

HEALTHIER HOLIDAY RECIPES

We wanted to compile a unique collection of healthier holiday recipes for you this year so we turned to some of our favorite Nashville cooks, the food bloggers! All of these recipes were contributed for this article and we've included links to each of their blogs so if you see some recipes you really like and connect with, be sure to check out their individual blogs for more great healthy recipe ideas.



Photo and recipe from Edward Tomlin at [In The Kitchen With Edward](#).

Pumpkin Cranberry Muffins

(Makes 12 muffins)

- 1 cup Whole Wheat flour
- 1 cup All Purpose Flour
- 1/2 cup Brown Sugar
- 2 tsp. Baking Powder
- 1 tsp. Cardamom
- 1/2 tsp. Salt
- 1 cup Almond Milk
- 1 T Olive Oil
- 1/4 cup Maple Syrup
- 3/4 cup Pumpkin Puree
- 1/2 cup Walnuts, toasted

- 1/2 cup Dried Cranberries
- 1 T Rolled Oats

Directions:

Pre-heat oven to 350° and line or lightly grease a muffin tin. Mix together the flours, sugar, baking powder, cardamom and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the almond milk, olive oil, maple syrup and pumpkin puree. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix with a wooden spoon. Stir in walnuts and cranberries. Spoon the batter into muffin cups and sprinkle with oats. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove muffins from the tin and place on a baking rack to cool.



Photo and recipe from McKel Hill, MS, RD at [Nutrition Stripped](#)

Pumpkin Hummus

- 1 can Organic Pumpkin Puree
- 1 can Organic Garbanzo beans
- ¼ cup of Pumpkin Seeds, pureed (yields about 1 heaping tablespoon)
- 1 heaping Tbsp of Tahini
- 1 Tbsp Maple Syrup
- 2 tsp Pumpkin Spice (adjust per your taste)
- 1 tsp Sea Salt
- Juice of 2 Lemons
- Dash of Cayenne Pepper
- Pumpkin Seeds (for garnish, optional)

Directions:

Soak the pumpkin seeds for about 10 minutes to soften. Blend the pumpkin seeds in a high-speed blender, nut grinder, or small food processor until pureed/broken down. Add the remaining ingredients to this pumpkin seed butter mixture. Blend all ingredients into a Vitamix, high-speed blender, or food processor until thick and creamy. Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds. Keep in the refrigerator until eaten. Enjoy!



Photo and recipe from McKel Hill, MS, RD at [Nutrition Stripped](#)

Fall Harvest Superfood Salad

- 4 cups Organic Kale, chopped and “massaged”
- 1 cup Butternut Squash, roasted and diced
- 1 cup Quinoa, cooked
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Red Cabbage, diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Red Onion, diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Fuji Apple, diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Walnuts
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Pumpkin Seeds
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Goji berries
- 1 juice of a fresh Lemon
- 1 Tbsp Olive Oil, to drizzle
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of Sea Salt (to taste)

Directions:

Prepare the KALE as follows- De-stem the kale leaves from the stem by simply placing your index finger and middle finger (in the shape of a claw), and “claw” down the center of the leaf to de-stem while simultaneously pulling the leaf away from you with your other hand. Then, in a large bowl, combine the de-stemmed kale

leaves with the sea salt, lemon juice, and olive oil. Lightly coat your hands in olive oil by mixing the kale with your hands. Using a massaging action (similar to kneading bread dough), start to tear the leaves apart and massage. Continue massaging for about 2-5 minutes or until the leaves are softened, the leaves will also turn a more vibrant green. Kale is now finished, set off to the side. Cook quinoa according to package directions. Roast butternut squash at 450 degrees F for 40 minutes or until soft. Pan toast walnuts on a skillet- no added oils. Simply toss around for about 2-5 minutes and keep a close eye on them, as they tend to burn quickly. Assemble the salad by mixing all the remaining ingredients together in a large bowl. Serve warm, room temperature, or chilled. Enjoy!



Photo and recipe from Michelle Parvizi at [M's Belly](#).

Roasted Garlic

Prep time: 5 minutes/ Cook time: 30-35 minutes

- 1 head of Garlic
- 2-3 Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 small pinches of Salt and Pepper each
- Aluminum foil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Peel the outer layers of garlic paper away from the cloves as much as possible and then trim the tops of the bulbs so the raw garlic beneath is exposed. Take care all the garlic cloves are exposed. Using a square of aluminum foil, make a pouch for the garlic; it helps to use a muffin tin to form the pouch. Place bulb inside pouch and douse with garlic, then salt & pepper. Seal the foil so it is airtight and bake at 400 degrees for 30-35 minutes. Serve with crackers, bread, apple slices, carrots, whatever you like best! Don't forget to pour out the remaining garlic olive oil into a small plate for dipping bread.



Photo and recipe from Michelle Parvizi at [M's Belly](#).

Shaved Brussels Sprout Salad

- 20 Brussels Sprouts (Green Brussels Sprouts work just as well.)
- 1 hard Pear or Green Apple
- 1/4 cup Olive Oil
- Juice of 1 Lemon
- 4 dashes of Apple Cider Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 handful of Walnuts, toasted and chopped
- Salt & Pepper

- Parmesan (for shaving)

Directions:

No way around it, you will need a mandolin. Clean the Brussels sprouts. After washing, I usually end up taking away 3-4 of the outside leaves. Leave on the stems; they serve as nature's handle while you are shaving. Set the straight edge of the mandolin to 1/8" or 3 mm. Shave the Brussels sprouts down to the stem. Some of the shaves will stay in tact, making beautiful patterns! Toast your walnuts until fragrant, let cool, and then roughly chop. Slice your pear/apple into matchsticks. Whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, and vinegar. Give a few cranks of salt & pepper. Just before serving, combine all the above ingredients and toss well. You may not want to use ALL the dressing, so go halvesies at first, until you have the right amount for your preference. "Shave" long strips of Parmesan over top before serving. I use my vegetable peeler for shaving the Parmesan. We served ours as a side dish to broiled salmon – perfect!



Photo and recipe from Nicole Mattingly at [Double N Urban Farm](#).

Roasted Roots with Brussels Sprouts

- 2 Beets (peeled, chopped into bite size pieces)
- 5 or 6 Carrots (peeled & cut in 2 in. chunks)
- A couple handfuls of Brussels Sprouts (halved)
- 3 or 4 Parsnips (peeled & cut in 2 in chunks)
- 2 Turnips (peeled, chopped into bite size pieces)
- 1 or 2 Sweet Potatoes (peeled, chopped into bite size pieces)
- 1 head of Garlic (popped and peeled)
- 3 Tbsp good Olive Oil
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp fresh Thyme, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh Rosemary, chopped

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Toss all veggies in olive oil salt and pepper to coat. Spread evenly on baking sheet and roast for 45 minutes. Remove from oven and toss in rosemary and thyme.



www.localforkful.com

Photo and recipe from Charles Hunter III at [The Local Forkful](http://TheLocalForkful.com).

Zucchini Ribbons in Sage Brown Butter

- 4 medium-sized squash
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 5-7 sage leaves
- Smidge of kosher salt (to taste)

- Fresh cracked black pepper (to taste)

Directions:

First, rinse zucchini and pat dry. Then grab a folded kitchen towel and stand the zucchini in the center of the towel to peel ribbons. If you apply too much pressure you will break your zucchini. Set ribbons aside on paper towels to soak up any excess moisture while your butter browns. Heat butter in the skillet on medium high heat until it begins to foam. Do not walk away from the pan. Throw in your sage leaves once butter has melted. Stir gently in a circular motion until you begin to see little bits of milk fat separate from the butter. Once butter has turned golden brown, remove from heat quickly and add one tablespoon of chilled butter to keep the butter from burning. Return the skillet to the eye and add ribbons. If you are confident, feel free to give it a few quick chef toss in the air to incorporate the butter throughout the ribbons but if you are not confident, use tongs or a wooden spoon to stir your ribbons. Add salt & pepper to taste. Continue moving the ribbons around, as they will cook quickly because they are thin. Remove sage and use for garnish.



Photo and recipe from Charles Hunter III at [The Local Forkful](#).

Pumpkin Cranberry & Apple Biscuits

(An adaptation via [A farmgirl's dabbles](#))

- 2 c. All Purpose Flour
- 1 Tbsp Baking Powder
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- 1 Tbsp Pumpkin Pie Spice
- 1 tsp Kosher Salt

- 6 Tbsp chilled Butter (cubed) ☷
- ½ cup Buttermilk ☷
- ¾ cup canned Pumpkin Puree (not pre-spiced) ☷
- 3 Tbsp Honey ☷
- 2 Tbsp chopped Candied Ginger ☷
- ½ cup chopped Apples ☷
- ½ dried Cranberries

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 and spray or butter cookie sheet. Set aside. In a bowl, add flour, baking powder, salt, and spices and whisk together. Cut in the butter with a pastry blender until it resembles coarse cornmeal. Place in the refrigerator to chill about 15-20 minutes. Combine apples, cranberries, pumpkin, buttermilk, and ginger in a bowl and combine. Add this mixture to the other mixture by the heaping spoonfuls until you have a tacky dough that forms a ball. (Side Note: it is essential that you do not move too fast. Slowly work the dry and wet ingredients together without over-mixing the batter. This is the key to happy, fluffy biscuits.) There is no kneading or rolling necessary unless you want perfectly shaped, round biscuits. To make drop biscuits, use a 3/4 fluid oz scoop which will roughly be about an ounce of dough per biscuit. ☷ Leave a 1/2 an inch of space between each biscuit. Bake for about 6-8 minutes. Due to their size they won't take long to cook, but like I always say. "No two ovens are the same." so you be the judge. Enjoy.

This next recipe for Butternut Squash Soup comes from Marirae Mathis of [Who Cooks For You](#).

Raw Butternut Squash Soup

3 cups Organic Butternut Squash, peeled and cubed
 1 ½ cup Organic Apple Juice or Cider
 ½ Jalapeno Pepper
 2 tsp Madras Curry Powder
 ½ cup Walnuts
 3 cups Water
 4 Organic Medjool Dates, chopped
 Handful of Fresh Mint Leaves
 Pink Salt To Taste

In food processor, blender or vita mix, blend all until smooth. Enjoy!



Photo and recipe from Lesley Lassiter of [Lesley Eats](#) and [Nashville Scene Bites](#).

Pumpkin Risotto

Serves 4

1 cup uncooked Arborio Rice

4 Tbsp Olive Oil

1/3 cup diced Onion

3 cups Vegetable Broth

1/2 cup Roasted Pumpkin

2 tsp dried Thyme

Directions:

Sauté the onion in the oil over medium heat until translucent. Add rice and cook, stirring frequently for about 2 minutes or it becomes pearly. Stir in one cup of broth, pumpkin, and thyme and continue cooking until all the liquid is absorbed, stirring frequently. Add the remaining broth, 1/2 cup at a time and cook, stirring frequently until liquid is all absorbed before adding the next half-cup.



Photo and recipe from Lesley Lassiter of [Lesley Eats](#) and [Nashville Scene Bites](#).

Toasted Couscous with Acorn Squash and Crispy Chickpeas

Serves 4-6

1 Acorn Squash

1 can Chickpeas/Garbanzo Beans

Olive Oil

1 cup Pearl Couscous

2 Tbsp Olive Oil (optional: chili infused olive oil)

1 cup Boiling Water

1 cup warm Vegetable Broth

1 clove Minced Garlic

1 tsp dried Thyme or Herbs de Provence

1/2 Tbsp Salt

3 Tbsp Lemon Juice

Pinch Cumin

Small handful of Fresh Thyme (removed from the stems)

Directions:

Cut the acorn squash in half; remove the seeds and place cut side down in a large pan coated with olive oil. Bake for 30 minutes at 400 degrees (or until soft enough to pierce easily with a fork). Set aside to cool. Drain the chickpeas and place in the same pan, coat with olive oil and roast at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, pour 2 tablespoons of olive oil and the couscous in a large saucepan and heat on high. Stir frequently and when browned, reduce heat to low and add the water, broth, garlic, dried herbs, and salt. Simmer—stirring occasionally—for about 6-8 minutes, or until the water is absorbed. Transfer the couscous to a large bowl. Once cooled enough to handle, cut the squash into slices and peel off the skin. Then cut it into small cubes. Place the cut squash in the bowl with the couscous. Once the chickpeas have roasted until they're crispy, remove from the oven and add to the couscous. Then stir in the lemon juice, cumin, and thyme. Serve warm, room temperature, or chilled.

This next recipe is a contribution from Colby Durden Baker, Chef/Holistic Nutrition Specialist. Her blog is [Chef Colby](#).

Acorn Squash with Cranberry Apple Stuffing

- 2 Acorn Squash
- 1 cup cooked Quinoa
- 1/2 Onion, small dice
- 2 cloves of Garlic, minced
- 1 Apple, small dice
- ½ cup Dried Cranberries
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- 2 Tbsp Coconut Oil
- Salt, to taste

Directions:

Cut squash in half and with a spoon, remove pulp and seeds in a baking dish, place squash cut-side down. Pour ¼-inch boiling water into baking dish. Place dish in oven and bake squash for 30 minutes at 350°. In a large bowl, combine quinoa, sautéed onion, garlic, apples, cranberries, cinnamon and oil to make stuffing. Remove squash from the oven after 30 minutes. Turn halves over and stuff center of each squash half with apple mixture. Return to oven and bake for 30-35 minutes (or longer) until squash and apples are tender.

This next recipe is a contribution from Colby Durden Baker, Chef/Holistic Nutrition Specialist. Her blog is [Chef Colby](#).

Oven Roasted Root Vegetables

- 1 Sweet Potato, medium dice
- 1 medium Butternut Squash, medium dice
- 1 medium Beet, medium dice
- 2 Parsnips, thick slice
- 1/2 lb Purple Potatoes
- 1 Onion, medium dice
- 8 Garlic cloves, halved
- 3 Tbsp Coconut Oil
- Salt to taste

Directions:

Roast all vegetables at 400 for 45 minutes or until soft. Serve with Lemon Thyme dressing (recipe below).

Lemon Thyme Dressing

8 oz. Greek Yogurt
1 Lemon, zested and juiced
2 tsp Cumin
1 Tbsp Thyme, finely chopped
1 Tbsp Rosemary, finely chopped
Salt to taste

Directions:

Whisk ingredients together until combined. Serve over top root vegetables.



Photo and recipe from Kathryn M. Johnson at [Lady Smokey](#).

Autumn Barley Risotto

- 2 Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 small Onion, chopped finely
- 2 cloves Garlic, crushed and chopped finely
- 1 cup Pearled Barley
- 4-5 cups Vegetable Stock
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Port
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Tamari
- 1 handful of Shiitake Mushrooms, sliced
- 1 bunch Lacinato Kale, washed, stems removed, and chopped into thin strips

Directions:

Heat stock in medium saucepan. (If not making your own stock, I like to add chopped onion, garlic and mushroom stems to the stock.) Once it comes to a boil, lower temperature to simmer. Heat oil in large flat pan on medium heat. Add onion and sauté. Add garlic and mushrooms. Stir. Cook for a couple minutes. Add barley. Stir. Add wine and port and stir until liquid is absorbed. Gradually begin to add stock in, about half a cup at a time and continue to stir. Stir until most of the liquid is absorbed. Add another addition of stock and stir until most of the liquid is absorbed. Repeat this process until the mixture is creamy and a bit loose; the barley should still have some chew to it. The process will take about 20-30 minutes. Right when you think you are getting close, add the kale and then continue to cook for a few more minutes.



Photo and recipe from Kathryn M. Johnson at [Lady Smokey](#).

Pear Gruyere Pie

- 2 Dough Balls (recipe below)
- 5-7 pears, peeled, and sliced thin (you can also mix pears and apples)
- 1 cup Organic Cane Sugar
- 1 Tbsp All-Purpose Unbleached Flour
- 1 tsp Ground Cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Cave-Aged Gruyere Cheese, grated
- 1 Egg White

Directions:

Roll out dough ball and place in pie plate. Mix pears with sugar, flour, cinnamon and pour into pie shell. Sprinkle the Gruyere on top. Roll out second dough ball and lay on top of pie. Trim edges and use your index fingers and thumb to pinch edge. Cut a few slits in top to let air escape while pie bakes. Brush top of pie with egg white. Bake at 425 for 15 minutes and then lower oven temperature to 350 and bake for another 35 minutes.

Pie Dough

The key to a good pie is in the crust! This recipe makes 2 10" tart shells.

- 2 cups Unbleached All Purpose Flour
- 2 sticks Unsalted Organic Butter, chilled and cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 1 cup Cave-Aged Gruyere Cheese, grated
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 6-8 Tbsp Ice Water

Directions:

Place flour, butter, cheese, and salt in a bowl. Stir. Using your fingers, gently mix the butter into the flour, breaking the butter into little crumbs or grains; do not to mush it all together (be careful not to over mix). The

largest pieces of butter should be the size of grains of rice or small peas. Sprinkle with 6 T of ice water. Make your hand into a claw and stir dough briefly until the liquid is incorporated. Squeeze a handful of dough in your palm. It should have just enough moisture to stay together. If it seems dry and crumbly, add more water a teaspoonful at a time until you can squeeze it into a ball that doesn't crumble when broken apart. Divide into two balls and wrap in plastic wrap. Chill in refrigerator for at least 15 minutes. Roll out onto floured surface as quickly as you can. (Balls of dough can be stored in fridge for a week or so or you can also freeze them.)



Photo and recipe are from Melissa Corbin of [Corbin In The Dell](#).

Everyday Cobbler

(Adapted from Yesterday and Today Cookbook, Montgomery County Country Woman's Club)

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Unsalted Butter
- 2 cups Fruit
- 2 cups of Sugar
- 1 cup Flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Baking Powder

- 1 cup Milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter in cobbler pan. Heat fruit with one cup of the sugar. Bring to a boil. When sugar has melted, turn the heat off. Combine dry ingredients. Add milk slowly until a consistency of a thick milk shake. Pour batter over butter. Pour fruit evenly over batter. Bake 30-40 minutes or until crust has risen and golden brown.



Photo and recipe from Tim & Shannalee Mallon of [Food Loves Writing](#).

Kabocha Squash Custards (Gluten-Free)

Serves 5-6

Notes: You can easily substitute any squash, pumpkin or even sweet potato purée in place of the kabocha here, even though we are partial to kabochas. If you go with fresh pumpkin purée from a traditional pumpkin (i.e., not a pie pumpkin), be sure to drain the excess water from the purée first; we learned the hard way that, with too much water content, this recipe will not work. Also, on the arrowroot powder: Feel free to substitute flour here, whether spelt or all-purpose or something else. You could even try almond flour, though we haven't been able to do so with perfect results.

- 2 Eggs

- 1 cup Unrefined Natural Cane Sugar (Sucanat), or Palm Sugar, or some other sugar
- 1 Tbsp Arrowroot Powder (or, if you don't need to be gluten-free, flour)
- 2 cups Kabocha squash (or other squash, pumpkin) purée*
- 1/2 tsp Sea Salt
- 1 1/2 tsp Cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp Ginger
- 1/2 tsp Nutmeg
- 12 ounces (i.e., 1 1/2 cups) Heavy Cream

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.

In a large bowl, beat the two eggs lightly. Add all the rest of the ingredients but the cream; mix; add the cream and combine until well mixed. Distribute the mixture evenly among five or six ramekins. Bake for 10 minutes at 450F. Lower oven temp to 350F and bake 40 to 50 minutes more. Custards are done when toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Top with whipped cream and nuts, or ice cream, or eat plain. Best while still warm.

*Kabocha squash purée: Preheat oven to 375F. Slice the squash in half, remove seeds and rub with coconut oil. Place, cut-side down, on a baking sheet to roast. Should be done in 35 to 45 minutes or, when a fork pierces the flesh easily. Let cool, scoop out insides and blend in a food processor. Depending on size of squash, you should have between two and four cups as a result.

This next recipe is a contribution from the blog, [Food Loves Writing](#).

Buckwheat Chocolate Chip Cookies

- 1 cup of organic Buckwheat Flour
- 1/2 tsp of Baking Soda
- 1/2 -3/4 tsp of Aluminum Free Baking Powder
- 1/2 tsp Sea Salt
- 1/4 cup Organic Extra Virgin Coconut Oil
- 1/4 cup Organic Salted Butter
- 1 cup Organic Sucanat, Rapadura, or Dried Cane Juice (it should look like dirt, not crystals)
- 1 Egg
- 1 Egg Yolk
- 1-2 tsp Vanilla
- 1 3.2-ounce Bar of Organic Dark Chocolate (preferably over 70% cacao at least)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 360 degrees F. Sift together the dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt) in a bowl. Set aside. In another bowl, mix together sugar, butter, and coconut oil. Because of the molasses content of the cane sugar, this mixture will not do very much, as the sugar will not absorb like refined sugar would. Add vanilla, and then add egg and egg yolk. Mix this for 1-2 minutes. The eggs and oil will get creamy but you will still have the granules of sugar cane, as they do not dissolve easily; that is fine. Add the dry ingredients to this mixture. Chop chocolate bar finely or as you like (we got nine pieces out of each square, cutting in thirds each way). Fold chocolate into dough. For larger, restaurant-size cookies (almost 1/4 cup of batter for each cookie, 3-4 inch cookies) bake at 360 for almost exactly 10 min. For smaller cookies, watch to take out at maybe 8 to 9 minutes. The cookies should start to look "wilty" and the edges should start to crisp. Cool completely.



Photo and recipe from Tim & Shannalee Mallon of [Food Loves Writing](#).

Pear Crisp

This recipe is adapted from Leite's Culinaria, where the proportions of a basic blueberry crumble recipe are so good, we've been able to tweak and repurpose it for everything from peaches to pears, as seen below. Besides swapping out the fruit in the original recipe, we've added almonds to the topping, swapped out coconut sugar and einkorn flour in the ingredients list and slightly adjusted a few proportions. But no matter what we do here, every time we use this general formula, the results are excellent.

Filling:

- Just under 2 pounds Pears, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1 cup Coconut Sugar
- 1 Tbsp Ground Cinnamon

Topping:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup slivered Almonds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Coconut Sugar

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup All-Purpose Flour (we used einkorn) [\[2\]](#)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp Salt [\[2\]](#)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Rolled Oats [\[2\]](#)
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) Butter, cold and cubed

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350F, and butter a two-quart baking dish. In a bowl, combine pears, 1 cup of coconut sugar and 1 Tbsp cinnamon. Pile fruit in the buttered pan. In a medium bowl, stir together almonds, coconut sugar, flour, salt and oats. Cut in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cold, cubed butter. Spread this mixture over the fruit in the buttered pan. Slide into the oven and bake, uncovered, one hour. Crisp is done when topping is golden and bubbly.