

A Low-carb Thanksgiving to Remember!

by Chef George Stella

In the article you just read, titled "Emotional & Healthy Eating during the Holidays," the author provided you with tips on how to maintain healthy eating habits during the holidays. The author also suggested taking old family favorite recipes and making them healthy and new!

In this article, you will find a variety of holiday recipes provided by Chef George Stella. From sausage and herb stuffing to praline pumpkin pie, you'll love these healthy and festive recipes for the holidays!



My name is George Stella, and 12 years ago I was well on my way to weighing 500 pounds! Add in my wife Rachel, who at one point weighed 205 pounds, my oldest son Anthony, who weighed 225 pounds and my youngest son Christian, at 305 pounds, and you have a single family of four that weighed more than half a ton!

Understandably, I am not exaggerating when I say that the way we were eating was indeed killing us. Looking back at the years in which we were literally growing together as a family, I remember our meals consisting on average of things ranging from pizza and macaroni and cheese, to Chinese and fast food.

What finally worked for us was a lifestyle initially based on the Atkins diet, which centers on drastically limiting your carb intake, and together my family of four lost more than 550 pounds in less than three years! After a while, we did find that we were all missing the old comfort foods that we had gotten used to throughout the years, especially at the holidays. As a chef, I decided we needed to make the low-carb lifestyle work to fit our tastes, rather than restricting ourselves completely in order to follow a plan created by someone else.

I have always said that you need to like what you are eating, or you are dooming yourself to failure. For this reason, it is incredibly important that what you're eating includes foods you enjoy! And what better time to enjoy cooking than the holidays! With Thanksgiving around the corner, I thought you might enjoy a few of our favorite low-carb comfort-food sides and desserts that your family is sure to love and remember! All of these recipes are available at www.StellaStyle.com.

Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Eating!

Chef George Stella





Cranberry Relish (shown with diced apples and walnuts)

Calories: 20 | Fat: 0g | Protein: 0g | Fiber: 1g | Net Carbs: 3g

It wouldn't be the holidays without cranberries, so we're quite lucky they're naturally low in sugar. Of course, the kinds of sauces you'll find premade in supermarkets are full of the stuff. Which is why this recipe is so darn delicious—because it's made fresh, and isn't it all about the cranberries anyway?

Prep Time: 5 minutes - Cook Time: 15 minutes - Serves 12

Shopping List

- 1 cup bulk sugar substitute (recommend Splenda®)
- 1 cup water
- 12 ounces cranberries, fresh or frozen
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated orange zest



Preparation

1. Combine the sugar substitute and water in a saucepan and bring to a boil on the stove.
2. Add the cranberries and orange zest, and bring back to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Remove from the heat and let cool before covering and placing in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Mock Mashed Potatoes

Calories: 140 | Fat: 11g | Protein: 5g | Fiber: 3g |
Net Carbs: 4g

Doing without your favorite foods simply won't do, as that's something absolutely unheard of in the Stella home! For instance, we found a new favorite when we substituted that nameless high-carb root vegetable with healthy and light, yet filling, cauliflower. And even better, we piled them high with the best ingredients we could find!

Prep Time: 15 minutes - Cook Time: 6 minutes - Serves 4

Shopping List

- 1 medium head cauliflower
- 1 tablespoon cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon minced fresh garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon chicken base or bouillon
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh or dried chives, for garnish
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, if desired

Preparation

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat.
2. Clean and cut cauliflower into small pieces. Add to the pot and boil for about 6 minutes until well done.
3. Drain well, but do not let cool. Pat the cooked cauliflower between several layers of paper towels or place cauliflower in a colander and use a heavy bowl to press down on it to remove the excess water.
4. Using a food processor or hand blender, pulse the hot cauliflower with the cream cheese, Parmesan, garlic, chicken base and pepper until almost smooth.
5. Garnish with chives and serve hot with pats of butter, if desired.



Praline Pumpkin Pie



**Calories: 130 | Fat: 11.5g | Protein: 3g | Fiber: 1.5g |
Net Carbs: 2.5g**

This is an updated version of one of the very first desserts Rachel created after we started on our low-carb lifestyle. By recreating an absolutely delicious pumpkin pie, she ensured that we would never go through the holidays without a sweet tradition.

**Prep Time: 25 minutes - Cook Time: 75 minutes -
Serves 12**

Shopping List

CRUST

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup bulk sugar substitute (recommend Splenda®)
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

FILLING

- 1 (15-ounce) can pure pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 3/4 cup bulk sugar substitute (recommend Splenda®)
- 1 tablespoon plus a dash more pumpkin pie spice
- 1 ¼ cups heavy cream
- 4 large eggs

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. To make the crust, melt the butter in a small saucepan or in the microwave and mix all the crust ingredients together in a small bowl.
3. While the mixture is still warm from the butter, press it down evenly over the bottom of a 10-inch deep pie pan. Bake for about 5 minutes, until browned, and remove the crust from the oven.

4. Turn the oven up to 425°F.
5. To make the filling, place all the filling ingredients in a medium bowl and whisk together.
6. Pour the filling into the crust. Bake for 15 minutes, and then reduce the heat to 350°F. Continue to bake for an additional 50 to 55 minutes until done. (To test for doneness, stick a toothpick in the center; if it comes out clean, the pie is done.) Cool on the counter for at least 30 minutes, and then chill for at least 3 hours before serving. Try serving with a dollop of sugar-free whipped cream.

Sausage and Herb Stuffing

**Calories: 120 | Fat: 2g | Protein: 3g | Fiber: 1g |
Net Carbs: 2g**

Stuffing is commonly made with bread or croutons, which makes it off limits to low-carbers. But, it doesn't have to be made that way. There's nothing wrong – and everything right – with substituting chopped vegetables to make up the missing bulk. So don't get stuffed. Try this recipe instead of all that bread!



**Prep Time: 15 minutes - Cook Time: 35 minutes -
Serves 8**

Shopping List

- 3/4 pound turkey sausage (you may use pork breakfast sausage)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups coarsely chopped cauliflower
- 1/2 cup diced yellow squash
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley leaves
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh sage leaves
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

EQUIPMENT

- 8 by 8-inch square baking dish

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Remove sausage from casing and crumble it into a pan over medium heat. Add the celery and onion and cook, stirring, until browned. Drain fat if necessary.

3. Beat the eggs in a bowl. Using a spoon, mix in the sausage mixture and all the remaining ingredients.
4. Pour the stuffing into the baking dish and bake until hot and browned, about 30 minutes. Serve hot.

Wild Mushroom Turkey Gravy

Calories: 113 | Fat: 10g | Protein: 1g | Fiber: 0.5g | Net Carbs: 2.5g

Here's the perfect way to use those juices and drippings from your next roasted turkey. There's more than one way to thicken a sauce or gravy! Since flour and cornstarch are out when you're eating low-carb, a classic French cream reduction is in order. This rich sauce is complemented by the hearty taste of the mushrooms, and it's a great accompaniment to anyone's Thanksgiving turkey!

Prep Time: 10 minutes - Cook Time: 15 minutes - Serves 8 (about 1 2/3 cups)

Shopping List

- 2 cups defatted turkey juices from turkey roasting pan or homemade turkey or chicken stock
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 10 ounces shiitake mushrooms, rinsed, stemmed and sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper



Preparation

1. Collect the turkey juices from the roasting pan. Remove the fat by skimming off the fat that rises to the top. Discard the fat.
2. Transfer the juices to a small saucepan, bring to a simmer over medium-high heat and cook until reduced by half.
3. Add the cream. Continue to cook until the gravy is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 8 minutes.
4. Heat the butter in a separate sauce pan. Add the mushrooms, thyme, garlic and sherry and sauté over medium-high heat until tender.
5. Combine the sautéed mushrooms with the reduced gravy.
6. Finish by seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to a gravy boat and keep warm until serving.

About the Chef:

Chef George Stella, a professional chef for more than 25 years, is an official spokesman for the Junior Leagues' Kids in the Kitchen childhood obesity initiative. He hosted two seasons of his own show, Low Carb and Lovin' It on the Food Network, appears regularly on QVC, Dr. Oz, television and news shows and has written five bestselling cookbooks. You can catch up with George, his family and other families eating fresh, healthy foods at www.StellaStyle.com.



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The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



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 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
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