

7 Flavor-Boosting, Calorie-Reducing Tips



Keeping meals fit is essential to staying fit. But there's no need to slim down the taste of your cuisine. Try out these clever palate-friendly tips for nutritious cooking that's big on taste, not on calories.

1. Being nosy. The majority of flavor is actually due to aroma. When food is full-flavored and high-calorie, you'll be satisfied on smaller portions. When full-flavored and low-calorie, it'll enhance your lean eating experience. So give food the sniff test.

Hint: Select foods with these three key words in mind: stinky, strong, and sharp. Robiola is stinky; fresh ginger is strong; and citrus is sharp.

2. Twice the spice. Spices add international pizzazz to plain foods and intrigue to light fare. They boost antioxidants, too.

Hint: Add a pinch or two of one new spice at a time—anywhere you like. Try nutmeg on veggies, cumin in guacamole, cinnamon in rice, and five spice powder on chicken. Or consider coriander on veggies, curry powder in guacamole, turmeric in rice, and paprika on chicken. Experiment.

3. “Pleasing pain,” no gain. To create the effect of more taste depth, bring on “heat.” It adds flavor flair to low-cal dishes.

Hint: Go for interesting, not sweating. Sprinkle up to a few drops of hot sauce or a touch of curry paste into soups, sauces, dips, or mixed dishes.

4. Whimsical ways. In addition to our sense of smell and taste, we do eat with our eyes. So the more amusement or visual drama in your meal presentation, the more enjoyable it will be to keep eating healthfully.

Hint: Toss out the rule book. It's okay to play with your food...a little. Insert a bamboo skewer and savor food on a stick. Enjoy a hard-cooked organic egg this way, for instance.

5. Going nutty. Nuts provide rich taste, memorable texture, and good nutrition. Their protein and fiber can help you feel full longer.

Hint: Make food appear richer by sprinkling pistachios, almonds, or walnuts onto sweet or savory dishes instead of mixing them in when you can.

6. Up in smoke. Smoking can be cool ... when food is doing the smoking. It adds a layer of flavor without adding calories.

Hint: Grilling is an ideal way to create smokiness. But occasionally opt for naturally-smoked Gouda or mozzarella in place of regular cheese. Choose organic smoked turkey or tofu instead of their plain counterparts. And for a little smokiness anytime, add a pinch of hickory-smoked sea salt.

7. A few of your favorite things. Including desirable foods into a naturally nutritious meal plan can heighten appeal—and help you stick to a healthful plan.

Hint: Pizza can be part of your good-for-you repertoire. Just keep it petite. Top a whole grain pita or lavash with pizza toppings of choice—include at least one veggie or possibly fruit topping--and bake till crisp. Be creative; try cauliflower, edamame, or fig!

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