

Food

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TOMORROW
I RESOLVE ... Have you
already broken your
New Year's resolutions?



Guiding lite

Gourmet service
delivers meals
that help you to
stop dieting and
start eating



Business partners Mike Haddow, right, and John Stevenson, with co-worker Stephanie Calce.

STAN BEHAL/SUN PHOTOS

COPABANANA CAKE

Here's a treat that's low in fat and calories, yet packs a wallop of flavour, from the *Crazy Plates* cookbook. We adapted it even more without sacrificing taste or texture when we decreased the sugar and substituted fat-free sour cream, plus some fat-free apple sauce, too!

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. each baking powder and baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ½ cup fat-free egg substitute,

- or 2 whole eggs
- 1 tbsp. butter, melted
- 1 cup mashed, ripe bananas
- ½ cup non-fat sour cream
- ½ cup no-sugar apple sauce
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ½ cup mini chocolate chips

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with non-stick spray and set aside.

2. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

3. In a large bowl, beat together sugar, egg substitute, and but-

ter on medium speed of electric mixer. Add bananas, sour cream, apple sauce and vanilla. Beat again until smooth. Gradually add flour mixture to banana mixture, beating after each addition. Batter will be thick. Fold in chocolate chips.

3. Spoon batter into prepared pan and spread evenly using a spatula. Bake for 25 to 28 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in centre of cake comes out clean. Cool completely. Cut into 16 pieces and store in an airtight container.

Serves 16.



PRETZEL-COATED CHICKEN BITES WITH MUSTARD-CHIPOTLE SAUCE

When you taste these tender, low-calorie chicken morsels, you'll be sure to forget about the frigid winter temperatures outside! Recipe courtesy of Weight Watchers.

- 1 cup low-fat unsalted mini pretzels
- ½ cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. whole-grain Dijon mustard

- 2 tsp. chipotle pepper sauce
- 1 tsp. red-wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper
- ¼ lbs. skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 24 chunks

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Spray a shallow baking pan with non-stick spray.

2. Pulse pretzels in a food processor just until finely chopped, not ground (or crush with a meat mallet or rolling pin). Transfer to a zip-close plastic bag.

3. To make mustard sauce, com-

bine mayonnaise, mustard, pepper sauce, vinegar and pepper in a small bowl.

4. Put chicken in a medium bowl and toss with 2 tbsp. of mustard sauce until evenly coated. Add chicken to pretzels and seal bag. Shake bag until chicken is evenly coated.

5. Place chicken in baking pan in one layer. Spray chicken lightly with nonstick spray. Bake until golden on outside and cooked through, about 15 minutes. Pile chicken on a plate and serve with remaining mustard sauce.

Serves 8.

of nutritionally sound and incredibly delicious meals for his customers. Haddow, 28, knows of what he speaks — as a chef working the restaurant circuit for many years, he found himself overweight and “I realized in order to live a long and healthy life, I needed to make some drastic changes not only in the food I ate, but in my daily lifestyle as well.”

Back to school to learn about nutrition, biology and certification in personal training. Fifty pounds lighter, Haddow's culinary creative juices have him reinventing favourite foods with a healthy spin.

“What we do is create the foods you love, without worrying about the extra fat and calories,” says co-worker Stephanie Calce. “Getting healthy is easier than you think ... the changes to your dietary needs need not be drastic to enjoy the health benefits.”

Marguerite Neri, GM of Weight Watchers southern Ontario, says the key to getting

back on the health saddle is to “allow for some breathing room — take simple, small steps to improve lifestyle. It's always best to change habits gradually.”

Like walking an extra five minutes a day and increase the pace gradually, says Neri. “Remember, dieting success is less about will power than it is about having the necessary structure and support of others, while making key changes in eating and physical activity.”

The secret is in not giving up — “even if a lapse occurs. Lapses are normal. If a wrong turn is taken with eating a pile of French fries or dish of chocolate mousse, don't despair and give up. Knowing that getting back on track is always possible is an empowering skill to learn.”

Home economist, award-winning cookbook author Mairlyn Smith is a little more blunt — “Just don't go on a diet! If you really want to lose weight, downsize your plate. Cut your portion sizes. And up the exer-

cise ante.”

Something as simple as parking your car a little further, or walking the stairs instead of taking the elevator “will make a huge difference in your life.”

And cutting the extra fat and calories from your daily meals, “is not that difficult, when you plan properly,” says Stevenson. “It's a question of planning. Ultimately, if you're looking to get healthy for the coming months, listen to what the health experts tell you.”

“And don't stress yourself with unreasonable demands on your capabilities,” adds Haddow. In other words, don't sweat the small stuff — be committed to the idea that you will be making personal changes in your lifestyle, but don't set yourself up for failure ... you can succeed.”

Here are few recipes to get you started.

LOW-FAT SCALLOPED POTATOES

Here's a healthy and delicious recipe courtesy of LitenUp.

- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium-sized onion, minced
- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp. whole wheat flour
- 1 litre 2% lactose free milk
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 tsp. freshly chopped rosemary
- 1 tsp. freshly chopped thyme
- 1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1 bag spinach, cleaned and hand-torn
- 10 large Yukon Gold Potatoes

1. In a large fry pan mince onion, garlic and saute in olive oil for 4-5 minutes until soft. Sprinkle in flour and let cook for 1 minute on medium-high heat. Add cold milk, chicken stock, rosemary, thyme, pepper and sea salt and whisk until mixture comes to a boil. Remove from heat and add spinach, stir thoroughly until spinach wilts. Set aside.

2. Slice potatoes no more than ¼th thick using mandolin or food processor. In a deep baking pan lined with parchment paper, add 4 alternating layers of sauce and sliced potatoes across pan, slightly overlapping potato slices. Pour remaining liquid mixture over top of last layer to completely soak potatoes. Bake uncovered in 350F for 90 minutes.

Serves 8 to 10.

TIPS TO REACH YOUR GOAL IN 2006

Weight Watchers Canada offers these tips for maintaining a healthy lifestyle:

- Dieting and deprivation don't have to go hand in hand: Giving up favourite foods is not a prerequisite to losing weight. Many favourite foods don't need to be thought of as diet breakers, and can be eaten in good conscience.
- Be Prepared: Make sure to keep a stash of healthy snacks on hand at work. This will prevent you from heading to the vending machine.
- balanced breakfast will kick start the brain for the day and curb mid-

- morning snack cravings.
- Learn to count successes: Celebrate every pound lost! Don't fret about the weight that hasn't been shed. Keeping a positive, balanced perspective is key.
- Bring lunch/snacks from home: Packing a lunch that has been personally prepared will ensure that ingredients are closely monitored. Ensure that fruits and vegetables are main components of lunches and snacks.
- Wise cafeteria food choices: Ask your arrange for the cafeteria to offer employees a range of healthy food

- choices for every meal including low fat and freshly prepared foods.
- Set the first major goal at losing 10% of current body weight: Not only has a 10% weight loss been proven to be medically significant, it's also an achievable goal. Recent medical research indicates that a sustained 10% weight loss can reverse the negative effects of obesity, resulting in lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and a longer, healthier life.
- Make physical activity Encourage fellow employees to get moving during their breaks.

LITENUP FACTS

LitenUp is a healthy gourmet takeout and delivery service dedicated to providing great-tasting meals that help people to lead a healthy and well-balanced lifestyle. The company plans two or three meal packages plus snacks on a daily basis that they deliver to wherever you are in the GTA, home or office. When the company first opened its doors, they started with eight clients and now “we're up to more than 100 clients who let us plan their healthy meals on a daily basis.”

LitenUp also offers walk-in service and catering. “Our programs can be tailored to fit any dietary need — from people looking to lower their cholesterol, manage their diabetes to conquering obesity,” says Stevenson. “Our service designed to make living a healthy lifestyle easy and cost-effective.”

Packages start as low as \$25 a day. Visit the shop at 383 Jane St., 416-572-0072 or check out Litenup.ca.

