



Festive, Healthy Fare With *Flair*

Long grain and wild rice, cranberries, and peanuts make a festive and healthful dish for holiday entertaining.

FAMILY FEATURES

The thoughtful host has guests who glow with a healthy sense of satisfaction, not from being stuffed," says chef Rozanne Gold, author of many cookbooks including "Entertaining 1-2-3" and "Healthy 1-2-3." Gold maintains that "holiday and healthful" can go hand in hand. She recommends planning around excellent ingredients, bold textures, bright colors and big flavors. Registered dietician Laura Pensiero, author of "The Strang Cancer Prevention Center Cookbook" agrees: "Focus on healthful, seasonal offerings. Foods like pumpkin, cranberries, whole grain rice, dates, pomegranates, root vegetables, braising greens and peanuts help make the season colorful and nutritious." "USA-grown peanuts are a familiar ingredient that make a dish seem exotic, providing a delightful array of texture and flavor possibilities," Pensiero says. Beyond its culinary versatility — complementing any cuisine from Latin to Asian to New American — the peanut satisfies nutritionists, too, with its good fiber, zero cholesterol and more than 30 essential nutrients. "Festive holiday side dishes, soups, and salads are all more interesting with whole grains, such as long grain and wild rice," says Gold. "Wild rice is a whole grain hero; it's packed with nutrients, full of flavor and easy to make," she says. "Plan a holiday meal that's satisfying and tasty with big flavors and bold colors, and keep the merry in your party by not stuffing yourself or your guests," Gold says. For more flavor-packed, nutritious ideas, visit www.NationalPeanutBoard.org and www.UncleBens.com.

Entertaining With Flair:

Tips From Rozanne Gold

- Simplicity makes food shine — let the flavors of the best ingredients star.
- Update traditional sides with flavors and texture such as peanuts, dried cranberries or whole grain long grain and wild rice.
- Create an instant holiday dessert buffet by asking guests to bring a dessert to share; let everyone choose a left-over dessert to take home.
- Go festive with your good silverware, fine china, oversized wine goblets and best linens.
- Surprise with a three-ingredient centerpiece: A platter of tangerines with strings of cranberries and lemon leaves; a pyramid of apples and pears with evergreen sprig garnish; or a bowl of gold-sprayed pine cones, halved pomegranates and bits of holly.
- Create your color theme with napkins and print the menu for each guest on color-coordinated stationery.



Healthy Holiday Habits: Tips From Laura Pensiero, R.D.

- Enjoy a large glass of water before tackling the bar or buffet.
- Monitor holiday drinking, which sparks appetite and lowers resistance.
- Scan the offerings on the buffet and create a quick plan for a healthy plate. When possible, serve yourself so you control what and how much you'll eat.
- Look for lively conversation — connect with interesting people to distract from mindless eating and drinking.
- Yes, we bend over food; but also on a walk. Suggest an after-meal walk to enjoy fresh air and the chance to visit.



Ginger-Scallion Wild Rice and Peanuts

Makes 6 servings
Preparation Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes

- 1 box (6-ounce) Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice Original Recipe
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1/2 cup finely chopped scallions
- 1 tablespoon finely minced fresh ginger
- 1/4 cup unsalted roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 4 tablespoons slivered fresh basil

In 2-quart saucepan, put rice, spice packet, water and 1 tablespoon butter. Bring to a boil, stir and reduce heat to low. Cover pot and cook 20 minutes, stirring once.

Meanwhile, melt remaining tablespoon butter in 9-inch skillet. Add scallions and ginger and cook over medium heat 3 minutes, until scallions soften. Add peanuts and cook 2 minutes, stirring, until peanuts get a little crispy. Remove from heat.

After the rice has been cooking 20 minutes, add dried cranberries to rice. Cook 5 minutes longer, or until water is absorbed. Remove from heat; transfer rice to large warm bowl. Using a fork, stir in scallion-peanut mixture and 3 tablespoons basil. Mix well. Scatter remaining basil on top and serve.

Per serving — Calories: 188, Pro: 5g, Fat: 7g, Sat. Fat: 3g, Choles: 10mg, Carb: 28g, Fiber: 2g, Calcium: 20mg

Recipe created by Rozanne Gold, award-winning chef and cookbook author, known as the "diva of simplicity," on behalf of Uncle Ben's.

Holiday Rice

Makes 6 servings
Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 25 minutes

- 1 box (6-ounce) Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice Original Recipe
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 2 cups chopped leeks, white part only
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh sage
- 1 large clove garlic
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Salt and pepper to taste

Put rice and rice packet, water, and 1/2 tablespoon butter in 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower heat to simmer and cover. Cook 25 minutes.

Melt remaining butter in large skillet. Add leeks and cook, stirring, over medium heat 15 minutes until soft and golden. Add orange juice, lemon juice, sage and garlic pushed through a press. Cook over high heat 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add cooked rice to skillet and stir 1 minute until rice is hot. Add cinnamon, and salt and pepper to taste.

Per serving — Calories: 158, Pro: 4g, Fat: 4g, Sat. Fat: 2g, Choles: 10mg, Carb: 27g, Fiber: 1g, Calcium: 39mg

Recipe created by Rozanne Gold, award-winning chef and cookbook author, known as the "diva of simplicity," on behalf of Uncle Ben's.

Garlicky Spinach With Raisins and Peanuts

Makes 4 servings
Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes

- 1 tablespoon peanut oil
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- A pinch dried hot red pepper flakes
- 1 small red bell pepper, cored, seeded and cut into thin strips
- 2 pounds fresh baby spinach*, rinsed and spun
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 1/4 cup unsalted dry-roasted peanuts, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In large non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; add garlic and red pepper flakes and cook, shaking pan here and there, just until edges of garlic are brown. Add red bell pepper and cook, tossing or stirring, another minute. Add spinach, raisins and peanuts; using tongs, flip spinach from underneath to over on top to distribute mixture and evenly cook. Sauté just until wilted and released water has mostly evaporated, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

*Trim tough stems and roughly chop leaves.

Per serving — Calories: 143, Pro: 9g, Fat: 8.5g, Sat. Fat: 1g, Choles: 0mg, Carb: 12g, Fiber: 3g, Calcium: 191mg