

Weight for the Holidays

*It's not only turkey's that get
fattened up at christmas. If we're not careful, well-meaning
friends can
cause us to put on unwanted pounds.*

At
the risk of sounding like Ebenezer Scrooge, I will state
unequivocally
that I dislike the holidays. From sunup on Thanksgiving until
sundown on
New Year's, I am provided with unparalleled high-calorie
grazing
options and numerous chocolate-consuming opportunities. These
memorable
moments in munching are the recipe for diet disaster.

The task of
keeping my weight in check and my thighs to a minimum is
complicated by
my "friends" who inconsiderately bake calorie-laden treats,
slap them
on a festively decorated holiday plate and then give them to
me! They
apparently assume that I don't mind having my derriere look
like two
humongous hot air balloons stuck together.

For
11 months of the year my nondomestic friends complain about
cooking. I
see their messy kitchens stocked with Tuna Helper. They
consider a meal
to be labor intensive if it involves stopping the microwave to

rotate
the tray.

For 11 months of the year these friends are sane,
budget-conscious women, scouring the grocery ads and clipping
coupons.

But when the holidays approach—seduced by enticing, glossy,
close-up
magazine photos—their domestic genes froth up like cappuccino
foam, and
they willingly spend several hundred dollars on one cookie
recipe
alone. The ingredients are always exotic, and the directions
are like
something out of a deliverance manual:

“Over a low fire in a
copper-coated double boiler, melt 4 pounds unsalted, whipped
butter and 1
package distilled Dutch chocolate. Stir in 1 bag dehydrated
lemon
syrup, 1 cup imported marshmallow paste and 2 tablespoons of
licorice
root extract.”

These recipes frequently have compound hyphenated
names such as Double-Chocolate-Fudge-Creme-Mocha-Nougat-
Filled-Dainties
and require bizarre kitchen utensils that can be leased only
from Martha
Stewart with several months advance notice and a large
deposit.

“After
roasting the chestnuts on an open fire, extract each nut whole
from the
shell by placing them one at a time in the teak-handled,
brass-tipped

nut-nippers. Raise the nippers in a smooth motion over your head and while balancing on your left foot, gently squeeze the teak handles with a pulsing motion."

These are the kinds of high-calorie extravaganzas that my domestically impaired friends frequently whip up in triple batches during the holidays. As the ungrateful recipient, I have three options: (1) throw them away; (2) give them away; or (3) eat them.

Option No. 1 is out. My mother has convinced me that no food may be thrown out for any reason.

I have tried option No. 2—giving them away—but then I get recipe requests I can't fill or questions that make me look stupid.

Once, I lost track of the origin of a fruitcake and actually gave it as a gift back to its maker. This culinary faux pas left me embarrassed and the giver-recipient speechless (unless tears count as speech).

This leaves option No. 3 by default: I eat them. I eat all of them, frequently in one sitting, and then I lick the crumbs off the festively decorated holiday plates. Afterwards, I slink to my scale like a guilty dog with its tail tucked between its legs. Criminals are no more terrified of the electric chair than I am of my bathroom

scale!

By

mid-December my cellulite gets so thick and dimply that from the knees

up, my pantyhose appear to be stuffed with cottage cheese.

When I catch a

glimpse in the full-length mirror (which I hang horizontally so I can

check my girth from thigh to thigh), I am disgusted with myself, with my

friends and especially with those enticing holiday recipes.

Humbug!

This

year I have a preholiday request for all well-wishing friends:

If I'm

on your Christmas list and you are baking holiday cookies, please,

please, give them to someone else!

If you still feel charitably

inclined, purchase a few boxes of SnackWells, empty them onto a

festively decorated, lick-proof holiday plate and leave them on my

doorstep.

I'll be in the bathroom, cowering by my scale.

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