

Try Something New

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The man who does things makes many mistakes, but he never makes the biggest mistake of all - doing nothing

-Benjamin Franklin

From the Garden

Ah July. It's hot and everything grows - almost visibly each day. This year even the tomatoes are growing earlier than usual. Several plants already have fruit on them. Yes the fruit is still green, and yes it will be a battle between me and the squirrels to see who gets to eat them at the peak of ripeness, but that's true every year. It's that there are already a significant number of tomatoes that surprises me.

Try Something New

Summer is finally in fully force, and the living is easy! Do you notice how during summertime everything seems promising? The plants are in full bloom, and the sun feels glorious on your skin. The longer days give you boundless energy, making you feel like it's possible to achieve all your desires and dreams. Why not harness this energy, ride the wave of summer and try something new?

Throughout the year we live at **an intense pace** (physical, emotional and mental), and we often get stuck in routine, either for the sake of efficiency or out of fear of unfamiliar territory. The lack of variety in doing the same things over and over not only stagnates our minds, but also our bodies and hearts. Hesitant to break your routine? It is interesting to note that fear and excitement have the same physiological expression in our bodies; it is our mind that classifies the feeling as either positive or negative. So the next time you consider a change in routine and your mind says "scary!" see if you can re-frame it as "exciting!"

What is something you have never done before, or that you have wanted to do for a long time? Choose your own adventure: organize a kayak trip, take a dance class, do some exotic traveling or set a goal for a new personal challenge. Or try something simple, like playing flashlight tag with your kids and neighbors or reading in the sunshine. Maybe it's time to discover a new vegetable dish or to visit a new town, restaurant or beach.

Whatever adventure calls to you, use this summer to make it happen and enjoy the life you came here for. Increasing new experiences and excitement in your life can decrease your need for and dependence on artificial stimulants like caffeine and sugar, leading to more vibrant health. Watch out for massive improvements in physical well-being, mental acuity and motivation, plus a full portfolio of fun.

Food Focus: Raw and Cooling Salads

Why is it that in the summer we naturally crave more fresh and raw foods? These foods have a cooling effect on the body. The lightness and high water, fiber and vitamin content work together to act as our internal air conditioning during these warm months. At this time of year we also need less dense, high-energy food, because we get so much energy from being outside in the fresh air and sunshine.

There is no better season than summer to have fun creating your own fresh, tasty, creative salad combinations. By simply tossing together several of your favorite raw veggies, naked or with a light dressing, you have a perfect meal for a hot summer's day.

I pulled the last of the peas in June and planted string beans in their place. The beans are growing really well because peas fix nitrogen into the soil and things that come after them absolutely LOVE the added boost.

So how funny is this? I weeded my strawberry patch last month, when the berries were about half way finished ripening. My dog, Max, was in the garden with me and ate (ahem ...stole) two berries I had picked to have for breakfast the following day. I went to NY that weekend and when I got back I realized there wasn't a single strawberry left on a plant; none of the plants was at all damaged, he had simply eaten all the fruit. It made me laugh out loud.

Have you been to your local Farmers' Market? I've been going to mine (buying strawberries among other things!) and reveling in all the great tasting fresh things available.

Next month: tomatoes and the bounty of the garden.

Until then,

Natalie

Try your favorite leafy lettuce with various sliced, diced or grated veggies. The possible combinations are endless. Fresh herbs are a wonderful option to mix in, as they are packed full of flavor. Experiment with adding diverse forms of protein to your salads, such as nuts, seeds, beans, tofu, fish or poultry. Pick up a light and healthy dressing at your local health food store, or mix up something easy, like lemon juice, black pepper and olive oil.

This is a great opportunity to try a new vegetable from your market. What are some creative flavors you've never tried before? Fennel and mint? Daikon radish and arugula? Summer squash with watercress? Whatever you choose, have fun with your food and stay cool. Happy summer!

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

Bok Choy Apple Slaw

Prep time: 7 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

6 stalks of bok choy (about 1/2 a head), thinly sliced
1/2 a small red onion, thinly sliced
1 granny smith apple, sliced
1/2 cup toasted sunflower seeds

Dressing:

1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon dijon mustard
2 tablespoon apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice)
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoon honey or brown rice syrup
salt and black pepper to taste

Directions:

1. First make the dressing by combining all the ingredients and whisking well.
2. Chop all the salad ingredients, leaving the apples until last. Mix in a salad bowl.
3. Toss salad with half the dressing. Add additional dressing if so desired.
4. Either eat immediately or chill for up to one hour and then add the apples just before eating. Save remaining dressing in a glass jar in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Asian Watercress Salad

Prep time: 7 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

1 bunch of washed watercress
1 cup grated carrots
1 cup of baked tofu
1-1/2 tablespoons of toasted sesame oil

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2/3 tablespoon of umeboshi plum vinegar or other vinegar

Directions:

1. Tear watercress into desirable size pieces.
2. Mix with carrots in a salad bowl.
3. Drizzle sesame oil and vinegar over salad and toss.
4. Dice tofu into bite size strips.
5. Serve in individual salad bowls and sprinkle tofu on top of each and serve.

Become a client

There are many ways to become a client:

- Individual coaching programs to help you meet weight loss or healthy living goals
- Employer programs to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, and teach employees about things like healthy eating on the go and stress reduction
- Group cooking classes to learn how to put healthy meals on the table in fewer than 30 minutes - if you have a group of four to ten friends we can do a single or series of cooking lessons based on the skills of the group
- Eating for Peak Performance - Programs for athletes of all ages from middle school to adulthood to learn to fuel your body correctly
- Group coaching programs if an individual program is too much of an investment

[Contact me](#) to learn more about any of these services

Let me know what you think

Thanks for reading this edition. Is there something you'd like to know more about? Anything you would rather never see again? I'd love to know. Please feel free to [email me](#) your suggestions.

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