

# Meat, move over, let veggies take over

Thanksgiving is a prototype for the traditional American plate: centered around an 8- to 10-ounce piece of meat, a large helping of potatoes or white rice smothered in gravy, and perhaps a green vegetable — maybe green beans — as a kind of afterthought garnish.

Sound familiar? Our traditional food habits combined with swollen portion sizes and seden-

tary lifestyles have resulted in a major obesity problem.

They also contribute to high rates of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends a different approach. Their “New American Plate” concept includes:

■ More than two-thirds fruits,

vegetables and whole grains dominate the plate. Their basic meal plan suggests two servings of fruits or vegetables and one serving of whole grains.

■ A smaller portion of meat rounds out the plate.

That approach crowds meat and poultry to the edge of the plate. The result is a meal high in fiber, vitamins and phytochemicals, those plant substances that

seem to protect us from cancer, heart disease and other threats. This plate also grabs the eye with color, unlike the predominant brown and white of the traditional plate.

A growing body of research suggests that a diet high in plant foods including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains promotes better health.

—Cinda Williams Chima

## Papaya, Red Pepper and Pecan Salad With Turkey

Makes 4 servings

- 8 cups torn romaine lettuce leaves
- 2 medium, ripe papayas, peeled, halved, seeded and cubed
- 1 large red bell pepper, halved, seeded, sliced into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 scallions, trimmed and sliced, white part only
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 tablespoons fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 pound cooked boneless, skinless turkey breast, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans, toasted

**Preliminaries:** To toast pecans, put them in a small skillet over medium-high heat and stir frequently for 2 to 3 minutes, until lightly browned. Immediately transfer the nuts to a small dish and cool.

**Assemble the salad:** In a large salad bowl, combine the lettuce, papaya, bell pepper and scallions.

**Make the dressing:** In a measuring cup or small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, broth, honey, garlic and mustard. Slowly add the olive oil in a thin stream and whisk the dressing until it is well-blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

**Presentation:** Pour the dressing over the salad, add the turkey, and toss until well-combined. Add the pecans and serve.

**Approximate nutritional analysis per serving (made with chicken):** calories, 306; fat, 17 grams; carbohydrates, 33 grams; protein, 24 grams; fiber, 7 grams; sodium, 122 milligrams.

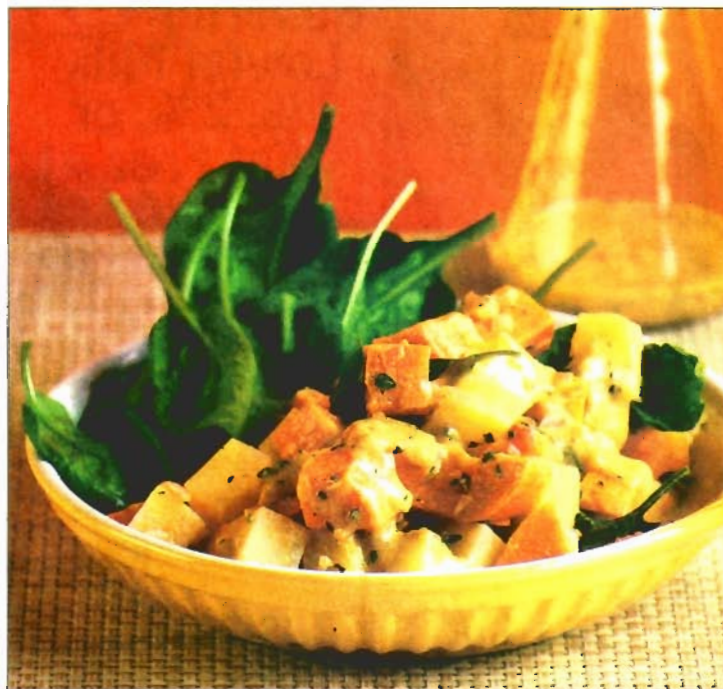
**Source:** Adapted recipe, nutritional analysis from “The New American Plate Cookbook” (University of California Press, 2005).

## Two-Potato Salad With Spinach and Fresh Herb Dressing

Makes 12 side-dish servings

- 1 pound boiling potatoes, preferably yellow-fleshed (such as Yukon Gold) peeled and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 1 pound orange-flesh sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2/3 cup mixed shallots
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme

**Did you make both white potatoes and sweet potatoes for your holiday feast? Use the leftovers to make this salad, and you can skip the boiling step. This is hearty enough to serve as a light meal.**



THE NEW AMERICAN PLATE COOKBOOK

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and torn into bite-size pieces, tightly packed

**Preliminaries:** Put the boiling potatoes and sweet potatoes in two separate pots with enough cold water to cover them. Cover both pots with tight-fitting lids and bring the water to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until just barely tender when pierced with a fork, about 4 to 5 minutes. (The potatoes will continue cooking after they are removed from the pot.)

**Make the dressing:** Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the mustard and vinegar. Gradually whisk in the olive oil until the mixture is smooth and well-combined. Mix in the shallots, rosemary and thyme, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

**Assemble the salad:** Drain the potatoes and transfer them to a large bowl. Drizzle in half of the dressing (about 1/4 cup) toss gently, and set the salad aside to allow the potatoes to absorb the flavors while cooling. When the potatoes are at room temperature, gently mix in the spinach and the remaining dressing.

**Presentation:** Adjust the seasoning and serve at room temperature.

**Approximate nutritional analysis per serving:** calories, 128; fat, 5 grams; carbohydrates, 19 grams; protein, 2 grams; fiber, 2 grams; cholesterol, none; sodium, 148 milligrams.

**Source:** Adapted recipe, nutritional analysis from “The New American Plate Cookbook” (University of California Press, 2005).