


YOUR CHRISTMAS SURVIVAL & RECIPE GUIDE



Expert tips to help you start your
New Year without gaining weight!



LighterLife®



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CHRISTMAS WITH **LIGHTERLIFE**

Whether you celebrate or not, Christmas is inescapable, and while it's about far more than food, it can sometimes seem that way, especially when the shops start stocking mince pies in early September...

So it's little wonder that the average person puts on 5-10lb between November and January. But you're not the average person – you've got LighterLife, and you've got the skills to ensure that you don't become part of this statistic. And it starts right here, with your LighterLife Christmas Survival & Recipe Guide, packed with advice and tried-and-tested tips for a festive season that's right in line with your goals for enjoying a healthy, lighter life.

You'll also find this little guide useful for holidays and celebrations. And if you plan not to eat over the festive period, but you'd like to try some of the recipes, why not arrange your own 'Christmas' at a time that's not unhelpful to your goals, such as after your reintroduction to a full range of food? Whatever you intend to do, this is the time to make your festive plan.

Season's greetings from the LighterLife Team

“

Ditch the guilt this Christmas!

If you've currently got weight to lose, start planning for the new year, new you with LighterLife's unique weight-loss approach.

1. Avoid weight gain over the festive period with our Fast 5:2 plan.
2. Lose weight in 2018 with our Total or Lite plans.

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Contact your LighterLife Centre, visit: lighterlife.com or Call UK: **0800 2 988 988**
(ROI: **1800 92 72 13**) for more details and to reserve your place in group in January.





IMAGINE...

...waking up one morning in early January. The celebrations are over. Unsold Christmas cards are in the January sales, along with all those amazing clothes bargains. Are you pleased with your food choices over the Christmas period? Do you wish you'd eaten more? Or do you wish you'd eaten less?

It's worth spending some time doing this visualisation now, before Christmas happens, before you make those choices. The best way to do this is to settle yourself into a quiet, comfortable corner, relax, close your eyes and imagine yourself in the various food situations you'll meet. Experience, in your mind's eye, all your choices and then 'see' yourself making those choices.

Imagine that you've followed your plan, and how you feel as a result. See yourself getting dressed and going about your day, meeting people you haven't seen since before Christmas.

Then imagine that you didn't follow your plan – either eating foods that aren't on your Total or Lite weight-loss plans, or not eating to your Management or Fast plan. Again, visualise yourself getting dressed and going about your day, meeting people you haven't seen since before Christmas – and imagine how you'll feel in this situation.

Now reflect on your imaginings.

Doing this visualisation before you make your festive plan will help you decide how you want to be feeling in January, and what you need to do to achieve your goals.

You can also use your visualisation to help you make real-time choices over the holiday period. If you're confronted with a challenging situation – 'Shall I eat no chocolates, just one or the whole box?' – take a moment to imagine how you'll feel in two hours' time, depending on whether it was no chocolates, one chocolate or every last one. Let the imaginary you, two hours into the future, help with your decision-making process. Don't wait until it really is two hours later to ask yourself, 'Why did I eat that? I wish I hadn't.'



PLANNING YOUR FESTIVE SEASON



Whether you're on Total, Lite, Management or Fast, make sure you have clear goals for dealing with food over the festive period.

State your goal(s) in terms of what you want, rather than what you don't want. Be specific and talk about your goal(s) in the present tense, as if you're already achieving them – say it how you want it to be. What, when and why will you eat?

Look for challenges so you can work out ways to deal with them before they even arise. Which skills do you already have that you can use to meet them? What else do you need?

Who can support you?

Get together with the people you're spending Christmas with and explain why you're on the LighterLife Programme and what it means to you. Ask them to provide that extra bit of support, if you need it, over the festive season. Think of ways that they can help you, then tell them (perhaps even write it down), they won't know unless you're clear with your needs.

Have a good look at beliefs about yourself and other people that you're unsure of. Are they true or not? Test each belief and challenge what may be twisted thinking. Ask yourself what you've learned in your LighterLife group about yourself in situations like Christmas.

If you are including food in your Christmas eating plan, or you're cooking for others, plan your menus and food shopping (and try our healthy Christmas recipe ideas on page 8).

Write your plan down and keep it handy where you can read it a few times a day, just to remind yourself that you have a plan and that you plan to stick to it.

Remember – failing to plan is planning to fail!



FESTIVE STRATEGIES



If you're on the Total or Lite plans, use these helpful tips and coping strategies to ensure you enjoy your celebrations to the full.

Do the maths! If you eat too much for three weeks you won't lose the 2-3lb each week you'd normally expect – in fact, you'll most likely gain – and then there are the 5-10lb that the average person gains over Christmas to consider... But, by keeping to the boundaries of your LighterLife plan, at the end of three weeks of festivities you could actually be 11-19lb lighter than if you'd overeaten.

Consider spreading your Foodpacks out more over Christmas or New Year's day. For example, have a Foodpack first thing; then half a Foodpack when everyone else is having their starter; one whole Foodpack with the main (or, if you're on Lite, your Lite meal) plus half a sweet shake or bar for dessert; and one whole Foodpack in the evening.

If you're anxious about refusing to eat meals and snacks that someone else has prepared, think about how often in the past you've eaten more than you wanted for fear of upsetting someone. Explain to them why you're on the LighterLife Programme and how much it means to you, then politely decline.

If you're in Management or using Fast, these tips will help you have fun without piling on the pounds.

Avoid commercially produced, high-fat items such as mince pies, chipolatas, pastries and cream-based soups. Instead, try our healthy, lower fat recipes (see page 8).

If some Christmas foods are triggers for you, give yourself boundaries with them: for example, don't have them at home, but only in a restaurant, where you can't nip into the kitchen and take some more when no one is looking.

Instead of having carb-heavy drinks such as beer, lager and cider, or sugar-packed sweet sherry, liqueurs and Baileys (which also contains cream), try red wine, dry white wine or sherry, a Bloody Mary or spirits with diet mixers. Why not try a LighterLife double – one measure of spirits with two bottle of low-calorie or calorie-free mixers – or a ginless tonic (good quality calorie-free tonic, lots of ice and a squeeze of lemon)?

If you're entertaining guests at Christmas and have bought lots of 'treats' for them, only get these out when the guests are present, and put them away when they've gone. Out of sight, out of mind.

MINDFUL FESTIVE EATING



Mindfulness is the practice of becoming more fully aware of the present moment – noticing your breathing, the sensations in your body. It's all about being in the 'now'. If you're including conventional food this Christmas, on Lite, on Fast or in Management...

Before you eat, check if you're really physically hungry. Use a hunger gauge – imagine a car fuel gauge, with 1 to 10 around the dial, where 1 is very hungry (empty) and 10 is full. Focus your attention on the gauge and read off the hunger number for where you are when you want to eat – if you aren't physically hungry, you're probably between 4 and 8. In that case, ask yourself what it is that you're hungry for – company, stimulation?

Don't go to a Christmas party physically hungry – this can often lead to overeating. Have a healthy snack or a Foodpack beforehand.

Eat slowly and chew your food well, and aim to eat until you're comfortably full rather than eating until you feel uncomfortable. Remember that it can take around 15-20 minutes for your brain to register that you've physically had enough.

If you want to try all the courses, eat only a small portion of each. The key is moderation. Obviously, if you're on Lite or your food reintroduction plan in Management, choose only the foods that are in your plan.

Avoid distractions from phones, radios, televisions or computers, and don't eat standing up – sit down at a table, giving your food your full attention.

Pay attention to your portion sizes. Studies show that when people use smaller plates, they eat around 25% less without noticing.

Wherever you are on your LighterLife journey...

1. Keep up your normal exercise routine over Christmas, because if you give it up for even a week it will be hard to get back into afterwards.
2. Stay well hydrated – being thirsty can lead you to believe you're hungry, when all you might need is a drink.
3. Use your adult thinking to choose the path toward your goal. Remember—you can do it!





MANAGING LAPSES

A lapse can turn into a relapse if you don't pay attention to what, how and why you're eating inappropriately, so if you do go off track this Christmas, use our three-step action plan to get yourself back on course asap.

1. Stop!

When you're faced with a big bill you don't react by going on a spending spree (that's twisted thinking) – instead, you spend less to rebalance your budget (straight thinking). Treat your lapse in the same way; acknowledge it, deal with it.

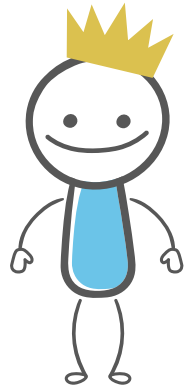
2. Think

Review your Christmas plan, your goals and your commitment to what you really want. Challenge your twisted thinking. Ask yourself what other options you have.

3. Rebalance

Have a good look at how you could manage this situation more effectively – come up with some new strategies, or focus on ones that have worked in the past, and enlist support from your LighterLife Centre, your friends and family. Review your achievements and add a new one: 'I'm thinking about a recent lapse and working out how to be more effective in the future.'

Finally, give yourself space to be human. This helps to stop the vicious circle of feeling bad because you ate off-plan, eating because you feel bad that you ate off-plan, and on and on...



YOUR FESTIVE FAST PLAN



LighterLife Fast is our 5:2 intermittent fasting plan – where you ‘fast’ for two days a week with four Foodpacks a day, and eat normally on the other five days.

If you fast with ordinary food, you can’t be sure you’re getting all the nutrition you need, but having three to four Foodpacks or meal-replacement FastPots and bars a day on each of your two fasting days ensures you get 100% of the recommended daily allowances (RDAs) for vitamins and minerals, with plenty of protein and fibre, and all for around 600 kcal. So, if you’re in Management or thinking of returning to do Total or Lite in the New Year, use LighterLife Fast now as part of your festive weight plan to ensure your success.

Fasting facts

Thousands of years ago our ancestors would have fasted, not necessarily by choice, but because there would have been days when they just couldn’t find any food to eat. And, of course, fasting plays a key part in many religions to this day.

Intermittent fasting means eating significantly fewer calories on two days a week, it’s also a way of eating that’s been around for a long time, and there is some evidence that it could provide health benefits, over and above helping you balance your weight.

You can fast on any day of the week, so choose the days that best suit you.

It’s important to stay well hydrated on your fasting days – include low-calorie drinks, like tea and coffee (either black or with a splash of milk, and with optional sweeteners), water and calorie-free drinks. Don’t have alcohol, though – it’s high in calories and it stimulates your appetite, too. Health experts advise us to have at least two alcohol-free days a week in any case, so your fasting days are the ideal times to do this.

On the days you’re not fasting, you can eat and drink whatever you normally do – we recommend you make veg and fruit the focus of your meals, with pulses, wholegrains, reduced-fat dairy products and lean red meat, poultry, fish and eggs.

For more information, contact your LighterLife Centre, visit our website at lighterlife.com or ring **0800 2 988 988** (ROI **1800 92 72 13**)



CHRISTMAS RECIPES



Over the next 14 pages you'll find lots of healthy, tasty and easy recipe ideas for Christmas – ideal if you're eating or cooking for other people. All recipes serve eight, unless otherwise indicated. They're all great for Management and non-fasting days, and some are suitable for Lite clients – there are also four desserts for Total that are great! Vegetarian recipes are flagged with a **V**.

STARTERS & LIGHT MEALS

Salad Niçoise (Lite)

preparation time 30 minutes

While most salad Niçoise recipes include potatoes, the classic version doesn't, and neither does ours. This is suitable for Lite as long as you omit the olives.

450g (15½oz) fine beans, fresh
1 clove garlic
4-5 spring onions
1 cos lettuce, leaves roughly torn
10 black olives*
4-5 anchovies (if in oil, rinse and pat dry before using)
1 x 130g (4½oz) tin tuna chunks in water, drained
2-3 medium-sized tomatoes, quartered
8 medium sized hard-boiled eggs, halved

Garlic dressing:

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 tsp Dijon mustard
4 tbs red wine vinegar
4 tbs lemon juice
black pepper



1. Mix all the garlic dressing ingredients together, then set aside.
2. Steam the beans for 5 minutes or until just tender.
3. Rub the salad bowl with the garlic, then add the beans, spring onions, lettuce, olives (omit if on Lite), anchovies and half the dressing, and stir well.
4. Place the tuna, tomatoes and eggs on the top, pour over the remaining dressing and serve immediately.



Mushroom soup (V, Lite)

preparation time 10 minutes

For a creamier version, swirl a teaspoon of quark or fromage frais into each bowl of soup when serving (this will add just 3 kcal extra per person).

1.5 litres (2½ pints) stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth
2 medium onions, sliced
600g (1lb 5oz) mushrooms, sliced
2 large carrots, sliced
3 stalks celery, sliced
1 bunch parsley
1 bunch spring onions, chopped
handful of fresh basil, roughly chopped
2 tbsp fresh thyme, leaves stripped from stems
pinch dried oregano
black pepper



1. Place a few tablespoons of the stock in a large saucepan, add the onions and gently cook over a medium heat until tender, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the mushrooms, carrots, celery and the rest of the stock, and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about half an hour or until all the vegetables are tender.
3. Remove from heat, purée using a blender, then return to the pan. Add the parsley, spring onions, basil, thyme and oregano, heat through for a few more minutes until the spring onions are tender, and season with black pepper to taste.

Tomato, mozzarella and basil salad (V, Lite)

preparation time 7 minutes

A light, fresh-tasting starter. You could also try it with halved cherry or baby plum tomatoes, or add a sliced avocado (for an extra 24 kcal per serving).

4 beef tomatoes, top and bottom chopped off and thinly sliced
2 x 250g (8½oz) packets of reduced-fat mozzarella, thinly sliced
1 bunch fresh basil, roughly torn
8 tbsp balsamic vinegar
black pepper



1. Arrange slices of tomato and mozzarella on each plate and top with the basil leaves.
2. Drizzle each salad with 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar and season with black pepper to taste.

Smoked salmon with prawns (Lite)

preparation time 10 minutes



This is suitable for Lite if you omit the lemon juice and dressings – why not try it with balsamic vinegar instead?

- per serving without dressing 47 kcal, 9g protein, 0.5g carbs, 1g fat
- per serving with tangy pink dressing 57 kcal, 9g protein, 2g carbs, 1g fat
- per serving with honey-mustard dressing 62 kcal, 10g protein, 5g carbs, 1g fat



100g (3½oz) smoked salmon
200g (7oz) bag mixed salad leaves
200g (7oz) prawns, cooked and peeled
¼ large cucumber, peeled and finely chopped
juice of ½ lemon (or 1 tbsp bottled lemon juice)
black pepper
8 sprigs fresh dill to garnish

tangy pink dressing:

100g (3½oz) extra-light mayonnaise
2 tbsp passata
Worcestershire sauce

honey-mustard dressing:

8 tbsp oil-free vinaigrette or French dressing
4 tsp cider vinegar
juice of 2 lemons (or 4 tbsp bottled lemon juice)
4 level tsp honey mustard
4 level tsp wholegrain mustard
4 tsp runny honey
freshly ground black pepper

1. To make either dressing, blend all the ingredients until smooth.
2. Cut the salmon into strips about 2cm (1in) wide. Make a nest of salad leaves on each plate and top with the salmon slices.
3. Add your optional dressing. Top with the prawns and cucumber and drizzle with lemon juice. Add black pepper to taste and decorate each dish with a sprig of fresh dill.

Melon with grapefruit (V)

preparation time 10 minutes

This refreshing dish is packed with colour and flavour.

4 large grapefruits

2 different coloured small melons e.g. cantaloupe, galia

½ cucumber, peeled and finely chopped

fresh black pepper

1. Halve each grapefruit and carefully scoop out the flesh, then chop finely. Place the grapefruit halves on individual plates and spoon some of the chopped grapefruit around each one.
2. Cut each melon in half, remove the seeds and, using a teaspoon or a melon baller, drag out the flesh into curls or balls.
3. Place different coloured melon curls or balls in each grapefruit 'bowl', top with the cucumber and season with black pepper to taste.



Spicy tomato and chickpea soup (V, Lite)

preparation time 20 minutes

This is a great starter or lunch ahead of a later Christmas dinner.

Reduce to 66 kcal a serving by omitting the chickpeas and cooking for longer to thicken the soup.

1 litre (1½ pints) stock made from

LighterLife Savoury Broth

2 medium-sized red onions, finely chopped

4 cloves garlic, finely sliced

2 tbsp cumin seeds, crushed

2 tbsp chopped thyme

700g (24oz) bottle passata

1 x 400g (14oz) tinned cherry tomatoes

1 x 400g (14oz) can chickpeas, drained

black pepper

1 tbsp thyme leaves, to garnish

1. Put a couple of tablespoons of stock in a non-stick pan, add the onions and cook over a low heat until browned and tender. Add the garlic, cumin and thyme and continue cooking until the garlic just begins to colour (don't allow it to brown, as that makes it bitter).
2. Add the rest of the stock, the passata, tinned cherry tomatoes and chickpeas and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat then simmer for 10 minutes. Take off the heat and liquidise using a handheld blender.
3. Season with black pepper according to taste, spoon into serving bowls and garnish with the thyme leaves.



LIGHTER CHRISTMAS DINNER



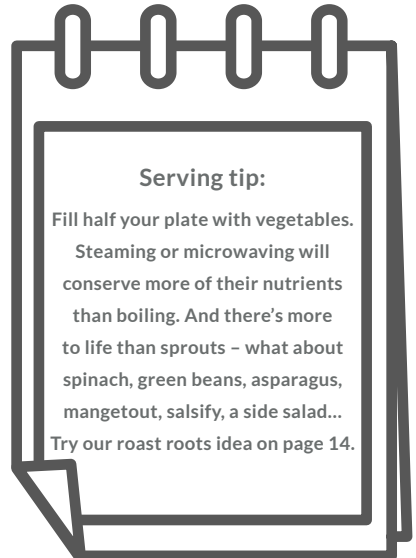
Lighter roast turkey (Lite)

preparation time 10 minutes

Buy an unbasted turkey – basting can add up to 50% more calories. Cut down on the amount of fat needed to roast by filling the roasting tin with water up to the turkey legs – this steams the turkey and keeps it tender, too. This is suitable for Lite if the lemon is omitted.

- 1 turkey, skin removed
- 1 large onion, peeled and halved
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1 small bunch lemon thyme

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C, gas mark 5.
2. Remove the giblets and place the onion and lemon halves in the body cavity. Line a large roasting tin with enough foil to wrap around the turkey. Place the turkey, breast-side up, in the middle of the foil but leave the foil open on each side so the bird is uncovered.
3. Roast for one hour. Turn the turkey over with the breast down, cover it completely with the foil and continue roasting. Half an hour before the cooking time is up, remove the foil to brown the skin.
4. When fully cooked, remove from oven and leave to rest for 30 minutes breast-side down to keep the juices in the breast meat and to prevent it from drying out.



As a rough guide to cooking times, in an oven preheated to 180°C, gas mark 4:



- For a bird (including stuffing) under 4kg, cook for 20 minutes per kg plus 70 minutes.
- For a bird (including stuffing) over 4kg, cook for 20 minutes per kg plus 90 minutes.
- To ensure your turkey is cooked, check it's piping hot all the way through, that the juices run clear when you pierce it and that none of the meat is pink when you cut into it.
- On Lite, to calculate your serving sizes, 150g (5oz) raw turkey is around 110g (4oz) cooked, and 200g (7oz) raw turkey is roughly 150g (5oz) cooked.

TURKEY ALTERNATIVES...



Duck and goose have a very thick layer of fat just under the skin, but you can remove this by taking off the skin before cooking to leave a surprisingly lean meat. Remember to trim off any visible fat from the cavity, too. After roasting, leave to rest, covered and breast-side down, for 10-20 minutes to allow the juices to run back from the surface into the meat for a moist result.

If you prefer roast beef, go for a lean cut such as sirloin or fillet; topside, silverside and rump are also very lean, but prior to roasting do remove the sheets of fat that are often fastened around these cuts. To keep the meat moist, first sear the outside of the meat by roasting at a high temperature for 10 minutes, then turn the heat down and continue to roast slowly for the remaining cooking time. Allow to rest, covered, for 10-20 minutes before serving.

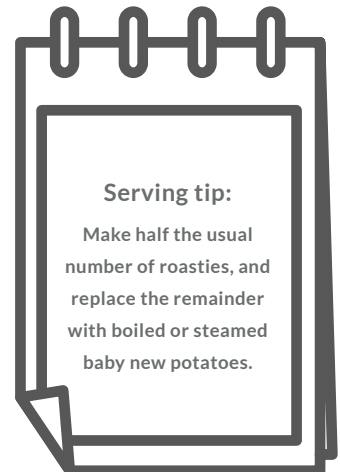
Lighter roast potatoes (V) preparation time 10 minutes

Desiree, King Edward and Maris Piper are the best varieties for roasting, having a floury, granulated texture that guarantees fluffy insides and a crisp skin.

2kg (4lb 7oz) potatoes

1 litre (1½ pints) stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6. Peel the potatoes and cut into halves or quarters, so they are roughly egg-sized. Put the stock in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Add the potatoes, bring back up to the boil and simmer for about ten minutes until just tender.
2. Drain, put the lid back on the pan and give the potatoes a good shake to fluff up the outsides, then place them in a non-stick roasting pan and dry roast, turning once, for 45-50 minutes or until golden brown and crispy on the outside.



Lighter roast parsnips (V)

preparation time 10 minutes



Try baby parsnips, simply scrubbed and sliced rather than peeled – they'll roast more quickly, in around 30 minutes.

700g (1lb 9oz) parsnips

4 tbsp stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Peel the parsnips and cut into thick strips. Boil until not quite tender.
3. Put the stock in a non-stick roasting tin and toss the parsnips in it.
4. Roast for 45 minutes, until crisp and golden, turning once.



Lighter roast roots (V, Lite)

preparation time 15 minutes

This colourful roast vegetable dish provides two of your 'five a day' vegetable servings and is perfect for a Lite Christmas dinner.

250g (8½oz) swede, peeled and cut into chunks

1 medium turnip (approx 250g or 8½oz), peeled and cut into chunks

250g (8½oz) fennel, quartered

2 medium red onions, quartered

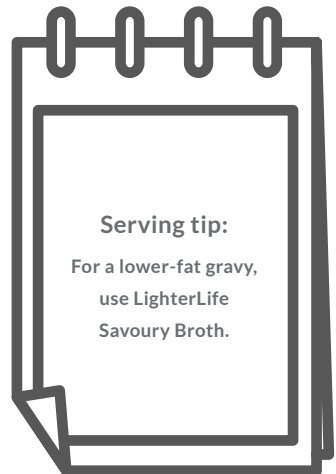
250g (8½oz) baby carrots, whole

600ml (1 pint) stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth

1 large sprig rosemary, leaves removed

freshly ground black pepper

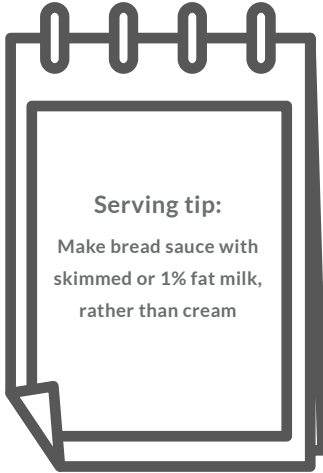
1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Bring all the vegetables to the boil in a large pan in the stock, and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Drain and place the veg in a roasting tin, topped with the rosemary and seasoned with black pepper, and roast for 35 minutes, turning once.



Lighter bread sauce (V)

preparation time 10 minutes

Our reduced-fat version retains all the taste and creamy texture of the old favourite, but with far fewer calories.



Serving tip:

Make bread sauce with skimmed or 1% fat milk, rather than cream

- 1 small onion, peeled
- 4 whole cloves
- 500ml (18floz) skimmed milk
- 2 bay leaves
- 150g (5oz) white bread without crusts, chopped
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- freshly ground black pepper

1. Stud the onion with the cloves. Put the onion, milk and bay leaves into a pan, bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to cool for 1 hour so the flavours infuse into the milk, then remove the onion and bay leaves.
2. Add the bread, nutmeg and black pepper to the milk. Cook over a gentle heat, stirring, for 3-4 minutes until the milk is absorbed into the bread and the sauce is smooth.

Lighter chestnut and cranberry stuffing (V)

preparation time 15 minutes

Add colour and crunch to Christmas dinner with this veg and fruit-packed stuffing.



300ml (½ pint) stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth

- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 4 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 100g (3½oz) white breadcrumbs
- 1 x 200g (7oz) can whole chestnuts, roughly chopped
- 1 egg, beaten
- black pepper to taste
- 100g (3½oz) fresh cranberries

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Put a little stock in a large pan and add the onion, garlic and celery. Cook, without browning, until the onion has softened. Place in a blender with the rest of the stock, plus the parsley, breadcrumbs, chestnuts, egg and black pepper, blend well, then stir in the cranberries.
3. Roll the mixture into 8 balls, place in an ovenproof dish and bake for 30-40 minutes, until browned all over.

DELICIOUS DESSERTS



LighterLife black forest mousse (Total, Lite)

preparation time 5 minutes

This is quick and easy to make – and it tastes delicious! You can also make a simple festive mousse with just the water, Drink Mix and Mousse Mix if you want to save your Foodpack for later.

- 200ml (7floz) warm water
- 1 tsp Fruits of the Forest Drink Mix
- 2 tsp Mousse Mix
- 1 Chocolate Foodpack

1. In a bowl, whisk together all the ingredients.
2. Put in the fridge to chill and set for 10 minutes prior to eating.



LighterLife sorbet slush (V, Total, Lite)

preparation time 5 minutes

Light and refreshing, our sorbet is ideal for between courses or as a cooling dessert.

- Ice and cold water
- 2 tsp Drink Mix flavour of your choice

1. Half-fill a blender with ice and enough cold water to make it slushy.
2. Add the Drink Mix and blend well.
3. Pour into a chilled glass and serve immediately.



Lighter trifle (Total, Lite)

preparation time 15 minutes



If you really want a treat, a LighterLife treat is to wake up knowing you've kept to your plan – and you can definitely do that with our scrumptious trifle!

- 1 LighterLife Raspberry Jelly
- 1/2 Strawberry Shake Foodpack
- 5g (1 tsp) Mousse Mix
- 15g Vanilla Foodpack
- 1/8 Crispy Peanut bar

1. Mix the LighterLife Raspberry Jelly as per the pack instructions and pop into the fridge to set.
2. Mix 1/2 of a Strawberry Shake Foodpack with 100ml of very cold water, add the Mousse Mix and blend well using an electric blender for 90 seconds.
3. When the jelly has set, remove from the fridge, top with the Strawberry, and return to the fridge to chill for 12 minutes.
4. Blend 15g of Vanilla Foodpack with 50ml (3 tbsp) of very cold water to a thick consistency, and spoon over the set Strawberry. Pop back in the fridge for two minutes.
5. Finely chop the bar, sprinkle over the trifle, and serve immediately.



LighterLife banana mousse (Total, Lite)

preparation time 5 minutes

This luxurious mousse contains a crunchy surprise!

- 1/2 Banana Foodpack
- 5g (1 tsp) LighterLife Mousse Mix
- 1/2 LighterLife bar of your choice, finely chopped

1. Mix the Banana Foodpack with 100ml of very cold water and the Mousse Mix.
2. Top with the chopped bar.
3. Pop in the fridge to set for 10 minutes, then serve.



LighterLife mince pie crackers (V)

preparation time 15 minutes

This unusual take on the traditional mince pie is far lighter in calories but still packs in all the fruity flavour.

2 x filo pastry sheets (48 x 25cm or 19x10in per sheet)

8 tbsp mincemeat

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4.
2. Divide each filo sheet into 4 strips each measuring roughly 12x25cm (4½x10in).
Spread 1 tbsp mincemeat across the end of each strip, not quite up to any of the edges.
3. Roll the filo sheet up to make a cigar shape, and place seam-side down on a non-stick baking tray.
4. Bake for 10-15 minutes until golden. These are good served hot or cold.



Christmas pudding (V)

preparation time 15 minutes

Standard Christmas puddings have less dried fruit than 'luxury' varieties, saving on calories – better still, use our easy recipe to cut down on the calories, without compromising on taste!

350g (12oz) dried mixed fruit

80g (3oz) plain flour

2 tsp mixed spice

50g (1¾oz) fresh breadcrumbs

50g (1¾oz) brown sugar

115g (4oz) grated apple

115g (4oz) grated carrot

2 tsp gravy browning

juice of 1 lemon or orange

4 tbsp skimmed milk

2 medium eggs, beaten

2 tbsp dark treacle

8 tbsp (120ml or 4flox) brandy or rum

1. Mix the dried fruit, flour, mixed spice, breadcrumbs, sugar, apple and carrot in a bowl.
2. Combine the gravy browning, lemon/orange juice, skimmed milk, eggs, treacle and 4 tbsp of the brandy or rum in another bowl.
3. Stir the contents of both bowls together and pour the mixture into a 3lb pudding basin or glass bowl and cover with greaseproof paper.
4. Either place in a steamer, cover and cook for 3 hours, or microwave on high power for 10 minutes, leave to stand for 5 minutes, then microwave for a further 5 minutes (to reheat, steam for 1-2 hours or microwave for 10 minutes).
5. Turn out onto a serving plate, spoon the remaining brandy or rum over the pudding and serving dish, turn off the lights and light the alcohol.
6. Serve with reduced-sugar custard, made with semi-skimmed or 1% fat milk.



Chocolate cherry cake (V)

preparation time 25 minutes



You can make the sponges for this cake in advance and then assemble just before serving. It's also good with raspberries instead of cherries.

- 2 large eggs
- 10g (1/3oz) caster sugar
- 80g (3oz) plain flour
- 30g (1oz) cocoa powder
- 300g (10oz) 0% fat natural Greek yoghurt
- 1 x 425g (15oz) can pitted black cherries in natural juice, drained
- cocoa powder, for dusting

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4.
2. Prepare 2 non-stick 18cm (7in) sandwich cake tins by brushing them lightly with oil and lining the bases with parchment paper.
3. Whisk the eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl until thick and pale (when you lift the whisk out of the mixture, it should be thick enough to hold a trail in the mixture). Sift half of the flour and cocoa into the bowl and fold in gently with a metal spoon. Repeat with the rest of the flour and cocoa.
4. Divide the mixture between the cake tins. Spread evenly and smooth the tops. Bake for 20 minutes, or until well risen. Each sponge should be firm to the touch and shrink away slightly from the sides of the tin.
5. Cool for 5 minutes, then turn out the sponges on to a wire cooling rack and leave until cold. Peel away the lining paper and place one of the sponges on a serving plate.
6. Spread half the yoghurt over the sponge and cover with the cherries, keeping a few back for decoration. Cover with the other sponge and spread the top with the remaining yoghurt.
7. Dust with cocoa and decorate with the reserved cherries, and serve cut into 8 slices.



Vanilla crème (V, Lite)

preparation time 5 minutes

Enjoy this simple, creamy dessert on its own or as an accompaniment to fruit salad or Christmas pudding. It's suitable for Lite when made with quark.

- per serving made with quark 23 kcal, 6g protein, 6g carbs, 1g fat
- per serving made with fromage frais 16 kcal, 3g protein, 2g carbs, 1g fat

- 250g (8½oz) quark or low-fat fromage frais
- 8 drops vanilla essence
- sweetener to taste

1. Blend the quark or fromage frais with the vanilla essence and sweetener
2. Use as a topping for fruit salad or serve with the mince pie crackers.



Fruity meringue layer (V)

preparation time 15 minutes



This versatile dish can be made in lots of different ways, depending on the fruit available – you could also try it with raspberries, chopped mango and orange curd.

8 level tsp lemon curd
800g (1lb 12oz) 0% fat natural Greek yoghurt
8 meringues, roughly crumbled
360g (12½oz) strawberries, sliced
8 ripe peaches, stoned and diced
grated zest of 1 lemon

1. Mix the lemon curd and Greek yoghurt and spoon a little into the base of 8 tall sundae glasses.
2. Add a layer of meringue and then one of fruit before covering with another layer of yoghurt. Build up the layers, finishing with a layer of yoghurt. Sprinkle with lemon zest and serve, or chill in the fridge until required.



Tiramisu (V)

preparation time 15 minutes

Give this a kick by adding 40ml (¼cup) of brandy or Tia Maria to the hot coffee.

320ml (11floz) hot strong espresso or filter coffee
24 sponge fingers
4 egg yolks
4 tbsp caster sugar
700g (1lb 9oz) quark
8 drops vanilla essence
4 tsp cocoa powder

1. Pour the hot coffee into a bowl and quickly dip 12 of the sponge fingers into it. Break the sponge fingers into smaller pieces and divide between 8 tall glasses.
2. Beat the egg yolk and sugar until the mixture is thick, pale and creamy. Beat in the quark and vanilla essence and spoon half of this over the coffee-soaked sponge fingers.
3. Dip the remaining sponge fingers into the rest of the hot coffee, break into pieces and arrange on top of the creamy quark layer. Cover with the remaining quark mixture and dust with sifted cocoa powder. Chill in the fridge before serving.







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