

## Trader Joes Products and Ideas

Welcome to the Trader Joes resource letter. Some clients and I bravely ventured forth on a Tuesday morning to go shelf diving and uncover some of the latest hidden treasures that Trader Joes has to offer Shifters. I have married our findings with the original list. Everything has been organized into sections to be user friendly. I am a big fan of the Joe's because they have affordable products and a lot of them are master mindset friendly. TJ's leaves a lot to be desired with his parking lots though!

The big lesson we learn again and again is you have to read labels! Otherwise, seemingly innocent "health food"-- that actually is really caloric-- ends up undoing you because you think you are eating light but you are not. Case in point—we looked at the sushi section the seemingly low cal "rolls" average about 600 calories per package!!! Yikes!

### **Dairy Section**

You either embrace dairy or you don't. We whipped by the milks because what's there to say about milk—you either got it or you don't.

For those of you who light your coffee on the pale side, the **TJ's Fat Free half and half** has fewer calories at 50 cal per 2 tablespoons (note less fat and more sugar though).

For those of you who are looking to cut down calories in your milk substitutes—like soy milk, rice milk, etc.—I cannot rave enough about **Almond Breeze's Unsweetened Almond Milk**—back me up Joesters—we were practically misty-eyed singing the praises of this slightly almondy beverage that doesn't come from a mammal or throw your hormones into a funk. 40 calories a cup and it's rich and creamy to boot.

**Yogurt Rave:** Many from this crew of Joesters agree about these products.

**Fage 0% Greek Yogurt**-plain

And **Trader Joe's 0% Greek version** of the same thick and creamy, great for breakfast and snacks—topped with fruit or plain, stirred into savory dips. I use it to top stewed apples, bananas, and other fruit desserts.

**Kozy Shack now does a sugar free chocolate (60 cal) and tapioca (70 cal) pudding** in single serving containers in a 4 pack. I have tried these and think they are swell—sweetened with Splenda. Nice dessert or treat.

**Pasturized Egg Whites:** (Near the egg beaters) I love these things because you can spray a casserole dish, pour some whites in, nuke 'em, and you can keep 'em for a couple of days. I sometimes make a breakfast from a tortilla, Canadian bacon slice-1 slice, one slice tofu cheese, and a bit of egg whites. It's like an Egg McMuffin but it's only 180 calories and low in fat and it takes seconds to make when the egg whites are prepped ahead of time. They are great for cooking, baking, and omelettes, obviously.

## **Bread Section**

**Zen Muffins and Fiber Cakes:** These little fruit juice sweetened baked goods are the fiber child of The Zen Bakery. The fibercakes are 80 calories and 15 grams of fiber-wow going in, 'cause they taste great—and double wow going out—if you get my drift! The Zen muffins are a bit more zaftig—weighing in at 250 cal but with fiber low fat and the same size as those big Starbucks' muffins but a third of the calories. These go fast so store them in the freezer and take out as needed. Great for breakfast or snacking or dessert when crumbled up over some of the above-mentioned yogurt.

**Mini Pita Pockets are also in the bread section—at 60 cal** each, they're worth a mention. Everybody has their own gluten or non-gluten thing going on, and TJ's does seem to cater to everyone's needs in the bread department.

Love the **Sonora low carb tortillas** (really Rita—that's a surprise) 60 calories

Ricardo loves the **Ezekial tortillas**, bigger, more grainy and good for tortilla salads and strips (Blog Ricardo for the recipe)

**Look Pa Bread:** whole grain, no flour, 90 calories, but as whole grain as you can get.

Check out other breads—check labels--a slice of bread can range from 40 to 160 calories a slice.

Okay now we are in the salad area and looking at those cold deli/salad products. You are almost there with us, doncha feel it??—People are poking us with their grocery carts and giving us the evil eye—but we are on a mission and will not be deterred!!!!

## **Deli case:**

**Eggplant Hummus:** the lowest calorie hummus in the case. At 35 cal a tablespoon, it is a good thing-as Martha would say—spread on w/w toast or the low carb tortilla (I am going to be buried in a low carb tortilla I mention them so much), or as a dip for those sexy veggies that you all love to chomp on at snack time.

**Hummus Quartet:** It's nice--4 different flavors averaging about 45 cal per 2 Tablespoons. Great to bring into work to share over the week in the staff room with a bag of carrots (instead of a dozen donuts!!)

The below tomato based sauces in the deli section are great over everything in my book—steamed broccoli, salads, in soups, veggie dip—heck, if they made a vat big enough I would bathe in ‘em!

**Salsa Especial Premium—fresh, very tasty, salsa 2T=5 calories!**

**Pico De Gallo 2 T =5 cal**

**Tomato Bruschetta sauce** (amazing and garlicky, I eat straight from the container) 2T=20 cal

**Guacamole:** Low cal? We think not! However we discussed ways to take this healthy yet calorie dense dip and make it user friendly—blenderize it with peas or cooked asparagus—it adds minimal flavor to the dip but cuts the cal down. Or eat, but just be aware of how much you are using. Ricardo gave us another idea—lettuce. Sometimes Mexican restaurants will blenderize the lettuce in the guacamole just to fill it out to save money—we like the idea because it saves calories!

**Egg White Salad with Chives and Egg White Salad Ranchero:** These bad boys come in the same type of container as the hummus. I love this stuff; it tastes great, packs a ton of protein to keep hunger at bay and a whole container is 100 calories! Put it on salads, over steamed veggies (this is actually awesome) on w/w toast or the 1c tortilla. I like the Ranchero best because it’s spicy and is reminiscent of a chili relleno when you put salsa over it.

**Just Chicken, Just Salmon, Just Beef: calories vary** For the carnivore in us, these are packages of freshly poached and chunked meats and fishes that are prepped with no fat and have had all the fatty bits removed—they are located by the salads. These products would be great over a salad, tossed in a stir-fry, or just kept in the office fridge for a protein packed snack. Great for those of us who like to eat meat but don’t like cooking it.

**Note:** the **Teriyaki Just Chicken** is fewer calories at 110 per 3 oz versus the plain chicken, which is 160—I think the Chicken teriyaki is hiding something. Sometimes I think Trader Joes can be Liar Joes and just FYI by FDA standards food calories can be 25% off the correct amount. If it tastes like it should be more calories than it says it is—it probably is! Sigh!

**Hard Boiled and Peeled Eggs in the bag another** great item to bring in and keep at work or in the front of your refrigerator to reach for some protein on the go.

**TJs fresh Soups**—a new line added to the deli section, these come in plastic containers

**Heart Minestrone** 110 cal per cup

**Lentil** 230 per cup

**TJs Salads:** these are the prepped ones that I have already mentioned but worth repeating because they are so convenient, tasty, fresh, and low cal—

California Spa-Nicoise

Low Fat Southwestern

Low Fat Greek

Garden with Tomato Basil Dressing  
Sesame Tofu  
Low Fat Chinese Chicken  
Low Fat Shrimp Louis

I buy the organic garden and toss the 300 cal dressing packet (TJ's, what are you thinking?) and put ½ the egg white salad over the top with some salsa on top. It's really good and filling and for 120 calories in total gets you through to afternoon snack time without a tummy rumble.

Pete put in a good rave about **TJs Fat Free Balsamic Vinaigrette** and it was so low in calories you could bathe in it. 25 for 2 Tablespoons.

**Spicy Spinach Pizza** (located on the top shelf above salads—in this TJs at least) these are thin things that are more like pizza sandwiches. Amy from our group has been enjoying them. They have about 120 calories each and look good. Amy, any comments???

**Chevre Lite**, at 35 calories an ounce, is a great tangy topping to a salad, toast, apple slices—or dare I say it—a low carb tortilla, spread with a tiny bit of jam or a savory salty olive tapenade (just to impart a flavor).

**Fat Free Feta** 35 cal per ounce

**Laughing Cow Plain, Herbed, or Bleu Cheese Flavors**—35 cal per wedge

**Any cheese that is preportioned and packaged** like the **Bon Belle** or **Laughing Cow** or cheese sticks are a help because then your rebel isn't tempted into having you continue slicing away at the bigger piece of cheese "Go on—even up that edge—you know you want to."

**Light String Cheese**—many reach for this protein filled snack—60 cal. per stick.

**Hebrew National Franks 97% Fat Free**—A good tasting hot dog that weighs in at 45 calories.

**Canadian Bacon**-Surprisingly, this Canuck breakfast meat is super low in fat and calories—Oh, Canada! 20 calories a slice.

**Reduced Sodium Turkey** breast slices 60 calories per 2 oz

**Beef-less and Chicken-less Strips** these are fabulous for stir-frying with 9 strips =110 calories.

**Roasted Chicken Patties (pre-cooked and awesome tasting)** 140 calories each. I must admit when the hubby and kids were away last summer for a week, I lived on these—so easy to heat up and then cut up and toss on a salad or a bowl of steamed veggies with some sauce.

**Sweet Apple Chicken Sausage** 120 cal per link

We kind of looked at the veggie section, but by now the store was crowded, so we didn't hover too long.

TJ's is great because they package up prepped veggies so it makes cooking them a cinch. I buy the **bag of Southern Greens** and sauté those of the time. Liz puts cumin and paprika on them and says it gives them that smoky southern thing without the ham hock.

**Bags of Sugar Snap Peas** have about 100 calories and are a favorite of Alicia's—my hypno-associate. You can munch for hours for little calories but a lot of nutrition!

**Broccoli Slaw:** low in cals and super high in nutrients—add some dressing—toss in a salad, sautee. When I met with Lisa Lillien we both spent about 5 minutes just singing its praises.

**Apples:** We discussed slicing up apples, putting them in a microwave dish, adding cinnamon, a slice of ginger, some vanilla, and then microwaving for 5 minutes. The result is a comforting bowl of what tastes like apple pie. I will serve this as dessert to company with yogurt on top—always a big hit and great for breakfast, too.

### **Freezer Section:**

The freezer is your LTPWR friend. Not only is it a great place to put the gacky foods that you don't want calling out your name, but it is also a wonderful hideout for all those healthy veggies and prepared dinners at your office and home for those days and nights that you just can't put energy into cooking. The microwave and freezer together can be your answer to the take-out or fast-food drive-thru.

TJ's freezer section has alot of dinners, but you do have to check labels. Here are some lower cal items for snacks, meals, and desserts.

**Chicken, Beef, or Black Bean Taquitos.** 100 calories per taquito. Great for a snack attack—one is pretty big and can hold off your hunger. Or have a couple with a salad or veggies for din din.

**Thai Frozen Veggie Gyoza:** 50 calories each—not bad and decadent feeling. Keep on top of the number you eat though.

**Pizza Fromaggio:** These baby pizzas are very high quality and taste great. They have been the subject of my personal 3-bite rule many a time. Now they aren't what I would call a healthy dinner, *but* if you have to eat pizza, these are small and only 250 calories each.

**Roasted Veggie Pizza:** W/W crust, no cheese, and lots of cool veggies, 1/3 of the pizza is 260 calories and another idea for a pizza jonzing attack.

**Just Grilled Chicken:** Slices of grilled chicken breast frozen and put in a resealable package. Need I say more—I see salads, stir fries, and romaine roll-ups in your future.

**Asian Veggie Mixes:** TJs is your hub for frozen Asian veggie mixes. Just look on the back-some have a ton of calories and some are down right low cal. Another way to cut cal's is to stir-fry one of these bags with another bag of just veggies.

**Soy Nugget 4 pc** =120 calories

**Mahi Mahi burgers**= 110 calories each

**Chicken Cilantro Won Tons 4 pc**=50 calories

**Cucumber Won Ton Rolls 4 pc** 100 calories

**Misoyaki Turbot fillets 2 filets**= 210 calories

**Pork Roast Florentine 1/3 package** = 240 calories

**Battered Halibut 3 pc** = 200 cal's

**Steamer Clams (in a box you just microwave)**=70 cal's for 14 clams, rave reviews on this one)

**Wild Turbot Filets 4oz** =210 cal's (great flavor)

**Seasoned Mahi Mahi 4.5 oz** =130 calories (love this one)

**Morning Star Farms:** You either love the fake meat and soy burgers or you don't and then sometimes you think you hate them but find a product that actually works. Here is a list of the MSF products that TJs carries that us Joesters are fans of:

Tomato basil burger=120 calories AND AWESOME

BBQ riblets=230 cal's a serving and hits the BBQ spot.

Veggie bacon=the best I've had

Veggie breakfast patties=80 calories each-good Jimmy Dean feeling and Wilbur gets to live.

Also:

**Dr. Praegers Veggie Burgers**=100 calories each

**Veggie Masala:** Indian spiced veggie burgers-I love these-no protein though

**Lime Cilantro Chicken Patties**=100 calories.

**Chicken Skewers**= Phyllis put in a good word for these and 120 cal's each-we listened!

**The frozen broccoli,** green bean, and spinach are all great ways to cut time and get green into your diet. Take the bag from your freezer, put it in your microwave, and hit 6 minutes—it will come out nicely steamed and ready to eat. Sometime I will put out a bowl of salsa and dip the broccoli spears in for a snack or as I'm fixing dinner for the kids.

**Grilled Eggplant and Zucchini Mélange** = 70 Calories per ¼ package

**The frozen fruit** is a must for the freezer for smoothies, sorbets, or eating out of the bag frozen—the cherries and mangos are great for this—they slow down your eating and it satisfies that late night sweet tooth.

Another idea is to thaw and top cottage cheese, yogurt, etc. I will put frozen fruit in a cup and let it thaw on my desk at work and then eat it.

### **Dry Goods Aisle:**

Here are some items from the always crowded pasta aisle.

**TJ's Tuscana Marinara sauce**, no sugar low cal.

**Sesame Oil-high in calories** but imparts tons of flavor so a little goes a long way in sauces (soy sauce+sesame oil+rice vinegar+some sweetener and ginger if you want) and dressings or toss a ¼ t. in a stir fry.

**Tapenades:** Another higher calorie item but, as mentioned before, you can spread a bit on some goat cheese, on some toast or tortilla for a great lunch or snack. Ideas: pesto, black olive, artichoke, red pepper and green olive. Indian relish.

**Masala Simmer Sauce, Red Enchilada Sauce, Red Thai Sauce**, all come in glass jars and are great sauces that are low cal to transform humble proteins and veggies or beans into an amazing feast of the senses.

**Roasted Corn and Pepper Soup in a carton=110 cal per cup—great!**

**Organic Creamy Tomato Soup=110 cup**

**Organic Lentil Soup in a can=110 cal per cup (kids live this one)**

**Low Sodium Chicken Stock: little packets**=about 20 cal each. They deliver a ton of flavor. I toss my veggies with just a bit and it makes them taste amazing. Great to make soup in a pinch or to add to stir frys for more of a flavor boost.

**Indian and Thai Boxed Pouches:** A lot of these have 160 calories or less for ½ a pouch and are great tossed into a bowl of broccoli instead of the more caloric rice. Green Thai Tuna is my fave, and the eggplant Indian one is also full of flavor.

**Canned Organic Pumpkin:** I love making crustless pumpkin pie and eating it for dinner. Take a can of pumpkin (150 calories), add ½ c. egg whites, some sweetener (agave, stevia, applesauce splenda etc.), pumpkin pie spices, 1 cup almond milk, Put in a pie dish and bake at 300 for

about an hour (depends—check). The whole dish is only about 350 calories if you get carried away and eat the whole thing. (Calories depend on how you sweeten it.)

That's it. If anyone who was on the tour can remember more, please let me know. Thanks again to those who came and especially Ellie Hannibal who wrote down all the items as we went through the first time and Liz who did it the second field trip!

Bon Appetite

Have a shifted week!