

Brunch Made Easy

(Family Features)

Gathering friends and family doesn't need to be fancy. With its prime positioning between breakfast and lunch, brunch is a more casual and lighter alternative to the typical dinner party.

When charged with hosting a mid-day gathering, a little pre-planning can go a long way toward ensuring your brunch get-together is as simple as it is scrumptious.

Get creative with decor. When prepping your table, think outside the box. Opt for unexpected serving dishes such as tartlet tins and vases, and transfer syrups and jams from their everyday containers to glass bowls or creamers. Fresh flowers and produce can add natural pops of color to the table and a bowl of fruit can make for an eye-catching centerpiece.

Plan a variety of dishes. Make sure you have a mix of both sweet and savory dishes on the menu that can please a wide variety of palates. Earmarking some recipes that can be made ahead, like pastries and casseroles, can be a simple way to avoid waking up extra early to prepare. Save the morning of your event for dishes that are best served fresh, like this Herbed Spanish Omelet, which features potatoes; fresh, spring herbs; and red onions, and packs protein, B-vitamins and cancer-protective phytochemicals.

Serve it buffet-style. Setting your spread out on the counter and allowing guests to help themselves not only makes it easier for the host to mingle, but it allows guests to customize their meals as they wish and gives the gathering a more casual vibe. Try themed stations, such as a coffee or mimosa bar, parfait bar or bread bar, in addition to more traditional dishes to let guests take the customization to the next level.

For more brunch ideas and recipes, visit Culinary.net.

Herbed Spanish Omelet

Reprinted with permission from the American Institute for Cancer Research
Servings: 4

- 1 pound potatoes, peeled and diced or shredded
- water
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 large whole eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 egg whites, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh chives
- salt, to taste (optional)
- fresh herb sprigs, for garnish (optional)

Place potatoes in large pan. Cover with water. Bring to boil and cook, uncovered, 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand about 10 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Drain well.

In deep, 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and garlic.



Cook about 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add potatoes and cook 5 minutes.

Combine whole eggs and egg whites. Stir in parsley, basil and chives. Season with salt, to taste, if desired. Pour mixture over potatoes in hot skillet. Reduce heat and cook, uncovered, about 10 minutes, or until bottom of omelet is golden.

If desired, brown top under toaster oven. Garnish with fresh herb sprigs, if desired.

Nutritional information per serving: 260 calories; 12 g total fat (2 g saturated fat); 28 g carbohydrates; 11 g protein; 2 g dietary fiber; 106 mg sodium.

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Source: Culinary.net

A Positive Path to a Healthy New You

(Family Features)

For many people, the New Year brings the resolve to just say no to indulgent food and drink, to inactivity and to a host of other unhealthy habits.

However, you can also approach your reset with balance and positive thinking. This can be your year to say "yes" and rework the all-or-nothing mentality, which can be a more mindful way to reach your goals.

From eating with purpose to finding healthier options for tasty meals, making small changes can help you reap rewards throughout the year. Start 2018 with a clean slate of practical and attainable eating goals that are realistic for the life you want to lead by shopping at a grocery store like ALDI, a one-stop shop with a wide selection of high-quality, affordable food choices. Whether you follow a paleo, plant-based or organic eating plan, all of the following nutritious options can be incorporated into your lifestyle and budget for less than \$20:

* **SimplyNature Organic Coconut Oil:** This trendy ingredient can elevate better-for-you recipes like this Cranberry Orange Chia Granola. You can also use it as a replacement for butter or vegetable oil because it's a versatile choice for both sweet and savory dishes.

* **SimplyNature Chia Seeds:** Use chia seeds to top your smoothie, overnight oats or make chia pudding in the morning for an easy way to power up the most important meal of the day. Chia seeds serve up protein, fiber and antioxidants.

* **Earth Grown Black Bean or Veggie Burgers:** If you follow a vegetarian or vegan diet, or just want to join the Meatless Monday movement, black bean burgers are one option to try.

* **Earth Grown Vegan Shredded Cheese:** This dairy-free cheese is a tasty addition to vegan recipes.

* **SimplyNature Organic Popcorn:** Movie nights call for popcorn, and this organic version can quickly become a family favorite. Each serving provides 3 grams of both fiber and protein.

Part of making healthy choices includes finding quick and easy recipes. Discover how easy it is to make fresh meals at home with this better-for-you recipe and find more options at aldi.us.

Cranberry Orange Chia Granola

Recipe courtesy of Chef Linsey, ALDI Test Kitchen

- 2 1/2 cups Millville Old Fashioned Oats
- 6 ounces Southern Grove Shelled Pistachios, chopped
- 1/4 cup SimplyNature Chia Seeds



- 5 ounces Southern Grove Dried Cranberries
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 3/4 cup SimplyNature Organic Wildflower Honey
- 3 tablespoons SimplyNature Organic Coconut Oil
- 1 teaspoon Stonemill Essentials Pure Vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon Stonemill Essentials Ground Cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground Stonemill Essentials Sea Salt Grinder

Heat oven to 325 F.

In large bowl, combine oats, pistachios, chia seeds, cranberries and orange zest. Toss until orange zest is evenly distributed.

In separate medium bowl, combine honey, coconut oil, vanilla, cinnamon and salt. Heat in microwave 1 minute; stir. Continue cooking in 30-second intervals until coconut oil is melted.

Add honey mixture to oat mixture. Toss until thoroughly coated. Transfer to parchment- or foil-lined baking sheet. Spread into even layer and bake in center of oven 20 minutes. Stir and continue cooking until evenly browned, about 10-15 minutes.

Remove from oven and cool to room temperature. Serve with yogurt or enjoy on its own.

Note: Granola can be stored in airtight container up to 3 weeks.

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Source: ALDI