

Dollar Tree
Dinner Series
**4 FAMILY
DINNERS
FOR \$20**

Rebecca Chobat



Rebecca Chobart

A.K.A. The Dollar
Tree Meals Lady

Hello! My name is Rebecca. My mission is to make home-cooked meals feel accessible, realistic, and empowering. Especially for those working with tight budgets or limited resources. I create meal plans that prioritize affordability without sacrificing comfort, creativity or dignity. Whether it's a low grocery budget series or a pantry based dinner series, I focus on intentional planning, smart ingredient use, and approachable cooking methods that anyone can follow. My goal isn't just to feed people, but to show that good food is possible, no matter where you shop or how much you have to spend.

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\$20 Shopping List + Accessibility-Friendly Alternatives

Flour – Used to make homemade tortillas and pierogi dough.

Alternative: Dollar Tree sells 10-packs of small flour tortillas.
Grab two packs if skipping homemade tortillas and pierogi.

2 bags Mexican-Style Rice – Pre-seasoned, microwaveable, includes vegetables.

Alternative: Any cooked rice + veggies + taco seasoning.

1 pouch Refried Black Beans – Fully cooked and microwavable.

Alternative: Canned refried beans or mashed canned black beans with seasonings.

1 pouch Four Cheese Instant Mashed Potatoes

Alternative: Homemade mashed potatoes or any instant variety.

1 bag Frozen French Fries – Boiled and mashed to enhance instant potatoes.

Alternative: Fresh or canned potatoes.

1 pack Smoked Sausage – Pre-cooked protein.

Alternative: Any cooked sausage or protein.

1 can Green Beans – Side dish or skillet ingredient.

Alternative: Frozen or fresh green beans.

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\$20 Shopping List + Accessibility-Friendly Alternatives

1 box Spaghetti – Used in Rosatella pasta.

Alternative: Any pasta shape.

1 can Garlic & Herb Pasta Sauce – Base for Rosatella.

Alternative: Marinara or tomato sauce + Italian seasoning.

1 jar Grated Parmesan Cheese – Used across three meals.

Optional, but highly recommended.

1 small Carton Milk – Used in sauces and fillings.

Alternative: non-dairy milk.

2 boxes Cheeseburger Mac – Used in chili mac.

Alternative: Any boxed macaroni & cheese or cheesy dinner kit

1 can Chili – Added to chili mac.

Alternative: Ground beef and beans with seasoning.

1 can Diced Tomatoes with Green Chiles

Alternative: Plain diced for milder option

Pantry staples: Oil, Salt & Pepper

(These are the only items not included in the \$20 budget)

Chili Mac

Ingredients

- 2 boxes Cheeseburger Mac
- 1 can Chili
- 1 can Diced Tomatoes with Green Chiles
- 2 cups Milk
- 3 cups Water

Instruction

In a large pot, combine the chili, diced tomatoes, both boxes of mac and cheese, 2 cups of milk, and 3 cups of water. Stir to combine.

Each box calls for 2 cups milk and 1 cup water (6 cups total), but to save milk for other meals, we swapped the measurements to 2 cups milk and 3 cups water, accounting for the extra liquid in the chili and tomatoes.

Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and let sit uncovered for 5 minutes to thicken.

Yields: 4 hearty servings

Substitution note: Any boxed pasta meal will work here. Use seasoned ground beef and cheese if avoiding canned chili.



Video Instructions



Bean & Rice Chimichangas

Ingredients

- 2 bags Mexican-Style Rice
- 1 pouch Refried Black Beans
- Splash of Milk
- Tortillas (homemade or 2 packs Dollar Tree)
- Oil for frying (optional)
- Optional toppings: Salsa, Sour Cream

Instruction

If making tortillas, prepare a double batch (recipe on following page)

Microwave rice & beans according to package instructions

Combine warm rice and beans in a bowl with a splash of milk to make the filling creamy and cohesive. Scoop filling onto tortillas and roll into burritos.

Option 1: Grill in a dry skillet until golden on each side.

Option 2: Shallow-fry in oil for crispy chimichangas.

Yields: About 12 burritos

Accessibility note: Store-bought tortillas are smaller, so final count may vary.



Video Instructions



Flour Tortillas

Ingredients

- 1 & ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- ¼ cup Oil
- ½ cup boiling Water

Video Instructions



Instruction

Mix flour with salt and oil. I like to work the oil in with my hands until the mixture looks crumbly. Then you are going to add boiling water, start with ½ a cup and only add more if your dough looks dry. Your dough should be soft and slightly sticky.

Turn it out onto your counter and knead it for 5 minutes. The dough should be smooth and not stick to your hands or counter. Cover your dough and let it rest for 15 to 20 minutes. Then cut it into 8 even pieces.

Form these into tight doughballs and keep them covered so they don't dry out. Then working one at a time, roll out your tortillas. Use a lot of flour to help keep the shape round and when you are new to making tortillas it's helpful to use a ruler to make sure you roll them into the right size.

Cook them on a dry skillet preheated over medium high heat for 20 to 30 seconds on the first side until you start to see small bubbles. Flip it and cook for another 20 to 30 seconds on the other side until lightly browned. Transfer your cooked tortillas into a towel to stay warm while you finish the rest.



Pasta in Rosatella Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 box Spaghetti
- 1 can/jar Pasta Sauce
- 1½ cups Milk
- 2 tablespoons Flour
- 2 tablespoons Oil
- Salt, Pepper
- Grated Parmesan

Instruction

In a saucepan, heat oil and whisk in flour to make a roux. Cook 1–2 minutes. Slowly whisk in milk, stirring until thickened. Season with salt, pepper, and a handful of Parmesan. Once it tastes similar to Alfredo, stir in the pasta sauce. Simmer on low.

Meanwhile, boil pasta in salted water, drain, and top with the sauce. Garnish with extra Parmesan.

Yields: 4 generous servings

Substitution note: Use any pasta or pasta sauce available. The roux + milk + Parmesan adds creaminess.



Video Instructions



Smoked Sausage & Pierogi Skillet

Ingredients

Pierogi Dough:

- 2 cups Flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Warm Water
- 1 teaspoon Salt

Filling:

- 1 bag Frozen French Fries
- 1 pouch Instant Four Cheese Mashed Potatoes
- Splash of Milk
- Parmesan

Video Instructions



Instruction

Mix flour, salt, and water into a dough. Knead 5 minutes until smooth. Rest covered for 20 minutes.

Boil French fries 7 minutes until soft. Mash with prepared instant mashed potatoes, adding milk and Parmesan. Roll dough thin and cut into circles. Add a spoonful of filling to each. Brush edge with a little water, then fold and pinch edges to seal.

Boil in salted water 3 minutes until they float. Drain and set aside.

Skillet Instructions:

Slice smoked sausage and pan-fry until browned. Add drained green beans and season with salt and pepper. Set aside. Pan-fry pierogi in same skillet until golden on both sides. Return sausage and beans to pan and toss gently.

Alternative (no pierogi): Serve sausage and green beans over mashed potatoes. Extra potato filling can be used to make bonus tortilla wraps.

Yields: 4 servings

Substitution note: Use boxed pierogi or skip completely for a faster meal.