

Give Mediterrasian diet a try

Editor's Note: The Busy Kitchen is a Monday column written by two area chefs — Tiffany Poe and Val-arie Carter — who also happen to be mothers of young children. They explore nutrition, cooking for kids and more.

As many of you know, the “Busy Kitchen” families have been taking on the 90-day unprocessed food challenge. It’s been an interesting ride, and heading to the Mediterranean and Asian cultures for culinary inspiration and eating has made my job as “chef and chief bottle washer” much easier.

There is a secret to being healthy and living a long, healthy life.

Mediterranean and Asian cultures have known and practiced

The Busy Kitchen

Family cooking tips and ideas with Chef Tiffany Poe



these healthy eating lifestyles for centuries and therefore enjoyed lower rates of obesity and less chronic disease.

The Mediterranean diet has been around in Western diet circles for years but combined with the flavor and food profiles from the Asian diet, the world of healthy and unprocessed eating goes to a new level.

Several years ago I was intro-

duced to the book “The Mediterranean Way.” I immediately fell in love with the concept, way of life and recipes. As you know, I’m always looking for a culinary adventure to take my kids on and the Mediterranean way of cooking has given me just that — an endless culinary adventure.

It has even led my business partner Chef Trey Wilson and me to launch a food truck — “Plum Delicious: Mediterranean Mobile Eats,” (tulsaworld.com/plumfoodtruck).

Over the next few months I want to introduce you to the Mediterranean diet and the health benefits it holds for your family. As we plug



Orange, Fennel

SEE DIETS D2

DIETS

FROM D1

away at fighting the processed food monster in our homes, I want to introduce you to new ways of looking and preparing food through the eyes of these two amazing cultures.

Here is a sneak peak into the similarities and recipe ideas found in the Mediterra-

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sian diet. Find the website at tulsaworld.com/mediterrasian.

The diet includes abundant amounts of plant foods such as vegetables, fruits, grains, legumes (beans, peas and lentils) and nuts.

Red meat is consumed in small amounts, but fish is eaten regularly.

Most fat comes from plant and fish oils.

Alcohol is fine in moderation and is usually consumed with meals.

Physical activity is part of everyday life.

Both Mediterranean and Asian cultures tend to be optimistic, with strong family ties and special time set aside each day to relax body

and mind.

Chef Tiffany Poe, a graduate of The Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., owns Tiffany Poe Culinary Services, a consulting, food styling and corporate coaching company. She and her husband have three small children and own The Grandview Inn, a historic bed and breakfast near the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in Pawhuska. Find more of her recipes on her blog, tulsaworld.com/gastronomymommy.

ORANGE, FENNEL AND OLIVE SALAD

Serves 4-6

3-4 large oranges

2-3 large bulbs fresh fennel

1 jar or tub of kalamata olives, sliced in half or quartered

½ cup orange juice, fresh or not from concentrate

3 tablespoons olive oil

Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Start by washing and peeling or slicing the orange rind off. You can do this two ways. One, the old fashioned way by just peeling the orange (this is more kid friendly) or two, by using a chef’s knife and slicing the bottom, top and sides off to match the shape of the orange.

2. Take the cleaned orange and slice cross ways to get orange rings. You will get about 4-6 per orange. Set aside.

3. Take the fennel bulb, wash it, cut off the stalk portion and set aside. Using a mandoline or slicing device, thinly shave the bulb portion of the fennel all the way down to the root end and place shaved fennel in a bowl. (I like to leave the root or bottom of the fennel attached until I’m finished shaving because it gives me something to hold on to.)

4. Using the stalk ends of the fennel remove some of the “fennel fronds,” the herby-looking green springs from the fennel stalks to use as

garnish and flavor in the salad.

5. In a bowl, combine orange, fennel meat, fronds, olives, orange juice, olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Toss to combine.

Note: Enjoy this simple salad with roasted or grilled chicken and a green salad for a fun spring/summer meal.

EDAMAME AND MINT SOUP

Enjoy hot or cold with a simple wrap or sandwich, or with a full meal.

Serves 4 to 6

2 bags of frozen or fresh edamame or soy beans

1 quart vegetable stock

½ cup of half-and-half or almond, coconut or soy milk

(your choice)

1 small bunch fresh mint

Salt and pepper, to taste

1. In a small saucepan, combine edamame and ¾ of the stock, and bring to a boil. Remove from stove and allow to cool slightly.

2. Place cooked edamame in a blender and blend until smooth. Add cream and blend again. Finish with several leaves of mint, salt and pepper.

3. Thin with remaining stock to desired consistency. Garnish with mint and black pepper.

Note: Also, try this simple salad with roasted or grilled chicken and a green salad for a fun spring or summer meal.