Your Weekly Meal Plan

Eat Well, Be Well and LOVE Every Bite!

SPECIAL COMFORT FOODS MEAL PLAN!

Lentil Loaf and Mashed Cauliflower with Mushroom Gravy

Butternut Squash Mac & Cheese

Corn Crusted Tofu with Roasted Potatoes and Carrots

Baked Apples with Walnut Cream

Food For Thought: **This will really help with cravings!**

What if there was an easy way to reduce cravings for unhealthy foods…no will power required?

Turns out, there is…and it is as simple as laying down and closing your eyes (ahh, doesn't that sound nice….)

Researchers at the University of Chicago found that getting enough sleep can help reduce cravings for unhealthy foods. When study participants got less than 6 hours of sleep per night, their levels of ghrelin, a hormone that triggers appetite increased by 30%. This shift caused participants cravings for starchy foods like cookies to increase by 45%.

So, if you know you are lacking in the sleep department, make it a priority to get to bed earlier this week, and you just may find it easier to stay committed to your healthy eating plan.

This weeks meal plan is designed with comfort foods in mind ~ making healthy foods even more attractive.

Enjoy!

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

Lentil Loaf with Mashed Cauliflower and Mushroom Gravy

Serves 4-6
Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Cooking Time: 50 minutes

This recipe calls for cooking lentils from dry, but you can save time by using canned.

1 cup dry brown lentils** or 2 cups canned brown lentils
2 cloves garlic
1/2 cup walnuts
1 cup rolled oats (Gluten Free? Be sure you buy certified gluten free oats)
1 Tablespoon ground flaxseed
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1 teaspoon mustard powder
pinch cayenne
2 Tablespoons tomato paste
1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 Tablespoon tamari or soy sauce
1 Tablespoon olive oil
2 Tablespoons water
Salt and pepper to taste

**Place lentils in 3 cups of water in a saucepan, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 35 minutes or until lentils are tender.

Preheat oven to 350F. In a food processor, grind garlic, walnuts, oats, flaxseed and spices. Pulse until it is well ground. Add remaining ingredients, including cooked lentils and a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Pulse until well mixed, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed.

Spread into a greased loaf pan and bake, covered, for 35 minutes. Remove cover and bake another 15 minutes. Let stand a few minutes before cutting and serving.

Recipe continues next page....

Mashed Cauliflower

1 head cauliflower, chopped
2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
Chopped parsley for garnish

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Once boiling, add the chopped cauliflower and cook for 10-15 minutes, or until fork tender.

Heat the garlic and olive oil in a saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until garlic is softened and fragrant but not browning; about 5 minutes.

Drain the cooked cauliflower well and add it to a food processor along with the garlic and oil. Blend until smooth, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed. Season to taste with salt and pepper, sprinkle with parsley and serve hot.

Flour Free Mushroom Gravy

1 Tablespoon olive oil
8 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon dried thyme
sprinkle of salt and black pepper
1/2 cup vegetable stock
2 Tablespoons arrowroot powder
2 Tablespoons tamari
2 1/2 cups vegetable broth
1/4 cup nutritional yeast

In a medium size saucepan, heat oil and add sliced mushrooms, garlic, thyme, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, or until mushrooms shrink and release liquid. In a small bowl, whisk together 1/2 cup vegetable stock and arrowroot powder until dissolved. Add arrowroot mixture, tamari and vegetable broth to the saucepan, bring to a boil, lower heat, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes or until thickened. Right before serving, whisk in nutritional yeast until it dissolves and serve.

Butternut Squash Macaroni & Cheese

Serves 6-8

You won't believe how delish this whole food version of macaroni and cheese tastes! Butternut squash is a great source of beta-carotene which helps to build immunity. Serve this as a side dish or make it a main by adding protein via pasta made from chickpeas. You'll save time by using prepared butternut squash but can also use fresh.

12 oz small macaroni, whole grain, bean based or gluten free
1-10 oz bag frozen butternut squash (or 1.25 cups)
1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
1/4 cup raw cashews
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
½ teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 Tablespoon nutritional yeast
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Black pepper to taste

Cook pasta according to package directions.

Place butternut squash, onion, garlic, cashews, smoked paprika and turmeric in a pot with 1 cup water, cover, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 15-20 minutes. When tender, place squash mixture in a high-speed blender, add salt, mustard, nutritional yeast and lemon juice and blend until completely smooth, scraping sides as needed.

Add salt, pepper and more lemon juice to taste and toss sauce with macaroni and stir until every noodle is coated. Enjoy!

Corn Crusted Tofu with Roasted Potatoes and Carrots

Serves 4

I love the ease of healthy meals made on baking sheets in the oven. Plus, this meal really satisfies! This tofu is coated with masa harina – corn flour used to make tortillas -- which makes it crunchy and wonderful in lettuce leaves topped with mayonnaise, mustard and pickles. Enjoy with a side of the roasted potatoes and carrots. YUM!

1-14 oz package extra firm tofu, drained and pressed between kitchen towels to remove as much moisture as possible
½ cup unflavored milk (mixed with a few dashes of hot sauce-optional)
1/4 cup masa harina (corn flour)
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Preheat oven to 400 F and coat a sheet pan with cooking spray.
In a small bowl, whisk together milk and hot sauce. In another bowl, mix masa harina with spices, salt and pepper. Dip tofu into soymilk and then into masa mixture until completely coated. Transfer to baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes on one side, flip and cook another 15 minutes.

Roasted Potatoes and Carrots

3 Tablespoons olive or avocado oil
2 cloves garlic minced
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1 lb whole carrots peeled and sliced
1 lb small creamer potatoes, halved
2 Tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Coat a sheet pan with cooking spray. In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, garlic, salt, pepper and thyme. Add the carrots and potatoes to the bowl and toss well to coat. Pour the vegetables onto the sheet pan and spread into a single layer. Cook for 25-35 minutes or until potatoes and carrots are tender. Sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately.

Baked Apples with a Caramel Date Center and Walnut Cream

Serves 4

This fruit sweetened dessert is such a great way to satisfy sweet cravings.

4 medium cooking apples, such as Rome, Cortland, Gala or Braeburn
8 pitted dates, soaked in warm water for at least 15 minutes
1 ½ Tablespoons coconut oil, melted
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1 pinch kosher salt
1/2 cup water, unsweetened apple cider or juice

Preheat to 350 degrees. Place dates, coconut oil, spices and salt in a food processor and blend until combined.

Core the apples, leaving their bottoms intact. Place the apples upright into a rimmed baking dish just wide enough for the apples to snugly fit, such as an 8-inch square baking pan.

Stuff the center of each apple with the date mixture, then pour water/apple cider or juice to come up about half an inch around the apples. Cover the pan with aluminum foil and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until the apples are tender.

Serve apples hot or cold, drizzled with the pan juices with a dollop of walnut cream. Leftovers are great with yogurt or oatmeal and should last 3 days in the refrigerator.

Walnut Cream

1/2 cup walnut pieces, soaked ahead of time if possible
1/4 cup milk of choice or water
1/2 Tablespoon maple syrup
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 small pinch salt

Drain walnuts and blot dry with a kitchen towel. Place on a baking sheet and bake at 350 for 7 minutes. Allow walnuts to cool.

Blend almond milk, maple syrup, vanilla and salt in a blender for 20 seconds. Add walnuts and blend again until smooth, may take up to a minute. Stop and scrape the sides as needed. Chill in refrigerator. Will keep in the fridge for 3 days.

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	**Lentil Loaf with Mashed Cauliflower and Mushroom Gravy**	**Butternut Macaroni & Cheese**	**Corn Crusted Tofu with Potatoes and Carrots**	**Baked Apples with Walnut Cream**
Produce	4-6 cloves garlic 8 oz cremini mushrooms ¼ cup fresh parsley 1 head cauliflower	1 medium onion 2 cloves garlic 1 lemon	3 T olive or avocado oil 2 cloves garlic 1 lb whole carrots 1 lb small creamer potatoes ¼ cup fresh parsley	4 medium cooking apples, such as Rome, Cortland, Gala or Braeburn
Bulk/Refrig/ Frozen	1 cup dry brown lentils **or* ½ cup walnuts	10 oz frozen butternut squash (or 1.5 cups) 1/4 cup raw cashews	14 oz Extra firm Tofu	8 pitted dates 1/2 c walnut pieces
Grocery/ Canned	***2 15 oz cans lentils** 1 cup rolled oats 1 T ground flaxseed 1/4 c nutritional yeast 2 T tomato paste 1 T worcestershire 1 T tamari 3 T olive oil 2 T tamari 3 c vegetable broth	12 oz small macaroni, whole grain, bean based or gluten free 1 t Dijon mustard 1 T nutritional yeast	½ cup soymilk A few dashes of hot sauce-optional 1/4 c masa harina (corn flour) Cooking Spray	1 ½ T coconut oil 1/4 c milk of choice or water 1/2 T maple syrup
Spices/Misc.	1 t Italian seasoning 1 t poultry seasoning 1 t mustard powder pinch cayenne 2 T arrowroot powder 1 t dried thyme	1 t smoked paprika ½ t turmeric	1 t garlic powder 1/2 t smoked paprika 1/2 t dried thyme	1 t ground cinnamon 1/2 t vanilla extract 1/4 t ground nutmeg 1/8 t ground cloves