

The party diet

Cocktails, buffets and canapés ... we're heading into party season, but beach holidays are just around the corner too, so save your waist with these tips from Paula Galvão of Eden Life Wellness Clinic.

1. Know your enemy

Party foods are usually not the best for you, but some are worse than others. A handful of peanuts is calorically equivalent to a 150g steak with a lettuce, tomato and avo salad with dressing, and if you eat five crackers with Brie and Camembert, you might as well have had a burger. Other no-no party foods to look out for are cocktail Viennas, mini sausage rolls, samoosas, mini quiches and even salmon. Instead, raid the fruit platter or opt for protein-rich oysters, sushi or beef and chicken satays because protein takes more energy to digest than carbs or fat. This means very little excess protein is actually stored as fat. Crudités (raw vegetables) are also a healthy snack that will fill you up. However, avoid the dip if it's made with cream. Low fat cottage cheese or yoghurt dips are better.

2. Arrive full

Dig into a low-calorie, nutrient-dense food like a summer salad or spicy soup before donning your party dress and you won't gorge on those tasty party canapés quite as much. If you don't have time to eat, drink a glass of water instead. This will trigger nerve stretch receptors on the stomach wall, sending a signal to your brain and tricking it into thinking that you're full.

3. Take your own treats

When you're invited to a party, a lunch or dinner, offer to take a big dish of your favourite home-made low-fat treat like fresh fruit salad with low fat frozen yoghurt. The hostess will love you for it!

4. Keep it simple

Appetite suppression can be moderated by a high-protein, low-fat and low-carbohydrate regimen. A plate of lean protein strips complemented by low-carb vegetables or a crisp salad is an ideal and well-balanced meal choice. But remember that any accompanying gravies, sauces, dressings and dips are a big no! And always keep in mind that when dinner is served buffet-style, it's best to use a small plate and avoid stacking your foods.

5. Go slow

Once you start eating, it takes about 20 minutes for your body to signal to your brain that it's full so put down your fork between mouthfuls and chew your food thoroughly!

7. Limit alcohol

What girl doesn't love a little G&T? But the reality is that your favourite cocktail or that end-of-week celebratory glass of wine are packed with 'empty' calories which have no nutritional value! Alcohol also stimulates appetite and lowers inhibitions so you'll be less likely to exercise self-control and dodge the 'bad' foods. If you feel out of place without a drink, sip sparkling water – no one will know the difference and it'll keep you full and hydrated too!

Details: www.edenlifeclinic.com

6. Is dessert your downfall?

It's pointless eating a perfectly healthy meal just to dive into a sugar-loaded pudding afterwards. To put it in perspective ... one serving of pudding with a dollop of cream will take you an hour-and-a-half of brisk walking to burn off. Opt for a low-fat sweetened cappuccino instead.

Protein, protein, protein!

Ditch the fats and carbs and hit it high protein-style with this sexy beetroot, quinoa and rocket summer salad from Chantal Lascaria's **All Sorts of Salads**. If you're not yet familiar with quinoa (pronounced keen-wah), you're in for a treat! This filling superfood is the perfect substitute for its carbo-laden counterparts like rice and couscous. It also packs a big protein punch and as Chantal points out, it's not actually a grain but part of the spinach family! More high protein salad recipes to look out for in this salad bible ... mushroom with alfalfa sprouts, ostrich salad and tons of chicken and beef recipes plus around 70 more recipes for salads and dressings. *Struik Lifestyle*, R230.

Salad

1/2 cup quinoa • 2 cups water • 180g beetroot • 3/4 cup halved cherry tomatoes • 1/4 cup red onion, peeled and chopped • 1 round feta cheese, chopped • 2 Tbsp lightly toasted pine nuts • 3/4 cup roughly chopped rocket • 2 Tbsp lemon juice



Something different

Did you know artichokes are technically flowers that have yet to bloom? Neither did we. And that's just one of the reasons we're in love with All Sorts of Salads. Try this out-of-the-ordinary smoked chicken and artichoke salad.

Salad

8 artichoke hearts (canned are fine) • 2-3 cups torn mixed salad leaves • 2 cups corn kernels • 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms • 1/2 cup pitted and halved green olives • 1/2 cup shaved Parmesan cheese • 3 smoked chicken breasts,

Dressing

2 tsp honey • 6 Tbsp olive oil • 2 heaped tsp prepared wholegrain mustard • 2 tsp prepared Dijon mustard • salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Preheat the oven's grill. Cut the artichoke hearts in half and place on a greased baking tray. Grill on both sides until the edges are well charred. Allow to cool.
2. Put the salad leaves in a serving bowl and add the corn, mushrooms, olives, Parmesan and cooled artichokes
3. Place the chicken slices on top.
4. Whisk together the dressing ingredients and pour over the entire salad.

Dressing

1/4 cup olive oil • 1 tsp lemon juice • salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Bring the quinoa and water to the boil in a medium saucepan. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer until soft and all the water has been absorbed, about 15 minutes.
2. In a separate pot, boil the beetroot until soft, then drain and set aside to cool. Once cooled, peel and quarter the beetroot.
3. Combine all ingredients in a serving bowl.
4. Whisk together the dressing ingredients and pour over the salad, tossing well.

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