

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION PRESENTS

HEALTHY CHARCUTERIE

NOVEMBER 21, 2023



EVENT DETAILS

Join us for a training on how to create healthy charcuterie boards following our November meeting

ELLIS COUNTY
EXTENSION OFFICE

701 S I-35 E
WAXAHACHIE, TX 75165

ELEMENTS OF CHARCUTERIE BOARDS

Charcuterie Boards are very on-trend right now, but for good reason, they make sense in a lot of situations! Charcuterie boards can be created for a gathering of friends and family, or just to put out some snacks to keep hunger away. While the concept is fairly simple, the goal of this training is to help you balance your board and keep it as healthy as possible!

Charcuterie Boards usually consist of:

- Protein
- Dairy
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Grains

PROTEINS

One of the most challenging food groups to include in a healthy charcuterie board is the protein. Healthy proteins should be lean, low sodium, and low nitrate. Try to get a variety of flavors and textures on your board.

Some healthy choices for a charcuterie board include:

- hard boiled eggs
- herb roasted chicken or turkey
- grilled pork tenderloin
- sirloin steak
- naturally cured salami, pepperoni or prosciutto
- protein alternatives (ex: tofu)

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FRUITS

Fruits can also be another challenging aspect of a healthy charcuterie board. Dried fruits tend to be higher in calories because the reduced water content concentrates the sugars and calories in a much smaller package. Instead, opt for fresh fruit

Fruits for Charcuterie Boards could include: grapes, apples, pears, oranges, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries. You could also include jams and spreads like Fig butter, orange marmalade, blackberry jam or other sweet spreads. (Just remember to check for added sugars and be mindful of that when you're eating)

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VEGETABLES

Vegetables are one of the few things that don't need a swap on your charcuterie board! Fresh, raw vegetables are a great choice for your board.

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- hard boiled eggs
- herb roasted chicken or turkey
- grilled pork tenderloin
- sirloin steak
- naturally cured salami, pepperoni or prosciutto.

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DAIRY

Because charcuterie boards are a feast of flavors and textures, try a mix of soft and hard cheeses. Goat cheese is a healthy, low-fat, and protein-rich alternative to cheese made with cow's milk, comes in hard and soft variations, and is less likely to cause gastrointestinal upset.

Cheese examples for a charcuterie board:

Soft cheeses such as brie cheese, goat cheese, blue cheese or camembert cheese are good choices as well as hard cheeses such as sharp cheddar cheese, Parmesan cheese, gouda cheese, and swiss cheese. Spreadable cheeses are also a great addition to a charcuterie board.

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GRAINS

The quickest swap you can make to help your charcuterie board be more healthy is choosing whole grain options like multi-grain crackers, whole wheat baguettes or whole grain crostinis. You can add crackers with flavors like rosemary, tomato and basil, multi-seed, or roasted garlic.



HEALTHY FATS

You can add healthy fats to your charcuterie board by adding nuts and seeds. If you need a creamy addition to your charcuterie you can add nut butter as a spread for crackers or for your fruit. When adding these make sure you are allergy conscious about who will be eating your board to make sure it's safe for them.

Examples include:

Olive oil for dipping, sunflower seeds, avocado and unsalted nuts like almonds, pistachio nuts, cashews, macadamia nuts, etc.



OTHER ADDITIONS

1. Briny, pickled or marinated: olives, cocktail onions, cornichons, dill pickles, pepperoncini. When choosing these, be aware of the salt content and make sure to not overload your board with them.
2. Savory Dips and spreads: Whole ground mustard, hummus, ranch, balsamic dip.
3. Chocolate: a few pieces of quality dark chocolate or chocolate covered nuts.



PUTTING IT TOGETHER

There is not one right way to assemble your charcuterie board. Here's an example of how to get it started.

1. Start with your cheeses. Working with odd numbers (3, 5, or 7) will help keep things balanced
2. Fold and add your meats. You can fold them in quarters and fan them out like cards or loose ribbons. Making the meats easy to grab for your guests is important. You can even try more advanced techniques that can be found on youtube or google.
3. Add your savory and sweet components. Fill in some of your gaps with your fruits, nuts and briny foods if you choose to include them.
4. Fill in your extra spaces with your whole grain crackers.

Extra Tips:

- Keep it Simple. Design your board based on the people who will be eating from it and fill it with simple foods that people actually LIKE! When in doubt, avoid fancy and expensive cheeses, nuts, crackers or condiments that the people you're serving may not care for.
- Make it colorful. As humans we eat with our eyes first. Add color through fruit, like bright red apples, green and red grapes, strawberries, raspberries or blueberries.
- Keep it Food Safe. Charcuterie boards should not be left out more than two hours. Make sure you take that into consideration when preparing your board and that you're conscious of that once your guests have arrived.

RESOURCES

- Dinner Tonight: <https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/charcuterie-boards/>
- <https://www.stlukeshhealth.org/resources/how-to-make-a-healthy-charcuterie-board>
- <https://simpleandsavory.com/build-healthy-charcuterie-board/>
- <https://tastesbetterfromscratch.com/charcuterie-board/#:~:text=Fresh%20fruit%20and%20berries%3A%20grapes,jam%20or%20other%20sweet%20spreads.>
- [https://www.excelahealth.org/images/Recipe-for-Web-HEART-HEALTHY-CHARCUTERIE-BOARD.1\).pdf](https://www.excelahealth.org/images/Recipe-for-Web-HEART-HEALTHY-CHARCUTERIE-BOARD.1).pdf)