

# Life Balance INITIATIVE

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December 2010

## A Word from Chef Michael Bauer...

### Holiday Cheer to All!

As the last leaves are being raked and bagged and Jack Frost starts nipping at our nose, it signals a special time of the year...the holidays. This is also the start of the feasting season. It starts off with Halloween candy, moves to Thanksgiving stuffing, gravy, pies, followed by Christmas cookies and candy canes, and then New Year's Eve's indulgence. Also, not to be forgotten, are Super Bowl parties with elaborate spreads.



The problem is not with holiday feasting itself, but with self-control. Statistics from the Institute of Food Technologies states that the average American tends to gain during the end of season festivities between 1 to 10 pounds.

It's important to understand why it's hard to keep from overeating during the holiday season.

### Dietary Downfalls

1. Overindulge. We Americans socialize using food and drink. During the holidays the availability and quantity of holiday cheer increases. The pressure to sample can be great by not wanting to dampen the holiday cheer.
2. Stress. We live in a very stressful time and the holiday obligation both financially and socially can add to the burden. Bethany Thayer, Registered Dietician and Spokeswoman for the

American Dietetic Association states, “ All the extra work can be overwhelming. It can add to the stress, and the stress can lead to the overeating.”

3. Exhaustion. Plain and simple - people are tired and sluggish during the holiday season. People are mentally exhausted and have logged a lot of miles. When you're tired, you tend to overeat and make poor eating choices.



4. Emotional Eating. Food can be used as an emotional crutch and with the holidays, our internal regulator can be shut off. Food is used to soothe sadness, anxiety, or loss. Also, holiday marketing of food contributes to excess eating as well.

5. Cold weather. People crave high calorie food when the weather dips. It's who we are in the north. We need to add insulation to our frames.

### Keys to Maintain Holiday Health

A few keys to maintain good health during the holiday season are: awareness, management of stress and emotions, proper planning, and good exercise.

1. Awareness. Be conscious of what you eat and how much. Allow yourself a special treat but moderate your servings. When confronted with sugary sweets and treats have a sample then back away from the table. “Moderation is the key”.
2. Manage Stress and Emotion. One way to keep stress at a minimum is to lower your expectations about holidays. It's not about the superficial or monetary gain (loss) but spending time with loved ones.
3. Plan in Advance. Before attending gatherings or events, make sure to eat a little good quality food. This will help with temptation. When traveling for the holidays, pack some healthy foods and bottled water. Apples, along with other skinned fruit, make an excellent choice.
4. Exercise. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, most American's do not engage in vigorous, leisure-time physical activity. This means we in general are over fed and under exercised. Add in the holiday season and that is a recipe for disaster.



According to the U. S. Health and Human Services, only 3 out of 10 Americans get regular exercise. This is figured out on a 5 day- 30 minute workout. 49% say they workout 3 day – 30 minute workouts with 31 percent saying they do not exercise at all. The number one reason for not exercising is lack of time, reports the American Board of Exercise. The holiday season can compound this issue. Studies show that

most people realize they should exercise, but along with not having the time, they are tired or just plain don't like working out.

Exercise and diet go hand and hand with good health. In order to be healthy, we have to exercise regularly. Exercise can tone muscles, increase weight loss, energize, and add longevity by staving off osteoporosis, heart disease, diabetes, etc.

If you're new to exercise, the best thing to do is start slow. A ten minute power walk is better than 20 minutes of couch surfing. Golfing, walking your dog, or walking the mall are good starts.

If outside support is needed to make exercise work, join a club. Traverse City has many fitness clubs and gyms in the area, but it also has the natural beauty of the area so walk the TART trail, ski, ice skate. Exercise does not have to cost money!

### **The Bottom Line**

The bottom line, the experts say, is to try to maintain a healthy lifestyle year round. Constant weight gains and losses can be harmful to your health. The best way to survive the feasting season is to remember it's about family and friends-not food!

### **BEHIND THE SCENE FUN FACTS.....what it takes to feed those fundraisers**

The 28th Annual Gladhander fundraiser has come and gone with much success. Being the person purchasing the different foods, I find it interesting how much of certain foods we need to feed literally an army of guests. This year's event had a sold out crowd of 607 people!

#### **For the Lemon Tomato Goat Cheese Bisque we needed;**

- 40 gallons of diced tomato
- 10 pounds of goat cheese
- 2 quarts lemon juice
- 1 gallon white wine

#### **The Bibb Lettuce Salad needed;**

- 144 heads of Bibb lettuce
- 50 pounds of red and yellow beets
- 160 pounds of vine-ripened tomatoes
- 35 pounds of feta cheese
- 607 orchids
- 10 gallons of salad dressing



Gladhander dining at its best!

#### **The beef course needed:**

- 272 pounds of Angus beef tenderloin

8 pounds of dried Morel mushrooms  
30 gallons of veal stock  
4 gallons of heavy cream  
10 pounds of truffle butter  
75 pounds of risotto  
64 pounds of French green beans

**The cream puffs course needed:**

10 allons Sander's hot fudge  
15 dozen eggs for custard  
100 pounds of flour  
45 pounds of butter  
30 pounds of granulated sugar  
1 gallon of vanilla extract

Bon Appetit,

*Chef Bauer*