



# Survive the Holidays and Enjoy Them!

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## Happy Holidayze!

Here's hoping your life isn't too crazy this December! If you are feeling overwhelmed, I've included some strategies for coping that should help you both stave off weight gain AND reduce your stress levels.

Let's face it: this is one of the most stressful times of the year, and all the bad economic news is compounding a traditionally difficult time. We all have lots of expectations on us this time of year from families, employers,

## Surviving the Holiday Party Circuit

It's easy to gain a few pounds at this time of year - the average American puts on 3 lbs. Here are a few strategies to help you at parties:

1. eat enough during the day before you go so you're not famished when you arrive
2. take small tastes of food on a small plate - then go back ONLY for the ones that are worth the calories
3. step away from the food table - go into another room
4. drink a glass of water (or sparkling water) between each plate fill up
5. drink another glass of water between each alcoholic drink
6. talk to two strangers before you go back for seconds (or thirds)
7. order an appetizer as your main course at a restaurant

And if you are the host, try to put some healthy things on your table: nuts, fruits and vegetables are always nice to have, and some people will actually thank you for them!

What coping strategies do you use? Let me know and I'll spread them around for next year!

## De-Stress This Most Stressful time of the Year

Gift lists, social obligations, cookies for the kids' school, decorate the house, extended family time. All this and there's a recession going on. Talk about stressful. Need some ideas for managing the stress? Try these:

1. make a budget and STICK TO IT - money can be a huge stress, especially when everyone's finances are under seige
2. agree with the people you exchange gifts with to do less this year: make one donation and let everyone know you've done it in their name; agree to buy gifts just for children in the family this year
3. delegate things you don't have time for or hate to do: love the look of a decorated house buy can't stand taking the time to do it? There's probably a teenager in the neighborhood who needs the money
4. plan an inexpensive but fun dinner with friends in lieu of exchanging gifts - or agree to work together on a worthy cause: pass out dinner at a homeless shelter or pack boxes at a food pantry
5. Shop on the internet where you'll be less tempted by impulse buys (if you ignore those pop-ups!)

friends and even total strangers who expect us to be happy all the time. You don't have to be Scrooge to wonder why we all lose our minds every year at this time.

So take a break, and a deep breath (or a few) and remember who and what you love: the first snowfall; pretty wrapping paper; hearing from distant friends, even if they are bragging about their kids achieving impossible things; some time off of work. what are you favorite things from this time of year?

I try to remember how much I have compared to many people around the world. In an effort to balance that out a little, I have made a donation to Concern USA's Gift of Hope campaign that provides children with access to education and families with access to clean water and health care. To learn more about [Concern and their programs, click here.](#)

Wishing you all the best in this holiday season and in 2009!

Warm regards,

Natalie

**Quick Links**

Try to build in time to relax and be good to yourself: don't let your work-out routine falter - schedule it in just like everything else; make big batches of food you can freeze for quick dinners; eat real food when you shop and drink water rather than soda or coffee.

Remember, you control what you do, no one else does. So make this season your most stress-free. You'll have less to regret in January!

## Recipe of the Month: Lemon Thyme Chicken Breasts

Serves 4, with leftovers for 4 more meals

Prep time: 3 minutes

Cook time: 16 minutes

### Ingredients

2 tbs olive oil  
8 4 oz chicken breasts  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp pepper  
1 tbs dried thyme  
juice from 4 lemons (about 1/2 cup)

### Directions

Sprinkle salt, pepper and thyme on chicken breasts. Heat oil in a skillet on medium high until shimmering. Add chicken and saute until brown on one side and it no longer sticks to pan, about 4 minutes. Turn over and brown second side, about 3 minutes more. Add lemon juice, cover pan, reduce heat to medium and cook until chicken is cooked through but not dry, about 8 minutes more.

This is an easy dish to make on a week night, and it keeps well, so make extra.

## There are Many Ways to Become a Client

- Want to jumpstart a weight loss program? Clear your body of toxins or fat? I now offer a variety cleansing programs using the #1 products on the market today. There's an 11 day program or a 30 day program (national average weight loss for the 11 day program is 7 lbs.). [Click here](#) to learn more about the programs and products.
- Individual coaching programs to help you meet weight loss or healthy living goals .
- Employer programs to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, and teach employees about things like healthy eating on the go and stress reduction.
- Group cooking classes to learn how to put healthy meals on the table in fewer than 30 minutes - if you have a group of two to ten friends we can do a single or series of cooking lessons based on the skills of the group.
- Attend a workshop. We give them in person in Chicago or via the web. For a web seminar, all you need is a phone and a computer connected to the Internet. See below for more information about our next web seminars.
- Eating for Peak Performance - Programs for athletes of all ages from middle school to adulthood to learn to fuel your body correctly.
- Group coaching programs if an individual program is too much of

an investment.

Looking for healthy eating ideas for your freinds and fmailly?

Check out the [resources page of my web site](#) to order interesting reading and cooking books!

[More About Us](#)

[Contact me](#) to learn more about any of these services.

## Happy holidays to all!

Thanks so much for all your support for my business, whether financial or moral, in 2008. I'll be launching a new web site with enhanced features in January, so keep your eye out for that. I hope that you get to spend some quality time with the people you love in the coming weeks and that 2009 brings you joy and laughter.

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