



A Moveable Feast

To me, a teacher, September means back to school. I think of syllabi, lesson plans, dry erase markers and, of course, lunch. Gone (until next summer) are the days of meeting a friend for a leisurely lunch.

While many of you leave your offices to dine out at lunchtime, I am confident that some pack your lunch as I do. So, in this month's column, I share some "boxed lunch" ideas. You will find some of these items — from chicken liver pâté to a PB & J — in my lunch bag on any given school day.

Chicken Liver Pâté

This is the easiest entry on the list. Simply purchase the pâté from your local deli and serve atop crackers. I also recommend a side of cornichons.

Chicken Salad

Roast a chicken for dinner and use the remaining chicken for a lunch salad. To roast, begin by drizzling the chicken with fresh lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil. Season with sea salt and fresh ground pepper, as well as a few sprigs of thyme. Roast in an oven preheated to 425 degrees for about 1½ hours. While the chicken is roasting, spoon the pan juices onto the chicken. Determine whether the chicken is cooked by cutting between the thigh and breast to see if the liquid runs clear. To prepare your lunch, pick the remaining meat from the bones and pull it apart into chunks. Squeeze some balsamic glaze on the chicken and season with salt and pepper. Also, mix in some pecans or cashews for a little crunch. Wait until morning to toss with some arugula.

Flank Steak Salad

Enjoy a flank steak for dinner and use the remaining beef for a protein-packed

lunch. To begin, marinate the beef for several hours. A basic marinade is to drizzle extra virgin olive oil over the steak and top both sides with fresh ground pepper and a few pinches of sea salt. Grill the steak on high heat — about four minutes per side — for medium rare. Slice the steak against the grain. To prepare the salad, make a bed of your favorite lettuce and top with several slices of steak. Top with balsamic glaze and extra virgin olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. I also add a small handful of nuts and some slices of radish.

Duck Salad

Your colleagues will be envious of this "leftover." First, purchase duck legs from your grocery store. By "legs," I also mean "thighs" as the two typically come attached in one package. To prepare the duck legs for dinner, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Trim the excess fat from the legs using kitchen shears and place skin side up in a baking dish. (Cook an extra duck leg, as this will serve as your lunch.) Season with fresh ground pepper and sea salt. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1½ hours. Remove the aluminum and cook for another 20 minutes at 400 degrees. Let the extra duck cool so that you can use a fork to pull the meat away from the bones. Toss some of the shredded duck with arugula and watercress and top with balsamic glaze and olive oil. I would also add dried cherries, cashews, sea salt, and fresh ground pepper.

Frittata

Make a frittata for dinner and bring a slice for lunch. In a bowl, whisk six eggs and add a splash of milk or cream. Add several tablespoons of olive oil to a non-stick pan along with slices of garlic and onion. Sauté until translucent, then add

pieces of asparagus, chunks of tomatoes, grated Parmesan and fresh herbs. You can include any vegetables you desire — these are simply suggestions. Cook over medium heat until the eggs set, and finish the top under the broiler. Enjoy a slice for lunch with some crusty bread.

Egg Drop Soup

In a saucepan, bring two cups of chicken stock to a boil. While the stock is coming to a boil, beat two eggs. Then add a drizzle of sesame oil to the stock and stir. Pour the beaten eggs into the stock in a steady stream and whisk in a back and forth motion so that the eggs form flakes. Add black pepper to taste and remove the pan from the heat. This also pairs well with crusty bread.

PB & J

Begin with some fresh sourdough from your local bakery. My local bakery of choice is Black Lab on Union Street in Wilmington. Spread your favorite peanut butter (I like honey nut) on one slice and a Bon Maman jam (I like raspberry, strawberry, wild blueberry, apricot...oh, I like them all!) on the other. You know what to do from there.

Along with one of the above "main courses," I typically include a yogurt and fruit in my lunch bag. Happy feasting! 🍴