

Pumped-up hummus a nutritional win

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 Picky Eater

WHY EAT PLAIN hummus when you can eat pumped-up hummus — hummus laced with an extra dose of vitamins and minerals? Meza VitaHummus, which is based in Northern California, has figured out how to lace — without a trace — a trio of their hummus flavors with extra A, C and E vitamins, plus a sprinkling of calcium.

If you dread pill-popping as much as I do, this is a great option. A double serving delivers half the A, C and E you need for the whole day.

After tasting this hummus, my only question is this: What took them so long? VitaHummus comes in traditional, garlic and red pepper flavors. The 7-ounce tubs are about \$3 and are just now being shipped to delis and local supermarkets.

MARINADE MAGIC:

Turns out there's a way to grill food without the guilt of knowing that you're introducing carcinogens. They're not sure exactly which spices or ingredients do the trick, but new research published in the Journal of Food Science suggests marinating meats decreases the cancer-forming compounds produced during grilling by more than 70 percent.

Researchers from Kansas State University tested three commercial spice-containing marinade blends on round beef steaks. The steaks were marinated for one hour and then grilled at 400 degrees.

After grilling, tests showed that the Caribbean marinade produced the highest decrease in HCA content (88 percent), followed by the herb blend (72 percent) then the southwest blend (57 percent). Dr. J.S. Smith, principal researcher at Kansas State University notes that the cause of the decreased carcinogens may be due to the antioxidants in the marinades themselves.

NO-STICK STACK: As a lover of all things baked, sweet and sticky, I have to tell you about a new plastic box that I am certain will restore sanity to bakers everywhere. It's called the Baker's Sto 'n Go. Cheesy name, I know, but you won't care the first time this clever container keeps your brownies or cookies from sticking together.

The box is outfitted with three slide-out shelves and has a lid that presses on. When filled with sticky or delicate snacks, you can attach the handle to the top to make sure it stays upright. When its not transporting snacks, it can sit upright.

If you're a baker and if you have room in your kitchen, you may want to track down one of these. It's \$24.95; special trays for deviled eggs are \$9.95 for two. This is pretty

much an online-only product. Find it at www.bakersstongo.com (the only two stores in Northern California which carry it are That Kitchen Place in Redding and the Lassen Gift Company in Chester, midway between Red Bluff and Susanville).

CAN IT: I'm not sure that the economic crunch had anything to do with it, but you have to give the **Sweet Leaf Tea** folks a nod for this summer's promotion — peach and blueberry lemonades in bonafide Mason canning jars. Drinking lemonade from a jar not only triggers memories of swinging on the hammock on great-grandma's back porch, but it's also a reminder of all that's good about preserving a little goodness in jars of my own.

The campaign, a celebration of the Mason jar's 150th anniversary, is all about re-using the jar — even if it's just to store a little leftovers. The limited-edition Sweet Leaf lemonades are \$2.49 and can be found at Whole Foods.

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