TECHNIQUE OF THE QUARTER: DEVELOPING HEALTHY RECIPES AND MENUS

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- **Intensify avors with variations on a theme.** Rather than adding a variety of seasonings to a tomato-based pasta sauce, for example, use several di erent tomato products, such as canned tomatoes, slow-roasted or sun-dried tomatoes, and fresh tomatoes, to create an intensely rich taste by "layering" the same ingredient. Puree smoked salmon and add to a paste that tops salmon llets before broiling, or simmer apples in cider when making a sauce.

- **Introduce the exotic slowly**. Although most customers are willing to embrace unusual tastes, you'll have better luck incorporating them if you combine them with the familiar. An entrée of freshly caught grilled sardines might have limited appeal, but add them to a sampler plate that includes olives, marinated

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yet be comfortable with smaller amounts. Before making adjustments to your recipes, survey your customer base to determine changes that are desired and those that will not be tolerated.

In order to prevent customers from feeling that they are somehow being cheated, there are a number of strategies you

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THREE WAYS TO ADD HEALTHY RECIPES TO YOUR MENU

#1 – Use Existing Recipes

Before you spend the time, e ort, and money adapting or creating recipes, review the ones you currently use. Look to see that they are in line with the standards for a healthy menu you have established for your operation. Evaluate the technique, the ingredients, and the portion size to be sure.

Grilling, broiling, roasting, poaching, steaming, stewing, and baking are all techniques that do not necessarily require additional fat during cooking. Recipes for clear soups, consommés, pilafs, and stir-fries are also normally appropriate.

Next, review the ingredients and their amounts. Whole grains, vegetables, fruits, pasta, sh, lean meats, and skinless poultry indicate a recipe that is potentially healthy. Ingredients for sauces should be low in saturated fat, salt, and re ned sugar. If everything appears to be acceptable, review the portion size. Some recipes that are not initially within parameters can be brought in line by serving a smaller amount.

#2 -Modify Recipes

The most common method of developing a healthy recipe is to modify a traditional or classic recipe to reduce its calories, sodium, sugar, fats, or cholesterol. The key to successful modi cation is to imagine comparisons between the modi ed recipe and the original version. If a modi ed recipe cannot emulate the avor and texture of the original but is still tasty, consider calling it by a new name and forgoing any association to the original dish.

In modifying recipes, two areas can be adjusted: techniques and ingredients, and fat is often critical in both areas. To identify recipes that are good candidates for alteration, look at the amount and purpose of fat. Recipes that rely on fat for the majority of their avor and texture, such as deep-fried foods or sauces like hollandaise or beurre blanc, should be avoided. Those that have a moderate amount of fat, and that rely on other ingredients to contribute avor, moisture, and structure, have potential. You may be able to use less fat if you modify the technique. Adaptations may be as simple as

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