



Recipe Writing Tips

Writing a recipe is an important skill. Here are some helpful tips from the McCormick Test Kitchen.

Recipe template

There are seven key elements of a recipe. Be sure to include all these within your written recipe.

Recipe title

Name of dish
e.g. Rich bolognese sauce

Preparation time

The preparation time prior to cooking, e.g. preparing vegetables, marinating meat etc.

Cooking time

Total time for the cooking process—if no cooking is needed then the cooking time will be 0 minutes

Number of serves/Makes

The number of people the recipe will serve or the number of items the recipe will make e.g. 4 rice paper rolls (2 serves)

Ingredients

Ingredients to be used, listed in order that they are used in the recipe (see *Tips for listing ingredients in a recipe*)

Method

Steps to be carried out, listed in order (see *Cooking method explanations*)

Presentation

How the dish should be presented on the plate

Tips for listing ingredients in a recipe

When listing ingredients, list them in order of their use and always list the quantity.

- Common measurements include: tablespoon, teaspoon, mL (millilitres), g (grams), kg (kilograms).
- For volumes of 1 litre and above, use litres e.g. 1.25L.
- Packaged and canned goods should be stated as available in store (e.g. 1 x 400 mL can, 1 x 800 g jar, etc.).
- Vegetables should be described according to common descriptions e.g. 4 small carrots, 4 medium stalks celery, 1 bunch parsley. If the vegetable is sold packaged, list the package weight e.g. ½ x 150 g packet snow pea shoots.
- All preparation descriptors should be listed after the ingredient itself e.g.
 - 4 carrots, washed and diced
 - 1 x 250 g can apricot halves, drained
 - 1 chicken breast fillet, sliced.
- If butter or another spread is an ingredient, show the amount in grams (g), tablespoons or teaspoons.
- If oil is an ingredient, show the amount in tablespoons, teaspoons or cups.

Cooking method explanations

Bake or oven bake

To cook in an oven

BBQ or barbeque

To cook on a pre-heated BBQ plate

Boil

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles constantly break the surface

Grill

To cook under a griller

Pan fry

To cook in a frying pan with a small amount of oil

Rapid boil

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles rapidly break the surface

Saute

To cook small amounts of food in oil, over medium to high heat

Simmer

To cook in water that is bubbling so the bubbles occasionally break the surface

Steam

To cook foods in the vapour/steam of boiling water

Stir frying

To cook foods quickly in a very hot wok or large, deep frypan in small amount of oil

Examples

from the McCormick Test Kitchen

Example 1: Gingersnap crème brûlée

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Refrigeration time: 4 hours

Serves: 10

Gingersnap crème brûlée

- Butter, for coating
- 2 cups almond milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 25 gingersnaps, coarsely crushed
- 1 piece McCormick vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise, seeds scraped
- ½ teaspoon McCormick ginger, ground
- 6 egg yolks
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup raw sugar

Caramel drizzle

- ½ cup Aeroplane caramel topping
- ¼ teaspoon McCormick cinnamon, ground

Ginger-spiced cream

- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon almond milk
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon McCormick ginger, ground
- Pinch McCormick sea salt, ground



Method

1. Lightly coat 10 (150ml) ramekins or shallow fluted dishes with butter. Place in shallow roasting pan. Set aside.
2. For the Gingersnap crème brûlée, place almond milk, heavy cream and gingersnaps in blender, cover. Blend on medium speed until smooth. Add seeds from vanilla bean and ginger; mix well. Pour into medium saucepan on medium heat. Bring to simmer, stirring constantly.
3. Beat egg yolks and granulated sugar in large bowl with wire whisk until pale yellow. Gradually whisk in hot almond milk mixture. Strain through fine strainer. Pour into ramekins, filling each about half full. Carefully pour enough hot water into roasting pan to come halfway up sides of ramekins.
4. Bake in preheated 165°C oven for 25–30 minutes or until custards are almost set in center. Cool custards in water bath. Remove from water bath. Cover each custard with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.
5. Sprinkle 1½ teaspoons of raw sugar evenly over each custard. Holding a hand-held torch 10cm from the sugar, lightly brown the sugar using a slow even motion. Remove the flame just before desired degree of browning is reached, as the sugar will continue to brown for a few seconds. Let stand 2 minutes to allow topping to harden.
6. Meanwhile, for Caramel drizzle, mix all ingredients in small bowl. Set aside.
7. For the Ginger-spiced cream, beat all ingredients in bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form and mixture holds its shape.

Presentation:

Top each crème brûlée with Ginger-spiced cream and Caramel drizzle.

Example 2: Garlic pepper labneh

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 0 minutes

Makes: 1 cup

Ingredients

- 1 cup labneh
- ½ teaspoon McCormick black pepper, ground
- ½ teaspoon McCormick chilli flakes
- ¼ teaspoon McCormick garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh coriander or mint (or a combination of both)

Method

1. Mix labneh and spices in small bowl until well blended.
2. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with fresh herbs.

Presentation

Serve in small bowl, with fresh or toasted pita bread.

