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DIETITIANS DISH UP CHRISTMAS CHEER

Ever wondered how dietitians approach Christmas? What do they eat? And how do they get through the festive season with their health intact?

According to the Dietitians Association of Australia, enjoying food and connecting with loved ones are the key ingredients for a healthy balance this Christmas.

This is what Accredited Practising Dietitian Gabrielle Maston appreciates the most about Christmas.

“Christmas Day in my family is any enjoyable food feast. We start the day with a hearty breakfast and sit around the dining table catching up, telling jokes and having a good time. I’m mindful to choose foods I really enjoy, rather than eating everything to excess,” said Ms Maston.

To achieve a healthy balance, Accredited Practising Dietitian Milly Smith said:

“Christmas Day for me is about enjoying a variety of foods. I serve myself a small amount of different things and stop when I’m full. I feel better when I enjoy everything in moderation,” she said.

For Accredited Practising Dietitian Themis Chryssidis, it’s about embracing the Australian summer vibes.

“I’m all about the salads, seafood and grills. My Thai prawn salad and kingfish ceviche are family favourites for the holidays. This is usually partnered with a good sparkling shiraz on Christmas morning, which is a family tradition to celebrate everyone being together,” said Mr Chryssidis.

Accredited Practising Dietitian Lisa Donaldson said her family has the best of both worlds, with a mix of traditional and modern Christmas food – and something for everyone, from her Mum’s roast, to seafood and salads, and for dessert, pavlova and her sister’s trifle.

But no matter the meal, all agreed that Christmas is a time for celebration with family and friends.

“Although the food is always a highlight, it’s the eating, sharing and laughing with loved ones that means the most to me,” Ms Donaldson said.

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For further information or to organise an interview with an Accredited Practising Dietitian, contact Pattie King, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.

Nutrition Journalism Award

Applications for the Dietitians Association of Australia’s 2017 ‘Nutrition Journalism Award’ are open. The Award acknowledges and celebrates quality nutrition reporting by Australian journalists. Submit to either the

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short-lead or long-lead category. It's simple to apply – visit '[Newsroom](#)' on the DAA website for more information.

Christmas-ready recipes

[Grilled peach, smoked almond and zucchini salad with chunky salsa verde](#)

Serves: 4 (as a side)

Time to make: 15 mins

Ingredients:

- Olive oil spray
- 2 medium yellow or white peaches, cut into wedges
- 80g rocket
- 1 shallot, finely sliced
- 1 zucchini, peeled into ribbons
- 2 tablespoons smoked almonds, roughly chopped
- 40g reduced-fat feta, crumbled
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- Chunky salsa verde
- 5 small gherkins, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon capers, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup basil leaves, finely chopped
- juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Instructions

Step 1: Preheat a grill pan or barbecue to medium—high heat. Combine chunky salsa verde ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

Step 2: Spray peach wedges with olive oil; grill for 2 minutes per side, or until wedges develop grill marks. Transfer wedges to a bowl.

Step 3: Put rocket on a serving platter and top with shallot and zucchini. Top greens with grilled peach, scatter with almond and feta, and drizzle with lemon juice.

Step 4: Serve salad with chunky salsa verde on the side.

Serving suggestions

This salad works well as a complementary side to fish or barbecue chicken.

This recipe is courtesy of Healthy Food Guide magazine. For more healthy festive recipe ideas go to healthyfoodguide.com.au

Recipe image available on request by contacting media@daa.asn.au

MEDIA RELEASE

[Yoghurt bark](#)

Serves: 6

Time to make: 25 mins, plus overnight freezing

Ingredients:

1/2 cup reduced-fat Greek-style yoghurt
1/2 cup coconut yoghurt
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or extract
3 teaspoons white chia seeds
1 tablespoon desiccated coconut
2 tablespoons reduced-sugar raspberry jam or fruit spread (*see variation*)
2 tablespoons pistachios, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon dried cranberries, thinly sliced
dried culinary rose petals (optional) (*see tip*)

Instructions

Step 1: Line a 30cm x 20cm tray with baking paper. Combine both yoghurts with vanilla and chia seeds in a bowl, mix well. Stir in the desiccated coconut.

Step 2: Spread the yoghurt mixture evenly over prepared tray.

Step 3: Microwave the jam or fruit spread in a small bowl on high for 20 seconds, or until just runny. Pour jam into a plastic piping bag (or zip-lock bag). Snip the tip off and pipe the jam in swirls or rows over yoghurt.

Step 4: Use a skewer or thin blade of a knife and lightly drag it through the yoghurt and jam to create a swirl or feathering effect. Tap the tray gently on the benchtop a couple of times to flatten the yoghurt mixture. Scatter with the pistachios, cranberries and petals, if using. Freeze overnight.

Step 5: Break or cut the yoghurt bark into pieces. Serve immediately.

Variations:

- Use fruit purée in place of the jam, if you prefer.
- For a slightly sweeter taste, use vanilla yoghurt instead of plain.

Tip: Dried culinary rose petals are available from specialty grocers, fruit shops and delicatessens.

This recipe is courtesy of Healthy Food Guide magazine. For more healthy festive recipe ideas go to healthyfoodguide.com.au

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