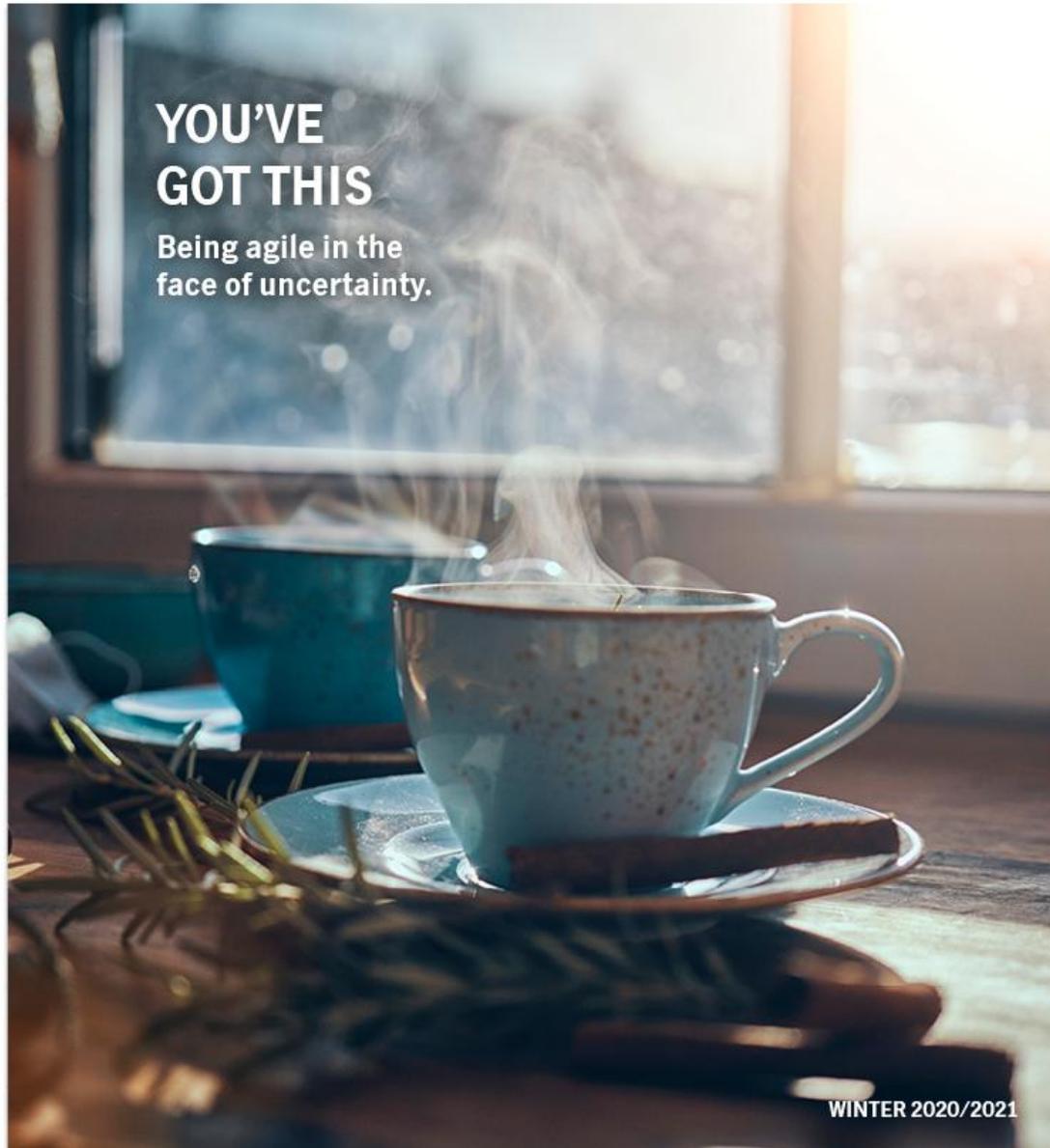


Solutions

FOR FINANCIAL PLANNING



Guilt-free holiday food

Enjoy a bounty of good eats that are both delicious and healthy.

For many, the festive season is a time to get together with family and friends (safely). But it can often be a time when healthy eating habits fall by the wayside in favour of delicious holiday party snacks and belly-busting meals. While the temptation to

overindulge can be strong, there are ways to remain mindful of what and how much you eat. These lower-calorie recipes and healthy eating tips can help you stick to your good food practices and still treat yourself and your guests.

What's on the menu?

If you are looking for some healthy inspiration, here are some tasty options guaranteed to be the talk of the table.

Appetizers

The classic pigs-in-a-blanket or cheese and crackers are no doubt delicious, but these skinnylicious alternatives are great substitutions that will have everyone coming back for seconds:

- [Phyllo-wrapped asparagus with prosciutto](#)
- [Deviled eggs](#)
- [Bruschetta zucchini chips](#)

Dips

Ditch the full-fat dips and go for healthier options like hummus or yogourt-based recipes. Take it a step further by replacing crackers and chips with a variety of veggies – they taste great and add a splash of colour to your plate. Check out these low-calorie dip options:

- [Skinny guacamole](#)
- [Middle Eastern zucchini dip](#)
- [Grilled eggplant dip](#)

Charcuterie boards

They're all the rage and completely customizable. If you're a charcuterie newbie, try this [protein-packed charcuterie board](#) guide.[1] And here are some more tips to build your board:

- Traditional charcuterie boards are filled with rich Italian cured meats, which can be high in sodium. Try swapping them out for leaner, high-protein options like grilled chicken breast, turkey deli meats, smoked salmon or thinly sliced beef or pork tenderloin.[2]
- While packed full of nutrition, some nuts are more calorie-dense than others. If you are concerned about calories, try switching from mixed nuts to shelled pistachios.[3]
- Cheese is great for calcium and protein, but not always good for the waistline. Include lower-fat options such as feta, goat cheese, mozzarella or blue cheese.[4]

Salads

While they are delicious, macaroni and potato salads can have a whopping 400 calories per serving.[5] If you want to savour the tastes but save on calories, these recipes may be perfect:

- [Faux potato salad](#)
- [Sicilian potato salad](#)
- [Balsamic green bean salad](#)
- [Dill garden salad](#)

Drinks

Plain water doesn't exactly set a festive mood, but those cheerful cocktails are full of calories. Here are healthier versions of some holiday favourites:

- For those who can't resist, this simple [low-fat eggnog](#) recipe makes the iconic drink only 90 calories per serving.[6]

- This [cranberry-orange punch](#) fits the festive theme for everyone.[7] Dress it up or dress it down, your choice,
- Warm up with a [mulled apple-cranberry cider](#).[8] This simple recipe is perfect for holiday visits and chilly days.

Sweet treats

Everyone deserves a treat! To satisfy your inner sweet tooth, consider these guilt-free ideas:

- “[Everyone loves this fruitcake](#)” is a high-fibre, low-fat version of the holiday classic.[9]
- The secret to holiday baking is finally here – butter extract! It mimics the rich taste of butter but without those pesky extra calories. Try it in [skinny Christmas sugar cookies](#).[10]
- What are the holidays without pie? Although one of the most popular, apple pie gets a bad rap for its high sugar content. [The ultimate healthy apple pie](#) tastes great and uses no added sugar.[11]
- Toasted coconut and almonds give classic shortbread a nutty twist. These [joy cookies](#) can satisfy any cookie craving. [12]

Healthy eating practices

Being mindful is the best practice for controlling consumption. Here are some tips to help you stay on track throughout the holidays.

- **Don’t arrive hungry.** When you save your appetite for a meal, you are more likely to overeat because your starving eyes are bigger than your stomach. Try having a healthy snack before the occasion so you have something in your stomach and can eat more wisely.[13]
- **Take a 10-minute break before filling your plate again.** Give your body time to assess what you’ve just eaten and determine how full your belly is. Taking a 10-minute break can help you reevaluate your appetite and determine whether you truly want that second helping.[14]
- **Be aware of the calories you drink.** Don’t forget that holiday drinks count towards your caloric intake. Alcoholic beverages are major culprits for excess calories, so try switching to water as a buffer between drinks.[15]
- **Divide your plate.** A great method for portion control is to fill your plate with the right amounts of each food group. Fill half your plate with veggies, a quarter with grains and starches, and a quarter with proteins.[16]

While it’s not always easy to watch what you eat around the holidays, you’ll thank yourself later. Not only can maintaining a healthy lifestyle help keep you in shape, it can also lower stress and boost self-esteem, which will make the holidays even more enjoyable!

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[1] <https://thegirlonbloor.com/how-to-make-a-protein-packed-healthy-charcuterie-board>

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[9] www.eatingwell.com/recipe/248848/everyone-loves-this-fruitcake

[10] <https://amyshealthybaking.com/blog/2014/12/13/skinny-christmas-sugar-cookies>

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[15] www.health.harvard.edu/blog/12-tips-for-holiday-eating-201212245718

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