



Fresh & Healthy
CARIBBEAN
Healthy Eating Guide



PearMD

START YOUR WEIGHT LOSS JOURNEY TODAY.

The Rich Tapestry of Caribbean Cuisine

The Caribbean region encompasses over 7,000 islands and coastal areas, each contributing to a vibrant culinary landscape. This diverse cuisine blends influences from native islanders, Africa, Europe, Latin America, China, the Middle East, India, and Southern Asia. The region's cultural diversity is reflected in its languages, which include Spanish, French, English, Dutch, Haitian Creole, and Papiamentu, among others.

While the Caribbean boasts a wealth of flavors and traditions, it also faces significant health challenges. The incidence of obesity and related conditions is rising rapidly, even as a quarter of the population lives in poverty. This unique situation calls for a thoughtful approach to nutrition that respects cultural heritage while promoting health.

The Essence of Caribbean Cooking:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Leafy greens
- Rice-based dishes
- Flavorful stews and soups
- Seafood and various meats (pork, poultry, beef, goat)
- Bold spices and seasonings
- Coconut milk as a common ingredient

PearMD's Strategies for Healthier Caribbean Eating

1. **Reimagine Cooking Methods:** Opt for sautéing, broiling, baking, grilling, or stewing instead of frying.
2. **Spice It Up, Cut the Salt:** Reduce salt intake by leveraging traditional Caribbean spices like curry, allspice, ginger, and herbs for flavor.
3. **Embrace Whole Foods:** Choose natural, unprocessed foods over ultra-processed alternatives and sugar-sweetened beverages.
4. **Smart Carb Swaps:** Replace refined carbohydrates with complex alternatives. Try brown rice or quinoa instead of white rice, or experiment with cauliflower rice for a low-carb option.
5. **Mindful Fruit Consumption:** Enjoy tropical fruits like bananas, mangoes, and pineapples in moderation due to their high sugar content. Incorporate lower-sugar fruits like berries more often.
6. **Lean Protein Choices:** Prioritize seafood and leaner meats as protein sources.



PearMD's Caribbean-Inspired Healthy Meal Ideas

Breakfast:

- **Ackee and Roasted Fish:** A healthier twist on the traditional salt cod version
- **Tropical Fruit and Nut Oatmeal:** Steel-cut oats topped with a small portion of mixed tropical fruits and a sprinkle of nuts
- **Caribbean Vegetable Frittata:** Eggs or egg whites with callaloo, bell peppers, and onions

Lunch/Dinner:

- **Jerk Chicken with Cauliflower Rice:** Baked jerk-spiced chicken served over seasoned cauliflower rice
- **Grilled Fish with Mango Salsa:** Served with a side of roasted sweet potato and sautéed callaloo
- **Caribbean-Style Bean Stew:** A hearty mix of beans and vegetables, seasoned with traditional spices, served over brown rice
- **Coconut Curry Vegetables:** A medley of local vegetables simmered in a light coconut curry sauce

Snacks:

- **Baked Plantain Chips:** Thinly sliced plantains baked with a sprinkle of sea salt
- **Spiced Roasted Chickpeas:** Chickpeas roasted with Caribbean spices for a crunchy, protein-rich snack

By following these guidelines, PearMD aims to help individuals of Caribbean descent maintain their rich food traditions while making choices that support overall health and well-being. Remember, small, consistent changes can lead to significant improvements in health over time, all while celebrating the vibrant flavors of Caribbean cuisine.

