



A Fit and Healthy Mother's Day

By Dana Robinson • Photo by Stacia Suchon

Most families spend Mother's Day at one of the nicest restaurants in town indulging in the Mother's Day buffet brunch. Two hours and 20 plates later, they slowly push away from their posts, amazed that they managed to pack away waffles, scrambled eggs, roast beef, chicken and cheesecake all in the same meal! Here are five healthier ways to show mom how much she is appreciated:

Breakfast in Bed

Instead of a massive buffet, the kids can help dad make some of mom's healthy favorites, such as an egg white omelet and whole-wheat toast. Think twice, however, before pouring her orange juice. "Have the real fruit rather than the juice," says Dori Zerlin, M.S., R.D. "Fruit provides more fiber, and the juice can be higher in sugar."

Gifts Aplenty

Food doesn't always have to be a part the Mother's Day celebration...but gifts do! Let dad organize a contest among the kids to see who can create the best hand-made Mother's Day card. On the big day, mom can decide which card will be awarded the title of "most creative," "most colorful" and "most outrageous."

And dad can't show up at the affair empty handed. Instead of giving mom chocolates or taking her out to a calorie-laden dinner, surprise her with flowers and a huge incentive to keep striving toward her health and fitness goals – six more months of sessions with her favorite personal trainer.

Movie Night

Mom won't be able to resist an evening filled with her family and her favorite flicks. Designate the house as a cell phone-

iPhone-, BlackBerry-free zone for the night to make the event even more relaxed. A big bowl of air-popped popcorn with a light spritz of spray butter and a sprinkle of Lawry's season salt makes the night complete.

Family Picnic

Pack up the crew for a day at the park. An afternoon of kicking the soccer ball around with the kids after a light lunch (courtesy of mom's favorite deli) is a perfect way to help keep the family fit. But choose the menu wisely. "Make sure it's a well-balanced meal," continues Zerlin. "You'll need a lean protein, a good source of fat, complex carbohydrates, and a vegetable." She recommends choosing hand-carved turkey (the smoked varieties usually have higher amounts of sodium) on whole-wheat, rye or pumpernickel bread, and a salad with light vinaigrette dressing on the side. Foods like almonds, walnuts, and avocados are good sources of healthy unsaturated fat, and you can't go wrong with a variety of fruits and vegetables. "Bright colored vegetables or fruits, such as carrots, apples, oranges and tomatoes, are all antioxidant rich," adds Zerlin. "Research shows that these [foods] help to prevent a range of degenerative diseases and repair cell damage."

Dine In

To celebrate the big day, invite the extended family over for a healthy dinner at home. Restaurants are notorious for doling out food portions that are generous to say the least, so eating at home can provide a little more control over the amount of food that you eat. Clueless about what to cook? Check out Web sites like CookingLight.com and FoodFit.com for lean, light recipes. **MS&F**