

NATURAL HEALTH.

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51 WAYS TO

DETOX YOUR LIFE

{BODY, HOME
& MIND}

**6 Supplements
You Should
Be Taking**

**10 BEST
FOODS FOR
YOUR HEART**
(PLUS RECIPES)

plus:

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COLD FIGHTERS**

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Misdiagnosed?**

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Carol Alt's
**ENERGIZING
Raw Food Diet**

FEBRUARY 2008

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shelf help

A well-stocked, organized pantry is an invitation to cook (and eat) your best.

hOW MANY times have you stared at the overflowing shelves of your pantry and concluded that there was "nothing to eat"? Or bought oats to make oatmeal cookies only to discover you had stale flour, no baking powder, and a pound of oats left over from the last time you had this idea? A pantry chaotic with stale grains and old spices or bags of processed, refined foods is hardly an inspiration to cook. We can help you correct that problem with our step-by-step approach to transforming your shelves into a source of tasty, nutritious meals.

step 1: clean up

Get rid of cans, bottles, and boxes of processed foods whose labels are dominated by chemical preservatives like sulfur dioxide and sodium benzoate or high levels of saturated fat and salt (your daily limits should be 20 grams and 2,300 milligrams, respectively). Throw away anything that is stale or expired. "The expiration date can be the main indicator of food quality," says Ben Atkinson, M.S., R.D., research dietitian at the University of Washington Medical Center. "Flour, grains, and even some baking supplies all lose their flavor and nutritional potency





Granola

Serves 8

Put your fresh grains, seeds, and spices to work in this homemade granola. Take it with you on a hike (or to the office) as an energy-boosting snack or pour it over yogurt for breakfast.

- ¼ cup canola or olive oil
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups rolled oats
- ½ cup pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup raw almonds, chopped
- ¼ cup wheat germ
- ¼ cup nonfat dry milk
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg (optional)
- ½ teaspoon ground cardamom (optional)
- Pinch of cloves (optional)
- 1 cup dried fruit (blueberries, cranberries, chopped dried peaches)

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. In a small saucepan, combine oil, syrup, honey, and vanilla. Stir over low heat until combined, about 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Combine oats, seeds, almonds, wheat germ, dry milk, and spices directly on an 11 x 7" jelly roll pan.
4. Pour wet mixture over dry mixture and mix until uniform. Spread evenly in pan.
5. Bake for 10 minutes or until browned, stirring and spreading every 3 minutes.
6. Mix in fruit. Let cool.

Per serving: 481 calories, 21 g fat (2 g saturated), 64 g carbohydrates, 13 g protein, 8 g fiber, 43 mg sodium (2% Daily Value).

over time." And pull out any items lurking in the recesses. Be honest with yourself: If you're never going to use that perfectly good scone mix you've held on to for six months, donate it to your local food bank.

step 2: shop smart

Once you've decluttered your shelves, you're ready to stock up on staples that will make it easy to cook imaginative, satisfying meals even on hectic days. Look for the organic versions of these items whenever possible; in addition to being free of chemical additives and pesticides, organic versions are almost always more flavorful.

Whole grains such as brown rice, multigrain flour, and organic steel-cut or rolled oats are rich in fiber, which can promote digestion and intestinal health in its insoluble form and maintain healthy cholesterol levels in its soluble form. Other tasty grains that are great sources of fiber include durum and whole wheat pastas and versatile (and super-quick) couscous.

Legumes such as cannellini, chickpeas, and lentils have an abundance of viscous fibers (which can regulate blood sugar) and are a great



Couscous with Apricots & Pistachios

Serves 6

When you've got whole grain couscous, dried apricots, and pistachios stored properly in your pantry, this Middle Eastern-flavored dish can be prepared in minutes.

- 1 cup raw, unsalted pistachio meats, chopped
- 2 cups whole wheat couscous
- 1/2 cup dried apricots, chopped
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

1. Toast pistachios over medium-high heat until fragrant, about 2 minutes; set aside in a small bowl.

2. In the same pan, toast couscous until it just begins to brown, 3 to 4 minutes; place in large bowl. Add apricots to bowl.

3. Combine water, olive oil, and salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil.

4. Pour water mixture into bowl with couscous and apricots. Cover securely with a plate and let sit for 5 minutes.

5. Fluff couscous with a large fork. Gently mix in reserved pistachios, lemon juice, and parsley. Serve warm or cold.

Per serving: 326 calories, 15 g fat (2 g saturated), 43 g carbohydrates, 10 g protein, 8 g fiber, 390 mg sodium (17% Daily Value).

source of protein for those cutting back on their meat intake. Legumes, also known as pulses, include the lesser-known East Asian adzuki bean and the Central American scarlet runner bean.

Extra-virgin olive oil, rich in heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acids and disease-fighting phytochemicals, is the preferred cooking oil of the best chefs, and extra-virgin is the most flavorful grade because it comes from the first pressing of the olives and has low acidity.

Fresh spices, great sources of anti-inflammatories and antioxidants, should be bought in bulk to avoid filling your pantry (and emptying your wallet) with jars of spices you'll use only sparingly. In the bulk section of most grocery stores, you can buy just the amount you need—whether that's an ounce or two pounds. (See "Fresh Spices: A Pantry Primer," page 41.)

Canned fruits and vegetables like tomatoes and corn can keep summer's bounty on your shelf year-round. And while some vitamins such as thiamin don't make it through the canning process, fat-soluble

FRESH SPICES: A PANTRY PRIMER

Tony Hill, author of *The Spice Lover's Guide to Herbs and Spices* (Wiley, 2005), tells you how to get more out of your spices.

BUYING

1 Find out how frequently your store's spices are restocked or visit specialty spice shops, which carefully monitor freshness. Many spices have traveled around the globe; you don't want to buy ones that have aged further on supermarket shelves.

2 Make sure spices are properly rotated in bulk bins. "If the bins are never empty, it may mean the store is just filling them from the top," says Hill. If that's the case, some spices could be quite old.

3 Taste the product, if possible. Let your palate decide if the spice is fresh.

4 Buy smaller amounts of spices more frequently.

5 Buy spices whole. Grinding them yourself as needed—with a coffee grinder or a mortar and pestle—gives you maximum flavor.

6 Compare newly bought and existing spices side by side. Your new spices should smell and taste stronger. Because essential oils deplete gradually, aroma and flavor loss can be difficult to detect.

STORING

1 Keep your spices in airtight containers, as air carries away their volatile compounds. Jars with rubber gaskets and latch closures are ideal. Test your jars by submerging them, empty and closed, under water for a half hour. If water has seeped in, replace the gaskets.



2 Store your spices in a cool, dry place, as light and heat compromise essential oils. Do not freeze them.

3 Know how long spices last. Whole spices like nutmeg and peppercorns keep for up to six to 12 months. Ground spices like chili and curry powders are good for three to six months, as are dried herbs like oregano and basil.

4 Test the freshness of herbs by rubbing them between your palms. "You should get a burst of aroma," says Hill. "If you don't smell anything, you're just adding a green powder to your food."

5 Change the herbs and spices on your rack every time you change the battery in your smoke detector: That's every six months, says Hill.

For shopping information, see *Buyer's Guide*, page 104.



Salmon & Shiitake Frittata

Serves 4

More labor-intensive than a tuna sandwich, this frittata, made with quality canned salmon (like Trader Joe's Red Salmon, a canned sockeye) and organic canned corn (like John Cope's), is worth the extra minutes.

- 5 dried shiitake mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 7.5-ounce can of wild salmon
- ½ cup canned corn kernels
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3 eggs
- 6 egg whites
- ¼ cup skim milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- Cilantro, roughly chopped

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Place mushrooms in a small bowl; pour 1 cup boiling water over mushrooms. Let soak for at least 10 minutes. Thinly slice.
3. Heat oil in a 10-inch nonstick or cast-iron skillet. Sauté onions until softened, about 3 minutes.
4. Add salmon, corn, and mushrooms; mix to break up salmon chunks and to blend all. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Lightly beat eggs, egg whites, milk, salt, and pepper. Pour evenly into skillet.
6. When bottom and edges begin to set, about 2 minutes, lift edges with spatula and tilt pan to allow liquid to run underneath.
7. Once top of frittata is no longer runny, transfer skillet to oven. Bake until top is set, about 10 minutes.
8. Run spatula around edges to loosen; invert onto serving platter. Garnish with cilantro.

Per serving: 265 calories, 14 g fat (3 g saturated), 12 g carbohydrates, 21 g protein, 2 g fiber, 400 mg sodium (17% Daily Value).

vitamins A, D, E, and K and most minerals are retained. Look for organic brands like John Cope's and Muir Glen, or, for optimal freshness, can your own produce. (For more information, see "Can-Do Attitude" in the November 2007 issue of *Natural Health*.)

step 3: use clear containers


Keep your dry ingredients fresh by storing them in transparent jars and boxes. "Once you've stocked up on natural foods, remember that they may not last as long as processed ones," cautions Atkinson. With clear containers, you'll be able to see, at a glance, the quantity and condition of your food—what you're low on, what you have plenty of, and what should be thrown out and replaced. Choose glass over plastic, as certain kinds of plastic containers are thought to leach chemicals into their contents. Airtight canisters are best, and for foods with shorter shelf lives, label your containers with the estimated expiration dates. Rectangular jars are not only easier to pick up than round ones, they're more space-efficient as well.

(Continued on page 45)

step 4: get organized

The organization of your pantry can have a significant impact on the way you eat. Lea Schneider, professional organizer and owner of Organize Right Now (organizerightnow.com) in Pensacola, Fla., emphasizes the importance of grouping related foods together. "Think about the different categories of meal preparation. For instance, it helps to have all of your breakfast items in one area—it makes mornings faster. You want to have all of your baking ingredients together. If you put them in a basket, you can just pull it out when you're baking and have everything you need."

Create additional vertical space with organization tools such as turntables, tiered wire racks, and rolling baskets on tracks to maximize the space within each shelf. Label the edges of the shelves to help maintain your organization and to make unloading grocery bags more efficient. Finally, attach a battery-operated light to one of the pantry's walls. If you can actually see everything your shelves hold, you may realize you have plenty of options for dinner.

"By keeping track of what you have, you save time by not making emergency trips to the store," observes Schneider. "You save money because you're not buying multiples of ingredients you already have on hand. You can spend these extra food dollars on fresh vegetables and lean meats." As for where those veggies and meats should go in your refrigerator, that's another story. 

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LEARN MORE: For a convenient checklist of pantry dos and don'ts, go to naturalhealthmag.com/pantry.