

THE FEED ZONE

Fast and Flavorful Food for Athletes

COOKBOOK



BIJU THOMAS with **ALLEN LIM**

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“BIJU’S RECIPES ARE MIND-BLOWINGLY SIMPLE, BUT THEIR FLAVORS AND QUALITY ARE AS GOOD AS A FIVE-STAR RESTAURANT. . . . BIJU WILL INSPIRE YOU TO WANT TO COOK.”
—Matthew Busche, RadioShack pro cycling team

“ALLEN LIM HAS ALWAYS PREACHED EATING REAL, NATURAL FOODS AS THEY PROVIDE FAR MORE OF WHAT WE NEED FOR ENERGY AND RECOVERY THAN ANY SUPPLEMENT. . . .”
—Lucas Euser, Team SpiderTech

Foreword

OVER THE COURSE OF MY LAST 15 YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL CYCLIST, diet and nutrition have played a significant role in my performance, but getting the right food at races hasn't always been possible and didn't become a serious problem for me until the 2011 season. I ended up hospitalized at the Tour of Catalunya in March due to complications that stemmed from an old stomach injury and the poor quality of food at the race.

These health problems came in the midst of early season preparation and I was concerned that I would not be at my best by the Tour of California, which was the most important race of the year for me next to the Tour de France. So I returned to the States to get some rest and to try and get my diet and training back on track. I needed some real help so I asked Allen and Biju if they would be willing to support me during a two-week training camp in Park City, Utah. They agreed and as soon as they arrived they got to work. Not knowing what might cause problems for my stomach, they took a back-to-basics approach: simple meals with minimal ingredients so I could begin to relearn what worked and what didn't.

My mornings started with a big bowl of oatmeal with Biju's toasted nut mix, poached eggs, and a glass of beet juice. For long training rides, I ate primarily chicken sausage rice cakes. After the ride, gluten-free pasta salad, chicken fried rice, or a hot soup. For dinner we had everything from pan-seared steak to pasta with smoked salmon, and Biju's chicken tikka masala, followed by a beautiful salad. For dessert, a big bowl of fruit with honey and yogurt. I felt myself getting stronger every day. I was also learning new recipes and picking up some skills in the kitchen as I watched Biju and Allen cook each day.



I FELT MYSELF GETTING STRONGER EVERY DAY. ★

AFTER THE BIGGEST WIN OF MY CAREER, I FOUND MYSELF MAKING BIJU'S RECIPES.

By the time we were done with the training camp, I was confident that I would have decent form at the Tour of California, but I also knew that it wasn't going to happen unless Biju and Allen came to cook for the team. The night before the start of the race, Biju and Allen showed up in a beat-up "Cruise America" RV. Using two butane burners, one propane stove, and a handful of pots and pans they began cooking the best race food our team has ever eaten. The European riders were totally unaccustomed to eating food this good at a race. They were amazed by how great their legs felt and lamented the fact that they didn't have this advantage earlier in their career.

Best of all, when we sat down at the dinner table for a great meal it took our minds off of the race and brought us together as a team. As we dined on park benches under a borrowed tent, riders who had been on the same team for years were talking, laughing, and telling stories we'd

never heard before. We had escaped the typical drudgery of eating for the sake of eating. We felt great and by the end of the race we had won the two hardest stages and finished with Chris Horner winning the overall and me in second.

Right after the Tour of California, I went on to win the Tour of Switzerland, erasing a 2-minute deficit in the final time trial to win by 4 seconds. It was the biggest win of my career and something I could have hardly imagined sitting in the hospital in Spain only 2 months before. Equally surprising was the fact that after that win, I found myself making Biju's recipes. I even made Allen dinner one evening. It wasn't quite as good as Biju's cooking but it was still one of the best pre-Tour meals I've ever cooked. So not only did Biju and Allen help salvage a disastrous start to my 2011 season and turn it into one of my best, they actually got me into the kitchen, cooking these recipes.

LEVI LEIPHEIMER
RADIOSHACK PRO CYCLING TEAM

Foreword

THE FOOD THAT FUELS ME AS AN ATHLETE is incredibly important. On any given day I will only feel as good as the food I have eaten before, during, and after my ride. Garbage in, garbage out.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the middle of a multi-day stage race. Not only is bad food poor athletic fuel, but the last thing I want to see or eat after riding hard for 5 hours for the fourth day in a row is some white bread, pasta, and flavorless boiled chicken. Putting that food into my tired body doesn't do much good, but even more so, it just cracks me mentally.

I know that there are good, healthy, and easily accessible ingredients and dishes out there that would be much better for me in a race. But in a race a cyclist is usually limited to what the team or race organization provides, which is almost always cost-cutting, nutrient-starved dishes. So when the opportunity presented itself at a few races during the 2011 season, Allen and Biju would sneak me some real food—the good stuff—at dinnertime. I would walk past the buffet to a corner in the hallway where they would dish me up some quinoa salad, fresh beets, and a proper piece of meat. Healthy and delicious, those morsels made my day and gave me confidence that I had what I needed to recover properly for the next day of racing.

Immediately following some of the stages at the Tour of California I would sneak out of my team bus to find the little motor home that was Biju's test kitchen. Coconut water and rice cakes were the perfect choices for refueling right after a hard effort. Tasty and effective.

There are so many foods out there that are packed with nutrients, easy to find, and easy to make. *The Feed Zone Cookbook* is full of recipes from Allen and Biju that epitomize the athlete's two greatest purposes in sitting down for a meal: to optimize performance and to maximize the pleasure that comes from eating.

After all, sport is too hard to not enjoy the food that fuels you!

TIMMY DUGGAN
LIQUIGAS-CANNONDALE PRO CYCLING TEAM





SERVINGS > 10
TIME > 30 minutes

Allen's Rice Cakes

I started making these rice cakes at training camps and races to give riders something savory and fresh to eat while on the bike. They became a huge hit since almost everything the riders ate was pre-packaged and sweet. Not only are these rice cakes delicious, they also provide a consistent energy source that doesn't upset the stomach.

2 cups uncooked calrose or other medium-grain "sticky" rice
1½ cups water
8 ounces bacon
4 eggs
2 tablespoons liquid amino acids or low-sodium soy sauce
brown sugar
salt and grated parmesan (optional)

TIP We always use calrose rice, a strain of medium-grain rice common in Asian cooking. This variety cooks fast (in 20 minutes or less), retains a nutty flavor, and is just sticky enough to hold our cakes together. If you can't find it, use another medium-grain rice or any kind marked "sushi rice."

- 1 Combine rice and water in a rice cooker.
- 2 While rice is cooking, chop up bacon before frying, then fry in a medium sauté pan. When crispy, drain off fat and soak up excess fat with paper towels.
- 3 Beat the eggs in a small bowl and then scramble on high heat in the sauté pan. Don't worry about overcooking the eggs as they'll break up easily when mixed with the rice.
- 4 In a large bowl or in the rice cooker bowl, combine the cooked rice, bacon, and scrambled eggs. Add liquid amino acids or soy sauce and sugar to taste. After mixing, press into an 8- or 9-inch square baking pan to about 1½-inch thickness. Top with more brown sugar, salt to taste, and grated parmesan, if desired.

Cut and wrap individual cakes. Makes about 10 rice cakes.

PER SERVING (1 cake) > Energy 225 cal • Fat 8 g • Sodium 321 mg • Carbs 30 g • Fiber 1 g • Protein 9 g

SERVINGS > 4
TIME > 15–20 minutes

Chicken Tacos

Lightly warmed corn tortillas stuffed with spiced chicken and cool salsa are the perfect après-ride food. Bursting with bright flavors and a hint of salt and citrus, these tacos are just what your body craves. To speed things up, prep the chicken in advance.

COOKED 1 cup cooked rice

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken, cut into small chunks (see note)

1 onion, cut into strips

2 mild green chiles, cut into strips

½ teaspoon chili powder and/or ground cumin

fresh lime juice

4–6 corn tortillas

Roasted Salsa (page 286)

Spicy Cabbage Slaw (page 284)

- 1 Add a splash of water to the cooked rice and warm in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Put rice aside.
- 2 Bring a lightly oiled sauté pan to medium-high heat. Add chicken, onion, and chiles. Sauté, sprinkling with spices as desired, until chicken is cooked through and onions have softened and browned, about 10–15 minutes.
- 3 Add lime juice and salt to taste.
- 4 Warm the corn tortillas in a dry pan or in the oven, about 3–5 minutes.

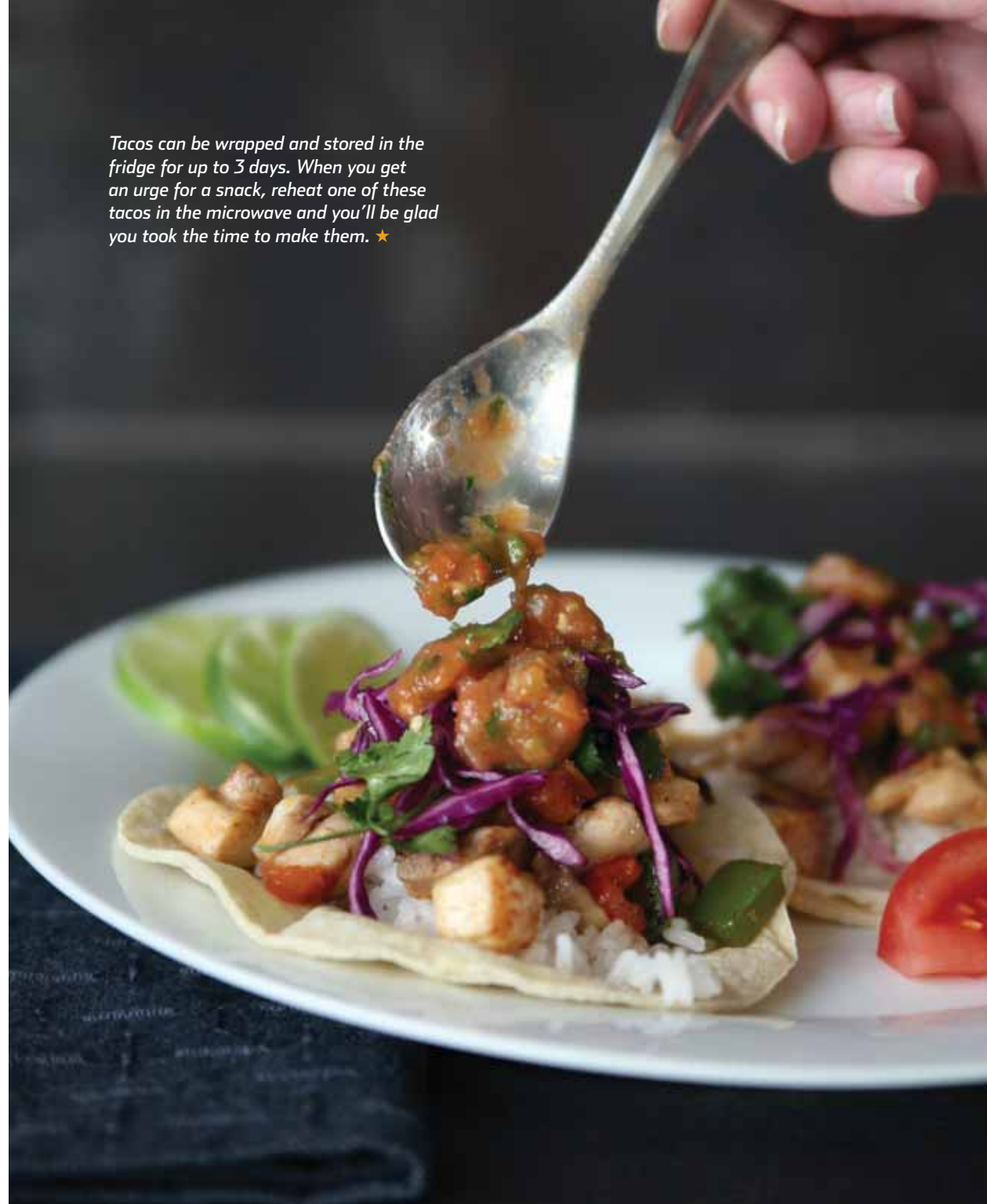
Stuff each warmed corn tortilla with a few spoonfuls of cooked rice, chicken, and salsa.

NOTE> Thigh meat will give you a bit more fat and flavor in the summer when you're racking up the training miles. At other times of the year, use chicken breasts.

TIP Feel free to use purchased salsa to save time. But if you want to impress your friends, our fresh option is a great accompaniment.

PER SERVING > Energy 274 cal • Fat 2 g • Sodium 244 mg • Carbs 24 g • Fiber 1 g • Protein 36 g

Tacos can be wrapped and stored in the fridge for up to 3 days. When you get an urge for a snack, reheat one of these tacos in the microwave and you'll be glad you took the time to make them. ★



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BIJU THOMAS

IF IT WERE NOT FOR the unconditional support and amazing food fed to me by my parents, the seeds for this book would not have been planted. Culture is more than what your mom fed you. It's the culmination of any meal or any recipe shared with others and it is the joy that we experienced cooking and eating with those closest to us. With that in mind, I'd like to thank those whom I have shared most of my meals with: my parents, George and Margarita, my brother Almerick, all of my cousins, aunts, uncles, friends, and athletes who took the time to cook me a meal or took a chance eating one of mine.

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ALLEN LIM



About the Authors



BORN IN SOUTH INDIA, BIJU THOMAS first came to the United States at the age of three. Part of a large extended family, including five siblings and several cousins, he learned to love food by watching his mother and grandmother cook for and feed large groups with ease. The entire family found joy and camaraderie in cooking, constantly upstaging one another in the kitchen.

A self-taught chef, Biju soon discovered he had a deep passion for cooking. He began working in restaurants at age 15, moving quickly to the top of his field as an in-demand chef in Colorado, and then

finally as an instructor and consultant to the industry, writing menus and helping to start restaurants around the country.

However, he had another great passion—cycling. Growing up in Colorado in the 1980s meant that he was surrounded by many of the greats of American cycling, including the 7-Eleven team and a generation of young cyclists who went on to define the sport.

In an attempt to marry his two greatest passions, Biju began to work with various cycling- and sports-related fund-raisers and events. This led him to Andy Hampsten, then to Jonathan Vaughters and an early Garmin pro cycling team, where he befriended Allen Lim.

Through those relationships, Biju has cooked and shared his love of food with many top cyclists, including Lance Armstrong; Levi Leipheimer; Tommy Danielson; Christian Vande Velde; and a new generation of riders, including Ben King and Matt Busche.

Biju contributes to MapMyRide and to other online media and various magazines while doing TV spots and heading up workshops and classes—all the while doing his best to remain a skinny chef on the roads around Boulder, Colorado.

“I WISH BIJU HAD COOKED FOR ME ALL THOSE YEARS I RACED BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE MADE ME FASTER.”

—Axel Merckx, former pro cyclist, Olympic medalist, and Belgian national champion

BORN IN THE PHILIPPINES, DR. ALLEN LIM began watching and helping his parents (who are originally from China) cook in the kitchen at the age of four—the same age that he taught himself to ride a bicycle. By age eight, Lim’s affinity for food and cycling was in full bloom. He began spending hours on his dirt bike roaming the streets just outside of Los Angeles and teaching his parents classic Western recipes, like the Denver omelet, picked up at sleepover parties with his American friends.

This merging of cultures eventually led Lim to search for ways to turn his love for cycling and food into a legitimate career—a search that culminated with Lim earning his doctorate in 2004 in the Department of Integrative Physiology at CU Boulder. Having worked almost exclusively with professional cycling teams since 2004, Dr. Lim was the director of sport science for the RadioShack professional cycling team for the 2010 and 2011 seasons and formerly held the same title for the Garmin professional cycling team. He has the unique distinction of being the only American scientist to have worked and cooked at the Tour de France, guiding countless riders, including Floyd Landis

and Lance Armstrong—controversial and inspiring winners of cycling’s most prestigious race.

Through these experiences, Lim has come to know firsthand the complexity of sport—an arena where ambition, emotion, and culture can both fuel and oppose the practice of science, innovation, and fair play. These dichotomies have led Lim to look for ways to redefine his love for cycling and food as a legitimate tool for social change—a conversation he is eager to discuss on a ride or at the dinner table.



“SOME OF LIM’S FOODS ARE SCIENTIFIC AND OTHERS JUST FEEL GOOD, BUT ONE INGREDIENT WAS ALWAYS PRESENT: PASSION FROM THE ASIAN EQUATION.”

—Christian Vande Velde, Team Garmin–Cervélo



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