FOOD AND FITNESS

Merry Christmas!

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Have a "Green" Christmas!

"Go Green" this holiday season! Start by evaluating your current Christmas traditions and habits and see how a few simple changes might be good for the planet.

The Tree:

Buy a living tree in a burlap bag and plant it in the yard after the season is over. If your landscaping does not need another tree consider donating it to a park, school, or community playground. Plant the tree as soon as the ground has thawed to give the roots time to get established before the next growing season.

The Lighting:

Less is more! For energy savings, reduce the number of bulbs or switch to energy efficient LED lights. To reduce the chance of fires, be sure to turn the lights off when no one is at home.

And don't leave lights on all night, except maybe on Christmas Eve….

Gift wrapping:

A lot of trash goes out on Christmas morning in almost every American neighborhood. Consider some alternatives to the usual Christmas wrap: Try wrapping gifts with brown paper

and red yarn ties for a nostalgic look. Or you could use fancy fabric and reusable ribbon to wrap small gifts. Another juvenile alternative is using the Sunday comics, which can easily be recycled!

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Web sites of interest::

- ewg.org
- ourearth.org
- abc.herbalgram.org

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Do You Really Want To Eat That ?

With the holiday season upon us, it's time to give serious thought to the treats that will lure us into holiday snacking! Occasional treats are harmless, but being aware of the activity required to burn up the treat may help stave off the extra unwanted holiday pounds!

Walking on a treadmill or in the neighborhood at 3.0 miles per hour (that's a 20 minute mile pace) can make those treats vanish!

Here's how much walking it will take at that pace to burn off your favorite holiday goodies!

- A slice of pecan pie—2 hours and 52 min.

- A slice of pepperoni pizza—2 hours and 14 min.
- A cup of eggnog—1 hour and 58 min.

- A slice of pumpkin pie—1 hour and 52 min. (add a dollop of Cool Whip to your pie and add 5 more min. to your walk!)
- A plain bagel—1 hour and 42 min. (add a spread of cream cheese and add another 35 min.)
- A slice of cheesecake—1 hour and 28 minutes
- 1 white chip Macadamia nut cookie—1 hour and 15 minutes
- 1 chewy chocolate chip cookie—1 hour
- 6 oz. of red wine—52 minutes
- A blueberry muffin—52 minutes
- 6 oz. of white wine—50 minutes
- 10 oz. double latte with low fat milk—48 minutes
- 1 slice of fruitcake—47 minutes

- 15 potato chips—43 minutes (chips with French onion dip, add another 34 minutes
- 1 shot of bourbon-80 proof—40 minutes
- 2 dark chocolate covered cherries—38 minutes

Of course if you walk faster and/or walk up some hills you will burn more calories. Enjoy the season but don't forget to eat sensibly and stay with your exercise program. Happy Holidays!

Contributed by Betsy Greer

Focus on Family and Friends

We forget that it's supposed to be about family and friends. We let the stress of the holiday gift-giving season get to us! The economy isn't helping either, is it? So saving time and saving money are big issues!

Save time. Never go anywhere without a well thought out list of what you want to get for whom. A trip to the grocery store or the drug store can serve as a place to pick up a quick gift and narrow down the list.

Save money. Dollar stores and surplus stores have tremendous bargains.

Have a white elephant party. Have each person wrap up something from home that doesn't require spending any money. One man's trash is another's treasure.

Have a Green Christmas (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Buy local goods:

Shopping locally saves money on packaging, fuel and other transportation costs, in addition to helping the community to prosper.

It's indeed a time

saver to order gifts online and have them delivered. However, this practice can take a toll on the environment. Packaging materials that can't be recycled are often used to ship breakable gifts. Those plastic bubbles that are fun to pop are not earth-friendly! Additionally, think of all the fuel that is used to transport the gift across the country.

Energy conservation:

Pay attention to how many times the refrigerator is opened. Conserve energy by monitoring the use of the oven. For example, when the oven is on, take advantage of the heat by warming several items at a time, like bread or leftovers.

Recycle:

Make sure guests know where and how to dispose of trash that can be recycled. Set up bins in a convenient location for

cans, soda bottles, and especially the occasional holiday wine bottle.

Give a gift to the planet by using ecologically sound practices this holiday season. Have a Merry Green Christmas!

Recipe Corner

Roasted Red Potatoes with Rosemary

2 pounds small red potatoes

¼ cup olive oil

2 Tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary

Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 375. Scrub skins of potatoes with cold water. Cut the potatoes into small wedges and cover with cold water. Boil for two minutes and drain.

Put the olive oil and potatoes into a hot skillet and cook for a few minutes until browned. Sprinkle with rosemary, season with salt and pepper and bake in oven for about 10 minutes until golden. Serves 8.

Cream of Carrot Soup with Rosemary

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 large onion, chopped

6 fresh carrots, sliced

1 medium potato, peeled and diced

3 cups chicken broth

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1 teaspoons fresh rosemary, minced

1/3 cup fat free 1/2 and 1/2

Sea salt and white pepper, to taste

In a heavy pot over low heat sauté onion in olive oil until it is soft but not browned. Add the carrots, potato, broth, ginger and rosemary; cook until carrots and potato are tender. Let the mixture cool ten

minutes before processing. Puree in a food processor. Return vegetables to pot; stir in the 1/2 and 1/2 and season to taste. To serve, garnish with a small sprig of fresh rosemary. Serves 6.

Rosemary Oil

1 quart water

¼ cup sea salt

1 cup fresh rosemary leaves

2 cups Italian parsley sprigs

1 cup olive oil

Blanch the rosemary by bringing water and salt to a boil. Place the rosemary in a strainer and dip into the water for 30 seconds. Then plunge the rosemary into a bowl of ice water to cool. Repeat with the parsley, but submerge it for only about ten seconds. Drain the herbs and squeeze them dry; cut into small pieces.

In a food processor blend the two herbs on high for two minutes. Add oil and blend for another two minutes. Strain the puree by pouring through cheesecloth into a second container. Pour the oil into an attractive bottle, garnish with sprigs of fresh rosemary and tie with a holiday ribbon. Store in the refrigerator. The leftover puree can be used in grilling or roasting ribs, pork or lamb.

Merry Christmas!

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Articles on Rosemary contributed by Catherine M. Townsend, "Do You Really Want to Eat That?" contributed by Betsy Greer.

Herb of the Month—Rosemary to the Rescue

Why Rosemary? It's easy to grow, flourishes in all kinds of weather, and does not require lots of maintenance.

Outside of the kitchen, rosemary has been said to improve memory, ease pain, stimulate hair growth and prevent infection when applied to wounds! In Shakespeare's day mourners would throw it into graves as a symbol of remembrance for the dead.

Inside the kitchen the herb is prevalent in Mediterranean cultures, including French, Italian and North African. To use fresh rosemary, just cut the amount you need, rinse with cold water, chop or mince and add to food toward the end of cooking.

Rosemary complements many meats, including roasted chicken, veal, lamb, and pork. Feeling creative? Rosemary can be used as a skewer for grilled shrimp or scallops, adding an attractive appearance and delicious flavor to the finished product. See the Recipe Corner for two simple recipes and one gift idea using fresh rosemary.