

Happy Belly

Over 140 plant-based recipes without
dairy, sugar, gluten, yeast or tofu.

Second Edition 2019

Recipes & Photography by

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About The Author

Yasmine Nazmy is a French-Egyptian food lover and creator of unique healthy recipes. With a background in arts and environmental engineering, she founded a restaurant in 2014 with a friend: The Vegan Kitchen. It was Egypt's first vegan and organic restaurant, serving delicious food free of sugar and gluten. A year later, she expanded her horizons and started a catering service named Earthly Delights, following the same trend of healthy plant-based cuisine. Shortly after, she founded KAJU, a line of raw vegan products such as ice cream and cheese. Her creations were then available to be ordered online - her aim was to make healthy natural food accessible to people all over the country. Over the years, she taught numerous cooking workshops across the capital, and also helped people transition to a plant-based diet and lose weight.

So what made an environmental engineer turn into a chef?! With a very strong passion for recycling and saving the planet, Yasmine always tried to minimize her use of plastic and eat foods that are local, seasonal and organic. Soon after graduating from university, she noticed the connection between food choices and environmental issues. That's when she became plant-based - meaning that her food is more than 90% from plant foods.

Having also experienced many digestive troubles since childhood, it took her about 3 years to adjust to a diet that kept her belly flat and her appetite fully satisfied! Her kitchen turned into a lab, experimenting with different types of flours, sweeteners, vegan substitutes, etc. In fact, many of the recipes in this book are 'engineered' due to her dietary restrictions. It has been a really fun journey and she wrote this book to share with you her favourite creations, and help others follow a diet that is free from irritating foods.

Her best health tip: Start every morning with a big smile!

Introduction

~.* Hello! *.~

I wrote this book to bring you simple delicious recipes, which are easy to remember and are made with ingredients that easy to purchase in the Middle East. It's my pleasure to present the healthiest dishes that I have created or adjusted to my taste! I emphasize raw foods the most, as they bring you so many nutrients and are hydrating, they can really be considered healing foods. For cooked foods, I try to include as much vegetables as possible, hiding them in child-approved dishes like pizzas and cakes!

The idea is to get plenty of water, vitamins, minerals, protein and flavor in just one simple vegetarian meal. Being an artist myself, I also love to play with colors and present bright cheerful dishes. The way our food looks affects our mood, instantly!

For most recipes, I suggest extra options to allow you to try a wide variety of creations. I believe the kitchen should be a fun place to learn and to get inspired. And not just learn how to cook, but to learn about our Earth, our bodies and our intuition. When we change the way we eat, we also change our perception of things... each person is different in that regard so I leave it up to you to discover your journey!

About Gluten-Free

When avoiding gluten grains (wheat, rye, and barley) it is important to remember that you cannot recreate the exact consistency but you can only get very close. Gluten itself is a sticky binder that gives baked food a fluffy texture which cannot be recreated without many chemicals and starches – and that defies the purpose of following a healthier lifestyle!

In fact, gluten also sticks to your intestinal wall, causing lots of damage.

In this book, I will show you great alternatives to bread, that according to my friends, family and customers taste even better! Desserts are the easiest to make without gluten as the fats and sugars tend to give nice textures and to be fair, sugar makes anything taste good! However, none of my recipes actually contain sugar – as this scary ingredient has absolutely no health benefits! Instead we will look at how to use molasses, raw honey, dates, maple syrup, etc. I also want to point out that gluten-free recipes always come out better with the use of eggs, but I understand that many of my readers are vegan so I offer alternatives to eggs whenever I can.

If you are allergic to gluten, you probably already know that many store-brought sauces and packaged items contain gluten in some form. One example is soy sauce, traditionally made from wheat. You can purchase an alternative called tamari, it is a soy sauce made from rice instead of wheat. Many ready-made salad dressings also contain gluten, which is why I'll show you how to make them safely from scratch!

If you want to get away from gluten and sugar, the best option is to get familiar with raw foods. Since raw foods already exclude grains and processed foods by definition, you will enter a world of culinary genius where ingredients are used in their pure form to create very original variations of foods we already know (cooked). Raw desserts have been gaining lots of popularity lately as they fit in to so many specific diets, and can be adjusted to any food intolerance. It is truly amazing that recipes have been developed to satisfy a craving and yet supply us with so much nutrition! For example, dates are an excellent sweetener because they are also high in fiber, protein, iron, magnesium and vitamin B. No other sweetener can match this. And can you imagine a brownie that is made without grains, sugar, dairy and oil?

The recipe is at the end of the book!

For the following cake recipes, you may choose from this list of homemade gluten free flour mixes. They all work equally well, with some slight differences in texture.

You may choose to try them all and see which you prefer.

Rice Flour & Almond Flour

Very easy to find rice flour as it is locally produced and sold in supermarkets. For this ratio simply to mix 1 cup of any rice flour with 1 compact cup of almond flour and keep it in the fridge, ready to be used anytime! You can save money by making your own almond flour (see page 121). This gives the best texture in my opinion, it's my absolute favourite!

Almond Flour & Coconut Flour

For this ratio, mix 1 cup of coconut flour with 3 cups of almond flour and keep it in the fridge, ready to be used anytime! This is a grain-free option (paleo-friendly). This blend works best with recipes that contain eggs. Note that coconut flour is **not** the same thing as shredded coconut!

Brown Rice Flour & Starch

My second favourite mix, it may be harder to find, but works really well and it's wholegrain! You can make your own if you have a strong blender. Mix 4 cups of brown rice flour with 1/4 cup of potato or tapioca starch, and keep it in the fridge.

White Rice Flour & Oats* Flour

You will have to make the oat flour yourself as it is not always sold ready (simply blend oats in a strong blender). For this ratio it is easier to mix 3 cups of white rice flour with 2 cups of oat flour and keep in the fridge, ready to be used anytime! You might find that this mix is a little drier than the others, so you may add 1 tbsp of water for every cup of flour that you use, in any recipe.

***Note:** if you are seriously intolerant to gluten or have celiac disease, make sure the oats you buy are certified gluten-free. It will clearly be indicated on the packaging.

About Dairy-Free

I personally have been intolerant to dairy products from a very young age, but I only realized that at the age of 16 and completely cut dairy out by the age of 20. Having suffered from digestive troubles for 2 decades, I was one of the first people to give up dairy in my community. However, since then, I have noticed many people starting to cut dairy out of their diets as well, and I have even been approached many times by women whose children are showing allergic reactions to dairy. What's scary here is the way dairy products have become just that: products.

Milk is no longer fresh! It comes out of a cow whose baby has been taken away for the meat industry, and then that milk is pasteurized and bottled, staying on shelves for much longer than it naturally would be able to. The cows are also loaded with antibiotics and hormones, which bind to the fat in milk (the main component!) and then it makes us sick. Lucky are those who can get fresh raw milk from cows that live long happy lives on green fields.

Either way, milk is not an essential nutrient. You can get all the health benefits from raw plants and eggs!

For many cheese recipes you will see that you need to strain the mixture to remove excess water so you can end up with a thick cream. The method is the same for all recipes, the only difference is the length of time – which will be indicated in the recipe.

All you need is a bowl, a mesh strainer/colander, a clean cotton kitchen towel and another smaller bowl. You place them in this order. The strainer has to sit comfortably on the edges of the bowl, not sink in. You then put the towel over it, pour the contents in, and fold the towel. Lastly you place the smaller bowl on top, and fill it with water so that it creates a weight to help squeeze the liquid out of the mixture. You can add as much water as you think appropriate, it will also depend on the weight of the bowl itself (glass vs plastic).

For making non-dairy milks, I recommend you buy a 'nut milk bag' which you can order online.

It helps by saving you time and is much easier to clean than a towel. You won't need more than one, and you can use it forever!



About Grocery Shopping

When shopping for groceries (which is better done in person) always select the freshest looking ingredients. Food that hasn't been well preserved won't taste so good. As a general rule, the best food is locally sourced and organic. There are many farms in Egypt now that deliver vegetables to your doorstep! While organic is more expensive, it's better for you and the environment – the choice is yours. Some fruits and vegetables don't need to be organic since they don't absorb chemicals as much as others, these safe foods are banana, mango, avocado, kiwi, melons, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, onions and garlic.

Try to buy small amounts regularly so that nothing perishes in your fridge/home. I find that shopping twice a week is perfect! However, for large families you may need to order / buy more often. If you have the chance to grow any of your greens, please do! It is such an amazing feeling to eat lettuce and herbs that are freshly picked. All you need is a good spot that gets direct sunlight.

Please avoid buying anything packaged, with the exception of food that comes in glass jars. Food in cans is toxic because the metal is lined with BPA - a cancer causing substance.



About Kitchen Equipment

A full kitchen only needs the following:

kitchen scale
cutlery
measuring spoons
measuring cups
a strong blender
a food processor
a pan
a pot
lots of bowls!

All cookware should be new, scratch-free – ideally made of ceramic or eco-friendly lead-free coating. The food processor is better at chopping and grinding solid foods (nuts, coconut, onions, etc.) whereas a blender is better for a smooth liquid result (smoothies, icing, sauces, etc).

I highly recommend having both. A good blender should be strong enough to blend nuts and crush ice, so I recommend something very durable, be prepared to spend over 1000 EGP for it – you will probably be using it every day so it's a great investment!

Please use measuring spoons for everything as listed, because small measurements can be easily overseen by the human eye (it's hard to distinguish between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon for example, but it can make a big difference in taste!) Please note that I use the US Standard measurements. You can easily find these measuring spoons and cups at any supermarket.

A Few Health Notes

This book presents a collection of my favorite recipes which are free of sugar, gluten, dairy and all kinds of meat. I found that my body is in much better shape ever since I stopped these foods, not only do I look and feel better but I also have a smoother digestion and I thankfully rarely get sick.

Meats, eggs and dairy can be heavy on the digestive system however if you are not vegan, I suggest you consume eggs that are either raw or soft boiled (avoid fried) and stick to seafood (no red meats). It is very important to consume from the sea, as we need iodine, an essential nutrient, and the best sources are wild caught fish and seaweed. Sea salt is a much healthier option than regular refined table salt, and it is available in most supermarkets nowadays. Dried seaweed has been consumed by many cultures for millennia – you can add it to salad dressings or use seaweed sheets to make sushi rolls. You can find it at the Asian section of most big supermarkets.

Moreover, omega-3 is an essential healthy fat that can be found in seafood and seaweed, as well as eggs, walnuts, flax seeds, and some fruit, but it is much better to consume it raw. If you are allergic to flax seeds, you can substitute them for chia seeds. Regarding other types of fat, there is omega-6 and omega-9 but you want to reduce your omega-6 consumption. That means avoiding things like peanuts, corn oil, sunflower oil, soy oil. Not all oils are equal! Some are very heavy and will make you sick in one way or another (diabetes, heart disease, acne, etc) but some are actually very good for you and can help your body heal. These good oils are: olive oil, sesame oil, coconut oil. Olive oil should not be heated above 200°C but coconut oil can be used at all temperatures, even for deep frying.

As for sweeteners, the healthiest alternatives to sugar are: dried dates, raw unprocessed honey, organic maple syrup and molasses (in that order). Agave syrup is also good but I don't like its taste. I do not recommend the use of anything chemical like xylitol, erythritol, aspartame, Splenda, etc. Regarding baking, it's really not ideal with dates, so I prefer maple syrup, honey or molasses for that purpose. In raw desserts, dates give a nice texture so they can be quite essential. Dates are also the best sweetener because they contain fiber, protein, minerals and vitamins.

Some ingredients that I cannot digest well have been omitted in this book, although some people may not have any problems with them.
For example: most beans, cauliflower, corn, yeast, etc.

Next to each recipe title you will find a symbol that indicates whether a recipe contains nuts or eggs, or if it is raw. Remember that coconuts are actually considered seeds, and peanuts are legumes.



DISCLAIMER

My recipes have been perfected based on my kitchen equipment and the temperature control of my oven. **Every oven is different**, and each has its own imperfections that everyone learns to adapt to in their home. You may realize that one side of the oven is hotter, or that the general temperature is higher it should be, it happens! Please try to use new modern high-quality equipment as much as possible, it will make all your meals taste a lot better! Please follow my recipes exactly as they are, and use the appropriate measuring tools.



Advice For Happy Digestion



Eat slowly, enjoy each bite!

Count your blessings with every meal (thanking everyone, from the person who cooked the food to the person who grew the ingredients!)

Focus on your meals instead of being distracted by a conversation or television

Eat only when you're hungry

Stop eating when you're almost full

Share your favorite food with the people you love

Pay attention to which foods give you energy and which ones take away your energy!

There is no right or wrong way of eating, there is only "right for me, right now"

Remember to breathe deeply!

Soups

Root Soup

Ingredients:

1 medium onion, sliced
2 tbsp coconut or olive oil
200g sweet potato, peeled,
and diced
100g carrot, diced
100g beetroot, diced
3 cups broth or water
salt to taste

Optional: thyme, ginger,
garlic, fennel

- Fry the onion for a few minutes until it becomes translucent.
- Add the other vegetables and stir fry for 2 minutes.
- Add the broth or water, bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let it simmer for 20 minutes.
- Puree in a blender until very smooth, then return to the pot and heat over medium fire, until desired consistency is reached.

Serving suggestion: Garnish with cheese or yoghurt (see pages 141-148)



Cooking Time:
Under 1 Hour
Serves: **2**



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