

A [LivFit] Thanksgiving

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The traditional Thanksgiving meal can be one of the healthiest meals of the year. Why not be thankful for your health this season and do what you can to improve the nutrition of your loved ones and yourself? Of course, the food has to taste good and of course, we all have some of our own "must haves", but with a few exchanges of some of the unhealthy ingredients for healthy ones we can all eat healthier this holiday season.

Below is our [LivFit] Thanksgiving menu complete with turkey, sweet potatoes, sides, and even dessert. You will notice how we use very little sugar in these recipes, lots of savory spices, and plenty of vegetables. Give them a try this year and you and your guests will not be disappointed!

Butternut Squash Soup

Ingredients:

1 Tbs. Olive Oil/ or Butter	4 Large Carrots/ peel and chop
½ C. Onion/ rough chop	1 tsp. Cinnamon
¼ C. Fresh Ginger/ rough chop	1 tsp. White Pepper
½ C. White Wine	2 tsp. Sea Salt
1½-2 Qt. of Vegetable or Chicken Stock	1 tsp. Curry powder
2 Butternut Squash/ peel and chop	4 Tbs. Honey or Agave Nectar
2 Granny Smith Apples/ peel and Chop	

1. Heat large saucepan or stockpot over medium heat/ add oil or butter
2. Add onions, sauté lightly; try not to add too much color. Add ginger, sauté lightly
3. Deglaze with white wine allow to reduce until almost completely evaporated
4. Add Stock, Squash, Apples, and Carrots- bring to a simmer
5. Add seasonings sparingly, allowing possibility for adjustments when finished
6. Cook for approximately 25-35 minutes, or until squash and carrots are very soft
7. Remove from heat, allow to cool @ room temp for around 15 min
8. Blend soup until creamy, using Regular or Immersion Blender
9. Taste for seasonings, adjust if needed, cool and enjoy for up to one week

Spinach Salad with Feta Cheese

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup red pepper jelly
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 8 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) crumbled Feta cheese

1/4 cup dry-roasted pistachios

1. Place jelly in a 1-cup glass measure. Microwave at HIGH 30 seconds. Add cider vinegar, oil, salt, and black pepper, stirring with a whisk until blended. Cool to room temperature.
2. Combine spinach and cheese in a large bowl. Drizzle vinegar mixture over spinach mixture; toss well. Sprinkle with nuts. Serve immediately.

Perfect Turkey

Ingredients:

1 (18 pound) whole turkey, neck and giblets removed
2 cups kosher salt
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 large onions, peeled and chopped
4 carrots, peeled and chopped
4 stalks celery, chopped
2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
1 cup dry white wine

1. Rub the turkey inside and out with the kosher salt. Place the bird in a large stock pot, and cover with cold water. Place in the refrigerator, and allow the turkey to soak in the salt and water mixture 12 hours, or overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Thoroughly rinse the turkey, and discard the brine mixture.
3. Brush the turkey with 1/2 the melted butter. Place breast side down on a roasting rack in a shallow roasting pan. Stuff the turkey cavity with 1 onion, 1/2 the carrots, 1/2 the celery, 1 sprig of thyme, and the bay leaf. Scatter the remaining vegetables and thyme around the bottom of the roasting pan, and cover with the white wine.
4. Roast uncovered 3 1/2 to 4 hours in the preheated oven, until the internal temperature of the thigh reaches 180 degrees F (85 degrees C). Carefully turn the turkey breast side up about 2/3 through the roasting time, and brush with the remaining butter. Allow the bird to stand about 30 minutes before carving.

Green Beans with Cherry Tomatoes

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds green beans, trimmed and cut into 2 inch pieces
1 1/2 cups water
1/4 cup butter
3/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh basil
2 cups cherry tomato halves

1. Place beans and water in a large saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil. Set heat to low, and simmer until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain off water, and set aside.
2. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in garlic salt, pepper and basil.

3. Add tomatoes, and cook stirring gently just until soft. Pour the tomato mixture over the green beans, and toss gently to blend.

Cardamom Whipped Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients:

5 pounds sweet potatoes

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom

salt and pepper to taste

4 tablespoons of coconut oil for frying

3/4 pound thinly sliced shallots

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F
2. Prick sweet potatoes with a fork. Bake for 1 hour or until tender; reduce oven temperature to 250 degrees F
3. Scoop potato flesh out of skins and place into a mixing bowl. Slowly beat in the butter and cardamom. Whip until potatoes are smooth and fluffy; season with salt and white pepper. Keep warm in oven.
4. In a large deep skillet, heat coconut oil until shimmering. Add 1/2 of the shallots to oil and fry until crisp. Transfer the shallots, using a slotted spoon, to a paper towel; season with salt. Repeat the process until all the shallots are fried. Garnish top of potatoes with shallots and serve.

“Cheesy” Broccoli and Quinoa Casserole

Ingredients:

For the cheese sauce:

1 cup cooked mashed sweet potato

1.5 cups water

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon onion powder

1/2 teaspoon chili powder

To assemble:

1 cup dry quinoa, rinsed

2 cups water

1 teaspoon coconut oil

1/2 yellow onion, chopped

5 cups broccoli florets

1. Preheat your oven to 350F. In a small saucepan over high heat, bring the quinoa and water to a boil, then cover and reduce the heat to low for 15 minutes, until the quinoa is tender and the moisture has been absorbed. Fluff with a fork and set aside.
2. While the quinoa is cooking, saute the chopped onion in a large saute pan (preferably with a lid) in the coconut oil until tender, about 5 minutes. Add in the broccoli florets and a splash of water to prevent sticking, then cover the pan and allow to steam for about 10 minutes, or until the broccoli is fork-tender.
3. To prepare the “cheese” sauce, combine all of the ingredients in a blender and blend until completely smooth and creamy. Keep in mind that this sauce will be diluted over the entire batch of quinoa and broccoli, so it may be on the salty-side to taste.
4. If your large saute pan is oven-safe, you can save yourself from cleaning an extra dish by assembling the casserole directly over the sauteed onion and broccoli. Add in the cooked quinoa, then pour over the cheese sauce, and stir to mix well. Adjust any seasonings to taste, then use the back of a large spoon to smooth the top.
5. Bake at 350F for 30 minutes, or until bubbly hot! Serve immediately, and store any leftovers in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Cinnamon Apple and Oat Bake

Ingredients:

6 cup peeled sliced apples
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tbsp lemon juice
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup oats
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sucanat
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup walnuts
Sprinkle of raisins

1. Mix in a bowl and spread into a 11X7 or 12X8 pan.
2. Cook 35-40 min at 375 degrees.

Pumpkin Cheesecake

Ingredients:

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of crushed graham crackers
5 tablespoons of butter melted
3 packages of cream cheese softened
1 tsp of vanilla
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of sucanat plus 1 tsp
1 can pumpkin
3 eggs
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp of nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp of allspice

1. Mix in a large bowl the crushed graham crackers and extra tsp of sucanat. Add the melted butter until the mixture is mixed well. Pat the mixture into a springform pan over the bottom and up half of the sides. Bake the oven at 350 for five minutes.
2. In another large bowl add the cream cheese, vanilla, and sucanat. Mix until smooth. Add all the other ingredients and mix again well. Pour onto the baked crust and bake for 60-70 minutes. The top will become a bit darker when baked. Cool to room temp, then refrigerate or freeze.

[Core] will be closed on Thursday, November 24th.

Happy Thanksgiving!

