

alternative

THE ART & SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING

medicine

8 ways to
stay young
at any age

supplements

does your body actually absorb them?

CANCER UPDATE

The hidden link to cervical cancer

news flash!

breastfeeding lowers
diabetes risk

MARCH 2006
WWW.ALTERNATIVEMEDICINE.COM
ON SALE THROUGH MARCH 28

plus:

skin care: it's a **MAN'S WORLD** too
HOMEOPATHIC travel kit

\$4.95US \$5.95CAN

03>



0 75470 08325 9



Macrobiotics *with*



Personal chefs are whipping up healthy designer dishes for the celebrity set, but you don't need to be a star—or hire a chef—to catch the macrobiotics wave.

“I remember having this exact thought 12 years ago,” recalls Jessica Porter, former macrobiotic chef for Pink Floyd’s Roger Waters: “If only someone like Madonna became macrobiotic, this whole thing would explode.” Visit celebrity food haunts in LA and New York these days and you’ll see just such an explosion firsthand. Porter’s not saying she predicted this trend, but she thinks it was inevitable that celebrities would get into macrobiotics. “Part of the celebrities’ job is to take care of their bodies, their emotions, and their minds,” says Porter, who also wrote *The Hip Chick’s Guide to Macrobiotics* (Avery, 2004). “Macrobiotics is one of the most compelling and exciting ways to do this.”



The carrots and burdock root in kinpira make for a healthy, hearty side dish.

a twist

BY ANNETTE RACOND

So how on target was she? Using fresh, organic ingredients, chefs are extrapolating from the basic principles of macrobiotics—from the Greek term for great or large life—to whip up gourmet masterpieces for the celebrity set. Call it macrobiotics with a twist. The likes of Alicia Silverstone, Kirsten Dunst, Jake Gyllenhaal, and Andre 3000 keep coming back to Los Angeles' M Café de Chaya restaurant, where gourmet macrobiotics rules. In Manhattan, macrobiotic Mana has served up nourishing specialties for Peter Max, Kevin Bacon, Chynna Phillips, and many others.

For the most part, the ingredients used in gourmet macrobiotic dishes are neither exotic nor mysterious. There's an expansive selection of whole grains, land and sea vegetables, beans, fish, fruit, seeds, nuts, and fermented foods like miso. Whole grains are an integral component of the macrobiotic diet partially because they produce a gradual rise and drop in blood sugar, which promotes balance in the body. Whenever possible, macrobiotic chefs use seasonal foods that are organic and locally grown. Some of the more unusual ingredients are nutrient-rich sea vegetables, including arame, kombu, and wakame. Bever-

ages include roasted bancha-twig (kukicha) tea, roasted brown-rice tea, and grain coffee.

General macrobiotic guidelines recommend that 50 to 60 percent of one's daily diet come from whole grains, 25 to 30 percent

Part of the celebrities' job is to take care of their bodies, their emotions, and their minds. Macrobiotics is one of the most compelling and exciting ways to do this.

from land vegetables, and 5 to 10 percent from beans and sea vegetables. But individuals can adjust these percentages based on their unique circumstances, including state of health, occupation, and lifestyle. A macrobiotic diet can also include fish, fruit, nuts, seeds, and other natural snacks, but it should reserve eggs, dairy, chicken, meat, caffeine, and refined and processed foods such as sugar and white-flour products for occasional use. If meat is a must, macrobiotic dieters opt for organic free-range offerings.

"Many people don't realize how delicious common vegetables can be when they're cooked properly," says Mirea Ellis, who has been following a macrobiotic lifestyle for more than 30 years. "Steam winter squash until it's very soft, and enjoy its natural sweetness. Cook snap peas a scant few minutes and you have a tasty treat. Fresh green soybeans, called edamame, are all the rage—even kids find them scrumptious." Ellis is a faculty member at the Kushi Institute, based in Becket, Massachusetts, which is one of the world's leading macrobiotic educational centers.

According to macrobiotic chefs, the way you combine, cook, and season ingredients makes a big difference in the taste of the final dish. In addition to the more popular cooking methods we're all familiar with, such as broiling, boiling, steaming, and sautéing, gourmet macrobiotics employs less well-known styles, including nabe, kinpira, nashime, pressing, and pickling. Calming and soothing, nashime is a slow-cooking style that produces rich deep-flavored vegetables. Kinpira is a long sauté and simmer that sweetens finely cut root vegetables such as burdock root and carrots. Ellis is a big fan of nabe-style cooking, a technique that combines sliced raw vegetables, fish, and cooked noodles in a pot of water or vegetable broth that's brought to a boil before serving. "Since the vegetables are lightly cooked, you actually feel lighter," she says. "At the same time, the broth is hot and soothing. It's a delicious combination." Ellis encourages anyone attempting nabe-style cooking to think color. "Mix onions, carrots, Chinese cabbage, scallions, kale, and tofu," she says. "For additional health benefits, add a strip of kombu and shitake mushrooms to the broth."

Many people assume that macrobiotics is a form of vegetarianism, but in fact macrobiotic diets often include seafood. Macrobiotics also addresses how different foods and lifestyle choices affect the body, explains Ellis. "If consumed in too large a quantity, even some vegetables can be detrimental to our health, creating problems such as an overly acidic condition, excess mucus, or difficulty healing inflammation." She points out that many foods—including whole grains and sea vegetables—have strengthening and healing qualities. For example, whole grains and beans can lower cholesterol. "However, the greatest benefits

can be realized by eating a variety of foods from the recommended food groups on a daily basis," she says, adding that following macrobiotic principles has the potential to improve the immune, digestive, circulatory, and lymph systems, along with other benefits. According to Ellis, eating a macrobiotic diet is also a healthy way to shed excess weight and keep your skin glowing and hair shining.

IN THE BEGINNING

"Doesn't everyone want to look and feel like a star?" asks Ellis, quickly adding that you don't need a private chef in order to go macro. "People around the world are practicing macrobiotics, and most of them are doing it themselves." Ellis has studied the evolution of macrobiotics since its introduction in the US by Japanese-born George Ohsawa and his student, Michio Kushi. In the early '60s, according to Ellis, macrobiotics was more of a philosophy, a hippie movement of sorts. That all changed in 1982, she says, with the publication of *Recalled by Life* by

Anthony Sattilaro, MD, who was told by his fellow Western physicians that he had terminal cancer. Sattilaro stumbled across a book by Ohsawa and followed the macrobiotic principles set forth in his writings. He lived to tell his tale of recovery and became a champion of the macrobiotic lifestyle.

"At that moment," says Ellis, "macrobiotics went from a



Fresh Starts:

5 Ways to Get a Taste of Gourmet Macrobiotics

Here are some healthful tips to get you acquainted with gourmet macrobiotics. Dig in.

- 1. Tour an organic market.** Head for the fruit and vegetable section of your local organic market and acquaint yourself with all of the raw, natural ingredients. Touch and smell the apples, oranges, fennel, and cilantro. Excite your senses.
- 2. Let cookbooks be your guide.** Pick up a macrobiotic cookbook and skim through the recipes. Become familiar with the ingredients. Or substitute healthier counterparts for the ingredients in your all-time favorite recipes.
- 3. Cook three healthy meals a week.** Don't set unrealistic goals. For starters, prepare healthy meals three times a week. Once you start eating better, you'll be motivated to do so more often.
- 4. Chew, chew, chew.** When was the last time you really chewed your food—as in, until it was liquid? According to the principles of macrobiotics, chewing your food thoroughly is the key to maximizing absorption of nutrients.
- 5. Add new foods before deleting old ones.** Instead of trying to ditch all of your junk-food favorites in one fell swoop, try adding healthier foods into your diet. Many sweets lovers, for example, start off by substituting amisaque (a fermented drink made from sweet rice and koji) or fruit for sugary desserts.

philosophy to improve one's life and to support peace, to a recovery diet. Today, people are applying the principles of macrobiotics to prepare tasty dishes using an abundance of delicious ingredients." She notes that individuals suffering from serious illnesses are advised to adhere to a healing macrobiotic diet, which is more restrictive than gourmet macrobiotics. They both emphasize the same food categories, but a healing diet may include restrictions on salt as well as certain foods, cooking oils, herbs, and spices.

In addition to tasting great, gourmet macrobiotic meals can lift your spirits and change your outlook on life. Many people who sample gourmet macrobiotics are hooked immediately. Lee Gross, former gourmet macrobiotic chef for Gwyneth Paltrow and currently chef de cuisine at M Café de Chaya, is thrilled to see so many people making the transition to a healthier diet. "Macrobiotics is being rediscovered because of its innate integrity," he says. "It's simple, pure, and true. When you

commit to a more centered and balanced diet, you'll see more of these qualities in your life." Gross loves sitting down to a plate of roasted fish, left on the bone, so he can pick at it while engaging in good conversation. He also enjoys simple Japanese dishes such as fresh homemade soba noodles in broth and a big pot of fresh vegetables prepared nabe style. "After a macrobiotic meal I feel really peaceful," he says. "I also feel light, as opposed to stuffed and full."

People around the world, according to Gross, have been benefiting from macrobiotics for generations. Macrobiotics, he

Macrobiotics is simple, pure, and true. When you commit to a more centered and balanced diet, you'll see more of these qualities in your life.

explains, is the traditional cuisine of every indigenous culture around the world. "Point to any place on the globe and dig up the traditional diet," he says, "and nine times out of 10, you'll find it rooted in whole grains and vegetables with small amounts of animal food. We're returning to traditional eating habits. That's what's so exciting."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When it comes to nutrition, macrobiotic chef Porter emphasizes the importance of long-term vision. "Getting Americans to even recognize a whole grain when they see one may be the most significant step of all," she says. "It takes a while to change the way people eat. It's a gradual process, but we're headed in the right direction. Someday, macrobiotics will be part of the mainstream vernacular, and celebrities will help make that happen."

Porter believes in the power of whole grains. "It's not just that whole grains are healthy," she explains, "they re-educate the body and mind to bring about balance—a sense of calm and peace." Porter says that these different mind and body states occur naturally—they require no conscious effort. Instead, when you change what you eat, you also change the way you think. "Whole grains have a complete and holistic impact that is very powerful," she

says, "transforming people in spite of themselves."

M Café de Chaya's Gross says that people are finally rediscovering the vast array of whole-grain options. "Quinoa is hot. It has more protein than any other grain out there. It's light, nutty, and delicious, and one of my personal favorites." In addition to quinoa, which is the ancient grain of the Incas, Gross points to other, more underappreciated grains like rye and spelt. "These are old workhorses that people in Europe have been eating for generations."

Gross, who received classical culinary training from Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, and who also studied at the Kushi Institute, was initially attracted to macrobiotics because of the challenge it presented in preparing tasty food. "It really pushed me creatively," he says. "I needed to emulate the textures and flavors found in classical cooking without using animal food." The more Gross worked on this challenge, he says, the more he discovered the versatility of vegetables, grains, beans, and tofu, which he calls "the wonder food."

THE RIGHT MIX

Despite his expertise, Gross says it was Paltrow who inspired the popular Bim-Bim-Bop menu item at M Café de Chaya. The idea for the dish came at the end of a long week while Gross was cooking for the actress. "I noticed a lot of leftovers," he says, "so for dinner, I made a big bowl of fresh organic brown rice and put out nearly a dozen other dishes that were in the refrigerator. Gwyneth had a field day." These weren't your everyday leftovers. Gross says they included marinated kinpira (burdock and carrots), braised shitake mushrooms, steamed Chinese broccoli, pan-fried tofu, fresh leafy vegetables, sautéed zucchini, and

continued on page 90



Sea vegetables are an important part of macrobiotics.



Melt-in-your-mouth chocolate truffles

RECIPES



Water-Sautéed Broccoli with Shoyu, Lemon, and Sesame

BY LEE GROSS

Water-sautéing is essentially an oil-free way to stir-fry vegetables. It calls for high heat along with constant attention to the pan and its contents.

SERVES 4

- 1 bunch broccoli (approximately 7 cups)
 - 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 - 1 tablespoon shoyu (available in Asian markets and some grocery stores)
water (see below)
 - 1 teaspoon garlic, minced (optional)
 - 1 tablespoon tan or black sesame seeds, lightly toasted
1. Separate the top of the broccoli and cut into bite-size florets. Peel the stem with a vegetable peeler and slice into 1/4"-thick rounds, keeping them separate from the florets.
 2. Combine the lemon juice, shoyu, and 1/4 cup of water in a measuring cup.

3. Heat about two tablespoons of water in a wok or sauté pan over medium-high heat until it begins to boil. Add the broccoli stems and stir. Sauté or "stir-fry" the stems for two to three minutes.
4. Add the florets and continue to cook, adding splashes of the water, shoyu, and lemon mixture as needed to keep the vegetables from scorching. Cook for five to eight minutes, or until broccoli is crisp-tender.
5. Add optional garlic and cook for one or two minutes more.
6. Transfer the broccoli to a platter and serve immediately, sprinkled with the toasted sesame seeds.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 75; Protein 5 g; Carbohydrate 2 g; Total fat 1.8 g; Saturated fat 0.2 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 311 mg; Fiber 4.3 g



Chocolate Truffles

BY ERIC LECHASSEUR

These indulgent delights make a welcomed hostess gift—just be sure to save a few for yourself!

SERVES 30

- 1 cup soy milk
- 18 ounces chocolate chips (non-dairy preferred)
- 2 tablespoons agar flakes
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- cocoa powder to coat

1. Bring the soy milk and agar to a simmer.
2. Add the chocolate chips and cocoa, mix well until melted, and let cool. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3. Add pastry pipe to bottom of pastry bag; place chocolate mixture in the bag and squeeze approximately 30 individual one-ounce sections of chocolate.
4. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.
5. Once cool, roll each section in your hands to form a ball.
6. Roll chocolate balls in cocoa powder to coat. Refrigerate again until firm.

Nutrition information per serving (1 truffle): Calories 86; Protein 1 g; Carbohydrate 11 g; Total fat 5.3 g; Saturated fat 3.1 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 3 mg; Fiber 1.2 g



Hambulgur Helper

BY JESSICA PORTER

Quick, light, and easy. Pair this dish with steamed or boiled greens for a satisfying meal.

SERVES 4

- Toasted sesame oil to fry tempeh, plus 1 tablespoon
- 8 ounces tempeh, sliced into bite-size cubes
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1/8 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 large carrot, cut into matchsticks
- 2 cups bulgur wheat
- 1 cup whole-wheat rotini or elbow noodles
- 5 cups spring water
- 3 tablespoons shoyu
- 2 tablespoons mirin (rice wine for cooking)
- 1/8 teaspoon brown-rice vinegar
- kernels from 1 ear of corn
- 2 celery stalks, diced

1. In a large frying pan, heat sesame oil over medium heat. When hot (but not smoking) add tempeh, frying the cubes until browned and crispy. Use a slotted spoon to remove tempeh from pan and place on paper towel to drain.
2. In a large saucepan, heat one tablespoon of sesame oil over medium heat. Add onion and salt and sauté until onion is translucent. Add carrot and sauté for a few minutes. Pour in bulgur and noodles, stirring them into the vegetables. Fold in tempeh.
3. Mix water, shoyu, mirin, and vinegar together and add to pot. Bring to a boil uncovered, reduce heat to low, cover. Let simmer 15 minutes. Add corn and celery. Cook for five more minutes. Remove from heat and let sit a couple of minutes to prevent sticking.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 384; Protein 17 g; Carbohydrate 61 g; Total fat 9.8 g; Saturated fat 1.7 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 328 mg; Fiber 11.5 g



Kinpira

BY JESSICA PORTER

A hearty, grounding side dish. Serve over brown rice with your choice of lean protein.

SERVES 4

- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- 1 medium burdock root, cut into fine matchsticks
- 2 medium carrots, cut into fine matchsticks
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 2 tablespoons spring water
- shoyu to taste
- ginger juice to taste

1. Heat the oil in a heavy skillet. Sauté burdock first, stirring constantly for about three minutes. Add the carrots and salt and stir for another three minutes.
2. Sprinkle the water over the vegetables, cover, and reduce heat. When most of the liquid has evaporated, add a sprinkle of shoyu. Cover and cook for five more minutes. Add a few drops of ginger juice.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 78; Protein 1 g; Carbohydrate 11 g; Total fat 3.5 g; Saturated fat 0.5 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 145 mg; Fiber 2.3 g



continued from page 87

spicy miso sauce. Paltrow mixed the ingredients together in a big bowl and topped it off with some toasted sesame seeds and nori. "It was such a hit that I put a toned-down Bim-Bim-Bop (using four or five different dishes) on our menu," adds Gross, who explains that Bim-Bim-Bop is the name of a traditional Korean dish and means "all mixed up."

Eric Lechasseur, who has prepared gourmet macrobiotic meals for Madonna, Tobey Maguire, and Keenen Ivory Wayans and is author of the macrobiotic gourmet pastry cookbook *Love, Eric* (www.loveeric.net, 2006), attributes some of his best creations to imaginative clients. He was frequently asked to come up with healthy variations of pastry favorites—a lot of the celebrities he worked with asked for chocolate cake without butter and eggs or certain types of flour. "Many of them wanted a different dessert every day," he says. Lechasseur is currently chef de patisserie at M Café de Chaya, where he dazzles his clientele with desserts made with organic and natural ingredients such as maple, rice, and honey syrups, along with grain-sweetened chocolate. Topping the favorites list are raspberry chocolate charlotte—layers of delicate sponge cake and chocolate mousse surrounded by a wall of chocolate ladyfingers and topped with organic raspberries, tofu cheesecake, and cocoa-chocolate cupcakes smothered in tofu frosting.

"In the end," says Gross, "it all comes down to taste. Everyone enjoys food and that's what the principles of macrobiotics are all about. It's about deriving pleasure from our meals while promoting our health. It's not about wild abandon and gluttony. It's about common sense. We can indulge in delicious dishes without killing ourselves in the process." **A**

Annette Racond, whose work has appeared in various national publications, is a writer based in New York City. She is currently working on a memoir.

M Café de Chaya in LA specializes in gourmet macrobiotic dishes.

What Your Appetite

MACROBIOTIC CENTERS

Kushi Institute
www.kushiinstitute.org

Macrobiotics America
www.macroamerica.com

BOOKS

The Angelica Home Kitchen
By Leslie McEachern
(Ten Speed Press, 2003)

*Everything You Always Wanted to Know
About Whole Foods but Were Afraid to Ask*
By Christina Pirella
(The Berkley Publishing Group, 2004)