FREEKEH AT LAST

“Freekeh was created by accident nearly 2,000 years ago when a Middle Eastern village was attacked and their crop of young green wheat was set ablaze,” notes the Freekeh Foods Organic Freekeh package. “Most folks would sulk over their misfortune, but the crafty villagers rubbed off the chaff, cooked it up and ‘Eureka!’ Freekeh was created.”

Historical accuracy aside, the cracked and roasted green wheat is a find. To see why, add water, bring to a boil, cover, and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. You’ll end up with a nutty, slightly sticky (in a good way), bulgur-like grain that you can use straight up as a side dish. Or try mixing with pesto, chopped cherry tomatoes, and roasted red peppers. Or with lentils, baby spinach, chopped apple, and a mustard vinaigrette.

When it comes to nutrients, freekeh is in the same ballpark as bulgur and quinoa. A ¾-cup serving of cooked freekeh delivers 4 grams of fiber and 6 grams of protein, along with a decent shot of folate, iron, magnesium, vitamin B-6, and zinc—all for just 130 calories.

Sodium? Zero for the Original and a low 150 milligrams for the Rosemary Sage and the Tamari. (A ¾-cup serving of most seasoned rice, couscous, quinoa, or other grain mixes socks you with two to three times that much.)

If you can’t find Freekeh Foods, you can order from the company’s website. (Even with shipping, a six-bag case is less than we paid at a local store.) Another brand to look for: Freekehlicious.

Isn’t it time you set yourself freekeh?

freekeh-foods.com—(612) 240-1408
freekehlicious.com—(201) 297-7957

FRAPPUCCI-No THANKS

“Three, two, one, sip!” goes the online ad for Starbucks’ summer Frappuccinos. “We’re super excited.”

So are we! Remember when Starbucks introduced the original Coffee Frappuccino in the summer of 1995? Well, it’s still around. And while a no whip venti (24 oz.) is loaded with some 14 teaspoons of added sugar, it has “just” 350 calories and three grams of saturated fat.

But that’s so last century. This summer, you can pick up a venti Caramel Ribbon Crunch Frappuccino with 600 calories, 12 grams (more than half a day’s worth) of saturated fat, and (we estimate) 21 teaspoons of added sugar. “Yes, there are some other ingredients: coffee, milk, ice, whipped cream,” says Starbucks’ website, “but really this is all about ribbons and ribbons of caramel, over and over and over.”

Goodbye, iced coffee. Hello, milkshake.

The Mocha Cookie Crumble Frappuccino has similar numbers, thanks to cookie bits, mocha sauce, vanilla syrup, chocolate chips, and whipped cream. And the Caffè Espresso Frappuccino, with its 460 calories, is “sure to set your summer off in the right direction.” That would be toward a chubbier you.

Instead, try a grande Coffee Frappuccino Light. It’s got 110 calories, zero sat fat (thanks to nonfat milk and no whipped cream), and around 4 teaspoons of added sugar (thanks to stevia, a no-calorie natural sweetener). Or order a grande nonfat Iced Caffè Latte (90 calories) or Iced Caffè Americano (20).

“Say yes to whipping life up,” urges Starbucks. How about saying no to weighing yourself down?

starbucks.com—(800) 782-7282

quick tip

Avoid frozen foods with ice crystals on the package or (if you can see inside) on the food. It could mean that the food has been stored for too long or that it has thawed and been refrozen.