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Boo-tiful boards for Halloween

By

Produce for Better Health and Emily Parent

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Boo! I hope I didn't scare you too badly... But let me tell you, the leaves are changing color, the air is getting cooler and it's giving me the chills! Where did summer go? As we know, the cooler weather is inevitable, but fall isn't so bad, especially when we have Halloween to look forward to!

As a dietitian, I would love to say that handing out an apple instead of candy is a perfect way to make the holiday a little more nutritious... but I would be lying. Truth be told, that was my least favorite trick or treat goodie. Of course, that's not to say we can't make Halloween nutritious – c'mon, I'm a Dietitian!

So, how do we make the season healthier? By getting the kids involved and making it fun! While most of us love a good charcuterie or cheese board, this Halloween, combine what you love about your favorite board and spice it up with spooky additions. I've gathered some of my favorite ideas to make the most spooktacular board for the entire family.

1. **Blood Oranges** – the name even makes us think of Halloween. The deep red of blood oranges not only adds a pop of color to your board, but also adds a serving of fruit. Serve cut in half or in slices throughout your board for a boo-tiful display.
2. **The Hills...I Mean Grapes...Have Eyes** – what's creepier than a bunch of grapes with eyes? Edible candy eyes can be the spookiest addition to individual grapes on a bunch. Looking for more? Try adding the edible eyes to other items on your board, such as olives or blackberries.
3. **Mandarin Pumpkins** – try to add a little cuteness to your board by adding a fruit and veggie pumpkin. Peel a mandarin orange, being careful to keep the entire fruit intact. To the core of the orange, add a small stick of celery and a mint leaf. Voila! You have a pumpkin.
4. **Fruit Puree** – a berry fruit puree or 100% fruit jam not only is a fabulous topping for a great cheese and cracker, but it's also perfect for creeping out those who dare to eat off the cheeseboard. Put a dollop of jam or puree on a cheese wheel with a cheese knife through the jam for the full Halloween effect.
5. **Spiders** – as a final touch, add non-food items like fake spiders that you can sprinkle (or strategically place) all over your board to amp up the creep.

There you have it! Fruits and veggies are all you need to make an adorable Halloween-themed charcuterie board!

Happy and Healthy Eating,
Emily Parent, MFCS, RD, LD

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