



HOLIDAYS

*Are Coming*

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TIS THE SEASON TO EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY, RIGHT? WELL, YES, BUT YOU CAN DO IT WITHOUT PILING ON THE POUNDS. BESTFIT'S EMMA KIRKE EXPLAINS...

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# SCARY FACT...

**APPARENTLY THE AVERAGE AMERICAN WILL HAVE CONSUMED 4,500 CALORIES AT THANKSGIVING, ACCORDING TO NEW RESEARCH FROM THE CALORIE CONTROL COUNCIL. THE ORGANIZATION FOUND THAT THE TURKEY DINNER ALONE CAN CONTAIN 3,000 CALORIES. THE ADDITIONAL 1,500 CALORIES CAN BE BLAMED ON SNACKS SUCH AS DIPS, CHIPS AND BOOZY BEVERAGES CONSUMED BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE MAIN MEAL. IN ADDITION TO THIS IS A WHOPPING 229 GRAMS OF FAT IN THE MEAL ALONE. SOMETIMES THEY DEEP FRY THEIR TURKEY'S WHOLE AS WELL.**

In essence, our standard Christmas dinner is reasonably healthy. The main component, Turkey, is a rich source of protein. When skinless it is low in fat with the white meat having less fat than the dark meat. Turkey is a fabulous source of vitamin B6 and niacin for energy production. There is some evidence to suggest that regular turkey consumption can help lower cholesterol and stabilise insulin levels. Perhaps, most importantly, the meat contains tryptophan, the amino acid that produces serotonin and plays an important role in boosting the immune system. It is a source of selenium, which supports the thyroid hormone and your metabolic system. However, the meat can be high in sodium and large amounts of tryptophan can make you sleepy, which might contribute to the compulsory snooze or post-Christmas meal crash.

Ensure you're getting the best turkey and try and buy from a local source where the turkeys have been raised organically and are less likely to contain pesticides and herbicides. If you're marinating it, immediately place it in the fridge once ready, as it is very sensitive to heat. When kept in a fridge it will be fine for approximately two days, if it is precooked you can safely keep it for about four days.

The remaining components of roast vegetables and potatoes (I usually switch to white sweet potato and leave the skins on) are full of nutritional benefits, providing you roast them in a little coconut oil, avocado oil or a fat that can be used at high temperatures.

How many times have you stood at the supermarket checkout and marvelled at the huge amounts some people purchase for a mere two-day spell.

Do we over purchase for fear of running out of food, or perhaps not having enough choice? And how can we avoid adding the pounds or perhaps making the Christmas menu work for us? We've taken some of the standard holiday treats and tried to make them nutritionally beneficial whilst maintaining the seasonal luxurious taste.

# RECIPES



## CLOVE & PEAR SLOW-COOKED HAM

Place the ham joint in a slow cooker, push cloves into the meat (sharp end first). Sprinkle mixed spices onto the fat, which will become the crackling. Slice two pears in half and place around the joint. Drizzle 3 dessert spoons of local honey over the joint. Pop 2 or 3 cinnamon sticks into the pot and cook on a low heat for 8 hours.



## CIDER GLAZED ROOT VEGETABLES WITH CINNAMON WALNUTS

I use carrots, parsnips, turnip and sweet potato. Chop them however you prefer. For the glaze I used Walden Farm apple butter, Sweet Bird sugar-free toffee apple syrup and cinnamon. Blend 1 tsp cinnamon with 4 pumps of the syrup and 1 tbsp of apple butter. Pour this over the vegetables and sprinkle walnuts on top of the vegetables before roasting. Roast for 45mins on 180 degrees.



## EGGNOG PROTEIN PUDDING

4 scoops of vanilla protein powder, 4 scoops of almond flour, 1 large egg, ¼ cup Alpro unsweetened almond milk and 2 shots of sugar-free Sweet Bird eggnog flavour. Mix together and pour into individual ramekins or small pots. Bake in the oven for 15 – 20 minutes on 180 degrees.



## BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH HORSERADISH CREAM

Split your Brussels sprouts in half and place in a wok. Pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  a cup of coconut milk into the wok and add 2 dessert spoons of horseradish and 3 tsps of grated creamed coconut. Simmer until the Brussels start to soften and the sauce begins to reduce.



## PROTEIN TRUFFLES

You'll need 2 scoops of Sativa chocolate caramel,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup organic unsweetened cocoa powder, 6 pumps of cranberry sugar free Sweet Bird syrup,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cocoa nibs,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup linseed and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup Alpro unsweetened almond milk. Blend in the Nutribullet. It should be a stiff mixture with a slightly sticky nature. Take a tsp of the mix and roll it between your palms to make a ball. Pour some cocoa powder into a dish and roll the protein ball in the powder until coated thoroughly. Place each ball in a mini paper sweet case.



## PROTEIN PUMPKIN PIE

In your food processor, place  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup stevia (sweetener), 4 cups almond flour,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup almond milk. Blend together. Unlike normal pastry, you shouldn't try and roll this out. Take some of the mix (again not too sloppy but slightly sticky) and press evenly into your pie moulds. Cook for 15 mins on 180 degrees. In a bowl mix 1 jar of pumpkin puree, 3 tsps of Steenberg's pumpkin pie spice blend, add 2 scoops of vanilla protein. Add 4 melted leaves of gelatine to help it set. Spoon the pumpkin mix onto the shortbread pastry. Leave it to set in the fridge. For the topping you need 1 cup of either Coyo or Fage Total Greek yoghurt and mix with 2 shots of tasted marshmallow sugar free Sweet Bird syrup. Spoon the mix onto the pumpkin and then sprinkle a little of the pumpkin spice for decoration.



## MINCE PIES: MULTI-ALLERGY FRIENDLY

In your food processor, place  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup stevia, 4 cups almond flour,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup almond milk. Blend together. Unlike normal pastry you shouldn't try to roll this out. Take some of the mix (again not too sloppy but slightly sticky) and press into your pie moulds evenly. Cook for 5 mins on 180 degrees. In your Nutribullet place  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cranberries,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sultanas,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup pitted dates, 3 shots of eggnog sugar-free Sweet Bird syrup, 1 tsp mixed spice, 1 tsp all spice, 1 tsp cinnamon. Blend together and then spoon equal amounts into the pies and place back in the oven for a further 10 minutes.



## PROTEIN NO BAKE CHRISTMAS CAKE

I love Xmas cake and this is multi-allergy friendly plus protein enhanced. It also requires no cooking at all. In your food processor, add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup linseeds and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup flaxseeds.  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cocoa nibs,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup goji berries and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup date syrup. Add protein powder if you wish, I used Sativa chocolate caramel for a richer flavour but you could use any you chose. Then the Christmas element is added, 1 tsp mixed spices, 1 tsp all spice, 1 tsp ginger, 1 tsp cinnamon powder. Blend together. Line a metal loaf tin with cling film. Spoon the mix into the tin and press down firmly. Fold the excess cling film over the mix and place in the freezer for 2 hours minimum. Lift out and keep in the fridge until you need some. Slice and enjoy with a coffee.



## WINTER SPICED POACHED PEARS

Peel your pears and place in the slow cooker. Place 4 cinnamon sticks in the slow cooker with a little fruit juice, I used organic unsweetened apple juice. Slice 1 orange and add to the juice. Pop in 3 mulled spice teabags for easy. Cook for a minimum of 6 hours on a low heat.

*Enjoy a healthier Christmas from all at BESTFIT!*