

Dining-Guilt Free: How to Mentally Prepare Yourself for Holiday Feasts



During the holiday season, it can be quite stressful to maintain the "perfect" diet and exercise regime, when faced with a series of fat and sugar-laden indulgences that are part of the holiday merriment. Thankfully, there is no need to go into a deep black hole of depression after enjoying your family's holiday feast. And what's better, you don't need to remove yourself entirely from the festivities to avoid the tempting delicacies either!

Franci Cohen, expert nutritionist and fitness trainer gave BeautyPress some of her secret weapons to help us all navigate those holiday meals successfully, and survive the holidays to come out fit and fabulous on the other side. Read on to get the tips you need to make it through those holiday feasts.

Cohen's says the first tip to remember is to learn how to accept your imperfections. "Accept them as the markers that make you unique from anyone else," **Franci** explained. "Train your mind not to aim for perfection, but rather to aim for being perfectly human."

Next, pick your battles! When sitting down to a holiday meal, take a look around, and see what looks most appealing to you. Then make a choice. If you're not very hungry, choose your 3 favorites on the table, and eat small amounts of each. "Eat enough to enjoy each food, but not enough to break the caloric bank," **Franci** said.

Conversely, if you were too busy holiday shopping, and sat down to Thanksgiving dinner ravenous, then start with some soup or salad, before diving into the big bird. "The water content in both will help satiate you a bit and quiet those hunger pangs, so by the time you pick up a spoon to serve yourself the more indulgent foods, you'll be putting much less on your plate!"

And the last tip **Franci** says to keep in mind: Mind over matter really does matter! "Stress really can take over the body, causing everything from acne to cancer. It is a very potent agent in the human body, and can reap havoc not only on our emotions, but also on our hormones production, metabolism, hunger and satiety cues, and of course body weight," Franci explained. The key here is to relax. "If you can learn to relax and embrace the family, friends, and joy that accompany the holiday season, rather than drive yourself crazy dieting and **detoxing** before and after, your body will thank you!"

Thank *you* Franci!