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Healthy Holiday Gift Guide 2007 - Foodie Edition

Blog Name: Nutrition Tidbits - HealthCastle

Wednesday, December 12, 2007



If you or your loved ones are true foodies at heart, holiday gift baskets packed with tasty treats may be high on your holiday giving list. But traditional gift baskets can be packed with fat, sugar, and calories. The good news is, it's easy to put together a tasty gift basket that's healthy too.

Here are our top picks for healthy holiday gifts for 2007. You can mix and match, or put them all in one basket for under \$25!

Top Treats for Your Healthy Holiday Gift Basket

1. Pomegranate

Pomegranate is the hottest fruit this season. Abundant between October and January, pomegranate is not only trendy (and beautiful!), it's also packed with health benefits. Containing high levels of antioxidants, polyphenols, tannins, and anthocyanins, pomegranate is said to benefit several chronic disease conditions, including heart disease and prostate cancer.

2. Sunsweet Ones

You've always known that Grandma really does know best - and there's a reason she always told you to eat your prunes! Prunes have twice as much potassium as bananas and 38 percent more antioxidants than blueberries! Prunes belong to the purple family, which the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) showed can reduce the risk of developing metabolic syndrome. We love Sunsweet Ones because they are individually wrapped - making them convenient to keep in a purse or toss in kids' lunch boxes.

3. Vitasoy Chocolate Peppermint

Looking for festive alternatives to traditional eggnog this holiday season? Look no further. Providing 140 calories and only 4 grams of fat, Vitasoy Chocolate Peppermint organic soy drink is ideal for people with milk allergies or lactose intolerance. This cholesterol-free drink is also best for your health-conscious loved ones who try to avoid gulping down the 340 calories and 19 grams of fat found in a cup of traditional eggnog.

4. Wild Sweets teXtuRe Crunch Chocolate

We all know by now that dark chocolate offers health benefits. But not all chocolate products are created equal. Some chocolate manufacturers dilute their dark chocolate products with milk solids or trans-fat-laden hydrogenated oils; some add loads of sugar that make it more like candy than chocolate.

You have to look closely to find quality decadent dark chocolate made with fine and natural ingredients. Providing 0 grams of trans fat and sugar per serving, our pick Wild Sweets teXtuRe Crunch chocolate bars are all hand-made by world-renowned pastry chefs Dominique and Cindy Duby. Decadent!

5. Everybody's Nuts Roasted No-Salt Pistachios

Nuts are one of the favorite snacks of all time. But instead of peanuts and walnuts, why not trying something different this holiday? Packed with antioxidants, fiber, and good fats, Everybody's Nuts No-Salt Pistachios make it onto our list. Pistachios are among the 7 kinds of nuts approved for a heart-health claim by the FDA in 2003. Because they are in-shell, pistachios take longer to eat, so you eat less but still feel satisfied. Good news for those who are watching the waistline this holiday season!

6. Welch's Fiber 100% Grape Juice

You've heard about the French Paradox and the health benefits red wine offers. Do you feel that you are missing out if you - and your kids, of course - are not wine drinkers? Don't worry - there's an alcohol-free version that suits all ages in your family and offers the same health benefits. Like prunes, Concord grape juice (not surprisingly) belongs to the purple family. Indeed, Concord grape juice ranks the highest in antioxidant activity among 13 juices tested, according to a study published in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry in March 2007. So next time you feel like a glass of juice, add more purple to your diet by trying a glass of Welch's Fiber grape juice.

7. Kashi Mountain Medley Granola

Most packaged whole-grain products are made with whole-grain flour. This holiday season, why not try something festive made from the actual grains, not just the flour? Kashi Granola makes it easy to do that. With cranberries, raisins, almonds, pecans, and sunflower seeds added to 7 whole grains, this versatile granola offers 6 grams of fiber with 300 mg of good omega 3 fats per serving. It's marketed as a cereal product, but we love to snack on it as is.

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