

Here are some of **Chef Ali's favorite staples** you should regularly keep in your fridge, freezer, and pantry to make sure that you can whip up something great on the fly.

## **Fridge**

**Parmesan:** A little bit of Parm goes a long way for flavor and lasts a long time.

**Cheddar:** A great all purpose cheese that lasts a long time, can be grated, and also melts great!

**Eggs:** Breakfast for dinner and the perfect protein. Omelet, frittata, hard boiled, fried or scrambled eggs.

**Dijon Mustard:** A lifesaver for salad dressings, sauces, spicing up an dish.

**Yogurt:** Plain, not sweetened, greek or whole milk. Great for dressings, sauces, toppings.

**Carrots, Celery and Broccoli:** These trusty, go-to vegetables will last forever. Roast, steam, or eat raw.

**Parsley:** Fresh herbs are wonderful, but who can use whole bunches in five days? It lasts a good long time and adds freshness to a dish.

**Lemons:** If salt won't save a bland dish, fresh lemon juice will.

## **Freezer**

**Bread:** It defrosts quickly and retains its texture and flavor after freezing. Slice before freezing for nearly instant toast. Frozen pizza dough or pizza shells makes for a quick and fun pizza night!

**Chicken or Vegetable Stock:** Pick a day and make a bunch of chicken or vegetable stock. Keep it in your freezer in pint-size containers or ice cube trays, and it will be your best friend when you're cooking lentils, rice, soup, grains.

**Frozen veggies like spinach, broccoli, or a mixed bag:** Emergency vegetables, at your service.

## **Pantry**

**Sea Salt and Pepper:** No explanation needed.

**Onions:** From soup to stir-fries to pretty much any savory meal, onions are clutch.

**Garlic:** Garlic makes everything taste better.

**White and Sweet Potatoes:** They last a while, and are *so good* no matter how you cook them.

**Quinoa/Rice:** Cooks faster than other whole grains and works for breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert.

**Canned tuna, wild salmon and sardines:** convenient, inexpensive, and healthy— high in protein and vitamin D and can be a good source of omega-3 fatty acids.

**Dried Red or Green Lentils:** Red lentils cook faster than most other varieties, and lose their form quickly, which works great as a soup base. But I lo green lentils as a soup, salad or tossed with a grain and some veggies for a simple dinner.

**Spaghetti and Other Pasta:** Sometimes we all just need a pasta dinner.

**Canned Tomatoes:** Because fresh tomatoes aren't always in season. Buy fire-roasted tomatoes for soups and chili.

**Olive Oil:** Good fats, good flavor.

**Vinegar:** Apple cider vinegar to brighten up salads or anything raw, red-wine vinegar for heartier dishes that crave a little acid, rice vinegar is great for anything milder and balsamic for great salad dressings or marinades.

**Peanut Butter or Nut Butters:** For sandwiches, for sauces, for marinades.

**Canned Beans:** Season a million different ways; add to grains, pasta, veggies and dinner is ready. A great source of protein too.

**Soy Sauce or Tamari:** A great flavor booster!

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