

Food for Thought

December 2023

Healthy Holiday Charcuterie Boards

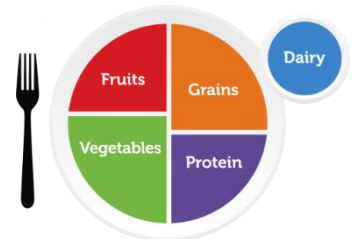
Charcuterie (pronounced shar-koo-tuh-ree) boards are a nice way to display a variety of healthy food items at your next holiday get together. If you aren't familiar with this trend, it is a tray loaded with various finger foods.

You can customize your 'board' to look the way you want it to, using the foods you want to include. Be creative – you can use an extra-large plate, a platter, a serving tray or even a cutting board for displaying the food. When deciding what foods to put on your charcuterie board, consider including a variety sweet, savory, and spicy foods in various colors, textures, and flavors.



Use the five food groups on MyPlate as the basis of your display (fruit, vegetable, grain, protein, and dairy). The healthiest boards will contain plenty of fresh fruits and veggies, which are good sources of vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber. Choose smaller amounts of meats and higher fat foods and fill in the extra space with nuts and hummus. Choose whole grains, such as whole-grain crackers, along with some lower fat cheese options. Search charcuterie boards online to view some beautiful display ideas. See the list below for more ideas:

- 🌲 Veggies: Cucumber slices, cherry tomatoes, mini peppers, sugar snap peas
- 🌲 Fruits: Grapes, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, dates, dried apricots
- 🌲 Cheeses: Fresh mozzarella (soft), brie, cheddar (semi-hard), gouda, Havarti
- 🌲 Meats: Roll some deli meats such as turkey and ham, or try some turkey summer sausage
- 🌲 Nuts: Almonds, cashews, pistachios
- 🌲 Breads: Whole wheat crackers, baguette slices, pretzels
- 🌲 Pickled Elements: Olives, pickles, pepperoncini
- 🌲 Spreads: Stone ground mustard, hummus



Safe Food Handling Instructions:

- Be sure to wash and slice all fruits and veggies.
- Store perishable ingredients in the refrigerator until you are ready serve them.

Holiday Bagel Bites

- 1/2 whole wheat mini-bagel
- 2 teaspoons low-fat cream cheese
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped and washed red and green fruit such as kiwi, green grapes, green and red apples, strawberries, raspberries, etc.



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on the bagel.
3. Sprinkle fruit to resemble a holiday wreath.

Festive Fruit Bark

- 1 (32 oz.) container vanilla Greek yogurt
- 2 cups frozen strawberries (no added sugar), sliced
- 2 cups frozen blackberries
- 4 tablespoons strawberry jelly
- 4 tablespoons blackberry jelly



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Spread the yogurt on top of the paper. Place strawberries and blackberries on the yogurt.
3. Drizzle with the strawberry and blackberry jellies. Tap on the counter slightly to help the fruit settle in the yogurt. Freeze for 4 hours. Take the bark out and cut or break into pieces.
4. Store this treat in a zip-close bag in the freezer. Pull it out to enjoy a healthy, frosty snack. You may want to let it thaw 5-10 minutes before eating.

Eat Smart Idaho offers FREE classes & educational events that can help limited resource individuals & families learn how to eat well for less! Ask for Eat Smart Idaho in your County.

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone Counties
208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties
208-883-2267



To contact the Eat Smart Idaho Coordinator: Kali Gardiner, RD, LD
Phone: 208-292-2525
E-mail – kalig@uidaho.edu
Web: www.eatsmartidaho.org

Sources: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/simple-nutritious-quick-and-delicious/2021-11-12-eight-food-ideas-your-holiday-charcuterie>;
<https://food.unl.edu/recipe/holiday-bagel-bites>; https://food.unl.edu/recipe/festive-fruit-bark_retrieved_11/21/23

This work and material is supported and funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA and University of Idaho are equal opportunity providers.