

Bethany Dailey

Health and Fitness

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🍴 Nutrition Project 🍴

Menu:

- Apricot Stuffed Pork Loin
- Sautéed String Beans and black beans with pearl onions and garlic
- Fresh Spinach Salad
- Cottage Cheese or Milk
- Cherry/Strawberry Whole Wheat Crunch and no-sugar whipped cream

Meat/Poultry	Grains	Vegetables	Fruit	Dairy	Fats
Pork Loin	Whole Wheat Flour in crunch	String Beans	Dried Apricots	Low-fat Cottage Cheese	Olive Oil
Almond Slivers in salad	Oatmeal in crunch	Spinach & Cabbage Tomato, Carrot and Cucumber in salad Black Beans Onions	Strawberries Cherries	Milk Cheese Sprinkles in salad Whipped Cream	Whipped Cream Salad Dressing



Recipes:

Apricot Stuffed Pork Loin

Followed recipe from the Sugar Solution Cookbook, pg. 257

Alterations: Instead of using fresh parsley, I opted for 1/8th c. fresh cilantro and 1/8th c. dried parsley. I also replaced salt with a salt substitute and used a no-sugar brand of apricot preserves.

APRICOT-STUFFED PORK LOIN

Apricots deliver a healthy dose of fiber at a minimal calorie cost. Each luscious fruit has 1 gram of fiber and only 17 calories. They are also low in fat and contain no cholesterol, so they are ideal for controlling your weight. *Photo on page 181.*

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: 1 hour 10 minutes

1 teaspoon ground cumin	3/4 cup dried apricots, finely chopped
1 teaspoon garlic powder	1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup apricot preserves
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice	1 1/2 pounds boneless pork loin, trimmed of all visible fat
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper	

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Coat a shallow baking pan with cooking spray and place a wire rack on it. Coat the wire rack with cooking spray as well.

Combine 3/4 teaspoon of the cumin, 1/2 teaspoon of the garlic powder, the salt, 1/8 teaspoon of the allspice, and 1/8 teaspoon of the pepper in a medium bowl. Add the apricots, parsley, and 2 tablespoons of the preserves and mix well.

Using a long, thin knife, cut a 1 1/2"-wide horizontal slit into the end of the pork, cutting through to the other end of the pork to form a deep pocket. Spoon the apricot mixture into the pocket, using the handle from a rubber spatula to pack it in. Combine the remaining 1/4 teaspoon cumin, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, 1/8 teaspoon allspice, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Rub the spice mixture over the pork.

Place the pork on the wire rack in the prepared pan. Bake for 45 minutes. Brush with the remaining 2 tablespoons preserves. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes longer, or until a meat thermometer inserted in the center registers 160°F and the juices run clear.

Makes 6 servings

Per serving: 222 calories, 24 g protein, 13 g carbohydrates, 7 g fat, 75 mg cholesterol, 250 mg sodium, 1 g dietary fiber

Diet Exchanges: 1 fruit, 3 meat

Carb Choices: 1

Sautéed Green Beans with Black Beans, Garlic, and Pearl Onions:

- I sautéed 2 cloves of fresh, finely chopped garlic in about 3 Tb of Olive Oil until brown.
- I then added the pearl onions, and green beans, sautéing until hot throughout.
- One can of black beans was drained (but not completely...I left in a little juice) and added to the mix. Heat through, then simmer on low.
- Seasoned with: salt substitute, black pepper, and a sprinkle of chipotle.
- Simmer with lid until green beans and onions are soft to bite, yet still retaining body.

My husband said it was an unusual combination, but very delicious! My girlies gobbled them down. ☺

Spinach Salad:

- Fresh spinach leaves
- Chopped cabbage
- Grated carrots
- Sliced cucumbers
- Chopped tomatoes
- Grated cheese
- Almond slivers
- Choice of salad dressing



Cherry/Strawberry Whole Wheat Crisp

Followed recipe for Strawberry Rhubarb Crisp from the Sugar Solution Cookbook, pg. 360

Alterations: Couldn't find rhubarb this time of year, so I went with another tart choice:

1 20 oz. can of no-sugar cherries. Because the cherries were sweetened a bit with Splenda, I cut the sugar called for in the fruit portion of the recipe down from $\frac{1}{2}$ c. to $\frac{1}{4}$ c. and used $\frac{1}{4}$ c. in the topping. Turned out absolutely tantalizing! Everyone loved it!



STRAWBERRY-RHUBARB CRISP

Rhubarb is an excellent source of fiber. When shopping, pick the redder stalks, which are less sour. *Photo on page 293.*

Prep time: 25 minutes • Cook time: 35 minutes • Stand time: 20 minutes

2 pints strawberries, hulled and quartered lengthwise	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 cups fresh or frozen and thawed rhubarb (cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces)	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole grain pastry flour
1-2 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca, or $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tablespoon cornstarch (see note)	Pinch of salt
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger	2 tablespoons butter
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
	$1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons honey

In a 2-quart baking dish, combine the strawberries, rhubarb, tapioca or cornstarch, ginger, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of the cinnamon. Spread the fruit mixture level, and let stand for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 400°F. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, salt, and the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon. Cut in the butter until the mixture is the texture of fine meal. Stir in the oats until combined. Drizzle the honey on top and stir until the mixture is crumbly. Sprinkle over the fruit in an even layer.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the fruit is bubbly and the topping is golden brown. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Note: If the berries are not very juicy, use the minimum amount of cornstarch suggested in the recipe.

Makes 6 servings

Per serving: 232 calories, 3 g protein, 47 g carbohydrates, 5 g fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium, 5 g dietary fiber

Diet Exchanges: 1 fruit, 2 bread, 1 fat

Carb Choices: 3

Our reflections of the meal:

I shared this meal with my family: my husband and 2 teenage daughters (16 & 13). This was a meal that we wouldn't normally have



because it is quite labor intensive. I spent about 4 hours of preparations and baking. Even with the work involved, it was a wonderful experience, and was definitely worth the smiles and ooohs and aaaaahs of my family while enjoying it. ☺ Everyone liked each dish being served and got to try out new flavor combinations.

It was also an excellent opportunity for my girls and me to work together in the kitchen. My 13 year old said she thought I was cheating a little by having them help, until I explained that even master chefs in fancy restaurants have entire teams to help them with the different preparations of the meal, lol. ;)

We all ate around the table, and lingered after the meal, enjoying each other's company and conversation. It was a wonderful way to have a little family time at the close of our busy day. All in all...a wonderful experience and well worth the effort put into it!

