

Unexpected-guest SOS

mmm...

FAST, DELICIOUS NIBBLES

JUST A FEW FOLKS? MAKE CREAMY SWEET-POTATO DIP

Pro chefs' secrets

"I always have a few sweet potatoes left over after the holidays," says Christina Pirello, host of *Christina Cooks* on PBS. "So I pop them in the microwave for a few minutes and whip up this dip. The tartness of the orange intensifies the potatoes' natural sweetness."

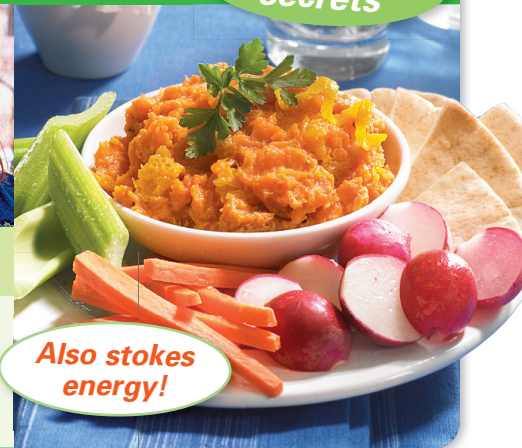
To do: In mixing bowl, scoop flesh out of 3 baked sweet potatoes. Halve 1 orange. Juice 1 half; peel and thinly slice other half. Add sliced oranges, 2 Tbs. orange juice, 1 Tbs. honey, 1 Tbs. flaxseed oil or olive oil, ½ tsp.

sea salt and a pinch of cracked black pepper to potatoes. Mash until well blended. Press mixture into shallow bowl. Serve with celery, carrot sticks and pita points.

Health bonus: The complex carbohydrates in sweet potatoes are broken down slowly, providing a steady stream of energy for four hours after eating, according to USDA researchers.

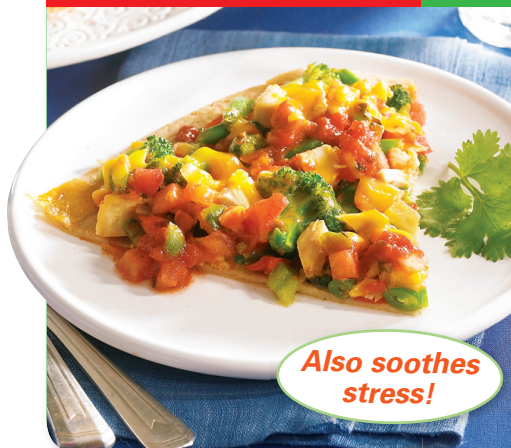


Chef Christina Pirello



Also stokes energy!

KIDS IN THE MIX? TRY TURKEY-VEGGIE PIZZA



Also soothes stress!

"This pizza is perfect for when a family with kids drops by," says Lisa Elaina, host of *Kidding Around the Kitchen*, an instructional series shown in cooking classes nationwide. "For an extra kick, serve it with spicy guacamole."

To do: Heat oven to 350°F. In pan over medium-high heat, saute ½ cup chopped fresh veggies (like broccoli and bell peppers) in 1 tsp. olive oil and a pinch of sea salt 5 min. Brush olive oil on 1 side of 10" whole-wheat tortilla; turn over and place on cookie

sheet. Top with veggies, ¼ cup shredded Cheddar cheese, ¼ cup chopped cooked turkey and 2 Tbs. salsa. Bake 5 min. Let cool; cut into wedges and serve.

Health bonus: Turkey breast is an excellent source of *tryptophan*. This amino acid is key for producing *serotonin*, a biochemical that hinders outflow of the stress hormone *cortisol*.



Chef Lisa Elaina

A CROWD? SERVE MUSHROOM-PHYLLO BITES

"Around the holidays, I stock up on phyllo shells," says Robin Miller, author of *Robin to the Rescue* (Taunton, 2008). "At a moment's notice they can be filled with anything, like mushrooms, chili or tomato pesto and cheese."

To do: Heat oven to 400°F. In large skillet over medium-high heat, cook 2 tsp. olive oil. Add 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms (any kind); cook 3 min., or until softened. Add 1 tsp. dried thyme; cook 1 min. Remove from heat and set aside. In bowl, grate ¼ cup

Parmesan cheese. Place 1 pkg. (1.9 oz.) mini phyllo shells on baking sheet. Divide mixture evenly among shells. Bake 10 min., or until shells are golden brown.

Health bonus: German researchers found that mushrooms' stores of *selenium* can speed up a sluggish thyroid, increasing the gland's output of metabolism-boosting *triiodothyronine*.



Chef Robin Miller



Also revs the thyroid!

Stills: HBB. Food stylist: Marianne Zanzarella. Text: Lorraine Sullivan.