

# DO OR DIET

Alternative Pinoy recipes that can save your life

**W**ho could resist the wonderful smells that emanate from a Pinoy kitchen?

I grew up in a household where my dad was the designated *kusinero* and my *lola* was the *carinderia* expert. She could whip up a mean *morcon* (yes, it's more complicated than you think) and steamed *lapu-lapu* with mayonnaise in a flash.

Our home was (and still is) a gastronomic utopia every night and every weekend with my dad's specialties, always served in generous portions - *bistek* Tagalog, *kalderetang baka* served with home-style french fries, *sinigang na bangus* paired with *torta* (an omelette-style dish with ground pork and potatoes), *Pinoy*-style spaghetti with "chicken lollipops" (chicken wings dipped in a cornstarch batter, then fried) and pan-fried burger patties (never served in a bun as usual practices require).

On family get-togethers, my relatives from both sides of the family are always profuse with praise over my dad's cooking. They never leave the house without the mandatory *bitbit* or *pabalot*. Such is the quintessential *Pinoy's* voracious appetite.

However, along with our clan's penchant for excessive eating lies an ugly side -- a lineage of life-threatening diseases that have ravaged our *lolos* and *lolas*, our *titos* and *titas* through the years -- hypertension, high-blood pressure, diabetes and cancer to name a few.

It's perfectly understandable for carcinogens and high cholesterol to be Greek to our elders, but food science has revolutionized the way we analyze the food that we eat.

#### Facts and figures

In her preface on *Filipinos Take It to Heart: A How-to-Guide for Bringing Heart Health to Your Community*, Barbara Alving MD, acting director for the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute wrote, "Many Filipinos in the United States engage in unhealthy behaviors. This puts them at higher risk for developing heart disease, which may go undetected or untreated. Behaviors such as eating food high in salt and sodium, saturated fat and cholesterol...all impact a person's heart health."

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"These are some of the reasons why one out of three Filipinos die from heart disease. Heart disease can lead to disability and significantly decrease a person's quality of life. Moreover, Filipinos have the highest rates of hypertension of all Asian American Pacific Islander subgroups," she further explained.

Findings from the 1979 California Hypertension Study revealed that heart disease is the leading cause of death among Filipinos. We also have the highest rate of high blood pressure among Asians and Pacific Islanders with only 8 percent having their high blood pressure controlled compared to 25 percent of the general population. The study also revealed that among Filipino men over the age of 50, 60 percent have high-blood pressure while among Filipino women over the age of 50, 65 percent have high blood pressure.

Let us not be mere statistic. It is imperative for us to radically change our diet and to improve the way we prepare our food. Of course, it's not just our diet that has to change, we also need to do more physical activity as well.

Here are some heart-friendly, healthy recipes from the Nhlbi.nih.gov. and *Mula sa Puso, Heart Healthy Traditional Recipes* (1999) to help you prepare an alternative version of your old *Pinoy* favorites without sacrificing taste. Relish every morsel and enjoy your weekend family *handaans* without the guilt.

For more information about Filipino health, visit [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov) or for recipes with a healthy twist, visit [http://www.geocities.com/htn\\_cholesterol/healthy\\_recipes.htm](http://www.geocities.com/htn_cholesterol/healthy_recipes.htm). **AJ**

## Chicken Adobo



AJ Photo by Rene Villaroman

#### Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken, skin removed
- 4 medium white potatoes
- 1/2 medium yellow onions
- 1 2/3 tbsp low sodium soy sauce
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 tsp vegetable oil

#### Directions:

1. Clean chicken. Cut into serving size pieces.
  2. Marinate chicken in soy sauce, vinegar, three cloves garlic and pepper for at least one hour.
  3. In a deep pan, add oil. Saute remaining garlic and onions. Add chicken and simmer for 20 minutes or until chicken is tender.
  4. Add marinade mixture, potatoes and bay leaves. Season with salt and cook for another 10-15 minutes until potatoes are well done.
  5. Serve hot.
- (Source: *Alay sa Pamilya: Lutuing Masustansya A Cookbook for a Healthy Filipino*. Asian Health Services, 1992)

#### Yield: 7 Servings

#### Nutritional information per serving:

Calories:	232
Total fat:	7 g
Saturated fat:	2 g
Carbohydrate:	21 g
Protein:	22 g
Cholesterol:	62 mg
Fiber:	2 g
Calcium:	28 mg
Sodium:	361 mg

## Shellfish with Wine Sauce

#### Ingredients:

- 1/2 lb. Mussels
- 1/2 lb. Manila clams
- 6 large prawns
- 1 c. Chicken stock
- 6 pcs. Bok choy
- 1 1/2 tsps. Black bean sauce
- 1 tsp. Fish sauce
- 1/4 c. White wine
- 1 slice Fresh ginger root
- 2 cloves Garlic, chopped

#### Directions:

Clean all seafood. Heat pan and add oil. When very hot add the shellfish and cover. When shellfish opens, add the prawns, liquid ingredients and the spices. Add the bok choy and bring to a boil. After boiling, serve with basil or Italian parsley. Serves 4. (*Mula sa Puso, Heart Healthy Traditional Recipes*, 1999)

#### Single Serving Nutrient Values

Calories	121.1 kc
Percent calories from fat:	42
Protein	10.73 gm
Carbohydrate	4.083 gm
Cholesterol	35.54 mg
Sodium	468.9 mg
Total fat	5.639 gm
Saturated	0.987 gm
Polyunsaturated	0.701 gm
Monounsaturated	2.805 gm

## Chicken Eggplant Omelet

#### Ingredients:

- 4 Japanese eggplants
- 1 chicken breast, boneless, skinless and finely chopped or ground
- 1/4 c. Red onion, chopped
- 4 medium Shiitake mushrooms, chopped
- 1 tsp. sesame oil
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 2 eggs, beaten or equivalent egg substitute
- Vegetable oil spray\*
- 1 Tbsp catsup, low sodium

#### Directions:

Broil or grill eggplant. Peel, flatten with a fork and set aside. Brown chicken meat with the onions and mushrooms. Add soy sauce, sesame oil, salt and pepper. Set aside. To make the omelet, spray the pan with vegetable oil spray, add one eggplant then a portion of the chicken meat mixture. Pour some of the eggs over to form an omelet. Serve with catsup on the side. Serves 4. (*Mula sa Puso, Heart Healthy Traditional Recipes*, 1999)

\* Do not use vegetable oil spray near an open flame or heat source. Read and follow directions on can before using.

#### Serving Nutrient Values

Calories	148.4 kc
Percent calories from fat:	32
Protein	17.58 gm
Carbohydrate	7.484 gm
Cholesterol	143.0 mg
Sodium	297.3 mg
Total fat	5.323 gm
Saturated	1.400 gm
Polyunsaturated	1.194 gm
Monounsaturated	1.965 gm

## Sesame Short Ribs

#### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. Beef short ribs (Korean cut)
- 1/4 c. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 c. catsup
- 1/4 c. broth or water
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsps. brown sugar
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 2 tsps. sesame oil

#### Directions:

Heat the sesame oil and braise the ribs in a very hot pan. Sauté in the garlic and onions. Add liquid ingredients and the sugar. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 1 hour or until beef is tender. Serves 4. (*Mula sa Puso, Heart Healthy Traditional Recipes*, 1999)

#### Serving Nutrient Values

Calories	296.5 kc
Percent calories from fat:	46
Protein	23.48 gm
Carbohydrate	16.02 gm
Cholesterol	54.30 mg
Sodium	242.2 mg
Total Fat	15.18 gm
Saturated	5.462 gm
Polyunsaturated	1.510 gm
Monounsaturated	6.694 gm

## Low Fat Leche Flan

#### Ingredients:

- 4 1/3 c sugar for caramel
- 2 c egg substitute
- 1 c. 2% low fat milk
- 1/2 c sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 sprig mint leaves, finely chopped

#### Directions:

Caramelize sugar in a non stick pan. Pour into small baking pan. Cool and set aside. In a double boiler, cook the egg substitute, low fat milk and sugar. Add vanilla and finely copped mint leaves. Stir constantly until it thickens a bit. This process takes about 5-10 minutes on low to medium heat. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour liquid ingredients in the baking pan. Cover with foil. Cook in Mary's bath for 20 to 25 minutes, until it solidifies. Serves 4. (*Mula sa Puso, Heart Healthy Traditional Recipes*, 1999)

#### Single Serving Nutrient Values

Calories	300.4 kc
Percent calories from fat:	16
Protein	17.09 gm
Carbohydrate	45.64 gm
Cholesterol	5.830 mg
Sodium	253.0 mg
Total Fat	5.331 gm
Saturated	1.555 gm
Polyunsaturated	2.053 gm
Monounsaturated	1.463 gm