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Fun Brown Bag Lunches for Spring Break Camps

Spring break is just around the corner, but for busy parents, there may not be much of a reprieve as kids are headed off to day camps. Keep the mood fun with these tasty lunch ideas – they might even ask for them again once they're headed back to school!

Our Crunchy Turkey Pitas are an easy twist on the usual turkey sandwich, combining chopped cooked turkey and celery with sweet apple and raisins. Add a touch of mustard or curry powder for some extra zing. Our Lunchbox Mini Bagelwiches are a bite-sized lunch perfect for small hands. The carrots and walnuts add crunch, while the orange and cranberries add sweetness. For nut-free environments, swap the walnuts for sunflower seeds.

For snack time, get your kids excited about fruit with our simple Lemon Maple Dip, which goes well with apples and pears, or make them a batch of Backpack Snack Bars – swap in your favourite dried fruit, and use sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds in place of chopped nuts for nut-free environments. With these delicious ideas, even adults won't be able to resist brown bagging it!

CRUNCHY TURKEY PITAS

- 2 cups (500 mL) chopped cooked turkey
- 1 cup (250 mL) diced apple
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped celery
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) raisins
- 1/3 cup (75 mL) mayonnaise
- 6 lettuce leaves
- 3 pita bread (6 inch / 15 cm), halved

Combine turkey, apple, celery, raisins and mayonnaise. Place one lettuce leaf in each pita bread half. Fill each with turkey mixture. Serve immediately or wrap and refrigerate for up to 4 hours. Serves 4 - 6.

LUNCH BOX MINI BAGELWICHES

- 8 oz (250 g) spreadable light cream cheese
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) shredded carrot
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped walnuts or sunflower seeds, optional
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) orange juice
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) grated orange peel
- 10 mini bagels, halved

Combine all ingredients except bagels until blended. Spread cream cheese mixture on bottom halves of bagels. Cover with top halves of bagels. Serves 4 - 6.

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LEMON MAPLE DIP

1 cup (250 mL) yogurt or fruit spread
1 tbsp (15 mL) fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp (15 mL) maple syrup
1/2 tsp (2 mL) grated lemon peel

Combine all ingredients until well blended. Dip may be refrigerated for up to 2 days. Stir before using. Makes about 1 cup (250 mL).

Cook's Note: This versatile, low fat dip is great for vegetables or fruit.

BACKPACK SNACK BARS

2 cups (500 mL) flour
1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda
1 tsp (5 mL) cinnamon
1 tsp (5 mL) ground ginger
1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt
3/4 cup (175 mL) thawed frozen orange juice concentrate
1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped dried apricots
1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped nuts
1/2 cup (125 mL) quick-cooking rolled oats
1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped pitted prunes
1/2 cup (125 mL) raisins
1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped pitted dates
1/4 cup (50 mL) wheat germ
1 tbsp (15 mL) sesame seeds
1/2 cup (125 mL) butter, softened
1/2 cup (125 mL) sugar
1/2 cup (125 mL) fancy molasses
1 egg

Preheat oven to 325°F (160°C). Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and salt in a bowl; set aside. Combine next 9 ingredients (orange juice concentrate through sesame seeds) in a bowl; set aside.

Using medium speed of an electric mixer, beat together butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in molasses and egg until blended. Stir in flour mixture just until combined. Stir in orange juice concentrate mixture. Spoon batter into a greased 9x13 inch (23x33 cm) baking pan and spread evenly.

Bake for 35 minutes or until golden brown and a cake tester inserted in centre comes out clean. Cool in pan on a rack. Cut into bars. May be frozen. Makes 32.