



# A Healthy Christmas

The focus on Christmas Day is always the main dinner but it's really important to kick start the day with a good breakfast; one that will set you up nicely for the day ahead. We've three great breakfast recipes for you to consider.

While the foundation of most Christmas dinners, the turkey, is actually quite healthy in the fact that it's a lean source of protein, it's the trimmings that usually come laden with sugar, carbohydrate and fat.

From stuffing, to bread sauce and countless amounts of roast potatoes covered in gravy, what started out on your plate as a healthy option quickly becomes a mountain of calorie rich foods.

By swapping out some of your side dishes for some of the healthy festive ideas below you can still enjoy your main meal while keeping your weight loss on track.

The day after Christmas day - a delicious turkey stir fry for you.

Also, why not make some healthy and delicious gift treats. Check out our Chocolate Snow Balls and Ginger Spiced Cookies.

- Breakfast - Smoked Salmon with Poached Egg
- Breakfast - Ham & Egg Cups
- Breakfast - Banana Oat Powerhouse
- Starter - Roasted Cauliflower and Chestnut Soup
- Main Meal Side Dishes - Roasted Spiced Vegetables
- Main Meal Side Dishes - Mushroom & Potato Winter Salad
- Low Fat Gluten Free Turkey Gravy
- Dessert - Baked Pears with Cinnamon Honey
- Dessert - Raspberry Chocolate Mousse
- The Day After - Turkey Stir Fry
- Christmas Gift Treats - Raw Chocolate Snow Balls
- Christmas Gift Treats - Ginger Spiced Cookies



Protein	Carbohydrate	Free Veg
2	1	½

# Smoked Salmon with Poached Egg

Breakfast on Christmas day is a tradition in many households, some do pancakes, some do a full Irish, some do champagne! It can however often be rushed with the stress of getting the turkey into the oven or trying to get kids organised for the day amidst the unwrapping of every present in sight. For those on a weight loss plan or trying to watch their intake during the festive season, it is a great opportunity to eat healthily and start the day off well. Ensuring you have an adequate intake of protein as part of your breakfast will keep you feeling fuller for longer meaning you'll be less inclined to reach for snacks, sweets and alcohol in between meals.

Smoked salmon is a food many traditionally associate with Christmas time but it's packed full of protein and heart healthy fats making it a great choice year round. Pair it with eggs and a slow releasing carbohydrate and you've got yourself a powerhouse breakfast.

## Ingredients

- 160g Smoked Salmon
- 4 eggs
- 4 slices rye bread
- 200g spinach leaves
- Chopped chives

## Directions

1. Start by boiling a saucepan of water
2. Put your bread on to toast
3. Add the eggs to the boiling water making sure the water is spinning at the time you add each egg. It works best to poach them 2 at a time.
4. Once your toast is done, layer a handful of spinach leaves on top, the heat from the toast will start to wilt them. Next add on a slice of smoked salmon.
5. Remove the eggs when they're cooked to your liking and place on top of the salmon, sprinkle with chives and serve!



Protein	Rest. Veg	Free Veg
1¼	¼	1

# Ham and Egg Cups

In this recipe we have used a lean luncheon ham as it has less fat than the usual streaky bacon so you will save yourself a heap of calories by making the switch. As you know we are a big fan of eggs and this is just another brilliant way to add the super food in to your meal plan this week.

Also feel free to add your own spices or free veg (diced spring onion or red pepper would also be a nice pairing with this recipe.)

We have paired the egg cups with a light green salad, if you are fan of balsamic vinegar, we would suggest adding 2 tps over your greens for extra flavour.

## Ingredients

- 2.5 pieces of ham
- 4 medium eggs
- 1 red onion
- 1 tomato
- Mixed salad leaves

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees
2. Line each compartment of a regular muffin/cupcake tin with 1/2 piece of ham
3. Crack one egg into each compartment
4. Bake for 10-12 minutes, depending on how firm you like the yolks to be. If you prefer soft or runny yolks, cook for 8 – 9 minutes.
5. Top with some red onion and tomato and serve with a green salad and enjoy.



Fat	Dairy	Fruit
1	½	1

# Banana Oat Powerhouse

This banana oat powerhouse breakfast is packed with nutrition, the banana offers potassium, the nut butter and flax are jammed with healthy fats and the protein granola will keep you feeling full all morning.

## Ingredients

- 600ml of Alpro Oat Original
- 2 frozen bananas
- 1 tablespoon of almond butter (or peanut butter)
- 1 tablespoon of ground flaxseed
- 1/2 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- Sprinkle of cinnamon
- 1 serving of Motivation Protein Granola

## Directions

1. Simply blend everything apart from the granola in a food processor or blender.
2. Serve the banana oat powerhouse smoothie over the granola and top with some extra cinnamon if you want to give it an extra kick.



Fat	Rest. Veg	Free Veg
½	1	1

# Roasted Cauliflower & Chestnut Soup

This is a great soup recipe -chestnuts are a great swap for cream and you'd be forgiven for thinking that the soup actually contained cream. Sweet chestnuts are now sold in most stores and did you know that they are low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates. In addition, edible chestnuts are the only "nuts" that contain vitamin C – about 40 mg per 100 grams of raw chestnuts.

This soup can be make the night before and gently reheated on Christmas day.

## Ingredients

- 1 head cauliflower cut into florets
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion chopped
- 1 leek trimmed and well rinsed, chopped
- 2 potatoes peeled, diced
- 1/4 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp rubbed sage
- 1.5litres vegetable stock
- 100g roasted chestnuts

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 180C. Spray the cauliflower florets with low cal spray. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Roast the cauliflower for about 20 minutes until tender and lightly browned.
2. Heat 1 tbsp of olive oil in large soup pot. Add in the onion and leek, and sauté until translucent, about 2-3 minutes. Add potatoes, turmeric, thyme, bay leaf and broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and cook, covered, for 15 minutes.
3. Add the chestnuts and roasted cauliflower and continue to cook 15-20 minutes until potatoes are tender. Carefully puree the soup in a blender. Season with 1/2 tsp salt and pepper if needed.



Rest. Veg  
1

Free Veg  
1

# Roasted Spiced Vegetables

When we think of vegetables, we generally think of them as a side dish but through Motivation you'll have learned about Free Veg and Restricted Veg and how to incorporate more vegetable based dishes into your healthy eating routine. This dish is delicious.

## Starchy Vegetables

Pick restricted vegetables of your choice or else leave them out completely, here are some examples that work well.

- 2 whole carrots, halved lengthwise and chopped into large bites
- 100g butternut squash or parsnips, sliced into ½ inch cubes
- 100g Brussels sprouts, halved

## Non-starchy Vegetables

Pick your favourite free vegetables of choice, they cook faster so remember to check on them half way through roasting.

- 1 head of broccoli, roughly chopped
- 100g red or green cabbage, thinly sliced
- 1 red pepper, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 100g chopped cauliflower
- 1/2 courgette, sliced into ¼-inch rounds
- 1/2 tsp of salt and black pepper
- 1 Tbsp medium curry powder (or one that you prefer)

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 190C and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Place a steamer on the heat and add in whatever starchy restricted vegetables you're using, e.g. carrots, Brussel sprouts, onions or swedes.
3. Cover and steam the vegetables for 4-6 minutes or until just tender. A knife should easily pierce the vegetables but not easily slide all the way through. You're looking for them to be moist and slightly tender.
4. Transfer the steamed starchy vegetables to one side of the baking sheet and arrange the non-starchy vegetables on the other. Season to taste with salt and curry powder, and toss to coat. Should you wish to use a fat allowance you can add a little olive oil to crisp them up too.
5. Bake for a total of 20-30 minutes, removing anything that seems to have cooked faster as you check half way through.
6. At this point, they're ready to serve! However, you'll find that the vegetables are enhanced with a bit of fresh lemon juice and some herbs of choice.
7. Store leftover vegetables covered in the refrigerator up to 3-4 days. You can reheat on a parchment-lined baking sheet -200c - about 10 minutes.



Fat	Carb	Free Veg
1	1	1

# Mushroom and Potato Winter Salad

This salad can be served warm or cold which means it's another menu item that can be made the night before or the morning of. Oyster mushrooms are a delicious mushroom but if you want to cater for the delicate palettes, then swap in some button mushrooms to give it that balance.

## Ingredients

- 250g oyster mushrooms, trimmed
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt and black pepper
- 480g rooster potatoes, quartered
- 30g fresh parsley leaves
- 2 tbsp of capers, rinsed
- 2 tsp sherry or red-wine vinegar
- 150g swiss chard leaves

## Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 220C, on one lined baking sheet, toss the mushrooms with 1 tablespoon of olive oil; season with salt and pepper.
2. On another lined baking sheet, toss the potatoes with 1 tablespoon oil; season with salt and pepper. Roast until the mushrooms have browned and the potatoes are cooked through, about 20 minutes, tossing once halfway through.
3. Transfer to a bowl lined with the chard leaves and toss with parsley, vinegar, and capers, if desired.



Fat  
1

# Low Fat Gluten Free Turkey Gravy

For a lot of people, the gravy is the most important part of any Christmas day meal. Although it is traditionally made with a roux based on fat, below is a healthier alternative to make sure you don't have to feel deprived. This recipe is low in calories and fat as much of the physical fat is removed. Contrary to the advice of most gravy recipes, you can make amazing tasting gravy with a silky, smooth texture without adding butter or using the turkey grease left in the roasting pan.

## Ingredients

- The drippings from a roasted turkey
- Turkey or chicken stock (homemade preferred, but good quality pre-made stock will work too)
- 2 tbsp corn flour
- 1/2 tsp salt and pepper.

## Directions

1. Once your turkey has roasted remove it from the roasting dish so you are left with just the drippings.
2. Start by placing a fine mesh sieve over a bowl and straining your turkey drippings, pushing on the fats using a spatula to squeeze out any remaining liquid.
3. Next add 2 ice cubes to the bowl and watch as the fat will start to separate from the liquid, spoon off and discard the solid fat that settles on top.
4. After the fat has been removed measure the drippings and add the stock to make up your total gravy to 1 litre.
5. Place your gravy in a pan back on the heat and bring to simmer keeping about 1 mug full of the cool liquid aside.
6. In a bowl start to make a slurry. Add 2 tbsp of cornstarch (you'll need 1tbsp per 500ml of gravy) to the cool stock and mix well. Make sure this liquid is not hot as the cornflower will clump if so.
7. Now start to slowly add in the slurry whisking continually to avoid clumping and your gravy will start to thicken.
8. Bring the whole lot to a simmer and taste before seasoning. Hold back on seasonings until the gravy is finished, as often the turkey drippings can provide adequate salt in themselves. Taste the gravy before adding more salt.



Fruit	Fat
1	1

# Baked Pears with Cinnamon Honey

Dessert is easily the hardest place to stay on track when it comes to Christmas day.

With often a host of delectable options on offer it takes will power to say no.

Having an option on hand that you know you can have and enjoy guilt free will take the stress out of this time of the day.

## Ingredients

- 2 large pears
- 2 tablespoons agave syrup (available in many supermarkets and health stores)
- 4 tsp butter
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Directions

1. Peel the pears with a vegetable peeler to remove the skin. Cut the ends off, then cut the pears in half. With a spoon, gently scoop out the core and seeds using a circular motion.
2. Place the pears face down in a glass dish or large lined baking sheet.
3. In a small saucepan, combine the syrup, butter, cinnamon and vanilla.
4. Warm the sauce over low-medium heat, stirring until the butter is melted and ingredients are combined. Carefully spoon the sauce over the pears, reserving some of the sauce for later for drizzling.
5. Bake the pears for 30-35 minutes, until slightly soft and beginning to brown.
6. Remove from the oven and let sit for about 5 minutes before serving. Spoon a small amount of the leftover sauce over the pears when serving.



Protein	Fat	Carb
½	¼	¼

# Raspberry Chocolate Mousse

This low-calorie raspberry chocolate mousse can be made up to 2 days in advance which will help free up time for you on Christmas day!

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp raspberry liqueur such as Chambord
- 1/2 tablespoon full fat milk
- 1/2 teaspoon gelatin
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons sugar replacer such as Splenda or stevia, divided
- 40g 70% dark chocolate, chopped
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 100g raspberries

## Directions

1. Combine the Chambord and milk in a small bowl and sprinkle the gelatin on top, let stand to soften.
2. Place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave on High, stop and stir every 30 seconds to make sure it melts evenly and does not burn. Melt until its 75% melted.
3. Bring linch water to a simmer in a small saucepan. In a heat proof bowl wide enough to sit over the saucepan, combine the two egg yolks, 3/4 of the sugar replacer.
4. Sit the bowl over the simmering water and whisk constantly until the sugar dissolves, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the gelatin mixture and whisk until it dissolves, about 1 minute.
5. Remove the bowl from the heat and whisk in the melted chocolate and vanilla extract.
6. Beat the egg whites in a clean large bowl with an electric mixer on high speed until soft peaks form. Add the remaining sugar replacer and continue beating until the mixture holds stiff, shiny peaks.
7. Whisk one-fourth of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture until smooth using the electric beater. With a rubber spatula, gently fold the remaining egg whites into the chocolate mixture.
8. Divide among 4 dessert ramekins. Cover and refrigerate until set, this will take at least 2 hours. Serve garnished with some fresh raspberries and/or chocolate shavings, if desired.



Fat	Protein	Free Veg
1	1	1

# Turkey Stir Fry

While many of us start on turkey stuffing sandwiches as we collapse on Christmas evening, there are healthier ways to put your left overs to good use. This turkey stir fry will get your taste buds zinging thanks to the fresh ginger! A nice light, fresh, change up for your pallet after what can sometimes be quite a heavy day.

This stir fry could be eaten alone or with some rice or noodles, just refer to you carbohydrate allowance.

## Ingredients

### Sauce

- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1 thumb sized piece of ginger
- 1 small red chilli, de-seeded, finely sliced
- 4 tbsp reduced salt soy sauce
- Juice of half a lime

### Stir fry

- 240g leftover cooked turkey
- 400g of mixed free vegetables of choice; green and red peppers, broccoli, Asian cabbage work well.
- Juice of half a lime
- 1 tsp roast sesame oil
- 1 tsp sesame seeds (to serve)
- 1/2 red chili, de-seeded, finely sliced (to serve)

## Directions

### Sauce:

1. Crush garlic and ginger using a garlic press into a small bowl, add in the bits left inside the press too. Add in the freshly chopped chili and soy sauce and lime juice.

### Stir fry:

- 1.Heat the sesame oil in a wok and add your vegetables of choice, making sure that you keep stirring frequently.
- 2.Next add in the turkey
- 3.In a last step, add the sauce and mix until everything coats well.
- 4.Divide between plates, and sprinkle with some sesame seeds.



# Raw Chocolate Snow Balls

These mini fudge-like pieces melt in your mouth and could not be easier to make, dusted with desiccated coconut they look like snow balls but feel free to leave the coconut off and dust with cocoa powder if you want them to look more truffle like. They also look fabulous rolled in finely chopped nuts!

They are dairy free, oil free, sugar free and also suitable for coeliacs as they contain no gluten!

## Ingredients

- 120g walnuts
- 220g pitted dates, the softer the better
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3-4 tbsp cacao powder
- desiccated coconut for dusting

## Directions

1. Blend all the ingredients using a food processor. If the mixture is a little too stiff or your dates weren't soft enough you can add 1tsp of warm water at a time until it blends easily.
1. Take 1 tsp of the mix at a time and roll into small balls.
2. Place the balls on a sheet of cling film and dust with desiccated coconut, finely chopped nuts or cocoa powder.
3. Leave them to set in the fridge for a couple of hours and then parcel up into mini boxes or sweet bags and tie with a festive ribbon.



# Spiced Ginger Cookies

These cookies are gluten free so would make a lovely gift for someone coeliac too! The recipe makes 10 cookies but feel free to scale it up if you'd like to make extra.

## Ingredients

- 50g coconut oil at room temperature (liquid)
- 35g cup coconut sugar
- 2 tbsp molasses
- 1 egg, at room temperature
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 120g almond flour
- 30g coconut flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/4 tsp salt

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 175 degrees C.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the coconut oil, coconut sugar, molasses, egg and vanilla extract. (If you have had to heat your coconut oil to liquify it, make sure it is cool before using it and not warm.)
3. Next add in the almond flour, coconut flour, baking soda, spices and salt; mix well to combine and form a dough. Leave the dough to rest for a few minutes.
4. Using a desert spoon pick up small chunks and then use your hands to roll the dough into a ball.
5. Place the cookies on a baking tray lined with an ungreased sheet of parchment paper and gently flatten the dough with your hand. If you want to use a Christmas theme, then use a cookie cutter.
6. Bake for 8-11 minutes and remove from the oven. Allow the cookies to cool on the tray for 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to finishing cooling.