

Merciful & Simple Meals

We try to live mercifully and simply and to apply this motto to each area of our lives. The more simply we eat, the more we will have to share with others in the long run. As Mother Teresa said, “Live simply that others may simply live.” Simple eating also makes it easy to scale up quantities and cook for a crowd when we have guests. **Our ideal meals include:**

1. non-GMO, no hormones, no antibiotics, no artificial preservatives, no artificial colorings, no additives, no hydrogenated oils, no corn syrups, no gluten
2. local food as much as possible (we love to stock up on meats & produce at the Farmer’s market first on Saturdays)
3. no pesticides (grown organically, naturally, or “beyond organic” – because organic label foods can still be sprayed with certain things)
4. no dairy/dairy optional, no nuts/nuts optional, no soy/soy optional, low glycemic/low glycemic optional
5. minimal/recyclable packaging of ingredients
6. salad greens offered & minimum of 2 cups total veggies per adult plate, minimum of 1-2 palm servings of protein
7. more natural sweeteners (ie: honey, pure maple syrup, molasses/brown sugar)

Our adult breakfast plates include: iron skillet eggs, iron skillet breakfast meat, salad greens or sauerkraut, & something colorful like berries or sautéed/raw tomatoes, and iron skillet diced sweet potatoes (cooked in olive oil, sea salt at the table)

Our kids breakfast plates include: If they don’t want eggs that day, I make a big pot of oatmeal for them & mix in frozen berries. They get a side of fruit, after a few bowls, when they’ve had ample oats & fruit, I have them switch to veggies (green peppers, raw carrot sticks, tomatoes).

We don’t have morning/afternoon snacks each day, sometimes these things are just part of our lunch plates. **Our morning & rare afternoon or evening snacks include:**

- green apple slices (lowest glycemic option), red apple slices & peanut butter/almond butter (Base Culture makes a delicious Gingerbread almond butter that is like dessert for me, and their Maple almond butter is like the taste of Teddy Grahams – only 3g sugar each serving for those, but regular almond butter usually has no sugar at all and that’s delicious, too)

- bulk almonds & walnuts (not pecans because they're similar to walnuts and really pricey – also we buy walnut pieces not whole walnuts, same taste, less money)
- black beans (canned with just sea salt, or make a big pot of beans from dried black beans each week & pull out what you need for each snack/meal)
- dried, flavored garbanzo bean snacks (I don't always buy these, but work well as crunchy flavor in salad, too)
- allergen free chocolate chips (as special reward treats for kids, chocolate chip rosary decades, and also use in baked goods)
- carrots & almond butter
- nut butter spoons

Our lunch plates include: salad with optional add-ins for plenty of great combinations (add-ins include nuts, chopped apples, flavored dried garbanzo beans, dried seasoning like basil & sea salt, soy-free balsamic vinaigrette, tomatoes, berries, salsa and meat/beans for taco salad, etc.), apple slices & carrot sticks with almond/peanut butter or balsamic vinaigrette dip, occasional rice cakes & nut butter or unsweetened applesauce topping, leftovers or extra breakfast meat, bowl of black beans with sautéed veggies on top, soup

Our dinner plates include: salad option, meat & vegetables. I'll share some of our favorite quick-prep farm-fresh dinner meals soon!

Our desserts are sometimes more rich than these, but we often offer daily dessert options including: chocolate chips, "healthy cake" – banana paleo muffins made with garbanzo bean flour (the kids love this because it's packed with protein & uses honey as sweetener, so they basically get as much as they want), frozen berries (frozen blueberries are ice cream like – so good), cobbler (frozen/fresh berries in casserole dish, top with mixture of brown sugar, coconut oil, oats & heat at 375 until crisp on top), baked berries (frozen/fresh berries in casserole dish & heat at 375 until warm, gooey, and pie-like), unsweetened applesauce, honey spoons

I'm hungry at bedtime snacks include: Raw carrot sticks & water. That's it. We give fair warning at the dinner table about how we want to make sure they get plenty to eat because we don't want them to be hungry at bedtime. Desserts are usually provided, too. Bedtime is approximately 20 minutes after dinner. We figure if they're hungry enough to eat raw carrot sticks at bedtime, they're probably truly hungry. And if they're staying up late on purpose just so they can gnaw on a carrot stick, we still win because we got our kids to eat carrots.

Until next time, go Live **Mercifully And Simply** to Build Up God's Kingdom **ON** Earth!

Kaitlyn Clare