J&M® halal certified meals use only wholesome ingredients and have NO MSG, NO SOY, and NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS OR COLORS. Each meal is fully cooked and is conveniently packaged in either 10 oz. (283 g) microwaveable serving dishes or 8 oz. (227 g) travel and camping pouches. Reheat to eat in minutes.

**LAMB & LENTIL STEW:** Tender lamb joins a medley of tomatoes, lentils, onions, chickpeas, zucchini and red and green sweet peppers. Aromatic herbs and spices invite all to taste and enjoy this truly delicious meal.

**LAMB & BARLEY STEW:** Tender lamb, combined with barley, eggplant, red and green sweet peppers, zucchini and onions, create a true culinary delight! A scrumptious meal with a variety of textures, it is deliciously seasoned with herbs and spices of the Middle East.

**MY KIND OF CHICKEN®:** A favorite combination of chunks of light and dark chicken meat with brown rice, peas and carrots in a mild sauce.

**CHICKEN MEDITERRANEAN:** A hearty chicken meal with the flavors of the Mediterranean region. It has chunks of light and dark chicken meat, tomatoes, potatoes, chickpeas, and black olives in a tangy sauce.

**CHICKEN & NOODLES:** A winning combination with chunks of light and dark chicken meat, homestyle Kluski noodles, peas and carrots in a lightly seasoned sauce.

**CHICKEN & BLACK BEANS:** A scrumptious meal with chunks of light and dark chicken meat, black & kidney beans, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet peppers and corn. Simple spicing brings out its full flavor!

**BEEF STEW:** A satisfying and delicious stew! It has chunks of lean beef, with potatoes, sweet peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, zucchini, chickpeas and carrots in a flavorful sauce.

**OLD WORLD STEW:** Chunks of lean beef, with brown rice, tomatoes, zucchini and pinto beans. The sauce is seasoned with the aromatic flavors of the Middle East.

**PASTA WITH GARDEN VEGETABLES:** This delicious and robust meal has rotini pasta with peppers, mushrooms, zucchini and tomatoes. It is perfectly flavored with traditional Italian seasonings.

**VEGETARIAN STEW:** A meal fit for vegetarian and hearty eater alike! With macaroni, vegetables, potatoes, barley, lentils, peanuts and seasonings, this meal has great taste and a variety of textures.

**CHEESE TORTELLINI:** Cheese-filled tortellini are simply delicious in a well-seasoned tomato sauce, with the added protein and texture of pinto beans.

**FLORENTINE LASAGNA:** A meal influenced by the tastes of Florence. Savor the combination of small lasagna noodles in a tomato sauce with Ricotta and Parmesan cheeses, spinach and pinto bean pieces which add texture and protein.
### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Editor’s Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>From the Publisher’s Desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>FOOD TRENDS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food Trucks: A Touch of Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>HEALTH &amp; NUTRITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weight Fluctuations During Ramadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td><strong>QURANIC &amp; PROPHETIC FOODS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grapes: Nature’s Candy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td><strong>A CLOSER LOOK AT LABELS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gelatin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recipes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Recipe Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mexican Hot Chocolate Ice Cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>The Great Greensby, Yogurt Smoothie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Kabargah, A Kashmeri Delicacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Grape Ambrosia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Feature Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Coffee: Healthy Treat or Dangerous Indulgence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Oven Verses Microwave Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Halal-Certified Product Locator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assalamu Alaikum,

Before you wonder at the change of name at the bottom, let me begin by introducing myself. I’ve been with IFANCA since the beginning of this year in the media department and have now assumed Alia’s role as the Content Manager of Halal Consumer® magazine. We’ll miss her and wish her best of luck in future.

It’s time to celebrate summer again; enjoy the long, lazy days; plan holidays; and stock up on Vitamin D. Check out our smoothies and ice cream recipes that will help you keep cool as temperatures soar. This time round, we have taken research on creamy, sugary dessert very seriously, to help you choose between froyo, gelato, and ice cream.

As always, this issue covers a wide range of topics. It features a comparison of conventional and microwave ovens. In a world of tweets and textese, where everyone is hard-pressed for time, learn how the latter can be a source of quick, nourishing meals while ensuring portion control. You will also find articles on the value of grapes (mentioned in the Quran), and nutrition bars in addressing human dietary needs. If you were hoping to shed some pounds during Ramadan and didn’t, find out why by reading up on human physiology, in the article on Ramadan and weight loss.

If you’re one of those for whom life begins after coffee, then you’d be happy to know that this great American amour does have its benefits. Read up on its history and find out how it’s both recreational and medicinal: protecting against several diseases, improving cognitive function, and decreasing the risk of depression. This issue has information on its pros and cons to help you balance your lifestyle.

Given the ever increasing consumer awareness about halal, this issue focuses on a very vital ingredient in the food industry: gelatin. Do you know that in case you can’t find IFANCA halal certified gelatin-containing products or gelatin dessert in the store you’re at, there are vegetarian and vegan alternatives to non-halal gelatin? Our review will help you find out what to look out for when shopping for it and how to spot it on a product label.

Since it’s easier to be outdoors, satisfy your cravings at food truck festivals happening this summer. The eating options are endless. Our article on food trucks will give you a better sense of what this trend is all about.

Enjoy the summer, in our magazine and outdoors. As always, your feedback would be very welcome, whether via email, Facebook or Twitter.

Happy Reading!

Sincerely,

Haniya Rais Tirmizi content manager
From the Publisher’s Desk

Assalamu Alaikum,

The use of anti-microbial products has become commonplace in our society. Products claiming to kill 99+% of all germs and microbes are readily available as foams, lotions, and liquids for personal use or for sanitizing household items, including in laundry detergents. Hospitals and many business offices have dispensers scattered around for patrons to use. Do we really need all of this?

We all certainly want to be germ free but should we want to be totally microbe free? Is that even possible?

There are billions and billions of microbes and they can be found everywhere on earth: in the soil, plants, animals, and even in the human body. Most of these microbes play a beneficial role, providing useful functions that make life more pleasant for us. A small percentage are harmful and may cause illness or damage. Are we going overboard in trying to live a microbe-free life?

Studies have shown that the majority of bacteria are removed by washing with clean water. Whether on our hands, clothes, or eating implements, thorough washing with water will remove most of the microbes. Cleaning with regular soap products and drying or wiping with a clean towel removes most of the remaining ones. There is usually no need to use stronger products if water, soap, and a clean towel are available. Use of these stronger anti-microbial products also kills many of the beneficial microbes, possibly resulting in discomfort or illness. Furthermore, the harmful bacteria are rather resilient and often become resistant to the chemicals used to kill them. They can adapt to the new environment and evolve into super bugs which become even more harmful and more difficult to destroy.

To promote new loan applications, my bank was offering cookies along with a hand sanitizer to sanitize the hand before taking the cookie. Is that overkill? Anti-microbial and anti-bacterial products have a use in environments where soap and clean water are not readily available or where the likelihood of harmful bacteria being present is high and they should definitely be used in such situations. Flooded areas, deep woods, camping, and hospitals are some examples of places and situations where using these products makes sense. That is why we have certified a number of anti-microbial products. However, we should not overuse these products when soap and clean water are available and will likely get the job done.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Munir Chaudry president
Food Trucks: A Touch of Travel

By Naazish YarKhan
For foodies, food trucks conjure up an appetite! On their menus is just about everything: dim sum, tacos, Indian dosas, shawarma, gumbo, Chinese, Brazilian barbecue, gyros, pancakes, cupcakes, Filipino halo-halo, sushi, Mexican ice-cream. While some have fixed menus, other food truck owners experiment with new flavors and ingredients, with novelty as their selling point. Yes, lots of authentic, ethnic food, and still more fusion recipes!

With historical roots in the US, food trucks started out in downtowns by office buildings, where office-goers wanted to grab a quick bite. The nationwide explosion in recent years can be traced to the mobile fleet selling taqueros across Los Angeles and the success enjoyed in 2011 by Kogi, the self-proclaimed most iconic Los Angeles and Orange County based taco truck that birthed the Korean-Mexican taco movement. “They are fast, it is so nice to eat outside, they are cheaper, and they offer more ethnic food—all of which I love,” says Susan Smith Rosenbaum of Glen Ellyn, IL. But, how do you find them? Some food trucks stay put at certain locations while the on-the-go ones have to be followed via their Facebook and Twitter feeds.

“Whenever I’m in DC for work, I try something different at the various food trucks at this one location,” says Erica Nelson, of Wheaton, IL. “It’s always packed and there is such a great fusion of foods. Eating at food trucks is a social experience, a communal eating experience.” Rosenbaum recalls her time at the University of Texas, when food truck vendors grilled fajitas at corners by 6th Street downtown, even at 1 a.m. “Food trucks also give you a flavor of the city... and the places you visit. Of all the things we did there, it stood out,” she adds. “Eating at food trucks brings back the feeling of being travelers,” she says, reminiscing about the time she travelled around Indonesia and experienced all the food-carts.

What began as a downtown phenomenon has morphed into an attraction, a food destination and a way of celebrating summer across America. June 2 was the date for the Food Truck Festival in Woodbridge, New Jersey, and June 4 for one in Evansville, Indiana. There was another Food Truck Festival on June 17 in Altoona, Iowa, and across the country in Houston, Texas. Chicago Food Truck Fest was on June 24 and 25, and Arlington Heights, IL, hosted its Food Truck Festival on July 8. These are just a sampling.

That said, food trucks owners have their share of woes. Currently, 70 licensed food trucks operate in Chicago with about 30 others in the rest of Illinois. That’s down from the 130-140 food trucks in Chicago alone in 2012, according to Gabriel Wiesen, President of the Illinois Food Truck Association. The 2012 ordinance “prohibits the trucks from parking within 200 feet of any business that sells food (including convenience stores and pharmacies), and from remaining in the same spot for more than two hours. Parking violations range from $1,000 to $2,000 per infraction, whereas health code citations start at $200,” according to a Chicago Reader, March 2017 article. And those aren’t the only legal hurdles. When food is cooked on board, rather than as pre-packaged meals, Chicago food trucks have a hard time both cooking and selling their food in a limited span of two hours. Unfortunately, Chicago isn’t the only city to give its food truck vendors a tough time.

Restaurants realize that if you can’t beat them, join them. Farhaan Khan recalls how an offshoot of a restaurant, the Tony’s Pizza food truck arrived like clockwork at the office campus in Wheeling, IL, ready to dish out hot and piping pizza for lunch. “I didn’t have to worry about bringing lunch and it is always easier if food comes right to your office than going anywhere,” Khan recalls. What was his first experience eating cheese pizza out of a truck soon became a three to four times a week habit. “The taste was very consistent so everyone knew what they were getting.”
Unlike many food trucks where food is cooked in the mobile kitchen, Tony’s Pizza had a pre-made selection, kept hot in their truck. The truck stopped for less than 10 minutes before its visit to the next office campus.

And then there are still other food trucks like Cupcakes for Courage that not only serve up delicious goodies, but contribute a percentage of their earnings to causes, like cancer research and organizations like Ride Janie Ride. Their website states, “Kathryn, my elder sister, was diagnosed in May of 2010 with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. During her treatment, to keep our spirits lifted, we dreamed up many different cupcake flavor ideas and baked and tested the winning ones when back home. Cupcakes and baking were an escape from the realities of battling cancer, little did we know it would become what it is today: a food truck & bakery cafe.”

If you’re getting ideas because you want to be a chef who is in charge of the menu himself, or don’t have a whole lot of cash to put down for a restaurant, or want to get a taste of the restaurant industry before committing to brick-and-mortar, then food trucks are the happy medium for you.

NAAZISH YARKHAN (www.writersstudio.us) is a writer, editor and a college essay coach and has contributed to NPR, PRI and more.
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Cool Desserts

By Husna Ghani
Do you ever look at research studies on the effects of different types of chocolate, or how napping at work makes you a better employee and wonder how one gets the opportunity to be part of research studies? Well, I lived one of my dreams while writing this article. I researched ice cream, gelato, and frozen yogurt...all for the sake of science. I know what you’re thinking. You’re thinking that I should have already known what those three are and what they taste like. Well, let’s just say I take my research of creamy sugary desserts very seriously and perhaps I needed to update my research...again.

In the midst of a warm summer, ice cream, gelato, and frozen yogurt are main staples on any dessert table or in any freezer. The United States consumes the highest amount of frozen treats in the world. So, what exactly are the components of these three creamy, cool desserts? Does one taste better than the others or does one save us from the battle of the belly bulge more than the others?

First up, we have ice cream. This is classic. We all have memories of ice cream as children, whether we ate it in a bowl, on a cone, or dropped it on the sidewalk. According to the Nestlé’s ice cream website—www.icecream.com, here’s a little history on one of the “coolest” desserts ever:

- **5 BC**: The Greeks ate a cold dessert similar to ice cream.
- **1300’s**: Marco Polo returns to Europe with an ice cream like food.
- **1700’s**: Ice Cream is introduced to the west (Americas) as a delicacy for the elite.
- **1776**: America’s first ice cream shop opens up in New York.
- **1840’s**: America’s first ice cream churn is invented.
- **1851**: The first ice cream plant is established in America.
- **1880’s**: The ice cream sundae is born.
- **1904**: Waffle cones are introduced at The World’s Fair in St. Louis.
- **1929**: Rocky Road flavor makes its debut.
- **1984**: July is declared National Ice Cream Month.
- **TODAY**: Ice cream is America’s favorite treat.... second only to cookies.

It’s interesting how we make the top of the charts in all things gluttonous. According to the International Dairy Food Association (IDFA), in the United States, the average American consumes over 23 pounds of ice cream a year, with summer being the obvious peak time (although I love ice cream in January in Chicago!). So what makes this dessert so yummy? Fat...and a whole lot of it. Real ice cream contains approximately 10-15% of milk fat. Ice cream is an aerated concoction of milk, cream (fat), sugar, and flavoring. Ever wonder why you feel like you need a nap after a big bowl of ice cream? Now you know.

We’ve been savoring Italian ice cream, gelato here in America for several years now. And no, gelato does not contain gelatin. Stop the rumors. Since the Europeans (and everyone else on the planet) are more health conscious than us Americans, gelato usually contains less than 10% milk fat and is not as aerated as ice cream. Hence, it has a more dense and flavorful taste. The main components of gelato are the same as ice cream; however, it has higher milk content and lesser cream/fat content than ice cream. Gelato is growing by leaps and bounds in the frozen dessert industry and what was a bit of a mystery about a decade ago is now close to a billion dollar industry. Gelato is here to stay.

Next up, frozen yogurt. Frozen yogurt has a dedicated fan following. There are people who are serious about their icy yogurts and will not listen to the ice cream and gelato folks. We’ve all seen these people come out of their hot yoga studios and go straight to their fro-yo place for a concoction of milk, yogurt culture, cane or beet sugar, and stabilizer. Stabilizer? A stabilizer can be made of a myriad of things such as animal gelatin, vegetable gelatin, or vegetable additives such as carrageenan or guar gum. The stabilizer ensures that the yogurt maintains a smooth consistency and minimizes crystallization. So what about the fat and sugar content? Anything with the word yogurt in it is low in fat and sugar, right? Not so fast. Let’s take a look at this healthy dessert. Frozen yogurt has some milk fat. Usually it varies from less than one percent to up to five percent (or more). However, most frozen yogurt brands can contain more sugar than both ice cream and gelato.

Disillusioned? Ok, let’s compare it all in a chart. Since a cup of ice cream has more air than a cup of gelato or frozen yogurt, we must look at the mass (in grams or ounces) to have a real comparison. Also, we have used vanilla ice cream, gelato, and yogurt but a flavor variation can also make a difference.

HUSNA T. GHANI has an MSEd and an MBA. She has taught health and science for years. When she’s not working, she reads, writes, sketches, and tries to save the world (or something like that).
Weight Fluctuations During Ramadan

By Suha Najjar RD, LDN

Weight loss during Ramadan is a welcome, worldly bonus to the multiplied, spiritual rewards. It helps us practice better self-control. For some it is an opportunity to catapult their weight loss goals, while for others it’s perplexing to see weight creep up, despite long hours without any nourishment. Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the curious world of human physiology. Here, weight fluctuations are based on metabolic adaptation under varying conditions.

Nutrition 101

The body needs micronutrients and macronutrients in order to stay balanced. Micronutrients include vitamins, minerals, and water; none of these essential nutrients have calories in them, so they are not energy bearing. A lack of water or excessive sweat/urination that is not replenished with fluids can cause dehydration, so it’s best to avoid being outdoors during hours of high sunlight.

Macronutrients include fat, protein, and carbohydrates (carbs). Carbs, which contain sugar and metabolize with the first bite, are used as the body’s primary fuel source and their breakdown triggers the quick release of insulin. Insulin acts as a key that opens the cell membranes to receive glucose to be used as energy. Insulin is a growth hormone that generates fat from excess carbs not used for energy metabolism, and stores glucose in the liver as glycogen for later use. Remember that the body goes into a survival, homeostasis mode in order to conserve the little energy it is receiving during periods of fasting. The primal brain interprets it as a threat of famine where fuel is scarce; it doesn’t know that you are fasting voluntarily. All it knows is it has to save the Queen—the brain. The metabolism thus slows down.

Sometimes what appears as weight loss is actually dehydration. It is a good idea to stay hydrated by keeping a water bottle near the bed to sip on throughout the night. Caffeinated beverages should be avoided, or their intake minimized, to this end.

Fat Be Gone

The liver holds glycogen to be used primarily for energy during sleep. However, the liver has a finite storage capacity and when stores are used up, the body pulls energy from its fat stores. In the case of fasting, fat is not solely used as energy, rather it is used in conjunction with muscle. Depending on eating (and fasting) habits, some individuals appear emaciated towards the end of Ramadan due to lost fluids and muscle mass, burnt up for energy utilization. This can lead to weight loss, muscle weakness, and prolonged fatigue. Thus it is important to take protein rich foods nuts, cheese, legumes, and lean meat before bed or protein shakes for suhoor the pre-dawn meal (try halal certified Organic Valley or EAS Complete Protein Powder). It’s a good idea to seek a registered dietitian’s assistance, at the very beginning of the month, for planning balanced meals.

Ghrelin the Gremlin

Hormones ghrelin and leptin are responsible for appetite regulation. With prolonged fasting ghrelin levels rise and continue to rise in hopes that you eat enough to satiate your energy level. There are two possible outcomes for ignoring ghrelin signals. Either it will encourage you to eat the most calorically heavy foods (I see you chocolate fudge cake) in the quickest period to squash the hunger and save the body from starvation upon breaking the fast or lead to appetite deregulation from suppressing hunger cues. This may be one reason why Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) encouraged people who were fasting to hasten to break the fast and said, “You should take sahur, for it is the blessed breakfast.” (Sunan an Nasa’I, Book 22, Hadith 75)

Leptin is the hormone responsible for countering ghrelin by signaling satiety. It encourages us to slow down or cease eating. During Ramadan (especially during summer months), when the days are long and fasting is prolonged, ghrelin can get uncomfortably high. Breaking the fast with high calorie foods, eaten very quickly, does not give leptin
a chance to tell the body to slow down before it reaches a point where it is exceedingly full. It’s advisable to break the fast with dates, water, and a small soup or salad, then pray maghrib (fourth prayer of the day) and come back to finish the meal. The prayer break can help regulate hunger, by forcing you to slow down while leptin catches up. Go easy on carbs, sugar, and deep-fried indulgences.

Let’s Get Physical

While it may be easy to shrug off exercise, physical activity can help shed those unwanted pounds while helping you maintain muscle mass. If you ate a very heavy dinner, a 30 minute walk is a perfect way to ensure that extra calories are put to good use. Be active not exhausted.

Consider exercising right before iftar (evening meal that breaks the fast) so that you are able to hydrate and replenish lost nutrients immediately.

Be it loss or gain, weight fluctuations around Ramadan can easily return to pre-Ramadan baselines and are none the less secondary to the immense spiritual reward that can be earned during this blessed month. That’s there to stay.

SUHA NAJJAR RD, LDN is a registered and licensed dietitian nutritionist. She provides outpatient nutrition education to students at North Carolina State University. She enjoys spending time with family, exploring new restaurants and bootcamp exercise classes.
NUTRITION BARS

By Sarene Alsharif
Anyone who has gone to the grocery store or watched television has caught on to the new food craze: sports nutrition bars. Aisles of grocery stores are dedicated to the plethora of bars. But what exactly are nutrition bars? And what is the difference between nutrition bars, energy bars, and sports nutrition bars?

Nutrition bars do not have a standardized definition by the United States Food and Drug Administration nor by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. In general, nutrition bars are made of cereals, puffed rice, and other grains. They may contain nuts and dried fruits. Nutrition bars are sweet and most people use them as a fast convenient snack or meal replacement. Energy bars are nutrition bars with added caffeine while sports nutrition bars generally have more protein compared to nutrition bars and may have added caffeine as well.

Nutrition bars are a controversial issue; some people love them and others do not. Racha Kobitary, a mother of two and computer engineer from Denver, Colorado says, “I do consume lots of protein bars! I usually look for low sugar, high protein, and less than 200 calories. For me it is a good on-the-go snack or grab-and-go breakfast that leaves me full and most of them taste good like a candy bar.” On the contrary Lauren Davis a graphic designer, marketer, and owner of Lauren Davis Creative from Rockford, Illinois argues “I only eat them if I am in a position (like traveling, or at a conference, or on the go) where I can’t eat real food. But I make sure to only eat ones with minimal ingredients and low sugar. Many of those protein and nutrition bars are full of sugar and weird ingredients that I wouldn’t eat on a normal basis so why would I choose to eat them in a bar?”

Andrew Weil, M.D. and integrative medicine expert, weighs in on the nutrition bar controversy on his website; he recommends people consume nutrition bars with caution because many bars contain high amounts of sugar with “sweetness that rivals that of many candy bars.” He also is concerned about the quality of the ingredients used to manufacture these bars as some new ingredients have not had enough research done on them to prove their safety or effectiveness. Dr. Weil concludes saying, “Food bars were invented to help endurance athletes, not desk jockeys, and couch potatoes. Use them to propel you through your own athletic endeavors.”

Although nutrition bars are not as beneficial and healthy as their name makes them sound, Tod Cooperman, M.D. and President of ConsumerLab.com states nutrition bars can be enjoyed periodically and provide protein, fiber, and energy but he cautions consumers to be aware of the ingredients in the bars they choose. In October of 2013, ConsumerLab.com tested 20 of the most popular nutrition bars in the United States to see if they were accurately labeled. Most of the bars passed the test with one bar containing 25% more fat and double the cholesterol than what was on the label and another bar had 30% more cholesterol. In general nutrition bars seem to be labeled accurately but it is the consumers’ responsibility to know what to look for and what to avoid.

Let’s start with what to avoid. Dr. Weil cautions consumers from buying nutrition bars with with sugar listed as one of the first ingredients because it will result in an unhealthy spike in blood glucose levels. Additionally, ConsumerLab.com says nutrition bars with sugar alcohols listed as one of the main ingredients can cause “gas and bloating” therefore it is best to stay away from bars with such ingredients.

Look for real ingredients when selecting nutrition bars. Read the ingredients; are they names of foods you recognize or does it sound more like a science experiment than a food? Sophia Ramdass, a math teacher from Poplar Grove, IL said she likes to choose bars that have zero trans fats and are low in sugar, with ingredients she can pronounce and knows what they are. Dr. Weil advises
“Food bars were invented to help endurance athletes, not desk jockeys, and couch potatoes. Use them to propel you through your own athletic endeavors.”

picking nutrition bars with no added sugars that get their sweetness, protein, and flavor from dried fruits and nuts.

Finding healthy, delicious, nutritious bars is not as hard as one may think, as IFANCA certifies a wide range of KIND nutrition bars. Ms. Ramdass likes to feed her kids foods with ingredients that are healthy, known, and with no chemicals. Her family loves KIND bars for this reason. She says they are filling, delicious, and great for when she or the kids need a fast snack. Hend Alhinnawi, co-founder and CEO of Humanitarian Tracker from Washington D.C. likes ‘No Cow Bars’ because “they are good with low sugar and carbs.” Entrepreneurs have caught on that customers are looking for convenient foods with real ingredients. Zobaida Falah is one of those entrepreneurs. She is the founder of Cure Bar and makes nutrition bars with all real ingredients while giving back to her community because ‘for every bar sold, a bar is given to a person in need.’

Nutrition bars are convenient for on-the-go snacks and with proper care can also be nutritious and delicious. Follow these tips for getting the most from your calories and your money:

✓ Read the ingredients
✓ Beware of the sugar content
✓ Avoid sugar alcohols
✓ Choose pronounceable ingredients
✓ Look for nuts and dried fruits
✓ Look for halal certified products

Remember nutrition bars are good for the occasional snack but the bulk of your calories should come from real foods and proper meals.

SARENE ALSHARIF, MPH, LDN is a licensed dietitian nutritionist. Her passion is health promotion and disease prevention with a wholistic approach focusing on functional and whole foods.
Grapes: Nature's Candy

By Kelly Crosby
Grapes are the perfect finger food. These juicy morsels are nature’s candy that come in many colors, from light green to red or purple; blue, pink, and even black. Just wash off a bunch with water and they become a simple snack to satisfy your sweet tooth without any guilt. In the science of botany, grapes are classified as berries because of their fleshy surface and lack of a pit or fruit stone. Grapes are usually eaten fresh but they are also used to make jellies, jams, juice, raisins, vinegar, grape seed oil, and grape seed extract.

Grapes were first grown and cultivated in the Middle East thousands of years ago. Today, they are a common supermarket item all over the world and buyers everywhere are familiar with several varieties. Crimson Seedless grapes, the ones commonly sold in stores, have a sweet and tart taste combination with a long shelf life. Moon Drop grapes are long, purple-black and finger-shaped and have a firm texture and sweet jelly flavor. Concord grapes are round, deep blue with an aromatic scent and big seeds. They are also the grapes used for the popular Welch’s Grape Juice. There’s even a variety, called Cotton Candy grapes, which tastes as sweet as that fluffy sugary treat.

“Grapes are a hydrating fruit with its increased water content. Grapes are a perfect addition for Ramadan meals and snacks,” says Yaqutullah Ibraheem Muhammad RDN LD. So, if you are starting or finishing a day of fasting, consider adding grapes to your meals for the nutrients and added hydration.

Muhammad says, “Grapes contain no cholesterol or fat. They are packed with many vitamins and minerals. In red or green grapes, you find vitamin B6, C, E, K, riboflavin, pantothenic acid, and niacin. Potassium, iron, zinc, and magnesium are also present.” According to Megan Ware RDN LD of MedicalNewsToday.com, “Consuming fruits and vegetables of all kinds has long been associated with a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and other conditions. Many studies have shown that increasing consumption of plant foods like grapes decreases the risk of obesity and overall mortality.” Raisins, or dried grapes, like other dried fruits are conducive to alleviating constipation. According to WebMD.com, “Grapes are used for preventing diseases of the heart and blood vessels, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, ‘hardening of the arteries’ (atherosclerosis), high blood pressure, swelling after injury or surgery, heart attack, and stroke.”

With all the wonderful health benefits of eating grapes, it’s no wonder that they are one of the rewards of Paradise. “And He it is Who sends down water from the cloud, then We bring forth with it buds of all (plants), then We bring forth from it green (foliage) from which We produce grain piled up (in the ear); and of the palm-tree, of the sheaths of it, come forth clusters (of dates) within reach, and gardens of grapes and olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike; behold the fruit of it when it yields the fruit and the ripening of it; most surely there are signs in this for a people who believe.” (6:99) Grapes are often mentioned throughout the Quran and hadith literature. “And from the fruits of date-palms and grapes, you derive a strong drink and goodly provision.” (16:67) God also mentions the beautiful gardens and vineyards for righteous people of Paradise. “Verily, for the righteous, there will be a success, gardens and vineyards.” (78:31-32)

“And from the fruits of date-palms and grapes, you derive a strong drink and goodly provision.” (16:67)

The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) enjoyed eating grapes in many ways. It was narrated by Abu Musa Al-‘Ash’ari that, “He used to drink thickened grape juice that of which two-third had gone and one-third was left.” (Sunan an-Nasa’i, Book 51, Hadith 183). Grapes are even considered a part of war rations from a defeated enemy. Narrated by Ibn ‘Umar, (may God be pleased with him), “In our battles, we used to get honey and grapes, as war booty which we would eat and would not store.” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 57, Hadith 62).

There is no end to how they can be used. You can place grapes or raisins in your salad to give them a sweet kick. Epicurious.com has great recipes. There’s one salad recipe using arugula, grapes, and almonds with a saba vinaigrette. The saba vinaigrette is made from grape must; the juice containing the seeds, stems, and skins of freshly pressed grapes. You can also try grilled Brussel sprouts and grapes with walnuts added for a crunchy texture. Roasted chicken with grapes and rosemary are a sweet and hearty meal packed with vitamins and protein. Concord grape pie makes for a perfect comfort food during the cooler months and grape-stuffed sweet potatoes, with yummy goat cheese and various seasonings, are a decadent treat. Try these recipes and let this healthy, sweet fruit add some zing into your meals!

KELLY IZDIHAR CROSBY is an artist and freelance writer in Atlanta, Georgia.
GELATIN

By Christine Escobar
Summer 2017 | HALAL CONSUMER

From its odd beginnings as the labor intensive result of boiled meat bones, skins, and other animal byproducts, and as the 1950’s epitome of the modern housewife’s kitchen to its present-day rise as a symbol of culinary sophistication, gelatin has had a long history as a common thickener, stabilizer, binder, glaze, and a convenient source of protein.

Gelatin produced by hydrolysis of collagen which has been lauded by alternative health writers and shown in scientific studies to have benefits for hair, nails, skin, joints, and the digestive system. It is rumored to help improve cellulite, persistent subcutaneous fat causing dimpling of the skin, especially in women. A great source of dietary collagen, it helps tighten loose skin. Ingesting collagen is way more effective than any skin cream.

Alone it can be found in powder form or sheets, sweetened and colored or unsweetened and without flavor. It can also be commonly found in ready-to-eat foods, shampoos, face masks, marshmallows, frosted cereals, yogurt, gummy candies, cakes, puddings, cosmetics, and even some medications and types of film coatings. Commonly available gelatin is mostly derived from pork, and even if it isn’t, it is usually not halal because only gelatin made from the bones and hides of halal slaughtered animals is halal. Gelatin from fish is however halal. IFANCA has certified authentic halal bovine gelatin, derived from halal slaughtered animals. Gelatins from different sources have different properties, hence each kind is appropriate for a different application.

Gelatin in cosmetics can be avoided by using vegan beauty products but those too may contain ingredients that could be questionable to the halal consumer such as alcohol. Lip color can be ingested by the wearer, and according to studies, on average, 4 to 9 pounds of lipstick are “consumed” by women in their lifetimes.

Chef John Umlauf, senior VP for culinary operations for Saffron Road Foods, an American manufacturer of certified halal foods, said his company finds creative ways to thicken their food products while avoiding the use of added gelatin. “For sure, gelatin is extremely relevant to the halal consumer, since gelatin is usually derived from animal sources and, to be halal, all animal products need to be derived from animals which have been harvested in the traditional zabihah manner. In all of our products, there is no added gelatin of any kind. Our chicken broths are made from only zabihah halal chicken bones, a natural source of halal gelatin. When our sauces need thickening, we often puree them to increase the smoothness of the onions and vegetables in the sauce, or add a small amount of native corn starch or xanthan gum (derived by fermentation). We also find that adding traditional, wholesome ingredients like coconut milk, cream or yogurt adds pleasing body to a

Many desserts, medicines, and vitamins use gelatin; ask or read the ingredients of anything you buy.
sauce and reduces the amount of other thickeners needed,” Umlauf says.

How do you spot gelatin and its related products on a product label? In medications, gelatin is commonly used in capsules that coat liquid medications, powdered medications, or vitamins. Some of the words to watch out for, that describe gelatin in food, medication, and personal care product labels are: collagen hydrolysate, collagen dénaturé, collagène hydrolysé, collagène marin hydrolysé, denatured collagen, gelatina, gélatine, gélatine hydrolysée, hydrolysed collagen, hydrolyzed collagen protein, hydrolyzed gelatin, marine collagen hydrolysate, and protéine de collagène hydrolysée.

The need for alternatives with the same binding properties that gelatin delivers has prompted one Silicon Valley startup from San Leandro called Geltor, to develop a vegan alternative to gelatin using genetically engineered microbes. It hasn’t yet hit the market as such products must first be approved by the US FDA. “Vegetarian ingredients,” Geltor’s CEO, Alexander Lorestani points out, “do a good job at imitating gelatin but are far from the real thing when it comes to consistency.”

The good news is that today there are myriad vegetarian and vegan gelatin alternatives such as agar agar, konjac, guar gum, carrageenan, lecithin, xanthan gum, gum arabic, tapioca, pectin, and locust bean gum. However, according to Dr. Mian Riaz, Graduate Faculty, Nutrition and Food Science Department at Texas A&M University, agar agar, carrageenan, guar gum, locust bean gum, and konjac are not comparable to gelatin. “To some extent they can be substituted in a few foods, but you would not be able to make good quality capsules, and marshmallows. They are more difficult to incorporate with foods because of their gelling characteristics and some may have an off flavor,” he says.

Carrageenan, extracted from a red seaweed, does not have the nutritional value of gelatin, when used as a thickener and emulsifier to improve the texture of food (often found in ice cream, yogurt, cottage cheese, soy milk, and other processed foods.) There have also been some reports of it causing gastrointestinal problems, but Dr. Riaz maintains that, “If used in very small amounts (as a food additive), it does not create any major health issues.”

As consumers continue to become more educated about the source of their foods and cosmetics, they will continue to demand these alternatives. While it is always important to read product labels, don’t hesitate to reach out to a company representative if you don’t find the answers you need.

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Mexican Hot Chocolate Ice Cream
By: Annan Shehadi

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS
1 pint heavy whipping cream
1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
4 tablespoons cocoa powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper

DIRECTIONS
1. In a bowl, whip heavy cream until it thickens and peaks form, about 3 minutes.
2. In a separate bowl, mix sweetened condensed milk, cinnamon, cayenne, and sift the cocoa powder so as not to clump.
3. Fold condensed milk mixture into the whipped cream with a spatula. Mix well.
4. Pour into a container and freeze for at least 6 hours before eating.
5. Enjoy!
The Great Greensby, Yogurt Smoothie
By: YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS
1 cup frozen peaches
1 cup frozen pineapples
1 cup fresh spinach
1 cup baby kale
1 cup IFANCA-certified Greek Yogurt
1 ripe banana
1 teaspoon cinnamon

DIRECTIONS
1. Combine ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Serve with cinnamon sprinkled on top. 😊
Kabargah, A Kashmiri Delicacy
By: Moonis Meer

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds mutton chops
- 2 cups Organic Valley whole milk
- 3 tablespoons ground anise seeds
- 10 green cardamoms
- ½ teaspoon saffron
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ginger powder
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup oil for shallow frying

DIRECTIONS

1. Lay the chops in a wide, non-stick pan. Add milk, ginger powder, cardamoms, saffron, salt, and pepper.

2. Cook on medium heat for the first 10 minutes. Watch out for the first boil-over.

3. Now reduce heat and cook on very low heat (with the lid on) till the chops are absolutely tender and the milk has evaporated (approximately 45 minutes). Stir regularly and scrape the bottom of the pan. You may add half a cup of water if the moisture has dried up and the chops are still not tender.

4. Mix a teaspoon of salt and a teaspoon of pepper to the eggs. Beat them and set aside.

5. Roll the chops in egg and fry them for 5 minutes on medium heat, turning them over once, till they are golden brown.

Grape Ambrosia
By: YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

1. (15-ounce) can mandarin oranges
2. bananas, sliced
3. cups white grapes
4. ½ cup Medjool dates, pitted, diced
5. 4 tablespoons lemon juice
6. ½ cup flaked coconut
7. ½ pint whipping cream

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine well-drained fruits and dates, sprinkle with lemon juice, chill.
2. Fold in whipped topping (or cream). Serve on crisp lettuce.
3. Sprinkle coconut on top.
4. Garnish with maraschino cherry.
5. If a tart salad is preferred, cut down on whipped topping and add ½ cup mayonnaise.
Coffee isn’t a drink; it’s a lifestyle. Three-quarters of Americans drink coffee every single day. Americans are, in fact, the leading coffee consumers across the globe, with annual retail sales in 2016 estimated at 5.17 billion dollars (Statista, 2017). American millennials are into having out-of-home, premium coffee, in response to which coffee chains and restaurants are fast expanding their menus.

Coffee fuels some people to stay awake and function throughout the day and helps others to relax and unwind at its end. Whether you are a caffeine junkie, like most Americans, or someone who prefers not to rely on it at all, you will find a great wealth of information to validate both points of view.

For American Muslims, who fast during the day during the month of Ramadan, it’s not uncommon to see coffee lovers indulge in a few sips, as soon as the fast ends. In Coffee, The Power Drink of the Pious, Naeem Ali, a blogger from Canada, relays the history of coffee beans originating in Ethiopia, then as a drink in Yemen—centuries before the fascination spread to the rest of the world. “For the pious Muslim over eight hundred years ago the night could not begin without a freshly brewed cup of coffee,” he writes. “Coffee was the power drink of the pious. For the first 300 years after it was discovered, coffee was closely associated...
with Muslims...Believers consumed coffee to stay awake during the night in contemplation of Allah.” Indeed, the potent caffeine stimulant attracted legions of devotees as it does today. And for this reason, there was controversy surrounding coffee consumption, particularly with those who worried it may be a bit too potent and addictive. During this time, as Ali points out, “A concerted effort was made to declare coffee a forbidden intoxicant.” Eventually, religious scholars came to the realization that unlike alcohol, coffee is not derived from fermented fruit and doesn’t fit the Islamic definition of an intoxicant.

It did not remain the drink of the pious for long. Renowned poet Mahmoud Darwish celebrates his daily coffee as an irreplaceable moment in time: “Coffee should not be drunk in a hurry,” he writes. “It is the sister of time, and should be sipped slowly, slowly. Coffee is the sound of taste, the sound for the aroma. It is a meditation and a plunge into memories and the soul”—words that resonate well with coffee lovers.

People who aren’t lovers of coffee can, on the other hand, relate to The Women’s Petition Against Coffee in 1674—around the time when coffee was first introduced in England: “Coffee leads men to trifle away their time, scald their chops, and spend their money, all for a little base, black, thick, nasty, bitter, stinking, nauseous puddle of water” offensive words to the ears of coffee devotees.

“Coffee was the power drink of the pious. For the first 300 years after it was discovered, coffee was closely associated with Muslims...Believers consumed coffee to stay awake during the night in contemplation of God.”

Exactly where and when coffee was first cultivated is not known. Some historians believe that it was first grown in Arabia near the Red Sea around the year 675. Others say that coffee was discovered in Ethiopia around the year 900. Still others say that around the year 575, Arab traders took it to the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula, where the cultivation of coffee flourished. From the Arabs, it is believed to have gone to the Turks. The world’s first coffee shop, Kiva Han, is believed to have opened in Constantinople in 1475. It was introduced into Europe in the early 1600s. The Christian church denounced coffee as “the hellish black brew,” until Pope Clement VIII baptized it. In 1670, Dorothy Jones of Boston became the first licensed American coffee trader. Nearly a century later, Thomas Jefferson described coffee as “the favorite drink of the civilized world.”

Today, there is no industrial city, town, or suburban community without coffee shops. Coffee and coffee-flavored products fill shelves everywhere, ranging from plain black coffee, flavored coffee, tiramisu, coffee jelly, coffee flavored ice cream, to coffee marinated meat. Do you know that a person who actually makes the coffee in a café or restaurant is called a *barista*, and that the two main species of coffee plants are Arabica (difficult to grow and expensive) and Robusta (hardier and cheaper)?

Up until a few years ago, study after study indicated that coffee was all around bad for us. Recent research shows otherwise. A study published in January 2017, titled, *Coffee Intake Is Associated with a Lower Liver Stiffness in Patients with Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, Hepatitis C, and Hepatitis B*, by Alexander Hodge et al., indicates that, “Coffee consumption, not tea, was associated with lower liver stiffness, non-invasive marker of liver fibrosis. [The] study adds to the growing evidence that coffee consumption has a beneficial effect in a variety of liver diseases.”

In defending coffee’s case, the Mayo clinic’s website states that earlier studies didn’t always take into account other high-risk behaviors, such as smoking and physical inactivity, which tended to be more common among heavy coffee drinkers. Studies now show that coffee protects against Parkinson’s disease, liver diseases, and type 2 diabetes. Coffee also appears to improve cognitive function and decrease the risk of depression. The website, does however, correlate high consumption of unfiltered coffee (boiled or espresso) with mild elevations in cholesterol levels. Another risk factor is a specific, yet common, genetic mutation that slows down the breakdown of caffeine in the human body. Those with it are at a higher risk of heart disease if they consume more than two cups of coffee a day.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) states that hot beverages, even hot water, above 149 F (65 C) are “probably carcinogenic to humans,” as they damage esophageal cells. It’s good to know that the actual drinking temperature in the US is typically lower than 149 F.

In a 2011 study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, researcher Kathryn M. Wilson, found that the non-caffeine components of coffee had a “Strong inverse association between coffee consumption and risk of lethal prostate cancer.” The key word here being ‘inverse,’ meaning that coffee consumption produced a reduced risk of developing cancer. Another key phrase is...
'non-caffeine components.' Although most people know that coffee contains the caffeine stimulant, many do not know that it's a compound mixture that also contains potassium, magnesium, proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, and antioxidants. Decaf thus has the same benefits sans the caffeine.

It's hard to blame obesity on coffee since an eight-ounce cup of black coffee accounts for less than three calories and zero fat. While you can't break the calorie bank on coffee, the problem only arises when you consume multiple cups with added flavor, sugar, cream, etc. In this case, the single serving of coffee becomes more of a weighty dessert. A report in the “Eat This, Not That” newsletter titled, “How Your Coffee is Making You Fat,” indicates that flavored creamers in coffee account for 140 calories, 6 grams of fat, and 24 grams of sugar per 8-ounce serving. The report further indicates that a “single cup of coffee with ¼ cup of creamer equals an additional 15 pounds a year on your derriere.” The report suggests to replace non-dairy creamers, which contain trans-fat, sugar, soybean oil, corn syrup, and carrageenan stabilizer, with a splash of milk, agave syrup, maple syrup, honey, or other natural flavors such as vanilla or almond extracts.

In *The Big Five: Five Simple Things You Can Do to Live a Longer, Healthier Life*, Dr. Sanjiv Chopra champions the habit of drinking a cup of coffee every day, but maintains that drinking more than two cups per day may lead to addiction. He writes, “Once you start drinking coffee and your system gets used to it, it’s very difficult to stop drinking it—and if you do, sometimes even for a day, the physical repercussions of withdrawal can include headaches and nausea. It can make you feel unusually tired and even depressed.” He further adds that, “Those people who drink more coffee than their system can easily tolerate may become overstimulated; too much caffeine can cause nervousness, a rapid heartbeat, excitability, insomnia, and worsening heart burn.”

If you are still wondering about whether it’s okay to drink that second, third, or fourth cup of coffee for the day, remember to know your body, listen to it, and as with most indulgences in life, know when to stop. As for the Islamic determination, we can all rest assured that while coffee may not be the ideal source of strength and stamina, it is nonetheless a much more benign, modern day vice, when there are other more harmful and non-permissible addictions available. Moderation is the key to good health. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said, “Always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course, whereby you will reach your target” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 8, Hadith 470).

**ASMA JARAD** is a writer and editor. She holds a Master of Arts degree in English Language and Literature from National University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from the University of Illinois.
Oven Verses Microwave Cooking

By Nadia Malik
Marie T. Smith’s claim to fame, decades after her death, was to be hailed as the author of the world’s saddest cookbook. Her Microwave Cooking for One was recently resurrected from the annals of the 1980s and immortalized in a Reddit string and an Internet meme. People bought it for single friends and relatives as a tongue-in-cheek gift.

Tracy Grant, Smith’s daughter, took advantage of this comeback. Embracing the joke, Grant created a website of her mother’s work. What started as a throwback gag about a seemingly defunct way of meal preparation turned into a realization that Smith was, in many ways, just ahead of her time. Smith saw the need to make food planning easier for dual-income families that were living busy lives and jumped on the relatively new technology that was supposed to simplify food preparation.

Grant explains how it all began, “My father was a pilot, he would travel, and she was often home alone, so she started figuring out how to make things for herself. My mother spent 10 years taking all of her favorite recipes for four and reducing them for one person”. This could not have been a simple task, as she couldn’t have just taken a meal and divided it by four. Also, cooking time in microwaves varies from conventional ovens as the former heat up faster, and the ingredients too have to be accounted for very differently. Smith was also mindful that her recipes were healthy, while making use of both fresh and frozen ingredients. The end result was a collection of 300 meals that theoretically anybody with the appliance could cook in their home with little fuss.

“The instructions are easy to follow,” Grant says, “I get a lot of feedback from men who love it. I’ve had a lot of widowers write to me over the years and say how much this book has meant to them.” Grant’s own favorite recipe is her mom’s stuffed shrimp which her mother demonstrated on a TV show in the 80s. Its archived video content is now on the website. Grant has also expanded on her mother’s work by creating conversion charts for newer models that have higher wattage.

Smith missed the upsurge of microwave cooking that was to come about three decades later. Now Pinterest boards and food blogs are rife with directions for mug cookies and cakes; quick office meals that can be assembled, then nuked in minutes; and tips for steaming vegetables. There’s even shortcuts to making traditionally time-consuming fare, such as risotto, enchiladas, and pasta. Intimidating tasks, such as poaching eggs, can be a cinch with microwaves. Just put them in a little water and heat for a minute. No more simmering water to just the right level with a touch of vinegar and creating a whirlpool to have egg whites fold properly onto themselves.

Television personality Martha Stewart claims to have used this magic machine while she was in prison where it was the only tool she had access to for cooking. “One of the hurdles the microwave had to overcome was the professional cook,” she expands. “But (Stewart) learned the value.” Now her website has a special section touting quick and delicious cuisine, such as curried chicken and lemon-horseradish sole, made in microwaves.

Food stylist, Dina Cheney jumped on this trend a few years ago and wrote the Mug Meals cookbook in 2015. “I’m a mom, I have two kids in elementary school, and I work. I’m busy and interested in health,” she expounds. “You can cook very quickly, and it’s also a very healthy way to cook with no added fat.” While there are certainly limitations—especially when it comes to items like bread—there are also a surprising number of items that take well to a microwave. Cheney has found that tofu works well, and eggs are always a favorite.

Mug desserts—where all the ingredients are measured into an easily portable coffee mug and warmed for just a few minutes—are also a big hit, even though their consistency can be different from something made in the oven. “A mug cake is almost like a steamed pudding. It’s going to be a little more airy and light and frothy,” Cheney describes. But, standard cakes and other desserts usually take a good amount of time, and they’re not usually made for just one person. “It’s good for portion control,” Cheney says. “If you make a whole cake, you can just keep cutting slices.” Microwave home-bakers can whip up only a single serving of a warm, chocolate chip cookie in less than 15 minutes when a craving hits. Cheney’s most prevalent use for the microwave, though, is for vegetables.

Catherine Adams Hutt, PhD, registered dietitian, and certified food scientist, points out that vegetables are a great...
use for the appliance because of the way the machines are set up to work. “It’s a very different cooking method than conduction or convention heat [cooking],” she elaborates. “It’s not direct heat as in an oven. You’re heating water molecules and creating energy from the inside of the food out.”

The way it does the job is the reason why people turn their noses up at food made or warmed up in the apparatus. Unlike putting something on the stove, where food is heated outside in, food made in a microwave will never have a browning or Maillard reaction. Food is warmed completely evenly. There are certainly limitations – especially when it comes to items like bread. Because water molecules are targeted, it’s a great option for steaming vegetables. In fact, it retains more nutrients. Since it takes less steaming time, it’s a quick and healthy option for making broccoli, asparagus, or carrots. Even artichokes work well. Potatoes, though, are a different story. While many are happy nuking them, direct heat in the conventional oven produces the Maillard chemical reaction, which brings together sugars and amino acids that give browned foods a more appealing flavor. “It sweetens the product and gives it that crunch,” Hutt elucidates.

There’s also been a prevalent fear of side effects since the appliance was introduced for home use 50 years ago. Timothy Jorgensen, Director of the Health Physics and Radiation Protection Graduate Program at Georgetown University, has written a book on the topic called Strange Glow: The Story of Radiation, seeking to explain and dispel myths about the energy waves. “There have been a number of studies over the years to see if microwave cooking produces any toxic chemicals,” he explains. “Those have been negative.” Of course, the appropriate cookware has to be used, and plastics that aren’t deemed safe should be avoided. In explaining general skepticism to it, Jorgensen says, “People are fearful of anything they can’t see, and radiation falls into that category. People also tend to be more fearful of things that are manmade as opposed to things that are natural”. While he’s not a chef, he concedes that the microwave is not a substitute for either baking or grilling, because it doesn’t char meat on the outside, while keeping the juices all sealed in, like fire does.

This method of cooking shouldn’t however be given the short shrift for seemingly out-of-the-box uses. One online recipe lays out meatloaf made with raw ground beef, milk, ketchup, oats, and onion soup mix, cooked for 3 minutes in a mug. Smith’s oeuvre includes sloppy Joes, hamburgers, lamb chops, and even the much-feared (because it may end up too dry) Potatoes are sweeter and less healthy when cooked in a microwave.
chicken. Cheney has experimented with plenty of soups and even grain-based salads that call for ingredients such as brown rice. Her book includes Moroccan pumpkin and chickpea stew for lunch and a shepherd’s pie or Chinese chicken with noodles for dinner. Her kids love the different types of oatmeal and pizza that calls for throwing together ciabatta bread and marinara. She’s also toasted nuts, made macaroni and cheese (not out of a box), and melted chocolate in the microwave. “It’s really good at keeping ingredients moist,” she continues. In the summer, it keeps the kitchen from getting too warm, and it’s a nice alternative to a frozen dinner that may be unbalanced and high in sodium. Plus, these machines are energy-efficient compared to ovens and stoves because they have shorter cooking times.

Microwave cooking is better than fast food and its advocates think of it as a great tool to get kids to learn their way around the kitchen and get used to the idea of helping with meal preparation. It’s also a wonderful resource for a college student who may not have access to a stove in a dorm, or a frequent traveler who doesn’t want to be stuck with constant room service or restaurant options. In short, it saves time and where everyone in the household is scurrying in a different direction, it’s also conducive to healthy gastronomy. 

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<td>Visit their website for a complete list of locations: <a href="http://www.carolescheesecake.com">www.carolescheesecake.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Biscuits</td>
<td>Bakery Items</td>
<td>English Biscuit Manufacturers (Pvt.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godiva</td>
<td>Candy / Chocolate</td>
<td>Godiva Chocolatier</td>
<td>Company stores, department stores, supermarkets, gift shops, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Bonbon</td>
<td>Candy / Chocolate</td>
<td>Asti Holdings Ltd.</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.goldenbonbon.com">www.goldenbonbon.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.halalcertified.com">www.halalcertified.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kontos</td>
<td>Bakery Items, Bread</td>
<td>Kontos Foods, Inc.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Arab, Indo/Pak) stores and fruit &amp; vegetable markets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love &amp; Quiches</td>
<td>Brownies and Cakes</td>
<td>Love and Quiches Desserts</td>
<td>Visit their website for outlets: <a href="http://www.loveandquiches.com">www.loveandquiches.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Product Type</td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Available At</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mead Johnson</td>
<td>Infant/Baby Food Products</td>
<td>Mead Johnson Nutritionals</td>
<td>Department stores, supermarkets, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melaleuca</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Melaleuca, Inc.</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.melaleuca.com">www.melaleuca.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Own Meals</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>My Own Meals</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.myownmeals.com">www.myownmeals.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td></td>
<td>English (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle</td>
<td>Beverages / Beverage</td>
<td>Nestle Pakistan Ltd.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrilite</td>
<td>Nutritional Supplements</td>
<td>Access Business Group, LLC</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.nutrilite.com">www.nutrilite.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>Gyros, Flat Bread</td>
<td>Olympia Food Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Arab, Indo/Pak) stores and restaurants throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OneCoffee</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Canterbury Coffee</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Product Type</td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Available At</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Valley</td>
<td>Dairy Products</td>
<td>Cropp Cooperative/Organic Valley</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POM Wonderful</td>
<td>Beverages / Beverage Concentrates</td>
<td>POM Wonderful, LLC</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fruits Processed</td>
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<td>Saffron Road</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>American Halal Co., Inc.</td>
<td>Target, Whole Foods, Kroger, Publix, HEB, and various markets throughout the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack Food</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visit their website to locate a store near you: <a href="http://www.saffronroadfood.com">www.saffronroadfood.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appetizers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunrider</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Sunrider International</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.sunrider.com">www.sunrider.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Food Products</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutritional Supplements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom’s of Maine</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Toms of Maine, Inc.</td>
<td>Department stores, supermarkets, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderful</td>
<td>Pistachios and Almonds</td>
<td>Paramount Farms</td>
<td>Supermarkets and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
100 YEARS OF THE Coca-Cola® BOTTLE
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www.ifanca.org

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