



Volume 8 Issue 7

McDougall Advanced Study Weekend

Guest Speakers Include:

John Mackey, founder of Whole Foods Markets

Jane Hightower, MD, author of *Diagnosis: Mercury: Money, Politics, and Poison*

Luigi Fontana, MD, PhD, Division of Geriatrics and Nutritional Sciences, Center of Human Nutrition, Washington University

Chad Sarno, Whole Foods Markets Diet Coordinator, Chef and Culinary Educator

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Sonia Sotomayor, US Supreme Court Judge (nominated)
Regina Benjamin, MD, Surgeon General (nominated)

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The Plan:

The public's reaction to the medical histories of these two women has been dismay. Undoubtedly, both are extraordinarily qualified in their respective fields and have the potential to make great contributions to our country. Their health problems are a potential Waterloo for each, or they could be an unprecedented teaching opportunity for healthcare reform in the US.

Obama says; "This (healthcare) is an issue that affects the health and financial well-being of every single American and the stability of our entire economy." Nothing could be more important than showing America a way out of these troubles. I am inviting both candidates for a 10-day visit to the McDougall Program in Santa Rosa, California. Their results will be the turning point for America, our broken healthcare system, and the McDougall Program.



Judge Sonia Sotomayor

Age 54, Hispanic, Puerto Rican descent

Born: June 25, 1954, Bronx, New York

Work: Served as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit since October 1998. First Hispanic federal judge in New York State.

**Regina Benjamin, MD**

Age 52, African-American

Born: October 26, 1956, Mobile, AL

Work: Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in the fishing village of Bayou La Batre, Alabama. First African American woman on the American Medical Association's board of trustees. Past president of the Medical Association of the State of Ala-

The Nation Worries about Sotomayor's Longevity

Appointments to the US Supreme Court are for life. Unfortunately (regardless of what the experts have told the press recently), the life expectancy of someone with type-1 diabetes is dramatically shortened (by about 10 years). These people also suffer more often from debilitating complications, such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, nerve damage, and blindness, than do people without diabetes. Because of her unhealthy diet, which is reflected by her overweight, premature death and complications should be expected for this Supreme Court judge. The most recent [analysis](#) using modern therapies found that after 30 years of type-1 diabetes 50% of people have eye disease (proliferative retinopathy), 25% have kidney disease (nephropathy) and 14% have cardiovascular disease. Judge Sotomayor has had her disease for 46 years; I have no doubt that she is already suffering from major organ damage from her diabetes and her diet. (She looks unhealthy even to the casual observer.)

Diabetics are metabolically handicapped people, hampered in their ability to defend and repair themselves from outside injuries, like an infection or an unhealthy diet. Therefore, to help counteract this disadvantage, people with this disease must be cared for with extraordinary vigilance—and that means careful control of their blood sugars with insulin injections, a wholesome lifestyle, and most importantly, a health-supporting diet. Sonia Sotomayor still eats the high-fat, high-cholesterol Western [diet](#) that causes heart disease, strokes, kidney disease, etc. in hundreds of millions of people worldwide who do not have this handicap of type-1 diabetes. Obviously because of her physical limitations caused by damage to her pancreas as a child she is a greater risk than the average person of rapid bodily deterioration.

By changing to a low fat, no-cholesterol, starch-based diet, type-1 diabetics have a real chance of avoiding premature death and serious complications. The only people I have met with long-standing type-1 diabetes who still have all their parts working after 40 years of disease, have been those following a low-fat nearly vegetarian diet—the best example I know is of the few fortunate people who learned and practiced the Kempner Rice Diet from Duke University—oftentimes they remained in great shape for as long as 50 years following their diagnosis because of their very low-fat diet of primarily rice, fruits and vegetables.

Sonia Sotomayor's diabetes interferes with her daily duties as a judge. She must test her sugars and administer insulin multiple times throughout the day. Bouts of confusion and accidents occur commonly from hypoglycemic reactions in most type-1 diabetics, especially those who try to intensively treat their disease. My experience has been that a change to the McDougall Diet results in more stable blood sugars throughout the day and at least a one-third reduction in insulin requirements. (Type-1 diabetics will always require some insulin.) Most important, what the judge needs to know is that this is not an irreversible sentence—she can get out of jail; that a significant amount of the long-term damage to the eyes, the kidneys, and the blood vessels to the heart and brain can be reversed with a change in diet. And she will look and feel better as soon as she makes the change.

In 1927 Dr. E. P. Joslin, founder of the famous Joslin Diabetic Center in Boston, suspected a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet might favor the development of diabetes and its major complication, atherosclerosis. He prophetically wrote: "I believe the chief cause of premature atherosclerosis in diabetes, save for advancing age, is an excess of fat, an excess of fat in the body (obesity), an excess of fat in the diet, and an excess of fat in the blood. With an excess of fat diabetes begins and from an excess of fat diabetics die, formerly of coma, recently of atherosclerosis." And now, 82 years after Joslin's farsighted message, diabetes is the fastest growing disease in the world.

Ref: Joslin EP. Atherosclerosis and diabetes. *Ann Clin Med* 1927; 5:1061.

The Nation's Anguish over Dr. Benjamin's Appearance

Since Dr. Regina Benjamin's selection, one negative comment has been emphasized over all of her other qualifications: her obesity. People are asking, "How is she to impact the nation's health if she can't even take care of herself?"

Some supporters point out that being overweight actually qualifies her for the job because she has more empathy for the obesity epidemic than a trim person would. Most comments have, however, not been so supportive. On the Fox Business Network, the Neal Cavuto show, a guest said, "Dr. Benjamin is 50 pounds overweight, she is obese...she is a size 20...The Surgeon General is a symbolic position...Would you then want your head of the Federal Reserve be a guy that lives in a cardboard box underneath the highway because he understands the plight of poor people?...Would you want Michael Jackson's doctors to be in charge of drug control of the DEA?...If (you are going to be Surgeon General) you should [look the part...](#)"

The example of the Federal Reserve guy is one of a lifetime of lack of education and opportunity, and the DEA example is one of moral depravity. These problems are largely unfixable. Dr. Benjamin's obesity problem is a simple misunderstanding about which foods to choose and this wrong thinking can be fixed instantaneously—or at least in 10 days at the McDougall Program.

Obesity Rates in Various States in the US:

Blacks: 23 to 45.1%

Hispanics: 21 to 36.7%.

Whites: 9 to 30.2%

Let's Make This a Racial Matter

Medicine and health remain the last bastions of broad segregation in the US.

In general, Blacks are considerably more often, and Hispanics are a little more often, fatter and sicker than are Whites. According to a report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, on average; Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians and Alaska Natives are [more likely](#) (1.6 to 2.3 times as likely) to have diabetes than non-Hispanic Whites. Compared with Whites, Blacks experience substantial excess mortality from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and infant death. Hispanics still have less heart disease than Whites.

Making health a matter of racial pride could turn the tables. Not long ago, because of widespread poverty, Black and Hispanic people followed simple diets—they could only afford starch-based meals, with little meat, dairy, and processed foods. By no coincidence, Blacks and Hispanics were typically trim and healthy back then, too. With the better job opportunities and an improved overall economy, these two subgroups have been able to eat like kings and queens, and it shows. Most people can remember a past generation when

people were healthier. Sotomayor's parents emigrated from Puerto Rico during World War II. The traditional diet then was based on corn, beans, and rice. As a US territory, the local diet has become very rich and the people are now in trouble like most other Americans.

As a young doctor working in Hawaii with people of Hawaiian, Filipino, Japanese, and Chinese descent I made great efforts to personalize the diet-health connection. My third and fourth generation patients were sick due to the rich foods they consumed. I would ask them if they knew why they suffered with obesity, type-2 diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, and cancer. Then I would ask them if grandma and grandpa were still alive, how was their health, and what did they eat. Commonly the answer was: "Grandma and grandpa are in their nineties, working hard every day, trim, and eating poi or rice." Then I would comment, "The reason you are not in the same shape is that you have abandoned your family's traditional foods. Look what the White man's diet has done to you." Common illnesses are not genetic. But, they certainly have become racial.

Besides being fatter and sicker, Blacks, Hispanics and minorities receive lower-quality health care; even when members have the same incomes, insurance coverage, and medical conditions as Whites, they receive [worse care](#).

Give the World a Demo

I am so confident in the effects of the education we provide at the McDougall Program that all I ask is for these two unhealthy representatives of the United States to attend the lectures, eat the foods served "all you can eat buffet-style," and let us measure the results as we usually do—body weights, blood pressures, and a few simple blood tests. I will challenge both women, as I do many other participants, to "overeate" if you wish during the program, in an effort to prove me wrong (no outside food allowed). In 10 days with TV, radio, and newspaper reporters looking in, the world will see beyond any doubt that the growing epidemic of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer worldwide is due to what people eat, not how much they eat—and more important, serious diseases can be cured by a simple change. Being overweight and sick are not matters of intelligence, gender, genetics, or race. Judge Sotomayor and Dr. Benjamin right now have a teaching opportunity to prove to the world, it's the food!



Vegetarian Diet "Weakens Bones" (Worldwide headlines July 2, 2009)

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This article, released ahead of scheduled publication, which gives the public the perception that the news was so important that it could not wait, in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* was by the same authors as the vegan-osteoporosis [article](#) I discussed in my June 2009 newsletter. The article I reported on received little press worldwide and showed results very favorable for a vegan diet and bone health. Published in the April 2009 issue of the journal *Osteoporosis International*, the same researchers directly examined 105 postmenopausal Mahayana Buddhist nuns, and compared them to 105 omnivorous women and found, "...although vegans have much lower intakes of dietary calcium and protein than omnivores, veganism does not have (an) adverse effect on bone mineral density (BMD) and does not alter body composition."

The highly publicized study showing negative effects of a vegan diet was a meta-analysis—a selected compilation of similar studies. This kind of analysis is notorious for showing bias and is easily manipulated by the choice of studies included or excluded in the research paper. Because of the ease of exploitation, meta-analysis has been referred to as an exercise in "[mega-silliness](#)." Their original research found 922 studies, but after applying exclusion criteria there were only 9 studies left, which included 2749 individuals; 5 studies were of Asians, populations where osteoporosis-related fractures are much lower because of their healthier diet and greater physical activity, than Westerners.

This analysis found no correlation between dietary calcium intake or protein intake and BMD. The results comparing diets of vegetarians and omnivores with BMD were considered clinically insignificant by the au-

thors. Furthermore, [BMD is a poor predictor](#) of future fracture risk. The criticisms could go on, making this one of the worst studies ever published in a respected journal. So why did this article condemning eating a vegan diet get so much attention?

This flawed research telling people worldwide that vegan diets are bad for the bones was funded by the AM-BeR alliance incorporated in Malaysia, which owns Amber F&B Nutrition Sdn Bhd, a dairy products producer and wholesaler. This company's [business](#) is the "manufacturing of sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk and dairy products." Once a study is published then the public relations department of the industry takes over and sends "Press Releases" to the media worldwide. Because people love to hear "good news about their bad habits (eating beefsteaks, fried chicken, cheese, and ice cream)," the press and the public revel in this good news, even when the conclusions are untrue as in this case. You might think there would be at least one curious reporter who would read the research before spreading the lie.

You can write the authors at: tuan.nguyen@unsw.edu.au and ask your questions about the two studies and why the one funded by a dairy industry showing no relevance to a person's choice of a vegan diet and the risk of fracture received so much worldwide attention.



Featured Recipes

Layered Tex-Mex Lasagne

Instead of rolling up each enchilada individually, this recipe layers the filling between corn tortillas and covers it all with the enchilada sauce.

Preparation Time: 20 minutes (need cooked and mashed pinto beans)

Cooking Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6-8

Sauce:

- 2 8 ounce cans tomato sauce
- 3 cups water
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons chili powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder

Place all ingredients for the sauce in a saucepan. Mix well with a whisk until well combined. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened, about 5 minutes. Taste and add more chili powder if desired. Set aside.

10-12 corn tortillas

- 4 cups mashed pinto beans (fat-free canned beans may be used)
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 1 ½ cups frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1 2.25 ounce can sliced ripe olives, drained
- 1-2 tablespoons chopped green chilies (optional)

To assemble casserole:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place the beans in a large bowl. Add the onions, corn, olives and green chilies (if you wish). Mix gently until well combined.

Place 1½ cups of the sauce in the bottom of a non-stick oblong baking dish. Place 3-4 corn tortillas over the bottom of the baking dish. Spread half of the bean mixture over the tortillas. Place another 3-4 tortillas over the bean mixture and then spread the remaining bean mixture on top of those tortillas. Cover with 3-4 more tortillas and then pour the remaining sauce over the tortillas. Cover with parchment paper, then cover

with aluminum foil, crimping the edges over the baking dish. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove from oven and let rest for about 15 minutes before cutting. Serve with salsa and tofu sour cream, if desired.

Hints: The amount of corn tortillas that you need will depend on the size of your baking dish. Just cover the bottom as well as you can with the tortillas (on top of the first amount of enchilada sauce) and then use that same amount for the 2nd and 3rd layer.

Three-Greens Ribollita Soup

Ribollita means twice-cooked, or *reboiled* in Italian. A white bean stock is livened up with greens, tomatoes, and potatoes with added slices of toasted bread.

By Colleen Patrick-Goudreau, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

www.compassionatecooks.com

- 3 cups (2 cans drained and rinsed) cooked cannellini beans
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 sage leaves
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons water for sautéing
- 2 onions, diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 1/2 cups cabbage, coarsely chopped
- 1 bunch Swiss chard, trimmed and chopped
- 1 bunch kale, trimmed and chopped
- 2 cups water or vegetable stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 12 (1/2-inch-thick) slices hearty Italian or French bread, lightly toasted

Place the beans, vegetable stock, garlic, sage leaves, bay leaves, and salt in a saucepan. Simmer over low-medium heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer until the mixture begins to thicken and the flavor of the garlic and herbs begin to infuse the beans, about 20 minutes.

Discard the bay and sage leaves. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Set aside.

Meanwhile, in a large soup pot, heat the water over medium-high heat. Add the onions; cook and stir until transparent, about 7 minutes.

Add the carrots, potatoes, cabbage, Swiss chard, kale, the pureed bean mixture, and an additional 2 cups of water or stock. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover, and cook until the potatoes are fork-tender, about 20 minutes, stirring at least once.

Adjust seasonings to taste. At this point you can either serve it right away, or refrigerate it overnight and reboil the next day.

When ready to serve, add one or two toasted bread slices to the bottom of each serving bowl, and ladle the soup over the bread. Serve.

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Breakfast Potatoes, Tofu and Vegetables

By Jill Nussinow, The Veggie Queen, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

This is so fast and easy in the pressure cooker. Use whatever vegetables are fresh, and add them according to how long they take to cook.

Serves 4

1 medium onion, diced
2-3 small potatoes, cut into chunks
½ pound firm tofu, diced
1-2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
1 tablespoon tamari
Any spice or spice blend that you like
2-3 tablespoons vegetable broth or water
1 ½ cups vegetables, such as carrots, cabbage, squash, broccoli

Add the onion to the pressure cooker and sauté for 1 minute. Add the potatoes, tofu, tamari and spices. Sauté for a minute. Add the broth and lock the lid on the cooker. Bring to high pressure over high heat for 1 ½ minutes. Quick release the pressure. Add the vegetables and more broth, if necessary, and bring back to high pressure for 1 to 1 ½ minutes, depending upon which vegetables you add. When time is up, quick release the pressure and serve immediately.

©2009, The Veggie Queen™, <http://www.theveggiequeen.com> or <http://www.pressurecookingonline.com>

From **Pressure Cooking: A Fresh Look, Delicious Dishes in Minutes**

Holy Mole Bean Dip

By Chef AJ, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

www.chefajshealthykitchen.com

1 can low sodium refried beans (black or pinto)
1 can salt free beans (black or pinto)
1 cup salt free salsa (such as Enrico's)
1/3 cup fresh lime juice (including the zest) approximately 3
2 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon chipotle paste
2 teaspoons raw cacao powder
½ cup raw, shelled hemp seeds

Drain beans, reserving liquid. In a high powered blender combine all ingredients except for the hemp seeds and blend until smooth and creamy, adding reserved bean liquid a little at a time if you need more liquid for processing. Add hemp seeds and blend again. Serve with baked, salt-free tortilla chips. Sprinkle with finely chopped green onions before serving.

Fresh Herbed Tofu Sour Cream Dip

By Emily Webber, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

This dip reminds me a little bit of a thick, creamy Ranch-style dip served at a party with potato chips or vegetables. In this version, however, the herbs are fresh and bursting with flavor and rather than sour cream, the base is silken tofu. It's rich, smooth and creamy, yet lower in fat and calories and totally cholesterol-free. Rather than serving it with the standard array of vegetables, try some new ones that are not typically seen. You might also wish to serve the vegetables vertically, standing tall in an array of clear glasses if you're having a party. To pack the dip for a picnic, pack a small cup of dip for each attendee inside his or her own container of veggies. It will make each guest feel extra special. This dip is even better the next day after the flavors have had a chance to mingle.

Variation: Drain the tofu overnight to make it really thick. In this way, the dip turns into a sandwich or bagel spread. Try it for simple cucumber sandwiches. It would be super-yummy for an afternoon tea or wedding/baby shower. I love it in the morning, spread on half a whole wheat bagel with a bowl of berries.

Serves 4-6 people

Special equipment: mesh strainer and cheesecloth

1 pound organic fresh silken tofu
½ teaspoon ground celery seed
1 teaspoon fine sea salt (adjust to taste)
About 10-20 turns freshly ground black pepper
4 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
¼ cup minced fresh chives
2 tablespoons each minced fresh basil, parsley and dill
2 teaspoons minced fresh tarragon
2 teaspoons minced shallot

Vegetables for Serving (just a few ideas – choose your own)

Asparagus, blanched
Sugar snap peas or Snow peas, blanched
Grape tomatoes
Cucumbers, sliced into spears
Carrots, cut into sticks
Fennel, cut into sticks
Daikon Radish, cut into sticks

Line a mesh strainer with a quadruple layer of cheesecloth, allowing a couple of inches to hang over the edges. Place the strainer inside a bowl, cut open the package of tofu and dump it in. Allow the tofu to drain for 15 minutes-2 hours (place in the refrigerator if it will sit for longer than 20 minutes). The longer it sits, the thicker your dip will be. Squeeze out any remaining water and dump into the food processor. Puree until smooth.

Add the celery seed, salt, pepper, lemon juice, nutritional yeast and puree. Add the herbs and shallots and pulse just until combined. Do not over mix or dip will be green. Bits of herbs should still be visible.

Serve with vegetables. Keeps in the refrigerator for about 4 days.

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2009.

Cumin-Spiced Sweet & Gold Potato Salad

By Emily Webber, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

This potato salad is a bit different than the standard type found at picnic, yet still stays true to its roots. Filled with substantial chunks of grilled Yukon gold and sweet potatoes, it's dotted with sweet, juicy grilled grape tomatoes and streaked with roasted yellow bell peppers. Don't forget to add the parsley at the end! The standard creamy dressing is lighted up and made more flavorful than ever with a touch of garlic and a bit of cumin.

Pour most of the dressing on the potato salad. Serve the potato salad on a bed of arugula, spinach or lettuce if you're not serving another green. Toss the extra dressing over these greens just before serving, if desired. I especially love the peppery bite of arugula with the sweet and smoky flavors of this potato salad.

The dressing is super-easy to whip up in a blender ahead of time. It will separate a little as it sits, but just shake it up or whisk it and it will come together again just fine.

Serves 4-6

1 ½ pounds (about 4 medium) Yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed and cut into wedges

1 ½ pounds (about 2 large) orange flesh sweet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into wedges
2 teaspoons sea salt
1 yellow bell pepper, roasted and sliced **See Note, below*
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes
¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, cilantro, or green onion (green part only)
4-6 cups (loosely packed) baby arugula, baby spinach or leaf lettuce (*optional*)

Dressing

1 cup silken tofu (prefer fresh, rather than vacuum-packed)
1 tablespoon agave nectar (or other natural sweetener)
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
1 small clove garlic, minced
½ teaspoon ground cumin
Fine sea salt to taste (about ½ teaspoon – taste first)
Freshly ground black pepper to taste (about 10 grinds)

Cook the gold potatoes and sweet potatoes: Place gold potatoes and 1 teaspoon of sea salt in a large pot of water. Bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for about 6-8 minutes or until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork. In a separate pot, cook the sweet potatoes by the same method for about 4-6 minutes. Cook both sweet and gold potatoes until fork tender, yet not falling apart. Drain and set aside.

Make the dressing. Place all dressing ingredients in a food processor and puree until creamy.

Assemble the salad: To the potatoes, add grape tomatoes, strips of roasted yellow pepper and fresh parsley (or cilantro or green onions). Drizzle with dressing and toss gently. Salad will continue to absorb more dressing as it sits so you may need to add more to leftovers, if you have any. Season with fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Note: To roast a bell pepper, place pepper directly beneath a preheated broiler or directly on top of a gas stovetop burner set on medium-high heat, turning every few minutes until skin is charred and black. Place pepper in brown paper bag, close the top and allow to steam in the bag for at least 15 minutes. Slip the skin off the pepper. Remove the core and seeds, and use the pepper in recipe.

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2009.

Bean & Grain Taco Burgers

By Emily Webber, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

These bean and grain burgers are super-easy to make – just right for a quick, healthy weeknight meal. They are also a fun break from the ordinary – sort of a cross between a burger and a taco. The burgers are formed into a half-moon shape, cooked and placed into a soft whole wheat tortilla. You may top your burger with sliced tomato and guacamole or sliced avocado and salsa. If you prefer, serve them fajita-style by topping with grilled veggies – perhaps some peppers, onions, portabella mushrooms and summer squash (and of course a bit of salsa!)

It's best to add the rice to the smashed beans while still warm. It will adhere like glue and the burgers will require no other binder. If you can't find quinoa, it's no big deal. Just use all rice. The burgers will be great either way.

Makes 4-5 medium-sized (about 1/3 cup) burgers

1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans (chick peas), drained and rinsed (or 1 ½ cups cooked)

½ cup cooked quinoa (see directions below)
½ cup cooked short grain brown rice (see directions below)
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon sweet Hungarian paprika
½ teaspoon ancho chili powder
½ teaspoon fine sea salt

To Serve

4 soft whole wheat tortillas (small, not the giant burrito size) or soft corn tortillas
Guacamole or salsa
Sliced tomato (2 tomatoes) or 1 avocado, sliced
Shredded lettuce (optional)
Sliced black olives (optional)

Cook the grains (separately). Combine ¼ cup rice with ½ cup water in a small saucepan with a pinch of sea salt. Cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 45 minutes or until all liquid has been absorbed and rice is tender. Combine ¼ cup well rinsed quinoa in a small saucepan with ½ cup water with a pinch of sea salt. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes or until all liquid has been absorbed and quinoa is dry and fluffy.

Dump beans into a mixer bowl. (If you don't have a mixer, use a potato masher or a fork.) Mix until the beans are about halfway smashed. Sprinkle in all the spices – the garlic powder, onion powder, cumin, oregano, paprika, chili powder and salt. Add the hot cooked rice and quinoa and mix until the beans and grains are all smashed together and the spices are evenly distributed throughout the mixture.

Wet your hands. Scoop about a rounded 1/3 cup into your hands and form into oval-shaped patties. Repeat, making 4-5 burgers that will fit neatly inside a soft taco.

To cook the burgers, you may grill them indoors or out or fry them in a non-stick pan. Grill or fry in a non-stick pan for about 10 minutes per side over medium-low heat. Cook until crisp and golden on the outside, and firm, yet still just slightly tender. If using an outdoor grill, be sure to **lightly** oil the grill to prevent sticking. The burgers may also be baked on parchment paper on a baking sheet in a 400 degree oven for about 10-15 minutes per side. They will not brown, but will still be yummy.

Warm each tortilla by placing directly on a gas cook top and cooking for about 30 seconds, flipping every 5 seconds or so with metal tongs. Alternately, warm in a dry stainless steel or non-stick skillet, using the same method.

Place each burger in a tortilla, top with guacamole and tomato or salsa and avocado and serve!

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2009.

Wonderful Fat-Free Vegan Chocolate Black Bean Brownies with Iced Vanilla Cashew Cream and Fresh Strawberry Sauce

By Emily Webber, for the Celebrity Chef Weekend, June 2009

Wonderful Fat-Free Vegan Chocolate Black Bean Brownies

These brownies are rich, moist and chewy. They are also vegan and virtually fat-free! They are quite possibly the world's healthiest, yet still scrumptious brownie! The black beans provide binding and substance, while providing protein and fiber.

Serve these brownies alone with a little sprinkle of powdered sugar or, if you really want to impress, top with Iced Vanilla Cashew Cream and Fresh Strawberry Sauce for a show-stopping ending to any meal. Your fam-

ily or friends will never guess this decadent dessert is actually good for them!

P.S. If serving with powdered sugar, sprinkle each square just before serving. If sprinkled on ahead of time, the moisture in the brownies will seep into the powdered sugar and make the top of the brownies look gummy.

Makes 12 rectangles

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 1/2 cups agave nectar
2 tablespoons ground flax seeds
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1/2 cup cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour

Preheat oven to 350F.

Line an 8x8" pan with parchment paper and allow about 1" of the paper to hang out on each side. This will allow you to lift the brownies out of the pan once they cool.

Place black beans and agave nectar in a food processor and puree until very smooth. Add the flax seeds, vanilla, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt and pulse to combine. Add the flour and pulse until just until barely combined, scraping the sides as needed. Do not over mix. Pour into prepared pan. Bake approximately 30 minutes or until center no longer jiggles when shaken gently and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out almost clean.

Allow to cool completely before slicing. Cut into 12 small rectangles.

Top with a scoop of Iced Vanilla Cashew Cream and drizzle with Fresh Strawberry Sauce. (see recipes, below)

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2009.

Iced Vanilla Cashew Cream

This dairy-free ice cream is very rich, creamy and delicious. It's super-easy to make with only a blender and an ice cream maker.

2 cups raw cashews, soaked in filtered or spring water for 1-5 hours
1 1/2 cups filtered or spring water
3/4 cup agave nectar (raw organic preferred)
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 vanilla bean

Drain cashews and discard soaking water. Place cashews in blender and add about half of the water. Blend for 3-5 minutes, stopping every minute to give your blender a rest. (If you have a high speed blender you will not need to do this, and it will take much less time to blend.) Add in the rest of the water, the agave nectar and the vanilla extract. Cut the vanilla bean in half lengthwise and scrape out the seeds. Place the seeds in the blender.

Blend for another minute or two until silky smooth and the consistency of heavy cream.

Pour into ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's instructions.

Note: Save the leftover vanilla pod. You can put the pod in a jar of sugar to make vanilla flavored sugar.

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2009.

Fresh Strawberry Sauce

Make this fresh, sweet syrup whenever strawberries are in season. Drizzle it over ice cream, pancakes or French toast. Substitute any seasonal fresh fruit for the strawberries including blueberries, peaches, kiwi and more!

2 cups fresh strawberries

¼ cup agave nectar (more or less as needed depending on sweetness of fruit)

Puree in blender until smooth. Warm gently just until heated through, if desired, or serve as is.

Recipe by Emily Barth Webber, 2006.