



your

# ... It's Worth the Trip!



## THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

### Cajun Shrimp with Fettucine

All of us by now have heard that consuming a diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables is important for optimal health and reducing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer. This advice is pretty much the cornerstone of basic nutrition guidance. What is the first thing many of us do when are trying to lose weight? We replace our typical entrees with salads, because fruits vegetables are lower in calories than most other foods and have fiber to help us feel full longer. Yet, the average American eats only two to four servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

This goes to show that even with knowing how extremely beneficial to overall health that an ample consumption of fruits and vegetable is, Americans still aren't motivated to consume them. Perhaps informing Americans about some other benefits may be more motivating. For example, did you know, some fruits and vegetables have compounds in them that help hydrate your skin and produce collagen, which can help reduce the appearance of wrinkles? Also, a Scottish study involving college students suggests that fruit and vegetable consumption may even increase your attractiveness! Researchers found that the pigments in many fruits and vegetables resulted in a warm glow of, and healthiness and attractiveness of, facial skin. Some even help to protect against sun-damage.

Adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables may also improve how you manage stressful situations, such as tight deadlines or chronic stressors, such as the loss of a job. This can help you work better under pressure and be more resilient to whatever life throws your way. Fruits and vegetables also have compounds in them that keep bones strong to help you physically perform optimally.

Ideally, Americans should aim to consume at least 8 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. This may seem like a lot, but it really isn't. Remember, fresh, canned and frozen varieties all count. Try the following tips to increase your intake:

- Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing or hummus, for dipping.
- Make a fruit dessert by slicing a banana into 4 pieces and freeze; then serve by topping them with a drizzle of melted dark chocolate.
- Add vegetables to your pizza toppings, like broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and zucchini, instead of all meats.
- Top a baked potato with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese.
- Stock your freezer with frozen vegetables to steam or stir-fry for a quick side dish or add to a soup to make it heartier.
- Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, yogurt, or smoothie.
- Serve a large colorful salad made with dark leafy greens, a variety of fruits and vegetables, and a lean protein as your dinner entrée 1-2 times a week.



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#### Directions:

1. Dice a small onion, mince 2 garlic cloves and slice 1 medium zucchini. Set aside.
2. Begin cooking 12 oz. of whole wheat fettuccine pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
3. While the pasta is cooking, add 12 oz. of uncooked, shelled shrimp to a bowl along with 1 tbsp. of Cajun seasoning. Toss gently to evenly coat the shrimp.
4. In a large skillet, heat 1 tbsp. of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the shrimp and cook on both sides until pink. Remove the shrimp from the skillet and set aside.
5. Heat 2 tbsp. of olive oil in the skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic and zucchini. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Serves: 4

6. Using a blender, pulse 1-15 oz. can of tomatoes until smooth and then add them to the skillet. Bring to a boil and then turn down the heat to simmer for about 15 minutes.
7. Pour ¾ cup of evaporated milk into skillet and stir gently. Add 3 oz. of freshly grated Parmesan cheese and cook for about 5 more minutes.
8. Add the cooked pasta and shrimp to the skillet and toss until everything is mixed together.
9. Serve by placing ¼ of the shrimp pasta on a plate and top with fresh basil (optional).

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.

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