

A MONTH OF MEDITERRANEAN MEALS

Big Basket Signals

Fresh fennel	about 1.1 kg across the month
Fresh tomatoes	about 2.55 kg, plus about 1.68 kg/mL passata, puree, and paste
Onions/alliums	about 1.04 kg onions plus chives/spring onions and about 8 garlic cloves
Extra-virgin olive oil	about 480 mL
Garlic-infused olive oil	about 122 mL
Seafood	about 2.6 kg combined fish, shellfish, and seafood pieces
Rice + grains	farro, risotto rice, bomba rice, brown rice, couscous, bulgur, orzo, semolina; keşkek wheat
Legumes	chickpeas, lentils, borlotti, lima/garrofo, and dried beans
Citrus	about 8 lemons, plus preserved lemon rind



How to Use This List

Shop the pantry once, then shop each week for fresh produce, seafood, herbs, dairy, and meat. The final week includes days 22-31 so the month-end close stays in one run.

Water, salt, and pepper are treated as pantry checks. Optional items remain marked where the recipe offered a choice.

Best First Shop

Buy oils, vinegars, rice, grains, beans, flour, pasta, nuts, canned tomatoes, spices, honey, and shelf-stable liquids at the start of the month.

Buy Fresh Weekly

Leafy greens, herbs, seafood, shellfish, berries, ripe tomatoes, and delicate dairy are best purchased close to cooking day.

Keep It Flexible

Use the listed page map to check recipe details. Specialty items like rabbit, goat, quince, and langoustines may need substitutions or a specialty grocer.

Meal Plan to Recipe Pages

These are the printed recipe-page numbers used to collect the ingredient panels. I matched the meal plan to the recipe pages, interpreted the ingredient blocks, then combined like ingredients by week.

DAYS 1-7

Week 1 · Start Clean

Ratatouille Niçoise (p. 16)

Farro con Verdure (p. 22)

Caponata Siciliana (p. 26)

Soparnik (p. 28)

Espinacas con Garbanzos (p. 8)

Bouillabaisse (p. 14)

Fiadone al Limone (p. 62)

DAYS 8-14

Week 2 · Build Comfort

Minestrone alla Genovese al Pesto (p. 20)

Gemista (p. 34)

Zeytinyağlı Enginar (p. 40)

Risotto alla Milanese (p. 18)

Mujaddara (p. 46)

Paella Valenciana (p. 12)

Su Papai Biancu (p. 66)

DAYS 15-21

Week 3 · Add Warmth

Manestra (p. 30)

Giouvetsi (p. 38)

Slata Mechouia (p. 58)

Chicken Tagine (p. 54)

Seksu (p. 52)

Baked Kibbeh (p. 48)

Gató d'Ametlla with Berries (p. 64)

DAYS 22-31

Week 4 · Go Deeper + Close Strong

Gamopilafo (p. 36)

Tepsi Fırın Kebabı (p. 44)

Keşkek (p. 42)

Zarzuela de Mariscos (p. 10)

Chakhchoukha (p. 56)

Ragù Napoletano (p. 24)

Palouze (p. 68)

Koshary (p. 60)

Pašticada (p. 32)

Safarjaliyeh (p. 50)

DAYS 1-7

Week 1: Start Clean

Vegetable-led plates, one seafood night, and a bright citrus finish.



Ratatouille Niçoise (p. 16)

Farro con Verdure (p. 22)

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PRODUCE + HERBS

- Fennel bulbs, about 410 g total
- Zucchini, 370 g total
- Eggplant, 565 g total
- Fresh tomatoes, 705 g total, plus 120 g passata/puree
- Sweet peppers: red 280 g, green 70 g
- Onion/red onion, 105 g total
- Celery, 125 g total
- Swiss chard, 170 g
- Fresh spinach, 285 g
- Potatoes, 250 g
- Leek greens, 70 g
- Garlic, about 1 clove total
- Parsley, about 16 g; chive tops/scallion greens, 24 g
- Basil, 8-10 leaves; thyme, rosemary, and bay leaf
- Lemons, 2

SEAFOOD + DAIRY

- Mixed soup fish/rock-fish pieces, 450 g
- Firm white fish, 225 g
- Whole-milk ricotta, 240 g
- Large egg, 1

DRY GOODS

- Semi-pearled farro, 140 g
- Cooked chickpeas, 250 g
- All-purpose flour, 130 g
- Whole-grain bread, 30 g
- Blanched almonds, 10 g
- Pine nuts, 8 g
- Capers, 9 g; mixed olives, 45 g
- Honey, 30 g; sugar, 4 g

OIL, ACID + SPICE

- Extra-virgin olive oil, about 87 mL
- Garlic-infused olive oil, about 55 mL
- Red wine vinegar, 10 mL; sherry vinegar, 5 mL
- Lemon juice or verjus, about 20 mL
- Smoked paprika, cumin, saffron, salt, and pepper

MARKET NOTES

- Choose eggplant that feels heavy with taut, glossy skin.
- Ask the fish counter for soup-fish pieces plus one firm white fillet.

DAYS 8-14

Week 2: Build Comfort

Stuffed vegetables, grains, beans, and fuller dinners.



Minestrone alla Genovese al Pesto (p. 20)

Gemista (p. 34)

Zeytinyağlı Enginar (p. 40)

Risotto alla Milanese (p. 18)

Mujaddara (p. 46)

Paella Valenciana (p. 12)

Su Papai Biancu (p. 66)

PRODUCE + HERBS

- Fresh tomatoes, 460 g total
- Bell peppers, 200 g
- Zucchini, 200 g
- Potatoes, 340 g
- Onions, 190 g; spring onions, 60 g
- Fennel, 120 g
- Green/flat beans, 175 g
- Fresh artichokes, 2
- Carrot, 60 g; celery, 45 g
- Chive tops, 24 g
- Parsley, 12 g; basil, 25 g; mint, 4 g; dill, 15 g
- Rosemary sprig; oregano; garlic clove
- Lemons, 2

MEAT + DAIRY

- Skinless chicken thighs, 225 g
- Rabbit, 225 g
- Whole milk, 360 mL
- Unsalted butter, 15 g
- Grana Padano/Parmigiano/Pecorino, 30 g total

DRY GOODS

- Rice: risotto 200 g, bomba 200 g, medium-grain 65 g
- Borlotti beans, 100 g
- Brown/green lentils, 100 g
- Garrofo or large lima beans, 100 g
- Coarse bulgur, 60 g
- Small pasta, 30 g
- Pine nuts, 18 g
- Almond flour, 16 g; chopped almond, 8 g
- Flour, 4 g; cornstarch, 12 g; honey, 22 g

OIL, BROTH + SPICE

- Extra-virgin olive oil, about 167 mL
- Garlic-infused olive oil, 5 mL
- Low-sodium vegetable/bean broth, 1.2 L
- Low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, 825-950 mL
- Verjus or white grape must, 10 mL
- Saffron, sweet paprika, cumin, oregano, vanilla, salt, and pepper

MARKET NOTES

- Buy saffron threads, not powder; threads should smell floral.
- Pick artichokes that squeak when squeezed and have tight leaves.

DAYS 15-21

Week 3: Add Warmth

Broth, spice, one seafood-optional lunch, and deeper legumes.



Manestra (p. 30)

Giouvetsi (p. 38)

Slata Mechouia (p. 58)

Chicken Tagine (p. 54)

Seksu (p. 52)

Baked Kibbeh (p. 48)

Gató d'Ametlla with Berries (p. 64)

PRODUCE + HERBS

- Onions, 310 g total
- Fennel, 200 g
- Carrots, 220 g
- Celery, 90 g
- Potatoes, 300 g
- Fresh tomatoes, 560 g total
- Tomato passata, 120 g; tomato paste, 5 g
- Red bell peppers, 280 g
- Zucchini, 140 g
- Turnip, 100 g
- Mushrooms, 60 g
- Green cabbage, 150 g; young corn kernels, 75 g
- Mild green chile or 1/2 jalapeno, 15 g
- Preserved lemon rind, 1/2 lemon
- Parsley, 20 g; cilantro, 8 g; chive tops, 8 g
- Bay leaves; garlic; fresh lemon for juice/zest
- Berries, 75 g

MEAT, FISH + DAIRY

- Lean beef braising chunks, 340 g
- Chicken tagine pieces: 2 bone-in thighs plus 1 drumstick
- Skinless chicken thigh for seksu, 140 g, if using
- Ground lamb or beef, 285 g
- Tuna in olive oil, 30 g, optional
- Large eggs, 4
- Kefalotyri or Parmesan, 5 g

DRY GOODS

- Dried beans, 100 g
- Whole-wheat couscous semolina, 170 g
- Fine bulgur, 120 g
- Orzo/kriitharaki, 90 g
- Cooked chickpeas, 115 g
- Almond flour, 100 g
- Pine nuts, 8 g
- Honey, 30 g

OIL, BROTH + SPICE

- Extra-virgin olive oil, about 115 mL
- Garlic-infused olive oil, 15 mL
- Unsalted light broth or vegetable broth, about 1.3 L
- Olives, 35 g plus 8 whole olives
- Cinnamon, allspice, saffron, ginger, turmeric, caraway, coriander, salt, and pepper

MARKET NOTES

- For couscous, choose dry, separate grains with no clumps.
- Preserved lemon should smell bright and salty, not harsh.

DAYS 22-31

Week 4: Go Deeper + Close Strong

Regional braises, seafood, and the three month-end dishes folded into one final shop.



Gamopilafo (p. 36)

Tepsi Fırın Kebabı (p. 44)

Keşkek (p. 42)

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Chakhchoukha (p. 56)

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Koshary (p. 60)

Pašticada (p. 32)

Safarjaliyeh (p. 50)

PRODUCE + HERBS

- Onions, about 430 g total
- Fennel, about 385 g total
- Fresh tomatoes, about 820 g total
- Tomato passata/puree, about 720 g or mL
- Tomato paste, about 155 g
- Green peppers, 170 g
- Potatoes, 300 g
- Carrot, 60 g
- Tart apple, 15 g; prune, 10 g
- Quinces, 285 g
- Grapes, a few for garnish
- Garlic, about 5 cloves
- Chive tops, 8 g; parsley, 5 g; basil leaves, bay leaves, thyme
- Lemons, 2

MEAT + SEAFOOD

- Bone-in chicken, 225 g, plus skinless chicken pieces, 115 g
- Bone-in goat, 225 g
- Bone-in lamb, 625 g total
- Lamb or chicken for chakhchoukha, 140 g
- Lean beef for ragu and pasticada, 680 g total
- Lean lamb shoulder or beef chuck, 285 g
- Monkfish, 225 g; firm white fish, 225 g
- Langoustines, 170 g; shrimp, 125 g
- Mussels, 340 g; clams, 280 g; squid, 115 g

DRY GOODS + DAIRY

- Greek-style short/medium rice, 150 g
- Keşkek wheat, 150 g
- Semolina flour, 140 g
- All-purpose flour, 24 g
- Brown/black lentils, 90 g
- Cooked chickpeas, 170 g total
- Brown rice, 45 g; small pasta, 25 g
- Potato gnocchi, 115 g
- Almonds/hazelnuts/walnuts, 23 g total
- Stakovoutiro or butter, 13 g

OIL, LIQUID + SPICE

- Extra-virgin olive oil, about 110 mL
- Garlic-infused olive oil, about 47 mL
- Fish broth, 300 mL; light broth, about 420 mL
- Purple grape juice, 480 mL
- Verjus, 50 mL; sherry vinegar, 10 mL; vinegar, 15 mL
- Pomegranate juice or molasses, 7 mL
- Saffron, paprika, red pepper flakes, ras el hanout, cumin, coriander, allspice, cinnamon
- Rose water, pantry check; salt and pepper

MARKET NOTES

- Shellfish should smell clean and marine; discard cracked shells.
- Quince should be firm, yellow, and floral.

MONTHLY BUDGET

Itemized Walmart-First Cart

This prices the month as 31 meals, not three meals a day. It uses May 2026 Walmart-style small-package logic: 6 eggs instead of 12, a quart of milk instead of a gallon, loose produce where possible, and frozen or mixed seafood packs where that keeps the listed seafood ingredients affordable.

Cart Line	Budget Package Strategy	Est.
Fresh tomatoes + tomato products	5.6 lb fresh tomatoes; small cans/jars for puree/passata and paste	\$12.80
Fennel + alliums	3 fennel bulbs; 3 lb onion bag; red onion; scallion/chive-top stand-ins; garlic bulb	\$15.25
Core vegetables + greens	Peppers, zucchini, eggplant, potatoes, carrots, celery, cabbage, mushrooms, corn, turnip, spinach/chard	\$31.10
Herbs, citrus + specialty produce	Parsley, cilantro, dill, mint/basil, rosemary/thyme, lemons, artichokes, quince, berries, grapes, apple/prune	\$23.75
Chicken	One family pack of bone-in thighs/drumsticks; freeze the extra portions	\$9.50
Beef	About 3 lb chuck/stew meat plus 1 lb lean ground beef	\$31.75
Lamb, goat + rabbit allowance	Smallest butcher/counter portions for the exact specialty proteins	\$32.00
Seafood	Frozen white fish, shrimp, mussels/clams/squid or mixed seafood in smallest practical packs	\$39.00
Dairy + eggs	6-count eggs, 1 quart milk, 15 oz ricotta, smallest butter and grated-cheese packs	\$12.50
Rice, grains, flour + pasta	Farro, risotto/bomba-style rice, brown rice, couscous, bulgur, semolina, orzo/small pasta, flour	\$25.00
Legumes, nuts, honey + bread	Chickpeas, lentils, dried beans, lima/borlotti, almonds/pine nuts/walnuts, honey, whole-grain bread	\$17.00
Oils, acids + specialty liquids	17 oz extra-virgin olive oil, garlic-infused oil, vinegars, verjus/grape must, pomegranate molasses, rose water	\$22.50
Spices	Small jars or packets: cumin, paprika, coriander, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, allspice, bay, saffron	\$20.50

\$292.65

Itemized target cart for the whole 31-meal month, before local tax, deposits, delivery fees, and substitutions.

Watch List

Exact rabbit, goat, langoustines, monkfish, quince, and saffron can push the total above \$300 if only premium or large packages are available.

BUDGET STRATEGY

How to Keep the Checkout Lower

- Buy the smallest real package when the recipe only needs a little: 6 eggs, 1 quart of milk, small cheese, small nuts, and loose produce.
- Use frozen fish, shrimp, mussels, clams, squid, and mixed seafood packs when the fresh counter price jumps.
- The recipe pages above still name the exact ingredients. If exact rabbit, goat, langoustines, monkfish, quince, or saffron exceed the allowance, mark it as a cost risk rather than hiding it.
- Plan seafood meals within 24 hours of shopping so nothing expensive is lost to spoilage.

Cross-Check Rules Used

- Eggs were counted from the recipes as five total, so the cart uses a 6-count package rather than a dozen.
- Milk is only needed for su papai biancu, so the cart uses one quart rather than a gallon.
- Olive oil is close to one 17 fl oz bottle for the month, so that bottle is counted in full.
- Frozen or mixed seafood packs are used as a purchasing strategy; the recipe list still identifies the seafood families required.
- Spices and specialty liquids are bought in the smallest jars or packets because their unused portions become pantry carryover.

When the Total Can Rise

Exact specialty sourcing is the only way this plan should break \$300. Rabbit, goat, monkfish, langoustines, quince, saffron, and some fresh herbs may be unavailable as small Walmart packages. If a store only sells a large or premium package, the honest budget should show that overage rather than hiding it.

How to Pick the Best Ingredients

Quality shows up as weight, scent, firmness, packaging condition, and freshness timing. These checks are written for quick use in a grocery aisle or at a counter.

Produce

- Use weight first. Tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, citrus, and quince should feel heavy for their size.
- Check skin tension. Avoid wrinkled tomatoes, soft pepper shoulders, spongy eggplant, and wet herb stems.
- Buy for timing. Choose ripe tomatoes and greens for the next two days, firmer vegetables for later in the week.
- For fennel, look for compact white bulbs, bright green stalks, and a clean cut base without browning.

Seafood

- Smell should be clean and ocean-like, never sour, sweetly rotten, or ammonia-like.
- Shellfish should be closed or close when tapped. Skip cracked shells and keep them cold but breathable.
- For frozen fish, choose tight packaging with little ice crystal buildup; heavy frost usually means thaw-refreeze damage.
- Ask for firm white fish when a recipe needs pieces to hold shape in broth or stew.

Meat + Poultry

- Look for intact packaging, no excessive liquid pooling, and a clean color appropriate to the cut.
- For braises, choose lean but not bone-dry cuts; a little connective tissue helps tenderness after slow cooking.
- Ground meat should be cold, evenly colored, and used quickly. Freeze anything not cooked within one to two days.
- For lamb or goat, ask whether the counter can cut smaller amounts so the weekly shop stays closer to the plan.

Dry Goods, Oils + Spices

- Buy rice by type. Risotto rice, bomba rice, and brown rice do different jobs and do not behave the same.
- Check dried beans and grains for dust, broken pieces, insect damage, or stale smell.
- Olive oil keeps best in dark glass or tins, away from heat. Smaller bottles are better if usage is slow.
- Saffron should be threads, not powder; cumin, paprika, and coriander should smell vivid when the jar opens.

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Data Sources

- **Walmart olive oil anchor:** <https://www.walmart.com/ip/10315102>
- **Walmart rice anchor:** <https://www.walmart.com/ip/10315395>
- **Walmart flour anchor:** <https://www.walmart.com/ip/10403017>
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The budget target is based on current Walmart.com grocery-price anchors checked for this revision, then itemized with small-package shopping logic because Walmart prices and availability are location-dependent.