

Healthy Eating Is 'In' (And It Tastes Good, Too)

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

The word "diet" is about to disappear from our vocabulary as smart people are finally ready to discard the practice of temporary deprivation to lose pounds, followed by a return to bad habits.

A whole new approach to eating nowadays means you change your habits, foregoing excess fat, salt and sugar.

Along with aerobics and running, this new development has become an absolute American craze. It has forced the canned goods industries and even fast food restaurants to provide information on the fat, salt and calorie content of its foods.

Grocery stores are emphatically in compliance, featuring tofu,



sprouts, skim milk, egg substitutes and fat-free cream cheese, sour cream and yogurt.

The cookbook world, similarly, has gone nuts with low-sodium collections, fat-free recipes, healthy foods and vegetarian dishes galore. There's no excuse for not serving home-cooked meals that are not only supremely good for you, but supremely tasty, as well. Cookbooks appealing to every health craving abound in bookstores.

The following recipes came from one of these sources. Weight Watchers has a new gimmick for "recipes by mail" called Smart Choice and its recipes are gourmet-yummy, easy to prepare, and guaranteed to keep your cholesterol, weight and heart rate at the desired level.

Try these in your kitchen and prepare to be surprised by the fla-

vor and satisfaction.

THREE-ONION TART

Crust:

- 1 cup flour
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. whole wheat flour
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup reduced-calorie margarine, chilled and cut in pieces
- 2-3 Tbsp. ice water

Filling:

- ¼ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 cup coarsely chopped yellow onion
- ½ tsp. dried basil
- ½ cup sliced leek
- ¼ t salt
- ¼ cup sliced scallion
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 1 cup skim milk
- Pinch ground red pepper
- 2 eggs
- 5¼ oz. Gruyere cheese, shredded

Combine flours, salt and pepper for crust. Cut margarine into the mix till the mixture forms coarse crumbs. Stir in the ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time, till dough forms. Gather into ball, place in plastic bag and chill 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Warm broth for filling in medium skillet over medium heat. Add onion, leek and scallion and simmer till tender, 5-7 minutes. Set aside.

Whisk together milk, eggs, cornstarch, basil, salt and peppers.

Roll dough between sheets of waxed paper to an 11-inch circle.

Fit dough into 9-inch tart pan, letting excess dough hang over edges. Prick shell and trim overhang to an even quarter-inch. Place tart on baking sheet and bake 10 minutes. With the back of a spoon, flatten areas that are puffed. Brush crust evenly with 1 tablespoon of egg-milk mixture. Bake 2-3 minutes longer till the crust surface is dry. Cool slightly on rack.

Sprinkle onions and cheese evenly in the crust. Whisk egg-milk mixture and pour into the shell. Place the tart on the baking sheet and bake until set, golden brown and puffed, 30-35 minutes.

TOMATO-SHRIMP SAUTE

- 1 Tbsp. plus ½ tsp. olive oil
 - 1½ diced zucchini
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - ½ cup drained, sliced roasted red pepper
 - ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
 - 48 medium shrimp, shelled, deveined
 - 1½ tsp. dried thyme
 - ½ tsp. ground black pepper
 - ¼ tsp. salt
 - 4 small plum tomatoes, sliced
 - 5 small pitted black olives, sliced
- In a large nonstick skillet over medium heat, warm 1½ tsp. oil until

hot but not smoking. Add zucchini and garlic, and saute till golden, about 4 minutes. Add the red pepper and flakes and cook 1 minute.

Add remaining 2 tsp. oil, shrimp, thyme, pepper and salt. Cook shrimp mixture, stirring occasionally, till the shrimp turn pink and are barely cooked, 3-6 minutes.

Gently stir in tomatoes and olives, and cook until the shrimp are opaque throughout and the tomatoes are heated through, about 2 minutes. Serves 4.

RIGATONI WITH ASPARAGUS AND CHEESE

- 2½ cup asparagus pieces
- 9 oz. rigatoni pasta
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil or 1 t dried
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 5¼ oz. part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1½ oz. grated Parmesan cheese, shredded

In a medium saucepan, bring ½ inch of water to a boil. Add asparagus and cook, covered, till crisp-tender, 1-2 minutes. Drain asparagus and refresh under cold water. Set aside.

Bring large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta and cook till al dente, 10-12 minutes, or according to package directions.

Meanwhile, in medium nonstick skillet over medium-high heat, warm oil until hot but not smoking. Add asparagus, onion, basil and garlic, and cook, stirring, till the onion begins to brown, about 4 minutes.

Drain pasta and add to the skillet along with the beaten egg, mozzarella and parmesan and cook over medium heat till the egg is cooked and the cheese has melted, 2-3 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 6.

APPLE BROWN BETTY

- ¼ cup unseasoned dried bread crumbs
- 1 small lemon
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 small MacIntosh apples
- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. margarine

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray shallow 8-inch square baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle lightly with enough of the crumbs to coat the surface; reserve the remaining bread crumbs.

Grate 1 tsp. of zest and squeeze 1 Tbsp. juice from lemon. Set the juice aside. In a small dish, combine the lemon zest, sugar and cinnamon.

Peel and core apples, then cut them into thin slices.

In the prepared dish, layer one-third of the apples, one-third of the remaining bread crumbs and one-third of the sugar mixture. Dot with one-third of the margarine. Repeat two more layers, sprinkling the last layer with the reserved lemon juice.

Bake until the apples are tender, 35-45 minutes. Cut the dessert into 8 equal portions.

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