

The Nordic Diet

It is no surprise that the Nordic Diet has arisen, as like many diets around the world it is very important to review the local produce found in each country and find the most nutritious foods available and consume these as frequently as possible.

Like the Mediterranean diet which is rich in omega 3 fats, monounsaturated fats, low in saturated fats, high in fibre and lean in protein it is no wonder the Scandinavians' have found foods which have these properties in their local community with the added bonus and benefits of rich antioxidants/phytochemicals found in berries which are much more common in colder climates.

It is possible to adapt these functional foods from the Nordic Diet to the Australian diet.

Key Foods

Lean red meat / game - Reindeer, Elk, Venison, Fish - herring, mackerel, salmon, trout

Australian food swap: Kangaroo, venison, rabbit, herring, mackerel, sardines, salmon and trout

Cold-weather veggies - cabbage, kale, brussel sprouts **(all available in Australia)**

Native berries - cloudberry, cowberry, lingonberry, **(mulberry, blueberry Rapeseed Oil)**

Bread - Rye **(readily available in Australia).**

THE NORDIC FOOD RULES

(1) Eat lean red meat, especially game

Why: It's full of iron and provides long-lasting energy, plus game meats like duck or venison tend to be lower in fat because the animals lived wild and had the chance to run around.

In Australia, the leanest red meats in the game category are Kangaroo, venison and rabbit.

(2) Swap chicken for fish

Why: White fish such as cod and haddock are low in fat and contain energy-providing B vitamins and minerals. And oily fish such as salmon and herring are rich in heart-healthy omega-3 fats, which studies show can help with weight loss. Eat at least two or three portions a week.

Oily fish is also readily available in Australia but choosing fresh varieties will also keep the sodium levels down.

(3) Switch olive oil for rapeseed oil

Why: Although olive oil is healthy, it has to be imported whereas rapeseed oil can be grown in Northern countries including the UK.

Plus the cold-pressed variety of rapeseed oil is even lower in saturated fat than olive oil and richer in omega-3s. Use for stir-fries and salad dressings.

Both rapeseed and olive oil is Available here in Australia

(4) Swap normal bread for rye bread

Why: Some people find wheat makes them feel bloated, but rye bread rarely has this effect. And, because it uses the whole grain, rye bread is packed with slow-digesting fibre and won't cause the sharp rises in blood sugar that create food cravings.

Rye bread is readily available and is also high in fibre and lower in fermentable carbohydrates.

(5) Stock up on berries, especially blueberries

Why: Numerous studies have found that berries, a Nordic staple, are packed with vitamins and antioxidants that help prevent disease and premature ageing.

Keeping frozen berries handy will help keep the cost down on fresh berries if out of season.

(6) Have a daily portion of leafy green veg

Why: Brussels sprouts, cabbage and kale are all packed with B vitamins and disease-fighting antioxidants.

(7) Eat little and often

Why: Big meals can slow down your metabolism, while studies show grazing keeps it ticking over, meaning your body burns off calories more effectively - so fewer are stored as fat.

The dietary principles of the Nordic diet are very similar to the CSIRO well – being diet of incorporating a good source of lean protein with low GI carbohydrates and a controlled source of good fat.

* Australian alternative given in red

Breakfasts

Grilled kippers or smoked trout and granary toast

(Grilled sardines or kippers or smoked trout/ salmon on rye toast)

Porridge made with semi-skimmed (lite milk) milk topped with a handful of mixed berries

Banana and oat smoothie (blended with a handful of oats and a tsp of honey) plus a slice of wholemeal toast

Mixed fruit salad, including blueberries, with yoghurt and chopped nuts | Glass of cherry or blueberry (cranberry) juice and an omelette made with 2 eggs, chopped red pepper (capsicum) and spinach

Lunches

Minestrone or fish stew or any other clear soup, wholemeal roll, apple or a handful of grapes.

Smoked mackerel pate on granary (rye or wholegrain) toast, with a low-fat yoghurt

Whole meal pita filled with lean duck (or kangaroo) slices and salad

Pickled herring (or 3 – 4 slices of smoked salmon) salad with a sliced apple and boiled egg

Jacket potato with tuna and spring onions, no butter



DESIGNER DIETS

By Geraldine Georgeou

Dinners

Poached salmon with steamed vegetables and new potatoes

Venison sausages (from any butcher) with mash, plus cooked cabbage

Small grilled steak with mustard, baked sweet potato wedges and broccoli

Stir-fry made using lean pork, sliced apple, red pepper (**capsicum**) and spinach, served with small amount ~ ½ - 1 cup already cooked basmati rice

Cod grilled (**or salmon steak**) with dill, topped with small amount Danish blue cheese or similar, served with steamed leafy greens

Snacks

Handful of almonds

Two oatcakes (**Anzac biscuits**) with peanut butter

Tub low-fat yoghurt

A glass of semi-skimmed (**lite milk**) milk

Nordic Stir Fry

Serves: 2

Yield: 2 Serves

Ready in: 40 mins (25 mins Prep - 15 mins Cook)

Kangaroo is a good rich meat that works perfectly in stir-fry dishes. Extra bonus - it's lean and high in protein.

Ingredients

2 teaspoons chopped fresh ginger	250g kangaroo fillet
1 clove garlic, minced	1 cup snow peas
1 teaspoon fish sauce	1 cup broccoli, chopped
1 teaspoon soy sauce	1 cup bok choy, chopped
2 teaspoons miso	1 cup chopped green capsicum
1 teaspoon sesame oil	1 cup bean sprouts
1 tablespoon vegetable oil	1 cup chopped zucchini

Preparation method

Whisk together the sauce ingredients - ginger, garlic, soy sauce, fish sauce, miso and sesame oil in a bowl.

Heat the vegetable oil in a wok or frying pan over medium heat. Add the kangaroo fillet and cook till medium rare - 3 to 5 minutes per side. Move to a cutting board to rest.

While the meat is resting, reheat the wok or frying pan to medium heat and add the snow peas, broccoli, bok choy, capsicum, bean sprouts and zucchini; cook and stir until the vegetables are softened. Pour the sauce into the pan and allow it to simmer for 5 minutes.

While the vegetables simmer, thinly slice the kangaroo. Stir into the vegetables and serve immediately.