



EATING LIFE

THOMAS BLOSSOM





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EATING HEALTHY

Eating a healthy diet is not about strict limitations, staying unrealistically thin, or depriving yourself of the foods you love. Rather, it’s about feeling great, having more energy, improving your health, and boosting your mood.

Healthy eating doesn’t have to be overly complicated. If you feel overwhelmed by all the conflicting nutrition and diet advice out there, you’re not alone. It seems that for every expert who tells you a certain food is good for you, you’ll find another saying exactly the opposite. The truth is that while some specific foods or nutrients have been shown to have a beneficial effect on mood, it’s your overall dietary pattern that is most important. The cornerstone of a healthy diet should be to replace processed food with real food whenever possible. Eating food that is as close as possible to the way nature made it can make a huge difference to the way you think, look, and feel.

While some extreme diets may suggest otherwise, we all need a balance of protein, fat, carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals in our diets to sustain a healthy body. You don’t need to eliminate certain categories of food from your diet, but rather select the healthiest options from each category.



TOTAL

45 Min

SERVINGS

6 People

EXPERT TIPS

We've replaced ingredients with great-tasting alternatives to create better-for-you recipes that are just as yummy as the originals.

Strongly flavored Cheddar cheese, Dijon mustard and cayenne pepper bump up the flavor of this lower-fat version of macaroni and cheese.

SKINNY MACARONI AND CHEESE



- 2 cups uncooked regular or whole wheat elbow with macaroni (8 oz)
- 2 cups fat-free (skim) milk
- 3 Tablespoons All-Purpose Flour
- 1 teaspoon dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne)
- 2 cups shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese (8 oz)

1. In 3-quart saucepan, cook and drain macaroni as directed on package. Return to saucepan; cover to keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, heat oven to 350°F. Spray 8-inch square (2-quart) glass baking dish with cooking spray. In 2-quart saucepan, stir milk, flour, mustard, salt, black pepper and red pepper with wire whisk until smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils and thickens. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese until melted.
3. Add cheese sauce to cooked macaroni; mix well. Spoon into baking dish.
4. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until edges are bubbly.

TOTAL

2 Hour, 5 Min

SERVINGS

6 People

EXPERT TIPS

Next time, try making these meatballs smaller and serve them as appetizers; use the sauce for dipping.

For food safety, ground beef needs to reach an internal temperature of 160°F.

CHEESE-STUFFED MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI



- 4 sticks (1 oz each) mozzarella string cheese, cut into 18 (¾-inch) cubes
- ½ cup Italian style bread crumbs
- 1 jar (48 oz) tomato pasta sauce (any variety)
- 1 ½ lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1 egg
- 12 oz uncooked spaghetti
- ⅔ cup shredded fresh Parmesan cheese

1. Place cheese cubes in small resealable freezer plastic bag; seal bag and freeze at least 1 hour.
2. Heat oven to 375°F. Line 15x10x1-inch pan with foil; spray foil with cooking spray. In large bowl, mix bread crumbs and 3 tablespoons of the pasta sauce. Stir in beef, onion, and egg. Shape mixture into 18 (2-inch) balls. Press 1 cheese cube into center of each ball, sealing it inside. Gently place in pan. Bake 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, pour remaining pasta sauce into 5-quart Dutch oven. Cover; heat to simmering over medium heat, stirring frequently. Gently stir in meatballs; reduce heat to low. Cover; simmer about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until meatballs are thoroughly cooked and no longer pink in center.
4. Meanwhile, cook and drain spaghetti as directed on package; keep warm.
5. Serve meatballs and sauce over spaghetti. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

TOTAL	SERVINGS
1 Hour, 35 Min	4 People

EXPERT TIPS

Boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces, can be substituted for the chicken tenders.

A sprinkling of chopped Italian (flat-leaf) parsley and additional grated Parmesan make a nice garnish to this dish.

SKILLET CHICKEN
PASTA PRIMAVERA

- 1 package (14 oz) chicken tenders, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 3 cups chicken broth (from 32-oz carton)
- 8 oz farfalle (bow-tie) pasta
- 2 medium carrots, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 2 cups trimmed 1-inch pieces asparagus (about 1 lb)
- 6 oz cream cheese, softened and cut into 1-inch cubes
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ cup frozen organic sweet peas, thawed

1. Season chicken with ¼ teaspoon of the salt and ¼ teaspoon of the pepper.
2. In 12-inch skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add chicken; cook 5 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken is browned on both sides and cooked through. Remove chicken from skillet. Add onion; cook 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add garlic and lemon peel; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until fragrant.
3. Add broth; heat to boiling. Stir in pasta, carrots, remaining ½ teaspoon salt and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper; reduce heat to medium. Cover and cook 11 minutes. Uncover; add asparagus and cooked chicken. Cover and cook 7 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until pasta is al dente and asparagus is just tender.
4. Stir in cubes of cream cheese, the Parmesan cheese and lemon juice until smooth. Add frozen peas; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until peas are heated through and sauce is creamy.
5. Remove from heat; let stand 5 minutes. Sauce will continue to thicken as it stands.



TOTAL

40 Min

SERVINGS

6 People

EXPERT TIPS

We've replaced ingredients with great-tasting alternatives to create better-for-you recipes that are just as yummy as the originals.

Strongly flavored Cheddar cheese, Dijon mustard and cayenne pepper bump up the flavor of this lower-fat version of macaroni and cheese.

CREAMY PESTO PASTA



- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 8 oz uncooked spaghetti pasta
- 4 oz (half of 8-oz package) cream cheese, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup refrigerated basil pesto (from 7-oz container)
- 1 package (8 oz) fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese

1. Heat to boiling over high heat. Add the pasta, and reduce heat to medium; simmer 12 to 14 minutes, stirring occasionally, until pasta is al dente and most of liquid is absorbed.
2. Add cream cheese and pesto, stirring frequently, until cheese is melted.
3. Gradually stir in spinach until starting to wilt. Just before serving, garnish with basil and Parmesan cheese.

TOTAL

30 Min

SERVINGS

8 People

EXPERT TIPS

Use preminced garlic that comes in small glass jars to save time.

You can use a tablespoon of dried parsley flakes for the fresh for a slightly different flavor.

CREAMY SEAFOOD PASTA



- 4 sticks (1 oz each) mozzarella string cheese, cut into 18 (¾-inch) cubes
- ½ cup Italian style bread crumbs
- 1 jar (48 oz) tomato pasta sauce (any variety)
- 1 ½ lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1 egg
- 12 oz uncooked spaghetti
- ⅔ cup shredded fresh Parmesan cheese

1. In 5- to 6-quart Dutch oven, cook linguine as directed on package. Drain well; return to Dutch oven and cover to keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, in blender, place clam chowder, milk, 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese and the garlic; blend on medium speed until mixture is smooth. Set aside.
3. In 12-inch nonstick skillet or wok, heat oil over medium-high heat until hot. Add shrimp, mushrooms and onions; cook about 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until shrimp turn pink.
4. Stir in pepper flakes and soup mixture; cook until thoroughly heated. Stir in parsley. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Pour over cooked linguine in Dutch oven; toss gently to coat. Top individual servings with Parmesan cheese.

TOTAL

20 Min

SERVINGS

4 People

EXPERT TIPS

To keep the ground beef from sticking to your hands when you are working with it, wet your hands before shaping the patties.

The burgers are perfect for year-round picnics! Just serve them with your favorite picnic side dishes--potato salad, baked beans, coleslaw and chips.

GRILLED RANCH
CHEESEBURGERS

- 1 lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ⅓ cup ranch dressing
- ¼ teaspoon coarse ground pepper
- 4 slices (about 3/4 oz each) Cheddar or American cheese
- 4 whole-grain sandwich buns, split
- 12 dill pickle slices

1. Heat closed medium-size contact grill for 5 minutes. In medium bowl, mix beef, onion, parsley, 3 tablespoons of the dressing and the pepper. Shape mixture into 4 patties, about 3/4 inch thick.
2. Place patties on grill. Close grill. Grill 4 to 6 minutes or until meat thermometer inserted in center of patties reads 160°F and patties are no longer pink in center. Top each patty with cheese slice. Let stand on grill about 3 minutes or until cheese is melted.
3. Spread remaining ranch dressing on cut sides of buns. Place cheese-topped patties and pickles in buns.



TOTAL

20 Min

SERVINGS

4 People

EXPERT TIPS

To check doneness, cut a small slit in the center of boneless cuts or in the center near the bone of bone-in cuts. Medium-rare is very pink in the center and slightly brown toward the edges. Medium is light pink in center and brown toward the edges.

GRILLED BEEF STEAKS



4 beef steaks, about ¾ inch thick (porterhouse, rib eye, sirloin or T-bone steaks) or about 1 inch thick (tenderloin steaks)

1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

1. Prepare the coals or a gas grill for direct heat. Heat to medium heat, which will take about 40 minutes for charcoal or about 10 minutes for a gas grill.
2. Cut outer edge of fat on steaks (except tenderloin steaks) diagonally at 1-inch intervals with a sharp knife. Do not cut into the meat because it will allow the juices to cook out and the beef will become dry.
3. Place the beef on the grill rack over medium heat. Cover the grill; cook 6 to 8 minutes for rib eye, 10 to 12 minutes for porterhouse and T-bone or 13 to 15 minutes for sirloin and tenderloin, turning beef once halfway through cooking, until an instant-read meat thermometer inserted in center of thickest part reads 145°F for medium-rare or 160°F for medium doneness. Sprinkle with salt and pepper

TOTAL

30 Min

SERVINGS

8 People

EXPERT TIPS

No cumin seed? Use 1 teaspoon ground cumin.

Round out these flavor-packed pork chops with corn on the cob and cooked rice tossed with black beans.

GRILLED CUBAN PORK CHOPS



CUBAN RUB

2 tablespoons grated lime peel
1 tablespoon cumin seed
1 tablespoon cracked black pepper
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
1 clove garlic, finely chopped

PORK CHOPS

4 boneless pork loin or rib chops, about 1 inch thick (about 2 pounds)
Mango slices, if desired

1. Heat coals or gas grill for direct heat. Remove excess fat from pork. In small bowl, mix all Cuban Rub ingredients; rub evenly on both sides of pork.
2. Cover and grill pork 4 to 6 inches from medium heat 8 to 10 minutes, turning frequently, until pork is no longer pink and meat thermometer inserted in center reads 160°F. Garnish with mango slices.

TOTAL

2 Hour, 55 Min

SERVINGS

6 People

EXPERT TIPS

Be sure to that the chicken is no longer pink near the bones and the juices run clear when pierced by the tip of a knife. The internal temperature should be 165°F on an instant-read thermometer.

ROTISSERIE-STYLE CHICKEN

- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 whole chicken (3 to 4 lb)

1. Spray 5-quart oval slow cooker with cooking spray.
2. In small bowl, stir together brown sugar, chili powder and salt.
3. Pat chicken dry, both inside and outside, with paper towels. Rub chicken all over with brown sugar mixture.
4. Place chicken, breast-side up, in slow cooker.
5. Cover; cook on High heat setting 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 hours or until legs move easily when lifted or twisted and thermometer inserted in thickest part of inside thigh reads at least 165°F. Remove chicken from slow cooker; let stand 10 minutes before serving.



TOTAL

40 Min

SERVINGS

20 People

EXPERT TIPS

Soak wooden or bamboo skewers in water for 30 minutes to keep them from burning on the grill.

Arrange the kabobs on a large platter decorated with sprigs of cilantro, green onion fans or fresh lemon grass.

SPICY GRILLED SHRIMP



60 uncooked peeled deveined medium shrimp (about 2 pounds), thawed if frozen

¼ cup olive or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon red pepper sauce

COCONUT-CURRY SAUCE

1 cup canned coconut milk (not cream of coconut)

2 teaspoons curry powder

2 teaspoons cornstarch

1 teaspoon honey

¼ teaspoon salt

1. Soak twenty 6-inch wooden skewers in water 30 minutes. Meanwhile, heat coals or gas grill for direct heat. Make Coconut-Curry Sauce.
2. Place shrimp in large bowl. Drizzle with oil and pepper sauce; toss to coat. Thread 3 shrimp on each skewer.
3. Cover and grill kabobs 4 to 6 inches from medium heat 4 to 6 minutes or until shrimp are pink and firm. Serve with sauce.
4. Mix all sauce ingredients in small microwavable bowl. Microwave uncovered on High about 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds, until mixture bubbles and thickens.

TOTAL

20 Min

SERVINGS

4 People

EXPERT TIPS

Serve with your favorite sides.

BEER BATTER-FRIED FISH



1/3 cup Gold Medal™ all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons seasoned salt

2 eggs

½ cup dark beer or water

1 ½ cups panko crispy bread crumbs

Peanut or corn oil for frying

1 ½ lb fish fillets (walleye, cod, whitefish or tilapia)

1. In 4-quart Dutch oven or deep fryer, heat oil (1 ½ inches) to 350°F. Cut fish into 8 serving pieces. Lightly coat fish with 3 to 4 tablespoons pancake mix.
2. In medium bowl, mix remaining ingredients except Tartar Sauce with hand beater until smooth. (If batter is too thick, stir in additional beer, 1 tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency.) Dip fish into batter, letting excess drip into bowl.
3. Fry batches of fish in oil about 4 minutes, turning once, until golden brown. Remove with slotted spoon; drain on paper towels. Serve hot with Tartar Sauce.

TOTAL

30 Min

SERVINGS

4 People

EXPERT TIPS

Sashimi-grade tuna is specially processed following Good Manufacturing Processes established by the U.S. government. If sashimi-grade tuna is not available, use regular tuna and cook to an internal temperature of 145°F.

AHI TUNA SALAD

VINAIGRETTE

- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel SAVE \$
- ½ cup fresh orange juice SAVE \$
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon honey

SALAD

- 4 sashimi-grade ahi tuna fillets (4 oz each)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 6 cups loosely packed mixed salad greens
- 24 small mandarin orange segments
- 2 tablespoons chopped green onions
- 2 teaspoons sliced almonds

1. In small bowl, beat all vinaigrette ingredients with wire whisk until well blended. Cover; refrigerate.
2. Lightly brush both sides of tuna fillets with oil; sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper. In 12-inch nonstick skillet, cook tuna over medium-high heat 1 minute on each side for rare doneness. Place on plate; refrigerate 5 to 10 minutes.
3. On cutting board, cut tuna diagonally into 1/4-inch slices.
4. On each of 4 plates, arrange 1 1/2 cups greens; top with 6 orange segments, 1 1/2 teaspoons onions and 1/2 teaspoon almonds. Arrange tuna on greens. Drizzle 3 tablespoons dressing over tuna and greens on each plate.



TOTAL

55 Min

SERVINGS

8 People

EXPERT TIPS

Buying Fish: Flesh should be shiny, firm and spring back when touched. Avoid fish with dark edges or brown and yellowish discoloration. The contents should smell fresh and mild, not fishy or like ammonia.

GRILLED SALMON
WITH HONEY-SOY
MARINADE



- 1tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 large salmon fillet (about 2 lb), cut into 8 pieces

1. In small bowl, mix all ingredients except salmon.
2. In shallow glass or plastic dish, place salmon. Pour marinade over salmon. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes but no longer than 1 hour.
3. Heat coals or gas grill. Remove salmon from marinade; reserve marinade. Place salmon, skin side down, on grill. Cover and grill over medium heat 10 to 20 minutes, brushing 2 or 3 times with marinade, until salmon flakes easily with fork. Discard any remaining marinade.

TOTAL

20 Min

SERVINGS

4 People

EXPERT TIPS

Serve with risotto, polenta or your favorite hot cooked pasta and grilled asparagus spears or steamed green beans.

Raw scallops should be stored in a leakproof bag or plastic container with a lid. Cook scallops within 2 days.

PAN SEARED
PARMESAN
SCALLOPS



- 16 large sea scallops (about 1 1/2 lb)
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Coarse ground black pepper
- Chopped fresh chives or parsley

1. Pat scallops dry with paper towels. Place cheese in shallow dish or resealable food-storage plastic bag. Coat scallops with cheese. Discard any remaining cheese.
2. Heat oil and butter in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook half of scallops at a time in oil 3 to 6 minutes, turning once, until golden brown on outside and white and opaque inside. Sprinkle with pepper and chives.