

December 2021

FOOD FOR THOUGHT –

The “holiday eating” that includes indulgent, decadent dishes that takes up the most Real Estate on our Christmas table may not align with our “healthy eating” efforts the rest of the year. But with these “Quality” tips, you can still enjoy your Christmas holiday without the guilt.

- 1.** It’s all about Moderation...You can still enjoy your favorite Christmas dishes but just with less on the plate. It’s time to engage friends and family at the table a little longer with “quality” time and you use your mouth for more conversation than chewing.
- 2.** It’s all about Homemade...making Christmas food can be hard with all that is going on during the holiday season but if your health is important to you it’s well worth the effort. Making “quality control” priority through the use of less salt, sugar & poor quality fats will make you much more aware of what you are eating, plus it gives you pride about the healthful foods you provided for you and your family.
- 3.** It’s all about Sleep...while I know this is not a food tip, it’s one that goes overlooked in the improvement of our health, especially during the holidays. Staying up late at parties, attending a large number of events where we eat more junk than necessary and staying too engaged with social media will promote irregular sleep schedules that will lead to poor sleep quality, fatigue, sugar cravings and the daytime hangry’s. “Quality” sleep is restorative and will mitigate cravings and compulsive eating patterns for days to come.

Hearty Sweet Potato, Arugula & Wild Rice Salad with Ginger Dressing

(Serves 6-8)

Ingredients

- 1 cup wild rice, rinsed
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt, divided
- 1 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes (2 medium or 3 small), peeled and sliced into 1" cubes
- 1 1/2 tablespoons avocado oil
- 3/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 5 ounces arugula (about 5 packed cups)
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta or goat cheese (optional)
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries



Ginger dressing (this makes extra)

- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, to taste
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey
- 2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

Instructions:

1. To cook the wild rice: Bring a large pot of water to boil. Add the rinsed rice and continue boiling, reducing heat as necessary to prevent overflow, for 40 minutes to 55 minutes, until the rice is pleasantly tender but still offers a light

resistance to the bite. Remove from heat, drain the rice and return the rice to pot. Cover and let the rice rest for 10 minutes, then remove the lid, stir in 1/4 teaspoon of the salt, and set aside.

- 2.** Meanwhile, to roast the sweet potatoes: Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper for easy cleanup. Place the cubed sweet potato on the pan, drizzle with the avocado oil and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon of the salt. Toss until the sweet potatoes are lightly and evenly coated in oil. Arrange the sweet potatoes in a single layer and roast for 25 to 30 minutes, tossing halfway, until they are caramelized on the edges and tender when pierced through with a fork. Leave the oven on and let the sweet potatoes cool for a few minutes.
- 3.** To make the dressing, simply combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and whisk until thoroughly combined. Set aside.
- 4.** Combine wild rice, roasted sweet potatoes, pumpkin seeds & dried cranberries in a large serving bowl and toss with 1/2 the dressing. Top with arugula and cheese (if using).
- 5.** When ready to serve, toss all together and enjoy!!!

Slightly modified from Cookie & Kate

— — — — —

Jennifer Cole Conn, NFC, CMINHP, CFMC, CCNE &
QUALITARIAN Food Integrated Training,
Inc. fitonyourfork@gmail.com