

# Delightful Food Ideas

## For Healthful Food Fun Try Fabulous Figs

(NAPSA)—Figs are an almost perfect food any way you look at them. They are available fresh or dried, and are delicious either way.

“Fresh figs are a tasty part of a healthful diet—they’re naturally low in fat and calories and are a good source of fiber. Research has shown that eating a diet based mainly on foods like these may be protective against some of the top killers in this country, including heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer,” says Jennifer Pitzzi Hellwig, MS, RD, a registered dietitian and faculty member at the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

Figs are rich in potassium and calcium, two minerals needed for a healthy heart and good bones. A serving of figs (4 medium or 2½ large) has 355 milligrams of potassium. A serving of fresh figs has 8 percent of the recommended daily value of calcium.

A serving of figs contains five grams of soluble and insoluble fiber—even more than some bran cereals. Soluble fiber helps lower cholesterol levels by blocking absorption of cholesterol in the intestines. Insoluble fiber has been shown to lower the risk of colon cancer.

“Figs may also be a useful part of a weight-control diet, because while they’re relatively low in



**Figs are sweet and easy to eat and highly nutritious.**

calories and fat, they are tasty and satisfying,” says Hellwig.

Most commercially available figs, including Calimyrna figs, Mission figs, Kadota figs and Brown Turkey figs, are grown in California. Calimyrna figs have a golden skin. Mission figs are deep purple in color. Kadota figs are a creamy amber in color. Brown Turkey figs have a brown skin and sweet rose flesh.

Look for fresh figs that are free of major skin blemishes. Fresh figs keep for four to six days.

Dried figs are also widely available and keep for several months, which makes them an amazing convenience food that can be chopped and added to salads, yogurt, breads, cookies, and desserts or just eaten out of hand.

Dried figs are convenient, but take advantage of the fresh fig season with the wonderful Saucy California Baked Fig recipe below.

Fresh fig season only lasts from June through October, so be sure and pick some up at your super-market today. For more delicious recipes and information, logon to [www.calfreshfigs.com](http://www.calfreshfigs.com).

### Saucy California Baked Figs

**12 fresh California green or black figs**

**1 teaspoon grated orange zest**

**¼ cup fresh orange juice**

**¼ cup brandy, port or Marsala (optional)**

**2 tablespoons honey heavy cream (optional)**

**Preheat oven to 350° F. Remove stems from figs, if desired. Arrange whole figs in ovenproof dish, pressing down lightly to flatten bottoms so that figs will stand upright. Mix orange zest, juice, brandy and honey together and pour over figs. Bake until tender, about 20 minutes. Cool and serve with heavy cream to pour over.**

**Makes 4 servings. Preparation Time: about 20 minutes. Bake Time: about 20 minutes.**

**Nutritional information per serving: Calories 183, Fat 0.5g, Calories from fat 2 percent, Protein 1g, Carbohydrates 39g, Dietary Fiber 5g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 2mg.**