

FOOD AND FITNESS

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Pull Up a Chair: Good Food is Better with Friends



Food tastes pretty good on its own, but somehow it seems even better when there is someone sitting across the table from you. Meals are about more than protein, vegetables, and remembering to drink your water. They also offer a chance to laugh, tell stories, catch up on the latest news, and maybe even find out who really makes the best biscuits. Sharing a meal can be good for both your body and your mood.

As we get older, we may find ourselves eating alone more often. Family may live farther away, friends may have different schedules, or cooking a big meal for one person may seem like too much work. After all, who wants to dirty three pans just to feed themselves? Unfortunately, eating alone often can make meals feel more like a chore than something to enjoy.

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Pull Up a Chair: Good Food is Better with Friends

The Power of Connection

Eating with other people may actually encourage us to eat better. When we are talking, laughing, and enjoying ourselves, we take more time with our meal. A shared meal is more likely to include a variety of foods, such as vegetables, fruit, grains, and protein.

But there is something important on the menu that you won't find listed beside the mashed potatoes: *connection*. Sitting down with others gives us a chance to feel like part of a community, fighting feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Finding Your Community

Senior centers and community meal programs are great places to find both good food and good company. Come for lunch, sit beside someone new, join a conversation, or stay for an activity afterward. Today's stranger could become tomorrow's walking buddy or bingo rival.

Keep It Simple

You don't need to throw a fancy dinner party. Invite a neighbor over for coffee, meet a friend for breakfast, or start a weekly family dinner. Paper plates count, sandwiches count, and even coffee and a muffin is a perfect excuse to catch up.



"Laughter makes a pretty good side dish!"

So this week, don't just think about what's on your plate — think about who's around your table. Nourish your body, but let conversation and friendship make the meal even better.

Because meals are simply better when we eat them together!

Help a Friend Take the First Step



1. Focus on the Fun

Invite them for laughter and connection. Remind them that good company makes any meal taste better.

Tip: Keep it light by planning around a shared hobby, a simple card game, or a favorite recipe.

2. Congregate Meals

Attend a local community or congregate meal together. These offer nutritious food and friendly spaces.

Tip: Check the monthly calendar for special themed lunches or guest speaker events.

3. Offer a Lift

Offer to drive or ride together. Stress-free transit removes one of the biggest hurdles to socializing.

Tip: Confirm the exact pickup time the night before to reduce any travel-related anxiety.

4. Try a Program

Bring them along to a senior center activity or community lunch. It's a low-pressure way to meet neighbors.

Tip: Arrive 15 minutes early so you can choose a comfortable table and introduce yourselves.

HERBS & SPICES

Marjoram: Culinary & Cultivation

Culinary Pairings & Tips

Beyond chicken and potatoes, marjoram pairs exceptionally well with ingredients that benefit from a subtle, floral lift. Try adding it to stuffings, savory breads, or marinades for grilled meats. Because its flavor profile is more delicate than oregano, marjoram works particularly well in subtle dishes like omelets, white sauces, or delicate pasta dishes.

If a recipe calls for oregano but you prefer a milder taste, marjoram is an excellent substitute. Use slightly more than the specified oregano. Conversely, thyme or a small amount of oregano can work as a replacement if you run out.

Growing Your Own

Marjoram is a rewarding herb to cultivate in a home garden or even in a sunny windowsill pot. It thrives in well-draining soil and loves plenty of sunlight, much like its Mediterranean ancestors. It is a perennial in warmer climates, though in cooler regions, it is often treated as an annual or brought indoors during the winter months.

Harvesting is simple: pick leaves as needed throughout the growing season. For the most concentrated flavor, harvest the sprigs just before the plant begins to bloom, as essential oils peak during that stage.



1. MARJORAM SEEDS



2. MARJORAM LEAVES



3. GROWING MARJORAM



4. MARJORAM IN FOODS



Marjoram

A MILD HERB WITH BIG FLAVOR

Marjoram is a fragrant herb in the mint family. It has a mild, slightly sweet flavor with a hint of citrus and pine. It has been used in cooking and natural remedies for thousands of years. Fresh or dried, marjoram adds wonderful taste to many meals!

NUTRITION HIGHLIGHTS

Marjoram is very low in calories and contains small amounts of vitamins, minerals, and powerful plant compounds.

- Vitamin K** – supports healthy bones and blood clotting
- Vitamin C** – helps support the immune system and heals wounds
- Iron** – helps carry oxygen in the blood
- Calcium** – supports strong bones and teeth
- Antioxidants** – help protect cells from damage caused by stress and aging

→ A small herb with nutrients that support your health!

What is Marjoram?



Marjoram (*Origanum majorana*) is a tender herb with soft, oval leaves.



It has a gentle, sweet flavor that is less intense than oregano.



It is delicious in many savory dishes and easy to grow in gardens or containers.



WAYS TO USE MARJORAM



Soups & Stews: Adds warmth and depth to vegetable soups, bean soups, and stews.



Meats: Perfect with chicken, pork, beef, lamb, and fish.



Vegetables: Great on roasted veggies, potatoes, green beans, and tomatoes.



Sauces & Dressings: Mix into tomato sauce, salad dressings, or marinades.



Eggs & Cheese: Stir into scrambled eggs, omelets, or sprinkle on cheese dishes.



Breads & Stuffing: Add to homemade bread, stuffing, and grain dishes for extra flavor.



Herbal Tea: Steep fresh or dried leaves in hot water for a mild, calming tea.

GROWING MARJORAM



Loves full sun and well-drained soil.



Water regularly, but do not overwater.



Harvest leaves often to keep the plant bushy.



Marjoram grows well in pots or garden beds.



DRYING MARJORAM

Hang small bundles upside down in a warm, dry place. Store dried leaves in an airtight container away from light.



DELICIOUS WAYS TO ENJOY MARJORAM!



HERB ROASTED CHICKEN

Sprinkle marjoram on chicken before roasting for amazing flavor!



VEGETABLE SOUP

Add marjoram to soups for a mild, comforting taste.



ROASTED VEGETABLES

Toss veggies with olive oil, marjoram, garlic, and roast until tender.



PASTA SAUCE

Stir marjoram into tomato sauce for a richer, more balanced flavor.



MARJORAM TEA

Enjoy a soothing cup of marjoram tea—caffeine-free!

HEALTHY TIP

Using herbs like marjoram instead of extra salt can help lower sodium intake while still making your meals taste delicious!



FUN FACTS

- The name "marjoram" comes from Greek words meaning "joy of the mountains."
- Marjoram was used by the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans for both cooking and healing.
- Marjoram is often called the "herb of happiness" because of its pleasant aroma!



A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY!

Marjoram has a gentle flavor, so a little goes a long way. Add it early in cooking to bring out its wonderful taste.



SIMPLE. FLAVORFUL. HEALTHY. Add marjoram to your meals and enjoy the goodness!



Herbs & Spices Recipe

Lemony Green Bean Salad

with Feta, Red Onion, and Marjoram

Recipe Quick Details

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 12 mins

Servings: 4



Ingredients

- 1 pound green beans
- 4 ounce feta
- 1/4 red onion, super-thinly sliced
- 3 sprigs fresh marjoram, stripped and chopped (or oregano)
- 1/4 cup your best olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced and zested
- 1 dash agave nectar (or sugar)

Preparation & Directions

1. **Step 1:** Bring a pot of salted water to boil. Throw in green beans for about 4 minutes or until al dente. Drain and rinse in cold water.
2. **Step 2:** Blend together lemon juice, zest, olive oil and agave nectar.
3. **Step 3:** Combine beans and red onion, crumbled cheese, and marjoram. Toss with dressing. Chill until those lamb chops come off the grill.

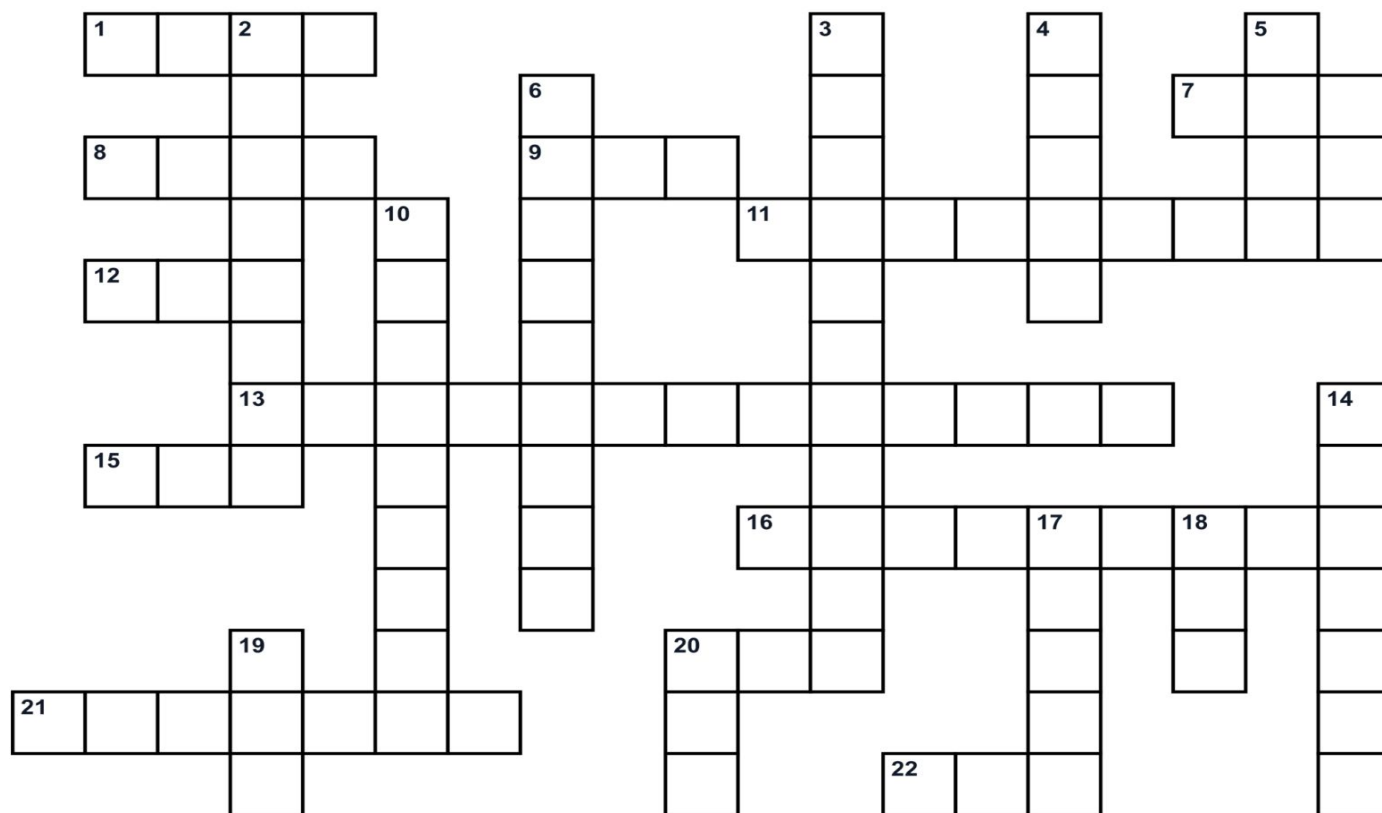


Brain Exercise

Don't Just Exercise Your Body – Work Out Your Brain!



AUTUMN CROSSWORD



Across

1. Time of evening just after sunset (4)
7. Box used for storage (3)
8. Popular kind of apple (4)
9. Mating season for deer and elk (3)
11. Sweet orange fruit of fall (9)
12. Large tub for liquids (3)
13. Pattern of stars in the sky (13)
15. Drink sold at some autumn fairs (3)
16. Tool used to measure air pressure (9)
20. Grain used in bread (3)
21. Cooked sugar flavor used on apples (7)
22. Powder left after burning wood (3)

Down

2. Shortest day event (8)
3. Fruit filled with juicy red seeds (11)
4. Crisscross pattern often seen in fall clothing (5)
5. Tall farm tower for storage (4)
6. Custom repeated year after year (9)
10. A very large amount (9)
14. To change with yeast over time (7)
17. Material spread over soil to protect plants (5)
18. Lightweight metal (3)
19. Orange root vegetable often eaten in fall (3)
20. Straight line of planted crops (3)



October 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	1 Homemade Cookies Day	2 Name Your Car Day	3 Techies Day
4 Taco Day	5 Do Something Nice Day	6 Mad Hatter Day	7 Pumpkin Seed Day	8 Pierogi Day	9 Chess Day	10 Handbag Day
11 Coming Out Day	12 Columbus Day	13 Train Your Brain Day	14 Dessert Day	15 Clean Desktop Day	16 Dictionary Day	17 Pasta Day
18 Cupcake Day	19 Clean Your Plate Day	20 Youth Confidence Day	21 Cheesecake Day	22 Color Day	23 iPod Day	24 Food Day
25 Sourest Day	26 Pumpkin Day	27 Black Cat Day	28 Animation Day	29 Cat Day	30 Frankenstein Friday	31 Halloween

Monthly Observations

- Breast Cancer Awareness
- National Pizza Month
- National Cookie Month
- National Dessert Month
- Cyber Security Awareness
- National Seafood Month
- Popcorn Poppin' Month



