

Food & Think

A Heaping Helping of Food News, Science and Culture

March 6, 2009

[Food Blog Carnival: Eating on a Budget](#)

Everyone's getting more cost-conscious about their food choices these days, [even gourmet cooking magazines](#), and the FaT bloggers are no exception. So we've decided to focus our latest blog carnival on budget-conscious recipes and thrifty shopping strategies. Please use the comments section to chip in your two cents (or one cent, given the theme)!

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Eat Down the Fridge:

Kim O'Donnel of A Mighty Appetite is challenging readers to a week of "[Eating Down The Fridge](#)." That means a self-imposed moratorium on grocery shopping from March 9-15. The idea is to come up with creative ways to use what you've already got on hand in your refrigerator/freezer/pantry. Alright, I'll bite! My co-blogger, Lisa, is going to try it, too, and we'll let you know how it goes next week. Feel free to join in and tell us what you're making.

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Make Your Own Snacks:

"[Charcuterie](#)" may sound a bit snooty, but *au contraire*, my friend. Chef Michael Ruhlman says "the less expensive the cut, the better" when it comes to [making your own beef jerky](#). Bring some to work and snub the vending machine.

Similarly, why not skip those overpriced treats at the coffee shop and bring in something homemade? You can make it super healthy, like this [nut and seed biscotti](#) at 101 Cookbooks, or indulge a bit more and try Orangette's [sweet potato pound cake](#).

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Make Your Pet's Snacks, Too:

I've recently gotten hooked on another great food blog, Use Real Butter. The name alone was enough to win my heart, but the blogger, Jen, also takes fabulous photos of food and her adorable black dog. Sometimes she combines the two, as in this post about [peanut-butter dog treats](#).

Awww.

The Leftover Queen also has a recipe for [milk-bone style dog treats](#) (as well as lots of budget-friendly recipes for humans, as her blog name suggests).

Speaking of peanut butter, why not grind your own at home? [Joy the Baker](#) makes it look easy. (You can use [this gadget](#) to stir it later.)

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Turn Tuna Gourmet:

The term “tuna foam” doesn't do much to whet the appetite, but the French Letters blogger promises it's actually quite tasty (and “sounds a whole lot better when you call it *Spuma di Tonno*”).

And Orangette (I know, already mentioned her, but she's fabulous) offers an easy recipe for “[tuna corks](#),” which also sound better in another language as “*Bouchons au Thon*.” An [updated version](#) of the recipe, plucked from her [new book](#), appeared in the Washington Post this week.

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Become a Stalker: I always feel a little mad buying broccoli by the pound when I know I'll be throwing out a good portion of it. Somehow it never occurred to me that the stalks can be just as tasty as the florets if you know how to prepare them! Regina at [Epi Log suggests](#) simply grating and braising. A New Old-Fashioned Gal recommends a [broccoli stem salad](#).

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Leggy Lentils and Bountiful Beans:

I love [lentils](#). I have no idea why such a tasty, nutritionally powerful food is so darn cheap, but I'm grateful! And as Gemma at Pro Bono Baker notes, lentils are incredibly easy to prepare: “If you can boil water and chop an onion, you can make this [delicious one-pot meal](#).”

The Nourishing Gourmet's Kimberly Harris recommends [growing your own sprouts](#) at home. Her recipe for [curried sprouted lentils](#) with ginger, garlic and cilantro is going on my “must try” list (though I'm sure [Lisa wouldn't like it](#)). Check out her [Nourishing Frugal Recipes carnival](#) today for more good ideas.

Also on the legume front, my dear friend Robin of the lovely, literary and occasionally food-focused [Cant d'ocell](#) blog recently learned how to cook [Catalan-style fava beans](#), and they sound delicious!

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So What If It Costs More?:

I know, I know, grocery bills can seem so expensive, especially when you fill your basket with organic foods. It's tempting to reach for ten boxes of that orange mac-and-cheese and a case of ramen noodles. But consider your priorities: This is your body we're talking about! Can you find anything else in your budget to trim first? Anne of [Beanland](#) argues the point well in a guest post for [Healthy Eats](#).

Then again, maybe it doesn't have to cost more...A blog called [Less is Enough](#) has been chronicling one woman's month-long quest to maintain a reasonably healthy diet on just \$1 a day. She seems to be doing quite well.

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If you think we should have included your blog in this carnival, please send us a link and [tell us why](#)—we just might whip up a second batch on this theme!

Posted By: Amanda Bensen