



Warmth

AN AYURVEDIC COOKBOOK

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" In this cookbook, we wish to give an experience of ' Warmth '. We offer a collection of recipes that will help build a foundation for deeper personal clarity on the matters of health & happiness; that will serve in the transformation of the mental & physical factors that are obstacles to not only our health, but to our fundamental desire to be happy, energetic & compassionate people."

Welcome

Cultivating Kindness & Warmth

Sensei Michael Doko Hatchett

In my deepest heart, I believe that a happy and healthy relationship with life, each other, and our own bodies and minds, dwells entirely in developing our capacity to be kind. Everything else regarding health and happiness flows from here. To give tender attention to our bodies and minds, to life itself, to its questions, wonders, and mysteries, constitutes a path in life that enhances our human potential for clarity of mind, body, and heart. It's about 'digesting' our joy, our heartaches, our difficulties, our love and our dreams.

Physically, spiritually, and mentally we are always in an eternal relationship with 'sustenance'. Throughout the cosmos, a process of movement, transmutation and adaptation is always occurring - from the inside to the out, and the outside to the in; the universal to the particular, the particular to the universal.

In the ancient traditions of health and healing, food is our fundamental starting focus to understand and live in harmony with these universal forces and processes of life. It can bring about a state of mind and body that leads to disease, suffering and mental imbalance, or to a state of mind and body that leads ultimately to perfect health of body, mind and spirit. Eating good food directly connects us to a soulfulness, a sense of connectedness, with nature and with the lessons it holds for us.

The essential 'point' to kindness, in terms of health, is that it establishes the necessary quality of approach for us to understand our bodies and minds. This is a simple statement, but a vast endeavour.

Kindness leads to a deeper patience, clearer powers of observation, and eventually to a precise path of self-care. Without it, we are guaranteed to be agitated - however subtle or unnoticed that may be - prone to greed, and blind to good sense. With it, we begin to sense and experience what is needed to be healthy and happy.

This is what I call developing 'Warmth' – of giving back to our lives, an appreciation of simplicity and its power. Simplicity is not superficiality; it is what assists in the continuing creation of deep wisdom, compassion and down-to-earth kindness; empowering us with the right dosage of a steady and firm conviction in our own abilities to self-manage our health.

The purity and choices of the food we eat is the first doorway to awaken kindness and balance in the body and mind. The digestive system's power and intelligence ('Agni' in Ayurvedic terminology) is the crucial factor of all health. It governs the entire mind/body chain of nutrition, as it co-ordinates the body in the digestive and elimination processes.

Well-digested meals give us energy and nourishment. Poorly digested meals set off chain reactions that create contaminating by-products that stick to our gastrointestinal tract ('Ama' in Ayurvedic terminology). This tires and weakens the mind/body, as it endeavours to 'burn-off' the toxins that will circulate to the deeper tissues and organs.

The more we eat poorly, the more constant is this task. Therefore, indigestion is a serious matter for our lives - not a small inconvenience. Due to the chain of nutrition, poor digestion in the body leads to poor digestion of thoughts in the mind. Poor digestion of thoughts leads back to poor choices of intake for our senses and diet.

The body will cope most of the time, especially in our earlier years. But coping with the presence of undigested foods and their toxic by-products steals from our deeper storehouses of immunity and energy. The energy that is, according to the ancient sciences of mind/body, meant to fuel our 'spirit' and evolution. In other words, it's a waste of energy and endowment, keeping us in a basic mode of being.

Thus, we need to do two things: (1) eat foods that are easily digested by the body and leave only simple wastes, and (2) enhance the ways in which we encourage digestive strength and harmonisation.

Mind and body need to work with, not against, each other. This is stated again and again in the all the ancient systems of health and healing - Buddhism, Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, to name a few.

The body responds to good digestion and a warm attitude, by better coordinating our cellular intelligence. When problematic substances for the body and mind to cope with are not produced; and when chemicals and hormones that enhance enthusiasm, immunity, harmony, and the ability to manage our senses are produced; we are better able to see, learn and use this body/mind well.

In this cookbook, we wish to give an experience of 'Warmth'. We offer a collection of recipes that will help build a foundation for deeper personal clarity on the matters of health and happiness; that will serve in the transformation of the mental and physical factors that are obstacles to not only our health, but to our fundamental desire to be happy, energetic and compassionate people.

"A 'Warm', welcoming, well-organised kitchen is a pleasure to spend time in. Of course we cannot all have the perfect kitchen, but we can make the most of the one we do have by taking the time to set it up well."

The Kitchen

Setting Up A ‘Warm’ Kitchen

Nadia Marshall

A ‘Warm’, welcoming, well-organised kitchen is a pleasure to spend time in. Of course we cannot all have the perfect kitchen, but we can make the most of the one we do have by taking the time to set it up well. Everything should have its place and the equipment we use most often should be readily accessible.

If possible, you should try and set aside a nice portion of bench space for prepping that is away from the stove. This is useful when you have two people cooking at once – the chef and the sous-chef! Keep your big, yummy wooden chopping board and knives in this space.

Keep the area around the stove clutter free apart from the utensils and ingredients you use regularly whilst cooking – wooden spoons, serving spoons, a ladle, a pot of ghee, a bottle of olive and sunflower oil, all of your spices plus salt and pepper.

A mortar and pestle or electric spice grinder near the stove is also very handy. Store your pots and pans in cupboards closest to the stove and consider putting your plates, bowls and plastics a little further away.

An accessible and well-presented spice rack / shelf or space is of the utmost importance in a ‘Warm’ kitchen. Purchase good quality organic spices and you will certainly taste the difference in your creations. Buy them whole and grind them on an as-needs basis to retain maximum freshness, aroma and taste.

Spices can even become an aesthetic feature in the kitchen if stored in nice glass jars of the same size and shape. Also consider storing your legumes, pulses, grains, dried fruits and nuts in large glass jars. If there is room, arrange them on visible kitchen shelves, to inspire creativity and to easily keep track of what you have on hand and when you need to go shopping. If you are pushed for room, consider installing some shelving on free wall space to achieve this.

When considering colours, pictures and accessories for the kitchen and dining room, look for choices that will help promote healthy agni/digestive fire. Shades of red and orange increase the fire element in the body, as do pictures of delicious-looking food. Pyramid and triangular shapes represent fire so also increase agni and candles are an excellent choice for table decorations.

Choose favourite quotes relating to food and cooking and stick them on the walls – anything that will help stimulate your excitement for cooking and eating!

Keeping your favourite cookbooks out on display also helps - consider investing in a cookbook stand, which makes their use far less logistically challenging.

When you are actually cooking, pretend you're a professional and approach one thing at a time. Do all of your chopping first, using small bowls or ramekins to store the chopped herbs, veggies etc before cooking. Then, take the bowls over to the stove and focus wholeheartedly on your creation. And don't forget to smile as you cook!

It is always a good idea to clean up as you go so half fill the sink with warm soapy water at the beginning of the cooking process and wash up along the way, or stack the dishwasher as you go. It makes the pile at the end much less scary and off-putting.

On the next page is a list of must-haves for the kitchen drawers and cupboards. A good cook is only as good as the tools he/she uses...

You will need...

- ~ at least two very sharp, good quality knives
- ~ a small wooden chopping board for chopping garlic, onion & ginger
- ~ a large wooden chopping board for chopping everything else
- ~ a small wooden rolling pin for making breads
- ~ a medium sized thick-based saucepan
- ~ two larger pots (approx 8 litres)
- ~ a skillet / fry pan / tawa
- ~ a large wok
- ~ a small-medium sized pressure cooker
- ~ a heat-proof bowl
- ~ a medium-size roasting dish for the oven
- ~ small bowls / ramekins
- ~ wooden spoons
- ~ a steel spatula
- ~ a ladle
- ~ a couple of serving spoons
- ~ a pair of tongs
- ~ a whisk
- ~ a mortar and pestle or electric spice grinder (i.e a coffee grinder)
- ~ a stick blender (e.g. a bamix, sunbeam)
- ~ an electric kettle
- ~ a good grater
- ~ scales, measuring cups & spoons.

Stocking A 'Warm' Pantry

Nadia Marshall

After setting up the kitchen, you'll have to stock the pantry. Below is a shopping list of all of the relatively non-perishable items you will need to cook all of the recipes in this book. (R) = refrigerate; (F) = freeze. (Please note - the list doesn't include the fresh items you will need).

SPICES

- ~ Turmeric powder
- ~ Cumin seeds
- ~ Coriander seeds
- ~ Fennel seeds
- ~ Mustard seeds
- ~ Asafoetida / Hing
- ~ Ajwain seeds
- ~ Caraway seeds
- ~ Cardamom pods
- ~ Cinnamon quills/sticks
- ~ Ginger powder
- ~ Cloves
- ~ Paprika powder (sweet)
- ~ Cayenne pepper
- ~ Garam masala
- ~ Curry leaves (R)
- ~ Dried Bay leaves
- ~ Kaffir lime leaves (F)
- ~ Black pepper
- ~ Sea salt / rock salt

PULSES

- ~ Moong daal
- ~ Toor daal
- ~ Red lentils
- ~ Puy/French green lentils
- ~ Dried chickpeas

GRAINS

- ~ Basmati rice
- ~ Red rice
- ~ Brown rice
- ~ Rolled oats
- ~ Thick poha (beaten rice)
- ~ Semolina (coarse & fine)
- ~ Couscous
- ~ Pearl barley
- ~ Sago (tapioca)
- ~ Vermicelli noodles
- ~ Besan flour
- ~ Moong flour
- ~ Wholemeal flour
- ~ Self-raising flour
- ~ Pasta & noodles

FRUIT & NUTS

- ~ *Sultanas / Raisins*
- ~ *Currants*
- ~ *Cashews*
- ~ *Almonds*
- ~ *Dates*
- ~ *Figs*
- ~ *Pine nuts (R)*
- ~ *Sesame seeds*
- ~ *Tahini*
- ~ *LSA*
- ~ *Desiccated coconut*

OTHER

- ~ *Ghee*
- ~ *Olive oil*
- ~ *Sesame oil*
- ~ *Raw sugar (unrefined)*
- ~ *Rapadura / Jaggery*
- ~ *Honey (not heat-treated)*
- ~ *Tamarind paste (R)*
- ~ *Soy sauce*
- ~ *Tamari*
- ~ *Kecap manis*
- ~ *Rice wine vinegar*
- ~ *Brown rice vinegar*
- ~ *Umeboshi vinegar*
- ~ *Shitake mushrooms*
- ~ *Arame seaweed*
- ~ *Wakame seaweed*
- ~ *White miso (R)*
- ~ *Kuzu or Arrowroot*

Because we use them everyday in almost every meal, it is particularly important to source good quality salt and sugar. Rock salt, sea salt or lake salt are far preferable to your standard table salt and taste completely different. Their flavour is much more subtle. Unrefined raw sugars (such as those produced by the UK company, Billingtons), rapadura and grated/ground jaggery have a softer, less sharp and more delicate flavour. They are also more stabilising to blood sugar levels than your average refined sugar. If available, flour, couscous, semolina and vermicelli made from spelt instead of wheat are lighter, easier to digest and better for you. These products may cost a little more but are well worth the investment for your long-term health and wellbeing.

You will notice we've also suggested using unhomogenised biodynamic/organic milk in all of our recipes. When it is homogenised, milk effectively becomes a different food, destroying its beneficial qualities and making it very difficult to digest. It is best avoided. When purchasing honey, look for the non-heat treated kind, found in most fruit and veggie shops. Heat-treated honey (usually from supermarkets) is very difficult for the body to metabolise, clogs the channels and is also best avoided.

"Health is about moving towards a purer & purer happiness. Kindness & patience are our first steps. Slow down, be kind to yourself & others, & you will find the next step."

Breakfast

" Breakfast should not be rushed or eaten on the way out the door, coffee & car keys in hand. This causes the nervous system to become agitated & disrupts digestion, setting up a pattern of rushed & potentially poor choices for the day ahead.."

Breaking The Fast...

Kester Marshall

Breakfast is a very special time and yes, in many ways, it is the most important meal of the day. It is our best opportunity to begin on a positive note and in so doing, set the tone for the day ahead.

At this time the body's anabolic processes are at their peak and the tissues are open and ready to receive nourishment. It is, however, as the word itself states, a time when we are 'breaking a fast'. As with any fast the intention is to give the body, particularly the digestive system, a break from processing the things we continually put into it. So, after a night of restful sleep with an empty stomach the end result is hopefully a system that feels light and strong and a hunger that is keen and sharp. This is the feeling that we need in order to enjoy a good breakfast. If for some reason we feel dull or heavy (maybe a large or rich meal late the evening before), it is wise to continue fasting or eat only very light food until lunch.

Generally speaking whatever we choose to eat should help us to feel more settled in our body; should ideally imbue us with a deep sense of nourishment and abundance, whilst not being so heavy or large that it creates feelings of sluggishness or heaviness.

Breakfast is best eaten between seven and eight (depending on the time of year), and after the morning ablutions - including toilet, teeth cleaning, tongue scraping and a shower. This allows for steady digestion and senses that are ready to receive, with full appreciation, whatever we prepare.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember, however, is that breakfast should not be rushed or eaten on the way out the door, coffee and car keys in hand. This causes the nervous system to become agitated and disrupts digestion, setting up a pattern of rushed and potentially poor choices for the day ahead. Taking all morning to eat breakfast is not really ideal either, but it is essential to take time to enjoy and be mindful of whatever we choose to begin our day with.

NOTE:

Grinding the oats into a fine powder & dry roasting them before cooking makes this porridge very light, smooth & easy to digest. It also means a short cooking time. However, if you are short on time, you can skip this step & the porridge will still be relatively light. The reasonably large quantities of ghee help to lubricate its passage through the digestive system whilst enkindling the digestive fire (see the 'Make Your Own Ghee' recipe to read about some of the virtues of ghee).

Technically oats are gluten free but, they may be 'contaminated' with other grains through the packing and distribution process. If you are a celiac, it is best to avoid them but if not, enjoy this delicious porridge!

Fine Oats Porridge

A delicious, super quick breakfast that is good at any time of the year!

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 2-3 *tbsp ghee*
- ~ 1/2 *cup ground rolled oats*
- ~ 1 *cup boiling water*
- ~ 1/2 *cup unhomogenised organic/biodynamic milk*
- ~ 3-4 *tsp raw sugar (unrefined) or jaggery*
- ~ 2 *tbsp sultanas/raisins*
- ~ 1 *tsp ground cinnamon*

METHOD:

Grind the rolled oats in a spice/coffee grinder into a fine powder.

Choose a heavy based pan and dry roast the ground oats, stirring over medium heat for 1-2 mins.

Add the ghee to the pan so that the oats and ghee combined look like a smooth paste (if crumbly and in big blobs, you will need a little more ghee).

Stir slowly over low-medium heat for 2-3 mins then add the boiling water carefully (as it will spit a bit). Stir quickly to avoid lumps forming. If you get lumps, you can switch your wooden spoon for a whisk and whisk the mixture.

Add the milk, sultanas, cinnamon and sugar. Bring to the boil then lower the heat slightly and keep stirring for 3-5 mins while it cooks. Serve into bowls and eat warm.

SERVES 2

Hearty Oats Porridge

A delicious, thicker porridge that will fill you up on cold winter mornings. It takes a little longer to cook than the fine oats porridge.

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ *1/2 cup quick or rolled oats*
- ~ *1 tbsp ghee*
- ~ *1 cup boiling water*
- ~ *1/2 cup unhomogenised organic/biodynamic milk*
- ~ *3-4 tsp raw sugar (unrefined) or jaggery*
- ~ *2 tbsp sultanas/raisins*
- ~ *1 tsp ground cinnamon*

METHOD:

Choose a heavy based pan and dry roast the oats, stirring over medium heat for 1-2 mins.

Add the ghee to the pan and stir until oats are lightly coated in ghee. Stir slowly over low-medium heat for 1-2 mins then add the boiling water carefully (as it will spit a bit). Stir, then add the milk, sultanas, cinnamon and sugar.

Bring to the boil then turn down the heat to low. Stir occasionally until the oats are well cooked.

Add more water/milk as required to get the desired consistency. Serve into bowls and eat warm.

NOTE: Do not serve with fresh fruit (e.g. bananas). Fresh fruit should be eaten on its own, between meals or it will remain in the stomach for too long and ferment, causing undigested food toxins (Ama).

SERVES 2

Stewed Breakfast Apples

Easy to prepare and super tasty! They're excellent, especially when feeling a little heavy from eating too late or too much the night before. Pears and other seasonal fruits can also be included. They also make a great morning tea.

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 5-6 cloves
- ~ 1/2 cinnamon stick
- ~ 12 sultanas/raisins
- ~ 2-3 apples
- ~ raw sugar (unrefined) / jaggery to taste

METHOD:

Cut up 2 or 3 flavoursome apples and place in a heavy bottom saucepan.

Add 2-3 tbsp of water, raisins, the cloves, cinnamon stick and unprocessed sugar to taste.

Bring to the boil and simmer with the lid on, stirring now and then until the apples are soft.

NOTE: It is best to eat fresh fruit on its own so avoid eating the stewed apples with other foods.

SERVES 2-3, GLUTEN FREE

NOTE:

If you're in a hurry, grinding the poha into a fine meal in a spice or coffee grinder will make an even smoother, lighter, creamier porridge that cooks in no time at all. This approach may require a little extra water &/or milk.

Lunch

“If we take the time to stop around midday & eat a decent meal, we are rewarded with energy levels that are stable throughout the afternoon & are less liable to suffer from sugar cravings resulting from afternoon swings in blood sugar.”

The Midday Feast...

Kester Marshall

Ideally lunch should be the main meal of the day. It is the time when the midday sun is at its peak and therefore its companion, our digestive fire, is at its strongest. The body's metabolism is therefore at its most vibrant and if we allow just a little time and are careful not to over eat then our body can process food quickly and turn it into nourishment for the tissues and fuel for the mind.

As we are usually busy in the middle of the day and at our most intense level of activity, the temptation might be to push through and simply gloss over lunch. It is all too easy to eat something at our desk or on the run, ignoring the chance to rest briefly in a quiet, peaceful place and refuel our bodies for the afternoon shift.

If we take the time to stop around midday and eat a decent meal, we are rewarded with energy levels that are stable throughout the afternoon and are less liable to suffer from sugar cravings resulting from afternoon swings in blood sugar.

We also tend to react better to stress, feel less rushed and our state of mind remains unhurried, more relaxed and more conducive to calm, productive thought.

Of course, you may also choose to prepare any of the following lunch recipes for the evening meal. If this is the case, you may just choose to eat a little less of each.

Please note that if you would like to avoid eating onion or garlic you can substitute these with asafoetida (hing) in all of the recipes.

A NOTE ON MEAT EATING

Deciding whether or not to eat meat is a very personal choice and depends upon many things, but our view is that it should be regarded as medicine. Who requires this medicine depends upon several factors...

Some people have a constitution that simply needs extra nourishment or their tissues will end up depleted, while others tend toward over nourishment and would probably be fine steering clear of meat altogether.

Some climates are more conducive to meat eating (take the Inuit people or the Tibetans for example) and others, like the tropics, are not at all. Meat builds and heats the blood so with these qualities it is easy to see in which climates it is most appropriate.

Generally speaking we all lead more sedentary lives and so require less of the intense kind of nourishment that meat provides. As well as this, meat in excess can have a subtle dulling effect on the mind; a factor that those interested in yogic or meditation practices should take into consideration.

The most important thing to remember is that meat is heavy and difficult to digest. As such, it is best eaten at midday or well cooked and prepared as a light soup or casserole. As with all things of this nature, it should be eaten in moderation.

Rice Pilau

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 *tbsp ghee*
- ~ 1 *cinnamon stick*
- ~ 1 *tsp cumin seeds*
- ~ 1 *tsp mustard seeds*
- ~ 3-4 *cardamom pods*
(*smashed open in a mortar & pestle*)
- ~ 1 *tsp salt*
- ~ 1/4 *tsp black pepper*
- ~ 1 *cup of basmati rice*
- ~ 1 *cup of veggies of choice*
(*e.g. peas, green beans, diced zucchini &/or eggplant*)
- ~ 3 *tbsp cashews*
- ~ 2 *tbsp sultanas/raisins*

METHOD:

Wash the rice in a sieve and leave to drain.

Heat the ghee in a solid-based saucepan over medium heat. When it is hot add the mustard seeds and fry until they 'pop'. Next, add the cumin seeds, smashed cardamom pods and cinnamon and fry briefly before adding the rice.

Sauté for a minute or two, until the rice starts to go transparent then pour in 3 cups of boiling water (about the same amount you'd use when doing plain rice so that there is about an inch of water above the rice).

Bring to the boil then add your veggies of choice, sultanas and cashews. Bring to the boil again then turn down to a very low heat.

Pop the lid on and cook for 15-20 mins. Leave to stand for about 5 mins with the lid on before serving.

SERVES 2-3, GLUTEN FREE

NOTE:

What is poha? It is like rolled oats but is actually beaten rice... so is light & very easy to digest & cook. You should be able to get it from your local Indian grocer or wholefood store. If they don't have it, ask them to source the medium or thick kind for you. It can also be made into a delicious breakfast porridge - see the 'Rice Flakes Porridge' recipe.

Poha & Coriander Pilau

This is an amazingly quick and low maintenance lunch. It is light, tasty and easy to digest so also makes a good choice for dinner.

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 2 *tbsp ghee*
- ~ 1 *tsp mustard seeds*
- ~ 1 *tsp cumin seeds*
- ~ 5 *curry leaves*
- ~ 1/2 *tsp turmeric*
- ~ 1/2 *tsp salt*
- ~ 1 *pinch asafoetida/hing*
- ~ 1 *brown onion, finely diced*
- ~ 1/2 *cup coriander leaves*
- ~ 2 *cups medium or thick poha*

METHOD:

Wash the rice flakes twice, soak in water for 5 mins, drain and set aside.

Over a medium flame, heat the oil in a pan and add the mustard seeds, cumin seeds and curry leaves. When the seeds are popping, add the turmeric, salt and hing.

Next add the onions and coriander leaves and cook until the onions are soft and slightly golden. Stir in the poha (rice flakes), cover and turn off the heat.

After a few minutes, the pilau will be ready to dish up. Garnish with extra coriander leaves and serve with a squeeze of lemon or lime and perhaps some stir-fry or steamed greens.

NOTE: As an optional extra, you can add grated carrot and/or zucchini. Add them after the onion is cooked and before you add the poha and cook for a couple of minutes until soft.

SERVES 2, GLUTEN FREE

Pumpkin & Spinach Curry

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 2 tbsp ghee
- ~ 6 curry leaves
- ~ 1 tsp fennel seeds
- ~ 1 brown onion, finely chopped
- ~ 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ~ 1-2cm fresh ginger, finely chopped
- ~ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ~ 2 tsp ground coriander
- ~ 1/2 tsp turmeric
- ~ 1/2 tsp garam masala
- ~ 1/2 butternut pumpkin chopped (about 4 cups)
- ~ 1/2 bunch of spinach chopped
- ~ salt & pepper to taste

METHOD:

Heat the ghee. Fry off the fennel seeds and curry leaves until slightly browned, then add the onion, garlic and ginger and cook on a low heat until the onion is golden. Add the ground cumin, coriander and turmeric and stir. Add the pumpkin and stir again until well covered in the spice mix then pop the lid on. Check and stir occasionally. If there is some sticking, you can add a little more ghee and after some time, add the salt as this will draw moisture out of the pumpkin.

When the pumpkin is nearly ready, add the remaining ingredients (pepper, garam masala and spinach), stir through and keep cooking for another 5 minutes or so, until the spinach is cooked and the pumpkin is soft. Serve with rice or flat breads.

SERVES 4, GLUTEN FREE

Adzuki Bean & Pumpkin Curry

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 pinch asafoetida/hing
- ~ 1/2 tsp ajwain seeds
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ 2 tbsp ghee
- ~ 2 bay leaves
- ~ 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ~ 2 tsp fresh ginger, finely chopped
- ~ 1/2 tsp turmeric
- ~ 1 tsp ground coriander
- ~ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ~ 1 brown onion, finely diced
- ~ 1 cup adzuki beans
- ~ 1 medium tomato, diced
- ~ 1/2 a butternut pumpkin cut into 2-3 cm cubes
- ~ 8 large leaves spinach/ chard, finely chopped
- ~ 1/4 cup boiling water
- ~ salt & pepper to taste

METHOD:

Soak the Adzuki beans overnight in cold water. Drain the beans and add them to a pressure cooker with 1 tsp salt, ajwain seeds, hing and twice their volume in water. Cook for approx 20 mins.

In another pan, heat the ghee, add the bay leaves then sauté the onions until soft and slightly golden. Turn down the heat a little and add the garlic and ginger. Cook for a minute before adding the turmeric, coriander and cumin. Now add the tomato and cook until soft. Next, add the pumpkin and the boiling water and stir until the pumpkin is covered in the spice mix. Put on the lid and let simmer over low heat until the pumpkin is just soft. When the beans are cooked and the pumpkin soft, add the adzuki beans to the pumpkin pot... along with all of the water, which will be like a thinnish gravy. (If you want the curry to be a little thicker, you can choose to not add all of the water or you can reduce the curry down to the desired consistency). Now add the spinach and simmer altogether for about 5 mins. Finally, add salt and pepper to taste and serve with a squeeze of lemon juice and flat breads or rice.

SERVES 4-6, GLUTEN FREE

Warm Soba Noodle Salad

INGREDIENTS:

SALAD

- ~ 400 gm soba noodles
- ~ 6 shitake or oyster mushrooms - soaked
- ~ 1 cup arame (seaweed)
- ~ 1 kaffir lime leaf
- ~ 10-12 snowpeas
- ~ 2 cups diced pumpkin

DRESSING

- ~ 2 large beetroots
- ~ 1-2 cloves garlic
- ~ 50ml brown rice vinegar
- ~ 70ml umeboshi vinegar
- ~ 25ml sesame oil
- ~ 150-200 ml olive oil
- ~ 1/2-1 bunch finely chopped coriander

METHOD:

Soak the Shitake mushrooms for at least 1 hr, preferably overnight. Discard the stems and slice very thinly.

Dice the pumpkin and beetroot into small cubes and bake in a hot oven, with the garlic (skin removed) until well done.

Rinse the arame seaweed then soak in water for 5 mins only (if you soak any longer than this, important nutrients will be lost). Squeeze out excess water and sauté in a little oil for a few minutes. Add some of the soaking water to almost cover the seaweed and simmer, with the shitakes, until the vegetables are tender and most of the liquid is absorbed – around 5 mins. Add the sliced Kaffir lime leaf for the last few minutes of cooking.

Boil the soba in boiling salted water until just tender – 4-5 mins. Pop the snow peas in the pot for the last 30 seconds to very lightly cook them. It is important not to overcook the noodles. Drain and rinse under cold water.

To make the dressing, combine the roasted beetroot with the other dressing ingredients and blend with a stick blender until turned into a rough paste. Finally, mix the dressing, noodles, arame and shitake, pumpkin and snowpeas together in a large serving bowl. Delicious!

SERVES 4-5

Dinner

The Light Evening Meal...

Kester Marshall

In traditional systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, and most traditional cultures, it is recommended to keep the evening meal very light. The meal should preferably be eaten early (around sunset, depending on the time of year), ideally about three hours before retiring for the night. This ensures that the food is digested quickly and that the stomach is empty before going to bed.

Soup or light vegetable meals are ideal choices at this time of day, while heavy food such as yoghurt and large amounts of meat are best avoided - heavier meals are best eaten at lunchtime.

Overeating is definitely not recommended. Sleeping on a full stomach tends to cause morning sluggishness, tiredness and stiffness, which can establish a cycle of low energy, dull thinking and poor food choices throughout the day to make up for the way we feel.

If, however, we eat a light dinner and go to bed feeling unburdened and even a little hungry (a warm milk before bed will fix this), then the cycle is broken, minimal waste is produced and the tissues stay healthy and free of toxic accumulations. Instead, we are more likely to experience sound, undisturbed sleep and to wake feeling refreshed and bright-eyed with plenty of appetite to enjoy a warm, nourishing breakfast.

You may, of course, wish to prepare any of the following recipes for your midday meal. Kicharee, in particular, makes a great, quick lunch.

NOTE:

Moong daal is made from split moong beans (also known as 'mung' beans). It is light, very easy to digest & not as gas-forming as other pulses & legumes. You can find it at wholefood stores, Indian & Asian grocers.

One Pot Kicharee

Kicharee is considered the perfect staple meal in Ayurveda. This one-pot version is incredibly quick and easy to prepare... and you can eat it everyday if you like!

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 tsp ghee
- ~ 1 tsp turmeric
- ~ 1/8 tsp asafoetida / hing
- ~ 6 curry leaves
- ~ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ~ 1/4 tsp ajwain seeds
- ~ 1/2 - 1 tsp salt
- ~ 1/2 cup basmati rice
- ~ 1/2 cup split moong daal

METHOD:

Rinse the rice and daal in the saucepan 3-4 times until the water runs clear. Add 4-5 cups of water from a recently boiled kettle. Add the ghee, asafoetida, turmeric, curry leaves and some rock salt, bring to the boil and turn down to low heat for about 15 mins. Lift the lid to check water levels (add more if it is looking a bit dry) and add the cumin powder and ajwain seeds. Simmer again over low heat for another 15 mins or until the moong daal has broken down and you have a thick, porridgy, smooth mixture.

If it needs a bit of a kick in terms of flavour then add fresh coriander or chilli-free chutney along with a squeeze of lemon and a small pinch of salt.

OPTIONAL: If you'd like some veggies with it, the addition of finely diced cauliflower or green beans at the beginning of the cooking is delicious.

SERVES 2-3, GLUTEN FREE

Masoor Daal

Masoor Daal or red lentils are the fastest cooking of all lentils, do not need pre-soaking and are also light and easy to digest. This simple daal is very quick and easy to make and is absolutely scrumptious!

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 2 tsp ghee
- ~ 1 tsp turmeric
- ~ 5 curry leaves
- ~ 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ~ 1 tsp mustard seeds
- ~ 1 tsp ground cumin or garam masala
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ 1 tsp raw sugar (unrefined) or jaggery
- ~ 1 cup red lentils
- ~ 1 medium tomato, diced
- ~ a handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped (optional)

METHOD:

Rinse the lentils in the saucepan 3-4 times until the water runs clear. Add 3-4 cups boiling water and cook over low-medium heat for 15 mins or until the lentils have lost their form. In a separate pan, heat up the ghee then add the mustard seeds and curry leaves. When the mustard seeds are popping, add the garlic and tomato and cook until the tomatoes disintegrate. Add the turmeric and cook for another 30 seconds then add the mixture to the lentil pan. Add the salt, sugar and ground cumin/garam masala to the daal and cook for another 5 mins until looking smooth and delicious. Add a handful of fresh coriander if you wish. Serve with rice, red rice or flat breads.

OPTIONAL: Another option, if you wish to include veggies is to add some fresh green beans – topped and tailed and cut into 3cm long pieces. Add these to the daal at the same time as the spice mixture. Alternatively, serve with steamed greens on the side

SERVES 2-3, GLUTEN FREE

Mulligatawny Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 *tbsp ghee*
- ~ 1 *brown onion, finely diced*
- ~ 1 *tbsp ground coriander*
- ~ 1 *tsp turmeric*
- ~ 1 *tsp salt*
- ~ 1 *pinch cayenne pepper (optional)*
- ~ *a handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped*
- ~ *salt & pepper to taste*
- ~ 1 *carrot, diced*
- ~ 1/2 *green capsicum, diced*
- ~ 1 *large potato, diced*
- ~ 1 *medium tomato, diced*
- ~ 4-5 *cups boiled water*
- ~ 1 *cup chickpeas, soaked overnight & cooked*
- ~ 1/2 *cup finely desiccated coconut*
- ~ 1 *cup coconut milk*
- ~ *the juice of a lemon*

METHOD:

Heat the ghee in a large saucepan and fry off the onions over low heat until soft, transparent and golden. Add the turmeric and coriander and briefly fry off before adding the tomato. Cook the tomato until it softens.

Add the potato, carrot, capsicum, cayenne pepper and salt and cook with the lid on, on a low-medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. When the veggies are starting to stick, add all of the boiling water. Bring to the boil and put the lid half on then simmer on low heat for 5 mins until the veggies are completely cooked.

Next add the coconut, coconut milk and chickpeas and cook for a further 5 mins. Blend the mixture well with a stick blender until it is smooth, with all lumps removed. Let cool slightly before adding the lemon juice and fresh coriander. Add salt and pepper to taste.

SERVES 4, GLUTEN FREE

Veggie Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 *tbsp ghee / olive oil*
- ~ 1 *brown onion, finely chopped*
- ~ 1-2 *garlic cloves, finely chopped*
- ~ 1 *tsp cumin seeds*
- ~ 1 *bay leaf*
- ~ 1 *large sprig of thyme*
- ~ *a handful of fresh oregano*
- ~ 1 *stick of celery, finely chopped*
- ~ 1 *carrot, diced*
- ~ 1/4 *cup green beans, chopped into 3cm pieces*
- ~ 1/2 *cup medium cauliflower florets*
- ~ 1 *potato, diced*
- ~ 1 *small tomato, diced*
- ~ 5-6 *cups boiling water*
- ~ *salt & pepper to taste*

METHOD:

Heat the ghee in a pot. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaf and cumin seeds and fry until the onion is soft and golden. Add the tomato and cook until soft.

Add the celery and carrot and cook for a few minutes before adding the other veggies. Cook all of the veggie on a low-medium heat with the lid on, stirring occasionally. When they begin to stick, add the boiling water and cook over medium heat until the veggies are tender.

Add the thyme and oregano and cook for another 2-3 mins then season with salt and pepper and serve with flat breads or basmati rice.

SERVES 3-4, GLUTEN FREE

Corn Chowder

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 tbsp ghee / olive oil
- ~ 1 brown onion, finely diced
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ a handful of chopped flat-leaf parsley or basil
- ~ 6 ears of corn
- ~ 1 large potato, peeled & grated
- ~ 7 cups boiling water
- ~ salt & pepper to taste

METHOD:

First you must 'chuck' the corn (slice the kernels off of the cob). From 6 ears, you should get about 4 cups of kernels in a bowl – put aside for now.

In a large pot, heat the oil then add the onion and sauté until soft and golden. Add the potato and one cup of boiling water and stew over medium heat until the potato is soft, about 10 mins.

Add the corn, salt and remaining water and bring to the boil. Simmer, partially covered for about 10 mins then turn off the heat and let cool briefly. Using a stick blender, puree the mixture for a good 5 mins.

Now comes the tricky bit. Using a large sieve, strain the soup from the pot into another pot – to make the soup nice and smooth and to remove all of the 'bits'. You may need to use a large wooden spoon to help push the soup through the sieve.

Once strained, reheat the soup and add the parsley/basil and salt and pepper to taste. If you need to thin the soup, add a little more water. Serve with breads.

SERVES 4, GLUTEN FREE

Thai Sweet Potato Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 1 *tbsp ghee*
- ~ 3 *kaffir lime leaves*
- ~ 1 *brown onion, finely diced*
- ~ 1 *tsp fresh ginger, finely chopped*
- ~ 1 *tsp salt*
- ~ *a pinch of cayenne pepper*
- ~ 2 *medium sweet potatoes peeled & cut into 1-2 cm cubes*
- ~ 4-5 *cups boiling water*
- ~ 1/2 *cup coconut milk*
- ~ *a handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped*
- ~ 2 *tbsp lemon juice*
- ~ *salt & pepper to taste*

METHOD:

Heat the ghee in a large pan over medium heat. Add the kaffir lime leaves and the onion and sauté until the onion is soft and slightly golden. Next add the ginger and cook for a few minutes before adding the sweet potato and cayenne pepper. Stir until the potato is coated in the oil and spices then pop the lid on and cook on a low-medium heat for 10-15 mins, stirring occasionally. If the mixture is starting to stick to the pan, add the salt as this will help draw moisture out of the sweet potatoes. Next, add the boiling water and simmer, half covered for another 5-10 mins or until the sweet potato is soft.

Remove from the heat, remove the kaffir lime leaves and then, with a stick blender, puree the soup. Add the coconut milk and return to a simmer for 2 mins.

Turn off the heat and add the lemon juice, fresh coriander and additional salt and pepper to taste. Serve with breads or rice.

SERVES 2-3, GLUTEN FREE

Simple Pumpkin Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- ~ 2 tbsp ghee / olive oil
- ~ 1 brown onion, finely chopped
- ~ 1 tsp fresh ginger, finely chopped
- ~ 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ a handful or two of fresh flat-leaf parsley or coriander, roughly chopped
- ~ 1 small pumpkin / 1/2 a big pumpkin cut into 2-3 cm cubes
- ~ 5 cups boiling water
- ~ salt & pepper to taste

METHOD:

Heat the oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until soft and slightly golden then add the ginger and sauté for 20 secs.

Add the cinnamon and stir, then the pumpkin and stir again briefly. Add the lid and cook on a low-medium heat for 10-15 mins, stirring occasionally. If the mixture is starting to stick to the pan, add the salt as this will help draw moisture out of the pumpkin. Next, add 5 cups of boiling water (or enough to cover the pumpkins). Bring to the boil and simmer half covered for 5-10 mins or until the pumpkin is disintegrating.

Turn off the heat and, using a stick blender, puree into a smooth mixture. If you'd like it thicker, reduce until the desired result is achieved. If you want it thinner, add a little more water. When done, add parsley or coriander, salt and pepper to taste.

OPTIONAL: for a different taste, consider roasting the pumpkin, drizzled in olive oil, in a hot oven for 15-20 mins. It will give the soup a delicious 'roasty' taste.

SERVES 4, GLUTEN FREE