Your Weekly Meal Plan

Eat Well, Be Well and LOVE Every Bite!

Your refrigerator staple for healthy lunches and snacks

Beet and Orange Salad

Your Weekly Meal Plan is:

Roasted Cauliflower Chiocciole

Easy Vegetable Curry over Cilantro Quinoa

Pinto Bean Tostadas

Food For Thought: Get Your Hands Off My Chips!!

I subscribe to a bunch of nutrition newsletters and this week, I got some information that stopped me in my tracks. Are you ready? I discovered that….

"A basket of tortilla chips at your favorite Mexican Restaurant has 640 calories and 34 grams of fat."

Gulp.

When I was living in my dieting days, a statistic like this would make me resolve to never eat another basket of tortilla chips again. And I would deny myself for a couple of weeks or months…do you know how this story ends?

That's right, with me coated in tortilla crumbs!

Instead, tortilla chips are in my "Eat Them Whenever I Choose To" column. Knowing this information may help me **Choose** not to eat them as often and say no when they offer a second basket.

I may also **choose** to create a healthy tostada recipe (in the plan this week) and get all the yummy corn crunchiness at home in a healthier package…

When you are eating healthy, deprivation is optional! Are you ready to take something out of your "bad" column and move it over to your "Eat Whenever I Choose To" column?

Until Next Week, Eat Well, Be Well and LOVE Every Bite!
~Chef Jenny

Beet and Orange Salad

I DIG BEETS!

Actually, truth be told, I don't always love them unless they are roasted like in this salad. The salad dressing is really sweet and SO good!

2-3 yellow beets (or red), peeled, cut into small chunks
olive oil and salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 375F. Toss beet chunks with olive oil and a sprinkle of salt and pepper and roast for 25-35 minutes or until fork tender.

1-1/2 cups orange juice
1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme leaves, or 1 teaspoon dried
2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Bring orange juice to a boil in medium saucepan. Lower heat to a simmer until liquid is reduced by 1/3 (ie, until 1/2 cup remains).

Cooking 101*: What you are doing here is making a reduction. It basically means boiling the water out of something until a flavorful thick syrup remains. It is a great way to get really concentrated flavor in a sauce or dressing.*

In a blender, combine reduced orange juice, garlic, thyme and vinegar and blend. With motor running, slowly pour in oil until combined and thick. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

1 5-oz container fresh salad greens, washed and spun
2 oranges, peeled and cut into segments
1/2 cup walnut pieces

Place salad greens, oranges and roasted beets in a salad bowl and toss as much vinaigrette as desired. Place the greens on a plate and top with walnuts. Enjoy!

Roasted Cauliflower Chiocciole (Pasta)

Serves 4-6
Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 20 minutes
Equipment Needed: Large pasta pot, skillet, baking sheet

Roasting cauliflower makes it sweet and delicious! Seriously, this stuff is GOOD!

12 ounces rice or whole grain pasta (little shapes are best, like chiocciole), cooked according to package directions**

1 large head cauliflower, cut into small florets
Olive oil and salt and pepper
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 medium red onion, chopped
5 garlic cloves, minced
pinch red pepper flakes
2 Tablespoons capers
1 15-oz can white beans, drained
1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 475 degrees. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss cauliflower with a drizzle of olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast on lower rack until lightly browned and tender, 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**Meanwhile, put pasta on to cook as directed. In a large skillet, heat oil and sauté onion, garlic, red pepper and capers for 3-5 minutes, until onion is getting clear. Add white beans and parsley and simmer on low heat.

When pasta is cooked, reserve 1/2 cup pasta water; drain pasta and return to pot. Add roasted cauliflower, bean/parsley mixture and 1/4 cup of the reserved water and toss to combine. If desired, toss pasta with remaining cooking liquid to add more moisture. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Easy Vegetable Coconut Curry With Cilantro Quinoa

Serves 4
Preparation Time: 20 minutes
Cooking Time: 15 minutes
Equipment Needed: Large skillet or wok, saucepan

I love Thai food and it is EASY to make a wonderful coconut curry at home. Coconut is praised for its anti-viral properties and some studies show it may help to kill yeast in the GI tract.

1 Tablespoon unrefined coconut oil
1 onion, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 14-ounce can organic coconut milk
1 Tablespoon red curry paste**
1/4 cup vegetable stock
1/3 cup water
1 cup broccoli florets
2 carrots, sliced
1 cup sliced cremini mushrooms
3 cups baby spinach
1/4 cup fresh lime juice
salt and pepper to taste

In a large skillet or wok, heat oil and sauté onions and garlic until clear. Push to the sides of the pan. Spoon about 1/3 cup of the coconut milk into the skillet. Add the chili paste and cook the mixture, whisking, for 1 minute, or until chili paste is dissolved. Add the rest of the coconut milk, stock, water and all vegetables, except spinach and simmer the mixture, for 5 minutes, or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Add spinach in batches, stirring until each batch is wilted. Right before serving, add lime juice and salt and pepper to taste and serve with cilantro quinoa.

**If this is your first time using curry paste, start with a smaller amount and increase gradually to desired spice level.

Cilantro Quinoa

Serves 8 (so you will have lots of leftovers for later in the week)

Cilantro is a cleansing herb. In fact, some studies show it can rid the body of mercury and other heavy metals. It is wonderful in this flavorful quinoa pilaf. Rinse dry quinoa before using to remove it's bitter coating.

2 cups fresh cilantro leaves, packed
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 fresh jalapeño chili, stemmed, seeded and chopped (Don't touch the seeds with your hands—scrape them out with your knife)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 cup vegetable broth
2 teaspoons olive oil
4 cups water
2 cups yellow quinoa, rinsed
1 teaspoon sea salt

In a food processor or blender, blend cilantro, garlic, chili, cumin and broth until smooth. With motor running, gradually add olive oil until mixture is smooth and well-blended.
In a saucepan over medium heat, stir together water, rinsed quinoa, cilantro mixture and salt. Cover, bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat and simmer until liquid is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Season with additional salt if needed and serve.

Pinto Bean Tostadas

Serves 6 (Or more, this makes a whole bunch of beans. You can *freeze* leftover beans)
Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 60 minutes (for beans)
Equipment Needed: Large stockpot, baking sheet

Yes for healthy Mexican food! Tostadas are like open-faced crunchy tacos. These are made with homemade chips and homemade refried beans. Serve these with the leftover Cilantro Quinoa from earlier this week.

Homemade Refried Beans:
2 cups dry pinto beans, soaked overnight (or 2 28-oz cans pinto beans)
1 yellow onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 chipotle peppers canned in adobo, chopped, or dry chipotles, cut up
1 strip kombu (sea vegetable—adds valuable minerals to your beans!)
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon oregano

Put all ingredients into a stockpot with 4 1/2 cups water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for an hour, or until beans are tender. Remove kombu, season with salt and pepper, and smoosh down half of the beans with a potato masher or fork.

Using canned beans? Place beans in a pot with all ingredients, except kombu. Heat for 5-10 minutes and smoosh away!

Tostada:
Sprouted grain corn tortillas
Olive oil or spray
Preheat oven to 375F. Brush or spray whole tortillas with oil. Sprinkle with salt and bake for 5-7 minutes, or until crispy.

Healthy Toppings:
Lettuce or cabbage
Avocado slices
Tomatoes or Salsa
Have leftover cilantro? Cut it up for a great topping!

Shopping List

Remember to read through your recipes before shopping to see if there is anything you would like to double. Also, I don't have salt or pepper on here—I am assuming you have them in the kitchen already. **Have fun shopping!**

Store Section	**Beet and Orange Salad**	**Roasted Cauliflower Pasta**	**Easy Coconut Curry**	**Pinto Bean Tostadas**
Produce	2-3 yellow or red beets 1 clove garlic 2 t fresh thyme or* 2 oranges 1 5-oz container fresh salad greens	1 medium red onion 5 garlic cloves 1 head cauliflower 1/2 cup fresh parsley	1 yellow onion 5 cloves garlic 1 cup broccoli florets 2 carrots 1 cup sliced cremini mushrooms 3 cups baby spinach 2 limes (for 1/4 cup juice) 2 cups cilantro 1 jalapeño	1 yellow onion 3 cloves garlic ***tostada toppings: lettuce or cabbage, tomatoes, avocados***
Bulk/Refrig/ Frozen	1/2 cup walnut pieces 1-1/2 cups orange juice		2 cups yellow quinoa	2 cups dry pinto beans, or** Sprouted corn tortillas
Grocery/ Canned	1/3 cup olive oil 2 T balsamic vinegar	1 T olive oil 12 oz shaped whole grain or rice pasta 2 T capers 1 15-oz can white beans	2 t olive oil 1 T coconut oil 3/4 cup veg broth 1 14-ounce can coconut milk 1 T red curry paste	Olive oil or spray ***2 28-oz cans pinto beans*** 2 chipotle peppers canned or dry 1 strip kombu ***Salsa***
Spices/Misc.	*1 t dried thyme	pinch red pepper flakes	1 t cumin	1 t cumin 1 t oregano