



A GUIDE FOR HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS: How to best enjoy and stay clear of a stomach ache -- Plus a Hazelnut Meringue cookie recipe

This time of the year things tend to linger in my refrigerator longer than they should. Too busy trying to shop for gifts, visit with loved ones, get ready for the holidays and finally still try to work!

Leftovers somehow find their way to back of my refrigerator and the recently purchased groceries end up covering them up and before you know it....there is a science experiment growing in the fridge.

Here are a few rules to follow regarding leftovers:

- Use leftovers within 4 days
- Stuffing and gravy should be used within 2 days
- Frozen foods should be eaten within four months
- After the food is cooked, it should sit out for no more than 2 hours before it goes in the refrigerator
- When reheating leftover make sure the internal temperature reaches 165° (soups/sauces/gravies should be brought to a rolling boil)

Be mindful to make sure to rotate the leftovers. A good idea is to always write the date on the saran wrap or foil covering the leftovers. This will leave no way to deny when it went in the fridge. What is the harm in letting the leftovers linger? Harmful bacteria start to develop and they are not pleasant to deal with once in the gut. One thing to think about is trying to have leftovers as part of your lunch the following day, that way you are sure to get them in and out of the fridge quickly!

Hazelnut Meringues

Ingredients:

1 c hazelnuts
1/3 c sugar
3 egg whites
2/3 c powdered sugar
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp lemon zest
48 whole hazelnuts

Preparation:

Grind hazelnuts with 1/3 c sugar in food processor. Set aside. In large bowl, beat egg whites until foamy white and double in volume using an electric mixer on high speed. Add powdered sugar, a tablespoon at a time, until meringue stiffens. Fold hazelnut mixture into egg white mixture. Add juice and lemon zest.

Spray baking sheet with cooking spray. Spoon meringues into pastry bag fitted with a star tip and pipe star shaped cookies onto baking sheet. Top each with whole hazelnut. Bake until firm but still resilient –about 20 minutes at 375°.

Nutrition Information: (2 cookies) 76 calories, 4 grams fat, 0 cholesterol and 6 mg sodium

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This is another in a weekly series of healthy recipes from Kay MacInnis, registered dietitian at Providence Health in Columbia, S.C.

Kay promotes health and wellness, helping cardiac and diabetes patients eat their way to healthier lives. She works in consultation with the trained chefs at Providence, combining her nutrition knowledge with their food prep know-how to create delicious, healthy dishes for patients and the public. She also conducts a number of health and wellness events for the public, including the monthly Providence Cooks! classes.

"She doesn't just give you the fish, she teaches you how to cook it."

– a Kay MacInnis fan and Providence Cooks! regular.