

Toss up pasta with seafood quick

October is the perfect autumn month. It eases us from summer into winter with its cooler weather, football games and falling leaves. And, surprisingly, perhaps the greatest variety of fish and shellfish (350 species) are commercially available throughout the country during October when National Seafood Month is celebrated.

If prepared with little or no added fats, seafood is virtually guilt-free. It is low in calories, yet contains a variety of vitamins and minerals. And, it is one of the most digestible all foods, making it perfect for very young people and elderly people.

When you're really pressed for time, try "Fish-In-Flash" rubs and sauces. What follows is the basic recipe which always serves as the base for variations. All you need to do is add seafood, pasta and seasonings.

SAVORY ONION SAUCE BASE

2-3 tablespoons olive oil
1½ cups finely chopped onion
2 tablespoons minced garlic
½ to 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ cup fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon minced lemon zest

1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper

To prepare sauce base, heat oil in 12-inch heavy skillet on medium-low heat until hot. Add onion, garlic and cayenne; cook uncovered until onion is tender, stirring, 8-10 minutes. Add lemon juice, brown sugar, zest salt and pepper; heat 1 minute.

INGREDIENTS ADDED TO SAVORY ONION SAUCE

¾ pound cooked spaghetti, linguine, penne, cuty pasta

to or curly noodles
1 to 1½ pounds cooked seafood

½ cup minced fresh parsley

While preparing the base, bring a large pot of water to a boil; salt to taste. Cook pasta until tender, 8-10 minutes.

Drain pasta and place in large, warm serving bowl. Add onion sauce base and toss to coat. Taste and adjust seasonings. Sprinkle bite-sized chunks of cooked and warmed seafood over pasta with parsley and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Simple seafood: Scallops with Pasta and Spinach is destined to become a family favorite.



Scallops with Linguine and Spinach — About 1 minute before pasta is cooked, add 5 cups cleaned, shredded, loosely packed spinach or 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed.

To Savory Onion Sauce Base add: 1 cup sliced red pepper and cook until tender, 10-15 minutes. Toss with scallops and pasta. Omit parsley and sprinkle scallops and linguine with ½ cup coarsely chopped feta cheese. Serves 4.

Recipes from National Fisheries Institute, Inc.

Fall vegetables make versatile dish

AP — Here's a simple recipe that makes a side dish for one meal and the base of a main dish for another — all from one preparation. Here's how it works:

First, onion, green bell pepper, garlic and celery are sautéed just until crisp-tender. Next, a can of stewed tomatoes and some seasonings are stirred in and cooked until hot. Use half the mixture for a crunchy vegetable side dish. Refrigerate the other half and use it as the base for Italian Sausage and Celery Skillet the following night.

ITALIAN SAUSAGE AND CELERY SKILLET

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 pound Italian sausage, cut into ½-inch thick slices
8-ounce can tomato sauce
3 cups prepared Simmered Celery and Tomatoes (recipe below)

In a large skillet, heat oil until hot. Add sausage; cook until sausage is browned, 4 to 5 minutes; drain excess fat. Stir in tomato sauce and prepared celery-tomato mixture. Cook until hot, about 3 minutes. Serve over hot cooked pasta, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, if desired. Makes 4 servings.

SIMMERED CELERY AND TOMATOES

1 large bunch celery
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
½ cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped sweet green bell pepper
1 teaspoon crushed garlic
1½-ounce can chunky-style stewed tomatoes
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

Trim end from celery; reserve for another use, such as soups and stews. Separate celery into ribs. Remove leaves from celery. Slice ribs into 1½-inch diagonal pieces (makes about 6 cups); set aside.

In a large skillet, heat oil until hot. Add onion, green pepper and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally until vegetables are crisp-tender, 4 to 5 minutes.

Add reserved celery; cook, stirring occasionally until celery is almost crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt and black pepper; cook until hot, about 2 minutes. Makes 6 cups. Use 3 cups as a side dish for 4 servings. Use remaining 3 cups for Italian Sausage and Celery Skillet.

Recipe from American Celery Council.

Eating out dos and don'ts help you stay trim



LOIS THIELEKE

When munching foods on the move or impulse eating, it's very hard to keep track of what you actually ate.

Pastries, ice cream, hamburgers, luncheon meats, high fat cheeses, fried breaded foods are just a few foods that we seem to grab for a quick snack or lunch. First rule is to allow time for yourself to eat whether at home, at the office or in a restaurant. Eating out does not have to mean empty calories.

A buffet or all you can eat restaurant can bring out the worst in most of us. Don't try to be a martyr; you do not have to taste everything! If you know you are going to a buffet, don't skip the

previous meal. Facing all those foods on an empty stomach can be disastrous. Circle the buffet table before picking up a plate and mentally note what you want to eat before getting in line.

Always dish up small portions of the foods you want to try, because of the variety it may surprise you how little it takes to satisfy hunger. Best advice for a buffet is to put some distance between you and the food.

Stand down once your plate is full. Standing near the food table can result in continuous nibbling. When your plate is empty, get rid of it or put your napkin on it so you won't continue to eat as the conversation lingers. Don't go back for seconds at buffets or you will overeat.

At a Mexican restaurant, order corn tortillas instead of flour tortillas, the flour kind often contain

lard. Watch out for the extra fat in deep fried tortillas used for tacos, taco salads or chips, ask if they are fried or baked. Ask for salsa instead of high fat guacamole and don't fill up on the chips.

Enjoy chicken or bean burritos, chicken fajitas, rice, chicken taco or tostitos, with lots of shredded lettuce and tomatoes. Mexican cuisine offers many dishes that are high in complex carbohydrates and good for you.

Chinese food

Chinese cooking relies on vegetables, rice and noodles but learn to read menus carefully being observant of cooking methods. Avoid deep fried, breaded and heavy sauces like a lobster sauce. Enjoy stir-fried vegetables, fish or chicken and all the vegetable dishes. The mushrooms, broccoli,

water chestnuts, bamboo shoots, bok choy, squash, snow peas and lotus root are all good choices.

The local Italian restaurant can help keep you on track, but avoid pasta dishes loaded with fatty cheeses or meats. Choose pasta with a marinara (tomato) sauce, clam sauce or a little olive oil. Go easy on meatballs, Fettucini Alfredo, lasagna and especially the dessert cream pastries and cannoli. Italian food is a cool, low calorie delightful dessert that will not add inches to your waist line.

Order pizza with extra vegetable toppings such as green pepper and tomatoes instead of fatty

toppings of pepperoni and sausage.

Southern and Cajun style dining are gaining in popularity, and have many good dishes available that have not been tried. Enjoy seafood gumbo, grilled seafood, rice and pinto beans, and corn bread. Even blackened fish is usually cooked with less oil than traditional Southern fried food. Go easy eating corn cakes, hush puppies, corn or fish chowder, gravy and mudpies and other rich Southern desserts.

Fast food

If you are hungry for fast foods,

make simple choices. Skip fatty dressings, mayonnaise, cheese and bacon hamburgers, request lettuce and tomato toppings, mustard and ketchup. A simple hamburger with regular fries has about 40 percent of calories from fat while a superburger and large fries has about 60 percent.

Other foods with more than 50 percent calories from fat are spareribs, corned beef, hot dogs, sausages, and eggs. Olives, herring, New England Clam Chowder, chocolate and buttery crackers are also just a few of the foods on the "fat" list.

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