

Eat, drink (milk thistle) and be merry!

I have previously mentioned some herbs which have great health benefits. As we tend to eat and drink more during the Christmas period, our bodies need time to recover from all the over-indulgence of sweet, fattening foods and alcohol. milk thistle is an amazing herb and has been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years. It can help with the following:

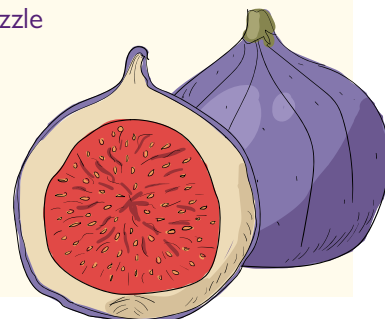
To detoxify the liver – this herb encourages the regeneration of liver tissue and also lowers the breakdown of fats in cell walls. Experts recommend that if you are due for a few heavy nights to take this herb a few days beforehand which can offer some protection!

Helps control diabetes – in recent trials, type 2 diabetes sufferers took milk thistle for 6 weeks and results showed that those people had less inflammation and higher levels in their blood than those who do not take milk thistle.

You can buy milk thistle at Amazon or in Holland & Barrett in tablet or liquid form but as always, please read labels carefully.

Healthy food at Christmas

I wrote last week about some foods that are surprisingly good for us that we eat more of at Christmas, for example cranberries and mixed fruit. Another hidden treasure to add is figs, which are great with a cheeseboard selection or you can add these chopped into mince pies or Christmas cake to increase your antioxidant/vitamin levels. Dried figs are so good for you and are packed with iron (great for vegetarians or vegans). They are high in calcium which is good for those who don't or can't eat dairy and osteoporosis sufferers to keep bones strong. Figs also help with constipation. Give them a try, perhaps pop some fresh figs in the oven briefly and drizzle some honey over them.



CUCUMBER MARTINI

This is quite a healthy cocktail!

100ml Hendricks Gin, fresh cucumber juice, 30ml Martini Bianco, 6 large fresh mint leaves, 2 thick slices of cucumber
Peel half a cucumber and whizz in a juicer or mixer until it is liquidized. Half fill a cocktail shaker with ice
Add the gin, cucumber juice, Martini and mint leaves and shake for one minute. Remove lid and strain and pour into glasses with a cucumber slice for the garnish.

Merry
Christmas!



The Wellbeing Team would like to wish you all a happy, healthy and safe Christmas and a 2021 to remember... for the right reasons!

CPJ Book Club

Who's in? I recently got asked by a colleague for a book recommendation. The feedback was they wanted more and it made me think, why don't we have a CPJ monthly book club, where colleagues take it in turns to recommend a gripping read? Entirely voluntary and no pressure to join in, however if you do enjoy reading and would like to share the gems you've enjoyed, pleasedrop me a line: emily.hendin@cpjfield.co.uk and I'll share a different book monthly in the wellbeing news.





Helpful hacks to stop you getting your tinsel in a tangle over Christmas lunch!

The Christmas lunch has a long and interesting history, dating back to the 16th century, with Henry VIII being the first English monarch to eat turkey on Christmas day. Now a national tradition, a big bird with all the trimmings is as much a part of Christmas as decking the halls, but with so many different elements to juggle, cooking a festive feast can be a little daunting. Not to fear – we've scoured the internet and pulled together some handy tips to help your day run smoothly.

Recruit some vegetable peelers

There's a lot of preparation for any roast, so why not relieve the pressure by roping children or visiting relatives into doing this task – top tip, peel veggies the day before and store in water overnight.

Keep on top of the washing up

Once the veggies are peeled, use your team or workers to help wash up as you work, allowing more surface space.

Take the cheese out of the fridge in advance

If you're having a cheese course, don't forget to take it out of the fridge earlier in the day so it can reach room temperature.

For the perfect crispy roasties, get the oil nice and hot

Roast potatoes are an essential part of Christmas dinner. Dusting them in flour will help to add a bit of crunch, but the real key is to get the oil or goose fat (adds a richer flavour), extra hot before you add the potatoes.

Try roasting your sprouts

Roasted sprouts taste completely different to boiled, steamed or microwaved, as it caramelises the natural sugars found in the veg making it sweeter. Try roasting them with some chestnuts and bacon and let them get brown and crispy round the edges. If boiling them, don't score the bottom or they will go soggy!

To keep it moist, cook the turkey upside down

Putting the turkey breast-side down for the first hour or so of roasting means the bird essentially bastes itself. Try to turn it a few times throughout the cooking process – this will encourage the juices to stay inside. Top it with streaky bacon or wrapping it in foil is also great for keeping the meat moist. If the whole turkey is browning too quickly, you can cover it with a loose foil tent.

Let the turkey rest

The heat of the oven forces the juices into the middle of the bird, so once you've taken it out of the oven, let the turkey rest for around 20 minutes under some foil before carving it.

Give your gravy a makeover

Try making it richer and especially festive by stirring in some cranberry sauce or a splash of port.

Be sure to read
Andy's tips on looking
backwards and
forwards: "Reminders
for Christmas and
Preparing for the
New Year"

Dollop some cream in your bread sauce

It's the season for over indulging after all! Stirring some clotted cream in to your bread sauce will give a lovely creamy texture.

Heat the brandy before pouring it on the pudding

The key to a flaming pudding is to get the spirit you're going to set alight really hot beforehand. Pour the brandy, rum, whisky or vodka into a metal ladle and heat it over a gas flame. Light it using a match and immediately pour it over the pudding.

Don't hit the bubbles too early

A small tipple is chefs perks but make sure you don't lose track of the task at hand!



The best way to spread Christmas cheer, is singing loud for all to hear! Be sure to listen back to the weekly company call if you missed it, but don't judge the singing!