



DELHI DELIGHT ALMOND VEGGIE BURGERS

Almond Board of California, www.almondboard.com

Yield: 24 servings

Almond Veggie Burgers

8 large eggs
4 t. curry powder
4 t. garam masala
4 t. salt
2 lb., 4 oz. cooked basmati rice
1 lb., 4 oz. cooked lentils
10 oz. chopped
toasted almonds
8 oz. dry unseasoned
bread crumbs
4 oz. green onions, chopped
1 lb. mild Cheddar, grated

Method (1) In large bowl, whisk together eggs, curry, garam masala and salt. Stir in rice, lentils, almonds, bread crumbs and onions. Add cheese; stir until well mixed. (2) With moistened hands, form 1/3 cup of burger mixture into oval patty. Place on parchment-lined sheet pan. Repeat with remaining mixture to make 48 patties. Refrigerate, covered.

Raita

1 1/8 c. mayonnaise
3/4 c. sour cream
4 1/2 oz. feta, crumbled
2 oz. cucumber, peeled,
seeded, chopped

1 1/2 T. dried mint leaves
3/4 c. yogurt

Method (1) In blender, purée mayonnaise, sour cream, feta, cucumber and mint until smooth. (2) Transfer to bowl; fold in yogurt. Refrigerate, covered.

Assembly

Canola oil, as needed
24 flour tortillas, warmed
1 1/2 c. sliced red onions
144 slices seeded cucumbers
48 slices tomato
1 1/2 c. chopped
toasted almonds
1/2 c. chopped cilantro
1/4 c. chopped mint

Method (1) For each serving, to order: In sauté pan, heat oil over medium heat. Add 2 Almond Veggie Burgers, and cook, turning once, about 6 minutes or until crust forms and burgers are heated through. (2) Place burgers on top half of 1 tortilla; spoon 2 tablespoons Raita over burgers. (3) Top with 1 tablespoon onion, 6 slices cucumber and 2 slices tomato. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon almonds, 1 teaspoon cilantro and 1/2 teaspoon mint. (4) Fold up bottom half of tortilla and serve.

Putting HEALTHY *in its place*

No need to compromise flavor
for health—just know where
to put it and when

by Abbie Jarman

A filet mignon with maître d'hôtel butter, crispy asparagus with béarnaise, a rich, creamy bisque. There are parts of the menu where diners will never sacrifice flavor for health. But there are others, particularly during lunch or a casual dinner, where they'd rather save the calories for a more special occasion. For that, offer healthy, flavor-filled sandwiches and wraps.

The definition of healthy food is changing, now including terms like organic, hormone-free and grass-fed, with benefits such as antioxidants, omega-3s and phytochemicals. Nowadays, it's not just what you take out of a dish—fat, calories, sodium, sugar—but what goes in that makes it healthy.

In the restaurants

Most chefs have a strong opinion one way or the other about their role in a diner's health and well-being. Some chefs believe it is their duty to offer customers healthy options. Others counter that people go out to eat for a special treat and shouldn't be bothered with fat grams and cholesterol—nor should the chef. According to Mike Garber, chef de cuisine at BLD in Los Angeles (www.bldrestaurant.com), it all depends on the restaurant.

BLD is a neighborhood place that takes fine-dining techniques and ingredients and applies them to a more casual setting. The dishes are distinct takes on classics, such as the fried egg sandwich with Nueske's bacon, gruyère and aioli, and curried chicken salad sandwich with red flame raisins, cashews and mizuna, a Japanese mustard green. With the high-end touches on classic, everyday dishes, BLD (which stands for Breakfast Lunch Dinner) hopes to draw customers who can call it their regular spot.

According to Garber, executive chef and co-owner of BLD Neal Fraser sticks to the belief that restaurants are not the place for nutrition. "As much as I love and appreciate that, I do understand that this is Los Angeles, and a lot of people aren't looking for that," explains Garber. "Over the year we've been open, I've realized that a lot of people who come into our restaurant don't want that at all. They save it for a special event."

BLD's sandwich offerings include a Berkshire pork burger, an albacore tuna sandwich (Garber orders whole albacore loins and slowly cooks them in oil, in lieu of canned tuna), a garden burger and a crab burger served with house-made pickles.

The eggless egg salad sandwich includes soft tofu, onions, garlic and lemon juice. The tofu acts as the egg and the mayonnaise, and the sandwich is finished with a mashed avocado spread—full of healthy fats. "We were looking for a vegetarian sandwich, and we didn't just want to do a portobello sandwich because that's what everyone does," says Garber.

You are what they eat

More and more, the American public is keyed into the idea that the lifestyle and diet of animals can affect the eater as well as the eaten. Diners are demanding hormone- and antibiotic-free meats, organic, humanely raised, grass-fed animals. And foodservice providers beyond the white tablecloth are responding with more sustainable, humane options.

Late last year, Centerplate (www.centerplate.com), which provides foodservice accommodations for over 130 sports, entertainment and convention venues across North America, announced its alliance with Niman Ranch (www.nimanranch.com), a network of family farms and ranches

Putting HEALTHY in its place

that offer sustainable, humanely raised animals. Through the partnership, Centerplate is offering Niman Ranch hot dogs and hamburgers in the suites and premium concession areas at a number of its sports arenas.

Centerplate first implemented the Niman Ranch meats in its baseball venues, offering them as an upgrade to the hot dog bar in a suite along with gourmet toppings like caramelized onion and cracked pepper sauerkraut, roasted garlic and chipotle mustard, and cumin-spiced sweet pickles. Getting the product into the football venues was more difficult, as much of the concessions is tied up in sponsorships. So Centerplate focused on suite menus. In Arizona, guests are offered braised pork using Niman Ranch pork butt, and in New Orleans they have the option of a top sirloin carving station. Goals for 2008 include bringing the products to more baseball venues, as well as the convention side of Centerplate's business.

Centerplate corporate chef Brett Lewis sees Niman Ranch's philosophies being adopted as part of Americans' overall definition of healthy food. "You hear the old saying you are what you eat. And certainly animals that are consumed in foodservice and the way that they are treated is impacting how we are looking at that whole industry,"

says Lewis. "The perception is that it is a much healthier piece of meat than you would get from a typical cow."

But Niman Ranch is also about sustainability, and Lewis and the Centerplate team are careful not to take this partnership to a level that is not sustainable. They are focusing on parts of the country where it makes sense to offer the product—such as in Colorado, where a number of Niman Ranch farmers are located. And that ties into another focus of Centerplate: sourcing local foods. "We don't want to overwhelm a particular part of the country with Niman if it doesn't make sense."

Eventually, Centerplate plans to offer the products throughout its venues—not just in the premium areas. The demand from the general public, says Lewis, is certainly there. "Five years ago, I never would have thought that we'd be here today doing this."

A similar partnership was recently created between Burrito Beach (www.burritobeach.com), a fast-casual Mexican restaurant with seven locations in Chicago, and Tallgrass Beef (www.tallgrassbeef.com), a provider of grass-fed, hormone- and antibiotic-free beef. According to Tallgrass, grass-fed beef is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in vitamins A and E and omega-3 fatty acids.



Dilseo's seafood salad wrap with sweet potato fries

From October 24, 2007, to the end of the year, Burrito Beach offered a barbacoa burrito with slow-cooked Tallgrass beef brisket, salsa verde, pinto beans, Spanish rice and Jack cheese. A portion of the proceeds from each sale was donated to Chicago's Green City Market. The partnership proved that sustainable, high-end meats are not just for white tablecloths.

Redefining retirement food

At Splendido, a Mather LifeWays Continuing Care Retirement Community in Tucson, Ariz. (www.matherlifeways.com), there is little interest in how the meat was treated before reaching the table, or other hot-button topics like superfoods and omega-3s. But as Cara Baldwin, vice president of dining services for Mather LifeWays, explains, her industry is just one generation away from seeing a big demand for such foods. The population currently

in the community still wants the old-fashioned comfort foods. "Short of the diabetic diet ... they aren't into the fad diets as much as your Baby Boomers are. So as the Baby Boomers start to age, we're going to have to take a more conscious look at our menu and make sure that we have more options to accommodate that generation," explains Baldwin.

Mather LifeWays' culinary services are aggressive, offering numerous dining facilities and a kitchen that runs like a restaurant. The 260 residents can choose from four dining rooms, each offering different menus. In the kitchen, six chefs cook nearly everything à la minute, allowing them to accommodate dietary requests on an individual basis. "We have to remember that our customer base comes back to us every night. We can't put in a true restaurant-style menu because they would get bored."

ALASKA COD VIETNAMESE CLASSIC

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, www.alaskaseafood.org



Yield: 12 servings

Vietnamese Marinade and Cod

6 oz. fish sauce
6 oz. fresh lime juice
4 1/2 oz. rice vinegar
3 oz. fresh garlic
3 oz. brown sugar
1 1/2 oz. sriracha
4 lb. Alaska cod fillets (4-5 oz. each)

Method (1) Combine all ingredients but cod in a stainless steel bowl. Whisk to combine. (2) Place cod fillets in a plastic bag or hotel pan. Pour marinade over fish, and refrigerate. After 2 hours, drain cod, and discard marinade. (3) Place marinated cod fillets, top-side down, on a hot grill. Grill on one side for 2-3 minutes, depending on grill temperature. Turn cod over, and grill for another 1 to 2 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 145°F. (4) Carefully remove cod from grill and place on a sheet pan to cool. Refrigerate until service. Important note: As cod cooks, it begins to flake apart. Use care when turning and removing from grill to keep fillets intact.

Sweet Cilantro Aioli

12 oz. mayonnaise
1 1/2 oz. fresh cilantro
4 1/2 t. fresh garlic, minced
4 1/2 t. fresh lemon juice
1 1/2 t. lemon zest
1 1/2 t. sugar
1 1/2 t. kosher salt

Method (1) Combine all ingredients in a food processor. Process for 60 seconds, or until cilantro is finely chopped and all ingredients are well-combined. (2) Pour dressing into squeeze bottles and refrigerate.

Pickled Carrot-Cucumber Slaw

5 oz. rice vinegar
1 T. sugar
2 t. kosher salt
8 oz. carrot, julienne
4 oz. cucumber, julienne

Method (1) Combine vinegar, sugar and salt in a stainless steel pot over medium heat. Stir to dissolve sugar. (2) Place carrots and cucumbers in a stainless steel bowl. Pour dressing over vegetables. Toss to combine, and let sit, 1 to 12 hours.

Assembly, per sandwich

1 grilled Alaska cod fillet
1 French roll
2 T. Sweet Cilantro Aioli
1 oz. Pickled Carrot-Cucumber Slaw
Jalapeños, sliced, to taste
Maggi Seasoning, to taste
4 onion rings, cooked
Cilantro sprigs, to garnish

Method (1) Place fillet on a pie plate in hot oven, and reheat, 1 minute. (2) Open roll (do not separate top and bottom), and toast on griddle or under broiler. (3) Spread aioli on both sides of roll, place fillet on bottom half. Add slaw and jalapeños. Drizzle with Maggi, top with onion, and garnish with cilantro.

Quick, healthy

Use these tips to easily increase the nutritional value of your sandwiches and wraps.

- Utilize overripe **avocados** that are too ripe to be used in other applications as a spread. Avocados offer nearly 20 vitamins, minerals and beneficial plant compounds. Due to their mono- and poly-unsaturated fat content, they are a healthy substitution for foods rich in saturated fat.

- Substitute high-fat spreads with **fruit relishes**, which can offer vital vitamins and minerals. Dole Foodservice offers a number of recipes for sandwich relishes, such as a roasted tomatillo, mango and pineapple salsa (www.dole.com).

- When **tomatoes** are heated and paired with a fat, the consumer can get more of their healthy lycopene. Broil tomatoes on a sandwich, and dress them with a heart-healthy **olive oil** to bring out the best.


- Use **brown rice** in wraps, which is whole grain and offers fiber and phytonutrients.

- Add **onions** to include health-promoting phytochemicals and vital nutrients like vitamin C, potassium, dietary fiber and folic acid.

- Incorporate nuts into your sandwiches and wraps.

Walnuts are one of the best superfoods; they are high in omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants. **Almonds** can help lower cholesterol and are also a good source of antioxidants.

chutneys offer fresh ingredients with little added fat. “What really helps the residents out from my point of view is top-quality ingredients and smaller portions,” says Dilseo. His healthy sandwich and wrap selection includes a grilled vegetable and pesto sandwich, a grilled ahi tuna sandwich with a light Boursin cheese spread and cucumber relish and a whole wheat pita pocket with chicken.

Offering healthy foods to your diners doesn’t mean compromising flavor, nor does it mean you have to cut out the duck confit or hollandaise. Just know when and where it is appropriate to offer healthy dishes—like the sandwich menu. When you offer them a healthy sandwich at lunch, they’ll come back for the rich, indulgent goodness at dinner. 

Currently, Splendido’s menus highlight two kinds of healthy dishes. There is a Conscious Cuisine dish offered every night, which includes the nutritional information on the menu. Then, about 50 percent of the menu meets the American Heart Association (AHA) guidelines for a heart-healthy meal option.

For this generation, that AHA logo is enough, but Baldwin knows that will soon change. Not only are Baby Boomers more educated about health and wellness beyond sodium and fat, but they are also much more adventurous eaters, with expansive, worldly palates that demand more than the comfort foods of generations past.

To make each individual dish healthy and nutritious, Splendido depends on executive chef Albert Dilseo. Dilseo relies on some smart cooking techniques to bring the residents full-flavored, satisfying foods that are healthy, too. For his sandwiches and wraps, he focuses on big flavors in lieu of heavy fats. Relishes, salsas and