

## Celebrate a World of Flavors

Although Phil declared six more weeks of winter, with March comes hope for longer days and warmer weather. It is also when we take the time to celebrate National Nutrition Month®. This is a national campaign held by the Academy of



Nutrition and Dietetics that promotes healthful eating through making more informed food and lifestyle choices (such as joyful movement) that can be sustained all year round. It is also a time to showcase the Academy and

highlight its members as the experts in nutrition. The theme for this year's campaign is Celebrate a World of Flavors. It highlights the unique variety of foods available to everyone, as well as the role that dietitians play in assisting people to make sound nutrition choices while celebrating their cultural identity.

Many factors influence the foods we choose to eat, including our culture. In most cultures, breakfast is the first meal of the day. Whatever country you find yourself in, each has its own individual staple foods and unique traditions surrounding breakfast. Highlighted below are examples of popular breakfast options from around the globe!

### Latin America

In this part of the world, breakfasts tend to be more savory than sweet. One sample breakfast may be scrambled eggs with tomatoes, onions, peppers, and

cheese in a corn tortilla or arepa. This breakfast is packed with B vitamins, protein, and fiber. Another example breakfast may be beans with rice, a sliced tomato, a cooked egg, and plantains. You can still find a somewhat sweeter option in Brazil, which is known for its bolo de fuba. This cornbread-style cake has a moist, creamy texture from the grated parmesan cheese and/or shredded coconut that is added. Along with pao de queijo, or puffy baked cheese rolls, these can be a great addition to the morning meal!

### Middle East

Israeli breakfasts typically include a combination of fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. In Turkey, breakfast is called kahvalti. A traditional kahvalti consists of a breakfast spread that has a little something for everyone! It includes Turkish breads, such as simit (a circular seeded loaf) or pide (a chewy flatbread). The spread also typically has olives, halvah (a fudge-like sweet made from flour and honey) and would not be complete without bowls of feta or other fresh cheeses.

### Eastern Asian

Like Latin America, breakfasts in Japan are more savory than sweet. The meal usually involves a selection of small plates, each with a few bites of a traditional Japanese dish. Fish, miso soup, pickled vegetables, and rice are all present at the meal. Additionally, there is a dish called tamagoyaki that is similar to an omelet in the United States. Tamagoyaki is a rolled omelet made from thin layers of egg in a rectangular pan that give the dish its signature shape.

In Taiwan, you may see a glass of milk sitting at the table for the breakfast meal. It differs though from traditional cow's milk that may be seen as part of an

American breakfast. Dòu jiāng is a fresh soy milk that is a specialty in Taiwan, served both hot in the winter months and cold in the summer months. The milk is a great contrast to some of Taiwan's traditional breakfast dishes, including scallion pancakes, dumplings, and dough fritters. Some may even go the extra step to dip their fritters in dòu jiāng! Breakfast in China also typically includes soymilk. The food at the meal may consist of congee (rice porridge) often served with a protein source (fish, chicken, peanuts, or egg) or bitter melon with eggs and mantou (a steamed bun).

### Africa

If you're a fan of chickpeas, you'll love breakfast in Tunisia! One popular breakfast option is lablabi, a traditional chickpea soup. It almost always contains chickpeas and harissa paste; however, the dish is customizable and additional ingredients vary based on who is preparing it. For example, some like to thicken it with pieces of stale bread, while others may choose a creamier consistency by adding plain yogurt. It is oftentimes also topped with a poached egg; this additional protein source helps to promote satiety, or the feeling of fullness. In Kenya, a traditional breakfast includes porridge made from maize (corn), sorghum, or millet. It may be served with peanuts or fish for protein and boiled sweet potatoes or cassava for carbohydrates.

Switch up your breakfast routine and expand your taste palate by trying a new breakfast dish from a different culture! Include two to three different food groups at breakfast to make the meal balanced. Consider trying any of the previously discussed breakfast options (or continue reading for a tasty shakshuka recipe!). Keep in mind with the examples provided, if a food you enjoy is not listed or you have an allergy or intolerance to a certain food, consider which food group it belongs to and try to swap it out to include one that fits within your eating pattern. Healthy eating should be as unique and wonderful as you!

### Need a Dietitian?

Registered Dietitians are here to help you with your nutrition questions. To make an appointment call 412.692.4497 (Oakland location) or 412.623.2421 (Shadyside location).



Israeli Breakfast Recipe: Shakshuka

### Ingredients:

¼ cup olive oil  
 3 jalapenos, stemmed, seeded, and finely chopped  
 1 small yellow onion, chopped  
 5 cloves garlic, crushed then sliced  
 1 teaspoon ground cumin  
 1 tablespoon paprika  
 1 28-ounce can whole peeled tomatoes, undrained  
 6 eggs  
 ½ cup feta cheese, crumbled  
 1 tablespoon chopped flat-leaf parsley  
 Warm pitas, for serving

### Directions:

1. Heat oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add chiles and onions and cook for about six minutes (or until soft and golden brown). Stir occasionally.
2. Add garlic, cumin, and paprika and cook, stirring frequently, until garlic is soft (about 2 more minutes).
3. Put tomatoes and their liquid into a medium bowl and crush with your hands. Add this to the skillet along with ½ cup water.
4. Reduce heat to medium and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened slightly (about 15 minutes).
5. Crack eggs over sauce so that eggs are evenly distributed. Cover the skillet and cook until the yolks are set (about 5 minutes).
6. Use a spoon to baste the whites of the eggs into the tomato mixture; be careful not to disturb the yolk.
7. Sprinkle the dish with feta and parsley. Serve with pitas for dipping.

### References:

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