Hell of a Holiday Feast

The holidays are just around the corner, and if you’re anything like me, you’ll want to set the table with delicious foods for your loved ones to stuff their faces with. Meal planning is stressful, especially when you slap the word “*holiday”* in front of it. And let’s be honest: there’s bound to be at least one annoying person at every gathering you attend. But don’t let them get your panties in a bundle, because we’ve got your back! You’ve been working hard and now it’s time to celebrate the holidays with some delicious and healthy dishes that are sure to kick ass and leave your guests saying, “*that was one hell of a holiday feast.*”

Let’s get started with some Garlic Parmesan Cauliflower Mash. We know what you’re thinking: “Garlic Parmesan Cauliflower what? She better not be messing with my taters.” Well I am. And if you give this recipe a shot, I think it’ll be love at first bite.

Garlic Parmesan Cauliflower Mash (servings: 8)

-Ingredients-

4 cups cauliflower florets

 1 1/4 cups Chicken Broth (I used Swanson Chicken Broth)

 4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

1 tablespoon butter

Directions:

* Heat the cauliflower, broth and garlic to a boil in a 10-inch skillet over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium. Cover the skillet and cook for 15 minutes or until the cauliflower is tender.

Mash the cauliflower mixture in the skillet and stir in the Parmesan cheese and butter. Salt and pepper to taste.

Here’s a fun recipe to pleasure your palate with. Within reason that is. This is a healthier stuffing recipe, but portion control is still a necessary skill if you want to make it through the holidays without packing on a few unwanted pounds. After all, you don’t want your trainer following you around, smacking food out of your hands. That wouldn’t be fun for anyone. Well, maybe it would be a *little* fun for your trainer.

Sexy Bread Stuffing (Serving: 12)

-Ingredients-

2 1/2 cups low fat, low sodium chicken broth   (I used Swanson low fat, low sodium Chicken Broth)

 3 onions, diced

 6 cups diced whole-grain bread

 1 tablespoon paprika

 1/4 cup egg substitute

1 tablespoon mixed chopped sage, rosemary, and parsley.

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

* In a skillet over medium-high heat, heat 1/2 cup of the chicken broth. Add the onions and cook for 10 minutes until onions have softened.
* In a bowl, combine the cooked onions, remaining broth, bread, paprika, sage, rosemary, parsley, egg substitute and salt and pepper. Mix well.
* Place mixture inside the cavity of a turkey or place it in a casserole dish. If stuffing is to be baked separately from the turkey, cover and place stuffing in a preheated 350-degree oven and bake for 45 minutes.

This next dish is going to replace your beloved sweet potato casserole. But I promise you, it is WAY better. And if its not quite sweet enough for you, you’re welcome to throw ¼ cup of dried cranberries into the mix or add 3 tablespoons of honey and 2 teaspoons of cinnamon. Just keep in mind this isn’t dessert, ok?

Roasted Sweet Potatoes & Onions (servings: 6)

-Ingredients-

2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut in 1-inch chunks

 2 medium Vidalia or other sweet onions, cut in 1-inch chunks

 3 tablespoons olive oil

 1/4 cup amaretto liqueur

1 teaspoon dried thyme

 Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste.

 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted

Directions

* Heat oven to 425 degrees F.
* Toss sweet potatoes, onions, ameretto liqueur, dried thyme, salt and pepper in a shallow medium-sized baking dish. Drizzle olive oil and coat ingredients evenly, add a dash of salt and ground black pepper.
* Cover and bake 30 minutes. Uncover and bake another 20 minutes more. Sprinkle with almonds
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* That’s it. You’re done. So let’s move on. I don’t want to keep you waiting any longer.
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Merry Berry Cobbler (servings: 8)

-Ingredients-

4 cups mixed fresh berries

* 2 teaspoon water (optional)

1 cup coconut milk

2 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1 cup almond meal

Directions

Place berries in a saucepan over medium heat. Cover saucepan and cook until berries soften and begin to break apart, about 5 minutes. If berries look dry when cooking, add 2 teaspoon of water to the saucepan. Remove from heat.

* Whisk coconut milk and cinnamon together in a bowl.

Transfer berries to a small serving dish; pour coconut milk mixture over berries and sprinkle almond meal on top.

This tarty little thing is absolutely delicious! If you’re feeling kind of naughty, throw some dark chocolate shaving on top. But make sure it’s at least 72% cocoa and low in sugar.

Tips that will turn on the cook inside of you!

That’s right, we’re not done blowing your mind yet. So sit back and enjoy yourself.

TIP #1 In place of fudge, peanut brittle or candies, set the table with fresh fruits such as grapes, strawberries or cherries. You can even serve sliced apples lightly coated in cinnamon and sugar. These are all smart and delicious alternatives that will keep guests happy.

TIP #2 Veggies and cheese please! Pretty much everybody loves cheese, so put some cubed options out with an assortment of veggies. Forget the ranch dip or crackers. No one needs that junk when they’ve got veggies and cheese.

TIP #3 Water! Sparkling, still or flavored water is really all you need. Your body can’t live with out that precious H2O, so make sure you and your guests are gulping it down to avoid dehydration. Fact: Thirst is commonly mistaken for hunger, and this leads to over eating without satisfaction. So stay hydrated!

TIP #4 Let someone else do the clean up. You did all the cooking for goodness sake!

Last but not least, remember to enjoy yourself. One cookie won’t kill you but it won’t make you stronger either. So just keep that in mind and have one hell of a holiday feast!