

Creamy macaroni and cheese low in fat

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The chill of late January can make anyone yearn for the rich taste of comfort food. Nostalgia for grandma's meatloaf or old-fashioned macaroni and cheese can also bring back a desire for foods that are simple, filling and delicious. With a few substitutions and flavor enhancers, you can create modern versions of these traditional dishes that keep all of the wonderful taste without all of the fat, salt and calories.

Although meatloaf seems an improbably part of low-fat fare, it can be made much leaner by using a low-fat cut of beef such as ground sirloin instead of ground chuck.

Decrease fat even further and add fiber by substituting a whole grain for some of the meat. Combine 1 pound lean ground beef with 1/3 cup unprocessed wheat bran and 1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce, 1 egg, 1 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, a tablespoon of chopped onion and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Form the mix-

ture into an oval and place it in a lightly greased loaf pan. Make a long, narrow indentation along the top of the loaf and spread with a mixture made from 5 tablespoons applesauce, 1 1/2 teaspoons brown sugar, and 2 tablespoons of prepared mustard. Bake for an hour at 350 degrees F.

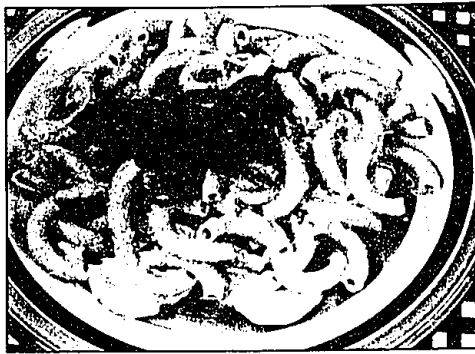
If grandma's apple crisp was always your favorite treat, try this version with a scoop of low-fat vanilla yogurt. Combine 1/3 cup brown sugar, 2 tablespoons of cornstarch, 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon and 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg. Place 3 pounds peeled, cored and sliced Granny Smith apples in a 2-quart shallow baking dish lightly greased with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with the sugar mixture, tossing to coat evenly. Cover the dish with foil and bake at 350 degrees F. for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, combine 3 tablespoons of flour, 3 tablespoons rolled oats and 1 1/2 tablespoons brown sugar in a small bowl. Melt a tablespoon of margarine into the dry mixture with a fork. Remove

the baking dish from oven, sprinkle with the crumb mixture and bake uncovered for another 40 minutes.

Macaroni and Cheese doesn't have to be high in fat or come out of a box. Make this homemade low-fat version that boasts a creamy richness and the fresh flavor of basil and tomatoes.

MACARONI AND CHEESE

- 1 3/4 cups elbow macaroni, uncooked
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 2 tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1 1/4 cups skim milk
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1 1/2 cups shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 3-4 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 teaspoon basil



Cook the pasta according to directions, omitting salt and fat. Drain and set aside.

Melt the margarine in a saucepan over medium heat; add flour, and cook on low for 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in dry mustard and

the next three ingredients. Add reduced-fat cheddar cheese and stir until melted. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top and garnish with cherry tomatoes and basil. Serve immediately.

Each of the six 3/4 cup serv-

Comfort food: Use skim milk and reduced-fat cheddar cheese to cut the fat in Macaroni and Cheese.

ings contains about 253 calories and 8.5 grams of fat.

Recipe from the American Institute for Cancer Research. Melanie Polk is Director of Nutrition Education for the American Institute for Cancer Research.

Hearty meatless dishes sure to please everyone

See related story on Taste front.

RUBY RED PEPPER STEW

- 1/2 cup dry lentils
- 1/2 cup navy pea beans
- 1 1/2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 6 medium red bell peppers, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup chopped domestic mushrooms
- 2 teaspoons basil
- 1 teaspoon mayonnaise
- 1/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (or to taste)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 to 3 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 cup dry red wine

- 2 Tablespoons Marsala wine
- 1/4 cup tomato paste

Cover the lentils and beans in cold water and soak for 4 hours or more. Drain.

Saute onions in oil until golden, add peppers and mushrooms and saute 5 minutes more. Add spices and saute for 1-2 minutes, then add the water, wine, beans and lentils.

Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer, covered, for about 1 1/2 hours. Mix in tomato paste and cook several minutes more. If stew seems thick, add water. Serves 6.

Recipe from HDS Services, Farmington Hills.

Nutrition per serving: Calories, 114; Protein 4.22 g, 188.75 mg.

Sodium, 15.18 g Carbohydrates,

Percent calories from fat 24.47.

POTATO KUGEL

- 2 medium onions, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and minced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 pounds potatoes, peeled and coarsely grated
- 1 small carrot, peeled and coarsely grated
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2 eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Saute the onions and garlic in the butter until golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Grease a 2 1/2-quart

gratin dish or shallow baking dish.

Place the grated potatoes in a dish towel and squeeze as much moisture from them as possible. Turn them into a large bowl and mix with the cooked onions, the carrot, milk, lightly beaten egg yolks, salt and pepper.

Beat the egg whites until they form soft peaks and fold into the potato mixture. Spread the potatoes in the prepared dish. Bake for 75 minutes, until the top is crispy and the inside creamy. Serve hot. Serves 8.

Recipe from "The Vegetarian Hearth: Recipes and Reflections for the Cold Season," by Dara Goldstein, HarperCollins Publishers, copyright 1996, \$26.

TURKISH LENTIL SOUP

- 1/4 cup dried chickpeas
- 1/3 cup bulgur
- 1/2 cup (heaping) green lentils
- 6 cups water
- 1 medium onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cayenne
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground coriander seed

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/2 teaspoon dried mint

Soak the chickpeas in water to cover overnight.

The next day, drain the chickpeas and place them in a stockpot along with the bulgur, lentils and water. Bring to a boil, then simmer the soup, partially covered, for 45 minutes.

Stir in the onion, 1 teaspoon of the cayenne, and the salt. Cook 15 minutes longer. Add the coriander and simmer for 5 more minutes.

Melt the butter and add it to the remaining 1/2 teaspoon cayenne and the dried mint. Pour the soup into a tureen and pour the butter mixture on top. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Recipe from "The Vegetarian Hearth: Recipes and Reflections for the Cold Season," by Dara Goldstein, HarperCollins Publishers, copyright 1996, \$26.

MEDITERRANEAN ORANGE SALAD

- 1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into thin strips
- 1/4 cup olive oil

- 4 large navel oranges
- 1/2 small red onion, peeled and sliced paper-thin
- 1/2 cup Nicoise olives
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons cherry vinegar

In a small skillet saute the red bell pepper strips in the olive oil for 10 minutes, until softened.

Meanwhile, peel the oranges and remove the white pith. Cut them into thin rounds, discarding any seeds, and arrange in overlapping circles on a serving plate. Scatter the onion slices over the oranges.

Remove the peppers from the oil with a slotted spoon, reserving the oil. Stir the peppers over the oranges and onions. Scatter the olives on top.

In a mortar with a pestle pound the garlic with the salt to make a paste. Mix this paste into the oil remaining in the pan and add the vinegar, stirring to mix well.

Pour the dressing over the oranges and leave the salad to sit for 1 hour at room temperature before serving. Serves 4 to 6.

Recipe from "The Vegetarian Hearth: Recipes and Reflections for the Cold Season," by Dara Goldstein, HarperCollins Publishers, copyright 1996, \$26.

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