

# REDBOOK'S COCKTAIL PARTY DIET: EAT MINI FRANKS!

With our smart just-for-the-holidays strategies, you can indulge now without regretting it later.

By Nicole De Coursy



INSTEAD OF  
1 fried  
pork  
dumpling  
150 calories

TRY  
1 scallop  
wrapped in  
bacon  
65 calories

You'll save  
85 calories



YOU'LL  
SAVE  
135  
calories

INSTEAD OF: 1 mini quiche, 250 calories  
TRY: 2 pigs in blankets, 115 calories

Cocktail parties, endless office goodies, and gift boxes of chocolate truffles—it's hard to keep your weight steady during the holidays when every day seems like a party. But you *can* enjoy your seasonal favorites and still fit in your skinny jeans after the last glass is raised. The key to not packing on pounds this time of year is creating an overall eating plan, says Katherine Tallmadge, R.D., author of *Diet Simple* and a Washington D.C.-based spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. It may be as simple as prioritizing when and where you get your pigs-in-blankets fix. "Figure out which party is most likely to offer the best treats and indulge there," Tallmadge says. "If you let yourself go to town at one or two parties, it will be easier to hold back at other events." What other strategies will let you savor your favorite party

foods without paying the bigger-pants price later? Check out these surprising (and painless) do's from top diet and nutrition experts.

**Balance out your binges.** The season is six weeks long—so if most of your shindigs go down in the first two weeks, let yourself eat whatever you want during that period, then scale back until December 24th. That way, you can enjoy a guilt-free holiday dinner, says Tallmadge. If your events are sprinkled throughout the month, pick one party a week as the one where you splurge.

**Don't stand near the hors d'oeuvres.** "Take a few things, then go as far away from them as possible so you're not tempted to pick from the platter," says Jackie Newgent, R.D., a New York-based nutritionist and chef.

**Alternate indulgences.** Have cheese at one party, but no dessert, then switch it next time out, says

Kathleen Daelemans, author of *Getting Thin and Loving Food!* Doing so will keep you from going too nuts—or saying no to nuts altogether.

**Implement the 15-minute rule.** Give yourself that much time before you hit up the yummys; grab a nonalcoholic beverage (like sparkling water with a lime twist) in the meantime to keep your hands busy. “People are usually nervous at the beginning of an event, so they dive into the buffet table and end up eating more,” says Tallmadge.

**Don't ban your favorites.** “Decide which special foods you *really* want and enjoy them, but skip the rest,” says Daelemans. So if you love eggnog, have

a glass, but if you could take or leave gingerbread-man cookies, don't waste your calories on them.

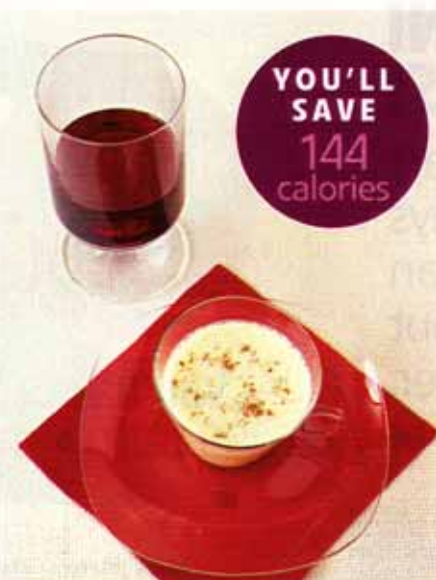
**Make water your best friend.** Tallmadge recommends not drinking on an empty stomach, and having two glasses of water for every glass of wine. “You want to sip and savor your wine, and grab and gulp your water,” she says.

**Keep in-between meals low-calorie.** Balance out party splurges with über-healthy choices at other meals and on other days of the week, says Daelemans. Make green salads with low-fat dressing for lunch and pick lean meats (like chicken or pork) or broth-based or bean soups for dinner. □



**YOU'LL SAVE**  
248  
calories

**INSTEAD OF:** 1 piece (1/8 of an 8-inch pie) of pecan pie, 452 calories **TRY:** 1.5 ounces of dark chocolate, 204 calories



**YOU'LL SAVE**  
144  
calories

**INSTEAD OF:** A 5-ounce glass of eggnog, 244 calories **TRY:** A 5-ounce glass of red wine, 100 calories



**YOU'LL SAVE**  
103  
calories

**INSTEAD OF:** Peanut brittle (1.5 ounces), 193 calories **TRY:** 1 small gingerbread-man cookie, 90 calories



**YOU'LL SAVE**  
47  
calories

**INSTEAD OF:** 3 crackers with 1 ounce of pâté, 140 calories **TRY:** 3 plain crisps with 1 ounce of smoked salmon, 93 calories

## OOPS, I ATE IT AGAIN!



Whether you're whipping up a batch of cookies or making frosting, it's hard not to sample here and there. “But you can end up eating a whole dinner's worth of calories before you even sit down,” says Tallmadge. To avoid accidental eating, try these tricks:

- Brush your teeth right before to discourage mindless nibbling while cooking or baking. “You won't be as tempted to sample foods when your breath tastes like peppermint,” says Newgent.
- Eat a small snack, like a cup of yogurt, 20 minutes before you start cooking, says Newgent. This will send a signal to your brain that you're already satisfied.
- Make deals with yourself. “Recently I baked cookies with my nieces,” says Daelemans. “If we ate one scoop of dough, we allowed ourselves two baked cookies. If we ate two scoops of dough, we were allowed only one baked cookie.”
- Wear bleaching strips on your teeth. “You won't want or be able to nibble when your teeth are otherwise occupied,” says Newgent.

## HOW BAD CAN A BITE BE?

Here's the raw truth about how many calories you're *really* eating:

- Having two spoonfuls of chocolate-chip cookie dough: 64 calories, 3 grams of fat
- Eating leftover pie scraps: 81 calories, 5 grams of fat
- Licking whipped cream off the beaters: 52 calories, 5 grams of fat
- Picking just one slice of cheese from the platter: 113 calories, 9 grams of fat
- Grabbing a handful of mixed nuts from the bowl: 168 calories, 15 grams of fat