

Strategies Applied:

- **Salmon:** Really budget shop for your fish. My Salmon was bought for \$4.99 a pound during Lent, but sometimes frozen fillets can be bought with a coupon. By taking the best of the Salmon, I was able to cut 4 small fillets and trim them to about 3 ounces and use the less desirable parts to make this meal. The piece of Salmon I was working with was about 1.2 pounds, the fillets came to 12 ounces and I had five ounces left over for hash. Cost, about \$1.56.
- Believe me, no one starves at my house, and I know I reveal just how cheap I am, but it is a strategy that works and allows me to eat “above budget.” I also serve plenty of healthy vegetables and sides. You might recognize this same strategy used in my [Corned Beef Dinner](#) post. This, basically, is how I saw my Grandmother cook back in the day, and my Mother. Sunday dinner was special, but then multiple spin offs came from it. There are no “I don’t like left overs” people at my house, and if there were, they’d be offered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich that they could get up from the table to make.
- **Olive Oil:** I have a little strategy for buying [olive oil](#) – using coupons and sales to lower the price, so click on the link. I think it’s important to use olive oil as opposed to many others – the health benefits outweigh a bit more extra cost, and it can be had at a very reasonable price. I also like the fact that Olive oil contains no hidden trans fats like Canola or Vegetable oil. Cost for this recipe: 32 cents. I would have no problem putting the removed olive oil in a small cup and reusing it again, but that's just me...and only if it were very soon.
- **Garlic:** I look for a price of about \$2.99 a pound, or about 54 cents a head. Check the pricing of the bulk per pound as opposed to the packaged. I never really find it on sale, but I use so much, I pay attention and buy a bit more when I see the price is lower.
- **Onions:** They keep well, so try to buy on sale. Aldi is a good place to find reasonably priced onions. Always less expensive in the fall/winter months, the pricing in my area runs from 33 to 66 cents a pound. Store them in a dark, cool place but not near potatoes. If you've bought too many onions, don't let them go bad. Slice or dice them, saute and portion into ziplocs labeled “onions” and freeze. You’ve just saved yourself a step for next time you make a dish. If you use half an onion, consider if you can sauté the rest and put it in a Ziploc in the freezer. If not store in the door where you'll see it when you're cooking next. Half an onion (at about 50 cents a pound) is 8 cents.
- **Potatoes:** Potatoes are dirt cheap - look for a great sales price of \$1.99 for 10 pounds in the fall and winter; regular sales price is \$1.99 for five pounds in my area. Store in a cool dry area, not near your onions - I like to store in a loosely closed paper bag. Don't know what to do with a large bag? Make what recipes you'd like to, then make [Freezer Twice Baked Potatoes](#) with the rest. I often pick out the smaller, misshaped potatoes for mashing and save the more regular sized ones for baking or other recipes. Cost for this recipe, at 26 cents a pound [St. Patrick's Day special](#): 26 cents.
- **Green Onion:** I try to buy on sale for about 50 cents a bunch (usually during Holidays) then put the white tips in a jar of water in a sunny window to regrow. Kids love taking ownership of the

project. I only need to replenish every few months. Cost is so minimal that I don't even count it.

- **Asparagus:** On sale in our area, very seldom for 99 cents a bunch, \$1.99 a bunch is a good sales price. In the spring we'll see it now and then for \$1.49 a pound. I love asparagus and try to think of ways to use it when it's in season and the prices are low. This is a vegetable I can't deal with frozen. You'll want to be aware of the size of the bunch – some stores portion it in 12 ounces and some 16 ounces. To remove tough ends, slide one out of the rubber band, and snap it, holding it at the ends – It will break in just the right place. Line that stalk up with the rest of the asparagus that is still banded, cut through them all at once. The stalks take longer to cook than the ends, so sliding a band up to keep the tips together saves you a bit of time. I don't waste the ends – they go in my morning smoothie or a stock.
- **Eggs:** Stock up on eggs when they're inexpensive, normally during Holiday weeks. Low prices in my area range from free (often with other purchases) to anywhere from 50 to 88 cents. They last for weeks in the fridge – The date on the container is a 'buy' date, and you can expect them to last a good six weeks past that date. If you pick up two or three packages when they're at their low, you'll rarely need to pay full price. Refrigerate right away and never store in the door; eggs keep best in a colder part of the refrigerator, in their own box. (Then put your partially used vegetables in the door where you'll see them and remember they need to be used ASAP – the half a bell pepper or onion, etc.) In doubt about an egg? If it floats in water, discard, just to be on the safe side.
- **Butter:** A bit of a splurge, cost and calorie wise – but for taste and health, I'd rather use real butter than trans fat laden margarine or oils. Yes – they do have trans fat, even if the label says they don't. Harvard, for instance, says unequivocally: "*The key to a healthy diet is to substitute good fats for bad fats and to avoid trans fat.*" While butter isn't a healthy fat, many feel that trans fat is worse than saturated. Buy on deep specials, often around the holidays with store coupons. I shoot for \$2.50 a pound and freeze, where it stays fine for months.

Recipe originally made in 2011 for \$5.01 - better shopping skills brought this in during March of 2014 for \$4.35. Primarily, I learned better how to take advantage of the cyclic sales discussed in my 12 Strategies. The Salmon was bought during Lent, and I rarely pay full price for eggs, the Asparagus was in season and other vegetables were bought on deep sales and stored well.