

# MEALS FOR TWO WITH CALIFORNIA FIGS

Recipes from Cook's Country from  
America's Test Kitchen and Valley Fig Growers



*Cook's Country*





## DISCOVER CALIFORNIA FIGS

At *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen*, discoveries are at the heart of our mission to inspire confidence, community and creativity in the kitchen. From cooking tips to secret ingredients that make your dishes shine, we love them all. That's why we're excited to share these recipes featuring Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs from our kitchen to yours.

Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs from Valley Fig Growers suit any occasion, from a quick weekday meal to a weekend baking project. Valley Fig Growers and *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen* partnered to bring you recipes that allow the subtle sweetness of California Dried Figs to shine through. We know this new collection of recipes will inspire your next dinner party and encourage you to discover the joys of California Dried Figs. The recipes include Moroccan-Style Quinoa and Kale with Figs and Pine Nuts, White Bean Salad with Figs and Red Pepper, Chicken Mole, Beef Chili with Moroccan Spices, Chickpeas, and Figs, Morning Glory Muffins with Figs, Chicken and Couscous with Figs and Smoked Almonds.

As you discover how versatile California Dried Figs are in these recipes, we hope you take inspiration for future dishes you make. As always, you can count on California Dried Figs to take recipes from ordinary to extraordinary. Look for Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® California Dried Figs at your favorite grocery store or [buy figs online](#). Find more delicious [dried fig recipes](#) from *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen* cook, bake, or share with friends and family at [ValleyFig.com](#).

Join the fig lovers community with Valley Fig Growers online: Save cooking with dried fig ideas [pinterest.com/valleyfig](#). Find fresh ideas for dinner tonight or your what to bake next at [Instagram.com/valleyfig](#) and join the conversation on [facebook.com/valleyfig](#).

*Cook's Country*



[valleyfig.com](#)



## RECIPES

White Bean Salad with Figs and Red Pepper .....	1
Moroccan-Style Quinoa and Kale with Figs and Pine Nuts .....	2
Chicken Mole .....	3
Chicken and Couscous with Figs and Smoked Almonds .....	4
Beef Chili with Moroccan Spices, Chickpeas, and Figs .....	5
Morning Glory Muffins with Figs .....	6

**CALIFORNIA FIGS** ARE MORE THAN  
JUST A TASTY FRUIT. FIGS ARE:

- Gluten-free
- High in fiber
- Cholesterol-free
- Sodium-free
- Non-GMO
- Vegetarian
- Nut & allergen-free
- Kosher

# White Bean Salad with Figs and Red Pepper

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** To liven up canned white beans for a boldly flavored bean salad for two, we started by steeping the namesake ingredient in a garlicky broth. This infused the beans with deep flavor in short order, and sautéing the garlic first brought a toasty element to the salad. Marinating our shallot in vinegar worked to tame its raw, harsh notes. Some red bell pepper added color and crunch, figs added pops of sweetness, and chopped parsley and chives ramped up the freshness of the salad. Make sure you rinse the white beans thoroughly before adding them to the pot to get rid of excess salt. The salad can be served chilled or at room temperature.

## SERVES 2.

- 8** teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2** garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- Salt and pepper
- 1** (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, rinsed
- ¼** cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 4** teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 1** small shallot, minced
- ½** red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 2** tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2** tablespoons chopped fresh chives

**1.** Heat 2 teaspoons oil and garlic in small saucepan over medium-high heat until garlic just begins to brown, about 2 minutes. Slowly add ⅔ cup water and ¼ teaspoon salt and bring to simmer. Off heat, add beans and figs, cover, and let sit for 20 minutes. Combine vinegar and shallot in large bowl and let sit for 20 minutes.

**2.** Drain beans and remove garlic. Add beans, remaining 6 teaspoons oil, bell pepper, parsley, and chives to shallot mixture and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover and let sit for 20 minutes. Serve.



PHOTO CREDIT: Kevin White

## CALIFORNIA FIG FACTS

Figs are harvested according to nature's clock, fully ripened and partially dried on the tree.



 [valleyfig.com](http://valleyfig.com)



# Moroccan-Style Quinoa and Kale with Figs and Pine Nuts

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** We combined two protein-packed vegetarian staples—quinoa and chickpeas—in one pot for this unique pilaf-style dish. Hearty kale helped tie the dish together, and figs and carrot imparted sweet, earthy notes. To play up the Moroccan flavors, we spiced the dish with fragrant coriander and hot red pepper flakes and stirred in toasted pine nuts, tangy feta, and a squeeze of lemon juice. With as much protein as it has flavor, the hearty combination of quinoa, chickpeas, and kale makes a great vegetarian dish for two. Be sure to rinse the quinoa to remove its bitter coating (known as saponin). Don't dry the greens completely after washing; a little extra water clinging to the leaves will help them wilt when cooking.

## SERVES 2

- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 small onion, chopped fine**
- 1 carrot, peeled and cut into ¼-inch pieces**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander**
- ⅛ teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- ½ cup quinoa, rinsed**
- 1½ cups vegetable broth**
- ¾ cup canned chickpeas, rinsed**
- 5 tablespoons Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into ¼-inch pieces**
- Salt and pepper**
- 6 ounces kale, stemmed and chopped into 1-inch pieces**
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted**
- ¼ teaspoon lemon zest plus 1 teaspoon juice**
- 2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese**

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and carrot and cook until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, coriander, and pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in quinoa and cook, stirring often, until lightly toasted and aromatic, about 3 minutes.



PHOTO CREDIT: Kevin White

2. Stir in broth, chickpeas, figs, and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Place kale on top and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until quinoa is transparent and tender, 18 to 20 minutes. Off heat, gently stir in remaining 1 tablespoon oil, pine nuts, and lemon zest and juice. Sprinkle with feta and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.

## CALIFORNIA FIG FACTS

Infuse dried figs with fresh flavors: rehydrate them in lemon or orange juice, or for extra kick—try red wine or spirits like brandy or bourbon.



 [valleyfig.com](http://valleyfig.com)

# Chicken Mole

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Mole sauce is a rich blend of chocolate, dried fruit, nuts, spices, and chiles. An authentic mole has complex layers of flavor and an extensive ingredient list, but we found that we could get surprising depth of flavor in much less time with a combination of chili powder, chipotle chiles, and peanut butter. Simmering the chiles, spices, and chocolate developed their flavors even more. Figs accentuated the chiles' flavor and added a subtle sweetness. Downsizing to a 10-inch skillet prevented the sauce from burning. For a smooth, velvety texture, we processed the sauce in a blender, then poured it over chicken breasts and baked them until they were tender and flavorful. Take care not to burn the spice and chocolate mixture in step 2; add a small splash of water or broth to the skillet if it begins to scorch. If using kosher chicken, do not brine. If brining the chicken, do not season with salt in step 3.

## SERVES 2.

- 1** tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1** small onion, chopped fine
- ½** ounce bittersweet, semisweet, or Mexican chocolate, chopped coarse
- 1** tablespoon chili powder
- 1** teaspoon minced canned chipotle chile in adobo sauce
- ¼** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground cloves
- 1** garlic clove, minced
- 1¼** cups chicken broth
- 1** tomato, cored, seeded, and chopped
- ¼** cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into ¼-inch pieces
- 1** tablespoon peanut butter
- 1** tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted, plus extra for serving
- Salt and pepper
- Sugar
- 2** (12-ounce) bone-in split chicken breasts, skin removed, trimmed and brined if desired

**1.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Heat oil in 10-inch skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.



PHOTO CREDIT: Kevin White

**2.** Reduce heat to medium-low, stir in chocolate, chili powder, chipotle, cinnamon, and cloves; cook, stirring frequently, until spices are fragrant and chocolate is melted and bubbly, about 1 minute. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth, tomato, figs, peanut butter, and sesame seeds. Bring to simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is slightly thickened and reduced to about 1¾ cups, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer sauce to blender and process until smooth, about 30 seconds. Season with salt, pepper, and sugar to taste.

**3.** Pat chicken dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Place chicken, skinned side down, in 8-inch square baking dish and pour pureed sauce over top, turning chicken to coat evenly. Bake chicken for 20 minutes. Flip chicken skinned side up and continue to bake until chicken registers 160 degrees, 15 to 25 minutes. Let chicken rest in sauce for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with extra sesame seeds and serve.



# Chicken and Couscous with Figs and Smoked Almonds

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** This easy yet elegant chicken and couscous dish relies on just one 10-inch skillet to cook the chicken, sauté the aromatics, and simmer the couscous. Cooking the chicken first meant we were able to capitalize on the flavorful browned bits, or fond, left behind to infuse the couscous with deep, savory flavor. And since couscous cooks so quickly, it came together in a flash while the chicken rested. For some crunch and more savory depth, we stirred in a handful of chopped smoked almonds. The smoky flavor contrasted nicely with the sweetness of the figs and added an unexpected twist to this simple dinner. Be sure to use regular (or fine-grain) couscous; large-grain couscous, often labeled Israeli-style, takes much longer to cook and won't work in this recipe. Garam masala can be found with the other spices in your supermarket. If garam masala is unavailable, substitute a 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander and a pinch of ground cardamom, ground cinnamon, and ground black pepper.

## SERVES 2.

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 (6- to 8-ounce) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed and pounded if necessary
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1/2 cup couscous
- 1/2 teaspoon garam masala
- 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped smoked almonds
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

1. Spread flour in shallow dish. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Working with 1 breast at a time, dredge breasts in flour.

2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Lay chicken in skillet and cook until well browned on first side, 6 to 8 minutes. Flip chicken, reduce heat to medium, and continue to cook until chicken registers 160 degrees, 6 to 8 minutes; transfer to serving platter and tent loosely with aluminum foil.



PHOTO CREDIT: Kevin White

3. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in now-empty skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add shallot and 1/4 teaspoon salt and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Stir in couscous and garam masala and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth and figs, scraping up any browned bits. Bring to brief simmer, then remove from heat, cover, and let sit until liquid is absorbed and grains are tender, about 3 minutes.

4. Uncover and fluff grains with fork. Stir in almonds and parsley and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve chicken with couscous.

## CALIFORNIA FIG FACTS

Ounce for ounce, dried figs have more fiber than prunes and more potassium than bananas.



 valleyfig.com

# Beef Chili with Moroccan Spices, Chickpeas, and Figs

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Recipes for chili are typically geared toward a crowd, so we knew that creating a scaled-down version for two would require a careful balancing act. Cumin, coriander, paprika, ginger, oregano, and cayenne give the chili a heady aroma and adding them early—along with the aromatics—helped to develop their flavors fully. Twelve ounces of beef and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of canned chickpeas provided just the right meat-to-bean ratio. The juice from a can of diced tomatoes and a little tomato sauce were all the liquid we needed, creating a chili that was thick, rich, and utterly satisfying. Chopped figs complement the spices of the chili and add an earthy sweetness.

## SERVES 2

- 1** tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1** small onion, chopped fine
- $\frac{1}{2}$**  red, green, or yellow bell pepper, cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces
- 3** garlic cloves, minced
- 1** teaspoon ground cumin
- 1** teaspoon paprika
- 1** teaspoon ground ginger
- $\frac{3}{4}$**  teaspoon ground coriander
- $\frac{1}{4}$**  teaspoon dried oregano
- $\frac{1}{8}$**  teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Salt and pepper**
- $\frac{1}{8}$**  teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 12** ounces 85 percent lean ground beef
- 1** (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1** (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- $\frac{3}{4}$**  cup canned chickpeas, rinsed
- $\frac{1}{4}$**  cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$**  teaspoon grated lemon zest plus 1 teaspoon juice, plus extra for serving
- Sour cream**
- Cilantro**



PHOTO CREDIT: Kevin White

**1.** Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion, bell pepper, garlic, cumin, paprika, ginger, coriander, oregano,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt, and cayenne. Cook, stirring often, until vegetables begin to soften and spices are fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes.

**2.** Add ground beef and cook, breaking up meat with wooden spoon, until no longer pink and just beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and their juice, tomato sauce, chickpeas, and figs and bring to simmer. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes.

**3.** Uncover and continue to simmer, stirring occasionally, until beef is tender and chili is slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. (If chili begins to stick to bottom of pot, stir in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water.) Stir in lemon zest and juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve, passing lemon, sour cream, and cilantro separately.



# Morning Glory Muffins with Figs

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Morning glory muffins are chock-full of nuts, fruit, carrots, and spices. But all these tasty add-ins can make for heavy, sodden muffins, so we aimed to lighten them up. Our first move was to strain the fruit and press out the extra juice to prevent our muffins from being soggy. To keep the bright, fruity flavor intact, we saved the fruit juice, reduced it on the stovetop, and added the concentrated syrup back to the batter. Figs added just the right level of sweetness and satisfying texture. To keep the nuts and coconut from becoming mealy or soggy in the finished muffins, we toasted and processed them. At last, our muffins were truly glorious. Any muffin tin with standard-size cups will work here, and the batter can be placed in any of the cups.

## MAKES 4 MUFFINS

- 1/3 cup canned crushed pineapple**
- 1 small Granny Smith apple, peeled and shredded**
- 1/4 cup (3/4 ounce) sweetened shredded coconut, toasted**
- 1/4 cup walnuts, toasted**
- 3/4 cup (3 3/4 ounces) all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 cup (1 3/4 ounces) sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled**
- 1 large egg, room temperature**
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/3 cup shredded carrot (1 carrot)**
- 1/3 cup Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid California Figs, stemmed and cut into 1/4-inch pieces**

**1.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 4 cups of muffin tin using baking spray with flour. Place pineapple and shredded apple in fine-mesh strainer set over liquid measuring cup. Press fruit dry, reserving juice; juice should measure about 1/3 cup. Bring juice to boil in 8-inch skillet over medium-high heat and cook until reduced to 2 tablespoons, 3 to 5 minutes; let cool slightly.



PHOTO CREDIT: Steve Klise

**2.** Process coconut and walnuts in food processor until finely ground, about 15 seconds. Add flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt and process until combined, about 5 seconds; transfer to medium bowl.

**3.** In separate bowl, whisk cooled juice, melted butter, egg, and vanilla together until smooth. Gently fold juice mixture into flour mixture with rubber spatula until just combined, then fold in drained pineapple-apple mixture, carrot, and figs.

**4.** Using dry measuring cup or ice cream scoop, divide batter evenly among prepared muffin cups. Bake until muffins are golden brown and toothpick inserted in center of muffin comes out clean, 24 to 28 minutes, rotating muffin tin halfway through baking.

**5.** Let muffins cool in muffin tin on wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove muffins from muffin tin and let cool for at least 10 minutes before serving.