

Chef in Residency

Confused by contradictory news stories about what is healthy? Frustrated by recipes that "didn't turn out"? Think you hate (insert fruit or vegetable here)? Wonder how to prepare whole foods that taste good? Think it's impossible to eat well on a budget? Wonder where to find time to eat better and exercise? Feel overwhelmed about where to begin making healthy lifestyle choices? You've come to the right place.

[Four Days in Napa Valley @ the Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives conference](#)

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By Michelle Hauser, MD, MPA

March 22, 2012

As I write this, I am at 32,000 feet and headed to my fourth Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives (HKHL) conference, but first time as an attendee. This will be a brief post because the turbulence is awful, but I am too excited not to share!



HKHL is a joint venture between Harvard Medical School and the Culinary Institute of America. This leadership conference broadly bridges nutrition science, health care and culinary arts. Each year, around 300 participants from around the world, including physicians, nurses, dieticians, other healthcare professionals, chefs, insurance and healthcare

executives, school foodservice directors, teachers, journalists, lawyers and others, attend to break bread and toast with delicious Napa Valley wines and collaborate, cook, learn and become energized around healthy living. With delicious food, good energy and the beautiful landscape, it's no wonder why people leave feeling confident that healthy living is not only possible, but also delicious.

HKHL is the brainchild of David Eisenberg, MD and I fondly remember the planning we did together for the very first conference back in April 2007. It was a hit! If memory serves me well, this is the eighth iteration. To learn more, check out <http://www.healthykitchens.org> .

After the 4-day conference, I will be blogging to share some recipes and updates. Stay tuned! While looking through the conference documents, I came across one that I created early on that guides you through how to create your own "essential kitchen." With this guide, you'll be confident that you have all necessary equipment at your fingertips to tackle any recipe without wasting money on items you'll never use.

[Dukka](#)

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By Michelle Hauser, MD, MPA

March 30, 2012

Day #1 @ Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives

Gets started late in the afternoon and is essentially an introduction and teaser for the days to come. At 5pm PST, 400 people gathered for an inspiring introduction and several cooking demos from a Master Chef and other acclaimed chefs. One dish prepared was dukka, a delicious condiment from Egypt. My recipe is below. Afterward, there was a tasting reception in the CIA's Barrel Room with all of the cooking demo dishes and wine from 9 local wineries.



Dukka

Pronounced "Da'a" or phonetically Dha-ah, is an Egyptian condiment made of a mixture of pounded herbs, nuts and spices. Versions vary a bit and generally contain salt, pepper and then one or more of the following: hazelnut or pistachio, mint, salt, pepper, cumin, caraway, sesame seed, cashew. I've even seen some with coconut (I've never tried this, though, because it sounds terrible to me!). It is REALLY addictive! Traditionally, it's eaten with flat bread (about the thickness of a pita) dipped in olive oil and then dipped in dukka. It's also delicious to use as a crunchy coating for baked or roasted cauliflower or brussels sprouts and pork or poultry.

Ingredients

2/3 to 1 cup hazelnuts, pistachios, almonds or macadamia nuts, raw, unsalted*

1/2 cup sesame seeds, untoasted*

1/4 cup coriander seeds*

2 tablespoons cumin seeds*

1 teaspoon white sugar

2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper, or to taste

1 teaspoon flaked sea salt or kosher salt, or to taste

Directions :

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and place nuts on baking sheet. Grab a handful after 5 minutes to check for doneness. To do this, look for a slight darkening in the color, smell for a toasty aroma and make a fist around a couple of nuts. The should quickly heat up your palm if they are done. If not quite there, they will cool off within a few seconds in your closed fist. Continue to check every 2-3 minutes until done. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.

2. For nuts with skins that are flaking off a bit. Once cool, lie a kitchen towel out on the counter, pour the nuts onto it. Fold the towel over the nuts and roll around under your palms with gentle pressure to remove some of the excess skin. No need to try to get it all off.

3. In a medium sized dry sauté pan heated over medium heat, add the sesame seeds, shaking the pan occasionally until the seeds are popping and starting to turn golden. Keep a lid handy to prevent the seeds from popping out all over!

4. In the same pan, dry toast the coriander seeds and then the cumin seeds each until fragrant and starting to turn a slightly darker hue.

5. Allow all toasted seeds to cool.

6. In a food processor or mortar and pestle, pulse or grind all ingredients until finely ground. Beware, don't grind too long or you will end up with nut and seed butter.

Yield: Approximately 1 cup, 16-1 tablespoons servings. Varies with exact Kosher salt, but each serving has approximately 100mg sodium and 65 calories per serving.

Store: in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

*Time saver: buy nuts already dry roasted (unsalted), sesame seeds toasted, and roasted ground cumin and coriander. This is much less tasty, but much faster and still delicious.