



Nutrition Nibbles

Give Your Plate a Taste Lift

without Forfeiting Nutrition during National Nutrition Month®

-Content courtesy of the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*

When it comes to choosing what to eat, nutrition is important but flavor is likely the true motivator and also the key to eating right, according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This March, during National Nutrition Month®, experiment with new flavors and flavor combinations in healthy meals and “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right.”

“According to consumer research, taste tops nutrition as the main reason why consumers buy one food over another. The foods we most commonly eat are often those we enjoy the most,” says registered dietitian and Academy spokesperson Joy Dubost. “So make taste a priority when preparing nutritious meals.”

Preparing meals can be healthy, rewarding and cost-effective. Dubost offers cooking tips to help enhance flavor without adding extra fat, calories or salt.

To maximize food’s flavor and nutrition, choose high-quality

ingredients at their peak quality, and be sure to store and handle foods properly.

“Proper food handling and storage can enhance the natural flavors of food and keep nutrient loss to a minimum,” Dubost says. “Overcooking can destroy both flavor and nutrients. So be sure to cook foods properly to retain nutrients and enhance flavor, color, texture and overall appeal.”

Try some of these simple techniques to enhance flavor while experimenting with flavor combinations,” Dubost says.

- Intensify the flavors of meat, poultry and fish with high-heat cooking techniques such as pan-searing, grilling or broiling.
- Pep it up with peppers. Use red, green and yellow peppers of all varieties—sweet, hot and dried. Or add a dash of hot pepper sauce.
- Try grilling or roasting veggies in a very hot (450° F) oven or grill for a sweet, smoky flavor. Brush or spray them lightly with oil so they don’t dry out.

Superfoods for a Super You!

Superfoods can bring the power of flavor to your plate and pack a punch by offering nutrients like much-needed vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Superfoods are colorful, (most often) plant-based foods that are beneficial to one’s health and well-being beyond providing the body with basic fuel. Superfoods have been implicated in disease prevention, improved immunity, eye and skin health, mood enhancement, even superior sports performance.

Here are a few ways you can transform your typical diet from your body’s nemesis to your body’s superhero through the strategic use of superfoods.

Add lycopene-rich tomatoes to your sandwiches, salads, burritos, pita, and pasta.

Mix unsweetened, canned pumpkin into your oatmeal for a burst of carotenoids.

Blend kale, spinach, or

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A Taste Lift continued...

- Sprinkle with herbs.
- Caramelize sliced onions to bring out their natural sugar flavor by cooking them slowly over low heat in a small amount of oil. Use them to make a rich, dark sauce for meat or poultry.
- Simmer juices to make reduction sauces. Concentrate the flavors of meat, poultry and fish stocks. Reduce the juices by heating them—don't boil. Then use them as a flavorful glaze or gravy.
- For fuller flavors, incorporate more whole grains such as brown rice or quinoa, or experiment with amaranth and wild rice.
- Add small amounts of ingredients with bold flavors like pomegranate seeds, chipotle pepper or cilantro.
- Add a tangy taste with citrus juice or grated citrus peel: lemon, lime or orange. Acidic ingredients help lift and balance flavor.
- Enhance sauces, soups and salads with a splash of flavored balsamic or rice vinegar.
- Give a flavor burst with good-quality condiments such as horseradish, flavored mustard, chutney, wasabi, bean purees, tapenade and salsas of all kinds.

“These simple cooking steps can really transform your favorite meals and foods,” Dubost says. “But keep in mind the average adult has 10,000 taste buds, and people sense the same foods differently. So don't be afraid to try new foods, flavors and taste

combinations. There's truly a world of flavors to explore.”

Visit the Academy's website to view [a library of recipes](#) designed to help you “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right.”

The *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy. Visit the Academy at www.eatright.org.

Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day is March 12, 2014

Have you hugged your dietitian lately? Here's a few good reasons why you should!

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are the food and nutrition experts that translate flavor and nutrition to your dining plate.

RDNs help the public put user-friendly dietary solutions into practice in order to improve the health status of the community.

RDNs work in a variety of settings--hospitals, nursing homes, schools, universities, gyms, medical offices, research centers, private practice--to ensure that everyone has access to quality nutrition information.

Superfoods continued...

avocado with yogurt, juice, and fruit for a superpower green lutein, zeaxanthin, indole, and sulforaphane smoothie.

Blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, cranberries, plums, and red/purple grapes add punch to any fruit salad while offering anthocyanins.

When it comes to your daily menu, channel your inner creative chef and color your diet with as many shades of health as you can!



Nothing says “Happy St. Patrick's Day” like a Shamrock Shake. You don't need to load up on high fructose corn syrup and food dye to enjoy the flavor of this celebratory minty treat. Try this skinnier version on for fun!

Skinny(er) Shamrock Shake

from *Skinnytaste.com*

Servings: 2

3/4 cup fat free milk
3/4 cup 0% fat vanilla frozen yogurt
1/3 cup sliced avocado
1 tbsp raw sugar
1/4 tsp mint extract (not Peppermint)
1 cup crushed ice

Pour the milk, frozen yogurt, avocado, sugar, mint extract and ice into your blender.

Blend 3-4 minutes until the mixture is thick and icy.

Pour into two glasses, and serve with a straw. Serve immediately.