

## Traditional Holiday Staples

### **Eggnog:**

- Exchange high-fat eggnog, sugary mulled wine and high-calorie cocktails for healthier options such as hot chocolate made with skim milk, wine spritzers and hot apple cider. Keep your system clean by sipping lemon water throughout the day and with meals. When drinking wine, red is healthier than white, as it contains antioxidants.

### **Stuffing**

- Replace bread-based stuffing with organic corn bread or serve a hearty fall side dish prepared with quinoa or wild rice instead. Roasted wild mushrooms, nuts and dried fruit added to quinoa or wild rice add color and texture while enhancing the complexity of flavors.

### **Turkey**

- Avoid letting meat take center stage at your holiday meals. Offer a variety of dishes featuring whole grains, fruits and vegetables. When serving meat, substitute lean cuts such as turkey breast, pork loin and ham in place of fatty cuts such as prime rib.

### **Cranberry sauce**

- Trade the canned jelly for a zesty sauce that takes just minutes to prepare in the food processor. Combine one package of fresh cranberries with a whole orange (cut into chunks), a dash of vanilla extract and a drizzle of honey. Pulse into a coarse chop. This is delicious on top of cottage cheese the next day.

### **Mashed/Sweet potatoes**

- Swap the traditional bowl of mashed potatoes, loaded with whole milk and butter, for mashed potatoes made with almond milk or broth (chicken or vegetable). You can also substitute half of the white potatoes with steamed cauliflower. Mash and mix.
- Most people make their holiday yams candied, topped with marshmallows or whipped into a frothy casserole with pineapple. Preserve the natural sweetness of these orange-colored spuds by swapping sugary sides for mashed yams accented with a bit of cinnamon and toasted pecans. Or, serve up roasted, caramelized sweet potatoes.

### **Gravy**

- Instead of whisking corn starch into meat juices or thickening gravy with a roux, add white wine to pan drippings and reduce for a rich concentration of flavors.

### **Substitute Basic Ingredients:**

- Coconut milk for heavy cream cup for cup
- Meringue for frosting: two egg whites and four tablespoons of sugar in a high-speed blender and—voilà—icing with less guilt.
- Unsweetened applesauce for oil cup for cup
- Replace olive oil, butter and other fats with organic coconut oil. Or, do a half and half mixture of fats. Coconut oil has been shown to reduce cholesterol, improve thyroid functioning, protect against illness-causing bacteria and viruses and aid digestion.
- Use naturally harvested Celtic sea salt in place of processed salt, which contains additives.
- Sweeten foods and beverages with grade B maple syrup instead of sugar. Grade B maple syrup—named for its dark caramel color, not its quality—is a natural source for beneficial minerals.
- Use almond or coconut milk instead of condensed milk.
- Sweeten with grade B maple sugar or raw honey. (This may not work with all recipes.)
- Replace butter or shortening with organic coconut oil. Even mixing half butter with half coconut oil is beneficial.
- Use whole-wheat flour or almond flour in pastry crust recipes. Or, go crustless.
- Instead of prepared pie crust, use phyllo dough. For an average-size pie, thaw five sheets of phyllo dough. Coat each sheet with cooking spray and layer in a pie pan. Fill and bake.
- Prepare a fruit galette. This "open face" tart is essentially a pie without the top crust.
- Opt for a fruit crisp. Top apples, peaches, pears or any combination with a mixture of oatmeal, natural brown sugar and a small amount of butter or a butter/coconut fat mixture.