



BUL 1069

Air Frying Fun!



Surine Greenway

Extension Educator
University of Idaho Extension
Owyhee County

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What Is an Air Fryer?

OFFICIALLY INTRODUCED TO the home food consumer in 2010 (John 2024), the air fryer appliance was designed to replace deep-fat fryers to produce a healthier version of “fried” food (lower in fat and calories) (Whirlpool 2024). Instead of cooking food submerged in hot oil (deep frying), an air fryer works somewhat like a convection oven, but on a countertop, its fan dispersing hot air around the food to cook it. The edible result is a product similar to fried food—crispy on the outside, moist on the inside—but ready to eat in less time.

Potential Benefits

There are many advantages to using an air fryer, including that it may contribute to lower calorie intake; is easy to use, energy-efficient, fast, multipurpose, and fits into most cooking spaces.

Air Fryers Can Save Energy

According to CNET (Watsky 2023), an air fryer uses about 50% less energy than an oven. Indeed, an air fryer is cheaper to use than a gas or electric oven (Table 1).

Table 1. Cost of using an oven appliance versus an air fryer.

	Gas Oven	Electric Oven	Air Fryer
Cost Per Hour of Cooking*	40 cents	52 cents	25 cents

*Based on 2023 New York Electricity Rates.

- **Lower calorie intake.** Air fryers generally produce foods that are lower in fat than traditionally deep-fried foods while replicating their texture and flavor. Consumers can reduce caloric intake and promote healthier food consumption by cooking foods in an air fryer while using less fat than the traditional deep-frying method. The Cleveland Clinic (2024) estimates that using an air fryer can reduce calorie intake by 70%–80% compared to a deep fryer because it requires less oil.

Note: Using an air fryer to prepare breaded, processed, or higher-fat foods should be done in moderation. Breading is not required for preparing air-fried food. Consider preparing leaner cuts of protein without adding breading. Add flavor by seasoning with spices as desired but reduce the oil and sodium usage.

- **Easy to use.** Most available models offer preprogrammed functions to select from, simplifying its operation for inexperienced kitchen users. Large quantities of oil are also unnecessary.
- **Energy efficient.** Air fryers generally operate like an oven, but on a smaller scale. Thus they will not heat up your home the same way a traditional oven unit might, incurring less energy usage compared to regular-sized ovens.
- **Fast.** Because of their smaller size, air fryers heat up faster when reaching temperature levels similar to your oven's.
- **Multipurpose.** An air fryer cooks a vast range of foods and/or dishes. Indeed, it does more than just produce a healthier “fried” food. It cooks protein and vegetable food groups quickly and easily, frozen foods with ease and efficiency, and is an excellent option for reheating leftovers.

Different desserts and even dried foods can be successfully prepared in these units too.

- **Size.** These appliances come in various smaller sizes, simplifying their countertop placement or storage. They can even be taken on trips and used when you arrive at your destination. Because they are typically smaller and cook a smaller quantity of food, they tend to serve the needs of smaller households.

Note: In recent years, manufacturers have begun to include an air fryer setting in larger appliances, including ovens. Read the manufacturer's recommendations on the use of this setting and if any adjustments should be made to the recipe you are preparing.

Safe Use of the Appliance

- **Manufacturer's instructions.** Always read the manufacturer's instructions before use, especially safety and handling information, but also any helpful information on appliance use and maintenance.
- **Stipulations.** Some air fryers may have specific stipulations, like don't use aluminum foil or liners within the appliance. Some models recommend carrying out an initial burn-off step to eliminate a chemical odor that can develop when cooking.
- **Do not leave the appliance unattended.** As with any kitchen cooking appliance, an air fryer should not be left unattended during cooking; this creates a fire risk.
- **Appliance location when in use.** Choose your air fryer placement wisely before cooking with it, a position that allows for airflow between the unit and its surrounding area (ideally, a minimum of 5 inches between the air fryer and other surrounding items). Not only does this reduce the fire risk, but it also creates the necessary airflow around the air fryer so that it can cook the food properly.
- **Accessories.** Use oven mitts and hot pads to handle your foods appropriately once they are done cooking. Additionally, gather the necessary tools to better handle the food you intend to

air fry. These might include baskets, trays, rotisseries, oil drip pans, racks, hot pads, tongs, forks, spatulas, etc.

- **DO NOT use aerosol-based nonstick sprays.** Aerosol sprays contain chemicals that could damage an air fryer when cooking at high temperatures.
- **Do not use wet batters.** Due to the nature of the cooking technique of an air fryer, cooking foods with wet batters is not recommended. Splattering can occur, which may create a low-quality product and a mess to clean within the appliance.
- **Preheat.** Preheat the air fryer to ensure that it reaches the desired temperature. A general rule of thumb is three minutes.
- **Burned or charred foods risk.** Because an air fryer handles smaller food amounts and reaches high heat levels, it can burn or char foods more easily. Eliminate this concern by checking on food throughout the cooking process. Sometimes, turning over the food allows for even heating. Turn or shake food at least once during the cooking process to keep it from burning. Some units even have a “turn” reminder that can be set. Most offer a safe way to open the air fryer or pull out the drawer so you can check on the food; the appliance fan and time resume after it is fully closed again.

Caring for Air Fryers

Cleaning instructions vary, so read the manufacturer’s instructions accompanying your specific model. But it’s good practice to clean your appliance after each use to keep it smoke and grease-free. Before doing so, turn it off, unplug it, and let it cool completely. Clean the basket or tray with warm, soapy water and a brush or sponge, being careful not to damage its Teflon coating. For stuck-on food items, soak the basket or tray in soapy water; some brands have dishwasher-safe baskets and pans.

Remove the bottom compartment, where crumbs, oil residue, and meat drippings have fallen, and wipe it down. In fact, inspect the compartment after each use. If it is located in an area of the unit that is not removable, wipe these areas carefully with a dry or dampened cloth. Make sure all the air fryer parts are completely dry before reassembling them.

Wipe the interior and exterior of the air fryer too. This can be done with a dampened kitchen towel. Use a hard-bristled brush sparingly and only to remove stuck-on food particles. Check the cooled heating element in the air fryer, because foods sizzle and pop during cooking. Occasionally, deep clean your air fryer; use baking soda and water to help remove stuck-on food items. Depending on the level of use and amount of oil used, use a degreaser to help remove grease residue. Be careful of the products or materials used when cleaning; **do not scrape the appliance’s interior**, which might remove some of its coating.

Food Safety

When cooking, be mindful of safe food-handling techniques to reduce the risk of getting a foodborne illness. Separate raw from cooked food products, keep foods at appropriate temperatures, and check the internal temperatures of food, especially protein dishes like meats or eggs. Use a thermometer to confirm that food is being cooked to the correct minimum internal temperature (see Four Steps to Food Safety and Table 2).



Four Steps to Food Safety

Clean: Wash your hands and surfaces often.

- Wash your hands for at least twenty seconds with soap and water before, during, and after preparing food and before eating.
- Wash utensils, cutting boards, and countertops with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water.

Separate: Don't cross-contaminate.

- Raw meat, chicken and other poultry, seafood, and eggs can spread germs to ready-to-eat food unless you keep them separate. Establish discrete spaces for food items in your preparation area.
- Use different cutting boards and utensils (or thoroughly wash equipment if shared for both items) throughout the preparation and cooking process.

Cook: Use a food thermometer to check that food has been cooked to the right temperature.

- Food is safely cooked when its internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that sicken diners.
- The only way to tell if food is safely cooked is to use a food thermometer. Color and texture (except for seafood) are too misleading (Table 2).

Chill: Refrigerate promptly. Bacteria multiply rapidly at room temperature or when in the “Danger Zone” (between 40°F and 140°F).

- Know when to throw out food before it spoils. Keep your refrigerator at 40°F or below and your freezer at 0°F or below. If your refrigerator doesn't have a built-in thermometer, store an appliance thermometer inside it so you can check the temperature on a regular basis.
- Following food preparation, cooking, and consumption, chill food quickly. Store leftovers in shallow containers and place them in the refrigerator within two hours of their preparation.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2023.

When preparing food for someone with a food allergy, carefully clean and use your air fryer. Some of the different components of the air fryer are difficult to clean; leaving behind small food particles could lead to an allergic reaction.

Purchasing

When selecting the air fryer, consider the following factors:

- **Size.** Estimate how many people you will likely be cooking for. About 3 qt of capacity is good for two people. A family of four people or more requires at least a 4-quart capacity.
- **Space.** Although it is important to consider the air fryer appliance's capacity for cooking

needs, don't forget to consider storage space. Ask yourself the following questions:

- If you intend to leave the unit on your countertop, will it fit easily or will it need to be stored in a different location when not in use?
- If you need to store the air fryer somewhere other than your countertop, can you easily lift and place the unit in an alternate location?
- **Features.** Consider the different programmed functions you want in an air fryer unit. These can include preset temperatures, times, and functions like dehydrate, roast, broil, etc. However, if you don't need additional functions, look for those

Table 2. Safe minimum internal temperature chart.

Product	Minimum Internal Temperature and Rest Time
Beef, Pork, Veal and Lamb Steaks, Chops, Roasts	145°F (62.8°C) and allow to rest for at least three minutes
Ground Meats	160°F (71.1°C)
Ground Poultry	165°F
Ham, Fresh or Smoked (Uncooked)	145°F (62.8°C) and allow to rest for at least three minutes
Fully Cooked Ham (to Reheat)	Reheat cooked hams packaged in USDA-inspected plants to 140°F (60°C) and all others to 165°F (73.9°C).
All Poultry (Breasts, Whole Bird, Legs, Thighs, Wings, Ground Poultry, Giblets, and Stuffing)	165°F (73.9°C)
Eggs	160°F (71.1°C)
Fish and Shellfish	145°F (62.8°C)
Leftovers	165°F (73.9°C)
Casseroles	165°F (73.9°C)

Source: United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety Inspection Service 2025.

that offer only basic options like bake or air fry.

- **Reviews.** As with any purchase, consider product reviews from other consumers. Make sure, however, that you access reputable third-party sources.
- **Cost.** The desired size and features can impact a price point. A reasonable price range for the most basic compact air fryer models runs about \$40–\$125. For a larger model or one with more preprogrammed features, the cost rises, from \$200 to upwards of more than \$450. If you can afford only the more basic models, consider those in that range that also offer the functions you need to stay within budget limits. For example, if you only intend to use the appliance to cook foods from a frozen state or to reheat leftovers, choose from those with fewer extra functions or a simple basic model.

Oils

Being aware of the different smoke points of oils is important when cooking. **Smoke point** is the temperature at which an oil begins to burn or smoke. In general, the lighter the color of an oil, the higher its smoke point. The smoke point also differs based on whether the oil is refined or unrefined. The key difference between refined and unrefined oils is that refined oils are more processed, while unrefined oils are left in their virgin state following the pressing process. In general, unrefined oil has a stronger smell and holds a higher nutrient value compared to refined oil. When using high-heat cooking (air frying, pan frying, searing, deep frying, etc.), select oils with a higher smoke point to reduce the risk of it burning or smoking (Table 3).

To best store cooking oil, place it in a cool, dark location away from the oven or stove and in its original container. Discard and replace any oil that smells or tastes “off.”

Table 3. Smoke point of common oils.

Oil	Unrefined Temperature (°F)	Refined Temperature (°F)
Avocado	488	520
Butter	350	
Canola	464	470
Coconut	350	450
Corn	320	450
Olive	320	420
Palm	255	455
Peanut	320	450
Sesame	410	450
Soybean	320	450
Sunflower	225	450

Source: Melina 2023.

According to the Cleveland Clinic (2023a), choosing appropriate cooking oils is also important for health purposes. Fats considered unhealthy are saturated and trans fats because they raise low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels. Saturated fats are commonly found in butter, whole milk, yogurt, cheese, lard, bacon fat, fatty cuts of red meat, poultry skin, coconut oil, palm oil, and palm kernel oils. The Food and Drug Administration determined that artificial trans fats are unsafe to consume. Consequently, since 2020, US food manufacturers no longer legally sell foods that include partially hydrogenated oil, although packaged and processed foods contain small amounts (Cleveland Clinic 2023b). Limit your consumption of these or avoid

them when possible. Fats that are considered healthy are those that lower your LDL and increase your high-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels. Too much of any fat, no matter the type, isn't good for your overall health, so consume any oil in moderation.

Monounsaturated fats are usually found in foods like olives, avocados, nuts, and their associated cooking oils. Polyunsaturated fats are also commonly referred to as omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids. These can be found in oily fish, like salmon, herring, tuna, and mackerel, and in walnuts, chia seeds, and flaxseeds. Read the oil label before purchasing to select an oil low in saturated fat and high in poly- and monounsaturated fatty acids.

Troubleshooting

Although air fryers are modern, electric, and easy to use, quality issues can occur in the cooking process. The following list discusses some of the most common ones and how to troubleshoot them.

- **Uneven cooking.** This can happen due to overcrowding food products inside the appliance. To reduce this risk, spread the food evenly in the cooking space, ensuring there is proper space for air circulation around the food. If the problem persists, consider shaking, flipping, rearranging, or stirring ingredients throughout the cooking time.
- **Food sticking.** Sometimes, foods stick to the basket or tray on which they are arranged. Prevent this by lightly brushing the basket or tray with oil to provide a slight barrier between the food and the contact surface.
- **Texture not crispy.** If you are cooking food to a safe doneness, but it isn't crispy enough, consider lightly spraying or brushing it with a small quantity of oil. You may also flip food when cooking to ensure even browning.
- **Smoke or odor.** If smoke appears or an undesirable burning odor materializes while your appliance is in use, you may be using too much grease or the inner chamber may contain too much grease residue. Regularly clean the basket, tray, and appliance interior to prevent any further buildup.

- **Overcooking.** Check your food throughout the cooking process and a few minutes before the recommended finish time. This will help you to see if the food is evenly cooking or has fully cooked before the recommended time. Adjust the temperature or time as needed.
- **Food drying out.** Use a basting brush to apply a thin layer of oil or sauce before or during cooking.
- **Overheating.** Air vents may be blocked or covered, causing the air not to circulate correctly and thus lengthening the cooking times. Also, blocked air vents are a safety hazard. Move the appliance farther away from the wall or other objects when operating it.

Recipes

To air fry foods using recipes based on the use of other appliances, adjust the recipes. Familiarize yourself with air-fryer conversion charts for oven-cooked, deep-fried, or pan-fried foods. An air fryer manual often contains recipes and sometimes conversion tips too, but for more general recommendations, see Table 4.

Air-Fryer Recipe Conversion and Tips

Conventional Oven-to-Air Fryer Conversion

Reduce the temperature by 25°F and the cooking time by 20%.

Deep Fryer-to-Air Fryer Tip

Add a light amount of oil to the food, at the beginning and halfway through the cooking time. For the remaining time, flip or shake the food as needed to prevent it from sticking.

Pan Fryer-to-Air Fryer Tips

- For recipes that require a batter, coat as directed and place the food in a single layer in the air-fryer basket or tray.
- If making a recipe with several ingredients, such as a chicken dish with herbs and vegetables for a side, use an oven-safe dish or foil pan to keep small pieces from falling through the basket/tray (Taste of Home 2024).

Table 4. Cooking times: Air fryer versus oven.

Food	Temperature	Air Fryer Cooking Times (min)	Oven Cooking Time with Preheat (min)
Chicken thighs	400°F	20–25	40
Chicken wings	375°F	10–12	40
Chicken breast	375°F	23	30
Salmon	400°F	5–7	12–15
Brussels sprouts	350°F	15–18	40
Bacon	400°F	5–10	20
Cauliflower	400°F	10–12	20
French fries (from scratch)	400°F	10–20	40–45
French fries (frozen)	400°F	6–8	18–20

Source: Watsky 2025.



Air-Fryer Acorn Squash



PREP TIME

15 MIN



COOK TIME

22 MIN



TOTAL TIME

37 MIN



SERVINGS

2

Ingredients

- 1 medium acorn squash (about 1½ lb)
- 2 tbsp avocado oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1½ tbsp Aleppo pepper
- 1½ tbsp za'atar (a spice blend composed of herbs such as thyme, oregano, and marjoram or a combination of the three, along with other spices including sesame, sumac, cumin, or coriander)

Dipping Sauce (Optional)

- 3½ tbsp plain Greek yogurt
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Directions

1. Wash acorn squash under cool running water. Cut it in half, remove the seeds, and cut it into ¼- to ½-inch-thick slices.
2. Add acorn squash, avocado oil, garlic, salt, pepper, and za'atar to a bowl. Mix thoroughly.
3. Preheat air fryer to 400°F. Place seasoned squash in an even layer in the air fryer basket or tray. Make sure the slices aren't touching.
4. Cook for 18–22 minutes, flipping over the slices halfway through. Cook until tender (slices should be easy to pierce with a fork).
5. Eat as is or with a dipping sauce. To make a sauce, mix Greek yogurt, garlic, paprika, and lemon juice. Add salt if desired.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 228 | Carbohydrates: 12g | Protein: 1.2g | Fat: 14.1g | Fiber: 1.5g | Sugar: 0.1g per serving

Sauce: Calories: 30 | Carbohydrates: 2.5g | Protein: 2.4g | Fat: 1.1g | Fiber: 0.1g | Sugar: 0.75g

Adapted from "Air Fryer Acorn Squash," <https://shredhappens.com/air-fryer-acorn-squash/>.





Air-Fryer Asparagus



PREP TIME

3 MIN



COOK TIME

5 MIN



TOTAL TIME

8 MIN



SERVINGS

4

Ingredients

- 1 lb fresh asparagus
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced

Directions

1. Preheat air fryer to 400°F.
2. Wash asparagus under cool running water and trim the ends. Cut or trim asparagus into 1-inch pieces.
3. Place asparagus pieces in a bowl and toss them in oil and garlic.
4. Place asparagus into the air fryer and cook for 5 minutes.
5. Serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 57 | Carbohydrates: 5.4g | Protein: 2.7g | Fat: 3.5g |
Fiber: 2.4g | Sugar: 2.2g

Courtesy of Jackie Amende-Lewis, Registered Dietician, Boise, Idaho.





Air-Fryer Roasted Vegetables



PREP TIME

18 MIN



COOK TIME

10 MIN



TOTAL TIME

28 MIN



SERVINGS

4

Directions

1. Prep all ingredients by washing vegetables under cool running water and cutting according to recipe.
2. Preheat air fryer to 360°F.
3. Add vegetables, oil, salt, pepper, and seasonings to a large bowl. Toss to coat; then arrange in a single layer in the fryer.
4. Cook and stir halfway through cooking time. Vegetables are done when tender-crisp, about 10 minutes.
5. Serve and enjoy!

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 42 | Carbohydrates: 3.5g | Protein: 1g | Fat: 3g | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 2g

Adapted from "Air-Fryer Roasted Veggies," <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/269890/air-fryer-roasted-veggies/>

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup sliced zucchini
- 1/3 cup sliced summer squash
- 1/3 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/3 cup chopped cauliflower
- 1/3 cup diced bell pepper
- 1/3 cup sliced onion, any variety
- 2 1/2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp Italian seasoning







Healthy Air-Fryer Apple Crisp (Gluten Free)



PREP TIME

12 MIN



COOK TIME

18 MIN



TOTAL TIME

30 MIN



SERVINGS

4

Directions

1. Mix the chopped apples, lemon juice, 1 tbsp of almond flour, agave syrup, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a bowl. Stir until well-coated.
2. In the baking dish, layer the bottom with the apple mixture.
3. Mix brown sugar, oats, and remaining almond flour in a separate bowl. Once mixed well, add in melted butter to coat mixture.
4. Cover the apple layer with brown sugar topping and mix it in the air fryer baking dish.
5. Set the air fryer to 350°F and bake for 20 minutes.
6. Allow the crisp to cool slightly before serving.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 260 | Carbohydrates: 43.5g | Fat 10.3g | Protein: 2.7g |
Fiber: 4.75g | Sugar: 33.25g

Ingredients

- 3¼ cups apples (suggested varieties include Fuji, Honeycrisp, Jonagold, or Braeburn)
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 4 tbsp almond flour
- 1½ tbsp pure agave syrup
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ⅓ cup oats
- 2 tbsp butter, melted

Adapted from "Healthy Air Fryer Apple Crisp (Gluten Free)," <https://www.fitandfrugalmommy.com/healthy-air-fryer-apple-crisp-gluten-free/>



Air-Fryer Chicken Breast with Amazing Seasoning



PREP TIME

5 MIN



COOK TIME

20 MIN



TOTAL TIME

25 MIN



SERVINGS

4

Ingredients

- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp Kosher salt
- pepper to taste (if desired)
- 1 tbsp avocado oil or olive oil
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 1 lb

Directions

1. Preheat air fryer to 375°F.
2. Combine seasonings in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Coat chicken with oil on both sides using a basting brush. Then coat seasoning mixture over chicken.
4. Place chicken in air fryer basket or tray in a single layer. Air fry at 375°F for 18–20 minutes, flipping halfway through.
5. Using a thermometer, ensure chicken has reached an internal temperature of 160°F. Chicken should be left to rest for about 5 minutes. During resting, chicken temperature should increase. Using the thermometer, ensure a minimum of 165°F is reached before cutting and serving.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 167 | Carbohydrates: 0g | Protein: 26g | Fat: 5g | Fiber: 0g | Sugar: 0g



Adapted from "Juicy Air Fryer Chicken Breast with Amazing Seasoning,"
<https://jenniferbanz.com/easy-air-fryer-chicken-breast>.



Seasoned Hamburgers



PREP TIME

5 MIN



COOK TIME

10–15 MIN



TOTAL TIME

15–20 MIN



SERVINGS

4

Directions

1. Preheat air fryer to 375°F.
2. If handling frozen ground beef, make sure to thaw it safely. The best recommendation is to thaw it in the refrigerator a day ahead of use.
3. In a bowl, mix together the ground beef and seasonings.
4. Form the mixed ground beef into four uniform patties.
5. Place the patties in the air fryer and cook for about 10 minutes, flipping halfway through.
6. To correctly gauge their doneness, use a thermometer to register a minimum internal temperature of 160°F for the patties. Once cooked, let the meat rest for a couple minutes. Add a cheese of choice during the resting to allow melting.
7. Serve warm with buns and condiments of choice, along with tomatoes, lettuce, etc.

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp seasoned salt
- 4 oz cheese of choice (cheddar, mozzarella, bleu cheese, etc.)

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories: 305 | Carbohydrates: 1.1g
| Protein: 16.7g | Fat: 22.3g | Fiber:
0.2g | Sugar: 0.2g



Storage Recommendations for Leftovers

Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to four days. **To reheat**, place them in an air fryer preheated to 390°F. Air fry for 5 minutes or until heated through.

Further Reading

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Page 10: “cooked asparagus on a plate in a bright and airy kitchen,” image generated using MidJourney, December 11, 2025

Page 11: “roasted zucchini, summer squash, mushrooms, cauliflower florets, bell pepper, onion on a plate in a bright and airy kitchen,” image generated using MidJourney, December 11, 2025

Page 12: “baked apple crisp dessert on a plate in a bright and airy kitchen,” image generated using MidJourney, December 11, 2025

Page 14: “seasoned chicken breast on a plate in a bright and airy kitchen,” image generated using MidJourney, December 11, 2025

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