

# What's Cookin': Tips to avoid over-indulgence at holiday parties this season

Did you know that the average North American gains 11 pounds over the holiday season? And then most never lose it. Kind of depressing eh? Well, for this year anyways, I have vowed not to be one of the over-indulging victims. I'm sure there's been many a year when I've exceeded the national average but not this year.

So, in that spirit, today's recipe is a simple-to-make tasty little dip that you can bring to a holiday party. It tastes pretty decadent, because it does have avocado (filled with good fats) and a bit of mayo, but assuming you aren't going to eat the whole bowl on your own, it's not a bad snack. If you want to cut the calories even lower, skip the mayo and substitute with a bit of chicken or vegetable stock. Try serving it with an assortment

**Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner**



of fresh vegetables and some rice crackers or baked tortilla chips—something light.

A couple of other hints for not putting on the holiday pounds that have worked well for me...

1. At cocktail parties do not stand near the food. If I stand beside the buffet, I eat all night long, but if I have to stop talking and actually go seek out the food, I eat less.

2. Eat before you go. I know it sounds weird to eat before a big party, but if you go and you are starving, you'll eat anything and

everything. But if you have a giant salad before you leave, you'll still be hungry enough to sample some of the goodies, but not so hungry that you lose control.

3. Stay away from the booze. We all know there are lots of empty calories in alcohol, but for me,

it's not the alcohol calories that are the problem—it's the loss of will power once I've had a few drinks.

4. If it's not a "10" don't eat it. Why waste calories on something that is not great—save it up for something you really love!

5. Remind yourself that you

will have the opportunity to eat food again—mincemeat tarts will be available again, so no need to eat them all in one night!

Have fun and keep cooking!

Email questions and comments to [whatscookin@independentfreepress.com](mailto:whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

## Edamame Dip

### Ingredients

- 14 oz bag frozen shelled edamame, unthawed
- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 shallot, peeled and cut in quarters
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 3 tsp olive oil (or more, if needed to create a smoother dip)
- 2 tsp fresh lemon juice,

- or more to taste
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 large handful of fresh basil
- pinch sea salt

### Method

Cook edamame in a large saucepan of boiling salted water until tender; approximately 4 minutes. Drain, reserving an half cup cooking liquid.

Place cooked edamame, avo-



cado, shallot, garlic, oil, lemon juice, mayonnaise and one-quarter cup reserved cooking liquid in a food processor. Season with the salt. Blend in more

cooking liquid or a little more olive oil if too thick or chunky.

Serve with tortilla chips, raw vegetables, rice crackers or pita chips.

  
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