

THE 100 BEST GLUTEN-FREE RECIPES FOR YOUR VEGAN KITCHEN

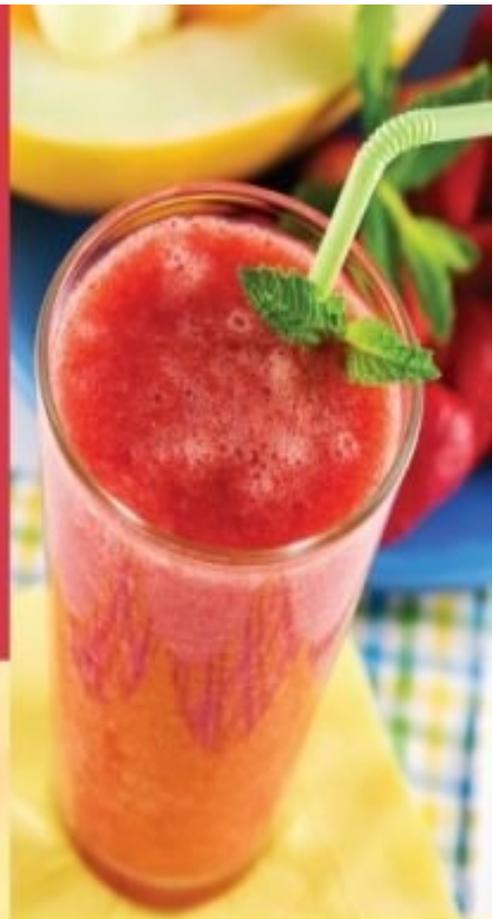


Delicious Smoothies,
Soups, Salads,
Entrées & Desserts

KELLY E. KEOUGH



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Ulysses Press

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***This cookbook is dedicated to all my
amazing, inspiring, question-asking,
solution-seeking students in Los Angeles,
New York City, and Boston.***

Introduction

Cooking vegan, gluten-free, and sugar-free is an optimal approach to healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle; it can be an entire way of life or a simple recipe you make because you're curious and want to see what it tastes like. Either way, food—the kind we eat and how we prepare it—is a daily practice that can support our foundation for personal potential and happiness.

Eating what you love to eat is crucial to enjoying life. And that opportunity to receive joy is in your hands up to five times a day: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and two snacks. It could be more or it could be less, but five feedings set the standard of balance for this cookbook. The health benefits—be they physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual—of those five joyful dietary doses follow us around the clock and into our sleeping hours.

My Story: It Started with the Hair

I'm forty-six, originally from Boston, and now living in Los Angeles. From age thirtyfive to thirty-nine, I lost over a third of my hair. Practically balding, at the time I thought, "This is my only good asset, I can't lose it!"

But I was a sugar addict and compulsive overeater, and I was desperate to heal myself. After consulting with a healer, I committed to going sugar-free and gluten-free and transformed myself from head to toe. I kept true to my healthy lifestyle and created a book where I walk the talk. Every day.

My first cookbook, *Sugar-free Gluten-free Baking and Desserts*, is a nostalgic compilation of my entire life: everything I've ever loved and craved. Growing up in a Sicilian family with a catering business in western New York, I had every meal made for me with love, cultural history, and lots of white flour, sugar, and animal products. Yet those meals are what I admire about my family and keep my connection with them. So I transformed those recipes from my great-grandmother, grandmother, and mom and made them the "Kelly" way. With those recipes, I ate what I loved, gave myself permission to be satisfied, and taught myself self-nurturing and self-healing by focusing on feeling the joy and complete and utter satisfaction my family taught me. It is my hope that you can do the same for yourself and your family now.

It is important to tell you that what I ate six years ago is not what

I eat or crave today, as my body and taste buds keep transforming, becoming more aligned with a healthy lifestyle and ingredients for my recipes. Six years ago, I did eat all of the recipes in my previous book, and I enjoyed eating two or three sugar-free, gluten-free desserts a day! But slowly my tastes changed. It became two or three times a week, then several times month, and then I started adding superfoods to my morning smoothie and my raw chocolate recipes.

Now, I still crave my chocolates a few times a month, but what has changed is my craving for animal protein on a daily basis. As my healthy lifestyle and cooking continue to grow and evolve, I find myself having less animal and more vegetables. Luckily for me, I found a term at the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City that describes my current food practice: *flexitarian* (more about that later). This means that I now eat mostly vegan and allow myself the occasional fish and eggs for protein when my body calls for it. The vegan, gluten-free, sugar-friendly recipes in this book are a compilation of the vegan dishes and desserts I have loved, craved, and created for over six years. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do!

So much has changed and expanded in the vegan, gluten-free world. And it's exciting. When you know how to dress up vegan staples with healthy oils, spices, and veggies, you will elevate your taste buds to the top of the food chain, which is the main reason I wanted to write this book. My cooking style takes the best food-preparation and cooking techniques from many different disciplines—French, Japanese, Italian, Indian, Mediterranean, Mexican, macrobiotic, and raw live vegan—and re-creates them in a new gourmet style and taste by using alternative ingredients that are vegan, gluten-free, and sugar-free. I have even created new techniques for making chocolates that score high points in the healthy-ingredients and taste-satisfaction departments. Deep down everyone wants to be told, "It's okay to love food, especially the food you eat! And food should taste great and make you feel great!" So, imagine eating your favorite food, chocolate, works for your body, not against it, and instead makes you radiant, glowing, and sexy. That is this cookbook!

So often, food is the enemy, so in this cookbook, you will discover how food is the foundation for your personal potential. Once you have found this alignment with your health, balance, and well-being, you will undoubtedly want to share it with your family and friends like I am sharing it with you!

Eating What You Love and Crave

Loving what you eat is the first step in fulfilling our natural desires

for well-being.

It also gives comfort and joy when the taste buds are completely satisfied. Making healthy food with the nutrient-dense benefits of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber is what this cookbook is all about. If it tastes good, you'll eat it!

Now when you add to this "love food" the significant culinary fact that it is made without processed high-glycemic white sugar, flour, trans fat, and too much salt, and instead is focused on vegan, dairy-free, gluten-free, sugar-friendly recipes with extra superfood ingredients that enhance your health, you have a recipe for self-fulfillment, self-satisfaction, and personal success. Find recipes that appeal to you, make a shopping list, and plan a two-hour session in the kitchen. You will fall in love with yourself, and even a grumpy onion or two.

THREE PILLARS OF EATING VEGAN, GLUTEN-FREE, SUGAR-FREE FOR AN OPTIMUM HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

1. EAT WHAT YOU LOVE. This is crucial to enjoying life, but how do you figure out what your "love foods" are? Ask yourself what you're craving. For example, is the weather, season, or holiday making you feel nostalgic and begging you to relive your childhood favorite foods? If so, find a recipe in this book that matches your mood, like pizza, brownies, or pasta with Alfredo sauce.

2. EAT FOR YOUR HEALTH. Eating vegan, gluten-free, and sugar-free allows us to avoid the negative effects of processed food and animal products that can lead to food allergies, some of which show up as symptoms in the body because of a food intolerance. If you add toxic ingredients, such as prescription drugs, alcohol, caffeine, and sugar, to a diet low in plant-based foods, you will have a recipe for unbalanced health.

Symptoms of such an unbalanced diet can be:

POOR DIGESTION
INFLAMMATION OR PAIN
MOOD SWINGS
BRAIN FOG
INABILITY TO FOCUS AND MAKE DECISIONS
LOW ENERGY

A vegan, allergy-free diet can reverse the above symptoms with:

BETTER DIGESTION

INCREASED ASSIMILATION OF NUTRIENTS
INCREASED METABOLISM
EVEN MOODS AND EMOTIONS
ABILITY TO HANDLE STRESS
CLARITY OF FOCUS
INCREASED ENERGY
BETTER SLEEP

3. EAT PORTIONS THAT KEEP YOU RUNNING AND DON'T SLOW YOU DOWN. This is an art form and, if you tend to overeat even good food, takes practice and patience. Eating what you love and crave is a key component to eating less and acknowledging portion control; this happens naturally when you consistently add vegan, gluten-free, sugar-friendly, nutrient-dense foods to your food plan. Sugar and fat cravings will diminish, like the need to eat chocolate after every meal. Recipes in this book like Goji Berry and Pistachio Raw Chocolate (page 120) will satisfy your sweet tooth without eating extra sugar.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND LOVE

The only things we can control are our food and our thoughts about the food we eat. If you take care of yourself by giving yourself food you truly desire, something that touches your heart and your stomach, you'll train yourself to pay attention to the things you love, thereby increasing your ability to give them to yourself.

When you get the love you want and deserve, you stop chasing the bad boy down the street for miles, leaking energy, leaving you feeling like you're missing out, big time. In other words, looking for what you want in the bad boy and never getting it is quite like eating an iceberg lettuce salad with lemon juice and some scattered chickpeas, and feeling oh-so-unsatisfied, ripped off.

What we really want is the permission to love food and love what we eat. This is possible to achieve when you have a balanced, healthy lifestyle that incorporates great vegan, gluten-free, sugar-friendly recipes, shopping for the best local, whole foods, and setting aside time to cook. Cookbooks and cooking are love. It all begins in the kitchen, the hearth, the center of the home, where the self-nurturing and inspiration to align with your passions begin.

Why Vegan?

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND HEALTHY EATING PRINCIPLES

A vegan lifestyle or vegan-ish approach to healthy eating is an amazing journey in and out of the kitchen. Vegan means free of animal products like meat, seafood, eggs, and dairy. Vegan also can mean that you are more confident that the body can digest and assimilate nutrients found in vegan ingredients like fruits, vegetables, most nuts, seeds, and beans without experiencing allergic reactions to food, which slows down your metabolism and suppresses your immune system. The fun of cooking and eating vegan is in discovering the personal value it has for you when you enjoy natural, fresh, local, and organic whole foods that are minimally processed. These foods are nutrient-dense, contain good fats, have slow-burning carbohydrates, and can greatly improve your health, energy, and vitality.

Vegan recipes support a healthy lifestyle by adding value to the energy you need to maintain balance and well-being. The recipes from this cookbook are from my personal life and my desire to heal myself and satisfy my taste buds, and this cookbook covers every meal, snack, and dessert. The best way to use this cookbook is to start with a recipe that you would like to add to your menu because the ingredients appeal to your sense of health, as well as your desire to eat something delicious!

Here, the vegan palate includes plant-based foods that focus on fresh vegetables (both raw and cooked), fruits, beans and lentils, nuts, seeds, and gluten-free whole grains, and sugar-free and sugar-friendly sweeteners. Use the recipes in this book if you are strictly vegan or if you just like to incorporate a balance of different healthy dishes into your food plan. These recipes are designed to entice your taste buds and re-create your favorite dishes, as well as venture into new kitchen techniques and ingredients you may not be familiar with yet, like soaking and sprouting grains, nuts, and seeds. These fun and easy food preparation methods used in raw vegan cuisine help to maintain the nutrient density of the whole food.

Choosing whole foods is simple when you have farmers' markets and health food stores nearby. The best ingredients are fresh, local, organic, seasonal, and unprocessed. These foods are found in the produce section of all grocery stores. Also, nuts, seeds, and grains are sold packaged and in bulk. The bulk bins are usually located in the produce section of most grocery stores. Using more whole foods helps to reduce the amount of refined, highly processed foods that have less nutrient value and contain artificial sweeteners, high-glycemic sweeteners, preservatives, and hydrogenated fats. A

healthy lifestyle steers clear of these types of foods.

Your healthy food plan should focus on nutrient-dense foods, which are rich in antioxidants, phytonutrients, vitamins, minerals, protein, and fiber compared to their caloric content. That means with each calorie, you are getting more nutrients compared to a food that is not nutrient-dense. A food's nutrient content is related to its color—including a wide spectrum of colors in your food plan will help maximize your nutrient-dense foods. It's also very important to eat healthy fats pressed from plant matter, like olives, avocados, flaxseed, chia seeds, almonds, and coconuts. Eat these fats in their whole-food form or cold-pressed.

Eating with the foundation in mind of choosing a wide, colorful variety of plant-based whole foods that are fresh and minimally processed is the first step of a healthy vegan lifestyle.

I'm a Flexitarian

As I prepare my Raw Kale with Peanut Sauce and Goji Berries and dress it with Pineapple Goji Berry Coconut Cream Fruit Dip with Strawberries in front of my cooking class, I tell them that I am a flexitarian. They laugh! I love when they laugh, but alas it isn't a joke. The word flexitarian is an actual term that comes from the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City, which has a simple and healthy food philosophy. And I have adopted it and made it my own.

It means I cook and eat primarily vegan and vegetarian and allow myself the occasional fish or egg when I feel the need. The Institute actually goes further, allowing people to eat poultry, meat, fish, and egg when they see fit. I think it is great because it allows people to have an individual choice based on their own specific health and lifestyle.

This cookbook is written in the spirit of choice. It is my pleasure to share with you my most treasured recipes that have caused many a taste tester to roll their eyes in the back of their head—and they weren't all vegan lifestylers.

INGREDIENTS THAT SUPPORT A HEALTHY VEGAN LIFESTYLE

The nutrient-dense ingredients that are used in this book assist you in getting nutrients that you are lacking. These lacking nutrients may be causing overeating and sugar cravings.

Superfoods are fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds that provide per calorie a significant amount of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and fiber. A vegan lifestyle uses only fruits and vegetables, but the lifestyle now calls for an elite lineup of super fruits and super vegetables to add even more value, energy, and power for optimum wellness. For example, vitamins A, B, and C are greatly present in superfoods, magnesium is found in raw chocolate, and potassium and iodine in sea vegetables. All of these superfoods can be eaten in their whole-food form, and some come in powders or in tablets or capsules. All can be easily added to smoothies or desserts and mixed in water for instant energy and rejuvenation. You will find recipes that use these superfoods throughout this cookbook, especially in Drinks and Smoothies (page 138). For more information on these superfoods, see the Glossary.

Superfoods remind us to acknowledge the amount of nutrients and fiber we get on a daily basis. Superfood ingredients blend nicely with vegan recipes, especially raw vegan recipes using fresh fruits and vegetables and nuts and seeds in smoothies, soups, salads, granolas, and dehydrator crackers. One of the most important contributions superfoods make to a healthy food plan is their antioxidant content.

Antioxidants protect the body from oxidation when we exercise by stabilizing the free radicals that are created; that is why bringing a recovery snack of a fresh fruit or vegetable is of great value. Antioxidants also help the body stay young by preventing wear and tear from everyday living like being exposed to pollution. They help prevent aging, inside and out.

Along with the antioxidants and nutrients, *fiber* is guaranteed when you reduce refined white flour products and begin to cook with plant-based foods and bake your own sweets and breads with whole grains, seeds, and nuts. Fiber aids digestion, increases absorption of nutrients, and helps with food cravings by giving you a feeling of fullness. It is also vital in balancing blood sugar, controlling hunger, and increasing intestinal health.

Essential fatty acids (EFAs) are plant-based fats that come in the form of omega-3 found in chia, flax, and hemp; the most nutritious monounsaturated fatty acids are found in avocado and almonds. EFAs must be eaten because the body does not make them. Eating good fats supports healthy digestion, metabolism, blood sugar levels, satisfaction, and fullness.

Probiotics are live bacteria or microflora essential for digestion and intestinal health because they serve as intestinal cleansers. Probiotics are mostly found in fermented dairy products like kefir

and yogurt. I have included Coconut Yogurt (page 53) and Coconut Kefir (page 145) in this book in order to add recipes rich in veganbased probiotics. Making your own fermented coconut products is easy and fun, and can also help you save money on probiotic supplements.

A VEGAN LIFESTYLE COMBATS WEIGHT GAIN AND STRESS

Living and eating a healthy lifestyle is a discipline and a commitment but becomes fascinating and fun when the results are quick: easy weight loss. One benefit that you will notice immediately—when adding vegan, gluten-free, sugar-friendly, or low-glycemic/no-glycemic ingredients to your favorite recipes—is that you will naturally lose weight. Many people want to eat vegan, gluten-free, and sugar-free for this reason.

Just a small weight loss can greatly improve health and reduce risk of chronic disease. Diving into vegan recipes, cooking for yourself, and eating your own food that you prepare with love and intention are the foundations of balance and a healthy lifestyle. Understanding that a vegan, gluten-free, sugar-free lifestyle and eating plan can give you the nutrient-dense benefits of fiber, essential fats, and probiotics is the foundation of weight control, weight loss, and stress reduction. This could be just the inspiration you are looking for to add leafy greens to your morning smoothies and make a batch of raw granola for a post-workout recovery snack. You may find that these two simple healthy and nutritious recipes can combat stress by allowing the body to assimilate the B vitamins that are necessary to beat the effects of stress.

Along with eating vegan, gluten-free, sugar-free foods, drink plenty of water, exercise, rest, meditate, and supplement as you need with vitamins, minerals, and protein for a winning step forward into an optimum healthy lifestyle. You will notice that just by adding a few great-tasting healthy vegan recipes to your food plan, you will be able to deal with stress better and also reduce the effects of stress.

SOY WHAT?

Soy in the form of tofu, tempe, soy beans, tamari, liquid aminos, edamame, soy milk, soy creamer, soy protein bars, and soy protein

shakes has been a staple in the vegan world of healthy eating for many years because of its high protein isoflavones content. Soy makes protein easily accessible for vegans and gives them the powerful plant chemicals associated with heart health. Yet because of food allergies, soy is another free zone for some people, an ingredient to avoid.

Eating soy is a personal dietary choice. Only you know if soy is a beneficial food for you to eat. I eat a very limited amount of soy, which is why the cookbook focuses on raw vegan cuisine using soaked nuts and seeds to add protein to dishes.

If you are soy-free, this cookbook will serve you well, as there are only a small number of recipes for baked goods that use silken tofu to replace egg, and a recipe that includes tempe. The majority of this cookbook is soy-free.

To replace soy and add protein to dishes, I have used alternative ingredients like coconut to make nut milk and seed milk, yogurt, and kefir. The biggest soy swap out is that I use Coconut Secret's Coconut Liquid Amino Acids for Bragg's Liquid Amino Acids.

SOAKING, SPROUTING, DEHYDRATING

A huge part of preparing everyday vegan and raw vegan cuisine is executing the proper use of nuts, seeds, and gluten-free grains and following the raw live food preparation technique of soaking, sprouting, and dehydrating.

Using these nutrient-dense ingredients and raw live kitchen methods will greatly enhance your menu and satisfy your desire for great tasting and satisfying food. It just takes a few minutes of active work time to soak, sprout, prepare a recipe, and place it in the dehydrator or oven. This raw live vegan technique of making granolas, crackers, chips, pizza, and cookies is easier than baking, doesn't require the precision of baking, and is more nutritious.

Soaking allows the nut, seed, bean, pulse, or grain to be more easily cooked or digested. Soaking nuts, seeds, and grains also allows you to sprout the nut, seed, or grain into the beginning stages of a plant. This is called germination, whereby all the vitamins, minerals, proteins, and essential fatty acids that were dormant wake up, become activated, and multiply.

There are numerous benefits from consuming a sprouted nut, seed, bean, pulse, or grain that has transformed from a seed to a plant. One is that it simply yields more protein and enzymes with less carbohydrate. Dehydrating at a temperature below 110°F allows a nut, seed, bean, pulse, or grain that has been soaked and sprouted to maintain its newly sprouted properties and enhances

the overall health benefits of the prepared recipe.

Why Gluten-free?

This cookbook is not only vegan, it is gluten-free vegan. For the people who are going gluten-free because their children have issues (like food allergies or celiac disease) or they have the desire to feel better, digest food better, focus and concentrate better, and suffer less bloat and inflammation in the body, this cookbook is a gluten-free guide to get you started in vegan cooking and baking and raw vegan food preparation.

In recent years, the gluten-free world has expanded by offering food products as solutions to the problems people have when they eat the gluten protein found in common cereal grains: wheat, barley, rye, spelt, kamut, durum, semolina, and sometimes oats when they are cross-contaminated with wheat. Each of these grains contains a sticky protein chain, gluten, and many people react differently to each grain because each has a different protein chain. Wheat causes the most problems.

Most people who have an intolerance to the gluten protein found in wheat can sometimes tolerate gluten-free oats, which contain a protein chain different from the one found in wheat. Some people who are diagnosed with celiac disease still avoid oats, even though gluten-free oats can be purchased online or in health food stores. Gluten-free oats are supposedly grown in designated fields miles away from wheat fields and are processed in gluten-free facilities. Gluten-free oats are used in this cookbook in pancakes and cookies.

Some of the grains that are considered safe for celiacs are rice, corn, quinoa, millet, sorghum, Job's Tears, tapioca, potato starch, and teff. Many of these grains are used in gluten-free flour mixes and combined with chickpea and fava bean flours, which add protein. Another popular gluten-free ingredient used in this book is buckwheat, which is a seed that looks like and tastes like a grain; it even cooks like a grain, and can be sprouted.

PASTABILITIES: GOING GLUTEN-FREE WITH PASTA

Going vegan can mean eating lots of pasta dishes, but what if you are gluten-free as well? How can you get satisfaction from pasta made with corn, quinoa, or grainy brown rice? The answer is

favorable for pasta lovers who want to go gluten-free—the food manufacturing industry has formulated many new products that are pleasing to the palate. Each year, you will find new and improved gluten-free *pastabilities*, pasta that tastes great and is gluten-free. Gluten-free pastas come in all your favorite shapes: elbows, shells, linguine, spaghetti, angel hair, penne, rotini, lasagne, macaroni, fusilli, and more.

I have compiled a list of newfound pasta flours used to make gluten-free pasta. The pasta that I like best is brown rice lasagna, which holds up to boiling and baking. And for spaghetti, I like any of the rice combinations. All of these flours and combinations of flours are used to make gluten-free pasta:

CORN
BROWN RICE
MUNG BEAN
QUINOA AND CORN
QUINOA AND RICE
QUINOA
RICE, GOLDEN FLAX
RICE, QUINOA, AND AMARANTH
RICE, POTATO STARCH, AND SOY
WHITE RICE

All these products emulate the traditional pastas we are used to. But it is all about making the sauce, and a vegan sauce can be made from tomatoes and vegetables or from “cheese” made from nuts.

Vegan Gluten-free, Sugar-free Baking

There are many advantages to gluten-free, sugar-free baking, one of which is the myriad of health benefits it offers. The other benefit is the ability to satisfy your sweet tooth without adverse food side effects.

Yet, there are some scientific baking challenges when baking gluten-free and sugar-free that have to be overcome with a few tips and tricks. And then there are still more challenges to overcome because we are eliminating eggs and dairy, the key protein-binding components that trap gas and air in a baked good, allow it to rise, and give it stability.

GLUTEN-FREE BAKING

First, let's talk about what gluten and wheat flour are used for in traditional baking. Gluten is a protein chain that creates a matrix that helps hold the baked good in its perfect shape. The gluten does this by creating pockets and trapping air. It also makes baked goods flaky and light. Gluten acts like a glue; that's why many people have digestive problems when they eat gluten—because it feels like it gets stuck in the gut. But gluten also helps give a baked good its golden color.

Mixing flours in gluten-free baking is important because it gives the recipe the starch and protein that is necessary for rise, structure, and browning. Starches help with gelatinization, and proteins help with coagulation or holding the properties of the ingredients together when subjected to heat. Both starch and protein aid in helping gluten-free baked goods to rise, stay up, and stay together.

In order to successfully bake gluten-free, you need to blend gluten-free flours together or buy an all-purpose gluten-free flour blend like the one made by Bob's Red Mill. It's a combination of chickpea, fava bean, potato starch, tapioca starch, and sorghum flours. This blend tastes best when used in cookies, brownies, muffins, scones, pancakes, and waffles.

For other recipes like cakes, cupcakes, pie crusts, and breads, you need to add to the all-purpose gluten-free mix other flours like tapioca, white rice, arrow root, cornstarch, and potato starch to make the batters lighter and fluffier. You may also want to add extra sources of protein, like quinoa flour. Protein helps the gluten-free baked good have a firmer structure. Also, adding a xanthan gum, made from plants, helps to hold the pressure and attract the moisture that is needed to keep the gas from escaping.

In breads and pizza dough, yeast helps give the baked goods the extra strength they need to trap gas and moisture and yields baked goods with a lighter texture. Salt in gluten-free baking is another ingredient that strengthens the overall recipe and may add extra flavor.

WHY SUGAR-FREE AND SUGAR-FRIENDLY?

Eliminating or greatly reducing foods containing refined sugar serves our minds, bodies, and spirits well. Yet, most of the people who are finding themselves looking for sugar-free satisfaction are doing so because they have one or more life-threatening diseases: diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. Others are trying to lose

weight and avoid aging. Sugar causes aging and wrinkles.

But it's okay to be forced to give up sugar. That's what happened to me. When I rediscovered cooking to heal myself, making sweets became fun and easy. When you know how to replace sugar with the right ingredients in a baked-good recipe or even in a raw vegan dessert, you will be amazed at how you can re-create the desserts you love and crave. What you will notice is that you will feel satisfied with one serving of a dessert or sweet snack that is made from this cookbook because there are no high-glycemic sweeteners or refined sugars in the recipes.

All of the sweeteners I use in the cookbook are sugar-free and sugar-friendly. I use the two terms interchangeably throughout the beginning of this book, but to distinguish between them, it is easy to remember that *sugar-free* refers to a sweetener like stevia that has no calories and no glycemic index. A *sugar-friendly* alternative refers to sweeteners like agave or palm sugar, both of which have calories and are low glycemic (below 50 on the glycemic index), which is why I use them.

When it comes to sweeteners, I use only all-natural, healthy low-glycemic ingredients (which have some calories) and zero-glycemic ingredients (which have little or zero calories). The alternative sweeteners used in this cookbook in both sweet and savory recipes replace cane juice, cane juice crystals, sugar, honey, molasses, and maple syrup, all of which may be natural, but they are high glycemic and spike the blood sugar. (Splenda, even though it has zero calories and a zero glycemic index, is not a natural sweetener; it is made through chemical processes and is not used in this cookbook.)

The sugar ingredients in baking ensure volume, give sweetness, add moisture, and have a browning effect. Baking without sugar is done by substituting a low-glycemic sweetener like lucuma, mesquite, agave, coconut nectar, yacon syrup, or palm sugar. There are also zero-glycemic, zero-calorie sweeteners like erythritol and stevia. In order to re-create the effects of sugar in baked goods, there also needs to be a blend of alternative sugar-friendly sweeteners to satisfy the science of baking and your sweet tooth.

In my style of sugar-free cooking and baking, I usually combine a number of alternative sweeteners in a single recipe. I often use a low-glycemic sweetener, like agave or coconut nectar, and blend it with a zero-glycemic sweetener, like liquid stevia or erythritol. This helps to save calories, keep the recipe's carbohydrates and glycemic index low, increase volume, round out the sweetness taste, and give the recipe more flavor. For more information on sugar-free and sugar-friendly sweeteners, see the glossary.

Here's to your appetite for beauty, health, and happiness!

Recipes

Leafy Greens

I'm launching our adventures in gluten-free, sugar-free, vegan cooking with the following recipes because of an experience I had teaching a raw vegan cooking class at a local Whole Foods Market in Southern California. I had just finished demonstrating how to make a raw salad massage with lacinato kale that was deliciously doused with an Asian peanut sauce. Everyone was eager to buy the ingredients and make it at home. The participants now knew how to re-create the basic raw salad massage technique, which means to *raw cook* the greens by breaking down the plant cell walls with lemon juice, Celtic sea salt, and olive oil.

I took the group that was eager to learn about leafy greens to the produce section of the store. I asked a simple question: "How many people have bought any of these leafy greens that are displayed here along this entire top shelf: curly green kale, Russian purple kale, dandelion, Swiss chard, rainbow chard, collard greens, bok choy?" No one raised their hand. I said, "I understand, I didn't grow up eating these leafy greens, either. My mother never bought them. She probably didn't know what to do with them, either. And I didn't start eating them until I had to heal myself." In the middle of the fruits and vegetables, we had a big laugh.

Now, home cooks are using the leafy greens for preventive and home-care medicine. That's why my recipes for leafy greens are a direct solution and answer to questions about what to do with leafy greens, how to prepare them so they taste good, and which ones to choose.

These recipes use four vegan food preparation and cooking techniques that will get you going and have you eating kale in no time. (And the kale will actually taste good.) I suggest starting with lacinato kale because it's the most palatable, easiest to chop, and works wonderfully as a raw salad massage or a blanch and sauté. For a savory cream sauce to serve with any of the raw or cooked greens, try the Macadamia Cream (page 161). This rich nut sauce will enhance any vegetable dish with savory flavor and add a comforting element.

RAW GREENS MASSAGE
LEAFY GREEN BLANCH AND SAUTÉ
WARM AND COLD GREEN SALAD