarket.
- Add items to your cart as you run out.
- No impulse purchases





Make a shopping list • Add items to your list as you run out.

- Keep your list in a central place in your house (or online), so everyone in the household can add to the list.
- Organise the list by section in the supermarket.
- Make the list suitable for ticking off items while shopping.





Going to the supermarket

- Bring your shopping list.
- Schedule shopping in your agenda.
- If possible, shop at quiet hours.
- Go to a small and familiar store.
- Go together with someone else.
- Shop when you are not rushed or hungry.





In the supermarket

- Check off items from your list.
- Let your list guide you though the sections.
- Don't look at what you don't need.
- If needed, take a break when you get home.

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TIPS FOR COOKING



Cooking can require a lot of steps, organisation and constant attention. People living with ADHD, may find this difficult. In this tip sheet we share tips from people living with ADHD to make cooking a bit easier.

Make it easy and fun

- If cleaning and cutting ingredients feels daunting, buy (frozen) pre-cut ingredients.
 Cook recipes that you feel like cooking and eating. For example, if your concentration only allows one pan, make a one pan-dish.
 Listen to your favourity pedeat
- Listen to your favourite podcast or an audio book while cooking, and allow yourself only to listen to it while cooking.



- Prep before you start

 Before starting to cook, make sure you have all the ingredients and equipment for the
- Read the recipe from start to finish to become familiar with it.
- Clear your workspace before you begin cooking and preparing.
- Wash, peel, and cut everything before you start.



Stay organised

- After preparing your ingredients, and before cooking, clean your workspace.
- Use timers to remember cooking times, both for the stove and the oven.
- If needed, use a physical reminder that you are cooking and to stay in the kitchen, such as a closed kitchen door.





Don't cook everyday

- Cook big batches and put in the fridge/freezer for easy meals.
- If you live together, alternate turns or cook together some days.
- It is okay to eat out, order food or eat ready-made meals when cooking is overwhelming.



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TIPS FOR LEFTOVERS



Cooking the right amount of food every day can be hard. For some people, having leftovers is no problem and they might even want to have leftovers. Others might have no idea what to do with leftovers or always end up forgetting about them. This tip sheet can help you use and organise your leftovers. your leftovers.

Repurpose

- Leftovers can be easily used in other dishes, for example soups, salads, and

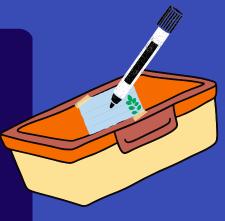
- Eat leftovers for lunch, or as a small snack.
 Combine leftovers from multiple days into a 'leftover buffet' dinner.
 If you know that you are not going to eat your leftovers, you can give them away to someone who can use an easy meal.





Label, Label, Label

- If you put your leftovers in a container or bag, always label them with the contents and the date you cooked it.
- Keep a marker (and labels) close to/ attached to you fridge and freezer.
- It can help to have a whiteboard on your fridge/freezer where you write what is inside, and what is the expiration date.





Refrigerate and Freeze

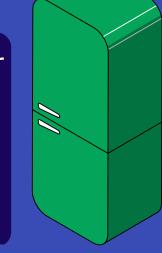
- Put leftovers you eat within days in the fridge and leftovers you eat later in the freezer.
- Place perishable leftovers and
- ingredients where you can see them. Only put leftovers in your fridge and freezer that you know you will eat.





Organize your Frige and Freezer

- Organize your fridge and freezer for easily recognizing leftovers. Use designated shelves for unopened ingredients and for leftovers.
- Store your leftovers in portions. This goes both for meals and for leftover ingredients.



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Breakfast

Vegan porridge with apricots and nuts (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients

For the porridge:

- 100 g wholegrain oatmeal
- 600 ml unsweetened oat drink
- 50 g dried apricots
- 30 ml olive oil

Topping:

- 50 g nuts and/or seeds (for example cashew, walnuts and pumpkin seeds)
- 8 g fresh mint leaves
- 2 tsp cinnamon powder

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Pot of at least 2 l
- Spatula
- 2 spoons
- 2 bowls

Recipe:

Preparation:

1. Coarsely chop 50 g nuts or/and seeds, 8 g fresh mint leaves and 50 g dried apricots.

Cooking:

1. Heat up 30 ml **olive oil** inside a pot and add 100 g **wholegrain oatmeal**. Toast it for about 2-3 minutes. Stir constantly to avoid the grains to get burnt.

- 2. Deglaze the grains with **600 ml unsweetened oat drink** and the chopped **apricots**. Low down the heat after the mix cooked up. Stir constantly for 2-3 Minutes until the porridge has reached a creamy texture.
- 3. Split the **porridge** into two bowls. Decorate each bowl with a line of chopped **mint**, a line of chopped **nuts and/or seeds** and a line of **cinnamon powder**.

Sandwich with avocado, smoked salmon und nut pesto (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients

- 2 thick slices of wholegrain bread
- 1 white onion
- 1 avocado
- 100 g smoked salmon
- 5 g fresh parsley

For the nut pesto:

- 60 g nuts (for example walnuts and cashew)
- 40 ml olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Mortar
- Spoon
- 2 flat plates

•

Recipe:

Preparation:

1. Cut 1 **onion** into rings. Unpeel 1 **avocado**, half it and cut the halfs into slices of about 2 cm.

Cooking:

- 1. Use a mortar to mix the pesto. Fill it with 60 g **nuts** and add 40 ml **olive oil** and a pinch of **salt**. Grind the mix for about 60 seconds until the mass becomes a homogeneous paste.
- 2. Put 2 thick slices of **whole grain bread** on two flat plates.
- 3. Cover each slice of bread with a half of the sliced avocado.
- 4. Sprinkle the avocado slices with the **nut pesto**.
- 5. Coarsely pick apart the **smoked salmon** and scatter it on top of both sandwiches.
- 6. Garnish with some onion slices, fresh parsley and a pinch of freshly ground pepper.

Whole grain rice pudding (2 Persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients

For the rice pudding:

- 110 g short grain brown rice
- 1 I non-fat milk
- 20 ml olive oil

Topping:

- 100 g fresh berries
- 40 g almonds
- 40 g walnuts

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Pot of at least 3 I
- Spatula
- 2 spoons

• 2 bowls

Recipe:

Cooking:

- 1. Heat up 20 ml **olive oil** in a pot.
- 2. Add 110 g **short grain brown rice** and sear it on medium heat for about 2 minutes until the grains get a lighter color.
- 3. Deglaze the rice with 1 l non-fat milk.
- 4. Cook the rice for about 50 minutes. Stir the rice pudding constantly.
- 5. Serve the rice pudding in two bowls.
- 6. Garnish each serving with 50 g **fresh berries** of your choice and 20 g of both **walnuts** and **almonds**.

Lunch/Dinner

One pot pasta with white beans (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients

- 250 g whole grain pasta
- 700 ml tomato passata
- 700 ml vegetable stock
- 250 g canned white beans
- 100 g low-fat feta cheese
- 40 g oyster mushrooms
- 1 white onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper
- 4 spears of green asparagus
- 2 spring onions
- 2 baby carrots
- 1 baby fennel
- 30 ml olive oil

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Pot of at least 3 l
- Spatula
- 2 forks
- 2 bowls

Recipe:

Preparation:

1. Cut 1 clove of garlic into slices and dice 1 onion.

- 2. Pick apart 40 g **oyster mushrooms** into stripes of 2-3 cm.
- 3. Cut 1/2 bell pepper, 4 spears green asparagus, 2 spring onions, 2 baby carrots and 1 baby fennel into rough pieces.

Cooking:

- 1. Heat up a pot on medium heat and add the garlic.
- 2. 1 minute later add the diced **onion** and **oyster mushroom** stripes and sear the mix for about 2 minutes.
- 3. Deglaze the mix with **700 ml tomato passata** and 700 ml **vegetable stock**.
- 4. Add 250 ml whole grain pasta and all the cut vegetables.
- 5. Cook it for about 12 minutes on low heat.
- 6. Add 250 g canned white beans and let the one pot pasta rest for 1 minute.
- 7. Serve on two dinner plates, each garnished with about 50 g of rough pieces of **low- fat feta cheese**.

Oven-baked Mediterranean chicken legs (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless chicken legs
- 1 white onion
- 80 g fennel
- 150 g zucchini
- 150 g eggplant
- 150 g fresh tomato
- 1-2 clove(s) of garlic
- 20 g Baharat seasoning
- 5 g fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 tsp salt

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife

- Pot of at least 3 l
- Spatula
- 2 spoons
- 2 plates

Recipe:

Preparation:

- 1. Cut **150 g tomatoes** and **1 onion** into quarters.
- 2. Cut 1 or 2 clove(s) of garlic into thick slices.
- 3. Cut **80 g fennel**, **150 g zucchini** and **150 g eggplant** into rough pieces of about 5-7 cm.
- 4. Give everything into a big bowl and add **4 boneless chicken legs**, the **Baharat seasoning** and **1 tsp salt**.
- 5. Use your hands (better use gloves to keep your hands clean) to rub in the seasoning and mix the ingredients.
- 6. Spread the content of the bowl on a baking tray.

Cooking:

- 1. Place the baking tray on the middle rack of your oven at 180°C for approx. 40 min.
- 2. Serve the dish on two dinner plates. Place the **vegetables** in the centre of each plate and put 2 **chicken legs** per serving on top of the vegetables.
- 3. Garnish with some fresh cilantro.

4.

Salmon steak with wholegrain risotto (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients:

For the salmon steaks:

- 2 salmon steaks (about 200g each)
- 30 ml olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper

Risotto:

- 1 white onion
- 100 g short grain brown rice
- 1,2 l vegetable stock
- 80 g peas
- 8 g fresh mint leaves
- 1/2 lemon
- 30 ml olive oil

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Pot of at least 3 l
- Pan
- Spatula
- Spoon
- 2 forks
- 2 knives
- 2 plates

Recipe:

Preparation:

1. Finely dice the onion.

Cooking:

- 1. Heat up 30 ml olive oil in a medium sized pot on medium heat and sear 100 g short grain brown rice for about 2 minutes.
- 2. Add the diced **onion** and sear it for 1 more minute.
- 3. Deglaze with 200 ml of **vegetable stock**. Stir the **rice** constantly to get a creamy texture.
- 4. Add some more of the **vegetable stock** as soon as it's almost running out inside the pot. Repeat this process until the **risotto** is ready, which takes about 50 minutes.
- 5. Turn off the heat.
- 6. Add 80 g **peas** and 10-12 **fresh mint leaves**. Stir the rice again an let it rest inside the pot.
- 7. 5 minutes before the risotto is ready, heat up a pan and add 30 ml olive oil.
- 8. Let **2 salmon steaks** sear on high heat for about 2 minutes each side.
- 9. Meanwhile add a pinch of **salt** and freshly ground **pepper** on each side of the **salmon** steak.
- 10. After searing, let the **salmon steaks** rest for 2-3 minutes inside the pan without heat.
- 11. Take 2 dinner plates.
- 12. Place half of the **risotto** in the center of each plate and top it with a **salmon steak**.
- 13. Garnish with a 1/4 lemon and the rest of fresh mint leaves.

Lentil curry (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients:

- 60 g black beluga lentils
- 150 g lean ground beef
- 1/2 white onion
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper
- 1/2 red bell pepper
- 3 spears green asparagus
- 50 g oyster mushrooms
- 80 g baby corn
- 80 g carrots
- 100 g young broccoli
- 600 ml coconut milk
- 40 ml olive oil
- 5 g fresh cilantro
- 1 tbsp yellow curry paste
- 1 tsp Salt

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Pot of at least 3 l
- Spoon
- 2 forks
- 2 knives
- 2 soup plates

Recipe:

Preparation:

- 1. Dice the 1/2 yellow and 1/2 red bell pepper, 1/2 onion, 80 g carrots and 50 g young broccoli.
- 2. Pick apart 50 g **oyster mushrooms** into stripes of 2-3 cm.
- 3. Cut 80 g baby corn, 50 g young broccoli and 3 spears green asparagus into pieces of 5-7 cm.

Cooking:

- 1. Heat up a pot and add the olive oil. Add the **oyster mushrooms** and sear them on high heat.
- 2. After 1 minute add 150 g **lean ground beef** and sear the mix for 2 more minutes.
- 3. Spice the mix with 1 tbsp of **yellow curry paste**, and let it toast for another 2 minutes.
- 4. Now add the diced vegetables, 60 g beluga lentils and 1 tsp salt.
- 5. Deglaze it with 700 ml **coconut cream** and turn down the heat.
- 6. Let the mix simmer for about 15 minutes. Stir constantly to avoid sticking on the ground.
- 7. Add the rough pieces of **baby corn**, **broccoli** and **green asparagus**.
- 8. Turn off the heat and let the lentil curry rest for about 5 minutes.
- 9. Serve on two soup plates garnished with some fresh cilantro.

Dessert

Pineapple lasagne (2 persons)



Checklist:

Ingredients:

- 1/2 fresh pineapple
- 400 g non-fat yogurt
- 80 g nuts and almonds
- 50 g sugar-free dark chocolate
- 10 fresh mint leaves

Cookware:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Spoon
- 2 forks
- 2 knives
- 2 plates

Recipe:

Preparation:

- 1. Peel 1/2 pineapple. Cut off 8 thin slices (about 0,5-1 cm).
- 2. Coarsely chop the 80 g nuts and almonds.

Cooking:

- 1. Use 2 dinner plates to prepare the lasagne.
- 2. Start with 2 tbsp yoghurt and spread it in the centres of the plates.
- 3. Top the yoghurt with a slice of pineapple.
- 4. Spread 2 tbsp. yogurt on it.
- 5. Top it with 1 tbsp nuts and almonds.
- 6. Grate some of the dark chocolate on it.
- 7. Repeat this procedure (pineapple yoghurt nuts dark chocolate) 2 times.

8. Garnish with some fresh mint leaves.