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THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE

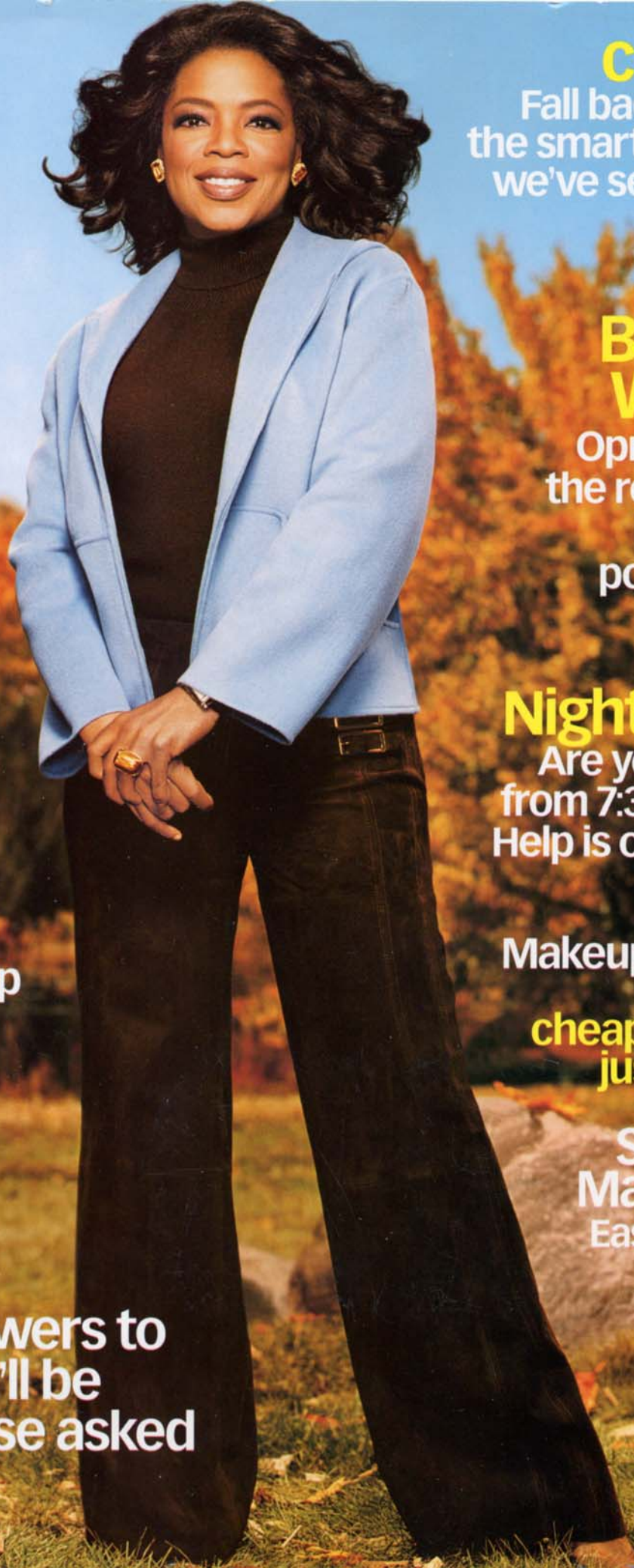
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to look at pleasure

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OCTOBER 2004



WEIGHT

I Could Be Thin If...

...it weren't for delectable diet bombs like creamy fettuccine Alfredo...hot, bubbly mac 'n' cheese... buttery mashed potatoes... You don't have to give them up, says nutritionist Laura Pensiero. Just try these lightened-up alternatives. CHEE GATES thinks "lite."



Fettuccine al Freedom

Help yourself with no regrets to a slimmed-down version of the classic diet booby trap.

WHILE EN ROUTE TO YOUR WEEKLY KICK-boxing class, you pass by a Mrs. Fields and get a whiff of her fresh-out-of-the-oven white chunk macadamia cookies. The aroma bull-rushes your senses. Your willpower crumbles. Within nanoseconds you've swallowed a dozen, gained two pounds, applied for home delivery (for the guests, of course), and are too

full to work out. Somewhere along the line, did Eve's apple get swapped for a greasy spoon?

Enter Laura Pensiero, part-time genie, full-time chef and nutritionist. When she's not running her Gigi Trattoria in Rhinebeck, New York, or writing—she's coauthor of *The Strang Cancer Prevention Center Cookbook*—Pensiero teaches healthy cooking at ▶

Memorial Sloan-Kettering's Center for Prevention and Wellness. We invited *O* readers to confess their favorite butt-plumpin' dishes—the ones that, without fail, derail their diets—and then asked Pensiero for leaner options.

"I love the shrimp and chicken fettuccine Alfredo from the Olive Garden, which comes with olive-oil-drenched salad and buttery garlic breadsticks. I must have it at least once a week."

—Nathalie, De Pere, Wisconsin

Pensiero says: Natalie, wow, you picked a dietary demon. When it comes to fattening, you can't get much worse than fettuccine Alfredo, about 900 calories and 80 grams of fat (40 of which are saturated; double your daily limit)—equivalent to more than two McDonald's Big Macs. You don't have to give it up; just make it an occasional treat. For the rest of the time, here's a lighter shrimp fettuccine Alfredo to try at home:

- 1 pound uncooked fettuccine
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup 2 percent milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup half-and-half
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound medium-size cooked shrimp
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated fresh Parmesan cheese
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Bring water to a boil, add 2 Tbsp. salt, and cook fettuccine until al dente. Reserve $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooking water to thin out sauce, if necessary, then drain pasta in a colander. In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add garlic and cook until it just begins to brown (less than 1 minute). Stir in flour. Gradually add milk and half-and-half, stirring with a wire whisk until mixture is blended. Toss in nutmeg. Cook 8 minutes more, stirring often, until mixture is thickened and bubbly. Add shrimp and Parmesan cheese, and whisk until well blended. Reduce heat and season with salt and pepper. If sauce is too thick, use reserved water to adjust consistency; then add pasta. As for breadsticks, you know the drill (go for the plain or seasoned ones, and eat them without butter); and

no drenching the salad (a little dab of extra-virgin olive oil with some good-quality vinegar will do). Makes 6 servings. **One serving:** 477 calories and 14 grams of fat (7 grams of saturated fat).

"Tangy, extra-crispy hot wings and a nice cold pint of Michelob Light—the mere thought makes me drool."

—Katrina, Centertown, Missouri

Pensiero says: You're already choosing light beer (the pint adds up to about 167 calories), so there's no way to remedy that unless you restrict yourself to half a pint or just skip it. You can switch to snacks with some tangy kick and less caloric damage, like barbecue-flavored mini rice cakes, spicy shrimp cocktail, or pita toasts with hummus, salsa, or bean dip. However, you can have your wings and eat them, too. Try this lower-fat version:

- 1 pound chicken breast tenders, about 12 pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat buttermilk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crushed cornflakes, saltines, or reduced-fat cheese crackers
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 1 tsp. paprika
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 400°. In a medium bowl, combine chicken and buttermilk. Cover and refrigerate 10 to 15 minutes. Combine cornflakes (or crackers), bread crumbs, paprika, garlic powder, salt, and cayenne pepper in a large Ziploc bag. Drain chicken, discarding liquid, and add 5 tenders to the bag; shake to coat. Repeat with remaining chicken. Cover the bottom of a shallow nonstick baking pan with oil. Add chicken in a single layer. Bake approximately 4 minutes; turn chicken, bake another 4 minutes, or until thoroughly cooked. Serve with light ranch dip or hot salsa. Makes 4 servings. **One serving:** 284 calories and 9.5 grams of fat (2 grams of saturated fat).

"My fiancé's family has a big Sunday dinner every week. It reminds me of that movie *Soul Food*. There's so much love and laughter and food at

that table—baked mac 'n' cheese in particular, of which I have at least two hefty servings. Then I take a nap."

—Vendetta, Brown Mills, New Jersey

Pensiero says: There is no comfort food like macaroni and cheese, but two hefty servings will cost you about 1,100 calories and 60 grams of fat, 35 of them saturated. Here are a few suggestions: Enjoy one scoop, and pile your plate with vegetable sides. Also drink a tall glass of water before you eat (it will help fill you up). Afterward, try not to nap. Let the satisfied feeling linger while taking a walk with your fiancé—you'll work off some of the calories and bond away from the table. Finally, consider a lower-fat recipe like this one:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 4 cups 2 percent milk
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 1 garlic clove, minced (optional)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (6 ounces) shredded reduced-fat sharp Cheddar cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (2 ounces) shredded smoked Cheddar or Gouda
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. spicy brown or Dijon mustard
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 pound uncooked elbow macaroni or cavatappi pasta
- 3 cups broccoli florets
- Cooking spray or butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unseasoned bread crumbs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 375°. In a medium saucepan, add flour, then gradually pour in milk, stirring with a whisk until blended. Add nutmeg and garlic, if desired. Place over medium heat and simmer until thick, about 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add cheeses, mustard, salt and black pepper to taste, and cayenne; cook, stirring until cheeses melt. Remove from heat and set aside. Bring 3 quarts water to a boil, season with 2 Tbsp. salt, and add pasta; cook according to directions. Add broccoli during last 3 minutes and cook until pasta is al dente and broccoli is tender. Drain. Combine macaroni and cheese mixtures. Spoon into a casserole dish lightly coated with cooking spray or butter. Combine bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese, then evenly top macaroni with mixture. Bake until golden and bubbly (about 20 minutes). ▶

Makes 6 to 8 servings. **One serving:** 500 calories and 13 grams of fat (7 grams of saturated fat).

"My father, who died 17 years ago, used to make the creamiest mashed potatoes ever. Whenever I think of him, I reach for that dish."
—Angela, Chicago

Pensiero says: There are several ways to make creamy mashed potatoes (which are rich in vitamin C) without loading them up with fat. Beating in a reduced- or low-fat sour cream instead of butter will result in a smooth and delicious lightweight version. Throw in chopped fresh chives (or other herbs, such as parsley) for added color and flavor. Or "re-root" your potato craving to rutabaga and turnips with one of my favorite recipes:

- 1 medium (about 1½ pounds) rutabaga, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 3 medium (about 1 pound) turnips, peeled and cut into 1½-inch chunks
- 4 large (about 2½ pounds) white potatoes, peeled and cut into 1½-inch chunks
- ½ cup 2 percent milk
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large saucepan, cover rutabaga and turnips (2 foods in the cruciferous vegetable family that help protect you from cancer) with cold water; add 1 tsp. salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes. Add potatoes, and cook until vegetables are tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain. In a small saucepan, heat milk. Using an electric mixer, cream rutabaga, turnips, and potatoes while pouring in heated milk (use only enough to make mixture creamy and light). Beat in butter, and season to taste. Makes 10 servings. **One serving:** 174 calories and 5 grams of fat (1 gram of saturated fat).

"Aah, cheesesteak. There's something about the chopped-up fried beef and all that grease and seasoning and mountains of onions topped off with American cheese that slides down the bread like hot lava, with French fries on the side. Oh, Lordy! And it doesn't help that there's a sub shop on every corner of my town." —Mary, Baltimore

Pensiero says: Mary, after your passionate description, I'm not even going to suggest a healthier alternative. The cheese will not flow like lava from the great onion and meat mountain unless it's the real thing. Just try to limit your number of indulgences per month to no more than two. You can curb the damage by making the fries at home: Lightly coat wedges of 1 fresh potato with 1 tsp. vegetable oil, sprinkle with salt (spice them up if you wish), and roast them at 400°. Shake the pan and turn pieces once halfway through; cook until golden (20 to 25 minutes). **One serving:** 164 calories and 4.5 grams of fat (.5 grams of saturated fat). A small serving of McDonald's fries has 220 calories and more than twice the fat. •

E-mail us at fatdish@oprah.com favorite dishes you'd like to see made healthier, and check the magazine in a few months for the results.

Iron Jawed Angels.

They had no vote. No political clout.

No equal rights.

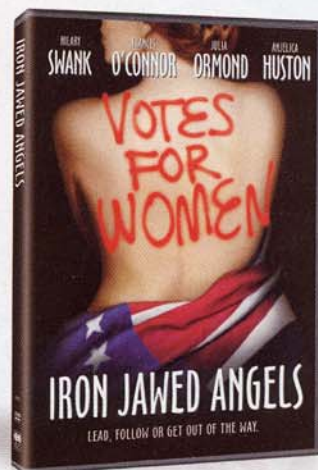
But what they lacked

under the law

they made up for in brains,

determination

and courage.



Iron Jawed Angels, the movie Redbook called, "riveting," and Us Weekly said was "amazing." Nominated for 5 Emmy® Awards.

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