

Holistic Health

Embracing wellness from the inside out



orthoplex

2018

RECIPES | D.I.Y | HEALTH | MINDFULNESS | KEEP IT GREEN

The Christmas and New Year period for many people is a magical one. A time to catch up with family and friends, and soak up some of our stunning summer days. However, it can be difficult to keep your health goals on track amongst the festive frivolity.

This booklet is here to help you keep working towards those goals with some simple tips, recipes and information to use over the holiday period. This booklet takes a holistic approach to health, yet we understand the holidays are for letting your hair down! These are just some little things you can do, so you can have your fun, whilst maintaining your health.



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Recipes BREAKFAST

Breakfast Smoothie: Choose your own Adventure

Place chosen ingredients in a blender, and blend until smooth! Please note you can adjust any of the quantities to suit your preference - these are indicative only.



Frozen Fruit of Choice: Pick One

- 1 cup banana chunks
- 1 cup apple chunks
- 1 cup mango chunks
- 1 cup dragonfruit
- 1 cup berries of choice
- 1 cup pineapple
- 1 cup pear chunks

Veggie of Choice: Pick One

- ½ large zucchini
- 1 handful spinach
- 1 handful kale
- ½ cucumber

Liquid of Choice: Pick One

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1 cup non-dairy milk of choice

Protein of Choice: Pick One

- 2 tblsp Greek yoghurt
- 2 tblsp coconut yoghurt
- 1 scoop clean protein powder

Optional Superfoods

- Chia Seeds
- Hemp Seeds
- Goji Berries
- Greens Powder
- Acai Powder
- Maca Powder



Veggie Packed Omelette

Makes 1 serve.

You may not have time to have an omelette for breakfast on a weekday, but who says you can't have breakfast for dinner? Or otherwise, this is a great way to supercharge your Saturday and/or Sunday.

Ingredients

- 2 free range eggs
- ½ zucchini, grated
- 1 handful spinach, chopped
- ¼ cup mushrooms of choice, finely chopped
- 1 tblsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tblsp organic, grass-fed butter
- spring onion to taste, finely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

- 1 Whisk the eggs in a bowl until fluffy.
- 2 In a small saucepan, heat the butter on medium heat until melted and hot - make sure it coats the bottom of the pan!
- 3 Pour the eggs into the pan and tilt so they cover the base of the pan.
- 4 Cook for 1-2 minutes (the edges should be firm), lift the edges and tilt the pan so uncooked egg runs underneath (the top will stay slightly runny).
- 5 Sprinkle the zucchini, spinach, mushrooms, nutritional yeast and spring onion over the egg.
- 6 Gently fold the egg mixture in half, lifting one side and laying it on top of the veggies.
- 7 When heated through (usually less than a minute), slide onto a plate!
- 8 Add salt and pepper to taste and enjoy!

Overnight Oats: 4 Ways

Overnight oats are a wonder-breakfast that are incredibly easy and cheap to make and save you precious time in the morning! You can make these in a glass jar, so they are easy to take to work if you run out of time to eat beforehand.

To make, simply add all ingredients to your jar (or into a bowl/ramekin) and stir to combine. Place in the fridge and leave overnight! If you don't like your oats cold, you can warm gently in a pan over low heat.

Chocolate Overnight Oats

- ½ cup plain rolled oats (not quick oats)
- ¼ cup Greek yoghurt (or coconut yoghurt)
- ¼ cup non-dairy milk of choice (or coconut water/plain water)
- 2 tsp cacao powder
- 2 tsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp organic honey



Berry Delight Overnight Oats

- ½ cup plain rolled oats (not quick oats)
- ¼ cup Greek (or coconut) yoghurt
- ¼ cup non-dairy milk of choice or water
- 2 tsp chia seeds
- ¼ cup of your choice of berries (we like strawberries!)
- 1 tsp organic honey or maple syrup
- ¼ tsp vanilla



"Carrot Cake" Overnight Oats

- ½ cup plain rolled oats (not quick oats)
- ¼ cup Greek yoghurt
- ¼ cup non-dairy milk of choice (we recommend almond for this recipe)
- ½ cup finely grated carrot
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp allspice
- 2 tblsp raisins
- 2 tsp maple syrup

Apple Cinnamon Overnight Oats

- ½ cup plain rolled oats (not quick oats)
- ¼ cup Greek yoghurt
- ¼ cup non-dairy milk of choice (or coconut water/plain water)
- ½ cup finely chopped or grated apples
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 1-2 tsp organic honey (if desired)

Recipes ON-THE-GO SNACKS

The following recipes can all be made ahead to put in your bag for when you're on the go - so you can have nutritious snacks throughout the day!



Roasted chickpeas

Roasted chickpeas are super simple and super cheap to make - and can be carried around easily in a glass jar!

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas
- 1 tblsp Celtic sea salt
- 1 tblsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp olive oil

Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius.
- 2 Drain liquid from the chickpeas, rinse and blot dry with a paper towel.
- 3 Toss chickpeas in a bowl with salt, nutritional yeast, and olive oil.
- 4 Spread chickpeas onto a baking tray and roast for one hour or until crunchy.

Protein Balls

In a food processor, combine the following ingredients, and roll into little balls!

Ingredients

- ¼ cup coconut flour
- ½ cup clean protein powder
- 5 tblsp honey (or rice malt syrup for a vegan version)
- 2 tblsp nut butter
- 2 tblsp non-dairy milk
- cacao powder to taste



Mini Veggie Muffins

Recipe makes **10** muffins.

These little veggie muffins are the perfect meal-on-the-go to sneak some extra veggies into your day, in the most delicious way!

If you're not a fan of these veggies, you can swap in your favourite ones. You can also add mushrooms or your choice of meat if you so desire.

Ingredients

- 1 capsicum, finely chopped
- 2 handfuls spinach, chopped
- 1 cup zucchini, grated
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, grated or finely chopped
- ½ tsp paprika
- 8 large, free range eggs
- pinch of chilli flakes (to taste)

Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius.
- 2 Line 10 muffin tin compartments with baking paper or muffin wraps of choice.
- 3 Divide capsicum, spinach, zucchini, onion and garlic evenly amongst each muffin compartment.
- 4 In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs, add in the spices and garlic, and stir to combine.
- 5 Pour the egg mixture into the muffin compartments, dividing evenly amongst all of them.
- 6 Bake in oven for 10-15 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Recipes WORK-FRIENDLY LUNCHES

Stop paying \$15 a lunch served straight out of a Bay-Marie, and take your own delicious and nutritious meals, made in advance for a lunch, or using less than 10 minutes of your lunch break. Bringing your lunch to work not only vastly improves your nutrition but saves you money and precious time on your breaks. Don't waste half your lunch break waiting in a line!

Zucchini Noodles

Makes 1 Serve.

This super-easy, super-cheap dish takes only minutes to make! You can buy spiralizers at almost any homewares store.

These "noodles" are great on their own or as a side dish, but for a more filling meal, add some vegetables and meat if desired! Some ideas we like are grilled chicken, a can of tuna, cherry tomatoes or a small handful of nuts!

Ingredients

- 1 large zucchini
- 1 tsp olive oil
- squeeze of lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

Toss all ingredients together in a bowl - no need to cook these, the longer they sit, the more tender the zucchini will be (thanks to the lemon!)



Strawberry and Avocado Salad

This salad is so delicious for something a little different and is easy to make at work!

Ingredients

- 1 medium avocado, chopped
- 8 large strawberries, chopped
- 3 tblsp walnuts (or almonds/nuts of choice), crushed
- 3 tblsp feta cheese (or non-dairy cheese of choice), crumbled
- 1 tblsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tblsp olive oil
- 1 tsp dried tarragon
- 1 tsp honey
- ½ tsp Celtic sea salt

Method

- 1 Combine apple cider vinegar, olive oil, tarragon, honey and salt in a jar/jug.
- 2 Place avocado, strawberries, nuts and feta in a bowl and pour over the apple cider vinegar mixture.

Make-at-work Mediterranean Bowl

Makes 1 Serve.

No meal prep needed, this bowl can be whipped up in just a couple of minutes at work (or at home for a super-easy weeknight dinner).

Ingredients

- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ can chickpeas, drained
- 1 small cucumber
- 7 olives
- ½ red onion
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 tblsp hummus
- 1 can line-caught tuna, drained (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

- 1 Dice the cherry tomatoes, olives and cucumber and add to your bowl.
- 2 Finely chop the red onion and add to bowl.
- 3 Add the chickpeas (and tuna if using) and toss everything to combine.
- 4 Top with hummus, salt and pepper to taste and a drizzle of olive oil.

Recipes DINNER

Ditching the ready-meals and takeout at dinnertime for a home-cooked meal can revolutionise your diet. It's not as easy, or as fast, but cooking for yourself can be very cathartic. Better yet, you'll drastically increase your consumption of good quality nutrients, while cutting out a lot of harmful toxins and chemicals. Better still, it'll save you a whole lot of money each week.

Hearty Shepherd's Pie

This version of a shepherd's pie is a healthy spin on the traditional version. Easy to make, it's a good one to cook for a dinner and freeze the rest for later, or to take to work if you want a bigger lunch option.

Ingredients

Topping:

- 3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 tblsp coconut oil
- 1½ tsp sweet paprika
- 1 tblsp nutritional yeast flakes (optional)
- celtic sea salt to taste

Filling:

- 500g mince of choice
- 2 large zucchinis, grated
- 1 brown onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, grated or finely chopped
- 1 broccoli, coarsely processed or diced
- 1 can organic diced tomatoes
- 1 tblsp olive oil
- 2 tblsp fresh oregano, chopped
- 1 tblsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 tblsp fresh coriander, chopped
- Pinch of cumin powder
- Chilli powder if desired



Method

- 1 In a large pot, place sweet potatoes and cover with cold water, adding a pinch of salt. Bring to the boil and reduce to a simmer until sweet potato has softened (approximately 20 minutes). Once cooked, drain.
- 2 Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius.
- 3 In a saucepan over medium-high heat, heat the olive oil and add your mince, brown onion and garlic. Sauté until cooked through.
- 4 Add grated zucchini, processed broccoli and herbs and stir to combine.
- 5 Add the can of diced tomatoes and stir to coat mixture.
- 6 Add salt and pepper to taste, and chilli powder if desired.
- 7 Transfer the mince mixture to a (20cm approx) baking dish.
- 8 Transfer the sweet potatoes back to pot, adding coconut oil and paprika (salt and pepper or nutritional yeast as desired) and mash.
- 9 Spread the sweet potato mash over the mince mixture.
- 10 Bake in the oven for approximately 30 minutes until the top has browned.

Roast Veggie Pasta

Makes **4** serves.

This delicious pasta can easily be popped into a container and taken to work! While there is no meat included in this version, you can, add your choice of meat (or tofu if desired).

Ingredients

- 1** red capsicum, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1** yellow capsium, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2** carrots , cut into bite-sized pieces
- ½** small pumpkin, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1** small-medium sized eggplant, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2** zucchinis, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 125g** mushrooms, finely diced
- 1** red onion, finely diced
- 2** tblsp olive oil
- 400g** spelt fettuccini (or pasta of choice)
- ½** cup flat leaf parsley, roughly chopped
- ½** cup basil leaves
- 125g** ricotta
- 2** tblsp Celtic sea salt
- lemon, cut into quarters
- salt and pepper, to taste (for vegetables)

Method

- 1** Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees Celsius (fan forced).
- 2** Place the bite-sized veggie chunks, mushrooms and onion in a large bowl, drizzle over 1 tblsp of olive oil, salt and pepper. Toss to combine.
- 3** Arrange the vegetables, ensuring everything is evenly coated in the olive oil in a roasting tray and place in the oven, roasting for 30 minutes or until tender on the inside, and golden on the outside. Turn the vegetables every 15 minutes or so until all sides become golden.
- 4** Meanwhile, boil approximately 3-4L of water in a pot. When water is at a rolling boil, add 2 tablespoons of Himalayan salt and pasta.
- 5** Bring back to the boil and cook pasta for approximately 11-15 minutes or until al dente. Once pasta is cooked, drain and rinse.
- 6** Once pasta and vegetables are cooked, add all to a large bowl with herbs, ricotta, and toss to combine.
- 7** Serve with a wedge of lemon.



Honey-garlic Salmon with Baked Asparagus

This delicious fish dish can be pulled together very quickly and is super simple, making it perfect for those busy weeknights. We've served it up with baked asparagus, but you can pair it with whatever vegetables or salad you like (even the zucchini noodles in our previous recipe.)

Ingredients

- 1** wild caught fresh salmon fillet (we used skin-on)
- 1** tblsp organic honey
- 3** cloves garlic, minced (you could crush with a mortar and pestle or place in a food processor)
- ¼** tsp Celtic sea salt
- pepper to taste
- 2** tblsp olive oil
- 1** tblsp lemon (or lime) juice
- 1** bunch asparagus
- ¼** tsp turmeric

Method

- 1** Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees Celsius.
- 2** In a small bowl, whisk together honey, garlic, salt, pepper, 1 tblsp olive oil and 1 tblsp lemon juice.
- 3** Coat the salmon with the honey mixture and place in baking dish, pouring any excess over the salmon.
- 4** Coat asparagus with turmeric and 1 tblsp olive oil (you can add salt and pepper to taste).
- 5** Place asparagus in the baking dish with the salmon.
- 6** Bake in oven for approximately 15-20 minutes or until salmon is cooked through and asparagus is tender.

Recipes

SWEET TREATS

Having a healthy and nutritious diet doesn't have to mean completely depriving your sweet tooth! Instead, try swapping out those super-sugary and fat-laden treats for something a little richer (in nutrients).

Sweet-and-salty Popcorn

Ingredients

- ¼** cup organic popping corn
- 1** tsp organic, grass-fed butter
- 1** tblsp honey
- ½** tsp vanilla
- salt (to taste)

Method

- 1** Add ¼ of a cup of organic popping corn to a brown paper bag, folding the top over twice (or enough times to ensure that it is properly sealed).
- 2** Microwave the paper bag for 2-3 minutes (or until there is a 5-second pause between pops).
- 3** Tip the popcorn into serving bowl.
- 4** In a small, glass microwave-safe dish, combine 1 tsp organic grass-fed butter, 1 tablespoon honey and ¼ teaspoon vanilla, and microwave until butter is melted.
- 5** Pour the mixture over the popcorn and toss to combine.
- 6** Top with additional salt if desired.



Banana Pancakes

These pancakes are sweet enough on their own and contain no added sugar. They can also be whipped up in a matter of minutes for when the cravings hit. You can make a couple of bigger pancakes, or multiple little pikelets with this recipe - it's up to you.

Ingredients

- 1** banana
- 1** free range egg
- ⅓** cup organic rolled oats
- 1** tsp organic, grass fed butter
- dash of vanilla
- pinch of cinnamon (optional)

Method

- 1** Place all other ingredients in a blender and process until it resembles a smooth batter.
- 2** Heat butter in a fry pan over medium heat.
- 3** Pour some of the mixture into the pan, flipping the pancake when the edges become stiff (should be a golden brown when cooked).

Coconut Yoghurt Pops

Makes 8 serves.

For this recipe, we made our own coconut yoghurt. If you don't have a yoghurt maker, you can always purchase pre-made coconut yoghurt, but make sure you check for added sugar and buy organic if possible! Alternatively, you can purchase a yoghurt maker for approximately \$23 from several major retailers.

To make our yoghurt, we used the EasiYo yoghurt maker, so the instructions may change depending on your yoghurt maker. Be sure to check the instructions for your specific device.

Equipment

Yoghurt maker (if making your own)
Icy pole moulds

Ingredients (coconut yoghurt)

- 670mL coconut cream
- ½ cup boiling water + enough to fill yoghurt maker
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1-2 tblsp honey OR maple syrup
- 1 tblsp good quality gelatin
- 2 probiotic capsules

Method (coconut yoghurt)

- 1 Pour 400mL coconut cream into appropriate yoghurt maker container (middle).
- 2 Add ¼ cup boiling water, vanilla extract and honey/maple syrup.
- 3 Stir to combine.
- 4 In a separate cup, combine ¼ cup boiling water with gelatin.
- 5 Once gelatin is dissolved, add to original mixture.
- 6 Add 270mL coconut cream to mixture and stir well to combine.
- 7 After a couple of minutes (when temperature has dropped significantly) add the probiotic capsules.
- 8 Put the lid back on the yoghurt capsule.
- 9 Fill yoghurt maker with boiling water up to fill line and place yoghurt capsule inside.
- 10 Leave on the bench overnight.
- 11 The next morning, give the yoghurt capsule a good shake, and place in the refrigerator for 5-8 hours or until set.

Ingredients (coconut yoghurt pops)

- 1 container coconut yoghurt (either home-made, or purchased – if purchasing, be mindful of added sugars and buy organic).
- 1 handful frozen raspberries
- 1 handful frozen blueberries
- 2 passionfruit

Method (coconut yoghurt pops)

- 1 Layer your berries/fruit of choice with the coconut yoghurt in the icy pole moulds.
- 2 Place in freezer for 12+ hours or until set.



Avocado Mousse

Makes approximately 4 serves.

Full of healthy fats, this recipe can satisfy the strongest chocolatey cravings - and if you didn't know the avocado was in there, you'd never taste it! This recipe makes approximately 4 servings, so you can reduce the amounts proportionally if you need, or make ahead of time and package the rest up!

When serving, we topped our mousse with cacao nibs and fresh berries for added yum!

Ingredients

- 2 ripe avocados
- ½ cup organic cacao powder
- ½ cup coconut cream
- ½ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup coconut oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- pinch of sea salt

Method

- 1 Place all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth
- 2 Separate into bowls and refrigerate for at least 1 hour (2-3 works best).



Recipes

FESTIVE FAVOURITES

Getting together with friends is a huge part of our lives, especially around holiday times! However, often these catch-ups can result in over-indulging or indulging in foods that are harmful for our overall health. While it's all about maintaining a healthy balance, these are just a couple of recipes that give some festive favourites a healthier spin.

> Platter Party

A good cheese platter is a staple at many a Christmas catch-up, and taking its usual place at the centre of the table, it's all-too-easy to just keep on snacking. Unfortunately, we can't completely remove the temptation to eat too much of it, but we can create a healthier version of the original!

> Top Tips

In addition to these recipes, include on your platter some carrot and cucumber, cut into thin discs or matchsticks.

When choosing crackers for your platter, stick to wholemeal or veggie crackers, keeping an eye on sodium content.

Fruit pairs perfectly with a platter. Some of the best ones to include are grapes, kiwis, strawberries, blueberries, cherries and apricots.

If you want to include meat on your platter, opt for smoked salmon instead of processed meats like salami or ham.

Include nuts, raw almonds, peanuts and pistachios add a bit of a crunch to your platter!

Opt for olives! Enjoyed in moderation, olives can add healthy fats to the platter.

If you'd like some bread on your platter, opt for a rye sourdough over white bread or baguettes.

Guacamole

Ingredients

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1tsp lemon juice
- 1 tblsp finely sliced fresh coriander
- ¼ tsp minced garlic
- 1 tblsp finely diced red onion
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

- 1 Smash the avocado in a bowl and stir through other ingredients.



Roasted Cherry Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 1 punnet organic cherry tomatoes (or bite-sized tomato of choice) - you can cut these in half if you'd like
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp olive oil

Method

- 1 Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees Celsius. (fan forced).
- 2 Toss the cherry tomatoes with olive oil and place on baking tray.
- 3 Drizzle balsamic vinegar over the tomatoes.
- 4 Bake tomatoes in oven for approximately 15 minutes or until they start to collapse.

Homemade Hummus

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 tblsp tahini
- 1 tblsp water
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 tsp cumin
- paprika/chili powder/turmeric (if desired)
- lemon juice to taste
- chopped parsley to taste
- salt and pepper to taste

Method

Place all ingredients in a blender, and process until smooth.

Strawberry Santas

Popular on Pinterest, this is a healthy take on the strawberry Santas! Due to the need to chill the coconut cream however, these do require some forward planning.

Ingredients

500g strawberries, leaves sliced off (make sure they are sliced so the strawberry can sit upright!)

- 1 large banana, sliced into thin discs.
- 1 can coconut cream: chilled in fridge for 1-3 days beforehand
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tblsp maple syrup (optional)

Method

- 1 Open the can of coconut cream, being careful not to turn it over. When open, gently scoop out the solidified cream, separating from the coconut water into a chilled bowl (you can reserve the water to use in smoothies etc).
- 2 Add the vanilla and maple syrup to the coconut cream.
- 3 Using hand beaters, or a stand mixer, whip the coconut cream on high speed until soft peaks form.
- 4 Set aside the cream for a moment (we recommend putting in the fridge while you cut the fruit).
- 5 Slice a disc off the end of each strawberry, about ¾ of the way down from the tip.
- 6 Using a butter knife (or pallet knife if you have one), “ice” the bottom disc of each strawberry with the whipped coconut cream. You want this layer to be about the same thickness as the banana slice.
- 7 Place the banana slice on top of the coconut cream and replace the tip of the strawberry on top of the banana, using a tiny dollop of the whipped coconut cream to make them stick! If you'd like, pipe a small tip of coconut cream onto the top of the strawberry to resemble the pompom on santas hat.



Mini “Christmas Puddings”

These might not taste like your traditional Christmas pudding, but they look the part, while being infinitely better for you!

Ingredients

- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 cup pitted dates
- ⅓ cup cacao powder
- 1 tblsp coconut flour
- 2 tblsp almond (or coconut) milk
- 1½ tsp peppermint extract
- 1 cup cashews (soaked at least 2 hours)
- 3 tblsp maple syrup
- ⅓ cup almond milk (you can also use water)
- 2 tblsp lemon juice
- pinch of pink salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- handful of small mint leaves (optional - to garnish)
- pinch of Celtic sea salt

Method

- 1 In a food processor, process the walnuts until they are finely chopped.
- 2 Add dates and repeat process until dates are also finely chopped and combined with walnuts.
- 3 Add cacao, peppermint extract, coconut flour, 1 tblsp almond/ coconut milk and pulse until all are combined.
- 4 Roll mixture into little balls (if they are not rolling, you might need to add some more milk, or if too wet, more coconut flour).
- 5 Push the balls into your tray to achieve a dome shape (like a little pudding).
- 6 In your processor, blend the soaked cashews, maple syrup, ⅓ cup almond milk, lemon juice, salt and vanilla until smooth.
- 7 Dollop a small amount of the cashew “cream” over each pudding and garnish with mint!

Penultimate Pavlova

While we'd never recommend eating this much sugar, the reality is that at Christmas, it is near-impossible to avoid the sweets. This version of a pavlova cuts back on ingredients like cream and corn flour but is definitely still something to have in moderation.

Ingredients

- 4 egg whites
- 1 tblsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tblsp arrowroot starch
- 1 cup coconut sugar (pulverized to a fine consistency)
- whipped coconut cream (see “Strawberry Santas” for instructions)
- fresh seasonal fruit and berries to top
- mint leaves (optional - to garnish)
- pinch of Celtic sea salt

Method

- 1 Pre-heat oven to 150 degrees Celsius.
- 2 Line your baking tray with baking paper.
- 3 Combine ground coconut sugar and arrowroot starch in a bowl.
- 4 Using a stand mixer, whip the egg whites and salt together on low speed until they start to foam.
- 5 Add the apple cider vinegar, slowly increasing the speed to high, continue to whip until soft peaks form.
- 6 Turn the mixer back to medium and add the sugar and arrowroot, one tablespoon at a time, until all added.
- 7 Turn the mixer back up to high, until stiff peaks form.
- 8 Pipe or spoon mixture onto baking tray (you can also make small meringues- just adjust cooking time to suit). Try to make the edges higher to get a little bit of a bowl shape.
- 9 Place in oven and bake for approximately 1 hour or until the outside is completely dry to touch.
- 10 When cooked, remove from oven and allow to cool completely before topping with whipped coconut cream and seasonal fruits/berries of choice.



Recipes VERA'S KITCHEN

This Plum Pudding recipe is an exclusive from Henry's wife, Dr Vera, and is one of their family favourites at Christmas. While it makes no claim of being healthy – it is delicious! Enjoy in moderation, as part of a balanced diet.

This recipe does require some forward planning and is best made as far in advance as possible.



Ingredients

750g raisins, chopped
500g sultanas
250g currants
125g mixed peel
2-3 glace fruits, chopped (you could use apricots, figs, whatever you like)
2 tblsp crystallised ginger
1 cup pitted prunes, chopped
1 cup pitted dates, chopped
3 tblsp spirit of choice (rum or brandy)
250g organic, grass fed butter
1 cup lightly packed brown sugar
1 Rind of a orange
1 Rind of a lemon
1 cooking apple - peeled, cored and finely chopped
1 carrot, grated
4 eggs
1 cup plain flour
1 tsp allspice
1 tsp cinnamon
1/3 tsp ground cloves
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1/3 tsp grated nutmeg
2 cups soft breadcrumbs

Method

The day before you begin, prepare the fruits by soaking them in whatever spirit you are using. Remember you can vary the fruits, and the amounts, the more fruit you put in, the richer the pudding will be, and the bigger the yield.

- 1 Grease a 10-cup pudding basin with butter, and line the bottom with buttered greaseproof paper. Cut a disc of the same greaseproof paper for the top of the basin.
- 2 In a stand mixer, cream butter and brown sugar with orange and lemon rind, and grated apple.
- 3 Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat thoroughly between additions.
- 4 In a large bowl, sift flour, allspice, cinnamon, ground cloves, ginger and nutmeg.
- 5 Add the breadcrumbs to the dry ingredient's mixture.
- 6 Alternate between adding the dry ingredient's mixture and the prepared fruits and grated carrot into the butter mixture, ensuring to mix well as you go.
- 7 Spoon mixture into the prepared pudding basin and top with previously prepared disc of greaseproof paper.
- 8 If your pudding basin has a lid, secure it over the mixture, or if it doesn't have a lid, cover with alfoil.
- 9 Steam the pudding in a large saucepan of boiling water, covered, for 5-6 hours checking at regular intervals that there is enough water in the pan to come up to halfway up the pudding basin.
- 10 Remove from the pan, and store in the fridge until Christmas Day, re-steaming 2 hours before serving.

Health MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

For some people, even the mere suggestion of exercise is enough to end a conversation. However, it is incredibly important for both our physical and mental health to move our bodies. Nobody is going to make you spend hours in a gym if you're not that way inclined. We've pulled together some of our favourite ideas to get your body moving more, and thrown in a workout in case you want to step it up a notch - but don't worry, there is no gym required for this one, it can be done in the comfort of your own home.

> Healthy Habits

Sneak more movement into your life with these healthy habits, based around things you are already doing!

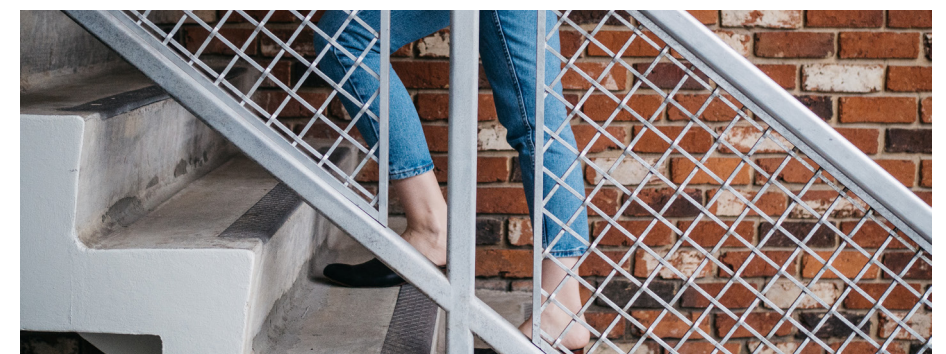


Catching up with Friends

Catching up with friends on the weekend is great for our mental health, but have you noticed how these catchups often revolve around food? Switch it up and go for a walking catchup, or just incorporate a walk into your breakfast date.

Pick a café within walking distance from one of your houses and take to the street before you take your seat! A 15-minute walk to breakfast will feel like nothing at the time, but once you've gone and returned you've snuck 30 minutes of movement into your day. As an added bonus, you'll get more quality time with your friends, more fresh air and more Vitamin D.

Take the Stairs



Whether you're at the shops, or the airport, or going in to work, it can become very easy to "justify" to ourselves why we should take the escalator or the lift. The long and short of it is, these are just excuses. The stairs will take you the same amount of time (less even, if there is a line up), and are the easiest way to move a little more.

Walk like a Farmer



Farmers markets, in addition to being home to incredibly fresh produce, organic goodies and ethical shopping, are an easy way to get some extra steps into your day. Spend less time in conventional supermarkets and source out a local farmers market to pick up your weekly fruit and veg.

Not only will you get some great produce (usually at great prices!) but you'll sneak in plenty of extra steps, extra sunlight and fresh air. Better still, farmers markets usually open well before supermarkets, so if you get an early start, you'll find yourself with more time in your day.

Health NO GYM? NO PROBLEM

This workout is one you can do wherever you are, and being just 10 minutes, it is easy to sneak in as soon as you get up, on your lunch break, while you wait for dinner to cook, or at any point of your day!

For this workout, do each of the following exercises for 45 seconds, resting for 15 seconds between each one.

Mountain Climbers



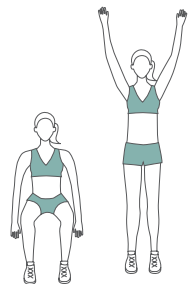
Push-ups



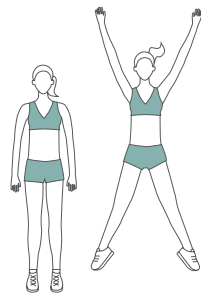
Crunches



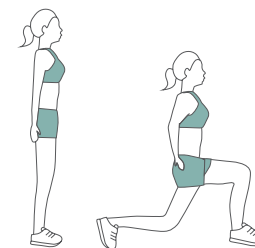
Jump Squats



Jumping Jacks



Alternating Lunges



Tricep Dips



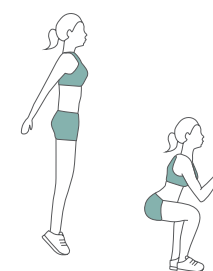
Bicycle Crunches



Quick Feet



Pop Squats



➤ As you find yourself getting fitter, repeat each exercise for multiple sets. This will give you a longer workout, to really challenge yourself.



Health HYDRATION STATION

> Why do we Need Water?

The human body is approximately 60% water, so it goes without saying that it is imperative to our health that we stay hydrated. But why is that? What is all this water doing in our body? And what happens if we don't have enough of it?

Brain Function

Our brains are made up of 80% water, so it is no surprise that water is important for several functions in the brain. Ensuring you drink enough water every day can improve concentration, cognition and memory function, as well as help you deal with stress and balance your moods and emotions.

Digestion

Starting with saliva, all the way to excretion, water is responsible for a lot of the digestion that our body does. Saliva is the water-based substance where the magic of digestion starts. Enzymes in saliva break down food and liquid so that the nutrients can be absorbed.

The body excretes waste via sweat, urine and faeces, and what do all these have in common? A big component of all of them is water, making it an important vehicle to remove this waste from the body in the most efficient (and pain free) way possible.

Skin's Saviour

Who doesn't love having youthful, soft skin? While making sure you're adequately hydrated won't magically erase all your skin issues, drinking enough water is important to flush out impurities, moisturise your skin and increase its elasticity. Dehydration wreaks havoc on our skin, leaving it looking dull and dry.



> How Much Water do we Really Need?

Typically, we hear that adults need to drink 8 glasses of water a day. However, in reality there is no hard and fast rule when it comes to how much water your body needs. The amount will depend on your environment, weight, age and level of activity amongst other things.

There are plenty of signs to look out for to determine whether or not you are drinking enough water, but the easiest way to tell, is to look at your urine. While other factors will affect the colour of your urine, as a general rule of thumb a healthy, well hydrated person's urine will be a pale yellow colour. The darker the yellow, the more likely you are to be dehydrated.

If you need a number to work to, for men, the average minimum requirement is 2.6L per day, and for women, 2.1L per day.

> Urine Colour Chart



Extremely Dehydrated

Drink 4 or more glasses of water in the next hour.



Dehydrated

Drink 2–4 glasses of water in the next hour.



Mildly Dehydrated

Drink 1–2 glasses of water in the next hour.



Hydrated

You are drinking enough water. Keep up the good work!

Vitamin and multivitamin supplements may change the colour of your urine, making it bright yellow or discoloured. Use this urine colour chart as a guide to whether you are drinking enough water or if you are dehydrated.



> How to Help Your Hydration

For some, drinking 2L of a water a day seems like an impossible task, but as we just discussed, it is incredibly important to make sure your body is well-hydrated.

Here are some tips to help you make hydration a habit.

Set a Goal

Set yourself water consumption goals throughout the day eg. make sure that you've had 1L by lunchtime. Keep yourself accountable and set reminders!

Accessorise

Invest in a good water bottle, that is not just easy to carry with you, but a pleasure to do so. There are many insulated stainless-steel bottles on the market that look great, and keep your water at the desired temperature all day.



Infuse

If plain water doesn't tickle your fancy, try adding fruit or herbs (such as mint) to your water to give it a bit of flavour. Some of our favourite infusions to use are lemon, mint and cucumber.



Leverage Technology

Logging intake is a great way to keep yourself accountable and keep an eye on how much water you are drinking. One great app we've seen is "Plant Nanny" where you log your water in order to keep a virtual plant pet alive (who says games are for kids!).

Health HEALTH-PROOF YOUR HOLIDAY

Let's face it, keeping your health goals on track is incredibly difficult during the festive season. However, just because there is cause for celebration, and potentially a little more indulgence than normal, there's no reason to completely throw in the towel. These are a few things to keep in mind over the festive season, so the recovery is more attainable as we enter the new year!

Eat Mindfully

It's all too easy to pick at the food that's on the table for hours on end when at a Christmas party, but this is an easy way to over-indulge. Take note of how your body is feeling, and try to avoid continuing to eat, long after you're full.

Stay Active

While holidays are for maximum relaxation, your body still needs to get moving to function properly. Moving is particularly important at a time of year when we tend to eat a little more than we otherwise would. Go for a quick 30-40 minute walk as soon as you get up, before the festivities start. It might be tempting to leave it till the afternoon, but post-festive walks are a high risk for excuses. Make it a family affair and take the kids/dogs with you too and start the day off the right way.

After Your Drinking Habits

For most people, a Christmas Day Champagne is a tradition. While ideally this would be a tradition we could completely ditch, in most cases that is not realistic. Instead, try to have a water between each drink, and remember to be mindful of how much you are drinking, if you choose to consume alcohol.



Be Wary of Germs

Getting everyone together for the festive season is one of the best parts, however it does carry a risk of sharing a little more than fond memories. Make sure you (and the kids!) are washing your hands well, and frequently. It is worth giving surfaces that a lot of hands touch a frequent wipe down as well. Think light switches, door handles (particularly in the toilet) and remotes. Make sure no one is getting too close for comfort by using glass markers to identify which cup belongs to who.

Don't Forget Your Veggies

With so much delicious Christmas fare getting about, fresh, green vegetables are often far from our minds. This isn't to say that you have to completely ditch those roast goodies, but rather, just make sure that some of your plate space is occupied by fresh veggies. If you eat those veggies first, it might even stop you dipping too deep into the potato salad.

DIY. BODY SCRUBS

We're so lucky in Australia that our Christmas break is full of sunshine and sand (for most of the population). But while the break is certainly good for our mental health, too much indulgence, and too much sun can take its toll on our skin.

In addition to making sure you use appropriate sun protection measures, and drink plenty of water, here are a couple of DIY skincare treatments to try over the summer break!

Lemon-aid

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup coconut oil
- ½ tsp vitamin E oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice



Summer Spritzer

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup coconut oil
- ¼ cup orange juice
- ½ tsp peppermint essential oil



DIY. FACE MASKS

Goddess Glow

- 1 tsp aloe vera
- ½ tsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp raw, organic honey
- ¼ tsp lemon juice
- Pinch of nutmeg



Summer Sunset

- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp raw, organic honey
- 1 tblsp organic (plain) yoghurt or kefir



D.I.Y. ALOE THERE, SUN

Sometimes the sun sneaks up on us! If you've forgotten to slip slop slap, here are a couple of ways to ease the pain. Remember to drink lots of water to get the moisture back into your skin, and wear loose fitting clothing so as not to aggravate it further.

Aloe Vera Cubes

Freeze aloe vera gel in ice cubes to soothe and cool sunburnt skin.

Cooling Tea Bags

Brew up some black tea, and once the tea bag has cooled, place on your skin (put it in the fridge/freezer first to make it extra cool!).

Baking Soda Bath

Brew up a baking soda bath. Fill up your bathtub with cool water and add a few heaped tablespoons of baking soda. You can also add oats or chamomile to help soothe the skin.



Mindfulness WHAT IS MINDFULNESS, REALLY?

Mindfulness is often used as a buzz word, but why has it gained so much attention in recent years?

While it sounds like something exclusive to monks and hermits, mindfulness is a practice that carries too many benefits to list and is easy to fit into your everyday life.



What is it?

Mindfulness is simply the practice of being fully present in the current moment, completely conscious of where you are right now, what you are feeling and thinking.

It might sound easy or obvious, but once you start really paying attention, it may shock you how often you're mentally absent. We get lost in our thoughts, mentally wandering and planning or reflecting.

Why is it Good for Us?

Mindfulness carries so many mental benefits, cultivating a sense of clarity and calm, helping us make better decisions and better cope with emotions.

But did you know that mindfulness also carries physical benefits? Practicing mindfulness in the form of meditation can help improve your immune system and strengthen the brain.

Outside of meditation, mindfulness is about immersing yourself in the moment. For example, mindful eating is about paying attention to the food you are eating, listening to how your body feels and focusing on the taste of that food.

How Do you Practice Mindfulness?

Practicing mindfulness doesn't require any fancy equipment, or any kind of expensive "retreat". In fact, mindfulness is best practiced... wherever you are!

Remember, the goal of mindfulness is not to completely quiet your mind or obtain some kind of transcendent state, it's simply to be completely immersed in the current moment. How you practice mindfulness will depend on your situation, and what you're hoping to get out of the practice.



Mindfulness MINDFUL EATING

Being mindful when you are eating is something we rarely think about in an era of convenience foods and meals being eaten in front of the TV. While it won't always be possible to practice completely mindful eating, here are a few ways you can be more mindful when you eat.



Eat from a Plate, Not a Packet

As a general rule of thumb, eating out of a packet is normally not a good thing, however, it isn't entirely unavoidable. We all have our vice, and if yours is out of a packet, so be it!

Instead of sitting down with that tub of ice cream, when you must indulge, make sure you put the appropriate serving size in a bowl before you start eating, and eat only what you've allocated.

Listen to Your Body

When we are not eating mindfully, we tend to eat well beyond the point of being full. Pay attention to the signs your body is giving you, and stop when you feel full, not when the meal is over.

Stop Multi-tasking

Put the phone down and focus on your meal when you are eating, rather than looking at what others are eating on Instagram! This extends to writing notes, taking phone calls or walking around while you are eating. Sit, and use the time you have for eating, to actually enjoy your food.

Focus on the Food

Pay attention to the way your food tastes, the textures, flavours and smells. Savour it as you eat it, rather than just inhaling it so you can get back to the TV.



Mindfulness MINDFULNESS FOR ANXIETY

Mindfulness can be extremely helpful for those suffering from anxiety. While it does depend on what is triggering your anxiety and the situation you're in, here are some mindful tactics that could help deal with that anxiety.

Switch Off

When we're feeling anxious, it can be easy to sink into an endless scroll of social media, but did you know this can induce anxiety? Log out of your social media accounts, and do something you enjoy, or find relaxing. Cook a meal, do something creative or go for a walk, whatever you choose, do it free of the pressure of social media.



Take Time for Tea

Just like grandma said, "there's no problem that can't be solved with a cup of tea". Making tea is a simple, step-by-step process, that can be very calming in itself. Notice the smell of the leaves and watch the flavour seep out into the water as the tea brews. Notice the steam rising from the cup and feel the warmth of the cup in your hands. For extra oomph, select a tea that has calming properties, such as chamomile or peppermint.



Re-enter Your Body

When anxiety or panic takes over, it can often feel like an out-of-body experience, or as though you've lost control. To calm yourself using mindfulness, re-connect with your body, breathing slowly and deeply, taking note of how the breath feels. Touch something in your hand and be mindful of its weight, texture and other physical characteristics.

Mindful Walking

You might have seen in the news recently a number of incidents caused by pedestrians playing on their phones while walking. Safe to say, this is the opposite of mindful walking! Go for a mindful walk, taking in all the sensations you experience while walking. Notice how your body feels, look around, and stop to smell the roses.

Keep it Green WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

In Australia, we're unfortunately guilty of plaguing our wonderful landscape with a huge amount of waste each year. At Christmas time, this tends to get infinitely worse. Here are a few things you can do this Christmas time to help keep our country festivity-friendly.



Shop Smart

Buying gifts for family and friends is a Christmas tradition for many people. When purchasing those presents though, here are a couple of ways you can reduce waste and make smarter shopping decisions.



Write a List, and Check it Twice

Start your Christmas planning as early as possible. Work out who you need to buy gifts for, and scribble down some ideas for them. Better still, ask them directly what they'd like for Christmas, guaranteeing that you'll purchase something that won't end up in the bin!

The list theory also works when planning festive celebrations. If you're hosting a Christmas event, work out exactly what you need, and write a list to take to the shops. Having a comprehensive list, and sticking to it, is not only less stressful, but helps reduce waste and saves you money, and it means you are using less fuel, while not contributing to the Christmas road congestion.

Quality Over Quantity

Instead of buying plastic, mass produced items or toys for children (little ones AND big ones), opt for higher quality gifts, and buy less of them. Look for gifts that are made locally, using sustainable practices. Buying better quality items means they'll have a longer life span before ending up in landfill. Visit the local artisan's market and support a local business while you're at it!

This too goes for the food you serve up at Christmas. Choose foods you know will be eaten or are liked - instead of buying a 50 pack of candy canes no-one will ever eat, opt for a fresh fruit platter, or some raw nuts.

Re-use and Recycle

Just like every shop you do throughout the year, remember to use re-usable shopping bags at Christmas time. Remember to recycle everything that can be recycled; your local council will usually have a guide for what can and can't go in the recycling bin on their website, so make sure to check that out, and if you need, write a note to leave atop the bin.

Cans, glass and hard plastics can go straight into the recycling bin. For soft plastics, check with your local grocer to see if they have a soft plastic recycling bin.



Pick Your Packaging

When shopping for Christmas gifts, try to choose those with less packaging, or opt out of the packaging where possible. Handmade or local artisan gifts usually come with little to no packaging. Before ordering gifts online consider if it would be possible to buy it locally, to reduce packaging and carbon miles.

When wrapping Christmas presents, ditch the glossy store-bought paper for something a little eco-friendlier, or recycle paper from the previous year. Before you purchase wrapping paper, check the cupboards for leftovers! If you must purchase more paper, opt for a recycled alternative, or dress up some leftover brown paper with a splash of ribbon.



Eat Smart

If you've stuck to your list, picked foods that everyone likes, and still have leftovers, it's time to get creative! Jump on Pinterest for some ideas on how to use leftovers or take those supplies that have remained untouched to a food donation service like OzHarvest or your local soup kitchen/YMCA.

Hostess with the Most-ess

If you're hosting Christmas festivities, there are a few things to look out for, to reduce your waste, environmental impact and better yet, keep your bin as empty, and non-smelly as possible.

While it can be tempting to serve up that Christmas lunch on disposable plates, it's time to whip out the "real" crockery and cutlery. Nine times out of ten, your guests will be more than happy to help wash up afterwards, knowing they're doing the right thing by the environment. If you must go for disposable, choose an eco-friendly alternative like paper or bamboo, that will decompose much faster than plastic.



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