

# Discover 'alternative cuisine' in your own home

The "alternative cuisine" that's all the rage in four-star restaurants means exactly what it says. It's an alternative to foods which are high in calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium and sugar.

Unlike traditional "diet food," alternative cuisine is beautiful and bountiful — and surprisingly easy to duplicate at home.

Fish and chicken, skin removed, form the backbone of alternative cuisine. Both contain high-quality protein, but moderate to small amounts of fat and cholesterol.

To further reduce calories and fat, they're poached, broiled or baked rather than sautéed or fried. When served with a sauce, the butter and cream have been replaced by vegetable purees, broth, yogurt or skim milk.

To keep sodium in check, alternative cuisine takes full advantage of seasonings other than salt to heighten the natural flavors in food. Lemon and lime juice, citrus zest, fresh ginger, chilies, green onion, garlic, fresh and dried herbs, and spices like pepper, cinnamon, clove, cumin and coriander are just some of the seasonings which can be used alone or in combination.

IT'S ESSENTIAL that accompaniments be carefully selected since fish and chicken portions do not exceed two or three ounces. Although a generous serving of fresh vegetables is an important part of an alternative cuisine meal, rice makes the meal satisfying.

Because rice is high in complex carbohydrates, it helps prevent that "running on empty" feeling dieters often experience an hour or two after eating.

At a lean 225 calories per serving, California Seafood Supper satisfies completely, and the 25-minute, one-skillet preparation meets the needs of after-five cooks.

Rice extends both the budget and the great flavor of plump Pacific shrimp and tiny bay scallops. A trio of fresh mushrooms, green onions and tomatoes make a separate vegetable unnecessary. The vegetables, rice and seafood all simmer together in a rich basil-scented broth.

Coriander-flavored rice flecked with sliced ripe olives and bits of green onion becomes a tasty bed for colorful fish kebabs. Meaty chunks of halibut, haddock or sole marinate in lime juice, garlic, cumin and a small amount of vegetable oil. Before broiling, the fish is threaded onto skewers with thick slices of zucchini and yellow squash and squares of sweet red bell pepper. Save time by marinating the fish overnight in the refrigerator.

## CALIFORNIA SEAFOOD SUPPER

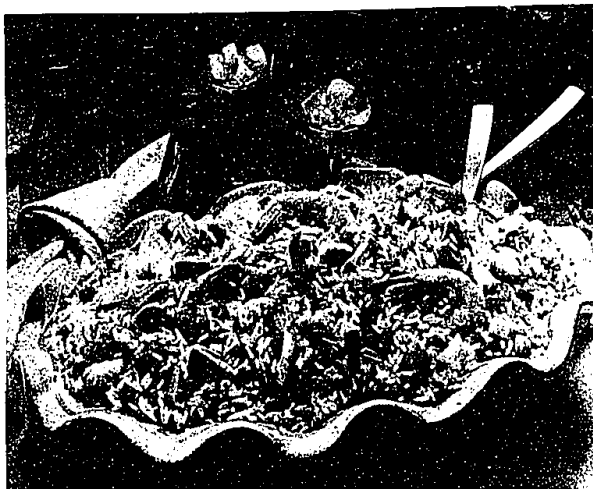
2 cups clam juice  
1/2 cup dry white wine  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 cup rice  
1 cup quartered fresh mushrooms  
1/2 lb. small bay scallops, about 1/2-inch in diameter  
1/2 lb. cooked shrimp, peeled and deveined with tails left on  
2 green onions cut into thin strips (about 1/2 cup)  
1 to 1 1/2 tsp. dried basil leaves  
1/4 tsp. white pepper  
1 medium tomato, seeded and diced  
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

Bring clam juice, wine and garlic to a boil in 12-inch skillet. Stir in rice and mushrooms. Cover lightly and simmer 20 minutes. Add scallops, shrimp, onions, basil and pepper; mix well. Remove from heat. Let stand covered until all liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomato and lemon juice. Makes 6 servings.

## CEVICHE-STYLE FISH KEBABS WITH CORIANDER RICE

1/2 cup fresh lime juice  
2 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh parsley  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
2 tsp. ground cumin  
Black pepper, to taste  
1 1/2 lb. halibut or haddock fillets about 1-inch thick, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces  
2 1/2 cups water  
2 tsp. ground coriander  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes  
1 cup rice  
2 medium zucchini or yellow squash, or a combination, sliced 1-inch thick  
1 large red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1 1/2-inch squares  
1/2 cup sliced black olives  
3 Tbsp. thinly sliced green onions

Combine lime juice, olive oil, parsley, 1 garlic clove, 1 teaspoon cumin and black pepper in shallow glass container. Add halibut; mix well. Marinate at least one hour or as long as overnight, refrigerated, stirring occasionally. About 30 minutes before serving, combine water, coriander, salt, red pepper flakes, remaining 2 garlic cloves and 1 teaspoon cumin. Bring to a boil. Stir in rice. Cover lightly and simmer 20 minutes. Meanwhile, remove halibut from marinade, reserving marinade. Thread halibut onto 6 skewers alternately with squash and pepper. Brush with marinade. Broil 3 to 4 inches from heat source 3 1/2 to 5 minutes per side or until fish flakes easily with fork. Turn once and brush liberally with marinade during cooking. Remove rice from heat. Let stand covered until all liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Stir in olives and green onion. Arrange kebabs over rice. Makes 6 servings.



California Seafood Supper, which weighs in at a lean 225 calories per serving, boasts the lightness and satisfying quality of "alternative cuisine."



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# Brighten up mashed potatoes

For more colorful potatoes, try carrots with America's favorite vegetable.

While dining at a friend's house, I questioned the orange-flecked mashed potatoes. I learned that a few carrots were boiled and mashed right along with the potatoes.

The combination is not only colorful, but tastes great.

• "Can home-grown grape leaves be used in recipes such as stuffed grape leaves?" asks Marie-Madeleine Kaplan of



Nashua, N.H. "How can I preserve them?" I went straight to one of my cooking co-

sultants who for several years lived in Greece. Diane said she enjoyed grape leaves picked right off the vine.

She suggests blanching the leaves, thoroughly drying them, stacking them flat on foil, sealing the package and stashing the leaves in the freezer until ready for use.

I'm afraid I'm a jar man myself. Diane also says the kind that comes in the jar is much better from Greece than the imported leaves from Greece.

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# Kiwi Fruit adds color, flavor

Juicy kiwifruit turn ordinary dishes into the spectacular. They add a boost of brilliant green color and tangy-sweet flavor to salads, stir-frys and desserts.

Both of the following recipes exemplify the versatility and ease of using kiwifruit. Kiwifruit Sorbet is a wonderfully refreshing treat that's simple to prepare and keep on hand.

For a low-calorie alternative to heavy desserts, try Kiwifruit Compote. It's a colorful combination of fruit, available this time of year.

To ripen kiwifruit, leave firm fruit at room temperature several days or until it yields to gently finger pressure. Placing firm fruit in a plastic bag with an apple or banana and leaving at room temperature will hasten ripening. Ripe kiwifruit should be refrigerated where it will keep for a few weeks.

**KIWIFRUIT SORBET**  
1 cup water  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/4 cup light corn syrup  
3 or 4 kiwifruit  
5 tsp. lemon juice  
1/4 tsp. grated lemon peel

Combine water, sugar and corn syrup in saucepan. Cook and stir 2 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Puree kiwifruit in food processor or blender to equal 1/2 cup puree. Add lemon juice, lemon peel and sugar mixture. Pour into shallow metal pan; freeze about 1 hour or until firm but not solid. Spoon into chilled bowl and beat with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Return to freezer; freeze about 2 hours or until firm enough to scoop. Makes about 4 servings.

**KIWIFRUIT COMPOTE**  
2 Kiwifruit, pared and sliced  
1 cup red grapes, halved and seeded if necessary  
1 red apple, cubed

MAKE "Mock Eggplant" by dipping cucumber slices into beaten egg then in fine bread crumbs, then frying. For shopping variety, try reading the Observer & Eccentric Classified Ads.

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