

Planning leads to guilt-free holiday eating

The holidays offer taste-tantalizing foods that tempt even the most strong-willed dieter. High calorie seasonal dishes served at family dinners, parties or potlucks can put a strain on anyone's waistline. Take healthful measures and practice saying "No more gravy for me, please pass the veggie!"

Planning ahead when cooking or indulging in holiday foods is the first step to holding the weight line. Prepare well balanced menus and low calorie eating strategies before the holidays begin.

If a heavy entree is served, balance it with a light dessert, such as fresh fruit, a souffle, fruit flan or poached fruits. Low calorie ingredients also should be included whenever possible.

Lower fat and calories in holiday recipes by using nonfat dry milk for sauces, drinks, breads and desserts; substitute almonds for pecans; mustard for mayonnaise; matzo, rye crisp and melba toast for snack



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crackers; imitation cream cheese for regular cream cheese. Look at the recipe and make adjustments to help trim the calories without sacrificing seasonal taste.

Lower the sugar in recipes using up to 1/4 less sugar than called for in a recipe. (The exceptions would be jellies, very delicate baked goods and meringues.) If you don't want to experiment, find recipes using the least amount of sugar. Use a little more vanilla and spice, as both give the impression of sweetness.

If you're the host Don't snack while cooking. You can consume hundreds of calories doing this. Nervous snacking is likely

to occur during a hectic holiday schedule, so beware and relax before cooking. Before you start to cook, eat a light snack, such as a small salad, to deter tasting later.

If you're doing a lot of cooking and baking, check the labels and make sure they do not contain lard, other meat fat, coconut oil, palm oil or coconut butter. Health-wise, these are not good choices.

When cooking, choose corn oil, safflower oil, sunflower seed oil, sesame seed oil, cottonseed oil or soybean oil. Always choose a margarine that lists one of the above as the first ingredient on the label. The amount of fat or oil can often be reduced by

as much as 1/4 to 1/2 in recipes for baked products. Reducing fats in recipes may require a little more liquid for a proper baked consistency.

Guests welcome nutritious munchies. For appetizers, provide raw vegetables with an herb dip using dry curd or low-fat cottage cheese instead of sour cream. Mix it in the blender. No one will know. Other healthful snacks are sliced cucumbers, fresh green beans or mushrooms marinated in a wine vinegar and dill dressing, or fresh fruit on skewers with a low-fat yogurt dip. Serve guests unsalted nuts and popcorn as snacks before dinner.

Holiday meals can remain flavorful without butter, oil, cream, heavy sauces or salt. Avoid using cream soups and sauces on vegetables or meats. Serve simple and light foods. Your guests will appreciate it, too.

Try using lemon juice to sharpen the flavor of vegetables, salads, soup, poultry and fish. Mustard adds a piquant flavor to salad dressings

and meat sauces, while wine vinegar with herbs adds a zesty taste. Poultry and fish dishes served with a lightly seasoned tomato sauce are high in protein yet low in calories.

For dessert, choose skim milk sherbet, fruit ice, angel food cake, ice milk or little meringues instead of pie, pastry or ice cream.

If you're the guest

Try to eat light, but regular and balanced meals before and after holiday get together. If you anticipate eating out, make a special effort to eat prudently the rest of the day.

If the hectic season doesn't always allow time to make lunch, store already-made "mini meals" in the refrigerator. Have three or four plates ready with these slices or a cup of yogurt, fresh fruit and a few crackers wrapped in foil on each plate. Grab for them rather than a few pieces of chocolate, a handful of po-

tato chips or a couple of cookies. Remember, unfortunately, all calories count!

Take a low-calorie dish to a potluck get together. Spicy seafood soup made with red snapper and vegetables, hot curried fruit compote, baked apples or homemade cinnamon spiced applesauce are excellent possibilities. Another idea is to splurge and bring fresh, out-of-season fruit—Papaayas, cantaloupe and pineapple, are good alternatives to heavy holiday treats.

Be selective about foods you taste during cooking or dining out. Try for a slimmed-down season, when either as the host or the guest, favorite foods can be enjoyed without feelings of guilt.

Lois Thieleke is a home economist with the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service. Watch for her next column, "Cures for Brown Bag Boredom."

Veal roast: Begin an easy holiday tradition

Start a new tradition for holiday celebrations and special occasions—meals this year—serve a stuffed veal rib eye roast. While veal is primarily found on upscale restaurant menus, veal chops, cutlets and cubes for stew are showing up more and more family dinner menus.

When it's time to select an extra-special entree for holiday celebrations and special occasions, choose a prized veal rib eye or boneless loin roast. Look for a roast with a fine grain, velvety texture and a light pink color. It's easy to create an elegant stuffed roast using this boneless meat cut. Butterfly the roast by cutting it horizontally through the center, but not all the way through. Then lay the meat flat with the cut sides facing up and fill with your favorite stuffing or filling.

One unique stuffing mixture is made by spreading a veal mousseline on the roast over a combination of herbs. A mousseline always contains whipping cream and this particular one combines it with a veal paste. To enclose the mousseline, roll the butterflied roast jelly roll-fashion and secure with string.

Lean veal roasts are most flavorful and juicy when cooked to a medium degree of doneness. Place the butterflied, stuffed roast in a 325°F (slow) oven and cook for 22-26 minutes per pound, or until a meat thermometer registers 155°F. Remove the roast from the oven and let it stand for about 15-20 minutes in a warm place before carving. During

this time the temperature of the meat will rise about 5°F, to 160°F, or medium.

VEAL RIB EYE ROAST WITH HERBED MOUSSELINE

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 1 hour 26 minutes to 1 hour 38 minutes

2 1/2- to 3-lb. veal rib eye roast*

1/4 cup each whipping cream and wa-

ter

2 tbsp. finely chopped parsley

1 tsp. each finely chopped fresh

rosemary leaves and sage leaves

1/2 tsp. salt

2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1 tsp. oil

1/4 cup each finely chopped carrot

and zucchini

1 tsp. minced onion

2 tsp. Madeira wine

4 tsp. cornstarch

1/4 cup each beef broth and water

Trim veal rib eye roast; reserve 6 ounces lean meat trimmings. Butterfly the veal roast by cutting horizontally through the center (parallel to the surface of the meat) the length and width of the roast. Do not cut through the opposite side. Meat should lay flat. Place reserved 6 ounces meat trimmings, whipping cream and 1/4 cup water in food processor bowl fitted with steel blade and process until light and creamy; reserve. Combine parsley, rosemary, sage, salt and pepper; sprinkle evenly over cut side of veal. Spread re-

served veal mousseline over herbs to within 1/2-inch of edges. Stuffing with long side, roll roast jelly roll fashion to enclose mousseline. Tie roast securing with string at 1 inch intervals. Place roast, seam side down, on rack in an open roasting pan. Insert meat thermometer so bulb is centered in the thickest part of veal but not in mousseline. Do not add water. Do not cover. Roast in 325°F (slow) oven to medium. Allow approximately 22-26 minutes per pound. Do not overcook. Remove roast when meat thermometer registers 155°F.

Allow roast to stand 15 minutes in a warm place before carving. Roasts continue to rise about 5° in temperature to reach 160°F for medium. Meanwhile remove drippings from roasting pan and add enough water to measure 1 cup; reserve. Heat oil in roasting pan over medium heat. Add carrot, zucchini and onion; cook and stir 8 minutes. Combine wine and cornstarch; reserve. Add reserved pan drippings, reserved cornstarch mixture, beef broth and 1/4 cup water to vegetable mixture. Increase heat to high and boil 1 minute, stirring constantly. Carve into slices and serve with vegetable sauce.

Note: A veal rib eye roast will yield three 3-ounce cooked, trimmed servings per pound.

*A boneless veal loin roast may be substituted.

Cheese makes healthy, simple party appetizers

Americans are becoming increasingly more concerned with the old adage "you are what you eat." The desire to maintain a well-balanced and palatable diet in our fast-paced society has resulted in changes ranging from the addition of salad bars to restaurants, to the growing popularity of low-calorie gourmet T.V. dinners. The way we entertain is also being challenged. The traditional caddy dish left out for guests who drop by unexpectedly is no longer the perfect solution to last minute get-togethers. Attractive, simple, and healthy items that are easily retrieved from the refrigerator or pantry can be a viable entertaining alternative.

Cheese has always been a staple member of most household menus, as well as a consistent party buffet item. The recipes shown here combine cheese with various other items found in most kitchens to create festive party ideas that can be prepared with a minimal

amount of time and fuss.

Since cheddar cheese is so compatible and versatile, it can be used to make even the simplest vegetables a culinary delight. In the first recipe shown, Vegetable Basket, the cheese is cut in half diagonally, or cubed, and placed in a wicker basket along side colorful vegetables. A dill dip is served on the side to add zest to this basic, yet elegant serving idea.

An array of thinly sliced bread, cheese, meat, and condiments are beautifully combined in the second recipe to create a European-style "sandwich-board." Party pumpnickel, party rye, and whole wheat bread rounds are topped with thinly sliced meat and cheese and appropriately garnished.

The key to successful entertaining is resourcefulness. With a little imagination and know-how, any number of left-overs and odds and ends can be displayed in an imaginative manner such as the two recipes illustrated here.

VEGETABLE BASKET

Sharp natural cheddar cheese, cut in 1/2-inch cubes
Sharp natural cheddar cheese, sliced, cut in half diagonally
Pea pods
Green beans
Baby carrots
Asparagus spears
Broccoli flowerets
Summer squash slices
Cherry tomatoes

Arrange ingredients in decorative basket. Serve with dill dip, if desired.

SANDWICH-BORD

Party pumpnickel bread slices
Horseshard sauce
Roast beef slices
Extra sharp natural cheddar cheese, sliced

For each appetizer, spread bread slice with horseshard sauce. Cover with meat and cheese. Top with cherry tomato wedges and parsley, if desired.

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