

Satisfy snack cravings with dressed up veggies, fruits

If you're finding it difficult to eat the recommended five daily servings of fruits and vegetables, then you might try including them at snack time. It's well worth the effort, since the American Institute for Cancer Research tells us that five servings of fruits and vegetables each day could reduce our cancer risk by as much as 20 percent. But can these nutritious foods really satisfy our snack cravings? The secret is to keep wholesome treats on hand for when the munchies hit, and make sure you can meet both the sweet and salty cravings that

snacks often have. Snacks have developed a bad reputation because most tend to be high in fats or sugar and low in nutrients. It's time to think of snack time as an opportunity to consume foods that you enjoy and that are good for you, as well.

Granola ambrosia, for example, can almost be addictive. Combine orange sections, apple slices (leave the peel on for extra fiber), banana slices, blackberries and seedless green grapes in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix low-fat yogurt with a little vanilla and honey. Then add the yogurt to the fruit and gently mix with low-fat or fat-free granola and serve at once.

GREEN BEANS WITH FRESH TOMATO SAUCE

1 pound firm, ripe red tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
2 pounds fresh green beans, trimmed
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 cup fresh basil leaves, cut into strips
4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

Rinse tomatoes in cold water and drop them into a pot of boiling water. When water returns to a boil, cook for about 1 minute, then drain and allow to cool. When cool enough to handle,

peel, remove seeds, and cut into large pieces.

In a large sauté pan with a lid, warm olive oil over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté until golden. Add tomatoes, turn up heat and cook for 5 to 6 minutes. Add green beans, reduce heat to medium, sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste and cover with lid. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the green beans are tender but firm. If too watery, remove lid and raise to a high heat and cook an additional 5 minutes.

Remove from pan and toss with basil. Sprinkle with feta cheese and serve.

Nutrition information: Each of the eight servings contains 117 calories and 7 grams of fat.



Super snack: Green beans with fresh tomato sauce is a delicious way to enjoy summer's fresh green beans as a snack or a side dish.

If you're a nachos fan, use baked corn chips and top them with a low-fat bean spread, onions, tomatoes and taco sauce with a dab of low-fat sour cream. Or, make them with roasted vegetables for a tasty variation.

Perhaps you're dreaming of a scrumptious banana split. Start by processing two bananas, a handful of strawberries, a cup of nonfat vanilla yogurt, and malt

powder in a blender or food processor until smooth. In a small bowl, mix crunchy grain cereal and minced peanuts. Then dip quartered bananas into the sauce and then into the cereal topping, and enjoy.

For a salty, crunchy treat, try green bean crunch, made by simmering green beans, cauliflower florets, chopped onion, a garlic clove and some lemon juice in

water until tender-crisp. Drain and discard the garlic, then marinate in the refrigerator for at least an hour in a mixture of water and olive oil. Before serving, remove the vegetables from

the marinade and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds.

Here's another way to enjoy summer's fresh green beans as an afternoon snack or a side dish with dinner.

Information and recipe from the American Institute for Cancer Research. Visit them on the Web www.aicr.org

Excite your palate with texture, flavor contrasts

See related 2 Unique column on Taste front. Chef Kelli L. Lewton is owner of 2 Unique Caterers and Event Planners in Bloomfield Hills. A graduate of Schoolcraft College's Culinary Arts program, Kelli is a part-time instructor at the college. Look for her column in Taste on the second Sunday of the month.

EGGPLANT MARMALADE

Yield 3-4 cups
2 Eggplant
3 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon Extra virgin olive oil

3 cloves garlic
3/4 cup fine diced tomatoes
Salt and pepper to taste
Pierce eggplant skins randomly with a knife
Bake in pre-heated 350°F oven for 45 to 60 minutes.

Let cool, peel skin, scoop out meat and place in food processor. In food processor add garlic and olive oil mix thoroughly.

Remove from processor place in bowl and add diced tomatoes, basil and adjust seasoning. Serve as an accompaniment to

grilled chicken, salmon or beef. Also makes a great dipping sauce for breads and crackers.

MANGO VINAIGRETTE

1/4 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons white vinegar
1 cup vegetable oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Pinch of dry ginger
1/2 mango, pureed

Mix vinegar, orange juice, mango puree. Whisk in vegetable oil. Season to taste. Mix with your favorite bowl of greens or drizzle on your next fish steaks.

BLUEBERRY ORANGE PEKOE CAKE

2 cups all purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
2 eggs
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup melted butter
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup of steeped Orange Pekoe Tea
1 teaspoon orange juice concentrate

2 cups blueberries

Crumb topping
1/2 cup sugar
1/3 cup all purpose flour
1/4 cup butter (softened)
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a separate bowl, mix crumb topping ingredients until crumbly. Glaze: 1/2 cup powdered sugar, 1/4 teaspoon vanilla, 1-2 teaspoons hot water or milk. To make glaze: Combine ingre-

dients in a separate bowl.

To make cake: Grease a 9-by-9-by-2-inch pan. Preheat oven to 375°F.

Blend flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Mix milk, egg, tea and orange juice concentrate for 30 seconds.

Gently fold in blueberries. Bake 35-45 minutes.

Top cake with crumb topping and drizzle with glaze. Recipes compliments of Kelli Lewton, 2 Unique.

Share your chili recipes

The Observer will publish a special section about the Plymouth Chili Cookoff Sept. 30, and we'd like to include your favorite chili recipes.

Send your recipes to Special Projects Editor Ralph R. Echlin, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or e-mail to rechlin@ec.homecomm.net.

We will publish as many as we

have room for.

Cooks for all over the Midwest are expected to cook in two chili cookoffs to be held in downtown Plymouth on Saturday, Sept. 11 and Sunday, Oct. 3.

The Sept. 11 event will also include a salsa competition. For more information, call Annette Horn, (734) 455-8838.

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