

Easy Lunches Meal Plan

110+ individual meals

This meal plan covers a variety of lunches that can be quickly reheated or assembled.

[Cheesy Corn Chile Tamales](#) – 1 batch (about 30 tamales)

[5-Ingredient Pizzas](#) – 2 batches (20 small pizzas)

[Pizzawiches](#) – 2 batches (18 large or 36 small sandwiches)

[Chicken and Bacon Subs](#) – 2 batches (2 large loaves or 12 sandwiches)

[Green Chile Burritos](#) – 2 batches (24 burritos)

[Burger Patties for the Freezer](#) – 2 batches (8 patties)

Pulled Chicken for subs and extra for salads – 1 batch (using 2.5 lb bag) – directions follow

[Baked Bacon](#) – 1 pound use some in subs; freeze the extra for salads and sandwiches

[Jamie's Spice Mix](#) for use in recipes – 1 batch

Notes

- If you don't want to make your own spice mix, you can substitute your favorite spice blend. 21 Seasoning Salute from Trader Joe's is a good and economical alternative.
- If you like, you can prepare the Chicken and Bacon Subs using small rolls so that you have individual sandwiches ready to go. Use six rolls per batch.
- Freeze the pizzas on trays before baking. Wrap the frozen pizzas in plastic wrap and store in freezer bags. Do not thaw before baking.
- There's quite a bit of shredded cheese in this plan. Feel free to alter the kinds of cheese you use (or omit) if you don't want to buy several different varieties.
- Pulled Chicken: place the chicken tenders in the crock of a slow cooker. Season generously with Jamie's Spice Mix. Cook on high for 4 hours or low for 6 hours. The chicken will practically shred itself as you pull it from the crockpot. Use the drippings in soup if you like.

Grocery List

FRESH PRODUCE:

- ☐ 4 cloves garlic
- ☐ 1 onion (for 1 cup chopped)

DAIRY:

- ☐ 2 cups butter
- ☐ 6 cups shredded pepper jack cheese
- ☐ 8 cups shredded cheese (jack, cheddar, mozzarella or mixture)
- ☐ 8 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- ☐ 10 ounces sliced mozzarella or jack cheese

MEAT & POULTRY:

- ☐ 2.5 lbs chicken tenderloins
- ☐ 1 pound bacon
- ☐ 2 pounds lean ground beef
- ☐ three 5-ounce packages pepperoni
- ☐ 2 cups cooked and crumbled Italian sausage (about 4 links)

FROZEN:

- ☐ 1 cup corn kernels

CANNED/BOTTLED/DRY GOODS:

- ☐ 3 1/2 cups masa harina
- ☐ 3 cups vegetable broth
- ☐ three 7-ounce cans chopped green chiles
- ☐ 6 cups [Healthier Refried Beans](#) or your favorite canned variety
- ☐ two 15-ounce cans tomato sauce
- ☐ 4 cups favorite spaghetti sauce
- ☐ hot sauce
- ☐ 20 pita breads
- ☐ 24 burrito-size flour tortillas
- ☐ 12 sandwich rolls or 2 large loaves French bread
- ☐ 36 club rolls or 18 long sandwich rolls

SEASONINGS & EXTRACTS:

- ☐ salt
- ☐ Trader Joe's Seasoning Salute or ingredients for [Jamie's Spice Mix](#) – onion powder, garlic powder, paprika, dried basil, dried oregano, fine sea salt, ground black pepper, celery seeds, grated lemon zest, cayenne pepper

- ☐ dried parsley flakes
- ☐ dried corn husks for tamales (usually available in the Mexican food aisle or the produce department)

Packaging

- ☐ aluminum foil
- ☐ plastic wrap
- ☐ deli waxed paper wrap
- ☐ gallon-size freezer bags
- ☐ small jar with lid or sandwich bag

Special Equipment

- ☐ large pot with steamer basket for cooking the tamales
- ☐ sheet pans for flash freezing as well as baking
- ☐ crockpot for pulled chicken

Prep List

- ☐ Assemble Jamie's Spice Mix.
- ☐ Prepare the Pulled Chicken in the crockpot the day before. Chill overnight in a covered container.
- ☐ Cook the bacon.
- ☐ Cook and crumble the Italian sausage.
- ☐ Slice one package of pepperoni for pizzawiches.
- ☐ Chop the onion.
- ☐ Prepare the garlic butter.
- ☐ Soak corn husks about one hour before starting the cooking plan.

Cooking Plan

One of the tricks to saving time during a large cooking session is to make sure you maximize every action. If you are quicker or slower with any of the steps or are waiting for one stage of a recipe to be complete, skip to the next step. Then go back to the step that you were waiting for previously.

1. Prepare the tamales and get them steaming. Once they are done, cool them on a rack until room temperature. Package the cooled tamales in freezer bags and label. Chill them completely in the refrigerator before freezing. [TAMALES DONE]
2. Assemble the pita bread pizzas by laying the pitas on baking sheets that will fit in your freezer. Add the sauce and toppings. Freeze until firm. Once firm, wrap them carefully and quickly with plastic wrap, label, and return them at once to the freezer. [5-INGREDIENT PIZZAS DONE]
3. Assemble the Pizzawiches. Wrap, label, and freeze. [PIZZAWICHES DONE]
4. Assemble the Chicken Bacon Subs, wrap, label, and freeze. [CHICKEN BACON SUBS DONE]
5. Package any leftover chicken and bacon separately in freezer bags to use in sandwiches and salads. [PULLED CHICKEN AND BAKED BACON DONE]
6. Assemble the Green Chile Burritos. Wrap, label, and freeze. [BURRITOS DONE]
7. Form the burger patties. Wrap, label, and freeze. [BURGER PATTIES DONE]
8. Go back to any unfinished steps to complete. Wipe down counters. Freeze any items still chilling in the fridge.

Cheesy Corn Chile Tamales

To prepare from frozen, steam for 20 – 30 minutes or until heated through. Alternatively, heat in the microwave for a couple of minutes.

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5-Ingredient Pizzas

Bake frozen at 475 degrees for about 9 minutes or until the crust is browned and the cheese is melted and brown in spots.

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Pizzawiches

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Chicken and Bacon Subs

Thaw completely before baking for best results. Bake wrapped in foil at 350 degrees for 20 minutes for small sandwiches or 25-30 minutes for a large loaf. If frozen, bake about 25 minutes (small) or about 1 hour (large).

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Green Chile Burritos

Reheat in the microwave for a minute or two, or reheat on the griddle.

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Burger Patties

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Pulled Chicken

Reheat and use in salads and sandwiches as needed.

Date Prepared:

Baked Bacon

Reheat in a pan on the stovetop or between paper towels in the microwave until hot. Use in salads and sandwiches as needed.

Date Prepared: