



... It's Worth the Trip!



THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Asian Lettuce Wraps with Blue Cheese Peaches

The most important part of building a healthy eating pattern is eating balanced meals and snacks. MyPlate, USDA's food guidance graphic, shows what experts believe is a nutritious, well-balanced meal. Experts promote a variety of food choices amongst and within food groups to assure that Americans meet their micronutrient (vitamins and minerals) needs. The recommended proportions of each food group guide Americans in meeting their macronutrient (fat, carbohydrate, and protein) needs in the ideal combination to promote optimal performance, brain function and blood sugar levels while at the same time, keeping you satisfied and avoiding excess calories.

Some "quick-fix diets," encourage limiting or even eliminating carbohydrates and fat. Others advise eating some excessively. These diets may cause a drop on the scale by likely decreasing muscle mass. The best bet for keeping and building your lean muscle mass and decreasing your body fat percentage (which is more important than your weight), is to be sure to consume fats, proteins, and carbohydrates at each meal. Your body needs a combination of all these supplied to it and you need to refuel with this combination multiple times (meals and snacks) a day. You will feel better, have enough energy, crave less sugar and feel satisfied eating a balance of macronutrients at each meal and/or snack. Your metabolism (the rate you burn calories) will be also running at peak levels, which makes it easier to meet your weight goals.

The key is choosing the correct proportions of each macronutrient while keeping portion sizes in check from each food group. Aim to follow the portion sizes provided in "Guide to Meals and Snacks."

Guide for Meals and Snacks

CARBS: Fill your plate $\frac{1}{2}$ full with non-starchy vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, greens, cucumbers, etc. because they provide loads of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Limit pasta, breads, rice, legumes and the starchier veggies like potatoes, carrots, corn, and fruit to about a half cup. For snacks, eat carbs with a fat or protein.

PROTEINS: For meals, eat a portion of protein about the size of the palm of your hand at meals (2-3 eggs, 4-6 oz. of chicken, beef, or fish). For snacks, aim for $\frac{1}{2}$ the amount as meals.

FATS: Have a MINIMUM of 2 servings of fat at meals and 1 serving at snacks (half an avocado, 1 oz. of regular cheese, 1 tbs. of butter or oil, 2 tbs. peanut butter or other nut butter, etc.)

With fusion being the new thing, why not build a nutritious meal that is nearly ideal in macronutrient proportions (percentages) by using Asian flavors, sweet peaches and blue cheese?



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Directions: Preheat oven to 400°

Serves: 4

1. Measure $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of uncooked, instant brown rice and then cook according to package directions.
2. While the rice is cooking, wash and gently pat dry the fresh produce (2 peaches and 12 leaves of bibbed lettuce). Set lettuce leaves aside. Slice the peaches in $\frac{1}{2}$ and remove the pit.
3. Place the peach halves in a baking dish with the flesh side facing up. Slide the dish in the oven and bake for about 20 minutes until the peaches are soft.
4. Once the rice is finished cooking, spread it evenly on a flat cookie sheet and place the rice in the refrigerator to chill.
5. While the rice is chilling and the peaches are baking, prepare the meat mixture by heating over medium heat 3tsp. of sesame oil in a pan and then adding 1 lb. of ground beef (90% lean; 10%fat), 2 tsp. of hoisin sauce, 2 tsp. of soy sauce and 1 minced garlic clove (or $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder). Mix the ingredients well and then cook over medium-high heat.
6. Once the meat begins to brown and just a little pink remains, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of shredded carrots, and 8 oz. of sliced water chestnuts drained and chopped and continue cooking until no pink remains in the meat and the carrots are crisp tender.
7. While the meat is finishing cooking, quickly make the sauce by whisking together $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of smooth peanut butter with 1 minced garlic clove ($\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder), 3 tbs. of hoisin sauce, and about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water.
8. Remove peaches from the oven and then sprinkle a total of 2oz of crumbled, blue cheese over the peaches (each peach should just have a dusting of blue cheese—about $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.).
9. Serve each plate with 3 lettuce wraps and $\frac{1}{2}$ of a baked peach. To assemble the lettuce wraps, place $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the rice topped with $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the meat mixture on each lettuce leaf and then lightly drizzle with the sauce.

NOTES:

- Add a little "heat" by adding a pinch of red pepper flakes to the sauce and/or cook with the ground beef.
- If you aren't sure about how the sauce will taste, don't drizzle it on the wraps but serve it on the side, for dipping.
- Sprinkle some green onion and/or lime zest and juice on the wraps for a little more zip.
- This recipe tastes great with ground chicken or ground turkey too.

DISCLAIMER: YOU MAY USE ANY LIKE PRODUCTS OF ANY BRAND IN MAKING THIS HEALTHY CHOICE MEAL. THE PICTURES HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT OF THESE PRODUCTS.

FOR ADDITIONAL MEAL SOLUTIONS, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats.cfm) OR VISIT [COMMISSARIES.COM/HEALTHY-LIVING/HEALTHY-EATS.CFM](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living/healthy-eats.cfm).