
Graduate Certificate in Plant-Based Diet for Diabetes

Cooking Techniques for Plant-Based Meals

Al dente

Al dente is an Italian term used to describe pasta that is cooked to be firm to the bite, retaining a slight resistance in the center. This cooking technique is commonly used to prepare plant-based meals with pasta to prevent overcooking and maintain a desirable texture. Achieving al dente pasta involves cooking it in boiling water for a shorter time than indicated on the package instructions.

Baking

Baking is a dry-heat cooking method that involves cooking food in an oven using convection heat. This technique is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare a variety of dishes such as bread, cakes, cookies, and casseroles. Baking can be a healthy cooking method as it requires minimal added fats and oils. Plant-based meals can be baked using ingredients like vegetables, fruits, grains, and legumes to create flavorful and nutritious dishes.

Blanching

Blanching is a cooking technique that involves briefly immersing food in boiling water and then quickly cooling it in ice water to halt the cooking process. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to partially cook vegetables before using them in stir-fries, salads, or other dishes. Blanching helps to preserve the color, texture, and nutrients of vegetables while reducing their cooking time.

Braising

Braising is a cooking technique that involves searing food in a pan and then simmering it in a flavorful liquid, such as broth or wine, until tender. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like stews, curries, and braised vegetables. Braising helps to infuse the food with rich flavors and creates tender and succulent plant-based meals.

Broiling

Broiling is a cooking technique that involves exposing food to direct heat from above in an oven or broiler. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to quickly cook and brown dishes like tofu, vegetables, and plant-based proteins. Broiling can help to create crispy exteriors and caramelized flavors in plant-based meals, adding depth and texture to the dishes.

Caramelizing

Caramelizing is a cooking technique that involves heating sugar until it liquefies and turns into a golden-brown syrup. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to add sweetness and depth of flavor to dishes like onions, carrots, and fruits. Caramelizing can be achieved by cooking food over low heat for an extended period, allowing the natural sugars to develop and create a rich flavor profile.

Chopping

Chopping is a culinary technique that involves cutting food into small, irregular pieces. This method is

commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare ingredients like vegetables, fruits, nuts, and herbs for various dishes. Chopping helps to create uniform pieces of food that cook evenly and blend well in plant-based recipes, adding texture and flavor to the final dish.

Deglazing

Deglazing is a cooking technique that involves adding liquid, such as broth or wine, to a pan to loosen and dissolve the browned bits of food that are stuck to the bottom. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to create flavorful sauces and gravies for dishes like stir-fries, stews, and roasted vegetables. Deglazing helps to enhance the taste and aroma of plant-based meals by incorporating the caramelized flavors from the pan.

Grilling

Grilling is a cooking technique that involves cooking food over direct heat on a grill or barbecue. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like vegetables, fruits, tofu, and plant-based proteins. Grilling can help to create smoky flavors and charred textures in plant-based meals, adding depth and complexity to the dishes.

Julienning

Julienning is a culinary technique that involves cutting food into long, thin strips. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare vegetables like carrots, zucchini, and bell peppers for salads, stir-fries, and garnishes. Julienning helps to create visually appealing dishes with uniform pieces of food that cook quickly and evenly, enhancing the presentation and texture of plant-based meals.

Kneading

Kneading is a cooking technique that involves working dough with the hands to develop gluten and create a smooth and elastic texture. This method is commonly used in plant-based baking to prepare bread, pizza dough, and pastries. Kneading helps to strengthen the dough structure and improve the rise and texture of baked goods, resulting in fluffy and light plant-based products.

Mincing

Mincing is a culinary technique that involves cutting food into very small pieces. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare ingredients like garlic, onions, herbs, and nuts for sauces, dressings, and toppings. Mincing helps to release the flavors and aromas of the ingredients, enhancing the taste and texture of plant-based dishes.

Peeling

Peeling is a cooking technique that involves removing the outer skin or rind of fruits and vegetables. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare ingredients like potatoes, apples, and carrots for various dishes. Peeling helps to improve the texture and appearance of the food, making it more appealing and easier to eat in plant-based meals.

Pressure Cooking

Pressure cooking is a cooking technique that involves cooking food in a sealed pot with high pressure and steam. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like beans, lentils, grains,

and stews in a fraction of the time compared to traditional methods. Pressure cooking helps to retain nutrients and flavors in plant-based meals while reducing cooking time and energy consumption.

Roasting

Roasting is a dry-heat cooking method that involves cooking food in an oven at high temperatures. This technique is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like vegetables, nuts, seeds, and tofu. Roasting can help to caramelize sugars, develop flavors, and create crispy textures in plant-based meals, enhancing their taste and presentation.

Sautéing

Sautéing is a cooking technique that involves quickly cooking food in a pan with a small amount of oil or fat over high heat. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like stir-fries, curries, and sautéed vegetables. Sautéing helps to retain the natural flavors and nutrients of the ingredients while creating flavorful and aromatic plant-based meals.

Simmering

Simmering is a cooking technique that involves cooking food in liquid at a low and steady temperature. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare soups, stews, sauces, and grains. Simmering helps to meld flavors, tenderize ingredients, and create rich and hearty plant-based dishes with complex and layered tastes.

Slicing

Slicing is a culinary technique that involves cutting food into thin, uniform pieces. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare ingredients like fruits, vegetables, tofu, and plant-based proteins for salads, sandwiches, and garnishes. Slicing helps to create visually appealing dishes with even textures and shapes, enhancing the presentation and taste of plant-based meals.

Steaming

Steaming is a cooking technique that involves cooking food over boiling water or steam. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare vegetables, grains, and dumplings. Steaming helps to retain the nutrients and colors of the ingredients while creating light and healthy plant-based dishes with a natural and fresh flavor.

Stir-Frying

Stir-frying is a cooking technique that involves cooking food quickly in a hot pan with a small amount of oil over high heat. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like stir-fries, noodles, and fried rice. Stir-frying helps to preserve the texture and nutrients of the ingredients while creating flavorful and colorful plant-based meals with a crisp and vibrant finish.

Tempering

Tempering is a cooking technique that involves slowly raising the temperature of an ingredient by adding a small amount of hot liquid. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prevent curdling or separation when combining hot and cold ingredients, such as plant-based milk in sauces or soups. Tempering helps to stabilize the mixture and create a smooth and creamy texture in plant-based dishes.

Whisking

Whisking is a culinary technique that involves vigorously stirring ingredients together with a whisk to incorporate air and create a smooth and light texture. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare recipes like batters, dressings, and sauces. Whisking helps to emulsify ingredients, blend flavors, and create fluffy and creamy plant-based dishes with a uniform consistency.

Wok Cooking

Wok cooking is a traditional Chinese cooking technique that involves using a wok, a versatile and deep cooking vessel with sloped sides. This method is commonly used in plant-based cooking to prepare dishes like stir-fries, noodles, and fried rice. Wok cooking allows for quick and even heat distribution, enabling the ingredients to cook rapidly and retain their natural flavors and textures in plant-based meals.