



# Healthy holidays cookbook

Delicious desserts, side dishes, and mocktails to light up  
your table this holiday season - with a healthy twist.



Health Cover for the  
CommBank Family





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# Bite-size Santa cheesecakes

*Simple and delicious treats to level up your festive spread, take them to work or wherever you need to bring a plate – the options are endless.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	24 serves (serving size is 1 Santa)
<b>Time</b>	30 mins
<b>Protein</b>	2g
<b>Sugar</b>	4g
<b>Sat fat</b>	3g
<b>Energy</b>	70 calories (293kj)
<b>Carb</b>	6g
<b>Total fat</b>	4g

## Ingredients

### Base

4 Weet-Bix, blended into crumbs  
1.5 tbs coconut oil or copha

### Filling

250g light cream cheese  
½ cup ricotta cheese  
2 drops vanilla extract  
⅓ cup sugar  
1½ tbs all-purpose flour

### Santa tops

Piped ricotta for Santa's hat  
24 medium-sized strawberries  
Chocolate drops for eyes

## Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C.
2. Prepare mini cupcake moulds with butter, or spray olive oil.
3. Crumb the Weet-Bix in a food processor or blender, until they resemble breadcrumbs.
4. In a bowl, mix the coconut oil (melted) and crumbed Weet-Bix together until combined.
5. Firmly press 1 tsp of the mixture into the moulds, to form the base of your cheesecake. Bake them for five minutes and set aside to cool.
6. In a clean bowl, combine cream cheese, ricotta, and vanilla. Beat well, until the mixture is smooth.
7. Add the sugar and beat again until smooth and creamy, scraping down edges as required.
8. Using a spatula, gently fold the flour into the cream until just combined.
9. Divide mixture evenly, among the cupcake moulds, until full.
10. Bake in the oven for 12-14 minutes or until puffed, set around the edges, and a little jiggle in the centre.
11. Turn off the oven and leave them to cool with the door open for five minutes.
12. Take them out of the oven and let them cool in the moulds. Then transfer to the fridge in an airtight container.
13. When you're ready to serve, quickly whip some ricotta and put it into a piping bag. Place a strawberry on top of your mini cheesecake, pipe the ricotta on top of Santa's hat (the strawberry) and use two chocolate drops for the eyes.

## Why it's good for you

We've made some healthy edits to the original recipe, including reducing the sugar by more than half, using Weet-Bix instead of biscuits, and using light cream cheese instead of full fat. However, these are still a treat food!



## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	12 serves
<b>Time</b>	30 mins
<b>Protein</b>	2g
<b>Sugar</b>	6g
<b>Sat fat</b>	2g
<b>Energy</b>	102 calories (427kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	7g
<b>Total fat</b>	7g
<b>Fibre</b>	2g

## Ingredients

¼ cup of raw almonds  
 ¼ cup raw pistachios  
 2 tsp goji berries  
 2 tsp pepitas  
 2 tsp cacao nibs  
 Pinch of sea salt  
 1 block 70% dark chocolate (we used a supermarket own-brand)  
 2 squares white chocolate (we used supermarket own-brand)

# Festive bark

Wrap a pretty bow around it and you have a great gift idea to bring to your family gatherings. You can also get the kids into the kitchen and make this festive bark as a fun family activity.

## Directions

1. Line baking tray.
2. Melt dark chocolate in a microwave-proof bowl, stopping every 30 seconds to stir, until smooth.
3. Thinly spread the chocolate over the baking tray into your desired shape.
4. Sprinkle almonds, pistachios, goji berries, pepitas, and cacao nibs evenly.
5. Put aside in the fridge to set.
6. Melt the white chocolate in a microwave-proof bowl, using the same method as the dark chocolate.
7. Once dark chocolate is set, drizzle white chocolate on top, and let it rest.
8. Enjoy as a treat or wrap up and give as a festive gift.

## Why it's good for you

Not only does this bark make a lovely, customisable gift or treat, but you can pack it with your favourite superfoods too. We have also added nuts and seeds, which have protein and unsaturated fats, to help slow down the spike of blood glucose from the chocolate.





# Gingerbread cookies with a healthy twist

Try our healthier take on an old favourite. As soon as you smell this delicious spice mix you will feel like Christmas Day is already here!

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	40 cookies approx.
<b>Time</b>	120 mins
<b>Protein</b>	2g
<b>Sugar</b>	5g
<b>Sat fat</b>	1g
<b>Energy</b>	96 calories (402kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	14g
<b>Total fat</b>	3g
<b>Fibre</b>	2g

## Ingredients

3 ½ cups wholemeal flour	<b>Festive spice mix</b>
2 tbsp spice mix (see below recipe)	3 tbsp cinnamon
¾ tsp baking soda	2 tbsp ground ginger
¼ tsp baking powder	1 tbsp mixed spice
½ tsp salt	1 tsp nutmeg
½ cup extra virgin olive oil	1 tsp cardamom
½ cup maple syrup	1 tsp cloves
½ cup molasses	¼ tsp turmeric
1 tsp vanilla essence	Dash black pepper
1 large egg	<b>To decorate (optional)</b>
Zest from 1 orange	Dark chocolate drops
	Goji berries
	Pumpkin seeds
	Almonds

## Directions

1. Sift dry ingredients into a bowl. Stir to combine.
2. Blend olive oil and maple syrup in a food processor until creamy. Add in molasses, vanilla essence, egg, orange zest, and blend it all until well combined.
3. Slowly add in dry ingredients and stir until a dough-like consistency has formed.
4. Put extra flour on a flat surface and separate the dough into two large pieces, roll and cling wrap them. Put it in the fridge for at least an hour to rest. Note: Ideally, keep the dough in the fridge overnight if you have time (our mixture that stayed in the fridge overnight was smoother and less sticky to roll, however the mixture that stayed in the fridge for an hour still turned out well).
5. Pre-heat oven to 175°C.
6. Sprinkle flour on a flat surface and roll out each ball of chilled dough with a rolling pin, until it is about 3-5mm thick. Use a cookie cutter to make whatever shapes you like and place on a baking tray pre-lined with baking paper.
7. Bake for 8-10 minutes until the edges of the cookies are a nice golden colour and the middle is soft to touch. Check at the five-minute mark as they can burn easily.
8. Eat fresh or decorate with icing and your choice of toppings.

## Why it's good for you

These gingerbread cookies are made with extra virgin olive oil instead of butter, so not only are you getting an excellent source of unsaturated fats (which has proven heart health benefits), you're also getting a dose of antioxidants from the olive fruit. We've also used wholemeal flour and reduced the sugar content. So, compared with traditional ginger cookies, you can count on some extra protein, fibre, and energy-producing B vitamins. But this is still a treat food so enjoy in moderation!



# Festive pudding bliss balls

Add some festive spice to your afternoon snack with these bliss balls for all.

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	14 balls (serving size = 1 bliss ball)
<b>Time</b>	20 mins + 60 minutes in the fridge
<b>Protein</b>	2g
<b>Sugar</b>	11g
<b>Sat fat</b>	1g
<b>Energy</b>	132 calories (553kj)
<b>Carb</b>	14g
<b>Total fat</b>	8g
<b>Fibre</b>	2g

## Ingredients

1 tsp mixed spice  
 ½ tsp dried ginger  
 ½ tsp cinnamon  
 1 cup pecans  
 ⅓ cup almond meal  
 1 cup pitted Medjool dates (approx. 150g)  
 1 tsp vanilla extract  
 ¼ cup currants  
 Zest of 1 orange  
 1-2 tbsp orange juice

### To decorate (optional)

White chocolate  
 Goji berries  
 Pumpkin seeds

## Directions

1. In a bowl, add the Medjool dates and cover with boiling water for one minute. When soft, remove from water and set aside (this first step is optional, it will help soften the dates before blending).
2. Put pecans in a high-speed blender or food processor. Blend it to a fine crumb.
3. Add the almond meal, dates, spices, vanilla, orange zest, and juice to the mixture. Blend on high speed until well combined. You may have to stop to scrape down the sides of the bowl one or two times, to get the mixture blended properly.
4. Transfer mixture to a bowl, add the currants and apricot pieces. Mix with a spoon, folding fruit evenly through the dough. Roll them into small balls.
5. Melt white chocolate in the microwave or in a double boiler over the stove.
6. Add a drizzle of the white chocolate on top of each bliss ball, then add a pepita and two goji berries to decorate. Repeat until all bliss balls are covered.
7. Refrigerate for one hour to set and enjoy.

## Why it's good for you

These bliss balls are a beautiful finish to your festive dinners. They're also a balanced afternoon snack to get you into the swing of the festive season – without worrying about excess calories, that you normally find in desserts. Packed with protein and fibre to help keep you full, they're also low in refined sugar and saturated fat. These bliss balls also contain antioxidants from the dates and currants, to assist with reducing cell damage.



# Meringue sandwiches with raspberry labneh cream

*Impress this festive season, with this simple, yet delicious version of an old Australian favourite.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	12 (serving size is 1 sandwich)
<b>Time</b>	15 mins + labneh
<b>Protein</b>	3g
<b>Sugar</b>	21g
<b>Energy</b>	111 calories (463kj)
<b>Carb</b>	23g
<b>Total fat</b>	2g
<b>Fibre</b>	3g

## Ingredients

2 cups (500g) natural yoghurt\*\*

2 tsp maple syrup

¼ cup fresh or frozen raspberries

24 store-bought mini meringues\*

Berries, passionfruit and drizzle of honey to serve\*\*\*

## Directions

1. Make the labneh (strained yoghurt, also known as 'yoghurt cheese' in English). Place a cheese cloth or clean Chux cloth in a sieve over a bowl. Add the yoghurt and twist the top of the cloth to secure it. You can place a heavy object on top to add weight and strain out the liquid.
2. Place the sieve and bowl in a fridge for up to 5 hours, or overnight until the labneh resembles thick cream.
3. Once labneh is at desired consistency, add to a mixing bowl and stir in maple syrup, and raspberries until smooth.
4. Add the labneh cream in between two meringues, and serve with fresh berries, passionfruit, and a drizzle of honey.

\*It's okay to take a shortcut sometimes! We're all about balance at CBHS.

\*\* Light cream cheese is an alternative if you don't have time to make labneh.

\*\*\* Not included in nutritional analysis.

## Why it's good for you

- Pavlovas and meringues are always going to be higher in added sugar, as sugar is one of the main ingredients! However, there are always ways to add nutrients to your plate.
- Switching the traditional whipped cream for yoghurt or homemade labneh, helps reduce the saturated fat in the recipe.



# Festive fruit cake

*A fabulously festive fruit cake with cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and orange. Our version has all the flavour of a traditional fruit cake without the added sugar and butter, making it a much more nourishing option without compromising on taste.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	16
<b>Time</b>	120 mins
<b>Protein</b>	5g
<b>Sugar</b>	18g
<b>Sat fat</b>	1.2g
<b>Energy</b>	190 calories (898 kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	24g
<b>Total fat</b>	10g
<b>Fibre</b>	3.4g

## Ingredients

150g diced dried apricots  
 150g currants  
 250g sultanas  
 100g dried cranberries  
 200g almond meal  
 2 tsp mixed spice  
 ½ tsp cinnamon  
 ½ tsp ginger  
 1 tsp nutmeg  
 1 tsp baking powder  
 3 eggs  
 2 tbsp olive oil  
 1 tsp vanilla extract  
 160ml orange juice, divided  
 1 ½ tbsp orange zest

## Directions

1. Place apricots, currants, sultanas, dried cranberries in a bowl, add 60ml orange juice and ½ tbsp orange zest, mix, cover and leave to soak overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 160°C.
3. In a large bowl, add almond meal, spices, and baking powder, and mix lightly.
4. In a small bowl, add eggs, oil, vanilla, remaining orange juice and zest, then mix well.
5. Add fruit mixture and wet ingredients to the flour mixture, and mix well to combine.
6. Pour mixture into a lined 20cm round cake pan.
7. Place the pan in the oven and bake for one hour. Poke the cake in the centre with a small skewer to check if it's ready. If the skewer doesn't come out clean, cover the cake with foil and bake for a further 20 minutes.
8. Let the cake completely cool before serving. Top with flaked almonds and cherries for a festive look.

## Why it's good for you

- This recipe has no added refined sugar. The sweetness comes from all the wonderful, dried fruits and orange juice which means you get all the flavour and less of the sugar.
- Almond meal is a good source of healthy fats and is high in vitamin E and magnesium. It also has a lower GI than regular flour, so it helps keep blood sugar levels stable.





# Summer watermelon and feta salad

*This refreshing watermelon salad is one of our favourite summer sides. Feta, mint, and avocado are the perfect tangy, creamy, and fresh complements to the juicy watermelon.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	4
<b>Time</b>	15 mins
<b>Protein</b>	8.5g
<b>Sugar</b>	20g
<b>Sat fat</b>	3g
<b>Energy</b>	296 calories (1,238 kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	23g
<b>Total fat</b>	17g
<b>Fibre</b>	6g

## Ingredients

### Dressing

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
3 tbsp lime juice  
½ garlic clove, minced  
Pinch of sea salt

### For the salad

5 cups watermelon, diced into cubes  
1 cup cucumber, diced  
½ cup spinach, finely diced  
¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced  
⅓ cup feta cheese, crumbled  
1 avocado, cubed  
⅓ cup mint or basil leaves, roughly torn  
½ jalapeño, thinly sliced (optional)

## Directions

1. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together all dressing ingredients and set aside.
2. Arrange watermelon, cucumber and red onion on a large plate or bowl. Drizzle with half of the dressing.
3. Top with the feta, avocado, mint, and jalapeño (if using), and drizzle with remaining dressing. Season to taste and serve straight away.

## Notes

- Best consumed within 3 days of preparing. Store in an airtight container.

## Why it's good for you

- This salad contains a variety of fresh produce, helping you reach your 5+ a day serves of fruit and veggies.
- The sugar content of this meal is from the natural sugars found in the watermelon. However, by pairing it with fibre, healthy fats, and protein, this will help reduce blood sugar spikes.



## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Time</b>	50 mins
<b>Protein</b>	44g
<b>Sugar</b>	14g
<b>Sat fat</b>	3g
<b>Energy</b>	392 calories (1,640kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	26g
<b>Total fat</b>	10g
<b>Fibre</b>	5g

## Ingredients

1 medium fennel bulb, separate layers  
 1 lemon, juiced  
 ¾ cup Greek yoghurt  
 ¼ cup mint, chopped  
 3 ripe mangoes  
 120g bag of baby rocket  
 3 Lebanese cucumbers, peeled into ribbons.  
 1 bunch radish, washed  
 1kg cooked medium prawns, peeled and deveined  
 ¼ cup pistachio kernels, toasted and chopped  
 Extra virgin olive oil and lemon wedge, to serve

# Wreath prawn and mango salad

*Looking for a vibrant centrepiece for your festive spread this year? Here's a fresh, summery, wreath-shaped salad which brings together the festive favourites and seasonal produce to impress your guests.*

## Directions

1. Use a mandolin to thinly slice the fennel into a large bowl. Pour over the lemon juice, salt and pepper. Stir to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, combine the Greek yogurt and mint, and season. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Use a mandolin to thinly slice radish and put aside until ready to assemble the salad.
4. Using a sharp knife, slice mangoes lengthways either side of the stone to remove the cheeks. Carefully scoop out the flesh, and thinly slice the mangoes.
5. Drain the fennel.
6. Arrange rocket mixture, in the shape of a wreath, on a large board or platter. Top with fennel, cucumber, radish, prawns, and mangoes. Sprinkle with pistachio and drizzle with olive oil.
7. Serve with mint yoghurt and lemon wedges.

## Notes

- You can swap prawns for another festive protein such as roast chicken, turkey, or smoked salmon.
- If you don't have a mandoline, you can slice the fennel and radish finely using a sharp knife.

## Why it's good for you

- A beautiful and delicious side to your festive feast, packed with a variety of vegetables to provide you with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
- Prawns are also a great source of protein and rich in B-vitamins which play a role in our energy production.



## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Time</b>	15 mins
<b>Protein</b>	7g
<b>Sugar</b>	<1g
<b>Sat fat</b>	2g
<b>Energy</b>	343 calories (1,434 kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	38g
<b>Total fat</b>	15g
<b>Fibre</b>	6g

## Ingredients

3 cups brown rice, cooked  
 6 spring onions, sliced  
 1 red capsicum, finely diced  
 ½ cup currants  
 100g pitted olives  
 2 tbsp sunflower seeds  
 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds  
 ¼ cup olive oil  
 4 tbsp soy sauce  
 2 tbsp lemon juice, freshly squeezed  
 1 garlic clove, crushed  
 Decorate with fresh coriander

# Quick brown rice salad

*This brown rice salad recipe is easy to prepare – you can have it on the table in less than 20 minutes, and it's full of goodness to nourish your soul and body.*

## Directions

1. Place the cooked brown rice, pitted olives, sliced spring onions, diced capsicum, currants, and seeds in a large salad bowl. Toss to mix.
2. In a small bowl, add the lemon juice, olive oil, soy sauce and crushed garlic. Stir until well combined.
3. Add the dressing to the large salad bowl and mix until well combined.

## Notes

- Best served immediately or stored in an airtight container for leftovers the next day.

## Why it's good for you

- Brown rice is a good source of dietary fibre, it keeps your bowels in check and you feeling fuller for longer.
- Capsicum, spring onions, and olives help you reach your daily 5+ serves of veggies.





# Festive Mediterranean grain salad

*The perfect balance between refreshing and tangy.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	6
<b>Time</b>	120 mins
<b>Protein</b>	14g
<b>Sugar</b>	18g
<b>Sat fat</b>	3g
<b>Energy</b>	447 calories (1,870kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	45g
<b>Total fat</b>	21g
<b>Fibre</b>	12g

## Ingredients

1 bunch coriander, chopped	1/3 cup currants
1/2 bunch parsley, chopped	Juice of 1 lemon
8 spring onions, diced	3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 red capsicum, diced	Sea salt to taste
2 sticks celery, diced	1 pomegranate, deseeded, to serve
1 cup freekeh	
1/2 cup Puy (French green) lentils	<b>For the dressing</b>
2 tbsp pumpkin seeds (or black cumin seeds)	1/2 cup thick Greek yoghurt
2 tbsp toasted slivered almonds	1 tsp ground cumin
3 tbsp toasted pine nuts	1 tsp honey
2 tbsp capers	

## Directions

1. Wash freekeh and lentils separately.
2. Add freekeh to a pot and cover with water. Let it sit on high heat until the water is boiling. Once freekeh has boiled for a whole minute, strain the grains and discard used water. Run it under the tap again, and now the freekeh is ready to be cooked.
3. Cook freekeh and lentils separately in boiling water for approximately 20 minutes. Drain well and allow to cool.
4. Meanwhile, mix the yoghurt, ground cumin, and honey until combined then set aside.
5. Toast the nuts in a small pan, until golden.
6. In a medium bowl, add coriander, parsley, onion, capsicum, celery, freekeh, lentils, toasted nuts, capers, currants, lemon juice, and olive oil. Mix well and season to taste.
7. Place into a serving dish and drizzle with cumin yoghurt and pomegranate seeds.

## Notes

- You can substitute freekeh with any cracked wheat or quinoa.

## Why it's good for you

- This is a delicious festive salad that uses freekeh, a nutritious grain made from roasted green wheat grains. Freekeh contains resistant starch, which feeds the good bacteria in our large intestine. It's also high in protein and fibre, which keeps us satisfied for longer.
- You'll be getting a variety of plant-based fibres from the lentils, freekeh, nuts, seeds, and fresh herbs. Meaning you'll be keeping both your tummy and gut happy this festive season!



# Hibiscus and pomegranate punch

*Bursting with flavour and colour, our punch is the perfect balance between delicious and healthy.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	4
<b>Time</b>	10 mins
<b>Protein</b>	0.5g
<b>Sugar</b>	23g
<b>Energy</b>	90 calories (377 kJ)
<b>Carb</b>	24g
<b>Total fat</b>	<1g
<b>Fibre</b>	1.5g

## Ingredients

- 4 cups hibiscus tea
- 1 fresh squeezed lemon
- 1 orange, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses or grenadine syrup
- 1 tbsp pomegranate seeds, to serve

## Directions

1. Place the hibiscus tea, still warm, in a jar.
2. Add molasses and honey and stir well to combine.
3. Transfer this mixture to your punch bowl with lots of ice. Pro tip: frozen berries are also a great addition.
4. Add lemon juice, orange slices and pomegranate seeds to the bowl and mix it slightly.

## Notes

- You can decorate your glasses with ice, orange slices, and a drizzle of pomegranate molasses for a festive look.

## Why it's good for you

- Hibiscus tea's bright colour is due to a class of polyphenols called anthocyanins. Polyphenols have antioxidant properties and are protective against free radicals.
- Polyphenols also have anti-inflammatory properties and have the potential to support cardiovascular health.



# Watermelon NOjito for two

*It doesn't get more refreshing than this! Quench your thirst in style and alfresco.*

## Nutrition content per serve

<b>Serves</b>	2
<b>Time</b>	15 mins
<b>Protein</b>	1.6g
<b>Sugar</b>	14g
<b>Energy</b>	82 calories
<b>Carb</b>	14g
<b>Total fat</b>	0.3g
<b>Fibre</b>	3.5g

## Ingredients

2 large slices of watermelon (300 grams)  
2 lemons  
½ tsp caster sugar  
1 cup of ice cubes  
1 cup of sparkling water  
1 sprigs of mint

## Directions

1. Cut two slices of lemon and set aside.
2. Juice the remaining lemons.
3. Roughly chop the watermelon and blend it until smooth.
4. Add the lemon juice and sugar to the blender and blend it until combined.
5. Pop some ice cubes into two glasses, pour in the watermelon mix and top it up with sparkling water for a fizzy finish.
6. Garnish with mint.

## Why it's good for you

- Watermelon is low in calories and has a high-water content, which can help to keep you hydrated on hot, sunny days.
- Watermelon contains several vitamins for our health, including potassium, for nerve and muscle function, and vitamin C, which acts as an antioxidant in the body and helps to absorb iron.