May 2016- International Mediterranean Diet Month

A note from the author—
Hello friends! Spring is in the air and with warmer weather comes a ton of fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables. Lighter meals, more salads, and more fruit consumption always seems to prevail during this time of year. Especially with summer right around the corner, a lot of people have been trying to eat healthier, exercise more, and lose weight to help them get, “beach ready.” This month, I urge you to explore, “The Mediterranean Diet”, a way of changing the way you eat on a daily basis, 365 days/year, to a more heart healthy, well-balanced (and delicious) way of cooking, eating, and enjoying food.

What is, “International Mediterranean Diet Month”?
As background, the traditional Mediterranean Diet came to the U.S. back in January 1993, when Oldways and the Harvard School of Public Health convened the International Conference on the Diets of the Mediterranean in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was there that the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid was unveiled, representing visually the traditional foodways of the Mediterranean region.

Back then olive oil was mainly an ethnic product. Not long after the introduction of the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid, a leading health organization wrote, “Americans will never embrace olive oil; they’ll just think they need to pour it on French fries!” How wrong they were! Since its introduction in 1993, consumers, educators, and health professionals have used the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid to understand and implement healthier eating habits.

May is International Mediterranean Diet Month and marks the 20th anniversary of the food and nutrition nonprofit Oldways’ introduction of the Mediterranean Diet here in the U.S. along with the Med Diet Pyramid, discussed later in this article. Despite the lure of glitzy fad diets, one centuries-old approach to eating and living is still the gold standard for good health and great taste: the Mediterranean Diet. There is no better time to
discover the delicious foods and proven health benefits associated with this vibrant lifestyle.

What IS the “Mediterranean Diet”?
The traditional Mediterranean Diet came to the U.S. back in January 1993, when Oldways and the Harvard School of Public Health convened the International Conference on the Diets of the Mediterranean in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was there that the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid was unveiled, representing visually the traditional foodways of the Mediterranean region. Since its introduction, consumers, educators, and health professionals have used the Pyramid to understand and implement healthier eating habits. Products inspired by the region, such as hummus, olive oil, olives and Greek yogurt, are now best sellers.

Is the “Mediterranean Diet” a typical diet?
No, the beauty of the traditional Mediterranean Diet is that, unlike restrictive fad diets, it celebrates cooking and eating simple, wholesome, minimally processed foods as well as being active, enjoying delicious meals with friends and family, and drinking wine in moderation with those meals. The Mediterranean Diet is a way of eating (and cooking) that incorporates natural, Mediterranean foods into daily meals. For example, cooking with olive oil instead of vegetable oil or topping a salad with avocado instead of cheese.

Why is the Mediterranean Diet healthier?
The individual foods recommended under the Mediterranean diet are healthy in their own right. Eating more fruits and vegetables (full of antioxidants), for example, reduces risk for mortality — and fruits and vegetables are among the core group of foods each Mediterranean meal should be based off. If not fruits and vegetables, than it’s a choice between whole grains, olive oil, beans, nuts, legumes and seeds, and/or herbs and spices.

There’s also something to be said for the amount of fish Mediterranean diets consume, at least two servings each week. Oily fish, like salmon and mackerel, are rich in omega-3 fatty acids (as are some vegetable oils, green vegetables, and walnuts). The HSPH reported, “we need omega-3 fatty acids for numerous normal body functions, such as controlling blood clotting and building cell membranes in the brain.” HSPH added omega-3s might protect against heart disease and stroke, as well as cancer,
inflammatory bowel disease, and other autoimmune diseases, like lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, too.

The body can't make omega-3s on its own, adding further value to these nutrient-rich foods. "Omega-3 fatty acids are really important to human health, whether you're talking about CVD, brain or immune health," Philip Calder, a metabolic biochemist and nutritionist from the University of Southampton, said in a press release. "Health professionals have a key role to play in educating the public about the beneficial effects of including fish in their diets."

Olive oil and nuts tend to be the staple Mediterranean foods placed under scrutiny; these are, after all, high in fat. The thing is, they're high in healthy fat. Monounsaturated fats are fat molecules that have one unsaturated carbon bond, or a double bond, and they can help reduce bad cholesterol levels, the American Heart Association reported.

Nutrient Packed Foods
The Mediterranean diet essentially combines foods individually high in antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, and good-for-you fat for an even healthier eating experience; it doesn't ban entire food groups, making it easier for dieters comply long-term. Depending on the meals dieters enjoy, foods can also be high in healthy nutrients and vitamins, like fiber, potassium, calcium, and vitamin D.

Beyond the Food
Perhaps more healthy than the Mediterranean’s traditional menu is their tradition, even ritual, to sit down and eat with each other. Communal eating occurs less in today’s society, but taking the time to eat and drink in someone else's company can boost social connection, happiness, and individual sense of belonging. Bonus: a 2010 study published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior found children of families who ate together also made healthier choices throughout the week.

"Food and drink are the lifeblood of social cohesion, integration and differentiation, and are active ingredients in humans' perceived ties to the sacred and the supernatural," Dr. Thomas M. Wilson, a professor of anthropology at Binghamton University, said. "Both
food and alcohol build and enhance peoples' senses of belonging and becoming, the twin bases to social identity."

Don’t worry; the Mediterranean diet doesn't skimp on alcohol. Wine is actually listed on Oldways’ pyramid, an alcoholic beverage with its own set of health benefits. That said, there are some caveats. For one, the diet isn't necessarily conducive to weight loss, or at least science has yet to find a strong enough relationship. And two, some of the diet's staple foods may cost you more than usual at the grocery store.

“[The Mediterranean Diet is] moderately pricey,” US News reported. “While some ingredients (olive oil, nuts, fish and fresh produce in particular) can be expensive, you can find ways to keep the tab reasonable. Can’t spring for the $50 bottle of wine? Grab one for $15 instead. And snag whatever veggies are on sale that day, rather than the $3-a-piece artichokes.”

What are the health benefits of a Mediterranean Diet?
With more and more research pointing to the health advantages of the Mediterranean Diet, including a first-of-its-kind clinical study showing its impressive cardiovascular benefits, it is the perfect time to celebrate International Mediterranean Diet Month.”

The Mediterranean Diet consistently draws praise. Recently, US News & World Report named the Med Diet the Best Plant Based Diet, as well as the third best diet overall. It’s also the third best diet for healthy eating and the third easiest diet to follow, as well as the fourth best diet for heart-health. And there’s no short supply of research to support these rankings.

The New England Journal of Medicine published findings from a new clinical study showing the Mediterranean Diet may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke by as much as 30%. The benefits of the Mediterranean Diet and lifestyle have also been validated by The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans as one of the most thoroughly researched models for healthy living. And it doesn’t hurt that celebs like Jennifer Garner, Penelope Cruz, Elizabeth Hurley, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Isla Fisher and Heidi Klum have all extolled the Med way of eating.
Research presented during this year’s American College of Cardiology’s 64th Annual Scientific Session found the Mediterranean diet helps cut risk for heart disease in half. The more Mediterranean options study participants ate — at least 11 of the 55 available — the less likely they were to develop disease. What’s more is a 2014 study published in the journal Stroke found this particular diet controls blood pressure, thus lowers risk of first-time stroke, while additional research shows sourcing more of the Mediterranean’s extra-virgin olive oil and nuts lowers risk of developing peripheral artery disease.

Hundreds of scientific studies report that the healthy Mediterranean Diet and its lifestyle practices reduce the risk of chronic diseases and, while the Med Diet isn’t a “go on a diet” type diet, it can lead to weight loss and overall wellbeing.

The specific health benefits
Studies show following a Mediterranean diet can improve cognition and memory, as well as lessen risk for cardiovascular disease, kidney disease; diabetes; and dementia. Heart disease causes 80 percent of erectile dysfunction cases, which is one of the main reasons why many men are referred to the diet by their doctors.

If that weren’t enough, two different studies have linked the Mediterranean diet to longevity; women especially are 40 percent more likely to live past the age of 70. “The evidence base for the Mediterranean diet in preventing all of the chronic diseases plaguing the western world is overwhelming,” Aseem Malhotra, an interventional cardiology specialist, said in a previous statement. “Policymakers and the public need to know that such a diet is far more potent than the often dubious benefit of many medications and without side-effects.”

What are the basic features of the Mediterranean Diet?
The eight basic tenets of the Mediterranean Diet, outlined in The Oldways 4-Week Mediterranean Diet Menu Plan, show it is convenient and affordable, promoting vibrant, fresh flavors, not deprivation. The eight basics are:
1. **Eat lots of vegetables.** From a simple plate of sliced fresh tomatoes topped with crumbled feta cheese to healthy pizzas, vegetables are vitally important to the fresh tastes of the Mediterranean Diet. The recommendation is to fill half your plate with them.

2. **Change the way you think about meat.** If you eat meat, add small strips of sirloin to a vegetable sauté, or garnish a dish of pasta with diced prosciutto. As a main course, eat 3 ounces or less of chicken or lean meat.

3. **Always eat breakfast.** Start your day with fiber-rich foods such as fruit and whole grains that can keep you feeling pleasantly full for hours. Layer granola, yogurt, and fruit, or mash half an avocado with a fork and spread it on a slice of whole grain toast.

4. **Eat seafood twice a week.** Fish such as tuna, herring, salmon, and sardines are rich in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids, and shellfish including mussels, oysters, and clams have similar benefits for brain and heart health.

5. **Cook a vegetarian meal one night a week.** Build these meals around beans, whole grains, and vegetables, and heighten the flavor with fragrant herbs and spices. Now, try two nights per week.

6. **Use good fats.** Include sources of healthy fats in daily meals, especially extra-virgin olive oil, nuts, peanuts, sunflower seeds, olives, and avocados.

7. **Enjoy some dairy products.** Eat Greek or plain yogurt, and try small amounts of a variety of cheeses.

8. **For dessert, eat fresh fruit.** Choose from a wide range of delicious fresh fruits — from fresh figs and oranges to pomegranates, grapes and apples. Save sweets like cookies and ice cream for a special treat.
The Med Pyramid
To accompany the information provided above regarding the basic tenants of the Mediterranean Diet, the USDA developed “The Med Pyramid” to guide people on proportions of various foods and recommended serving sizes per day.

Begin at the Base
At the core of the Mediterranean Diet are fruits and vegetables, nuts, legumes, whole grains, olive oil and fish. While there are small amounts of meat and dairy, many of the foods consistent with a Mediterranean Diet are plant-based and naturally high in fiber. For those following a 2,000 calorie diet, the USDA recommends an average of two cups of fruits and 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day, and six servings of grains, preferably whole, as well.

**Pass Up the Processed Foods**
Another hallmark of the Mediterranean Diet is the emphasis on simply-prepared, minimally-processed foods. If it comes out of a box or a bag, it probably isn’t part of the Mediterranean Diet! Many people find this “whole foods” approach to meal planning one of the most attractive things about the Mediterranean lifestyle. There is an additional focus on being physically active and enjoying meals with friends and family.

**Focus on Good Fats**
The Mediterranean Diet is characterized by a high monounsaturated to saturated fatty acid ratio. Avocados are virtually the only fruit that has monounsaturated fat, and in fact 75 percent of an avocado’s fat content comes from “good” mono- and polyunsaturated fats. California Avocados are a great addition to a Mediterranean meal plan not only for their favorable ratio of unsaturated-to-saturated fat (3.5 grams to 0.5 grams) but also because they contain nearly 20 different vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals. You can add California Avocados to a Mediterranean pasta salad, or pair them with lean proteins for a main course.
No matter how you go about building your Mediterranean lifestyle, focus on the flexibility and variety of the foods that will keep you motivated and inspired… and that will certainly promote well-being!

Eating Well, 3 Meals a Day- by OldWays

Are your meals full of unhealthy habits you’d like to change? Maybe you grab a large muffin and coffee for breakfast on the way to work, raid the vending machine or buy a fast-food burger and fries at lunch, then stop for take-out on the way home. You know this routine isn’t good for your body or your budget – and yet you’re not sure how to change these long-held habits.

Try some of these ideas. Not all at once – it takes time to change habits. Pick one idea, and try it for a week or two. When that small improvement seems second nature, pick another one. Just think how much better you could be eating, 52 weeks from now!

**Better Breakfasts**

- The right breakfast will keep you satisfied until lunch. If you’re hungry by mid-morning, experiment with adding some healthy protein (peanut butter, hummus, egg, yogurt) to your breakfast to avoid that carbs-and-coffee crash.
- Whole fruit has more fiber and satisfies longer than juice, even 100% fruit juice. (It takes 3-4 oranges to create an 8-ounce glass of juice, so you cut your calories by up to 75% too!) When you do drink juice, consider diluting it with sparkling water for a refreshing upscale “soda.”
- Leave butter and jelly on white toast behind. Instead, try half a smashed avocado on whole grain toast or bagel for a satisfying breakfast. Or top your toast with hummus or peanut butter for added protein and healthier fats.
- Buy a big container of plain instant oatmeal, rather than the more expensive flavored packets that tend to be heavy on the sugar. Add your own cinnamon, apples and raisins, or a spoonful of your favorite jam. You’ll save money and empty calories, while starting your day with a delicious whole grain.
- Sauté onions, mushrooms, and a handful of spinach leaves, and add them to your scrambled eggs, for a quick Veggie Scramble good for any meal of the day. Or, scramble them with salsa, hot sauce, or a spoonful of olive tapenade as a great way to add flavor.

- Use over-ripe bananas to make smoothies. Put one banana in a blender with an equal amount of frozen berries. Add milk (or soy or almond milk) to cover, and blend. No ice needed, with frozen berries.
- Consider adding a double handful of spinach or other greens to super-power your smoothie. We admit it sounds weird, and the color can be a bit startling, but you’ll be surprised at how good it tastes!
- Flavored yogurts can be very high in added sugar – often about 5 teaspoons per cup! Buy plain instead, and add your own fruit, granola, or even a spoonful of jam or maple syrup.
- Store-bought granola can be expensive and over-sweetened. Try our recipe for home-made granola instead. We like to microwave a small, cut-up apple, sprinkle it with cinnamon, and top with granola and Greek yogurt.
- Salads aren’t just for lunch and dinner. Fresh greens with a vinaigrette are a wonderful, fresh option to enjoy with egg or tofu scrambles for breakfast.

**Lighter Lunches**
- Experiment with making different types of salads—you don’t need to get stuck in the lettuce-tomato-dressing rut. Fruits, beans, fish, cheeses, olives, and many different types of greens and grains offer endless combinations.
• Eat a lunch of water packed tuna, olive-oil packed canned sardines, or mackerel with whole grain crackers and a crunchy apple for healthy omega-3s, protein, and lots of fiber.

• Use whole wheat flour tortillas in place of white for wraps, burritos, and quesadillas—they have a wonderful flavor and will increase your whole grain intake.

• Enjoy takeout sandwiches when you’re in a hurry, but skip the chips, mayo, and soda, and opt for whole-grain bread.

• Use tapenades, avocado, or hummus in place of mayo for sandwiches for healthier fats and protein. If you use mayo, consider one of the brands with added omega-3s or olive oil.

• For healthy homemade pizzas, top whole grain pita with tomato sauce, cheese, piles of vegetables, and a little drizzle of olive oil. Cook at 375°F for about 20 minutes and you’ve got your own in-house pizza party!

Delicious Dinners
• Pasta meals are a perfect solution for quick, delicious and healthy meals. Saute vegetables while the water boils and the pasta cooks, add a little fish or a few beans, and you’re at the table in 15 minutes.

• Add canned, rinsed beans (black, pinto, chickpeas, white) to pasta dishes, salsas, and salads to increase fiber and protein at very little cost!

• Switch from beef burgers to turkey burgers mixed with oatmeal. You’ll cut the fat and add whole grains to your meal.

• Love Italian sausage? Buying chicken sausage instead of pork can cut the calories almost in half, and the saturated fat by about two-thirds – without losing out on flavor.

• When filling your plate, make half of it vegetables, one quarter grains (preferably whole) and one quarter protein. Increasing your vegetable intake is one of the easiest ways to improve your eating habits.
• Eat fish or seafood 1-2 times a week, and choose baked, steamed, grilled, or poached preparations over fried.

• Load up your baked potatoes, eggs, soups, and beans with fresh or jarred salsa. It's a great way to add flavor and lots of extra veggies.

• Add frozen peas to just about anything—soup, pasta sauce, pasta, grains—for extra veggies and fiber. Add at the end of cooking so they stay firm and sweet.

• Enjoy pasta in healthy amounts: one half to one cup is a healthy adult portion. It may not seem like much but when you eat it with vegetables, olive oil, or other healthy ingredients you will be satisfied!

• Make one dinner per week a Veggie Feast: three or four nutrient-dense vegetables (carrots, broccoli, spinach, beets, squash, tomatoes), lightly steamed, with just a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. This is particularly wonderful at the end of the harvest season with farmers-market-fresh veggies, and is a great way to ensure you're getting enough of them over the week.

• Revel in the flavor, ease, and frugality of cooking a whole chicken. Click here for One Bird Three Meals.

• If you're exploring whole grain pasta for the first time, try several brands. Unlike white pastas, the tastes vary widely from mild and soft to chewy and nutty; by trying a variety you're sure to find a taste and texture you enjoy.
Frozen veggie burgers are a great quick dinner. Wilt some spinach at the same time in the pan you're cooking them in, top with sliced tomatoes and serve on whole grain toast for a balanced 10-minute dinner.

Cut whole grain pita bread in wedges, top with a little grated Parmesan cheese, Italian herbs, and a drizzle of olive oil, then broil till golden brown, for a great crispy treat with soups.

7 Habits of Healthy Shoppers - by OldWays
You rush to the supermarket on the way home from work to grab milk and spaghetti sauce. It's been a long day, and you're impatient as you jockey for a parking space, dash through the crowded aisles, then wait in the cashier line. There must be a better way to get a decent meal on the table. Right? Yes, there is, if you plan ahead. Planning gets a bad rap – it's boring; it takes too much time. But good food habits can quickly become routine, and in the end will pay you back in time saved from avoiding the last minute supermarket dash and in better, more economical meals. Here are Oldways' Seven Habits of Highly Effective Food Shoppers. (Let us know if you have any other suggestions!)

Effective Habit 1: Stock your kitchen with staples
A “staple” is whatever you need to make the kind of food you like to cook. For many people, pasta is a staple, or canned tuna. For others, soy sauce or anchovy paste might be must-have foods. With a well-stocked pantry, you can make many of your favorite dishes any day of the week without stopping again at the market.

Habit 2: Space allowing, back up your staples
This boils down to buying and storing one more of each staple if you have space, keeping you from dashing to the market at the last minute for just a single essential ingredient. It's like having your own private store at your fingertips!

Habit 3: Keep a running grocery list
Tuck a long skinny pad into the front of your silverware drawer, or clip a sheet of paper to the fridge with a magnet, or keep a list in your mobile device, and try to add things to your grocery list throughout the week. Be sure to check out your pantry and fridge
before you go to the store—you'll likely find last minute omissions, or get ideas of what to buy to pair with other foods on hand.

Habit 4: Plan a week’s worth of meals
Here’s the step most people resist: planning the week’s meals. Write the days of the week on a piece of paper, and jot down your dinner plan for each day. At first it might take you a half hour, but you’ll pare that down to 10 minutes or so once you get in the habit. (Hot tip: there’s nothing wrong with making one plan, then using that same plan every week. Or make two plans and just alternate them, week by week. You’re the cook. If someone else wants more variety, let them volunteer to cook!) Most of the stress of cooking comes from arriving home late, with no clear idea of exactly what ingredients you have that you can use to cook. By creating a dinner plan for the week, you eliminate all that stress. You know what you’re planning to cook, and you know you’ll have all the ingredients on hand. But back to that list. Once you know what you’ll be eating for dinner each day, add any additional dinner ingredients to your existing running grocery list. Think about lunch, and breakfast, and add any routine ingredients for those meals. Now your list is complete and it’s time to go to the store.

Habit 5: Shop intentionally
Armed with your list, you should be able to shop fairly quickly. At the start of each aisle, glance down at your list and note which items you’ll find in that aisle. (Some people even like to circle or highlight each aisle’s items so it’s easier to make sure they get them all.) Try to buy only what’s on your list, and limit impulse items to a minimum. Resisting impulse items is easier if you don’t shop with an empty stomach!

Habit 6: Store food thoughtfully
Before you put away your food, clean out anything in the fridge that’s on its last legs. Toss the leftover containers with three bites of moldy green beans, or the jug with an inch of sour milk. Make a pile of tired veggies you can turn into a zesty stir fry or our favorite “Clean The Fridge Chili” tonight. Rearrange what’s left, and only then put away your new purchases. Pantry snack items such as crackers, cookies, pita chips, and cereal can go stale quickly after opening, increasing the risk of food waste. Try using
small size binder clips from the office (much less expensive than "chip clips") to help seal the bag. You can also use gallon-size Ziploc-type bags, and reuse them for similar types of foods. If you have room, freeze your backups of foods that have oil content to avoid rancidity. These include whole wheat and whole grain flours, nuts, and butter. Store olive and other cooking oils in a dark place, and refrigerate cooking vinegars to ensure optimum freshness.

**Habit 7: Prep food ahead of time** There’s one more step after you return home and unpack your food, and that’s prepping fruits and veggies, especially greens. Why? To extend their shelf life, and make it easy to grab healthy foods quickly.

- Cut up a large melon or a pineapple, and put it in a Tupperware container.
- Tear the leaves off your head of lettuce, rinse them in cold water, and spin them in a salad spinner. Layer the lettuce leaves in paper towels, and store in a large plastic container or plastic bag. Do the same with chard, kale, collards or any other dark leafy greens or herbs. Instead of rotting in three or four days, they’ll keep one to two weeks stored this way, and you can make a quick crispy salad in minutes.
- Chop up peppers, carrots, and celery and put slices in a small container, so it’s easy to grab a handful.

If you have more money than time, you can buy pre-cut produce, but it’s generally much more expensive than prepping your own. Now, let’s get cooking! Now that your meal planning and shopping are under control, try some of our recipes here on the Oldways website. Bon appétit!

“*Pleasures of the Table*” by OldWays

Oldways has consistently encouraged the “pleasures of the table” as a key component of healthy eating. Based on our extensive knowledge of the “old ways” of eating, and on abundant scientific evidence, we have long argued that eating slowly, in a relaxed setting, in the company of friends and/or family, promotes better health. In recent years, science has vindicated our belief in the pleasures of the table — a number of intriguing peer-reviewed studies show why eating real meals, mindfully, is healthier than scarfing up fast food while stuck in a traffic jam.
Eat slowly, for better satisfaction
Eating slowly can make you feel more full and more satisfied, on the same amount of food. In one of our favorite recent studies, researchers gave a heaping cup (300 ml) of ice cream to healthy adult male volunteers, on two different occasions. One time, they were given 5 minutes to eat the ice cream; the other time, 30 minutes were allotted. Same volunteers, same amount of ice cream – but when people took a half hour to eat the food, their rating of “fullness” went up, and two important gut hormones related to appetite satisfaction increased markedly (Peptide YY up on average 27% and glucagon-like peptide up on average 41%).

Family meals have tangible benefits
The “Leave it to Beaver” world, where Mom spent the day in the kitchen and put a meal on the table at 5:30 pm, no longer exists – if indeed it ever did. Work schedules, long commutes, sports practices, and school events make it challenging for everyone in a household to sit down together for dinner. Yet research increasingly shows that making the effort pays off in a wide range of unexpected ways. Eating family meals is associated with:

- a healthier diet, including more fruits and vegetables, less fried food and soda, less saturated and trans fat, lower glycemic load, more calcium-rich foods, and more fiber and micronutrients;
- less tobacco, alcohol, marijuana use, depression, violence, stealing and running away in adolescents, along with higher grades;
- reduced odds of being overweight.

If your children are gathered around the family table for an hour a day, that’s an hour less they might be out drinking and smoking with their friends. And it’s logical that family meals are more likely to include healthy foods and therefore reduce the risk of overweight, obesity and poor nutrition.

Friends matter too
At a time when more of us are living alone, or in other non-family settings, it’s reassuring to learn that friends can have as positive an effect on health as families. A 2005 Australian study, for example, followed nearly 1,500 people aged 70 and older for ten years, and concluded that a supporting network of good friends may increase
longevity 22% more than family relationships. “The central message,” said lead researcher Lynn Giles of Flinders University in Adelaide, “is that maintaining a sense of social embeddedness through friends and family appears pretty important for survival, and it seems that non-kin relationships are particularly important.”

Although this study did not delve specifically into the value of eating meals with friends, it’s an easy leap to say that breaking bread together is one good way to “maintain a sense of social embeddedness through friends.” Of course, anyone with a dose of common sense can imagine that relaxing with friends over a meal might be more satisfying than eating alone off a TV tray in front of the evening news.

**Stress interferes with digestion**
The pictures painted above – of adolescents carousing with their friends or seniors eating a lonely meal – cover two alternatives to a social meal and the pleasures of the table. For most of us in our working years, however, a third reality is more likely: dining under stress. The day too often starts with a drive-through coffee and donut, includes lunch on the run or at our desk, and ends after a long commute with a less-than-idyllic dinner. We all know our digestive systems respond to stress. How else to explain the butterflies in your stomach before that big presentation, or the way you feel tied up in knots when you ask the boss for a raise?

“Fight or flight” stage – when our body gears up for action in response to stress – is diametrically opposed to “rest and digest” stage. We’re not geared to respond to stress and digest at the same time, so when stress is prolonged, digestion suffers. Compounding the issue is our tendency to chew less when we’re rushed. Digestive enzymes can’t easily work their magic on large chunks of food; the more you chew, the easier it is for your body to absorb the nutrients in your food. The bottom line: Eating rapidly, under stress, means that your body gets much less benefit from your meal than if you ate the same foods slowly in a relaxed setting.

**Oldways’ credo of the Pleasures of the Table**
Bringing it all together, here’s what we believe at Oldways:
1. Eat with friends or family whenever possible. When you eat alone, be present with yourself; relax and enjoy the taste of your food.
2. Carve out time for meals. Three-hour meals on a Tuscan hilltop are not possible or practical, but almost everyone can reorder their lives to put more of a priority on shared meals without TV, texting or telephone calls.
3. Enjoy your food. Don't count every calorie, or obsess over the latest dietary fads. Make every meal a sensual treat of color and flavor. Good food can indeed be good for you – as we demonstrate all over this website!

Cooking Simple, Good Food-by OldWays
Cook your own food and you'll eat better for less money. But cooking may seem daunting if you've never tried it. Oldways wants to help new cooks get started. Here's all you need to know about cooking, to create your first meals:
1. Exact measurements aren’t usually important, unless you’re baking cakes. That’s why many of our recipes say things like “1 can (~15 oz.)” meaning around 15 ounces. We’re telling you it doesn’t matter if your can is a little bigger or a little smaller. One good way to learn to cook is to follow the recipe fairly closely the first time, then start experimenting a little more each time you make that same recipe.
2. There are two main ways to cook things on a stove: in a lot of water, or in a little oil.
   - To cook things in water (or broth), turn the burner on high until the water bubbles rapidly (boils), then turn it down until the water barely bubbles (simmers), and cook according to directions.
   - To cook things in oil, heat a small amount of oil in a pan. Never let oil smoke; that means it’s too hot. Cook according to directions. Some foods just sit in the oil, while other times the directions will tell you to "sauté" which means to keep moving the food around while you cook it.
We’ve used three common abbreviations in our recipes:
   - TBS means Tablespoon (the largest measuring spoon)
   - tsp means teaspoon
   - oz means ounce

Go forth and eat well.
Salad Recipes - Mediterranean Inspired
Since May is International Mediterranean Diet Month AND National Salad Month, here are some Mediterranean-inspired salads for you to try this week!

A traditional Mediterranean diet is heart healthy and budget friendly. It consists of large quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, fish, whole grains, legumes, olive oil, less red meat and dairy and no processed foods, refined sugars and flour.

These salads are Mediterranean classics with a modern twist. You will find these recipes to be simple yet versatile enough to be used as a side dish and hearty enough to be the main course. Hope you enjoy!

Arugula with Pancetta, Grilled Asparagus, and White Beans

Serve this tasty dish for lunch, or as a first course for a meal that includes a light, grilled fish. You can substitute prosciutto, salami, or ham for the pancetta: toss it on the grill for just a minute before serving.

**Ingredients:**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh basil
- 16 spears asparagus, bottom ¼ trimmed
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 bunches arugula, trimmed, washed, and dried
- 1 cup cooked cannellini beans (if canned, rinsed and drained)
- 1 small red onion, peeled and diced
- ¼ pound pancetta, thinly sliced and cooked at 350°F for 6 to 8 minutes, until crispy, and drained on paper towels

**Instructions:**
1. Heat the grill. Combine the olive oil, vinegar, cheese, garlic, and black pepper in a food processor or blender and puree to make a smooth dressing. Transfer to a bowl, stir in the basil, and set aside.
2. Fill a large pot with ice and water. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, add the asparagus, and cook for about 3 minutes, until just tender. Drain and plunge the
asparagus into the ice water to stop cooking; then drain again. Rub the asparagus with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste, and grill over a medium-hot fire, turning frequently, for 3 to 5 minutes, or until well seared.

3. In a medium bowl, combine the arugula, beans, and onion. Stir the dressing well and pour just enough onto the arugula-bean mixture to moisten the ingredients. (You will probably have some dressing left over; cover it and refrigerate to keep it for up to a week.) Toss well, place the salad on a serving platter or individual plates, top with the pancetta and asparagus, and serve.

Recipe from License to Grill, by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby, William Morrow and Co.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 250
- Fat: 15g
- Sodium: 160mg
- Carbohydrate: 19g
- Protein: 10g

**Yield:**
- 4 Servings

---

**Arugula-Pear Salad with Parmesan and Savory Black Olives Walnut Bar**

A new twist on an old tradition, this fun salad mixes traditional salad makings with a Mediterranean bar, made with black olives and walnuts.

**Ingredients:**
- 8 cups trimmed arugula, washed and drained
- 2 pears, preferably organic, skin on, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 Mediterra savory olive-walnut bars, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (can substitute 1/2 cup chopped walnuts or cashews)
- 4 oz. Parmesan or Greek graviera cheese

**Dressing:**
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons orange juice (fresh)
- Salt and pepper
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

**Instructions:**
1. Place the arugula in a large bowl and add the chopped pears, and one chopped Black Olives Walnuts bar: set aside.
2. In a small bowl, whisk all the ingredients for the dressing together. Pour the mixture over the salad, and toss to combine. Salt to taste.

3. Using a vegetable peeler, shave the cheese into thin strips and lay on top of the salad.

4. Sprinkle the remaining chopped Black Olives Walnuts bar over salad, and serve immediately.

For more recipes, visit Mediterra.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
Calories: 228, Fat: 13g, Sodium: 303mg, Carbohydrate: 21g, Protein: 7g

**Yield:**
4 servings

---

**Avocado and Roasted Asparagus Salad**

*If you like asparagus, you will love this recipe! Feel free to substitute grilled peppers, zucchini, or mushrooms. Add baked tofu or grilled scallops for a main-dish salad.*

**Ingredients:**
- 1 lb. fresh asparagus, tough ends snapped off
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste
- 5 ounces spring mix salad greens
- 1 cup grape tomatoes
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 ripe avocado, peeled, seeded and sliced

Lemon Garlic Vinaigrette

- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced*
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ⅛ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Sea salt, to taste

**Instructions:**
1. Make the vinaigrette: Stir together the lemon juice, garlic, mustard and red pepper flakes. Whisk in olive oil. Taste, add sea salt if desired, and set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 400° F. Arrange the asparagus in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Roast for 10 to 15 minutes, just until crisp-tender. (The cooking time will vary based on the thickness of the asparagus; do not overcook.) Immediately remove from the hot baking sheet and cool.

3. Arrange the salad greens on four individual plates. Top evenly with roasted asparagus, tomatoes, onion, and avocado. Drizzle with vinaigrette.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 260
- Fat: 23g
- Saturated Fat: 3g
- Sodium: 210mg
- Carbohydrate: 13g
- Fiber: 5g
- Protein: 5g

**Yield:**
- 4 Servings

*Courtesy of California Avocado Commission*

---

**Bella’s Mediterranean Cobb Salad**

*Make some hard-boiled eggs ahead of time and store in the refrigerator for up to a week so you can assemble this salad in minutes.*

**Ingredients:**
- 2 cups of your favorite lettuce or spinach blend
- 1 8.5-ounce jar sun-dried tomatoes, sliced
- 6-8 stalks of marinated or roasted asparagus
- ¼ cup olives, pitted and chopped
- ½ cup sliced sweet red and yellow peppers
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
- Lemon Vinaigrette

**Instructions:**
1. Layer each of the ingredients on a serving platter starting with the lettuce/spinach blend on the bottom.
2. Drizzle the lemon dressing over the salad ingredients and chill for up to 2 hours if you wish before serving.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 450
- Fat: 11g
- Sodium: 470mg
- Carbohydrate: 78g
- Protein: 27g

**Yield:**
- 2 Servings
Black Bean, Edamame, and Wheat Berry Salad

Here's a nutritious side dish that goes well with any grilled food. Look for wheat berries (unprocessed wheat kernels) in supermarkets and health food stores.

**Ingredients:**
- 4 cups water
- ½ cup dry wheat berries
- 1 cup cooked black beans (about half of a 15 ounce can, rinsed and drained)
- 1 cup frozen, shelled edamame, thawed
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- ½ cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

**Instructions:**
Combine the water and wheat berries in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 55 minutes or until the wheat berries are just tender. Drain well in a fine mesh strainer and combine with the remaining ingredients in a medium bowl. Serve immediately or cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate up to 8 hours in advance.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 290
- Fat: 8g
- Sodium 35mg
- Carbohydrate: 45g
- Protein: 12g

**Yield:**
- 6 Servings

*Courtesy of Pompeian*
Brussels Sprouts and Chickpea Salad with Cranberries and Walnuts

This dish pairs fresh Brussels sprouts and chickpeas with dried cranberries and walnuts for a crunchy, colorful addition to the holiday dinner table. Leftovers are easy to pack for lunch too.

**Ingredients:**
- 3 cups shredded raw Brussels sprouts*
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cooked chickpeas
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped walnuts

**Instructions:**
1. In a large bowl, combine the shredded Brussels sprouts with olive oil, lemon juice, salt, chickpeas and cranberries. Toss to combine and set aside.
2. In a heavy-bottomed pan, toast walnuts over medium low heat until they are warmed and fragrant, about 3-5 minutes.
3. Toss the Brussels sprouts mixture with half of the toasted walnuts, and season to taste with salt. Top with the remaining walnuts and serve immediately, or refrigerate and serve cold.

*Notes:
To shred the Brussels sprouts, either thinly slice by hand with a sharp knife or use a food processor with a shredding attachment.
If you are making the salad ahead of time, reserve the walnuts and toss together just before serving. They will retain their crunch much better if they are freshly added.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 180
- Total Fat: 11g
- Saturated Fat: 1g
- Sodium: 110mg
- Carbohydrate: 21g
- Fiber: 5g
- Protein: 5g

**Yield:**
- 6 Servings

*Recipe and photo courtesy of the American Pulse Association.*
APPETIZERS
Try some of these interesting Mediterranean-inspired appetizers at your next gathering!

California Avocado Red, White and Blueberry Salsa

TOTAL TIME:  
20 min
PREP TIME:  
20 min
COOK TIME:  
n/a

Add some color to your 4th of July or any summer holiday party menu with a festive fruit salsa. Excellent source of Vitamin C and good source of Vitamin A.

Serving Size: 4

Ingredients

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>sweet white onion, minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ripe, red tomatoes, diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Serrano chiles, stemmed, seeded and minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Tbsp.</td>
<td>minced fresh mint, cilantro or basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ripe, Fresh California Avocado, peeled, seeded and diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>fresh blueberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 tsp.</td>
<td>sea salt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions:
1. Gently combine all ingredients. Let rest for at least 10 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to combine.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING

Calories 100; Total Fat 6 g (Sat 0.5g, Trans 0 g, Poly 0.5 g, Mono 4 g); Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 120 mg; Potassium 380 mg; Total Carbohydrates 11 g; Dietary Fiber 3 g; Total Sugars 4 g; Protein 2 g; Vitamin A 6984 (IU); Vitamin C 18 mg; Calcium 22 mg; Iron 1 mg; Vitamin D 0 (IU); Folate 49 mcg; Omega 3 Fatty Acid 0.06 g

% Daily Value*: Vitamin A 15%; Vitamin C 30%; Calcium 2%; Iron 6%
Baked Ricotta with Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Bring the fresh flavors of Italy to your table with this simple yet elegant appetizer. Use very fresh sheep’s milk ricotta if you can find it.

**Ingredients:**
- 2 2/3 cups fresh ricotta
- 2 heaping tablespoons chopped, fresh mixed flat-leaf parsley, basil, marjoram, and/or thyme
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 11 ounces sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 cup pitted black olives
- 1 cup shelled pistachio nuts
- 11 ounces ripe plum tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- Olive Oil, for drizzling
- 4 basil leaves, torn
- 6 slices rustic bread, lightly toasted

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease 6 individual 4-ounce ramekins and dust with flour. Combine the ricotta and herbs in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Divide the mixture among the ramekins, and arrange the ramekins on a baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes.
2. While the ricotta bakes, combine the sun-dried tomatoes, olives, and pistachios on a large cutting board and finely chop. Put the fresh tomatoes in a bowl, season with salt, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with the torn basil leaves.
3. Arrange the toasted bread on individual small plates. Run a knife around the edges of the ramekins and turn the baked ricotta out onto the bread. Spoon the sun-dried tomato pesto on one side, and the chopped tomatoes on the other. Drizzle with olive oil and serve warm.

*Recipe from An Italian Summer, newly collected by The Silver Spoon Kitchen (Phaidon Press, 2010)*

**Yield:**
4-6 Servings

*The Silver Spoon Kitchen*
Try some of these delicious dinner recipes this month!

Glazed Salmon with California Avocado Slaw

TOTAL TIME: 15 min  
PREP TIME: n/a  
COOK TIME: 15 min

A simple Asian marinade makes a beautiful glazed salmon and doubles as the dressing for delicious California Avocado Slaw.

Serving Size: 4

Ingredients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Ingredient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Tbsp.</td>
<td>soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>clove garlic, peeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp.</td>
<td>peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1/2 Tbsp.</td>
<td>honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp.</td>
<td>sesame oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>seasoned rice vinegar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>(5 oz.) salmon filets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>sliced water chestnuts, cut into thin strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>medium carrot, shredded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>red bell pepper, thinly sliced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 cups</td>
<td>shredded Napa cabbage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Salt and ground black pepper, to taste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ripe Fresh California Avocado, peeled, seeded and cut into 1/4-inch cubes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions:

1. Place soy sauce, garlic, ginger, honey, sesame oil, vinegar and olive oil in a food processor or blender. Blend until smooth and creamy.
2. Place salmon filets in a shallow dish and pour half the soy sauce mixture over top; turning filets to coat on all sides. Set aside.
3. Place water chestnuts, carrot, bell pepper and cabbage in a medium bowl and toss with remaining soy sauce mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Add avocado and toss to combine. Set aside.
4. Heat small amount of olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Place salmon skin-side up and cook until nicely browned, about 6 minutes. Turn salmon over and cook until it is cooked through, about 6 minutes more.

5. To serve: Plate salmon and spoon slaw over each filet.

*Large avocados are recommended for this recipe. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. If using smaller or larger size avocados adjust the quantity accordingly.

**Nutrition Information** Per Serving: Calories 390; Total Fat 17 g (Sat 2.5 g, Trans 0 g, Poly 5 g, Mono 8 g); Cholesterol 80 mg; Sodium 380 mg; Potassium 1230 mg; Total Carbohydrates 26 g; Dietary Fiber 6 g; Total Sugars 16 g; Protein 32 g; Vitamin A 4236 IU; Vitamin C 86 mg; Calcium 70 mg; Iron 2 mg; Vitamin D 0 IU; Folate 107 mcg; Omega 3 Fatty Acid 2.7 g

% Daily Value*: Vitamin A 80%; Vitamin C 140%; Calcium 8%; Iron 10%

---

**Baked Snapper with Tomatoes and Olives**

*This versatile recipe for baking fish calls for snapper, but you can use any other tender, flakey fish like bass, sole, or bream. Once you get comfortable with the baking method, try using different herbs, olives, and spices like ground coriander or even a touch of cumin. Pitted Niçoise olives are available at specialty food stores and are worth the hunt. Unpitted will work as well—just remember to tell your guests! Serve with roasted summer squash.*

**Ingredients:**
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus a little oil for drizzling
- 8 6-ounce pieces snapper fillet
- Fine sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon lightly toasted and ground fennel seeds
- 1 cup Niçoise olives, pitted
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 3/4 pounds ripe but firm tomatoes, seeded and cut into 3/8-inch dice
- 1/2 cup lightly packed torn fresh basil leaves

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Put 3 tablespoons of the olive oil in each of 2 baking dishes, each large enough to hold 4 pieces of fish with space in between. Put the dishes in the oven to heat the oil but don't let it get to the smoking point.

2. With a sharp utility or boning knife, make a few shallow slices through the skin of each snapper fillet to keep them from curling in the hot oil. Season each piece on both sides with salt, pepper, and fennel. Place the fish in the hot oil, skin side down, to coat with the oil, then immediately turn with a fish spatula so that the skin side is up. The oil is the correct temperature if you hear a light sizzle when the fish is added. Divide the olives between the dishes, scattering them around the fish, then splash equal amounts of wine into each dish.

3. Bake for 6 to 8 minutes, until the fish is slightly firm and start to flake when the tip of a knife is inserted into the flesh. The cooking time will vary depending on the thickness of the fillets. Season the tomatoes with salt and pepper, then divide them between the baking dishes, making sure they fall between the pieces of fish and into the hot pan juices. The tomatoes just need to get slightly wilted in the hot pans.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 330
- Fat: 16g
- Saturated Fat: 1.5g
- Sodium: 390mg
- Carbohydrate: 4g
- Fiber: 1g
- Protein: 36g

**Yield:**
8 Servings

**Chef David Shalleck**

---

**Amatriciana Sauce**

This classic sauce is easy to make for a weeknight or weekend meal. Guanciale is Italian cured pork jowl and comes rolled up like pancetta. Just a small amount adds a distinct flavor and silkiness to this sauce. Look for guanciale at a local specialty food shop or Italian market. If it is unavailable, try using pancetta in its place. As a last resort, try bacon (it is a last resort because guanciale is not a smoked meat, so the flavor will be markedly different if you use bacon).

**Ingredients:**
- 3 ounces guanciale, cut into small dice
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Red pepper flakes to taste
- Salt & freshly ground pepper to taste
2 cans good quality Italian plum tomatoes, hand-crushed  
1 pound spaghetti, bucatini, or other long pasta  
Pecorino Romano and/or Parmigiano Reggiano, grated, to taste

**Instructions:**
1. Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil.  
2. Meanwhile, heat a large sauté pan over medium heat and add the olive oil and guanciale; cook until golden brown.  
3. Stir in the red pepper flakes and cook until just fragrant.  
4. Add the crushed tomatoes and simmer gently, uncovered, for about 25 minutes.  
5. Meanwhile, cook the pasta until just al dente. Drain the pasta and add directly to the sauce. Toss together until the pasta is well coated and top with grated cheese.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 670; Total Fat: 26g; Saturated Fat: 8g; Sodium: 435mg; Total Carbohydrate: 88g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 20g.

**Yield:**
- 4 Servings

---

**Asian Shitake and Kale Bowl with Brown Rice**

*This crunchy bowl has umami—the fifth taste—thanks to the savory flavors of shitake mushrooms, tofu, and soy sauce. And kale—rich in vitamins—is a super green food everyone should eat more of.*

**Ingredients:**
- 2 cups cooked brown rice  
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
- 1 onion, chopped  
- 2 garlic cloves, minced  
- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce  
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds  
- 1/2 teaspoon wasabi paste  
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes  
- 1 cup sliced shitake mushrooms  
- 7 ounces firm tofu (about half of a 16-ounce package), drained and cubed  
- 4 cups packed chopped kale (about 1 bunch)

**Instructions:**
1. Cook the rice according to package directions.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet or wok. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 3 minutes.
3. Add the soy sauce, sesame seeds, wasabi paste, red pepper flakes, mushrooms, and tofu and stir well. Sauté for an additional 5 minutes. Stir in 1/3 cup water and the kale and sauté until the kale is slightly wilted and crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Spoon 1/2 cup cooked rice into each of four individual bowls and top with about 1 1/2 cups of the shitake-kale mixture.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 320
- Fat: 7g
- Sodium: 304mg
- Carbohydrates: 54g
- Fiber: 4g
- Protein: 12g

**Black-Eyed Peas and Walnut Lettuce Wraps**

These lettuce wraps with walnuts are fun to serve as appetizers. The lettuce leaves serve as “taco”shells. They make great party food for adults and kids alike.

**Ingredients:**
- 2 cups frozen black-eyed peas
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup diced butternut squash
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/4 cup sherry vinegar or wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 16 leaves iceberg or butter lettuce

**Instructions:**
1. In a medium saucepan, combine the black-eyed peas and water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for about 30 minutes, until the peas are tender but not mushy. Discard any liquid remaining in the pan and transfer the peas to a large bowl.
2. Coat a large nonstick skillet with nonstick cooking spray and place over medium-high heat. Add the onion, pepper and squash and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.
minutes. Turn the heat to low, cover the pan and continue cooking until the squash is just tender, 5-7 minutes more. Stir in the walnuts.

3. Add the walnut mixture to the peas along with the vinegar and parsley. Stir and toss to combine, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Let cool slightly.

4. Spoon about 1/4 cup of the pea and walnut mixture into each lettuce leaf. Fold the leaves in half and eat them "taco-style."

**Nutritional Analysis:**
- Calories: 260; Fat: 10.5g; Saturated Fat: 1g; Sodium: 13mg; Carbohydrate: 34g; Fiber: 7g; Protein: 11g.

**Yield:**
- 4 Servings

*Recipe and photo courtesy of California Walnuts*

---

**Baba Ghanouge**

*This Mediterranean classic is very easy to make at home.*

**Ingredients:**
- 3 medium eggplants
- ½ cup tahini
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- Juice of 3 lemons, more or less to taste
- Salt to taste
- Pomegranate seeds, to garnish
- Extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle

**Instructions:**
1. Char the eggplants on an open flame for about 15 minutes, or bake in a 400°F oven for about 30 minutes, or until very soft. Let cool slightly, cut each in half lengthwise, and spoon out the pulp. Discard the skin. Chop the pulp into very small pieces and combine in a bowl with tahini, yogurt, lemon juice and salt.
2. Decorate with the pomegranate seeds, drizzle with olive oil, and serve with pita bread.

**Yield:**
- 12 servings

*Courtesy of Al Wadi Al Akhdar*
Bouillabaisse

Although there are a number of ingredients, this dish is fast, easy to prepare and delivers the delicious, fresh flavors of the French Mediterranean coast.

Ingredients:
6 shrimp
6 mussels
4 little neck clams
1/2 cup colored peppers, cubed
1/4 cup white onions, cubed
1/4 cup chorizo, cooked & drained
1/2 garlic clove, minced
2 bay leaves
1 3/4 cup white wine
2 cups fish stock
3/4 cup tomato sauce
5 fingerling potatoes, cooked
3 pieces fish (2 ounces each piece)

Instructions:
1. In a small stock pot heat the oil, add the onions and chorizo and simmer for a few minutes.
2. Add a teaspoon of garlic, Bay leaves, and remaining ingredients, cover and let cook for 5 to 8 minutes at medium heat or until the clams and mussels open. Serve.

Yield:
2 servings
Bowtie Pasta with Shrimp

Combining shrimp with pasta helps make your seafood meal go further, yet keeps it very affordable.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 lb. fresh or frozen, thawed shrimp
- 10 oz. Farfalle (bowtie pasta)
- 1 cup seeded, sliced cucumber
- ¼ cup chopped green onions
- 2 red bell peppers, chopped
- 2 tablespoons capers

**Red Wine Vinaigrette**
- 3-4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- ½-1 teaspoon dried, crushed red pepper
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Instructions:**
1. Make the Vinaigrette: Combine the vinegar, oregano, garlic, crushed red pepper, olive oil and salt and pepper in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake until well mixed. Set aside.
2. Cook the shrimp in a large pot of boiling water until opaque and/or pink. Remove from the water with a skimmer and rinse under cold running water; set aside. Reserve the cooking water for cooking the pasta, if desired.
3. Cook the pasta as directed on the package. Drain well. Combine the shrimp and pasta in a large bowl. Add the cucumber, green onions, red peppers, and capers.
4. Pour the vinaigrette over the shrimp and pasta; toss to mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours to let the flavors blend. Serve cold, with or without greens.

**Yield:** Serves 6

*Courtesy of National Fisheries Institute*
Chicken & Egg with Unfried Brown Rice

This recipe can be made with or without leftovers. It is an easy and fast way to turn leftover poultry, vegetables, and rice into a new meal.

**Ingredients:**
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- ½ pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into ¼-inch slices
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 cups mixed vegetables (such as sliced carrots, broccoli florets, bell pepper strips, pea pods, and/or sliced cabbage)
- 4 eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 cups cooked brown rice, warm
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh basil or cilantro (optional)
- ¼ cup prepared orange ginger or classic stir-fry sauce

**Instructions:**
1. Heat oil in a large nonstick skilled over medium-high heat until hot. Add chicken strips. Cook, stirring frequently, for 3 to 4 minutes until the chicken is browned (or until the chicken or turkey is hot if you are using leftover poultry). Remove and set aside.
2. Add green onions and garlic to the skillet. Cook and stir for 1 minute.
3. Add vegetables. Cook and stir until the vegetables are crisp tender, about 3 to 4 minutes (or until they are heated through if you are using leftover vegetables). Remove and set aside.
4. Reduce the heat to medium. Beat the eggs and water together. Pour the eggs into the skillet. As the eggs begin to set, gently pull the eggs across the pan. Continue cooking until the eggs are thickened and no visible liquid egg remains. Do not stir constantly.
5. Add the brown rice, basil, stir-fry sauce, reserved chicken and vegetables to the skillet. Stir to combine. Cook 2 to 3 minutes or until heated through.

**Variations:**
To use up leftovers from a previous meal use cooked chicken or turkey in place of the raw chicken breast and use whatever cooked vegetables you have on hand. For Vegetable and Egg Unfried Brown Rice simply delete the chicken and proceed with the rest of the recipe.

**Nutritional Analysis:**
Chicken & Vegetable Kebob

320 Calories; 10g Fat; 2g Saturated Fat; 275mg Sodium; 33g Carbohydrate; 4g Fiber; 23g Protein.

Yield:
4 Servings

The secret to this dish is the marinade. Forget the pre-marinated meats you might buy from supermarkets, this will take you right back to your favorite Mediterranean restaurant.

Ingredients:
4 chicken breasts or the equivalent amount of cubes or strips
2 garlic gloves
Fresh or dried oregano
Freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons of your best extra-virgin olive oil
Juice of two lemons
Choice of vegetables: peppers, mushrooms, onions, zucchini
Wooden or metal skewers

Instructions:
1. If using chicken breasts cut into rough cubes. Place the chicken in a roasting tin.
2. Measure out the olive oil in a measuring jug and add the juice of two lemons.
3. Add a teaspoon of dried oregano or a handful of roughly chopped fresh oregano.
4. Roughly chop the garlic gloves and add to the jug. Then grind and add black pepper to taste.
5. Mix all the ingredients together so that the oil and lemon juice is no longer separated, drizzle over the chicken.
6. Mix the marinade through the chicken, cover and refrigerate for no less than an hour and ideally 3 hours.
7. If you’re using wooden skewers, soak them in water in readiness.
8. 10 minutes before you’re ready to cook, prepare your vegetables by slicing or cutting into chunks depending on your choice.

For more recipes, visit Positively Good for You.

Nutritional Analysis:
Calories: 192; Fat: 7g (Sat. fat: 1g); Sodium: 79mg; Carbohydrate: 4g; Fiber: 1g; Protein: 28g

Yield:
8 servings

Recipe, content and photo courtesy of Positively Good for You.

FOR MORE RECIPES: http://oldwayspt.org/recipes?page=11

Resources
http://oldwayspt.org/calendar/events/international-mediterranean-diet-month
http://www.californiaavocado.com/blog/mediterranean-diet-made-easier
http://www.foodandhealth.com/mediterranean-diet-month/
http://jeffsnaturals.com/may-is-international-mediterranean-diet-month/
http://www.mooneyfarms.com/bellasbites/article/may-is-mediterranean-diet-month1
https://foodandhealth.com/mediterranean-diet-month/