

SEASON'S eating

Heal your relationship with food this Christmas and gift yourself with festive treats as delicious as they are nutritious. *Laura Holland* brings you the lighter side to holiday indulgence – you don't have to miss out to avoid the weight gain

A troublesome relationship with food seems to be ingrained in most of us as the all too familiar mantra 'must not overeat' spontaneously monopolises our mind at the very sight of a menu or the sound of jingling bells as the festive season approaches.

In fact, the joyous period only exacerbates these fears, serving up an extra-large portion of food guilt that keeps our skinny jeans locked in the closet until post-January detox.

This food relationship is completely counterintuitive since food traditionally serves as a central point of celebration, bringing people together. It really is no wonder we feel miserable counting calories, it's against our nature.

So, this year, avoid the usual emotional food rollercoaster and inevitable subsequent diet nightmare and embrace a more positive mind-set. Eat with pleasure whilst tapping into festive food traditions that are wholesome, natural and offer health benefits. But remember, everything in moderation.

By allowing ourselves to enjoy these foods, conscious of their many health benefits, our body will relate differently to them – with appreciation for our body, something rather magical happens.

Our perspective shifts from mindlessly eating as much as humanely possible, to consciously eating 'real' foods with the emphasis on quality rather than quantity. In doing so fitting into that LBD for New Year's Eve will actually be a manageable feat. So don't restrict yourself, enjoy the festivities – but do so wisely and positively. ➤



IMAGES TRUNK ARCHIVE

HEALTHY *festive treats*

SWEET POTATO, an all American festive and beautiful comfort food.
BENEFITS: Contains beta-carotene, an antioxidant that protects skin from sun damage; vitamins C and E, essential for a glowing complexion and shiny hair; vitamin B6, great for a healthy heart and for encouraging hormonal balance. Also rich in fibre, it is a slow energy burner.

FRESH SEAFOOD, especially lobster and prawns, is the focal point of festive meal times in the Southern hemisphere.
BENEFITS: Contains zinc, which is known as the healing mineral and is essential for keeping your immune system functioning optimally – ideal during party season. Naturally low in fat and a great source of protein, helping your body to deal more effectively with sugar whilst increasing satiety.

CHESTNUTS were among the first foods ever to be eaten by man (or woman).
BENEFITS: Rich in fibre, giving them a low GI value; vitamin C providing the immune system with a positive boost; magnesium and potassium which can help regulate fluid levels in the body and are the important alkaline minerals often lacking in our diet.

THIRTEEN DESSERTS, a traditional French dessert including 13 delightfully sweet foods (raisins, walnuts, dried figs, almonds, dates, dried plums, apples, pears, oranges, winter melon, grapes, tangerines and traditional biscuits like cummin and fennel seed cookies) that have valuable nutritional gifts.
BENEFITS: Rich in iron, which strengthens your blood, prevents anaemia and provides energy. Clinical trials have found almonds help block the absorption of carbohydrates and improve satiety, producing greater and longer sustained weight loss in diets that included them.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING, dessert of the season, especially in the UK.
BENEFITS: Contrary to popular belief it isn't a diet enemy with main ingredients being natural fruits and nuts, and with so many health-conscious brands available today you can indulge gluten-free, dairy-free and even sugar-free and so most certainly guilt-free.

THE CHEESE BOARD, a festive staple on many tables worldwide but can potentially be a diet nightmare!
BENEFITS: Pecorino cheese and goat's cheese are lighter and easier to digest than cow's cheese. Analysis of The Blue Zones, geographical locations noted for longevity, suggests consuming goat's milk reduces stress, lowers heart disease and increases longevity. Pecorino cheese is known for its heart-healthy and anti-inflammatory omega 3 content and is also a staple in the top Blue Zones, including Sardinia. ➤



A HEALTHY festive dinner

Farah Sawaf of *cookingwithamanicure.com* serves up three conscious-free recipes for a healthy Christmas feast



STARTER: CRAB CAKES
Crispy on the outside yet juicy and fluffy on the inside, these are always a hit at any dinner party.

SERVES 6 TO 10

COOKING: 25 minutes
Recommended nail polish colour for this recipe: Poetic Petra

INGREDIENTS:
500g crabmeat, usually found in small tubs in the seafood section
1-2 crushed butter crackers
3 green onions (green and white parts), finely chopped
½ cup finely chopped bell peppers
½ cup mayonnaise

1 egg
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp dry mustard
¼ tsp dried ginger powder
½ lemon, juiced
¼ tsp garlic powder
1 tsp salt
Dash cayenne pepper
Flour, for dusting
¼ cup canola oil
Sauce for dipping

PREPARATION:
● In a large bowl, mix together

all ingredients except the flour and oil. Shape into patties and dust with flour.
● Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is hot, carefully place the crab cakes, in batches, in the pan and fry until browned (about four to five minutes).
● Carefully flip the crab cakes and fry on the other side until golden brown (about four minutes).
● Serve warm with preferred cocktail or seafood sauce.



DINNER: JUICY ROASTED CHICKEN
The secret lies in 'brining' – soaking the chicken for three hours in a saline solution.

SERVES 4 TO 6

BRINING PROCESS: minimum 2 hours

PREPARATION & COOKING: 1.5 hour
Recommended nail polish colour for this recipe: Poetic Petra

INGREDIENTS:
For the brine:
1 litre cold water
¾ cup kosher salt
¼ cup sugar
1 cup unsalted chicken broth
1 tbsp freshly grated black pepper
1 bay leaf
1 tbsp oregano
1 fresh sprig of rosemary
1 medium-sized 1.5kg (3.3lb) whole chicken with skin
1 small lemon, cut in half
Cooking string
1 litre water with 1 tbsp kosher salt for boiling
2 small red potatoes, with skin, cut in half-inch chunks
1 carrot, skinned and cut in chunks
4 cloves of garlic, chopped
1 small onion, cut in large chunks
Extra-virgin olive oil
1 red delicious apple, peeled,

cored and cut in large cubes

SAUCE:
1 cup honey
1 ½ tbsp curry powder
4 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 cloves of garlic, peeled minced

PREPARATION:
● Mix together brine ingredients: water, salt, sugar, broth and spices and heat over high heat. Keep stirring until the sugar and salt dissolves. Bring to a boil and set aside to cool to room temperature.
● Place the cleaned whole chicken into brine mix. Cover and place in refrigerator for at least two hours. You can leave it in for about eight hours if you want to make it in the morning or night before.
● When ready to begin

cooking, preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
● In a medium pot, boil approximately 1 litre of water with salt. Place the chopped potatoes and carrots in the water, with some salt, for about 10 minutes.
● Take the brining pot from the fridge and discard the brine mix. Rinse the chicken and stuff the two lemon halves into the cavity.
● Holding the drumstick bones together tightly, breast-side up, tie the drumstick bones together with cooking string. Place the chicken in a roasting pan. Drain potatoes and carrots and place around the chicken along with the chopped onion and garlic. Drizzle with olive oil.

● Cover the chicken with aluminium. Place the roasting pan onto the lower rack of the oven for 30 minutes.
● While the chicken is roasting, combine the honey, curry powder, Dijon mustard and garlic in a small bowl.
● After 30 minutes, take the roast chicken out of the oven. Baste the chicken and vegetables with the liquid accumulated at the bottom of roasting pan.
● Mix chopped apples into the already roasting vegetables. Place the roasting pan, uncovered, back into the oven and cook for another 25 minutes.
● Once cut, take the roast chicken out of the oven and cool for 15 minutes. Snip away and discard the string and remove the lemons. Transfer the chicken onto a serving platter, spooning vegetables around the beautiful bird.
● Serve warm with the sauce.



DESSERT: PARFAIT
After a healthy portion you will feel energised.

SERVES 4

COOKING: 25 minutes
Recommended nail polish colour for this recipe: Ginger Lace

INGREDIENTS:
1 cup water
¼ cup crystallised ginger, finely chopped
½ cup of your favourite honey (milk & HONEY have an amazing selection)
1 tbsp lemon zest
2 tbsp juice from a fresh orange
Greek yogurt
Small handful of granola/muesli
1 cup blueberries, chopped
1 cup mango, chopped

PREPARATION:
● In a medium saucepan, boil the water. Add the ginger, allowing it to dissolve. Reduce the heat. Add the honey, lemon zest and orange juice. Set aside to cool.
● In a parfait glass, dollop a big spoon of yogurt. Add the granola and any fruits you desire in layers.
● Serve with the ginger syrup.

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ALL NAIL VARNISHES ARE AVAILABLE AT NSTYLE