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The Amazing Make-Ahead Baby Food Book: Make 3 Months Of Homemade Purees In 3 Hours



Synopsis

You can prepare three months' worth of healthy, homemade baby food in just three one-hour blocks of time! Perfect for busy parents, Dr. Lisa Barrangou's innovative plan features instructions for preparing, freezing, and effortlessly combining puree "building blocks" into quick, tasty meals. With fun combinations like Peachy Strawberry Salad, Coconutty Mango Lassi, Plum-Gingered Broccoli-Quinoa, and Purple Papaya Flax Yogurt, The Amazing Make-Ahead Baby Food Book will help your baby cultivate an adventurous palate while providing a rainbow of nutrients.

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Customer Reviews

LISA BARRANGOU, PhD, is an experienced food scientist and culinary professional. After becoming a mother, she founded The Green Baby Chef, a homemade baby food company offering personal chef services for infants, as well as private cooking instruction and baby food-making workshops. She holds a BS in nutrition, food, and agriculture from Cornell University, and an MS and PhD in food science from North Carolina State University.

Introduction Creating a well-balanced, diverse offering of meals that baby will enjoy can be the most challenging part of feeding your baby. This challenge is largely responsible for why so many parents leave it up to food companies to create and supply their baby's food for them. While commercially processed jarred baby food does offer convenience, homemade baby food made from

fresh whole foods is far superior, both in nutrient and flavor quality. Whole foods are foods that are unprocessed and unrefined (or processed and refined as little as possible), and therefore maintain their natural flavor and nutrient integrity. Think of whole foods as those that can typically be found in nature, like whole fruits, vegetables, unrefined grains, and fresh cuts of meat. Processed jarred and pouched baby foods, while made mostly, but not entirely, from whole foods, are subject to very high temperature and pressure treatments, which allow them to remain shelf stable for literally years but result in substantial nutrient and flavor loss. The impact of this high heat can be clearly seen by comparing the color of processed jarred pea puree with homemade pea puree. The dramatic color change that results from excess heat directly indicates nutrient and flavor quality loss. In addition to extensive processing, jarred baby foods often include thickening agents, such as flours, starches, and gums, to increase stability (prevent them from separating during long-term storage), effectively diluting the nutrient density of the product. Homemade baby food, on the other hand, can be prepared using gentle cooking methods, ensuring the maximum retention of nutrient and flavor integrity. Storing homemade baby food in the freezer is a gentle preservation method that locks in nutrients rather than destroying them, allowing this nutrient and flavor integrity to carry over until consumption. When babies are offered gently processed, flavorful whole food purees, they learn to accept and enjoy the natural, beautiful flavors that nature provides. This early acceptance, if cultivated, becomes a preference, and carries on with babies through life. Conversely, the bland flavors of jarred baby food purees often lead to an underdeveloped palate that is less accepting of the full flavors of healthy foods, and that, too, can be carried on through life. Making homemade baby food provides an opportunity for you to prepare whole foods for your baby right from the start. Researchers have found that consumption patterns for fruits and vegetables often change adversely as babies transition from purees to a mature diet, primarily due to the introduction of processed foods. One study researched food consumption patterns of US infants and toddlers and found that, while deep yellow vegetables were consumed by 39 percent of babies at seven to eight months old, that percentage sharply declined to 13 percent at nineteen to twenty-four months old, when french fries became the most commonly consumed vegetable. This study also found that at nineteen to twenty-four months old, nearly one-third of babies consumed no fruit, while 60 percent consumed baked desserts, 20 percent consumed candy, and 44 percent consumed sweetened beverages on a given day.¹ In our current Western food culture, many well-intentioned parents unwittingly fall into the processed food trap. And no matter how healthily you may have eaten before you had children, it can be even harder to find the time for fresh-food preparation once they come along. I hope this simple system will make it easier for you to quickly and confidently keep whole foods at the forefront

of your child's eating habits—even as life becomes increasingly more complex. Preparing homemade baby food is very easy to do, but it does take time, the right cooking tools, and planning to provide a diverse, well-balanced offering of age-appropriate food. The Amazing Make-Ahead Baby Food Book does most of the planning for you, guiding you through a six-step process that will prepare you to make three months' worth of baby food in just three one-hour blocks of time. After guiding you through preparing a large supply of individual whole food purees, this book shows you how to combine your individual purees into an endless variation of flavorful, nutritionally balanced meals, and then transitions you to preparing more advanced meals as your baby approaches readiness for a mature diet. As you begin your baby food making adventure be sure to read chapter 2, which provides valuable information on feeding timelines, specific health concerns to be aware of, safe food preparation practices, and selection and preparation tips for whole foods. Please note that this book has been written as an informative guide to support your baby's health and nutrition, but it is not intended as a substitute for the medical advice of a physician. Always consult your baby's pediatrician for health-related matters or concerns. Now, let's get started!

I can't say enough good things about this book! I have 8 month old twins and I work full time and I have been making their baby food from whole foods since they started solids at 6 months. One of the things I love most about this book is that the author describes each fruit and vegetable and what you should look for when picking them from the produce section at the store. Also, I love that she highlights ways to save time with certain foods. With twins I am all about that! If I'm short on time, but need to make some food quick, I have a go-to list of foods that require little to no prep (frozen peas, avocados, etc.). I love having an inventory of baby food in the freezer to use every day. When I take my box full of baby food out of the freezer and people see the Ziplock bags full of colorful baby food, they always say "You're so organized!" which is funny because I'm really not. The strategies in the books are flexible too...I don't normally make months worth of food at one time. I usually go shopping and then make 2-3 fruits/veggies per day and get it done in smaller chunks instead of one longer session. I've definitely gotten more efficient as time has gone on too, so don't get overwhelmed if your first cooking session doesn't go as smoothly as you want it to. One last great thing about the book is it recommends fruits/veggies that can be paired together. For example, one of my twins did NOT like black beans the first time I tried it with her. So I waited a few days and the book said that black beans could be paired with apples. So I mixed a cube of black beans with a cube of apples and tried feeding that to her the second time. She took it the second time! Who

would have thought those two things could go together. I definitely recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn how to make their own baby food!~Jen

Really great purchase! Has step by step food introductions plus what-to-mix with what. Example meal plans and suggestions for how to overcome things like constipation with introductions of other foods.. Overall, nothing too fancy (I mean who has time for that when you are just introducing food into a little ones diet). In general the best policy is to KISS (keep it simple stupid) and this book does that for this working mom. There are some more advanced recipes in the back, but we haven't got to those yet...to be continued

I love this book. I saw it growing around. I love how the book lays out the three month plan, shopping lists, tool lists, three day cooking plan, and how to pick out the food. It talks about almost every fruit and veggie. It also makes recommendations of what to buy organic (dirty dozen) and what not to. We did have the vitamin blender before hand and the helps because she used that to make the purees but anything is worth buying. My mom and i did this in three nights and lately i have been feeding my daughter the purees and I have been side tracking from her plan that easy to do because the food cubes are in the freezer readyt o thaw out. It makes it easier to try more appropriate foods because my daughter got constipated from bananas and i was able to switch out to prunes to help her system. It was already in the freezer and there was no excuses to not make the prune for her... The bags do take up some space after while. For me is was no issue because i and a small breast milk freezer and also store the food in there. I plan to go back to work soon and having these foods helps out a lot when time is short. Yes i recommend this book to anyone...

I love that it takes all the guess work out and I can focus on getting recipes, information, etc from one source. I love that all the meals can be prepared ahead of time and that the author advocates for organic, healthy produce. I also love that it spells it out for you with the three month menu. I don't want to have to spend precious free time creating my own menu plan for my little one so this really helps me out.

I never thought that I would be 'that mom' who would make her own babyfood. Thanks to this book I am that mom and am so proud of myself for it! I feel much more confident in that I know my baby is getting healthy whole fruits and vegetables with no added anything (except maybe a little water). I love how detailed-oriented this book is written. From how to pick the best fruits and vegetables while

in-store to the specific pureeing instructions for each fruit and vegetable, everything is covered. The shopping list is great--I just took a picture of the page with my phone and pulled it up when I got to the grocery. The flavor compatibility guide is a great resource. The only caveat is that it definitely took me more than 3 hours and I still didn't get everything pureed. However, I am sure that the next go-round, I could probably reduce my time given that I've had a first pass at the whole process now. Thank you Lisa for writing this book!

Very clear, well written, and goes above and beyond containing the necessary information to make your own baby food. The most helpful parts for me were the shopping list (explains what type of fruits/veges to get, what to look for in ripeness, if you can buy it frozen or fresh, etc) and the calendar showing exactly when to introduce each food. It also contains thawing and storage information. We made the whole first months worth of food in just a few hours. Frozen cubes slip easily out of the one ounce silicone ice trays it suggests. Love this book! Would also make a great shower gift along with the cubes.

After reading this book I felt prepared to begin the adventure of making my own baby food. It has great information on what food to make, how to make it, and when to make it. My favorite part is the schedule of what food to introduce and when to introduce it.

Can't wait to get cooking! I've read through the book, and I can already tell it's going to be a staple. Fantastic simple recipes and explanations for what to do. A good overview on how to introduce food and test for allergies. Great for a first time mom like myself. Plus, the added bonus of how to set up and execute the 3 hour make ahead plan. Then a meal plan moving forward! Couldn't ask for more.

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