Eat in Season this Fall and Winter!

Did you know that in the state of Georgia produce is grown year-round? Late fall and early winter are peak growing seasons for many vegetables, including sweet potatoes, kale and cauliflower. This means that those vegetables are currently in season and are widely available at grocery stores and farmers markets. In season produce has great flavor and is an affordable choice when shopping for fresh fruit and vegetables.

You probably often hear how great veggies are for us and that you should eat more of them. But do you know why vegetables are such an important part of balanced diet? They help keep our bodies and minds in tip-top shape by giving them essential vitamins and minerals.

For example, sweet potatoes are loaded with potassium, which helps with bone and muscle health. Sweet potatoes are also rich in vitamin A, which is necessary to maintain healthy vision and skin, as well as a healthy immune system. They also are a source of calcium, which helps to build strong bones and teeth and may help lower blood pressure. Calcium is also a key player in muscle contraction.

Next up is the leafy green kale, which is also rich in calcium, potassium and vitamin A. Plus, kale is rich in vitamin K, which is necessary for healthy blood clotting and maintaining healthy bones.

And finally, cauliflower is a source of vitamin K, as well as potassium. It also has vitamin C, which is needed for healing wounds, and for repairing and maintaining bones and teeth. Cauliflower is also rich in folate, an essential nutrient for expecting mothers, as it helps in normal growth and development of babies.

Whether you already love these fall and winter veggies, or you’ve never tried them before, below are some delicious recipes for you to try this season.

This hearty, healthy kale salad with dried cranberries, sliced almonds and fresh goat cheese is a wonderful side salad for Thanksgiving or any time of the year.

**Kale Salad with Cranberries, Almonds and Goat Cheese**

*Makes 6 servings*

**Ingredients:**

- 2 bunches of kale, rinsed and dried, ribs and stems removed,

leaves thinly sliced crosswise
1/3 cup dried cranberries

4 ounces goat cheese

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°. Spread the almonds evenly on sheet a pan and bake for 5 minutes, or until lightly browned.
2. Whisk together the vinegar, orange juice, mustard, shallot and garlic for the dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. In a large bowl, toss the kale, toasted almonds, dressing and cranberries. Let sit for 10 minutes, then crumble with goat cheese and serve.

Recipe Source:

Cinnamon-Honey Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Few pinches of cinnamon
- Drizzle of honey

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Rinse and slice sweet potatoes into ½ inch chunks or into coin-like slices.
3. Line baking pan or dish with aluminum foil.
4. Spread sweet potatoes onto pan and drizzle with olive oil.
5. Add few pinches of cinnamon onto sweet potatoes and finish with a drizzle of honey across the potatoes.
6. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until potatoes are soft and starting to brown. If you prefer your potatoes a little crispier, bake for about 5 minutes longer.
“Mock” Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 medium head cauliflower
- 1 Tbsp. cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- ½ tsp. minced garlic
- 1/8 tsp. straight chicken base or bullion (may sub. ½ tsp. salt)
- 1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ tsp. chopped fresh or dry chives, for garnish
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter

Directions:

1. Set a stockpot of water to boil over high heat.
2. Clean and cut cauliflower into small pieces. Cook in boiling water for about 6 minutes, or until well done. Drain well; do not let cool and pat cooked cauliflower very dry between several layers of paper towels.
3. In a bowl with an immersion blender, or in a food processor, puree the hot cauliflower with the cream cheese, Parmesan, garlic, chicken base and pepper until almost smooth.
4. Garnish with chives, and serve hot with pats of butter.

Recipe Source:

Enjoy!

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