

# HEMSLEY HEMSLEY

THE ART OF EATING WELL



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# ABOUT THE BOOK

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LOVE WHAT YOU EAT. LOOK AND FEEL AMAZING.

Jasmine and Melissa Hemsley's revolutionary new approach to healthy home cooking is for anyone who loves food and wants to look and feel their very best. The sisters have created over 150 exciting, inventive recipes that are packed with nutrient-rich ingredients and easy enough to enjoy every day – meals so tasty you forget their purpose is nourishment and good health.

Jasmine and Melissa's down-to-earth guidance and infectious enthusiasm will inspire you to try new foods, reset your body and no longer crave high-sugar and processed meals. Packed with breakfasts, sweets, snacks and drinks as well as fish, meat and vegetable mains, *The Art of Eating Well* includes reworked classics, bold new flavours, make-ahead food and plenty of practical tips that will change the way you cook and eat for life. Enjoy simple, delicious, nourishing food for a better you.

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Melissa and Jasmine Hemsley's family business, HEMSLEY + HEMSLEY, has been the behind-the-scenes go-to food service for celebrities and those in the health, beauty and wellness industry since 2010. The H+H way of eating is based on ten years of study and self-practice. Focusing on the importance of eating natural, unprocessed foods, Jasmine and Melissa combine ancient eating principles with the latest research on diet and nutrition. Using their personal experience they have developed simple recipes for home cooking that suit any lifestyle, however hectic. H+H are regular contributors to [www.vogue.co.uk](http://www.vogue.co.uk), the London editors of [www.sousstyle.com](http://www.sousstyle.com) and write for international newspapers and magazines.

[www.hemsleyandhemsley.com](http://www.hemsleyandhemsley.com)



# HEMSLEY HEMSLEY

THE ART OF EATING WELL

JASMINE AND MELISSA HEMSLEY



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To our loved ones and all those who have inspired and supported us. For our clients who believed in a better way. And to everyone else who wants to join us on our delicious journey.

# INTRODUCTION

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If you want to love what you eat AND look and feel like the best version of yourself, then this book is for you. Wellness begins from within; eating real, unprocessed and nourishing food allows you to live a healthier, happier and more energised life. By understanding what's good for your body, making some simple changes to your habits and by choosing food that's both delicious and good for you, you will look better and feel amazing and energised. This is *The Art of Eating Well*.

We've created 150 exciting and inventive recipes for every day; recipes that are easy and fun to make as well as being packed with nourishing ingredients. You don't need to be a gourmet chef, count calories, go hungry or miss out on dessert – there is no fad dieting here. The idea is to cook and eat meals that are so delicious you'll forget that you're eating 'healthy food'. Many of the recipes in this book will seem familiar to you at first glance; a reworking of popular dishes from pizza and spaghetti to chocolate cake and ice cream, or traditionally 'healthy' recipes like supercharged salads and nourishing veg-packed smoothies. We don't believe in depriving ourselves of treats and 'comfort' foods, we just make them using whole ingredients and unrefined, natural sweeteners.

Don't be put off by unusual names or worry about tracking down certain ingredients. We've included plenty of alternatives and the stockist list on our website ([www.hemsleyandhemsley.com](http://www.hemsleyandhemsley.com)) will help you find your local specialist store or point you in the direction of an online shop.

In amongst the recipes you'll find simple, practical tips on sourcing and preparing food and enhancing digestion. Our easy, sustainable, common sense philosophy will arm you with the knowledge and tools to take control of your food choices and begin your own journey to the art of eating well.



Our food  
Our society is just beginning to acknowledge the ill effects of high-sugar, high-gluten, overly processed and chemical-laden foods in our diet. These foods have become so much a part of mainstream eating that we can be forgiven for being completely confused about what the ideal diet is. Much of the food on offer to us is nutritionally substandard. It will keep you alive, but not necessarily in the best of health if eaten as the bulk of your diet. Natural foods are often overshadowed

by commercially produced, heavily advertised 'health foods', which are usually designed in a lab and are full of ingredients and chemicals that we, let alone our bodies, struggle to recognise.

The HEMSLEY+HEMSLEY way is to keep it simple and as close to nature as possible. In essence this means we eat meat and vegetables, taking the best ingredients and foods from the plant and animal kingdoms as humans have always done. Simple food.

H+H food is free from gluten, grains and refined sugars, and focuses on nutrient-dense, unprocessed foods, good fats and bone broth.

We encourage you to eat organic vegetables, sustainable and ethically caught wild fish and grass-fed naturally reared, free-range meat. We enjoy high-quality dairy and a whole range of natural fats, including butter, unrefined oils and animal fat. This produce is better for nutrition, the environment, local economy and, in our opinion, it really does taste better.

We avoid processed foods, refined carbohydrates and sugar, and chemical sweeteners. Instead, we stick to pseudocereals, such as quinoa and amaranth, seasonal fruit and naturally sweet ingredients such as raw honey and maple syrup that have nutritional value.

We urge you to steer clear of food products that shout 'low fat' and 'no fat' as well as those promoted as 'low calorie'. Stay away from margarine, vegetable spreads, 'sugar-free' cakes and cereal bars along with products that claim to speed up your metabolism or contain ingredients you don't recognise. Think of these as fake foods that cause stress to the body.

Humans evolved to eat natural foods, foods that were foraged, hunted or grown. Many of us have lost this connection to the food we eat. We believe it's important to re-establish that link.

We don't believe in dieting or that good health is as simple as 'calories in, calories out'; this is not a natural way of evaluating what to eat. The answer is not to limit calories but to eat more high-quality foods and listen to our bodies. Mindful Eating.

You'll find that once your taste buds have been weaned off sugary, refined and chemically enhanced food products, you will quickly develop a taste for fresh, unprocessed whole foods. By preparing your own meals you can be more in control of what is going into your body and feel better for it.



Who we are

HEMSLEY + HEMSLEY, launched in 2010, is our family-run, bespoke food service looking after individuals and their families all over the world, including high-profile people within the music, media, fashion, beauty, health and wellness industries.

Alongside the food delivery service, we consult for private clients, restaurants and hotels as well as catering dinner parties and events. In 2012 we joined [Vogue.co.uk](http://Vogue.co.uk) as food bloggers, which allowed us to share our nourishing recipes with a wider audience.

We have been developing the H+H way of eating for almost ten years and, while it is now our business to help others overhaul their eating, it all began as a very personal journey.

Jasmine worked as a model for over 15 years, a profession that made her very aware of her food choices and health. Melissa travelled the world as a fashion brand manager and then worked in marketing for gastropubs and bars. Long hours, late nights and trying to eat on the go were challenges for both of us.

We have always loved cooking and recognised the relationship between food and health. On the surface we thought ourselves 'normal and healthy' young women. However, when we began tuning into our bodies we realised that we weren't functioning at our best. We were suffering from those everyday niggles and ailments like indigestion, acid reflux, IBS, eczema, stress and exhaustion from work. We realised that we weren't alone and that others around us were experiencing and accepting the same health problems as normal. Why were we putting up with feeling less than our best?



We researched, read and navigated our way through the bewildering variety of food, diet options and philosophies on offer. Through countless hours of personal studying, attending talks, conferences and lectures, and working with clients and experts in the wellness fields, we developed an approach to eating that made sense to us and made us feel great.

Friends and family noticed the dramatic change in us, loved the food we were putting on the table and wanted to be in on the secret. At their request, we started teaching them, then their friends, and then friends of friends, how to cook a handful of our favourite everyday meals and so, our family business HEMSLEY + HEMSLEY was born.



The third member of our team is Nick, juice master and maker of amazing stews. With twenty years working around the world as a model, actor and photographer, he was all too familiar with eating fads in all their strangest forms: models surviving on toasted seaweed and chilli flakes, red wine and jelly babies, or black coffee and egg-white omelettes washed down with protein shakes. With all these diets, several things were clear: they were unsustainable, unsatisfactory, emotionally draining and flavour was the least important factor. Nick alerted us to the fact that men can be as emotionally attached to food as women, particularly in a world that strives for body perfection.

Adopting the H+H way of eating, Nick was amazed by how his energy increased along with his resistance to common colds. Suddenly, daily visits to the gym were no longer a necessity. He became inspired to explore more natural, minimalistic and traditional training methods, such as barefoot running, yoga and body weight training, amazed at how quickly he could recover with a good mug of bone broth – no need for expensive shakes or supplements.

As self-taught cooks in an increasingly health-conscious world that is seeing a rise in allergies and autoimmune diseases, the H+H way of eating seems to resonate with many people. This cookbook is our chance to share our ethos and recipes with you. These are our easy-to-make, feel-good meals that our clients, friends and family have adopted and loved without even realising they were embarking on a nutritional change for the better. Our aim is simple: to get nourishing, tasty food on the table every day.

### How to use this book

Use this book simply as a collection of delicious recipes that you know are also good for you. Jump in and start cooking the recipes right away, dipping in and out to incorporate them into your weekly routine. Or make an immediate change and read 10 Things to Do Today ([here](#)) and take control of your well being by getting to grips with our food philosophy, understanding what's really good for you and what you should avoid. We have put together a summary of our thinking and practices [here](#) with our



Twelve Golden Rules while Our Food Philosophy ([here](#)) offers an in-depth guide to really understand our way of eating and how it can benefit you.

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Throughout this book there are tips and tricks for ways to make better choices painlessly, in a manner that will empower you to take control of your food and enjoy it – rather than food controlling you. Turn [here](#) to find out how to overhaul and upgrade the contents of your fridge, freezer and cupboards so you can always whip up something nutritious.

Turn [here](#) to see how a Sunday Cook Off gets you organised for the week ahead. And [here](#) you will find menus for a whole host of occasions, from work lunches to dinner parties and celebrations.

## 10 THINGS TO DO TODAY

Start with these simple changes and you'll feel better immediately.

- 1 Start your day by drinking a glass of warm water with half a lemon squeezed in, then rinse your mouth out.
- 2 Before a shower, dry body brush for a minute every morning, using a soft natural bristle brush to boost and aid your circulation and the removal of toxins.
- 3 Make a green smoothie ([see here](#)). Drink some for breakfast and save a glass for your mid-morning break.
- 4 Cut down on caffeine – have one less coffee or caffeine-rich drink and replace with something refreshing and zingy ([see here](#)).
- 5 Make a shopping list and clear out your cupboards. Remove vegetable cooking oils from your kitchen and cook in butter or steam until you can introduce more of the right unprocessed fats.
- 6 Take an extra 10 minutes over lunch, focus on your food not your phone/email and chew thoroughly.
- 7 Get a water filter and drink 2 litres of water throughout the day. Build up slowly and flavour it if you prefer.
- 8 Move your body and sweat for 20 minutes today. Get outside and take in the sunlight and fresh air.
- 9 If you feel like a snack try some nut butter on apple slices. If you get a food craving check first that you are hydrated. Drink something tangy or with bitter flavours such ginger, lemon or lime to bypass it. Don't go for something salty or you might have to eat something sweet afterwards and vice versa.
- 10 Go to bed an hour earlier and give your eyes a rest from TV, phones and computers as you unwind.

## OUR FOOD PHILOSOPHY

The 'better than' rule

We are big believers in the 'better than rule'. This means, if you can't find what you're looking for, then choose the next best option. You can apply this to ingredients as well as choices on a restaurant menu (for more on eating out, turn [here](#)). Eating real, whole food, organic or not, is always better than eating chemically processed, refined foods.

For convenience, and because no one has time to cook everything from scratch, we use some ready-made ingredients, such as coconut flour and soba noodles. Our way of eating is not restrictive and there is an increasingly large range of nutrient-dense products, which we use and discuss throughout the book, that are readily available to help make healthy eating easy to maintain; this is a long-term lifestyle choice that is wholly sustainable and enjoyable.

Nothing changes overnight, no day is the same and we cannot always be perfect in our busy lives. No one is judging you, so be kind to yourself. Make changes where you can, adopt some positive new

habits and enjoy the benefits and the feeling of a better version of you.

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### Eat the best food you can find

Where your food comes from is important. Food that is not labelled organic can often be laden with toxins, pesticides, fungicides and can be genetically modified (GM) – you do not want to be eating any of these. Similarly, foods labelled ‘pure’, ‘natural’, ‘healthy’ and ‘whole’ might not have had anything added but can still have had plenty taken away, ‘Fortified’ means that synthetic vitamins and minerals have been added, which are not necessarily bioavailable (can be absorbed by your body) – you need to check the small print to really understand what you’re putting into your body.

We always aim for home-grown, local and naturally farmed food, including organic and biodynamic-certified produce, to ensure our food is as free as possible from chemicals and GM ingredients, especially for meat, fish and dairy. The labels ‘organic’ and ‘biodynamic-certified’ ensure you are buying naturally grown or reared produce so look out for these labels. It’s also a good idea to support local producers who grow their produce free from pesticides, as nature intended, but don’t necessarily have an organic certification. You can often get a much better price if you buy directly from the producer.

Remember that natural farming is better for the environment, as well as being better for your body. Don’t see organic and naturally farmed food as elitist or specialist – before mass-production this is how all food was traditionally grown. Ask questions and use your spending power where it counts to increase the demand for naturally grown real food. In doing so you can spark change for the better for everyone. Remember it’s not extreme or weird to want to eat food free from chemicals and genetic modification – it’s natural!

### Rethink the way you shop

With a little research and planning you can buy the best-quality produce without breaking the bank. Buying in bulk and making your own food from scratch will free up cash to spend on the more expensive ingredients (share a food shop with a friend or two if you’re struggling for space to store lots of produce). Choose cheaper cuts of meat, build up a store cupboard of good-quality ingredients over time, eat seasonally, cook double quantities and freeze half and plan your meals for the week. You will reduce waste and make your money stretch further while improving your health. If you feel you’re struggling to buy the best-quality produce, don’t give up. Buy the best you can afford at that time.

### Healthy gut, happy you

The key to our philosophy is gut health and good digestion – it’s not just what you eat, it’s what you digest that counts. Without a healthy gut lining, your body will not be able to efficiently digest and absorb vital minerals and nutrients. So even if you are eating nourishing foods, you may not be getting all their benefits. Stomach soothing bone broths form the foundation of many of our meals along with plenty of probiotic foods.

**BONE BROTH** To help heal a damaged gut lining, you need large amounts of easily digestible substances like amino acids, gelatin, glucosamine, fats, vitamins and minerals, all found in good-quality bone broth.

Simple to make, soothing and nourishing, bone broth is one of the oldest, most affordable homemade foods, often used as an elixir to cure ailments and nurture the sick. To get the full nutritional benefits the broth should be homemade from the bones of the healthiest animals not from stock cubes, which can include a concoction of hydrolysed protein and emulsifiers. Even the ‘cleanest

ready-made shop-bought stock or bouillon will not have the same benefits as homemade bone broth.

A good broth is rich in gelatin (a source of protein that helps counter the degeneration of joints) and collagen (which improves the condition of skin). Bone broths made with fish bones and heads provide iodine and can help strengthen the thyroid (for how to make bone broth turn [here](#)).



**FERMENTED (CULTURED) AND PROBIOTIC FOODS** You may already be familiar with probiotics – also known as friendly bacteria or gut flora. They are essential to good health, enhancing immune function and improving digestion (the very name ‘probiotic’ means ‘for life’). Without well-functioning gut flora, the gut becomes unprotected and malnourished. By making your own cultured foods such as sauerkraut and kimchi ([see here](#) and [see here](#)), you can provide the body with a concentrated form of natural probiotics, and avoid sugary, low-quality dairy and soy-based probiotic yoghurts and drinks.

These days the commercial preparation of soy has made it more of a junk food than a health food, so we advise that you avoid soy yoghurts, milks, ice creams etc, which lack the health benefits that soy originally became known for. Instead, enjoy organic, traditionally fermented soy products, such as tamari and proper miso (for more info on these ingredients, [see here](#)). Look for an unpasteurised, organic (non-GM), fermented miso and add at the end of cooking to flavour and to ensure the live bacteria is preserved.

## Meat and fish

Meat, fish and seafood are very rich in protein, the building blocks of our body, and contain the essential vitamin B12, which is not available to our bodies in most plant foods. We choose pasture-raised, hormone- and antibiotic-free animals that have been raised on a diet that is natural to them, i.e. not grain-fed cows or corn-fed, captive chickens. When it comes to fish and seafood, we choose sustainable varieties of wild and ethically caught stock, well-regulated or organically farmed (for more on fish and seafood, turn [here](#)).

Naturally raised meat naturally costs more, but we champion the less popular cuts, which make it more affordable. We love eating chicken livers, fish roe, bone broth and bone marrow, and cooking with real fat, not only because they are all delicious and nutritious but also because these ingredients allow us to eat better quality food for less money. It is also a mindful way to eat that reduces waste and celebrates the whole animal.

We tend to eat less pork compared to other meats as it can be trickier to track down naturally reared pork products and it tends to be one of the most processed meats. Always choose unprocessed pork, free from nitrites and chemical preservatives and make sure it is cooked through.

Although we regularly eat meat and fish, we don’t have huge servings and not at every meal. Beef, lamb and pork take the longest to digest so we tend to eat them for breakfast and lunch or stick to an early supper. The last thing you want to do is to take that steak to bed with you!

## Fats

There is a myth that fat (especially saturated fat) is bad. In reality, fat, derived from both the animal and plant kingdoms, is essential to human wellbeing. This nutrient-dense, nourishing food is an excellent source of energy that makes your meals satisfying and tasty.

The body needs both saturated and unsaturated fats in their most natural forms for the absorption of vitamins A, D, E and K, slowing down the release of sugar and optimal digestion. Cholesterol is also essential to your wellbeing – it is vital for the communication of the nervous system and makes up all cell membranes and sex hormones. Cholesterol levels are tightly regulated by the liver, which produces the correct amount of blood cholesterol, regardless of the cholesterol content in your diet. High-quality, pasture-raised, animal-based foods not only provide an excellent source of protein, but also the fats needed for optimal brain and body health.

We keep two types of fat in the kitchen: saturated (mostly found in animal foods) and unsaturated (which includes monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat mostly found in plant foods). These two kinds of fat are great not only because of their varied nutritional profiles but also because they are suitable for different types of food preparation. We use real saturated fats, such as clarified butter (ghee) and coconut oil, because they are heat stable meaning that their chemical structure is not readily altered or oxidised when used for cooking. We reserve the goodness of unrefined, unsaturated plant oils, such as extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling over salads and vegetables and for making raw dips and dressings.

It's important that the fats you consume should be organic because toxins, pesticides and medications are stored in the fat cells of non-organically farmed produce and will be transferred to your body as you eat them.

Please avoid trans fats and heat-treated or refined polyunsaturated fats and oils ([see here](#)). [see here](#) for more on fats and how to use them.



## Bad fats

Trans fats are largely artificial fats that occur when unsaturated fats are heated and chemically altered to turn them into solids in a process called hydrogenation. This process gives these fats a longer shelf life and makes foods less likely to spoil – perfect for creating long-lasting, cheap food, but very bad for us. Trans fats have been linked to cancer, heart disease, autoimmunity and infertility.

Most margarines, butter replacements, vegetable oils, shortenings and other fat replacements contain trans fats in some form or another and they are a staple ingredient of commercially sold pies, cakes, biscuits and general packaged foods. Steer clear and enjoy real butter instead.

Other fats to avoid are cooking oils, such as sunflower and rapeseed oil. These usually undergo extreme pressure or heat during manufacturing, causing oxidation. By the time you've kept these oils standing in plastic bottles in a hot cupboard above the stove and then used them for frying, you may be

exposing your body to a large amount of free radicals (produced by oxidation). Over time, these free radicals can cause inflammation, affecting your organs, blood vessels and more. Stick to unrefined, cold-pressed oils on your salads and high-quality saturated fats for cooking.

## Vegetables

Vegetables are the recurring theme in our food. They take up around 60 per cent, or two-thirds, of our plates at every meal and find their way into our breakfasts, cakes, crackers and ice creams too. As you eat more of them, it's amazing how your body starts to crave the goodness from these nutrient-dense foods. Forget the target of 'five a day'. With these recipes, you will be eating up to ten portions a day with ease. To keep vegetables as the main event at every meal, we need to keep them interesting and varied. Eat a rainbow of vegetables and eat with the seasons to keep your taste buds excited. For added flavour and nutrition, we often cook our vegetables in bone broth ([see here](#)).

Vegetables are also extremely alkalising on the body. Our body constantly maintains the blood's optimum alkaline pH level, but a diet consisting of mostly acidifying foods (lots of refined sugars, grains, processed foods and meat i.e. the typical western diet) makes it work much harder to maintain that natural balance. We look to remove stress on the body at every opportunity so that it can function at its best – so a diet rich in alkalising veg is key to good health.

We aim to eat vegetables seasonally, when they are naturally at their best, are most abundant and, therefore, most affordable. Vegetables lose nutrients after being picked and the longer they've been in transit, the more nutrition is lost. Box schemes of organic seasonal fruit and vegetables delivered straight to your door are so convenient, especially when seasonal organic produce can be hard to get hold of locally.

If you cannot buy all your fruit and veg organic, then prioritise varieties where you can eat the skin (thin-skinned) e.g. apples, cucumbers, tomatoes, berries, broccoli and red peppers, as the surface is where the most pesticide residue will be found. Then if you do need to opt for conventionally grown, non-organic produce, go for thick-skinned fruits and vegetables, such as onions, garlic, bananas and avocados, as you peel them before eating.

## Washing produce

Organic or not, always wash produce well because of handling, transporting and possible contamination. A lot of goodness is contained in the skin so for organic root veg just scrub the earth off but don't peel. Remove tough outer leaves of anything leafy like lettuce and cabbage before you wash them.

In non-organic root vegetables, such as beetroots and carrots, pesticides are concentrated around the top, so chopping the top 1 cm off helps. Even if you peel or chop off the top, the produce will still contain pesticide residue absorbed whilst growing.

You can use a homemade wash to help clean the veg and reduce the pesticide residue on the skin (turn [here](#) for our homemade wash recipes).

## Dairy

Eat full-fat dairy from organic pasture-reared animals. We source raw milk from organic grass-fed cattle – unhomogenised, preferably unpasteurised and always full-fat (as it naturally comes). As this high-quality dairy milk is hard to come by we don't drink it often, although, we do enjoy easier-to-find, good-quality cheese, butter and yoghurt (all naturally lower in lactose than milk). As a general guideline the higher the fat content, the lower the lactose content. Always choose plain (sugar-free), organic, full-fat and probiotic ('live') yoghurt. Raw goats' and sheep's milks and milk products are also worth considering and are easier to digest thanks to their smaller fat molecules.

As well as good-quality dairy there are some deliciously creamy non-dairy options to try too, which is good news for anyone who can't eat dairy. More often than not we use dairy alternatives, such as coconut milk and coconut cream (rich in healthy fats) and even use them to make our own probiotic yoghurt ([see here](#)). Instead of cream cheese, we use avocado to make our cheesecakes and have created Mango Cashew Cream ([see here](#)) as a tasty substitute for dairy-based yoghurt, custard and cream. Nut milks, or 'mylks' as they are also known, offer a subtle, light and creamy flavour. Be aware that shop-bought varieties of nut milk can come with a whole host of other added ingredients so try our quick tips on making your own ([see here](#)).

## Sugar

Refined sugar can promote inflammation in the body. It is also the main culprit for feeding unfriendly yeast and bacteria in the gut. Sugar is easily absorbed into your system quickly releasing energy and raising the blood sugar level. The body responds by secreting a large amount of insulin from the pancreas and also producing cortisol from the adrenal glands (the classic 'fight or flight' response). Think sugar rush followed by sugar lows.

Over time repeated spikes and troughs in sugar levels can cause the individual to become insulin resistant, which causes an array of problems including suppression of the immune system, accelerated aging and the increased risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

Always read food and drinks labels before you buy because sugar is used in all types of foods (even savoury) to make them taste better. Avoid all the many names for refined sugars and sweeteners, such as brown rice syrup, barley malt, fructose, sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, cane juice, dextrose, mannitol, lactose, maltodextrin, sorbitol, fruit juice concentrate, the list goes on. Watch out for large amounts of natural sweeteners like dried fruits, honey and maple syrup as too many of these can disrupt the body's balance.

Sugar is addictive because the body is hard-wired to want sweet things, which provide instant, easily accessible energy. Reduce the sugar in your diet and you'll find your sweet cravings diminish so that only small amounts of the natural sweetness of fruit and raw honey is required to satisfy you.

## Grains and potatoes

Grains, the seeds of grasses, have become a staple food source around the world, and in one form or another have found their way into the meals and snacks we consume on a daily basis (think pasta, bread, biscuits, cereal, crackers, snack bars, pastries, sweets and even drinks).

The majority of grains today are heavily hybridised and even genetically modified, and these commercial crops are heavily sprayed with chemicals – this is not what our ancestors would have consumed.

Contrary to popular belief we do not need to eat grains to survive and they offer little goodness compared to the many more nutrient-rich options out there. As you digest grains, they can cause unhealthy, quick releases of sugar and spikes in insulin levels, and some release a feel-good feeling which makes you want to eat more. These cheap calories fill you up and keep you going but by cutting them out you leave a lot more room in your diet to add more nutrient-dense foods such as meat and vegetables. Properly prepared grains are good for some individuals but for the majority avoiding them shows improvement in health.

We substitute grains with vegetables and pseudocereals (buckwheat, amaranth, quinoa), which are small, protein-filled seeds that resemble grains in looks and taste, hence the name. Importantly, pseudocereals are completely free of gluten and are rich in amino acids not found in regular grains. They are also less likely to have been heavily hybridised or subjected to industrial farming methods.

You might notice that none of our recipes call for white potatoes. We prefer not to rely on them as

staple and substitute them with other more nutrient-rich, lower-starch vegetables that do not convert so quickly into glucose when digested.

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Don't worry, when we remove foods like potatoes and grains you're not missing out on carbohydrates. Other vegetables, fruits, pseudocereals and pulses have carbohydrates too and they are the better vitamin and mineral-rich options.

### Simple food combining

There are three primary categories of food: protein, carbohydrates and fats. Carbohydrates are divided into two categories: fruits and starches. Starches and proteins digest at different rates, so simple food combining in our day-to-day meals means we try to avoid keeping food in the stomach longer than it needs to be, which is helpful for those who suffer from poor digestion. This practice is just a general rule but we like it because it also means that we leave plenty of room on our plates for more of the mostly green, alkalising vegetables that help our bodies to stay healthy.

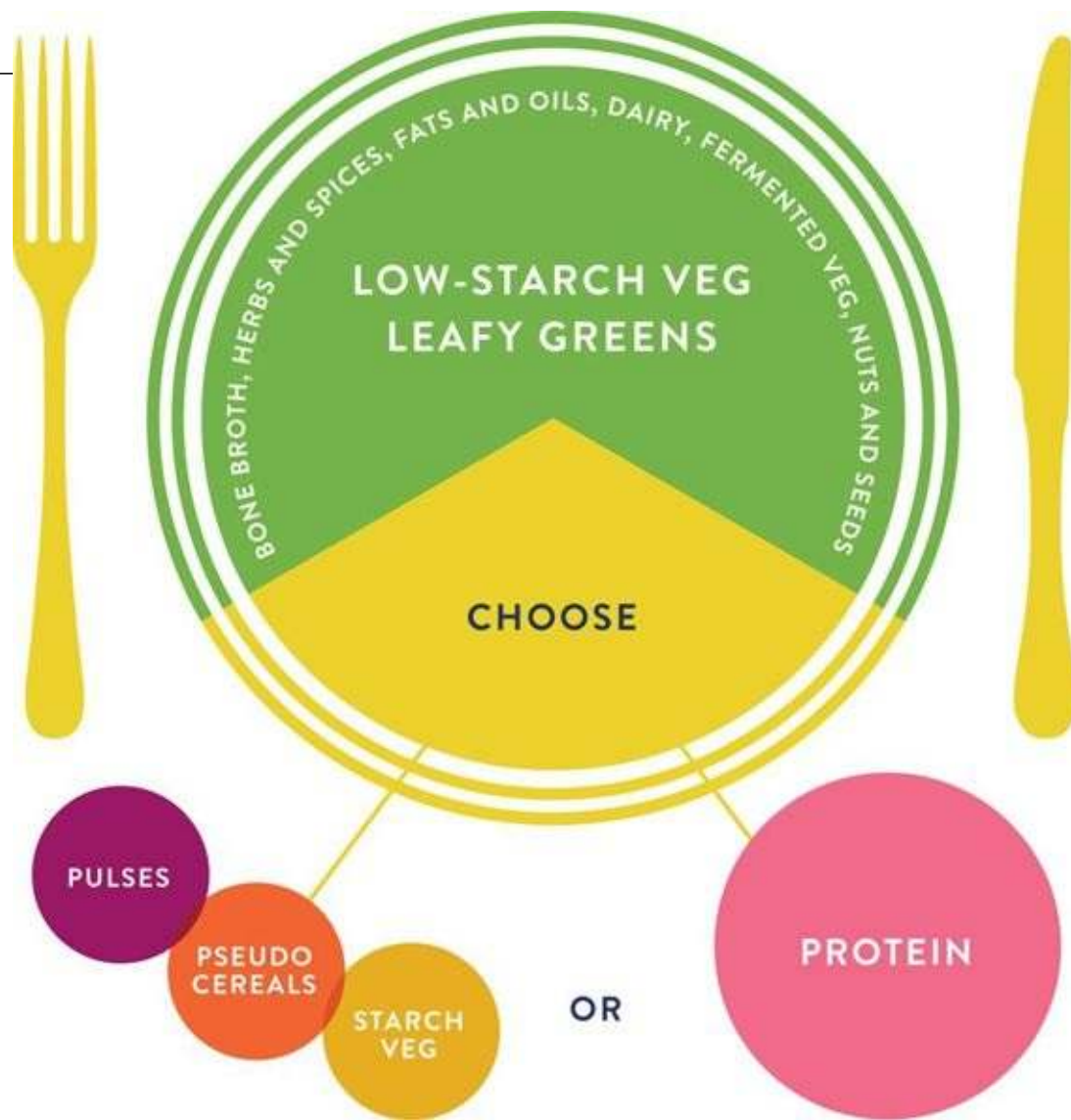
Think of a plate in three parts. One part should be taken up with a protein or high-starch food, the other two parts should contain low-starch veg. This means you avoid eating protein and high-starch foods at the same time. For breakfast and lunch we enjoy one or sometimes two portions of raw low-starch veg, but for supper we prefer cooked low-starch veg for easier digestion. To help explain what we mean, we've created an illustration of simple food combining on an ideal H+H plate ([see here](#)).

HIGH-STARCH FOODS ARE: tubers/root veg and fresh beans, such as beetroot, broad beans, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnip, peas, pumpkin, squash and sweet potatoes; pseudocereals, such as amaranth, buckwheat and quinoa; and pulses, such as beans and lentils.

PROTEIN FOODS ARE: animal products, such as beef, lamb, chicken, fish, pork and eggs.

LOW-STARCH VEG, WHICH CAN BE EATEN WITH HIGH-STARCH OR PROTEIN FOODS, INCLUDE: artichokes, asparagus, aubergine, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage family (including kale, cavolo nero and chard), carrots, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, courgette, cucumber, garlic, green beans, green beetroot leaves, fennel, kohlrabi, leeks, mushrooms, onions, pak choy, radish, red and yellow peppers, salad leaves such as chicory, rocket, lettuce and watercress, seaweeds, spinach, swede and turnips. We also include the 'savoury fruits' here: avocado, tomato and cucumber.

Herbs, spices, nuts, seeds, fats, oils, dairy, our Fermented Four probiotic foods ([see here](#)) and bone broth can be eaten with everything. Some might find it best to avoid fruit as part of a main meal, instead enjoying it as a snack between meals.



### Soaking and activating

All grains, pseudocereals, nuts, seeds and legumes have a natural, protective layer called phytic acid (phytate) – an anti-nutrient that irritates the gut lining and prevents the absorption of certain minerals into the body. Although a small amount of phytic acid can be beneficial we try to remove as much as is practically possible. In ancient times, these foods were usually sprouted and fermented, as well as cooked, all of which reduce the phytic acid content and increased digestibility and nutrients available.

We recommend ‘activating’ pseudocereals and pulses by soaking them to start germination and to reduce phytic acid before cooking. By doing this their nutrients are more available and easier to digest.

We also soak nuts and seeds to activate them. We then rinse, drain and add the wet and softened nuts or seeds to smoothies and other recipes. To enjoy activated nuts and seeds dry, crunchy or to make them into flour, we then dehydrate them. These dried activated nuts and seeds are known as ‘crispy’.

Be mindful not to overdo nuts and seeds, they are nutritious but are best eaten in small amounts. If you eat them regularly or rely on them as a source of protein, then it is even more important that you prepare them properly by activating them. Also, to make the most of them, especially small seeds, you must chew them well. For more info on soaking and activating turn [here](#).

### Eat slowly, chew well

Not only what you eat but also the way you eat is crucial to your health. Remember, there are no teeth



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