

Adding New Flavors to Your World



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Are you bored with your meals? Do you feel like you eat the same thing over and over again? Are you a picky eater and want to learn to enjoy more flavors? Adding new flavors to your meals adds variety and has many health benefits.

This lesson explores flavor combinations that make for delicious meals. We also share tips for successfully learning to like more veggies.

Flavor Combos

1. Onions + Carrots + Celery

This mix is found in both French and Italian food. Chop these veggies and cook them together with a healthy fat like olive oil. This creates a delicious base for soups, stews, and casseroles. Add parsley and thyme with bay leaves or garlic and sage for even more flavor.

2. Onions + Carrots + Peppers

This combo is the base for many dishes in Cajun and Creole cuisine. It is often paired with garlic, parsley, and paprika.



3. Onions + Tomatoes + Garlic + Peppers

Tomatoes add a pop of bright color and flavor to the classic base of onion, garlic, and peppers. Cooking these four ingredients together and adding them to some brown rice will give your meal a big boost in flavor.

Experiment with other Latin-influenced herbs and spices like cilantro, cumin, paprika, and spicy peppers or chilis.

4. Onions + Tomatoes + Garlic + Raisins + Green Onions

Adding raisins gives this combo a lightly sweetened flavor. Including spices like turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, cardamom, and pepper will give your meal a serious depth of flavor and some color. These combinations are common in Middle Eastern cuisines and are great for meat dishes. Add in some chicken or lamb and serve over rice.

5. Garlic + Green Onions + Ginger

The strong flavors of garlic and ginger work well together and can give your meal the essence of Chinese cuisine. Add hot chilis, Chinese five-spice blend, and/or cilantro to this combo and serve on grains, roasted veggies, meat, and/or tofu. These flavor combinations will make your meal truly satisfying and flavorful.

6. Onions + Garlic + Chilis + Ginger

Indian cuisine is complex and cannot be easily defined by just a few flavors and foods. But this combo is a great start to adding Indian flavors to your meal. Toss in some curry, garam masala, turmeric, ginger, and use coconut milk (from a can) to create a rich sauce.



You can also try different combinations with your favorite veggies and flavors! You never know what may work well together and what you may enjoy. For example, if you usually enjoy roasted butternut squash and turkey separately, you can pair them together to make a butternut squash chili. Or, if you already enjoy asparagus with garlic and lemon juice, try cooking it with some chili powder and lime instead for a different flavor. This can be a fun way to try new flavor combinations with foods and flavors you already enjoy!

Find Your "Gateway" Veggies

If you are having trouble adding new veggies into your routine, try to find your “gateway” veggie. This is a vegetable option that you enjoy eating frequently and fits into your diet well. The next step is to find a veggie similar to your gateway veggie. These vegetables may either have a similar appearance, texture, taste, and/or cooking method. Here are some examples below:



If you already enjoy...

Carrots



Butternut
Squash



Cabbage



Mashed
Potatoes



Try...

Parsnips

Sweet
Potatoes

Bok Choy

Cauliflower
Mash

So You Didn't Like it the First Time

Remember that you may not like it right off the bat when trying something new. But that does not mean that you won't like it in the future. You may need to try a new food and cook and flavor it in different ways many times before knowing that you do not like it. If you have ever introduced a new food to a young child, you know it can take up to 10 times of hearing "yuck" before you hear "yum!"

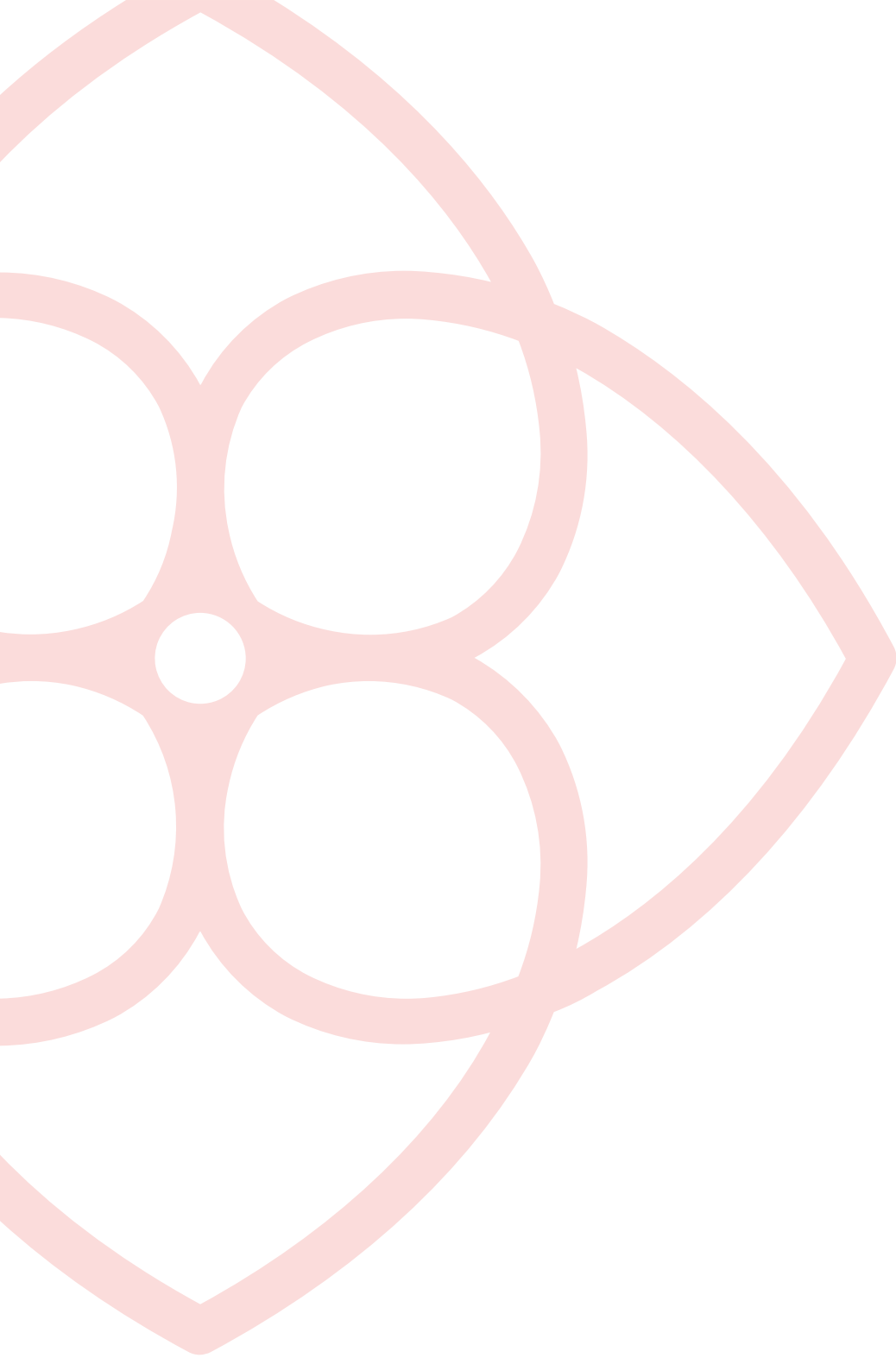
If you have only tried something once or twice, try it again and see what you think. Prepare the food in a different way to change up its texture! For example, if you tried mashed parsnips and didn't like them, try roasted slices next time. Add a new flavor or sauce to the food. If you did not like plain, baked tofu, try adding some peanut sauce next time. It will add a whole new dimension to the tofu, and your taste buds might thank you for giving the new flavor a try!



From Lesson to Action

Which flavor combinations listed above are you excited to try?

What is one way you could add extra flavor to your meals this week?



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