

New Mediterranean Diet Heart-Healthy Plan

Here's exactly how to start this plant-based, heart-healthy plan.

Monday: Breakfast

Start the day with this flavorful and vibrant Shakshuka recipe, known as a staple breakfast dish throughout the Middle East. Serve with two slices of sprouted grain bread.

Monday: Lunch

In a bowl, combine 7 1/2 ounces (half a 15-ounce can) canned chickpeas (rinse in a colander for two minutes to remove excess sodium and drain well; save other half for Tuesday's snack), 2 teaspoons olive oil, 1/4 cup chopped white onion, 1/4 cup chopped green pepper (save the rest of the onion and pepper for dinner), 1 tablespoon sliced black olives, 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, and 1 1/2 tablespoons white vinegar. Mix thoroughly. Serve mixture over 2 cups romaine lettuce leaves.

Monday: Snack

Spread one slice of 100% whole-grain bread or 2 whole-grain flatbread crackers with 2 tablespoons hummus, drizzle with 1 teaspoon of olive oil, and add salt, pepper, or other seasonings to taste.

Monday: Dinner

Slice remainder of white onion and green pepper from lunch into chunks; set out 10 grape tomatoes. Alternate pieces of onion, pepper, and cherry tomatoes on skewers and grill. Serve with 5 ounces of grilled salmon and one 6-inch whole-wheat pita pocket. Spread pita with 2 tablespoons of hummus. Finish with 1 cup fat-free milk.

Tuesday: Breakfast

In a clear, wide-mouth glass, layer 1/2 cup 2% Greek yogurt with 1 cup raspberries and 1/3 cup lower sugar granola, like KIND Peanut Butter Clusters.

Tuesday: Lunch

Eat one Freshé pack (the canned tuna salad comes in flavorful varieties like Provence Nicoise and Sicilian Caponata) with a piece of fruit.

Tuesday: Snack

Make this hummus in advance and have half the recipe today, and save the rest for Wednesday's snack (or top it with an egg for breakfast fun!). Use remaining chickpeas from Monday's lunch (half a 15-ounce can). Mash the chickpeas lightly in a bowl with a fork. Mix in 2 teaspoons olive oil, 1 clove minced garlic, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. If desired, add 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin. Mash all ingredients together thoroughly or, if a smoother spread is desired, use a food processor to blend the ingredients. Bring along 1 cup broccoli florets and 1 sliced pepper for dipping.

Tuesday: Dinner

Slice a 6-inch French baguette roll in half lengthwise. Sprinkle the halves with 1/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese and bake in a toaster oven at 250 degrees for four to six minutes, until the cheese is just beginning to melt. Meanwhile, slice two large red tomatoes. Remove baguette from toaster oven, sprinkle with a little dried basil and dried oregano if desired. Top with tomato slices. For dessert, enjoy 1 ounce of dark chocolate.

Wednesday: Breakfast

Today, make half of this Chive and Goat Cheese Frittata recipe. Serve half of the frittata now, and refrigerate the rest for Thursday dinner. Enjoy with an 8-ounce latte with skim or unsweetened soy milk.

Wednesday: Lunch

Spread two slices of whole-wheat bread with 1/2 avocado and stuff with 3 ounces sliced turkey breast, 5 artichoke hearts, and as much sliced red pepper as you want. Serve with a cup each of baby carrots and grapes.

Wednesday: Snack

Use remaining chickpea spread from Tuesday's snack. Bring along sliced crudité plus a 1-ounce piece of cheese.

Wednesday: Dinner

Today, make half of this Mediterranean Grilled Sea Bass recipe and reserve half of that for Thursday lunch. Increase your vegetable intake by serving half a bag of baby arugula leaves with this meal (save the other half for Thursday). Add one ear of corn and 1 cup cooked sugar snap peas topped with 2 teaspoons butter on the side. For dessert, have one frozen fruit popsicle (about 80 calories or less).

Thursday: Breakfast

Make 1 cup of oatmeal (like Good Housekeeping Nutritionist Approved McCann's Irish Oatmeal) and add 1/2 cup milk and hot water as desired. Serve with 1 cup fresh berries and sprinkle of cinnamon. Add a drizzle of raw honey for sweetness if needed.

Thursday: Lunch

Serve remaining sea bass from Wednesday's dinner over the rest of the baby arugula leaves.

Thursday: Snack

Mix 1/2 cup 0% plain, unsweetened Greek yogurt with 1 tablespoon light maple syrup and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract. Dip fresh crudité in this sweet, creamy dip.

Thursday: Dinner

Have the rest of the frittata from Wednesday's breakfast. Serve with 2 cups baby spinach leaves, topped with 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, and 1 cup fat-free milk. Have one slice of whole-wheat toast topped with 2 teaspoons butter. For dessert, have a single-serve ice cream, like a Magnum Mini Bar.

Friday: Breakfast

Top 2 slices of 100% whole-grain bread with 2 tablespoons of nut butter and 1/2 sliced banana. Sprinkle on a little cinnamon for extra flavor.

Friday: Lunch

Mix together 1/2 cup 2% Greek yogurt with 1/2 finely chopped cucumber, 1/2 minced garlic clove, and a shake of salt and pepper if desired. Spread half of yogurt sauce (save remaining sauce for later use) on a 100% whole-grain sandwich (like Arnold's) or pita and eat with a cup or more of veggies.

Friday: Snack

Munch on a 1.5-ounce bag of roasted chickpeas, like Biena Honey-Roasted Chickpea Snacks.

Friday: Dinner

Make one fourth of this Mediterranean Sweet and Sour Chicken recipe. Serve with 1/2 cup cooked brown rice topped with 2 teaspoons butter. Enjoy with a glass of wine.

Saturday: Breakfast

Whip up 2 eggs any style with 1/3 sliced avocado and 1 piece 100% whole-grain bread.

Saturday: Lunch

Top one half of a Good Housekeeping Nutritionist Approved Green Giant Cauliflower Pizza Crust with tons of veggies (leftovers of whatever you feel like) and 1/2 cup mix of part-skim shredded cheese. Eat with a green salad (at least 2 cups) topped with 2 tablespoons of regular dressing, any variety. For dessert, have one scoop of your favorite ice cream in a plain cone.

Saturday: Snack

Combine 1/2 fresh orange and 1/2 cup pineapple chunks (fresh or canned and drained) with 6 ounces Greek Yogurt for a fruit smoothie. Blend in a food processor or blender, dropping in ice cubes as desired.

Saturday: Dinner

At your favorite Greek restaurant, order sauteed or grilled shrimp or salmon with an extra order of veggies. Split an app with your table and skip the bread basket. Enjoy with a glass of wine or spirit on the rocks.

Sunday: Breakfast

Top a 100% whole-grain bagel thin with 1/3 cup fat-free ricotta cheese mixed with 1 tablespoon each peanut butter and honey. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon raisins on top.

Sunday: Lunch

Make this wild rice and egg bowl. Grab a skillet and cook one egg, then add 2 cups spinach and season with salt and pepper. Serve on top of Minute Rice Multi-Grain Medley.

Sunday: Snack

Nosh on 1 ounce nuts, like GH Nutritionist-approved favorites Hampton Farms peanuts or Wonderful Pistachios.

Sunday: Dinner

Marinate 6 ounces of shrimp in a basil marinade for at least 30 minutes or overnight. To make basil marinade: Whisk together 1/4 cup white wine vinegar, 1 teaspoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1/8 cup chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil. Grill shrimp until cooked through. Top 2 cups of romaine lettuce with the shrimp and mix well into greens for added flavor. Serve with 1 cup blueberries and enjoy 1 ounce chocolate (about 4 Dove Miniatures) for dessert.