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The latest dish on nourishing foods and delicious living

Eating Right

Benjamin Steak House's Arturo McLeod treats his 4-year-old son Timothy to a midday soup made with seared sirloin.

GRADE-A GRUB

Make your kid the toast of the cafeteria with these brown-bag lunch ideas from NYC chefs

By LAUREN STEUSSY

WHEN packing lunches for kids, it's easy to fall into a PB&J rut. But you don't have to be a famous chef to make your kids the envy of the cool table — you just need a few outside-the-(lunch)box recipe ideas. The Post visited six NYC culinary stars to find out how their junior foodies brown-bag it on busy school days. These chef-approved kid lunches all boast exciting flavor combos, A-plus presentation and plenty of opportunities for family participation. (Why should parents do all the work?) Even better, you can prep them in advance or throw 'em together in a jif — no actual jif required.

Arturo McLeod
Executive chef, Benjamin Steak House

McLeod knows the perfect temperature and humidity at which to age a steak, but the Staten Island-based father of six says school lunches are a continual work in progress.

"It's important to give the kids a lot of foods to try at an early age, so I can play to their strengths when I cook for them," he says.

McLeod's second-youngest child, Timothy, 4, is just starting his education.

After busy mornings in preschool learning the ABCs, Timothy loves to spoon up his dad's warming split pea soup with toasted bread. The soup is filled with healthy ingredients and satisfying flavors.

"I try to add carrots into every soup, which he loves," McLeod says. "He also loves the sirloin in this recipe. I'm not at all surprised that he's developed an affinity for steak."

THE RECIPE Split pea soup



1 tbsp. olive oil
1 cup diced carrots
1 cup diced uncooked sirloin
1/2 cup diced uncooked bacon
1 lb. dried split peas
1 tsp. dried thyme
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 tsp. dried oregano
2 cups chicken broth
2 cups water
Salt

Heat oil in 5-quart stockpot over medium heat. Saute carrots, sirloin, ham, split peas, thyme, garlic and oregano for 5 to 10 minutes. Add broth and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer uncovered for about 30 minutes, or until soup thickens and peas are soft. Add salt to taste. Serves 4.

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