

RECIPES & COOKING > RECIPES

A Heart-Healthy Meal to Cook for Your Valentine

By [Anna Smith, MS, RDN, LDN](#)

Last Updated: January 30, 2023



Whether you're celebrating Valentine's Day, *Galentine's* day or just looking to treat yourself to a yummy dinner, we've got you covered. Our registered dietitian, Anna, created a nutritious menu that's full of flavor. While there is some cooking required, we kept it to a minimum so all skill levels could join in. Follow the steps below for a healthy meal idea to eat this Valentine's day.

Start with a Simple Salad

Grab any greens you like. We love baby arugula or mixed greens. Next, chop up cucumber and cherry tomatoes. Then add in cheese; our vote is crumbled goat cheese. (If you're dairy-free, try diced avocado instead of cheese.) Lastly, drizzle with a dressing. [Garlic Expressions](#) is a great dressing option made with simple ingredients (apple cider vinegar, canola oil, cane sugar, garlic cloves, salt, spices, and xanthan gum). It has a light vinaigrette flavor but compliments just about any salad. Plus, it doubles as a marinade for future use.

If you're avoiding added sugar, use Tessamae's dressing instead.

Nutrition based on one serving being 2 cups baby arugula, 5 cherry tomatoes, 1 mini cucumber, ½ ounce crumbled goat cheese, 1 tsp garlic expressions dressing: 94 calories, 5g fat, 2g sat fat, 5mg cholesterol, 172mg sodium, 8g carbs, 2g fiber, 6g sugar, 4g protein

Make the Main

For the entree, we chose a [lemon garlic salmon](#) by Ambitious Kitchen. Salmon is a heart-healthy option that's packed with protein and healthy fats – two macronutrients that provide satiety at meals. The recipe includes wild salmon, butter, honey, dijon mustard, lemon, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Our hope is that you may already have all of these ingredients at your house, but if not, we recommend purchasing them. The ingredients make for great staples to have around, as many are used in numerous other recipes. Since we know our Lose It! readers are focused on calories, our dietitian recommends cutting the oil and sugar in half while doubling the dijon mustard to provide fewer calories, fat, and sugar per serving. Bake the salmon at 400 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

Nutrition based on adjusting the original recipe to 1 Tbsp butter, 1 Tbsp honey, 2 tsp dijon mustard (everything else the same): 209 calories, 9g fat, 3g sat fat, 78mg cholesterol, 135mg sodium, 5g carb, 0g fiber, 4g sugar, 24g protein

Roast up the Side

We recommend roasting up a vegetable (or two) to pair with the salmon. One of our favorites is asparagus. If you're new to cooking, check out The Kitchn's instructions on [roasting vegetables](#). It's a great resource to help get you started. The article recommends baking it at 425 for 10-20 minutes for asparagus. To make this dinner easier, we recommend roasting the asparagus at the same temperature as the salmon. They should both be ready about the same time, but keep an eye on the asparagus to avoid overcooking.

Nutrition based on one serving being 1 tsp olive oil, 8 spears asparagus: 66 calories, 5g fat, 1g sat fat, 0mg cholesterol, 17mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 2g sugar, 3g protein

Savor the Dessert

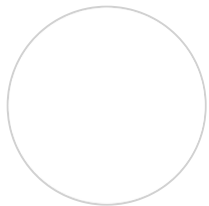
After that delicious meal, you may find yourself wanting a little something sweet. If so, we recommend a healthier cookie recipe like the [3-Ingredient Banana Oatmeal Cookies](#) by Simple Veganista. They're ready in just 15 minutes and, as the name states, use only 3 ingredients (bananas, oats, and chocolate chips). This allows for easy prep and an even easier clean-up. Plus, each cookie is less than 100 calories which is a total win if you've only got a few calories left to play with but still want to fit in a cookie.

Nutrition based on the website: 69 calories, 2g total fat, 1g sat fat, 0mg cholesterol, 0mg sodium, 12g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 6g sugar, 1g protein

The Bottom Line

This heart-healthy meal contains over 3 servings of vegetables, 1 serving of lean protein, plus a healthy dose of whole grains, healthy fats, dairy, and fruit. In addition to nutrition, it's fairly easy to prepare as all prep and cook time comes in at less than 1 hour.

Let us know if you enjoy meal ideas like this one and we'll incorporate more in the future. Happy Valentine's Day!



ANNA SMITH, MS, RDN, LDN

Meet Anna, a Nashville-based registered dietitian on a mission to make healthy eating easier. Her upbeat and encouraging guidance simplifies complex nutrition concepts into practical, easy-to-follow tips to inspire a happier, healthier you.

[View all posts by Anna Smith](#)

Get the latest from our newsletter!