

a guy's guide to great eating

Big-Flavored

Fat-Reduced

Recipes

for Men

Who Love

to Eat



DON MAUER

AUTHOR OF LEAN AND LOVIN' IT

a guy's guide to great eating

big-flavored, fat-reduced recipes

for men who love to eat

Don Mauer



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With love, to my father, DONALD L. MAUER,
who left this earth far too early, but who was the first guy
to show me how much fun cooking could be.

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a **guy's** guide
to great eating



Preface

I wrote this book to share my food and ideas with as many people as possible, especially guys. I love good food and you must too, or you wouldn't be holding this book in your hands. I have always believed great-tasting food can also be healthful. I use the freshest ingredients I can find, with the least amount of fat and oil possible.

Most of my recipes get 25 percent or less of their calories from fat. Why? I believe that is the healthiest balance in a food plan. Keeping the fat of each recipe low also makes it easier to decide what you want to make. You can relax, knowing the calories from fat will almost always be at a healthy level. You can prepare what you want based on your palate, not on your calculator. What sounds good? What gets your heart beating a little faster? The answers to those questions will lead you in the right direction.

As has always been true since I started spreading the word about great-tasting, healthful eating, I'd like you to write to me. If you find sustenance within these covers, write to me. If you have a great-tasting, healthful recipe you'd like to share with me, share it. If you have a favorite recipe that is way too high in fat or calories and you want to make it more healthful, send it to me. If this book touches your life in a positive way, share your thoughts with me at:

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Or by email at: leanwizard@aol.com

I can hardly wait to hear from you.

Introduction

I'll admit it: like most men, I love to eat—a lot. When I tried to get my eating habits under control—doctor's orders—the tiny portions made me want to run to the nearest steakhouse for a man-size meal. I reached the end of my rope with a recipe for light macaroni and cheese. The fat level was fine. The calorie count looked good. But the serving size stopped me cold: one-half cup. Come on! I want to meet the man who eats a half cup of macaroni and cheese and can't eat another bite because he's so stuffed. *Pub-leeze.*

A single four-inch buttermilk pancake doesn't fill me up in the morning. A wussy little half sandwich for lunch doesn't keep my furnace fired up all afternoon. And anyone who thinks a three-ounce serving of chicken breast, a half cup of steamed green beans and a small boiled potato will keep me—or most men—from raiding the refrigerator an hour later should think again.

After speaking with hundreds of men and women, I decided to write a cookbook for real guys—not people with the appetite of a supermodel. This book is aimed at both men who cook and the people who cook for men and are concerned about health.

I can't count how many women have approached me and confided, “Last night, I tried a new, low-fat recipe, and my husband barely touched it.” These women usually go on to say something like, “If I serve a steak and a baked potato with sour cream and butter, he devours it and asks for more.” That's the way I used to eat.

To reduce dinnertime friction, one woman told me that she actually cooks three separate meals: one the kids will eat, one her husband will eat without complaint and one that fits into her healthful diet. Everyone eats what they want, but who wants to be a short-order cook every night?



The recipes in this book should satisfy everybody. The servings are guy-size, but almost every dish gets 25 percent or less of its calories from fat. Every recipe can increase your chances of living a long and healthy life while providing full satisfaction. Each recipe was painstakingly created to satisfy my own tastes.

When I was 15 years old, I taught myself to cook because I loved to eat. Because I loved to eat, I got big—308 pounds. In 1990, I gave my favorite recipes a complete overhaul, trimming fat and slashing calories while creating major flavor. My efforts were so successful that I lost more than 100 pounds and never once felt deprived. My new dishes were so good that a friend told the *Chicago Sun-Times* about me, and before I knew it, I'd gone from running a photo lab to cooking on national television.

Today, I'm 51 years old and in excellent health. Am I slim? Nope. I haven't been slim since I was 9 years old. Am I lean? I'm far leaner than I was in 1989, when I weighed over 300 pounds. Am I as lean as I could be? No. Nonetheless, I've maintained most of my 100-pound weight loss for nearly a decade. I still love to cook, and I still love to eat.

Since I enjoy cooking more than my wife, Susan, does, I'm the head shopper and chef of the household. Because I'm too busy to spend much more than 30 minutes on any meal, my recipes are easy as well as healthful. I have no time to go to a specialty food store for exotic ingredients, and you probably don't either. That's why every ingredient used in this book can be found in most supermarkets.

I've provided complete nutritional information for each recipe, so you can put away your calculator, break out the skillet and get cooking. I've also indicated how much sodium is in every serving, and I've given tips for reducing it throughout the book. If you have a problem with sodium, you can still enjoy almost every recipe.

Most important, these dishes are full of no-holds-barred flavor, so



you'll be satisfied from the first bite to the last. In the pages that follow, you'll find real food like buttermilk pancakes and breakfast potatoes, grilled chicken and crunchy Carolina slaw, turkey gumbo and corn bread, meat loaf and whipped potatoes, peppery pork and white beans. You can enjoy crab cakes loaded with crab, succulent sizzling shrimp, spicy oven-fried onion rings, a chicken pot pie better than Mom used to make and a dark chocolate cake with fudgy chocolate frosting. There's a whole section of snacks ready in a flash, including several salsas better than any you can buy at the supermarket.

You'll also find a creamy, cheese-loaded macaroni and cheese that may be the best you've ever tasted, and you can eat a great big belly-filling serving yet remain on a healthful path. That's my kind of eating.



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major league breakfasts



light-as-air **buttermilk** pancakes

cornmeal blueberry pancakes

sunday **morning** pecan-topped
french toast casserole

lean scrambled eggs

snappy o'brien breakfast potatoes

oven-roasted bacon

country-style breakfast **sausage**

apple muffins

pumpkin-raisin **breakfast** muffins

Breakfast

is a must for me. I don't mean dry toast and half a grapefruit or those diet shakes. If men were meant to drink breakfast, Eve would have handed Adam a can of apple-flavored breakfast drink.

Small breakfasts just aren't enough, especially on the weekend. When I began to lose weight, I learned that my metabolic engine didn't rev up until I ate. If I want to start burning calories, I have to consume some. A tiny breakfast means that I'll need to refuel midmorning, and when I do that, I always seem to eat the wrong thing.

In my old, heavy days, I'd sit down to a butter-drenched pile of pancakes floating in a sea of syrup, a mess of sausages, hash browns, orange juice, coffee with cream and a glass of milk. Unfortunately, breakfasts like those are a prescription for a short life unless you're headed out to the fields for a full day of work.

Today, I still like pancakes for my Sunday breakfast, but now I make them with low-fat buttermilk and drained applesauce, and cook them in a skillet with just a touch of oil. I use a reduced-fat margarine, which has only 15 percent of the fat of butter, and I drizzle on real maple syrup, since it's loaded with flavor and fat-free. I can still enjoy sausage, too, because I created one that's generous with flavor but stingy with fat.

If you're content with a Jerry Seinfeld breakfast of cold cereal and milk, OK. But if you want a hearty breakfast that you'd find at a popular truck stop, without all the fat and calories, read on.



light-as-air buttermilk pancakes

makes 4 five-inch pancakes

In my book, when you're talking pancakes, you're talking buttermilk. It imparts sweet and tangy flavors, but the only butter in it is on the carton label. Buttermilk used to be the thick liquid left over after butter was churned, but today it's made from nonfat or low-fat milk.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 3 tablespoons unsweetened applesauce | ½ teaspoon salt |
| 1 cup all-purpose flour | 1 teaspoon canola oil |
| 2 tablespoons granulated sugar (optional) | 1 cup low-fat buttermilk |
| 2 teaspoons baking powder | 1 large egg |

1. Place a strainer over a bowl deep enough so the bottom of the strainer doesn't touch the bottom of the bowl. Put the applesauce in the strainer and set aside to drain for 15 minutes; you should have 2 tablespoons drained applesauce. Preheat the oven to 170 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium mixing bowl, stir together the flour, sugar, if using, baking powder and salt until combined. Set aside.
3. Place a medium heavy-bottomed, well-seasoned skillet over medium heat and add the canola oil.
4. While the skillet is heating, put the drained applesauce, buttermilk and egg in a medium mixing bowl and whisk until combined. Add the flour mixture and whisk until almost smooth.



5. Fold a paper towel into eighths and, using it as a pad, spread the canola oil over the surface of the skillet. Place the pad, oil side down, on a saucer near the skillet. When a few drops of water skitter and dance on the surface of the skillet, pour a generous $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the batter into the center. Tip the skillet gently to spread out the batter a little. Cook until bubbles appear in the center of the pancake, about 2 minutes. Flip the pancake over and cook for 2 minutes more, or until it springs back when pressed in the center. As each pancake is done, transfer it to an ovenproof plate, cover with a couple of paper towels and keep warm in the oven. Continue until the batter is gone and serve.

Nutritional information per pancake: 186 calories (10.5% from fat), 2.2 g fat (0.8 g saturated fat), 6.8 g protein, 31.6 g carbohydrate, 57 mg cholesterol, 365 mg sodium.

saltsense: Omitting the salt reduces the sodium to 99 mg per pancake.

leansuggestions: During blueberry season, make blueberry buttermilk pancakes. Pour the batter for a single pancake into the skillet, then distribute 10 to 12 washed and dried blueberries over the batter. Proceed as directed.

- ♦ For buckwheat pancakes, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup buckwheat flour and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white flour and proceed as directed.
- ♦ For whole wheat pancakes, use $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole wheat flour and $\frac{2}{3}$ cup white flour and proceed as directed.
- ♦ This recipe may be doubled or tripled, depending on your appetites and the number of guests.



cornmeal blueberry pancakes

makes 16 pancakes

I've loved the flavor of blueberries all my life, and they are at their best in pancakes. The sweet-tasting cornmeal gives these pancakes more body than flour alone would. I serve them with breakfast sausages (page 14) and real maple syrup. A cup of black, fresh-brewed drip coffee is the only other thing I need for a great morning jump-start.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1½ cups fresh blueberries, picked over,
washed and drained | ¼ teaspoon salt |
| ¾ cup plus 1½ tablespoons all-purpose
flour, <i>divided</i> | 1 large egg, <i>separated</i> |
| 1 cup yellow cornmeal, preferably stone-
ground | 1 tablespoon canola oil, plus more
for oiling pan |
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | 2 cups low-fat buttermilk |
| ½ teaspoon baking soda | 2 tablespoons clover or other mild
honey |

1. Place the oven rack in the center and preheat the oven to 170 degrees.
2. Stir together the blueberries and 1½ tablespoons of the flour in a small bowl until the blueberries are coated. Set aside.
3. Put the remaining ¾ cup flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large bowl and stir until well combined. Set aside.
4. Add the egg yolk and oil to a 1-quart bowl and whisk until blended. Add the buttermilk and honey, whisking until combined. Set aside.



5. Add the egg white to a separate small bowl and beat with an electric mixer on high until stiff but not dry. Set aside.
6. Form a well in the dry ingredients, add the buttermilk mixture and the blueberries and stir until combined. Gently fold the beaten egg white into the batter.
7. Place a large heavy-bottomed nonstick skillet over medium heat. When a few drops of water skitter and dance on the surface, lightly spray it with vegetable oil. Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup batter into the skillet for each pancake. Cook until the top of each pancake is covered with bubbles and the edges appear dry, about 2 minutes. Flip the pancakes over and cook until the bottoms are golden, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 minutes. As each pancake is done, transfer it to an ovenproof plate, cover with a couple of paper towels and keep warm in the oven. Continue, first spraying the skillet's surface with vegetable oil, until the batter is gone, and serve.

Nutritional information per pancake: 98 calories (21.3% from fat), 2.3 g fat (0.2 g saturated fat), 2.8 g protein, 16.4 g carbohydrate, 13 mg cholesterol, 118 mg sodium.

lean suggestions: Nonfat or low-fat margarine may be used to top each pancake. For a special treat, serve with real maple syrup.

- ♦ Frozen, thawed blueberries may be substituted for fresh.

