





Annelie's

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**RAW FOOD POWER**  
supercharged raw food recipes and remedies

Annelie Whitfield

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## *my journey*

Of all the gifts I received in my life, the most important was my childhood. I was always out and about, eating wild foods and loving the freedom of growing up on a farm. My early years were spent mostly barefoot and, today, I'm delighted to be able to gift my children the grounded, barefoot magic of living close to nature.

When I was four I decided that I was going to become a stunt girl, and from the age of twenty-three I found myself doubling for the likes of Julia Roberts, Nicole Kidman, and Cameron Diaz. I spent seven years jumping off bridges, being beaten up and set on fire, and crashing cars. It was a wonderful but brief career, full of excitement, travel, fun, and a fair amount of fear. However, deep down I always knew that one day I would be spending more time in nature, and I'd be doing something more likely to nurture my health than threaten it!

My turning time point came four years down the line, when I had a serious car crash while working, which left me burned, battered, and somewhat disillusioned. This, of course, was a blessing in disguise and the shake up I needed to start me on a different journey. I spent almost a year healing, choosing natural alternatives to conventional medicine where possible, because it felt so instinctively wrong to be mummified in casts and be applying strong pharmaceutical creams. This year was a time of huge learning, which left me both humbled and in awe of the power of herbs, living foods, plant spirits, bone-mending monks, homeopathy, Chinese medicine, and much, much more.

## *the here and now*

I am now a qualified naturopath and herbalist and have spent the last eight years running clinics, presenting TV shows, and traveling the world in search of powerful natural remedies and recipes.

I am not exactly sure why, but I have always had a deep-seated pull toward the jungle, which has intensified as I've traveled. I have spent many YEARS reading about jungle medicine and am fascinated by people's journeys into the jungles of the world; books, such as *Jungle Medicine* by Connie Grauds and *The Healing Power of Rainforest Herbs* by Leslie Taylor, ND, inspire me.

Then, one day, came the realization that my inspirations were just voyeurism—I wasn't living those experiences. How had it come to pass that the "nature girl" I so cherished inside had become part of the furniture in London's urban jungle? In a

remarkably casual conversation, given the gravitas of what we were discussing, my husband Jamie and I decided that same night to completely change our lives. We wanted to remove our little girls from the big city into a more natural living environment, learn a new language, experience a completely different culture, and no longer be in a nine-to-five existence. After a few months of plotting and planning, selling our house, and putting more than ten years of London life into storage, we went to live in the Costa Rican jungle. It was many things, from sheer bliss to borderline hell, but it was always highly stimulating.

The journey taught me so much, not just about how incredible it is to experience living such a different life, but also about my family. I feel like I know each one of them so much better, and I now understand how such an experience can strengthen ideas about how you want to live your life. It also taught me something that I always knew, but hadn't yet properly experienced: the power of the natural world. Living so close to nature was at times intimidating and a real challenge, but also incredibly energizing.

As a health practitioner, I have spent many years learning from courses, books, and seminars. But from living in the jungle I have changed some of my previous ideas about diet and lifestyle, and I now feel that I know how I really want to live, what I want to eat, and most importantly, how to nurture my children. I have no doubt in my mind that taking my kids out of the urban jungle and into the real one has been truly amazing for their little spirits, nourishing and supporting them while they rise to the challenges of life.

I wrote this book to share my experiences of the transition we have made, the recipes and remedies I have used along the way, and the herbal, nutritional, and lifestyle knowledge that I have learned during this time. I am deeply passionate about feeling alive and creative, and hope I can inspire you to feel this way by making the best choices for your mind and body, wherever you live.

*“Be weird. Be random. Be who you are. Because you would never know who would love the person you hide.”* Unknown

## *my raw food journey*

I have always gravitated toward healthy food, and eating fresh, wild, seasonal food has been a deep-seated passion for many years. Before I became a fan of raw foods, I had spent many years experimenting with vegetarianism and veganism, supplementing with an array of nutrient-rich foods and herbs and experiencing the importance of 100 percent organic. However, the transition to raw happened when

I experienced that inevitable exhaustion from having my first baby. The endless nights breastfeeding and dealing with a challenging child drained all my resources so after talking to a raw foodie friend who claimed to need only four hours sleep a night due to his high raw diet I thought, "That's it, I'm going *all raw*."

This was, without a doubt, one of the best choices I ever made. I felt better, looked better; I felt more energized. I spent less time feeling like a crazily hungry, breastfeeding mom because all the raw food snacks were so nutritionally packed. I also spent less time thinking about what to eat and prepare. I lived off superfood shakes, green and seaweed salads, dehydrated crackers, dips, and loads of raw chocolate; it just felt easy! And my little baby girl *loved* it! More breast milk, more calmness of spirit, and of course a happier mama!

I continued along this path in my next pregnancy and kept both my little girls "in the raw" until the age of two, when they naturally became curious about other foods. I've allowed them to make their own choices about whether to eat a wholly raw food diet, and luckily they have very healthy palates; they are happy to eat raw and steamed vegetables, fruit, nut milks, raw dips, an abundance of green juices, raw crackers, smoothies, and other superfoods.

My journey into raw food has certainly been the catalyst for a broader understanding of nature and a desire to experience as much as possible in its unadulterated form.

## *making the transition to raw food*

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My advice to anyone interested in converting to a diet rich in raw food is not to put pressure on yourself. Like anything in life, it is a personal journey and will evolve while you find your right dietary balance. It is also a way of eating that must inspire so if you are eager to introduce your family and friends to raw food, start them slowly with some of the delicious inventions in this book! Raw chocolate, dips, and crackers are a great way to introduce people to raw food. It is a different way of eating compared to the standard diet, however, and people can see it as restrictive. This, of course, is entirely untrue if you love eating highly nutritious, living foods, because, wherever you are, something is always available.

My diet changes as I experience different cultures, travel, and, of course, become older. My eating patterns have changed from only six months ago. Currently, I am juicing a lot of wild greens, making a lot of superfood smoothies, enjoying eggs and raw cheeses, and also eating some cooked foods, such as brown rice, quinoa, and steamed vegetables. Consuming just 50 percent raw with additional wild and nutrient-rich foods gives you a great upgrade in health, so this might be your starting point or maybe your perfect balance. My husband found his way into raw food through drinking green smoothies and was inspired by raw food expert and author Victoria Boutenko. He does a lot of traveling, and, although he doesn't maintain a 100 percent raw food diet, he keeps himself healthy and grounded via the huge amount of varied greens he consumes. This is his perfect balance.

I am passionate about our power as individuals and how we must never let food healthy or unhealthy, get in the way of our full potential. I believe that when you are truly on the right life path, you will be attracted to all the right things for *you*.

## *recommended equipment*

If you are looking to introduce raw food into your diet, I would thoroughly recommend investing in the following equipment. They have become essential items in my own kitchen, and I even take some of them traveling. Although the initial outlay might be expensive, you'll reap the benefits nutritionally and will have a lot of fun creating new and exciting raw food recipes.

*Blender* Vitamix and NutriBullet blenders are the best brands to buy. The Vitamix is perfect for the house, and the NutriBullet is your best friend if traveling.

*Excalibur dehydrator* This is well worth the expense if you have decided to switch to a raw food diet. It is a

fabulous, lightweight second oven, which is great for making your weekly supply of crackers, breads, and cereals.

**Juicer** I love the Champion brand, but other commercial brands, such as Braun or Waring, are also good. Vegetable juices are an essential part of raw food nutrition and bring a deeper level of hydration to the body, so a juicer is a real must!

**Food processor** This is great for making raw pâtés and raw pastry dough, and once you have one, you will never stop using it.

**Spiralizer** This is a wonderful piece of equipment and the answer to raw pasta. It is a quick and easy tool to turn any root vegetable into curly wurly-looking fettuccine!

**Good set of knives** These will help improve your cutting technique and can improve the appearance of your raw food dishes.

**Chocolate molds** These molds are great if you would like to make raw chocolate. You can also use ice cube trays, because any mold will make your inventions more professional.

**Ice cream machine** This machine is a wonderful indulgence, especially if you like raw ice cream.

**Mandolin** This is a handy tool for creating even, thin slices of fruits and vegetables. I like to use one if I'm preparing something fancy.

**Coffee grinder** You only need a small one, but it is so worthwhile because it grinds your nuts and seeds easily. They are also cheap and simple to clean. I use my coffee grinder as much as my food processor.

breakfast

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# HYDRATING BREAKFAST

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Every day has a different quality and the body's needs are different from the day before. Children are also growing physically and expanding mentally, so they might crave something different from the usual bowl of fruit or cereal. Having a good repertoire of staple breakfasts and seeing how your mood takes you is the best approach to happy mornings!

I recommend both adults and children start the day with a good amount of mineral-rich liquid. My favorite options are coconut water, vegetable juice, and green smoothies. These are wonderful at hydrating our cells after a long night of sleeping. I personally keep on liquid fasting until noon because this suits my needs, gives me tons of energy, and there is no wasted time preparing food, but everyone's needs are different. Once you're hydrated, your true need should kick in, whether it be a chunk of raw chocolate or a bowl of granola. Just make sure you start as you mean to go on: meet your needs, not your unhealthy cravings.

## best breakfast foods

**Vegetable juices** These juices are highly alkaline, hydrating, and packed full of easily absorbable minerals, such as potassium and magnesium. Drinking fresh vegetable juices will also regulate your sugar levels and help to start the day calmly.

**Green smoothies** These are a blend of leafy greens and fruit, which is an incredibly powerful source of fiber, nutrients, and protein. Blending greens makes their amino acids readily available as a reliable protein source.

**Fruit smoothies** These are another fantastic alkaline and energy-giving option. Always make sure to add a little hemp, flax, or chia seeds to help slow the release of fruit sugar into the blood. Fruit smoothies are packed full of antioxidants and slow-release carbohydrates.

**Soaked sprouts** These are a good nourishing, digestible, and grounding breakfast for everyone.

**Raw desserts and cakes** Yes, these can be a good idea, even for breakfast! The fats and proteins are sometimes just what you need to start the day.



## off to the jungle

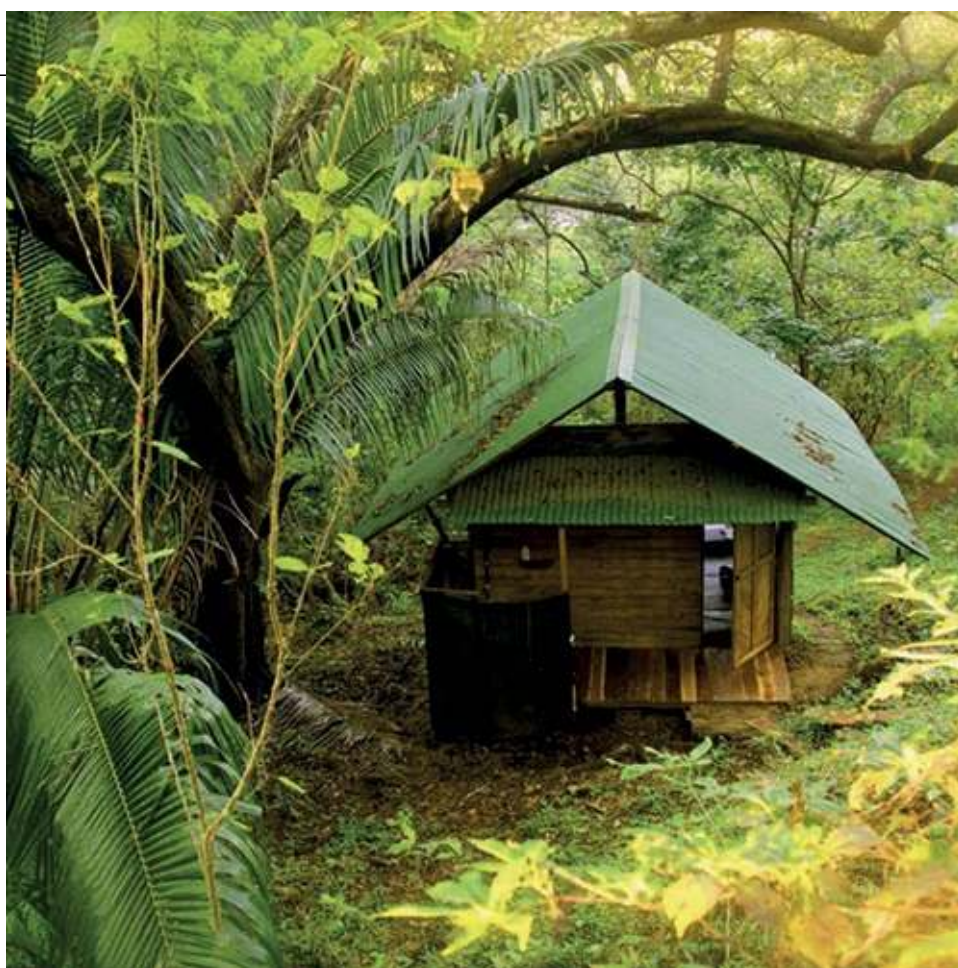
There is a song I learned as a very young girl at school: "What do you do when you want to go to the loo [bathroom] in an English country garden? Pull down your pants and terrify the ants in an English country garden."

On the first day of our new commune life, this inane ditty is running through my head as I find myself walking through the jungle and suddenly needing the bathroom. A whole new light is now being shed on the song with the realization that the ants here are the stinging and biting kind. They are not likely to be terrified of me. The variety and complexity of nefarious insects is something I really need to learn about.

The only piece of information that has stayed with me from our commune welcome earlier today is that it's scorpion season. Scorpions have seasons? Where I come from, wealthy socialites have seasons ... Wow, so this is the reality of the deurbanized lifestyle I have been craving all these years.

As we enter our open wooden house—the shack—I am struck by the majestic view up here on the rim of our jungle basin. By day, a paradise without question, but by night, I am imagining a different scenario. The house itself is basic, but beautiful: totally open, front and back, allowing unparalleled views of the jungle and ocean beyond, yet also unimpeded access to nature and all its wonders therein. Looking at the children they seem calm, convincing me to quash any sense of unease I might have and to start stepping up to the plate. Adaptation is easy I say; now, where do we all sleep? Upstairs is a large bed with an enormous mosquito net, so it looks like we'll be huddled together like a proper jungle family. I take a moment to reflect: insects, suffocating heat, mosquitoes, and the delights of whatever nighttime jungle terrors Mother Nature has in store. Oh and two incredibly jet-lagged children. Help!





# TROPICAL DOORSTEP SMOOTHIE

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Living in a tropical paradise, as it seems I now do, it is essential to make use of the abundant fruits growing virtually on our doorstep. Our current favorite fruits are bananas and mangoes. From the local store, we obtain all the herbs and greens that are harvested in the commune garden, so everything is 100 percent organic. This is just the best smoothie to start the day and a fantastic first food for my ten-month-old, who likes to eat it with a spoon from a jelly jar (always a good shaker in the absence of the right equipment).

*Serves 4 - Preparation time 5 minutes*

- 1 mango, peeled, pitted, and sliced**
- 2 bananas, peeled and chopped**
- ½ cucumber, peeled and coarsely chopped**
- 1 cup spinach or any wild greens available**
- ½ cup fresh mint leaves**
- 1 cup spring or filtered water**

Put the mango and bananas into a blender with the remaining ingredients. Blend until really smooth and creamy, adding more water if needed. This smoothie is thick and filling. Pour into glasses and serve.



# MORNING SUN JUICE

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This incredibly refreshing drink is our typical morning juice because it helps to hydrate and soothe the digestive tract for the day ahead.

*Serves 4 - Preparation time 10 minutes*

- 1 large cucumber, coarsely chopped**
- 8 celery stalks, coarsely chopped**
- 4 apples, coarsely chopped**
- 1 cup leafy greens**
- ¼ cup fresh parsley**
- ½-inch piece of fresh ginger, chopped**
- 2 limes or lemons, rind cut away, coarsely chopped**
- 2 beets, coarsely chopped**

Put all the ingredients, except the beets, into a juicer. Juice the beets separately; it will give the drink a beautiful two-tone look to it. Pour equal parts of both juices into glasses and serve.





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