

Happy **Healthy** Holidays

TAKE A CUE FROM YOUR ANCESTORS: EATING HEALTHY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ABOUT COUNTING CALORIES OR MAKING SACRIFICES. BY CAROLE AMBER

As fall turns to winter and temperatures cool, the holidays hang in the distance. Times of celebration, sharing and family lay ahead—as well as gravy, pies and cookies galore.

For many of us, tasty treats bring up an internal dilemma. How do I make healthy choices throughout the holiday season?

As I see it, there is a simple answer to this question: eat like your great-grandparents ate.

Back in the old days people ate what could be grown, caught or raised near them. Soil was rich, meat was a luxury and availability dictated the food choices. Animals roamed freely on grass pastures. Bread was made by hand. Sweets were made from scratch and with lots of love.

As a result people ate whole and fresh foods according to the seasons. Their meals were colorful, varied and teeming with nutrients—while their plates contained whole grains, ripe vegetables and small portions.

The ways of our great-grandparents are good rules of thumb for making healthy selections this holiday season.

Choose meats without hormones, vegetables without pesticides and desserts made from scratch. Fill your plate three quarters full with fresh foods and have fun with the rest. This is not about counting calories or making sacrifices—simply eat real food, the way nature intended. And savor it. Your body will thank you.

For additional tips about making the holidays more healthful, we turned to some local experts.

Anner Stone of Tulsa Organic Coop operates a grocery cooperative that offers weekly vegetable, meat and pantry bags by reservation. This nifty organization offers weekly whole, fresh and organic grocery bags packed with seasonal goodies and tailored recipes to boot. “I believe holidays are all about tradition,” says Anner, while she gives us the tip to “remember to eat healthy—it’s more fun!”

To put these recommendations to use, try her fresh broccoli or green bean casserole or sweet potato bake to add a lovely vegetable to your table.

Chris Emerson, owner of Naturalfarms, believes that “just because it is healthy doesn’t mean you have to sacrifice taste, tenderness, or quality!” Naturalfarms sells all-natural, organic and locally raised meats, cheeses and eggs. They even deliver to the Tulsa area, so keep them in mind when you are looking for your Thanksgiving turkey just like your great-grandparents’ bird. If ham is your protein of choice, make Naturalfarms’ recipe of ham with apple mustard glaze (organically cured without nitrites/nitrates).

Lastly, impress your guests with sautéed pears and zabaglione for dessert. Made with seasonal fruit, eggs and just a bit of sugar, this fresh ending is the perfect way to finish a special meal.

So as you head into the holidays, arm yourself with nourishing tips, soul satisfying recipes and whole ingredients. Tis the season for health and happiness.

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**Sautéed Pears
with Zabaglione**

Broccoli or Green Bean Casserole

Recipe by Anner Stone of Tulsa Organic Coop

1 pound green beans (Trim off the ends and cut in half. Drop into boiling water for 3 minutes, then drain. If using broccoli, cut florets into small pieces, boil for 30 seconds, then drain.)

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup crimini mushrooms, sliced
3 tablespoons whole wheat flour
2 cups milk
¼ teaspoon sea salt
⅛ teaspoon white pepper
½ teaspoon Anner's Mix (available at Tulsa Organic Coop)

Sauté the mushrooms in the butter and oil, until they are a rich deep brown. Add the flour and cook for one minute. Add the milk, Anner's, salt, and pepper. Add the green beans or broccoli and pour into a buttered baking dish. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes.

Sweet Potato Bake

Recipe by Anner Stone of Tulsa Organic Coop

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼ inch thick slices
1 tablespoon sucanat
2 tablespoons chopped pecans
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
1 tablespoon butter
Zest from the rind of one orange
¼ cup fresh orange juice

Toss everything except the butter and orange juice together and then place in a baking dish sprayed with non-stick spray. Dot with the butter and drizzle with the orange juice; bake covered at 350° for 45-60 minutes until the potatoes are quite tender. ■

Ham with Apple Mustard Glaze

Recipe by Chris Emerson of Naturalfarms

Serves 4

1 (5-6 pound) fully cooked ham
¼ cup apple jelly
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
Whole cloves (exact number will vary according to size of ham)

Preheat oven to 350°. Score the top of the ham in a diamond pattern, and press a whole clove into the center of each diamond. Place on a roasting rack in a roasting pan and bake 1½ hours. While ham cooks, melt jelly in a small sauce pan over medium heat until it is liquid and smooth. Remove from heat and stir in mustard. Spread evenly over ham and bake 35 minutes longer. (If using an uncooked ham, bake until it reaches an internal temperature of 160°. This will require 5-8 minutes per pound. Glaze in last 30 to 40 minutes of cooking.) Let stand for 15 minutes before carving. ■

Sautéed Pears with Zabaglione

Recipe by Carole Amber and Silvia Volonta

on www.chopsizzlepop.com

Serves 6

Sautéed Pears

1 tablespoon organic unsalted butter
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
4 firm ripe pears, cored and sliced
½ teaspoon fresh nutmeg
½ teaspoon salt

Zabaglione

6 egg yolks
6 teaspoons sugar
1 cup Moscato d' Asti (any good Moscato or Marsala wine will do)

Slice pears and set aside.

Prepare the zabaglione by adding egg yolks and sugar to a double boiler. Turn heat under double boiler to medium. Beat mixture rapidly with a whisk until it begins to foam (1-2 minutes). Add Moscato and continue whisking vigorously. Be careful not to boil the mixture. Whisking does take some elbow grease—about 15 minutes total. Zabaglione is ready when it is foamy, dense and almost three times its original volume. Take off heat and set aside.

Prepare the pears by melting butter, brown sugar, nutmeg and salt in your skillet over medium heat. Add pears and sauté for 6-9 minutes or until they reach desired consistency. Remove from heat and plate (or serve in martini glasses for a fun option).

Spoon zabaglione over pears and sprinkle with fresh grated nutmeg. Serve warm. ■

Quick Healthy Holiday Tip:

Eat a healthy meal before holiday parties to avoid over indulging on holiday party trays. Include a good portion of protein along with vegetables—this will keep you feeling fuller longer during your holiday party. But if you feel the need to indulge in party foods, choose low-calorie and healthy holiday foods. Go for higher quality proteins (such as grilled chicken, seasoned turkey, lean deli meats or chicken kebabs), whole grain pastas, salsa (instead of using chips, spoon up thicker salsa straight from your plate or with a piece of chicken), steamed asparagus (one large spear has only four calories), boiled shrimp (22 calories for four large shrimp), and grapes (two calories apiece). On a cheese tray, go for lower-calorie selections such as soft goat cheese and Feta. Skip the cracker when eating hard cheeses.