Your Weekly Meal Plan

Eat Well, Be Well and LOVE Every Bite!

Your refrigerator staple for healthy lunches and snacks:

Beet and Avocado Salad

Your Weekly Meal Plan is:

Eggplant Mushroom Curry over Golden Quinoa

Arugula & Olive Pasta

Tomato and Lentil Soup

BONUS RECIPE: Poached Pears with Cashew Crème and Ginger Crumble (Note: ingredients not on shopping list)

Food For Thought: Fiber Balances Blood Sugar

In honor of the upcoming holidays, I'd like to take a moment to talk about balancing your blood sugar. One of the most important factors to consider is eating more fiber. Because fiber acts like a sponge in your body, absorbing and releasing glucose, a high-fiber meal will slow down rapid changes in blood sugar and keep levels balanced.

That might not be news to you, but I thought I would share 3 of the high-fiber foods that are really surprising. Ready?

#1: Avocadoes: Get this: there are 9-15 grams fiber in one avocado. Creamy, delicious, satisfying AND high in fiber? Yes, please!

#2: Sweet Potatoes: One sweet potato with its skin has 9 grams of fiber. How can something so sweet and so delicious be so good for you?

#3: Pears: Are one of the fruits highest in fiber—one pear has 6 grams of fiber.

In honor of balancing your blood sugar naturally, I am including a recipe for poached pears—it's a showstopper of a dessert and one of my favorites.

I really hope you enjoy it!

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

Beet and Avocado Salad

Are you getting sick of me going on and on about beets? Sorry, I can't help but wax poetic about this powerful, healing veggie! Even if you don't love beets, I think you will enjoy this salad because of the addition of the creamy, high fiber avocado! Unless you don't like avocados either, in which case, I have to ask: What is wrong with you? Just kidding!

1 cup grated raw beets (2 medium beets)
2 carrots, grated
1 avocado, thinly sliced
1/2 cup chopped cilantro
1/2 cup chopped scallions
3 Tablespoons fresh orange juice
1 Tablespoon lime juice
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
2 Tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup pumpkin seeds

Place beets in a medium bowl along with carrots, avocado, cilantro and scallions.

Whisk together orange juice, lime juice, cumin, and coriander. Whisk in oil. Pour over beet mixture, and toss to mix. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

Sprinkle with pumpkin seeds and serve.

Eggplant Mushroom & Tofu Curry

Serves 4-6
Preparation Time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 30 minutes
Equipment Needed: Large skillet, rice cooker or small saucepan

1 Tablespoon unrefined coconut oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon fresh minced ginger
1 jalepeno pepper, seeded and diced
2 teaspoons curry powder
1 medium eggplant (about 1 pound), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
8 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced
1 14-ounce can coconut milk
1 Tablespoon tamari or Bragg's Amino Acids
1 lb extra-firm tofu, cut into 1-inch chunks
1/2 lb fresh green beans, trimmed
1/4 cup fresh lime juice
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic, ginger and pepper and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add curry powder, eggplant and mushrooms and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are coated with the curry mixture, about 3 minutes. Add coconut milk and tamari or Bragg's to the pan. Bring to a boil; stir in tofu and green beans. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tofu is cooked through and the beans are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in lime juice and cilantro and serve over yellow quinoa.

Golden Quinoa
3 cups water
2 teaspoons ground turmeric
1/2 cup chopped scallions
1 1/2 cups yellow quinoa

In a medium saucepan, bring water and turmeric to a boil. Stir in scallions and quinoa and a pinch of salt, return to a boil. Reduce heat and cook until quinoa is done, about 15-20 minutes.

Arugula & Olive Pasta

MEAL IN MINUTES!
Serves 4-6
Preparation Time 10 minutes
Cooking time 15 minutes
Equipment Needed: Large pot for pasta, large skillet

This simple dish is a testament to how yummy simple food can be. Tender, peppery baby arugula is great in salads, but I also love it lightly sautéed with garlic and tossed with pasta. If you can't find it, spinach is a good substitute.

1 12-oz package whole grain, lentil or chickpea spaghetti
1 Tablespoon olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
pinch red pepper flakes
1 15-oz can diced tomatoes
1 Tablespoon fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 cup pitted kalamata olives, halved
1 15-oz can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
6 oz baby arugula or baby spinach (about 4 cups)
salt and pepper to taste

Fill a large pot with water, add a pinch of salt and bring to a boil. Add pasta and cook according to package directions. Before draining, save 1 cup cooking water and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet. Add garlic, pepper flakes, tomatoes and thyme and cook for 3-5 minutes. Add olives, beans and arugula and stir to wilt. Add cooked pasta and stir around to get all the pasta covered. If it needs more liquid, gradually add some of the cooking liquid. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

Tomato Lentil Soup

Serves 6
Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 55 minutes
Equipment Needed: Soup pan

This hearty soup is SO tasty and its leftovers are even better!

Leftovers of this soup will FREEZE WELL.

2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 stalks celery, sliced
1 large carrot, sliced
1 bunch collard greens, stem removed and sliced thinly
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1 Tablespoon fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 cup dry brown lentils, washed and picked over
4 cups vegetable stock
1 28-oz can whole plum tomatoes, not drained
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large soup pan. Add onion and garlic and sauté for 3-4 minutes. Add celery, carrot, collard greens, and spices and cook for a few minutes more. Add lentils, stock and canned tomatoes (break these up with the back of a spoon) to the saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30-40 minutes or until lentils are tender. Before serving, add salt and pepper to taste and enjoy.

Poached Pears with Cashew Crème and Ginger Crumble

Serves 4

This impressive dessert is healthy and tasty—great for dinner guests!

Poached Pears

2 cups apple cider
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon or 1 cinnamon stick
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
4 Bosc pears. sliced and cored

Combine cider, cinnamon and nutmeg in a medium-sized saucepan. Bring to a boil. Cut pears in half (keep peel on for maximum fiber) and add to the saucepan. Simmer for twenty minutes or until the pears are tender. Remove pears and simmer cooking liquid until reduced by half (it is ready when it coats the back of a spoon). Serve pears drizzled with reduced cider sauce, a dollop of cashew cream and a generous sprinkle of crumble (recipes below).

Cashew Creme (you can sweeten this with a bit of agave if you'd like, I generally don't if I am serving it with a sweet fruit but it is up to you.)

1 cup raw, unsalted cashews, soaked ahead of time if possible
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon vanilla

Coarsely chop the nuts in a food processor, and with the motor running, add the water and vanilla. Continue processing until the mixture achieves a creamy consistency, adding a bit more water if needed.

Ginger "Crumble" (leftovers are fantastic on yogurt)

1 cup walnuts
1/4 cup ground flaxseed (grind first before adding to processor)
1/4 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 pitted dates

Process all ingredients in a food processor.

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 Salad**	**Eggplant Mushroom Curry**	**Arugula Pasta**	**Tomato and Lentil Soup**
Produce	2 medium beets 2 carrots 1 avocado 1/2 cup chopped cilantro 1 orange (for 3 T juice) 1 T lime juice 1/2 cup chopped scallions	2 cloves garlic 1 jalepeno pepper 1 2-inch slice fresh ginger 1/2 cup chopped scallions 1 medium eggplant (about 1 pound) 8 oz cremini mushrooms 1/2 lb fresh green beans (or frozen) 2 limes (for 1/4 cup juice)	3 garlic cloves 6 oz baby arugula or spinach 1 T fresh thyme or *	3 cloves garlic 1 medium onion 2 stalks celery 1 large carrot 1 T fresh thyme or * 1 bunch collard greens
Bulk/Refrig/Frozen	1/4 cup pumpkin seeds	1 1/2 cups yellow quinoa 1 lb extra-firm tofu	1 cup pitted kalamata olives	1 cup dry brown lentils
Grocery/ Canned	2 T olive oil	1 T unrefined coconut oil 1 14-ounce can coconut milk	1 T olive oil 1 15-oz can diced tomatoes 1 15-oz can cannellini beans 12 oz rice Spaghetti	2 T olive oil 4 cups vegetable stock 1 28-oz can whole plum tomatoes
Spices/Misc.	1/2 t ground cumin 1/2 t ground coriander	2 t ground turmeric 2 t curry powder	pinch red pepper flakes *1 teaspoon dried thyme	*1 teaspoon dried thyme 1 t poultry seasoning