



Your low-carb holiday menus

Thanksgiving Table

- Soup:** Pumpkin Sausage
- Salad:** Tender Greens with sliced pear, almonds & cranberries
- Dinner:** Oven Roasted Turkey (your own method)
- Mushroom and Shallot Gravy
 - Mashed Cauliflower
 - Cranberry Sauce
 - Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Bacon
 - Breadless Stuffing
 - Low-Carb Biscuits
- Dessert:** Low-Carb Pumpkin Cheesecake or Pecan Pie

Christmas Table

- Soup:** Crab Bisque
- Salad:** Spinach, Strawberry and Walnut
- Dinner:** Baked Ham or Prime Rib
- Green Bean Casserole
 - Loaded Baked Cauliflower
 - Roasted Mushrooms in Browned Butter
 - Zucchini Casserole
 - Low –Carb Dinner Rolls
- Dessert:** Pavlova or Soft Gingerbread Cookies

Tips for a low-stress, low-carb day!

Holidays and celebrations don't have to derail your weight loss!

Stay energized, hydrated & motivated.

Start the day with a protein-rich breakfast.

If you can delegate something - do it!

If it can be made ahead of time - do that too!

Just because Grandma made it that way, doesn't mean you can't modify it. Trust me, she won't mind if you tweak it a bit!

If you're not hosting the party, volunteer to bring something. A salad or side is almost always appreciated!

Take very small portions. A bit or two of each flavor will allow you to enjoy all of the favorites and still keep your calories and carbs in line with your goals.

Give yourself permission to say no. That includes people, food, drink and activities.

Short on oven space?

Plan for the turkey to be finished 2-3 hours before dinner and place (pan & all!) into a cooler that has been lined with foil. Close the lid and remove the turkey just in time to carve it.

Stock up on to-go containers when you get your groceries. Send any of those too-tempting leftovers home with your guests.

Appetizer Ideas

From Pinterest - Search 'low carb holiday appetizers'

Bacon Wrapped Water Chestnuts

Steak & Boursin Bells

Pimento Cheese & Celery sticks or Toast Rusks

Cheese, Salami & Olive Kabobs

Stuffed Mushrooms

Bacon & Cheddar Deviled Eggs

Bacon Wrapped Butternut Squash

Prosciutto Wrapped Arugula

Buffalo Chicken Tortilla Pinwheels

Garlic Wings

Marinated Shrimp

Parmesan Cheese Crisps

Turkey Sliders or Mini Meatballs

Pumpkin and Sausage Soup

Ingredients:

1 lb. pork sausage
1 medium white onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
4 cups chicken broth
1 (15 oz) can pumpkin puree
¼ cup half & half
Salt & pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Brown sausage with onion and garlic. Drain excess fat and set aside.
2. In medium saucepan, whisk together chicken broth and pumpkin puree.
3. Add sausage mixture and stir. Heat over medium high heat until hot and turn down heat to simmer. Add half & half and season to taste.
4. Garnish with pepitas or toasted pumpkin seeds.

Serves 6 (doubles easily)

Calories 224, Total Fat 12g, Carbohydrates 9g, Fiber 3g, Protein 20g

Note: A bowl of this soup with a salad would be more than enough for a meal on its own. To serve with a larger meal, use small soup cups.

Tender Greens with Pear, Almonds & Cranberries

Ingredients:

1 box of tender Mixed Greens
1 green or red pear
1 pkg (2.25 oz) sliced almonds, toasted
1 pkg unsweetened dried cranberries (I get them at Trader Joe's)

Directions:

1. Place greens on each salad plate or in large bowl for family style serving.
2. Slice pear in very thin slices and arrange on top of greens.
3. Toast sliced almonds in skillet for several minutes or until slightly browned. Sprinkle over salads.
4. Sprinkle dried cranberries over the top and serve with a light vinaigrette dressing.

Serves 8

Nutritional data without dressing:

Calories 42, Total Fat 2g, Carbohydrates 4g, Fiber 1g, Protein 1g

Note: The key to keeping the carbs low on this salad is to use the unsweetened cranberries.

Gingerbread Cookies

Ingredients:

4 cups almond flour	2 tsp baking powder
1 cup erythritol or Swerve sweetener	1 tsp xanthan gum
1/4 cup coconut flour	2 large eggs
2 Tbls ground ginger	1/4 cup coconut oil
1 Tbls cinnamon	2 Tbls molasses
1/2 tsp ground cloves	1 tsp vanilla
1/2 tsp salt	

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 275 degrees. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment.
2. Whisk together almond flour, sweetener, coconut flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking powder, xanthan gum, salt & cloves. Stir in eggs, coconut oil, molasses and vanilla.
3. Divide dough in half and place onto large piece of parchment. Top with another sheet and roll out to about 1/4 inch thickness.
4. Use cookie cutters to cut into desired shapes and gently loosen and lift with a spatula. Place onto prepared cookie sheets.
5. Gather scraps and reroll. Repeat with second half of dough.
6. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden and just firm to the touch. Allow to cool 5 minutes and then transfer to cooling rack.

Makes 50 cookies (2 cookies per serving)

Nutritional Data:

Calories 141, Fat 12g, Carbohydrates 6g, Fiber 3g, Protein 5g

Pavlova

Ingredients:

6 large egg whites
1/2 tsp cream of tartar or 1 tsp apple cider vinegar
1/2 + 1/4 cup powdered erythritol or Swerve powdered sugar substitute
1 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
1 Tbls vanilla extract
1 cup each: strawberries, raspberries , blackberries and blueberries
Mint leaves

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 275 degrees. Separate egg whites from yolks. Place whites in large bowl.
2. Beat egg whites on medium until they become foamy. Add cream of tartar while beating and slowly add 1/2 cup powdered sugar substitute. Keep beating until egg whites are stiff and glossy.
3. Spoon mixture onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment. Create a 9" circle of meringue. Build up the sides a bit to hold the whipped cream. Bake for 15 minutes at 275 and then turn temperature down to 210 degrees. Bake for 2 hours. Turn off heat and leave door closed for 1-2 hours or overnight.
4. When ready to serve, whip cream with vanilla and 1/4 cup erythritol. Fill the meringue cavity and top with berries. Sprinkle with slivered mint leaves.

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 222, Fat 18g, Carbohydrates 9g, Fiber 3g, Protein 5g

Mushroom-Shallot Gravy

Ingredients:

2 Tlbs olive oil
10 shallots, peeled
4 garlic cloves, peeled
12 oz mixed wild mushrooms (or baby bellas), cleaned & sliced
1 Tbls fresh rosemary, or 1 tsp dried
1 Tlbs fresh sage, or 1 tsp dried
1/2 cup dry white wine or cooking sherry
1 1/2 cup chicken stock or turkey drippings
1 cup half and half

Directions:

1. Bake shallots and garlic in oil in foil-covered glass baking dish for 1 hour at 300 degrees. This can be done ahead of time.
2. Slice shallots and garlic in thin slices, reserving oil. Cover & refrigerate.
3. In saucepan, heat reserved oil over medium heat. Add mushrooms, herbs and roasted shallots and garlic. Saute until mushrooms are tender (5 min).
4. Add wine or cooking sherry and boil until syrupy.
5. Add chicken stock and boil until reduced by half.
6. Add half and half and boil until mixture thickens to sauce consistency.
7. Season with salt & pepper.

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 95, Total Fat 7g, Carbohydrates 6g, Fiber 0g, Protein 1g

Mashed Cauliflower

Ingredients:

2 large heads Cauliflower (chopped)
4 oz. cream cheese
1/2 cup sour cream
1 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp garlic powder
Salt & Pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Wash cauliflower and cut flowerets from the stem.
2. Boil until very soft, about 15 minutes.
3. Drain well - let sit in colander until it looks dry.
4. Use food processor or immersion blender to puree until smooth.
5. Add cream cheese, sour cream and seasonings. Blend again.
6. Place into baking dish to reheat in oven.

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 130, Fat 8g, Carbohydrates 12g, Fiber 5g, Protein 6g

Dinner Rolls - low carb!

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
2 oz cream cheese
1 large egg
1 1/4 cup almond flour (fine grind)
2 Tbls plain whey protein powder (or coconut flour)
1 Tbls baking powder

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put rack in center of oven. Line a cookie sheet with parchment. Put an empty metal pie pan on the lower rack.
2. Melt mozzarella and cream cheese together in microwave at full power for 1 minute. Stir and heat another 30-45 seconds until bubbly.
3. Scrape cheese into bowl of food processor and process until blended. Add egg and blend again. Add dry ingredients and blend until combined—about 10-15 seconds.
4. Spray plastic wrap with cooking spray and scrape dough onto wrap. Shape into a disk or rectangle and pop into freezer to cool until the over is ready.
5. Remove dough from freezer and cut into 8 pieces. Lightly oil your hands and gently roll each piece into a ball and drop it onto cookie sheet. Sprinkle with poppy seeds or sesame seeds if desired. Press gently to set.
6. Add 5-6 ice cubes to the empty pie pan (to add steam). Bake rolls for 13-15 minutes until brown. May be stored in the refrigerator and reheated.

Serves: 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 165, Fat 13g, Carbohydrates 3g, Fiber 1g, Protein 10g

Zucchini Casserole

Ingredients:

3 large zucchini
1 tsp salt
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1/2 tsp Italian seasoning

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Toss zucchini slices with salt and let sit for 30 minutes. Drain excess liquid from bowl.
3. Heat the cream in small pan over medium heat. Remove from heat and stir in cheese, stirring until melted.
4. Arrange zucchini in circular pattern (or whatever floats your boat). Cover with cheese mixture and sprinkle with Italian seasoning. Bake for 30 minutes until bubbly. (another dish that can be made in advance)

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 60, Fat 6g, Carbohydrates 2g, Fiber 0g, Protein 1g

Cranberry Sauce (Sugar-Free)

Ingredients:

12 oz bag of cranberries
6 oz water
1 cup powdered erythritol (will keep it from crystalizing)
1/2 tsp vanilla
1 tsp orange zest

Directions:

1. Combine the cranberries and water in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat until all the berries pop, about 5-7 minutes. Add the other ingredients and reduce the heat to simmer. Cook until desired thickness. It will thicken further as it cools.
2. Store in the fridge for up to 2 weeks or you can freeze it. I love to serve it on top of a Baked Brie.

Serves 6-8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 32, Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 6g, Fiber 2g, Protein 0g

Note: Erythritol can be purchased online or use a Swerve sweetener.

Roasted Brussels Sprouts

Ingredients:

2 pounds brussels sprouts
4 Tbls olive oil
16 strips bacon
Salt & Pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Trim sprouts and cut in half or quarters if large.
2. Toss sprouts in large bowl with oil, salt & pepper. Get creative if you like more flavor - try cumin or cayenne.
3. Pour onto a foil-lined baking sheet and spread them out. Bake for 30 minutes and shake the baking sheet to rotate the sprouts.
4. Fry the bacon and cut into small pieces.
5. Remove sprouts from oven and sprinkle with bacon pieces.

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 278, Fat 21g, Carbohydrates 4g, Fiber 1g, Protein 15g

Note: To reduce fat & calories, use half the bacon.

Roasted Mushrooms

Ingredients:

1 lb mushrooms
1 Tbls oil
Salt & Pepper to taste
1/4 cup butter
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp thyme
1 Tbls lemon juice

Directions:

1. Toss mushrooms in the oil, salt & pepper and place on baking sheet in a single layer. Roast in preheated oven at 400 degrees for about 20 minutes or until they start to caramelize.
2. Cook butter over medium heat until it starts to brown, remove from heat and mix in garlic, thyme & lemon.
3. Toss mushrooms in the browned butter and serve!

Serves: 4 (easily doubled)

Nutritional Data:

Calories 109, Fat 9g, Carbohydrates 4g, Fiber 1g, Protein 4g

L

oaded Cauliflower Bake

Ingredients:

2 large heads of cauliflower
2 Tbls butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tbls almond or coconut flour
2 cups almond milk
3 oz cream cheese
1 1/2 cup shredded cheddar
Salt & pepper to taste
6 sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled
4 green onions, sliced thin

Directions:

1. Cut flowerets off heads of cauliflower and blanch in boiling water about 3 minutes. Drain excess water (allow to sit in colander until it looks dry)
2. Saute garlic until fragrant, then add flour and stir until golden. Add milk and bring to a simmer. Add cream cheese and stir until blended. Remove from heat and stir in 1 cup shredded cheddar. Season with salt & pepper.
3. Put cauliflower into a greased baking dish and pour cheese sauce over the top. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon, green onions & remaining cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. (This can also be made ahead of time)

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 210, Fat 10g, Carbohydrates 19g, Fiber 8g, Protein 14g

B

readless Stuffing

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons butter
1/2 medium onion, diced
3 stalks celery, diced
3.5 ounces pork rinds broken into crouton sized bits
1 large egg, beaten
3/4 cup chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1/2 teaspoon thyme

Directions:

1. In a large skillet, heat the butter flavored coconut oil over medium high heat. Once melted, cook the onion and celery in it until the celery is softened. Remove pan from heat.
2. Stir in the pork rinds until well blended in. Then pour in the beaten egg and stir until it's evenly mixed in.
3. Stir in the broth and stir to allow the pork rinds to absorb the liquid. Sprinkle in the seasonings then spoon into a casserole dish.
4. Bake the stuffing at 325°F for about 1 hour.

Serves 8

Calories 125, Fat 9g, Carbohydrates 1g, Fiber 0g, Protein 8g

Note: The more expensive pork rinds typically have a lower fat value.

Biscuits - Low Carb of course!

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups almond flour (fine ground)
1/4 tsp salt
1 Tbls baking powder
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp onion powder
2 eggs
1/2 cup sour cream
4 Tbls butter, melted
1/2 cup shredded cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Mix dry ingredients.
3. Combine wet ingredients and then mix with dry ingredients.
4. Spray your baking sheet or muffin tin. Drop dough by spoonfuls onto pan or into cups of muffin tin. It will help to spray your spoon too!
5. Bake for 10-12 minutes.

Serves 12

Calories 165, Fat 14g, Carbohydrates 5g, Fiber 1g, Protein 6g

Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients:

4 cups cooked green beans
1 cup half and half
8 oz cream cheese
2 Tbls dried onions
1 Tbls soy sauce
Fresh ground pepper
6 oz shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Heat half & half and cream cheese over medium heat. Whisk until sauce is smooth.
2. Add dried onions and soy sauce. Stir until mixture thickens.
3. Add green beans and simmer about 5 minutes.
4. Add pepper to taste.
5. Pour mixture into baking dish and sprinkle with shredded cheddar.
6. Broil on low until cheese melts and turns golden.

Serves: 8

Calories 242, Fat 20g, Carbohydrates 6g, Fiber 1g, Protein 10g

Note: This can be made ahead of time. Bake at 350 degrees until bubbling.

S

pinach, Strawberry & Walnut Salad

Ingredients:

Salad:

1 large pkg baby spinach leaves
1 quart fresh strawberries
1 cup walnut pieces, roughly chopped
4 oz gorgonzola cheese
1/2 red onion, sliced thin
1 avocado, cubed

Dressing:

1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup olive oil
Salt & Pepper to taste
1 Tbls raspberry preserves
1 tsp ground mustard

Directions:

1. Layer each ingredient on individual salad plates or large platter. Serve with dressing.

Serves 8

Nutritional Data:

Calories 330, Fat 28g, Carbohydrates 13g, Fiber 5g, Protein 10.5g

Note: To reduce calories, go easy on the avocado, walnuts & cheese and use less dressing.

P

umpkin Cheesecake

Ingredients:

32 oz ricotta cheese
1 can pumpkin puree
2/3 cup granulated sugar substitute
3 Tbls almond flour
1 Tbls coconut flour
1 1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
Dash of salt
6 eggs
2 tsp vanilla

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees.
2. Grease the sides of springform pan and line bottom with waxed paper. Tip pan over and cover bottom and sides with foil to avoid moisture getting in.
3. Whisk together flours and spices in medium bowl.
4. Blend together ricotta, pumpkin and sugar substitute.
5. Add eggs, one at a time while whisking.
6. Mix in remaining ingredients.
7. Place springform pan in baking pan with 1" lip. Pour cheesecake batter into pan.
8. Pour 1/2" warm water into baking sheet pan. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until center is firm. Cool for 30 minutes - then refrigerate.

Serves 10

Calories 235, Fat 10g, Carbohydrates 7g, Fiber 0g, Protein 14g

P

ecan Pie - also low carb!

Ingredients:

Crust:

3/4 cup almond flour
1/4 cup coconut flour
1/2 cup coconut oil
1/2 cup granulated sugar substitute
1 tsp stevia glycerite
1/4 tsp salt
1 egg

Filling:

3 eggs, beaten
1 cup erythritol (or Swerve)
1 tsp stevia glycerite
1 cup xylitol syrup
2 Tbls butter
1 tsp vanilla
1 1/2 cup pecans

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 9" pie plate. In medium bowl, mix crust ingredients. This will be thick - press into the bottom of pie plate.
2. Bake crust for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Set aside to cool.
3. Beat eggs with sweetener in medium bowl. Add butter, syrup and vanilla. Stir and then add pecans. Pour into crust and bake at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes or until set.

Serves 12 (small pieces)

Nutritional Data:

Calories 230, Fat 20g, Carbohydrates 4g, Fiber 2g, Protein 8g

C

rab Bisque

Ingredients:

16 oz crab meat	1 cup heavy cream
4 cloves garlic	3 bay leaves
1/2 red onion	1 Tbls sea salt
2 carrots	1 tsp fresh ground pepper
4 stalks celery	1 tsp paprika
4 oz tomato paste	1 tsp thyme
32 oz seafood or chicken broth	1 tsp xanthan gum
2 cups dry white wine	1 Tbls lemon juice
1 Tbls olive oil	Parsley for garnish

Directions:

1. Dice veggies. Cook onion and garlic (in soup pot) in olive oil until soft and fragrant. Allow to blacken a bit.
2. Deglaze pan with wine and add celery and carrot. Add broth and tomato paste. Stir to combine. Add spices and allow to simmer for an hour.
3. Discard bay leaves and add cream, return to simmer. Add small amount of xanthan gum at a time while stirring. It will start to thicken.
4. Blend soup in blender or food processor. You may have to work in batches.
5. Saute crab in butter or olive oil until warmed through and add to bowls. Ladle bisque over crab and serve with parsley sprinkled on top.

Makes: 8 servings (1 cup)

Nutritional Data:

Calories 110, Fat 8g, Carbohydrates 4g, Fiber 0g, Protein 6g