

Cooking Corner

Freshen Up Your Meal Prep

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(NAPSA)—With more than 3.9 million “mealprep” hashtags on Instagram, many people have found success in living a healthier lifestyle through meal prepping. Not only does it save you time during the busy workweek, it allows for a better variety of healthy, ready-to-eat foods at your disposal.

Prepping 101

Of course, this doesn't mean you should spend your entire day in the kitchen prepping every last detail of your meals for the week—simply cook up or prepare several staple items to have on hand for those quick and wholesome, no-brainer meals or snacks when you need them. Here are some tips on how to make the most of your prepping sessions:

Chop, slice, dice, repeat. Start with something as simple as prepping fruits and veggies in advance to have ready in the fridge for meals or snacks; store them in glass containers for easy organization and motivation to stick to your meal plan.

Double the batch. Along with prepared produce, cook large batches of staple ingredients such as quinoa, brown rice and proteins to make meal assembly quick and easy.

Add a dash of this, a dash of that. Use seasonings and sauces to mix up the flavor profile of similar ingredients. One night, dinner could be an Asian stir-fry, while the next it could be a Mexican-inspired bowl.

Try something new. Meal “preppers” may eventually become tired of throwing together the same old meals and find the food they prepare mundane. When fatigue hits, seek out a new recipe or work with a new ingredient. I like to incorporate tasty and brightly colored fruit such as mango to refresh everyday meals and snacks.



To save time, prep veggies and other ingredients in advance of making your meals. To make them more nutritious and fun, include mangos.

Roll Up Your Sleeves

For a healthy, tasty and quick meal this week, try my Mango Spring Rolls. This recipe is a delicious step out of the ordinary and it's chock-full of nutrients. One cup of mango provides 100 percent of your daily vitamin C, 35 percent of your daily vitamin A and 12 percent of your daily fiber.

Mango Spring Rolls

Servings: 5 spring rolls

Ingredients:

½ fresh mango
¼ small head purple cabbage
5 green onion spears
½ medium cucumber
½ medium red bell pepper
5 pieces rice paper
Handful cilantro
1 cup shredded carrot

Almond Butter Dipping Sauce:
3 Tbsp creamy almond butter

1 tsp tamari
½ lime, squeezed
1 Tbsp honey
2–3 Tbsp hot filtered water

Directions: Slice two mango cheeks into long, narrow strips and set aside. Slice cabbage, onion, cucumber and red bell pepper into very thin 4-inch pieces and set aside. Prepare rice paper as instructed on package. Once pliable, place a few of each ingredient (including cilantro and carrots) in the center of the paper, folding in the sides and rolling until all veggies are inside and paper is closed. To store, leave some space between rolls to prevent rolls from sticking together.

Dipping Sauce: Whisk or blend together all ingredients until consistency is creamy.

Mango How-To

If you're new to working with mangos, follow these quick tips for proper prep.

Selection. Don't judge a mango by its color—red does not mean ripe. A ripe mango will be slightly soft like a peach or avocado.

Storage. Keep unripe mangos at room temperature. Never refrigerate mangos before they're ripe. Once ripe, mangos can be moved to the refrigerator to slow down ripening for several days.

Cutting. To cut a mango, simply slice off the sides of the fruit, avoiding the large seed in the center. Once you have these two sides (cheeks), you can get to the flesh and slice or dice as needed. Then, simply scoop the fruit out of the skin.

Learn More

Visit www.mango.org for additional information on mango varieties, availability and recipes.