

# Healthy Foods for Christmas



There is a well known phenomenon around Christmas, New Year's or Thanksgiving known to some as the "*invisible man*." This occurrence is described as "MAN'S" ability to remove his presence from kitchen "dish washing duty" by claiming, "*The turkey made me tired*." Turkeys do not create fatigue. The culprit is the overindulgences of carbs, sugar and fat. This combination of great taste bloats an end result of unwanted stored fat, a decrease in energy and digestive sluggishness.

In our home, we eat the same holiday foods but cook them differently. For those who follow our monthly column, here is a Christmas menu high in nutrients and low in unwanted carbs and fats. To make the meal more beneficial, we suggest selecting "certified organic" raw ingredients.

## Menu for 4 to 6 people

### *Appetizers*

*Salmon Stuffed Pitas*  
*Hummus and Raw Vegetables*

### *Main Course*

*Roasted Turkey with Garlic Butter Sauce*  
*Basmati Rice and Shitake Mushroom Stuffing*  
*Candied Sweet Potatoes*  
*Lemon Garlic Snow Peas and Carrots with Almonds*  
*Festive Winter Salad Bowl*

### *Dessert*

*Gingerbread Cake*  
*Tofu Spiced Cookies*  
*Rooibos or Mint Tea*

## Recipes

### **Salmon Stuffed Pitas**

4 Tbsp fresh lemon juice  
4 Tbsp fresh lime juice  
2 tsp Dijon mustard  
2 cups drained canned wild pacific salmon, rinsed well  
2 celery stalks, with leaves, minced

2 scallions, minced  
3 whole wheat pitas  
8 red or green lettuce leaves, thick center stems removed

To make stuffing, whisk lemon, lime juices and mustard in a medium bowl until well combined. Add salmon, celery and scallions and mix with a fork. Cut the pitas in quarter and line each quarter with lettuce. Spoon the salmon mixture into pitas.

### **Basmati Rice and Shitake Mushroom Stuffing**

1 cup of white or brown basmati rice  
2 cup of water  
1 cup of chopped shitake mushrooms  
2 stalks of celery finely chopped  
1/2 cup of onion finely chopped  
2 tsp chopped garlic  
1 tsp chopped fresh sage  
1 tsp chopped fresh summer savory  
2 Tbsp of olive oil  
1/8 tsp of sea salt

Bring water to a boil, and then add rice. Reduce heat to low, with lid on, simmer until rice is cooked. Place olive oil in frying pan, sauté mushrooms, celery, onion, garlic until soft. Add herbs and salt. Mix together and let sit to blend flavours. When rice is cooked add to mushroom mixture, set aside to cool as the turkey is prepared.

### **Roast Turkey with Garlic Butter Sauce**

Wash 10 to 12 pound turkey inside and out and pat it dry. Place the bird on a rack in a roasting pan breast side up. Fill both cavities with stuffing. Any leftovers, heat on top of stove and serve with meal. Make small slits into the skin and insert cloves of peeled, sliced garlic, also insert garlic cloves between legs and body. Rub entire bird with butter (not margarine) to seal in the juices. Sprinkle with paprika.

Pour about 1 inch of water in bottom of roasting pan and bake in preheated oven at 325- 350 degrees F. until the turkey is done depending on the size. In the last ½ hour of cooking, baste the turkey with the pan drippings 1 -2 times. When cooking is finished, remove turkey from pan. Remove stuffing and place in warm oven until serving time. Let turkey sit 20 minutes before carving. While sitting, prepare sauce.

### **Sauce**

Pan drippings  
1 tsp minced garlic  
2 tbsp arrowroot flour as thickener  
1 cup of room temperature water

Pour pan drippings through a sieve into a sauce pan. Bring to a boil. In shaker, put arrowroot flour then add water, shake well. Add to pan drippings. Stir in garlic. Keep warm to serve.

### **Candied Sweet Potatoes**

5 medium to large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks

¼ cup of water

½ cup of honey

3 Tbsp of butter

Dash of sea salt

¼ tsp of cinnamon

In a saucepan, combine honey, water, butter salt and cinnamon. Simmer together 3 to 4 minutes. Place sweet potatoes into buttered baking dish. Pour syrup over potatoes. Bake in a preheated oven at 400 degrees F. for approximately 20 minutes or until potatoes are soft.

### **Lemon Garlic Snow Peas and Carrots with Almonds**

12 oz of snow peas, washed, trimmed and halved diagonally

1/2 cup of slivered carrots

1/3 cup of slivered raw almonds

3 Tbsp of olive oil

2 Tbsp of fresh lemon juice

1/8 tsp of sea salt

1/8 tsp of white pepper

1 Tbsp fresh tarragon

Heat oil in a stir fry pan, sauté vegetables and almonds until soft. Add lemon juice, tarragon, salt and pepper. Serve hot.

### **Winter Salad Bowl** (Hint: cook vegetables the day before)

½ cup of cooked beets, cut into strips

½ cup of steamed green beans

½ cup cooked carrots sliced

½ cup of lentils or dried peas, cooked

1 head of romaine lettuce, broken into bite sized pieces

### **Vinaigrette Dressing**

3 Tbsp of balsamic vinegar

1 tsp maple syrup

½ cup olive oil

In a screw-top jar, shake the vinegar and maple syrup together until combined. Add the oil and shake until thoroughly mixed.

Marinate vegetables except lettuce in a bowl for ½ hour. When ready to serve, add the lettuce and lightly toss with vegetables.

### **Gingerbread Cake**

1 cup of spelt flour  
½ cup of whole wheat flour  
½ cup of sour cream  
1/3 cup of butter  
½ cup of honey  
½ cup of molasses  
1 egg, not beaten  
1 tsp of ginger  
1 tsp of baking soda

Mix very lightly and bake in preheated oven at 375 degrees F. for 20 minute in a 9 X 13 baking pan.

### **Tofu Spice Cookies**

1 ½ cup of spelt flour	½ cup of honey
¾ cup of raisins	½ pound of tofu
¼ cup chopped dates	1 egg
½ cup chopped nuts	½ cup of canola oil
½ tsp baking soda	1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp vanilla	1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp of nutmeg	1 tsp sea salt

Mix flour, raisins, dates, nuts and baking soda. In a blender, blend remaining ingredients. Mix wet and dry ingredients together. Drop by teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees F. 10 –15 minutes.

Enjoy!