



## 20 Healthy Holiday Hacks from the Experts at Aramark and the American Heart Association

December 7, 2017

*Chefs and Dietitians Share Their Tips to Set the Table for a Heartfelt Holiday Celebration*

PHILADELPHIA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 7, 2017-- Celebrating the holidays with food, family and friends is what makes this time of year special. [Aramark](#) (NYSE: ARMK), a global leader in food, facilities and uniforms, that serves more than two billion meals each year, and the [American Heart Association](#) (AHA), the nation's largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, have teamed up to dish out recipes, tips and tricks from their experts, to help families create a healthy holiday celebration.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20171207005220/en/>



Aramark and the American Heart Association are [working together to improve the health of Americans 20% by 2020](#). Through healthy menu and recipe innovation, health awareness and education programs, Aramark and the AHA are encouraging individuals and families to make healthy eating a part of everyday life, including during the holidays.

"The holidays are all about tradition, heritage and family togetherness, which can often include indulging in your family's favorite meals," said Annette Gray, Lead Chef, Culinary & Innovation Aramark. "With all of the tasty temptation, there are plenty of tips and tricks to help maintain a balance of incorporating healthy foods, while still enjoying traditional holiday favorites."

"It's okay to indulge sometimes during the holidays, just enjoy in moderation," said Rachel Johnson, PhD, RD, a Professor of Nutrition and Medicine at the University of Vermont and spokesperson for the American Heart Association. "Extra calories, sodium, saturated fats and added sugars are hiding in a lot of traditional holiday treats. The good news is, you can

Aramark and the American Heart Association have teamed up to dish out recipes, tips and tricks from their experts, to help families create a healthy holiday celebration. (Photo: Business Wire)

make some simple changes to swap out the unhealthy ingredients without sacrificing flavor or fun."

**COMFORT FOOD SWAPS:** There's no reason to cut out traditional holiday foods. Enjoy holiday favorites by swapping out a few ingredients with healthier ones, or reimagining signature holiday flavors.

- **Cauliflower Mashed Potatoes-** Steamed cauliflower can be mashed or blended, just like potatoes. Top with herbs and other seasonings.
- **Spaghetti Squash-** Roasted spaghetti squash strands make a great substitution for traditional pasta. Pair the roasted squash with popular pasta toppings, like marinara or pesto.
- **Whole Grain Stuffing-** Bump up the fiber and nutrients in your stuffing by switching to a whole grain bread instead of white bread.
- **Fruit Crisp-** Fruit crisps are a delicious alternative to a traditional fruit pie. Make pie filling according to recipe instructions and replace the double crust with a topping of oatmeal and bake.
- **Pumpkin Pie Smoothie-** Eat dessert for breakfast! Switch up breakfast with a sweet and spicy smoothie blended with canned pumpkin, banana, pumpkin pie spice, vanilla almond milk and chia seeds.
- **Sweet Potato, Carrot and Zucchini French Fries-** Baked sweet potatoes, carrots or zucchini, tossed with spices and olive oil, are a great tasting, untraditional side dish.

**HOLIDAY SUSTAINABILITY TIPS:** Enjoy the holiday season, while being mindful of the planet, with these tips and tricks.

- **Reinvent Your Leftovers-** Utilize holiday leftovers in more ways than one when the celebration is over. Avoid food waste by turning scraps into soups, casseroles, sandwiches and more.

- **Freeze the Feast-** Enjoy holiday foods longer by freezing leftovers. Place leftovers in single portions for easy enjoyment later on. The freezer is great for foods like meat and other poultry that may spoil quicker.
- **Reduce Plate Size-** Minimize waste by utilizing a smaller plate for holiday meals. Eating off a smaller plate encourages guests to take less food and reduces the likelihood of waste occurring.
- **Potluck Power-** Invite family and friends to bring their own dish to holiday celebrations, to avoid excessive cooking. Store potluck dishes in on-the-go containers for guests to take home and enjoy later, once the party is over.

**HEALTH & SAFETY TIPS:** Keep safety top of mind, when preparing a holiday feast, by remembering these tips from Aramark's safety experts.

- **Wash Your Hands-** Hands must be washed AFTER using the restroom, coughing, sneezing and handling raw foods and garbage. Always wash your hands BEFORE starting to prepare food and in between tasks. Handwashing is critical to preparing safe food.
- **Thaw Frozen Food Properly-** It is recommended that a refrigerator is used to thaw frozen food, so plan ahead. For every 5 pounds (2kg 270g) of large frozen food, allow 24 hours of refrigerator thawing time. Place the food in a tray or container deep enough to collect any draining fluids to prevent contamination of other foods in the refrigerator.
- **Use Proper Cooking Temperatures-** Cook raw meat products to the minimum internal temperatures as stated on the product packaging. Insert a thermometer (digital is preferred) at several spots including the thickest part of the meat product. Achieving the proper internal minimum cooking temperature is critical to preparing safe food.
- **Avoid Cross-Contamination-** It is important to thoroughly clean kitchen counters, cutting boards and utensils to avoid cross contamination. Always clean kitchen counters, cutting boards and utensils in between tasks. Ideally use separate cutting boards for raw and ready-to-eat foods.
- **Transporting the Food-** Keeping cold food cold is key, so pack food with ice or frozen packs, in a closed cooler, when traveling. Cold food should be stored at 41°F (5°C) or below. Protect food from cross-contamination, by keeping raw meat, poultry, and seafood securely wrapped.
- **Storing and Reheating Leftovers-** Leftovers must be cooled to below 70°F (21°C) within 2 hours, and then to 41°F (5°C) or below within 4 hours. Large items should be broken down into smaller items by either physically breaking items apart or placing the item in multiple small shallow containers. Keep refrigerated leftover for 3 days from initial cooking or freeze for longer storage and reheat leftover food once to 165°F (74°C) for 15 seconds.

**MAKE IT MEATLESS:** Turkey, ham or roasts don't have to be the only stars of the holidays. Fill your plate up with plant-based options that make the most of seasonal vegetables.

#### **Butternut Squash Bisque**

*Squash and sweet potatoes blended together into a creamy bisque with pumpkin pie spice, onion, celery, carrots, gingerroot and other seasonings.*

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup celery pieces (1-inch)
- ½ cup carrot pieces (1-inch)
- 2 teaspoons grated, peeled gingerroot
- 2 tablespoons vegetable soup base
- 1 quart water
- ¾ cup diced, seeded, peeled butternut squash
- 1 can (15 ounces) sweet potatoes, drained and cut into 2-inch pieces
- ¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves

#### **Preparation:**

1. In a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat, heat oil. Stir in onion, celery, carrots and gingerroot. Cook until onion is translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in base.
2. Stir in water, squash, sweet potatoes, pumpkin pie spice, salt, pepper, nutmeg and thyme. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Simmer until squash is tender, 20 to 25 minutes.
3. In blender, process soup in batches on medium speed until smooth.
4. Strain through a mesh strainer.

#### **Sweet Potato Poblano Salad**

*Sweet potato cubes, poblano chili peppers (or sweet bell peppers), sliced scallions, and celery paired with dressings and other seasonings.*

### Ingredients

- 2¼ cups peeled, diced fresh sweet potatoes
- ⅓ cup seeded, diced fresh poblano chili peppers and/or large sweet red peppers
- ⅓ cup sliced scallions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- Dressing (recipe follows)

### Preparation

1. Cook sweet potatoes covered in ½ inch boiling water until tender. Drain. Chill.
2. Combine chilled sweet potatoes, poblano pepper, scallion, celery and dressing.
3. Toss to coat. Cover. Keep chilled.
4. Dressing: In bowl, combine 2 tbl. vegetable oil, 2 tbl. lemon juice, 2 tbl. honey, ¾ tsp. chili powder, ½ tsp. salt, ½ tsp. cumin, ¼ tsp. black pepper and ¼ tsp. hot pepper sauce. Whisk until well blended.

### Cinnamon-Glazed Root Vegetables

*Roasted vegetables glazed with olive oil, cinnamon, margarine and brown sugar.*

(Compliments of the American Heart Association)

### Ingredients

- 1 small raw sweet potato (cut into 1-inch cubes, peeled if desired)
- 1/2 cup baby carrots (cut into 1-inch pieces)
- 1 small turnip (cut into 1-inch cubes)
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. light tub margarine
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. brown sugar

### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Combine vegetables in a medium mixing bowl and toss with olive oil to coat.
3. Spread vegetables on a baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes.
4. Stir vegetables and bake an additional 20 minutes until vegetables are tender (pierce easily with a fork) and are lightly browned.
5. Return vegetables to mixing bowl and add margarine, cinnamon and brown sugar.
6. Toss until margarine is melted and vegetables are coated with cinnamon and sugar.

### Nutrition Analysis (per serving)

Calories 105, Total Fat 5.0 g, Saturated Fat 0.5 g, Trans Fat 0.0 g, Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5 g, Monounsaturated Fat 3.0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 71 mg, Carbohydrates 15 g, Fiber 3 g, Sugars 5 g, Protein 1 g. **Dietary Exchanges:** 1 starch, 1 fat.

### Curried Pumpkin Soup

*Pumpkin puree with vegetable broth, tofu, milk, maple syrup, curry powder, salt, cayenne and fresh herbs.*

(Compliments of American Heart Association)

### Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup chopped shallots
- Two 15 oz cans pumpkin (not pie filling)
- 2 cups fat-free, low-sodium vegetable broth
- 12 ounces light, firm tofu (drained, patted dry, chopped)
- One 12 oz can fat-free evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne (optional)
- 1/4 cup unsalted shelled pepitas (pumpkin seeds), dry-roasted
- 2 tablespoons chopped, fresh cilantro

### Preparation

1. In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium-low heat, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the shallots for 2 to 3 minutes, or until soft, stirring occasionally.
2. Stir in the pumpkin, broth, tofu, milk, maple syrup, curry powder, salt, and cayenne.
3. In a food processor or blender (vent the blender lid), process the soup in batches until smooth. Carefully return the soup to the pan.
4. Cook, still over medium-low heat, for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the soup is heated through, stirring occasionally.
5. Just before serving, sprinkle with the pepitas and cilantro.

#### **Nutrition Analysis (per serving)**

Calories 188, Total Fat 5.0 g, Saturated Fat 0.5 g, Trans Fat 0.0 g, Polyunsaturated Fat 2.0 g, Monounsaturated Fat 1.5 g, Cholesterol 3 mg, Sodium 202 mg, Carbohydrates 25 g, Fiber 7 g, Sugars 17 g, Protein 14 g. **Dietary Exchanges:** 1 starch, ½ fat-free milk, 1 lean meat

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Aramark (NYSE: ARMK) proudly serves Fortune 500 companies, world champion sports teams, state-of-the-art healthcare providers, the world's leading educational institutions, iconic destinations and cultural attractions, and numerous municipalities in 19 countries around the world. Our 270,000 team members deliver experiences that enrich and nourish millions of lives every day through innovative services in food, facilities management and uniforms. We operate our business with social responsibility, focusing on initiatives that support our diverse workforce, advance consumer health and wellness, protect our environment, and strengthen our communities. Aramark is recognized as one of the World's Most Admired Companies by FORTUNE as well as an employer of choice by the Human Rights Campaign and DiversityInc. Learn more at [www.aramark.com](http://www.aramark.com) or connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.

#### **About American Heart Association**

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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