



## Fabulous Foods of The Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet is a lifestyle\* and way of eating based on the food traditions of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea including Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Morocco. It's a delightful way to eat colorful, nutritious foods, and a sensible way to lose or maintain weight. In fact, randomized controlled trials have repeatedly found the Mediterranean Diet more effective than low-fat diets for weight loss, lower blood pressure, reduced cholesterol and other health measures.\*\*

The traditional foods of the Mediterranean region are simply delicious – wholesome, minimally processed, full of flavor and texture – and so easy and affordable to enjoy. Found at your local farmers' market or in your grocery store, they include an array of vegetables, fruits, whole grains (such as brown rice, quinoa and barley), beans, lean meat and fish, nuts, seeds, dairy, eggs and olive oil.

When you've a bounty like this to choose from it's easy to create healthy meals quickly. The menu to the right is an example of how to incorporate a spectrum of Mediterranean foods in a day's worth of meals to ensure you're satisfying your body's need for a wide range of nutrients, without overeating.

*(Recipes follow on the next page)*

\*In addition to eating nutritious whole foods, the Mediterranean Diet lifestyle includes cooking and enjoying the pleasures of the table with family and friends, drinking wine in moderation (if you drink), and finding ways to stay physically active throughout the day (such as an after-dinner walk, or taking the stairs whenever possible).

\*\**The American Journal of Medicine*, September 2011;124(9):841-851 e2

### Breakfast

- 1 slice whole wheat toast
- 1 medium orange
- 1 soft-boiled egg
- Coffee or tea  
(optional milk and/or sugar)

### Lunch

#### Mushroom Pita

- 1 cup grapes

### Dinner

#### Salmon Kebabs

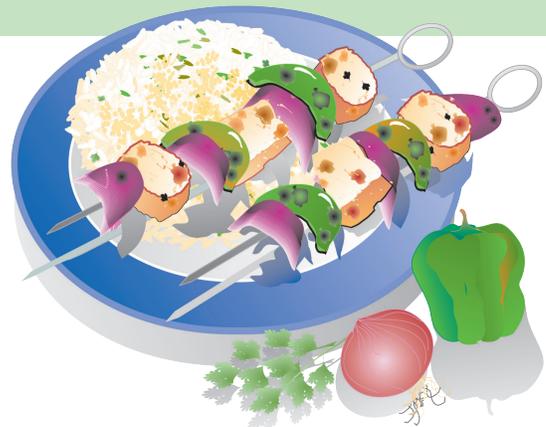
- Brown rice
- Arugula salad
- Vinaigrette made with olive oil and vinegar  
(1 tablespoon or less per person)

### Dessert:

- 1 cup strawberries

### Snacks (midmorning and midafternoon)

- 1) Sliced apple, pear, carrots or celery. Use as a dipper for 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) hummus. Or, slather a thin layer of peanut butter (2 tablespoons) on fruit or veggies.
- 2) Enjoy a handful of nuts such as almonds, pistachios or walnuts for a crunchy treat.



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## Good Fats and Healthy Carbs

*If you've somehow gotten the impression that "fats" and "carbs" are the enemies of good health and weight control, you may be interested to know that the vegetable or fruit you just ate is a healthy carbohydrate, and so are whole grains, such as the brown rice and whole wheat bread included in these meal ideas.*

*Healthy fats are found in salmon, olive oil, avocado, and that handful of nuts at snack time. Eating well comes from the quality of the carbohydrates, fats and proteins you eat—not from cutting any one of these three essential macronutrients out of your diet.*

## Salmon Kebabs

Serves 4

*Here's a great way to make dinner in 30 minutes. Add a few cherry tomatoes if you wish. Include one cup of cooked brown rice per serving.*

Juice of 1 lime	1 pound salmon fillet
1 garlic clove, minced	1 medium zucchini
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1 large onion
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard	1 red, yellow or orange bell pepper
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon or 1 teaspoon dried	

Combine the lime juice, garlic, olive oil, mustard, and tarragon in a bowl and blend with a whisk. Cut the remaining ingredients into chunks, add to the bowl, and toss gently to coat. Set aside for 15 minutes.

Preheat the grill or broiler. Thread the salmon, zucchini, onion, and pepper chunks onto four skewers. If using the broiler, arrange the skewers in a baking dish. Broil or grill for 5 minutes. Turn and cook for 5 minutes longer.

**Nutrition:** Calories: 300, Fat: 16g (Saturated fat: 2g); Sodium: 125mg; Carbohydrate: 7g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 30g

## Vinaigrette

Yield:  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup cider or wine vinegar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

Option: Add 1 tablespoon fresh chopped thyme, tarragon or rosemary to the dressing

Combine all ingredients in a jar with a tight fitting lid and shake until well blended.

### Nutrition per one tablespoon

**serving:** Calories: 80; Fat: 9g (Saturated fat: 1g); Sodium: 50mg; Carbohydrate: 1g; Fiber 0g; Protein 0g

## Mushroom Pita

Serves 1

*If you bring your lunch to work or school, pack the marinated mushrooms in a separate container and assemble your pita just before eating so your sandwich won't get soggy.*

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced mushrooms	1 garlic clove, minced
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil	Romaine lettuce
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar	$\frac{1}{2}$ whole wheat pita
1 tablespoon diced olives	1 tablespoon crumbled goat cheese
2 scallions, chopped	

Combine the mushrooms, olive oil, vinegar, olives, scallions, and garlic in a small bowl and toss to blend. Cover and refrigerate for one hour. To serve, place the lettuce in the pita half, fill with the mushroom mixture and the goat cheese.

**Nutrition:** Calories: 330; Fat: 14g (Saturated fat: 4g); Sodium: 310mg; Carbohydrate: 48g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 9g



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