

# Here's the way to easy dinner

AP — Families are rediscovering the pleasure of sharing a home-cooked meal at the end of a busy day. These tips will help you streamline dinner preparation.

## SHOP AND STOCK

• Post your grocery list on the refrigerator. When you notice a staple running low or use the last of an item, add it to the list. Encourage your family to do this also.

• Take advantage of quick-fix items such as cooked meats, chopped vegetables and deli salads at your grocery store.

• Keep supplied with staples such as eggs, fruits, spices and vegetables. It is easier to run to the cupboard or refrigerator than to the store.

• Buy ingredients as near to the form your recipe calls for as possible. For instance, choose canned boneless skinless pink salmon instead of regular canned salmon. Other ready-to-use ingredients: boneless chicken breasts, frozen cubed cooked chicken, shredded cheese.

As you unpack groceries, clean greens and chop vegetables. Store in plastic bags in the refrigerator. You can even make up your favorite greens combination for tossed salad.

## SUPPER HELPERS

• Make meals a family affair. The spouse who gets home first can start dinner. Organize your kitchen so you can share cooking tasks.

• Children can set the table, pour milk, tear lettuce for the salad or clean vegetables while you cook. This is a good chance to talk over their day, too.

## FAST-COOKING TIPS

• Before you leave in the morning, slice or chop vegetables, meat,

cheese or other dinner ingredients and store them in the refrigerator.

• Get a head start on main-dish or fruit salads by storing cans of meats, vegetables and fruits in your refrigerator. That way they're already chilled when you're ready to use them.

• Chill salads and desserts in a hurry by placing them in the freezer for 20 minutes.

• Make turning on the oven or broiler your first cooking step so the appliance will be preheated when you need it.

• Overlap preparation steps. While waiting for water to boil or meat to brown, start chopping vegetables, opening cans, or mixing a filling.

• For fast boiling water, start with water hot from the tap. Bring less than 3 cups of water to a boil in your microwave oven. For larger amounts, the range top is faster.

• Measure milk, oil, or other liquids in a large glass measuring cup. Then, rather than using a mixing bowl, add the other ingredients to the liquid in the measuring cup and stir together.

• To shorten the time it takes to bake potatoes, cut them in half lengthwise and place, cut sides down, on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake in a 425-degree oven about 35 minutes or until done.

## STREAMLINE CLEANUP

• Put away ingredients in containers as you go to cut cleanup time.

• Select a baking dish that will double as a serving dish.

• Skip the serving bowls and platters and serve dinner plates in the kitchen.

# Garnishes add that special touch

Garnishes are to food what accessories are to a simple dress.

They should accent the color or line, attract attention to a special feature or even detract from a flaw, but always harmonize.

A colorful food garnish or a clothing accessory can make the difference between an everyday or a festive look.

Garnish means "embellishment or ornament, a savory or decorative condiment," according to Webster's dictionary.

A food garnish should be natural and simple, using a light touch. Garnishes are meant to enhance the appearance, not overwhelm it.

Most foods become more appealing to the eye and the appetite if a skillfully prepared garnish is applied. Choose garnishes for color contrast and arrange them imaginatively.

**GARNISH FEATURED** dishes. A whole baked ham would be a good example.

Score the fatty surface with squares, diamonds, triangles or other interesting shapes. Whole olives, sliced or whole candied cherries, pieces of bright-colored candy, fancy-shaped orange peel, pieces of vegetable or fruit can be applied on the ham.

Garnish a serving platter with a

pleasing accompaniment such as baked or spiced apples, poached apple rings or wedges, or whole buttered onions.

The color should be bright, attractive and harmonious. Sprigs of fresh green parsley can provide a color accent and fill in empty gaps on the platter. A garnish should also be easy to remove when the food is being served.

**MANY GARNISHES** double as relishes, too. Radishes, roses, slices of mushrooms, jade trees from green onion stems, rings of green pepper or onions and the slices of cucumbers remind us all of a fresh relish tray.

Cut a cucumber lengthwise and remove seeds. Hollow out inside to hold olives and pickles. Garnishes are not used solely as an ornament but are also edible.

Slicing the old standby, carrots, on the top of salads or casseroles adds interest to the dish.

**GARNISH MOLDED** salads with a crisp bed of salad greens. Lucy, curly endive, pale romaine, or the simple form of watercress under an ordinary gelatin salad certainly gives it new sparkle.

A few mint leaves give molded fruit salads a nice twist. Small bunches of sugared or frozen grapes



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can enhance the eye appeal of plain gelatin.

Sometimes the garnish belongs on top of the food rather than on the rim or side of the dish.

A pat of butter or sprinkle of paprika on mounded mashed potatoes or slices of hard-cooked eggs may decorate the top of potato salad.

Prepackaged foods such as potato chips, onion rings, bread crumbs and crumbled crackers can all act as a garnish for casseroles or vegetable side dishes.

Hot dogs or sausage slices will add a little color or a different shape for a topping.

Add bacon curls as a garnish for an egg dish, casseroles or quiches. To make bacon curls, roll each slice of bacon around the tines of a fork just before the bacon is thoroughly cooked. Stand on end to crisp. Drain well and serve.

**TOASTED NUTS**, candied fruits, shaved chocolate or chocolate curls

add interest to desserts.

Coconut can be spread thinly on a baking sheet and heated some 10 minutes at 325 degrees for the brown, toasted effect.

Toast seeds such as sesame, sunflower, pumpkin or squash for an unusual topping. Herbs and spices add color contrast to fruits, cold drinks or vegetables. Mint leaves or cinnamon sticks make a drink even more sparkly.

**LEMON** and orange slices, wedges and wheels are the most common garnish behind lettuce leaves and parsley. These fruit slices can add a lot of interest to dull food. Star fruit, for example, can be used to garnish meats, salads and punch bowls.

Good cooks rely on garnishes to help make food inviting. Keep garnishes simple, yet elegant. Make sure the food tastes as good as it looks. Simple dishes can become a feast for the eyes as well as good for you by adding just a few garnishes.

## Buckwheat is popular once again

AP — Buckwheat, a pioneer staple, is making a comeback as the value of grains is recognized as a source of complex carbohydrates, vitamins and fiber.

Unroasted buckwheat kernels, called groats, are sold whole or ground as grits and flour. The roasted kernels are called kasha and are sold whole or ground. Use nutty-flavored kasha as you would rice in side dishes or oatmeal in cereal and baked goods. Look for kasha with the cooked cereals in the supermarket

or in health food stores.

**APPLE-BUCKWHEAT MUFFINS**  
1 cup apple cider or juice  
1 cup finely ground uncooked kasha  
1 egg  
1/2 cup cooking oil  
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger  
1 cup finely chopped peeled apple

In a mixing bowl pour cider over kasha; let stand 5 minutes. Add egg and oil; mix well. Stir together flour, brown sugar, baking powder, soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger. Add to kasha mixture, stirring just until moistened. Fold in apple. Fill greased or paper-bake-cup-lined muffin cups 3/4 full. Bake in a 400-degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve warm. Makes 12 to 15.

Nutrition information per serving: 168 cal., 3 g pro., 27 g carbo., 5 g fat, 23 mg chol., 193 mg sodium.

## Health tips available

AP — Where can you get answers to your nutrition questions? Here are some good sources for reliable, free nutrition information.

### GENERAL NUTRITION

• For sound advice on a healthier lifestyle, request the "Dietary Guidelines" for Americans. Also ask for the free list of other nutrition publications. Write: USDA, Human Nutrition Information Service, 6505 Belcrest Road, Federal Building No. 1, Room 325-A, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

• The American Dietetic Association offers "The Good Nutrition Reading List," which lists ADAP-recommended publications. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Good Nutrition Reading List, Box BHO, American Dietetic Association, 208 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1100, Chicago, Ill. 60604-1003.

• For a list of free and low-cost federal publications on food and health, the "Consumer Information Catalog" is your best bet. It offers booklets and fact sheets on topics ranging from food labeling to dietary sodium. Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.

• Want the facts on sensible weight-loss programs? The Nutrition Information Service at the University of Alabama-Birmingham has fact sheets on these and other topics. Nutrition Information Service, 234 Webb Building, Birmingham, Ala. 35294.

### CANCER

• Contact the Cancer Information Service and ask for the pamphlet, "Diet, Nutrition and Cancer Prevention: The Good News." Call 1-800-4-CANCER (in Washington, D.C., 202-636-5700).

### CHILDREN

• The Beech-Nut Nutrition Hotline handles calls about infant and childhood nutrition. Call 1-800-523-6833.

### DIABETES

• If someone in your family has diabetes, call the American Diabetes Association and request a free, one-year subscription to "Diabetes 88," a quarterly newsletter filled with research updates and tips for diabetics and their families. The association also offers a reading list of publications on diabetes. Call 1-800-232-3472.

### HEART DISEASE

• For hints on managing your fat intake, read the pamphlet, "The American Heart Association Diet." Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The American Heart Association, Box BHO, National Center, 7330 Greenville Ave., Dallas, Texas 75231.

• The National Cholesterol Education Program of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute offers "Eat's Your Ally," a 96-page booklet of fat facts, low-fat recipes and eating tips. Ask for a publication list. National Cholesterol Education Program, NHLBI-MHL, C-200, Bethesda, Md. 20892.

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