

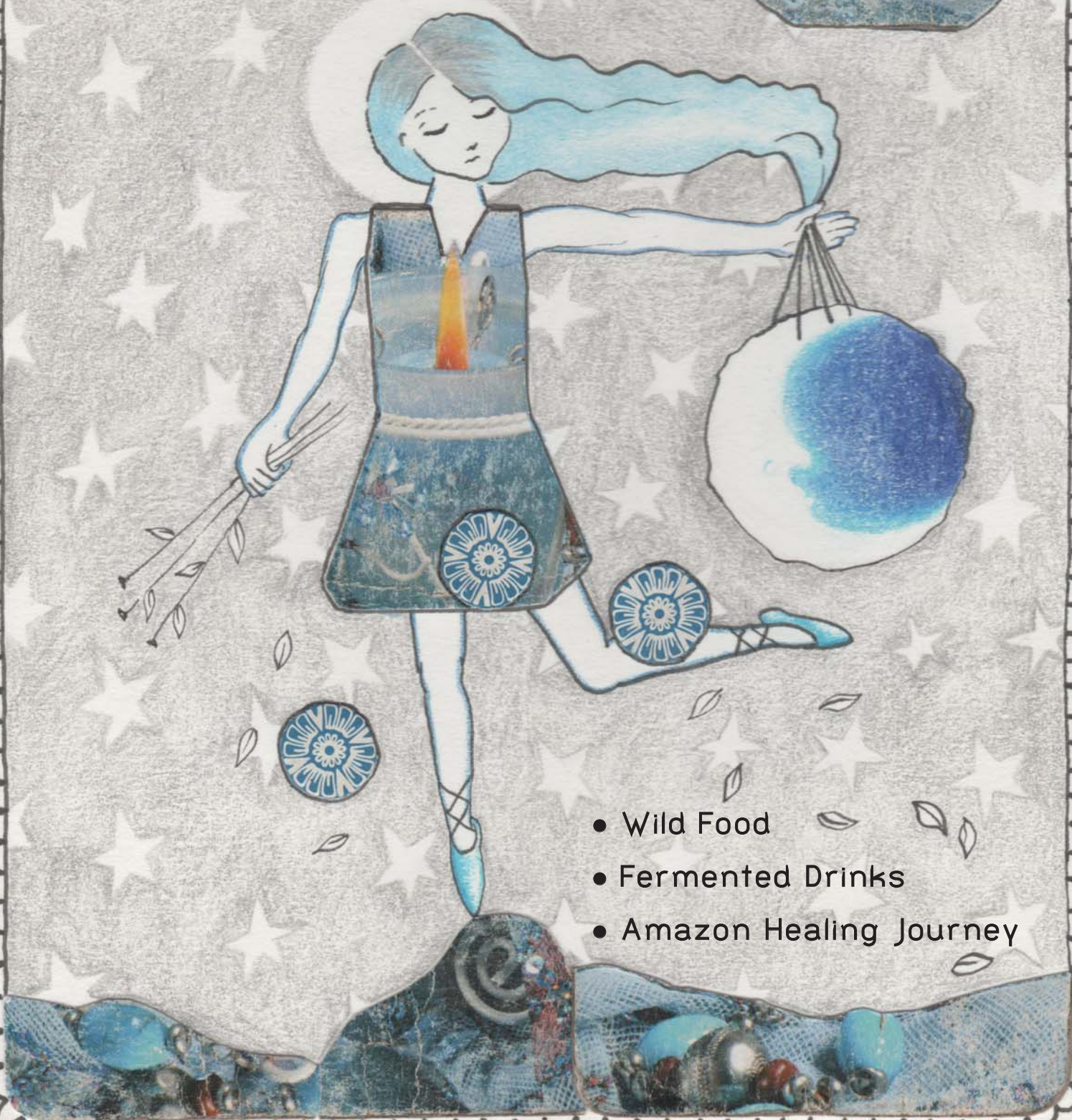
The Funky Raw

Issue 32 - Summer 2014

£3.50

Healthy eating for everyone

magazine



- Wild Food
- Fermented Drinks
- Amazon Healing Journey

From the Editor

In general, I try not to think too much about the wars, and instead concentrate on connecting with nature and growing my garden but I feel I need to say something. It's easy to take sides, left or right, one country over another, etc, and maybe that's what



those in power want us to do. But, all the political parties are on the same side. The 'differences' are to make it look like there is a choice, but the only choice is between keeping the "political class" or getting rid of them *all*. And more and more it looks to me like most of the political leaders in most countries are on the same side, yes even Putin, Obama, Cameron, etc, it's just a show, a power game, and innocent people are the casualties, the pawns in the game. I implore everyone to read *Endgame* by Derrick Jensen and maybe we can move forwards.

If you want to write or do artwork for future magazines, or just get in touch, my email is magazine@funkyraw.com

love Rob

Cover Artwork

By Hazel Lightfoot

These images and stories simply arrive, captivating my senses & coaxing me to surrender and allow their innocence to take form as they wish.

Hazel is the instrument, and she responds to an urge that comes from a window in Life that is freer & truer than the limitations our logical minds enforce.



Creating dips my toes into the peace of our true nature.

Available for commissions. Feel free as a bird to peek her ongoing creations & contact via:

Website: www.hazelsfables.co.uk

Etsy shop: www.etsy.com/uk/shop/HazelsFables

Email: hazels_fables@yahoo.co.uk

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www.ink.uk.com

ink

This magazine is printed on 100% post consumer waste recycled paper by an environmentally friendly printer using vegetable based inks.

Raw Food: What? How? Why?

Raw food is about eating the way nature intended. It's about fresh ripe fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds. It's about delicious flavours and healthy living.

No other animal on this planet cooks its food, and in general they enjoy much better health than humans do! Many people find benefits to eating more raw food including increased energy, uplifted mood, weight control, less need for sleep, better skin, clearer thinking and intuition, increased effectiveness, calmer, more contented children. Many people notice that their connections to nature and to other people deepen.

Due to the current state of humans, the state of the soil (lacking minerals due to intensive farming) and the actual fruit (changed through many thousands of years of hybridisation by humans) this is the diet we currently recommend:

Fruit - High quality fruit, fully ripened and grown on rich soil.

Greens - high quality greens grown on rich soil, particularly wild greens, in the form of salads, juice and blends (which help digestion), are essential for minerals and rebuilding.

Nuts and seeds - these are important to get enough density and rebuilding fuel to compensate for our malfunctioning systems. Soak before use to aid assimilation and remove anti-nutrients.

Animal products - insects would have definitely been part of our archaic diet. Figs for instance are a primate's favourite food and wild figs are laden with insect matter. At the very least we need to substitute for this. We use unpasteurised milk and cheese and butter made with unpasteurised milk, goats or sheep's generally being better than cows milk. Raw egg yolks are nutrient dense, buy them direct from a local farmer.

Some people need more animal foods, organ meats such as liver are nutrient dense. All animal foods should be from animals eating their natural diet, eg grass for cows.

Supplements and Superfoods - these help to compensate for not only our malfunctioning system but also for the degeneration of the soil. It may be possible however to avoid supplements if one eats food that are grown on very rich soil.

High Quality cold pressed oils - Flax and hemp seed oils are excellent. Keep all oils in the fridge.

Find out more on our website:

www.funkyraw.com

The Funky Raw Magazine is open for your **writing, recipes, artwork, food preparation tips, poetry, cartoons, short stories**, etc. Contributors receive a discount from the Funky Raw online shop and a free copy of the magazine. Please send submissions to magazine@funkyraw.com

Submission deadline for next issue: **6 Oct 2014**.

Advertising deadline: 27 Oct 2014 funkyraw.com/ads/

The editor reserves the right to edit articles for the sake of space and / or clarity.

The content of this magazine does not necessarily represent or reflect the editor's complete opinions, beliefs, thoughts or own experience. Copyright of submissions remains with each individual author or artist.

Everyone who reads this magazine is 100% responsible for what they do with the information presented here!

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News

Got a story? Email news@funkyraw.com

Crutopia Festival

Friday September 12th to Sunday
September 14th

Creating Utopia one bite at a time...

Come join us for a creative, fun-filled weekend celebrating healthy living and the abundance of harvest time with delicious, organic raw vegan foods.

Get back to basics, connect with nature and find inspiration in a positive, high vibration environment.

Enjoy a variety of workshops and activities including yoga, acrobatics, live music, ecstatic dance, food preparation workshops, permaculture, a kids area, a healing space and more...

Food

Our café and fruit bar will be serving delicious gourmet raw food and 80/10/10 options as well as organic fruit, smoothies, juices and raw sweet treats.

The Space

A small permaculture and community project nestled above Orgiva and Lanjaron, in the Alpujarra mountains, south of Granada, Spain. With 4 hectares of land, more than 100 olive trees, a natural spring-fed swimming pool and a 12 m geodesic dome.

Simply Vega Pop-Up Restaurant

Kirsty Wright will be hosting monthly raw vegan and vegetarian events with a series of unique, dynamic menus to tempt a wide range of raw vegan / vegetarian pallets.

Kirsty says "We will also be highlighting local artists and musicians, in performance. So, a little something extra for your mind, your body and your soul."

Dates to be confirmed, the first should be towards the end of August, the time will be 7pm to midnight in Chesham, Buckinghamshire (Nearest tube: Chesham)

To find out more and check the dates:

Website: www.kirstywrightrawfood.com

Email: simplyvegaevents@gmail.com

Tel: 078 0970 5519

Raw Fest 2015

Wasting no time after the 2014 event, the date for next years festival has now been confirmed as 6th to 9th August 2015 in East Sussex. Find out more and get your tickets at www.rawfest.co



Accommodation

Basic camping with compost toilets and outdoor showers. Some other accommodation may be available for an additional fee and needs to be reserved in advance.

Price

25 € per day or 65 € for the entire weekend.

Advance reservation and payment 55€ (before august 31th).

Includes camping and all workshops. Food is extra.

For more info see www.amoraleza.org

Raw Café in Chelsea, London

Tanya of betterraw.com has opened a raw café in Chelsea called Tanya's.

It is open during the day for breakfast and lunch plus snacks. At night you'll be able to enjoy small plates, desserts and super-food cocktails.

The menu includes smoothies, milkshakes, chia pudding, granola, fruit salad, salads, wraps, and more.

You can see more of the menu on the website.

Opening hours: Mon 7am - 4pm, Tue - Fri 7am - 11pm, Sat 8am - 11pm, Sunday 8am - 4pm.

Location: MyHotel, 35 Ixworth Pl, London SW3 3QX. Nearest tube South Kensington.

Website: www.tanyascafe.com Tel: 020 7225 7538



Workshops & Events

Yoga & Raw Food Workshops

Date: Friday 15 to Sunday 17 August, 5pm Fri - 3pm Sun

Location: Thirsk, North Yorkshire

Description: A 2 night luxury retreat - relax and unwind with yoga and meditation, refresh and cleanse with delicious energising raw food and enjoy some kitchen workshops on how to make simple & healthy raw food meals.. (yoga suitable for all levels).

Also enjoy soaking in the hot tub and detoxing in the sauna during your stay...

Price: From £345 per person in a shared room

Website: splitfarthinghall.co.uk/retreats-workshops/yoga-healthy-eating/

Contact: 01845 597 041

Advanced Raw Food Techniques

Date: Saturday 30 August, 10am - 3pm

Location: St Paul's, Bristol, BS6 5NT

Description: This class will expand upon your raw food skills and provide you with additional nutritious recipes to add to your repertoire.

We focus on:

the benefits of fermentation (kefir / kombucha / vegetables & nuts)

how to make the most of your dehydrator

quick recipes packed with superfoods

buckwheat crackers / onion bread

baobab courgette hummus

nut cheese & chutney

scrumptious warm lasagne

fermented nut cheesecake

The food prep class will be held in my home & limited to small groups

Price: £90 per person

Web: www.annamiddleton.com/02-Advanced-Raw.html

Raw Food at Home with Gabriela Lerner

Date: Saturday 6 September, 10:30am to 4:30pm

Location: Shaftesbury, Dorset

Description: Join me for a day of raw food making at my home and get an intimate view into the raw food lifestyle. This is for you if you'd like to eat more raw foods for energy, vitality and longevity. I have personal experience of changing my life from chronic fibromyalgia pains and constant fatigue to living fully and with joy every day.

You will learn some delicious, nutritious and easy to make recipes for every day and you will also be able to ask all those questions you've always wanted to ask about raw food! You will get some real insider tips on how to transition to raw and you'll be tasting plenty of food and be able to enjoy a yummy raw lunch in our beautiful conservatory (or outdoors if weather permits).

Price: £75 per person or £140 for two!

Web: www.radiantonraw.co.uk

To get your event listed here, add it to our website at www.funkyraw.com/events/

Fermentation Fetish

Date: Sunday 7 September, 10am

Location: Glastonbury

Description: Amazing health secrets you and your family need to know with Holly Paige and Kenny Bountiful Sun. In this informative, exciting and comprehensive class you will learn raw food nutrition principles and recipe creation for long term success, including why kefir is one of the most powerful and cost effective superfoods available. Menu for the day which you will learn how to create: Exotic Kimchi and sauerkraut recipes. (simple and advanced methods.)

Lacto fermented Mexican salsa.

Zingy kefir pesto.

Lacto fermented pineapple, papaya curry chutney.

Coconut kefir ginger beer.

Mood elevating super nutritional kefir breakfast pudding.

Cherry kefir cheesecake.

Price: £85

Website: www.foodforconsciousness.co.uk

Contact: 01458 860060

Introduction to Raw Food Taster Session

Date: Saturday 6 September, 2pm - 5pm

Location: The Well Garden, Hackney, London

Description: In this workshop you will learn all the basics of raw food and raw food recipe preparation – everything you need to know to get started with preparing deliciously simple and quick raw food.

If you're new to raw food come and join me for this afternoon of tasting and learning:

- Easy and delicious raw food recipes that you can build on and get creative with.

- Raw food ingredients and where to get them.

- Raw food preparation techniques.

- The equipment you need (and don't need!).

- How to sprout pulses, nuts and seeds

- Superfoods – what are they and do you need them?

Includes recipe packs and delicious raw food tasters!

Price: Early bird £64

Web: rawfreedom.co.uk/raw-food-classes-in-london

Phone: 07733 107 811

The Shekin Ashram Healthy Body & Mind Retreat

Date: Friday 12 to Sunday 14 September

Location: Shekin Ashram, Glastonbury

Description: This Retreat is designed to give us access to ways of rejuvenating our body, mind and soul encouraging peace, harmony and health. Offering the potential of a more balanced and happier way forward.

It will be a relaxed weekend of healthy food, yoga, ceremonies, health coaching, mediation, Bhajans, raw chocolate workshop, dowsing and exploring Glastonbury.

All meals are included (breakfast, lunch and light supper).

The food is organic vegan.

Price: £320 to £250 depending on accommodation.

Website: zodiactherapytraining.co.uk/retreats/healthy-body-and-mind-retreat.html

Phone: 01792 512294 or 07786 416324

Festival of Life, London

Date: Saturday 13 September, 10.30am-11.30pm

Location: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, WC1R 4RL

Description: Talks, demos and workshops and a wide variety of stalls covering: natural parenting, nature cures, permaculture, environmentalism, musical, poetic and artistic expression, simple and non-consumerist living, creating community and networks, celebration and connection.

Funky Raw will be there with a stall.

Conscious dance party in the evening.

Price: Full event: £20 /£15 (concs) Eve only: £10 /£5 (concs)

Website: www.festivaloflife.net

Detox, Raw Food and Yoga Retreat

Date: Sunday 14 to Saturday 20 September and same retreat Sunday 12 to Saturday 18 October

Location: Biarritz, France

Detox, Fast and Cleanse Retreats

I provide a week where you can experience a detox, fast and a thorough cleanse of all the organs with great tasting juices, fibre, raw food, detox yoga and a unique exploration of your relationship with food. See and feel the benefits of all those wonderful nutrients flowing through your veins.

We have walks in nature, hands on raw food training and yoga to enhance your detox experience.

I guide you through 7 days to help you lose weight, look younger and feel better than you have in ages. I help you to sustain your health and take back your energy.

I look forward to meeting you soon. Fiona Robertson.

Price: From 950 Euros

Website: www.retreatbiarritz.com

Contact: info@retreatbiarritz.com **Tel:** 0033 559 545635

Exclusive Life Transformational Detox Experience

Date: Thursday 18 September to Thursday 21 August

Location: Mallorca, Spain

Description: Enjoy the beauty of Mallorca from a castle overlooking the sea, for four exclusive days of transformation and healing. Beverley Pugh, Hippocrates trained raw food chef and educator has joined forces with David Biddle, energetic life transformation specialist to create a retreat that will reach to your very core. With over 40 years of combined experience you will find the combination of Raw Food and Energy work to be truly rewarding and set you on the path to the change you want to create in life. We look forward to working with you.

Price: 995 Euros

Website: www.nsaalive.com

Yoga, Raw & Super food Retreat

Date: Fri 19 to Mon 29 Sept, from 5 pm onwards

Location: Orgiva, Alpujarras, South Spain

Description: This retreat in sunny Andalusia is dedicated to your health. As an antidote to your hectic lifestyle we encourage and support you to revitalise your body, mind and spirit. We gently detox the body and each day reconnect a bit more. We focus on yoga, pranayama and meditation and learn about what raw and superfood do for our body-mind and general wellbeing. During this retreat you

will not only try interesting, tasty and beautiful dishes of raw food, but you will also learn how to prepare it and how it can become a natural part of our life.

Website: www.sunfoodyoga.com/en/retreats/yoga-raw-superfood-retreat

Phone: Spain: +34 699035695 / Holland: +31 (0) 647163867

Raw Desserts Workshop & Afternoon Tea

Date: Sunday 21 September, 12.30 - 15.30

Location: Brighton

Description: Imagine eating delicious desserts and sweet treats that not only satisfy that sugar craving but also nourish your body at the same time!

Sometimes when embarking on a raw plant-based diet it's hard to let go of those cravings for sweet treats and puddings. This is when we often reach for the baked cakes and ready made desserts, looking to satisfy cravings, but usually regret it soon after when we feel bloated, sick, tired, fat and unhappy. That's why I have designed this delicious half day workshop, to teach you how to create some mouth watering raw vegan desserts and treats.

I will show you how to make such delights as chocolate beetroot superfood love cake, apple and pear pie, rocky road bites, strawberry shortcake and vanilla cream.

Price: £59

Web: rawlesque.com/rawlesque-event-information/

Adventures in Raw Main Meals

Date: Saturday 11 October, 10.30am - 5pm

Location: Brixton, London

Description: A Step up from Salad! In this workshop we will be exploring the diverse and exciting world of Raw satisfaction.

Are you bored of the same old salad recipes? Are you tempted to eat more cooked food than you want to because of your lack of inspiring recipes? This day will arm you with a bevy of deliciously easy raw food main meals. We'll be making a selection of high raw meals that are brilliant staples for a healthy, high energy diet.

- Experiential raw food learning experience for ultimate confidence and follow through

- Satisfying textures and flavours to replace your cooked comfort foods.

- Low-calorie raw alternatives to bread, pasta, rice and potatoes.

- Not that keen on cold food? Find out how to heat raw food without killing nutrients.

- How to eat raw and feed your family without making one meal for them and one for yourself.

Recipes: Thai Noodles, Guacamole Mushrooms,

Vietnamese Salad, Walnut & Sage Burgers, Pasta with Rich Tomato Sauce, Vegetable Cheese Tart

Ingredients, equipment, recipe pack and a delicious raw lunch included!

Price: Super Early Bird £119

Website: www.rawfreedom.co.uk/classes

Phone: 07733 107 811

Radiant on Raw Vitality Week

Date: Saturday 18 October to Saturday 25 October, 7 days

Location: Lagos, Portugal

Description: This retreat offers a unique raw food holiday experience that allows you to unwind, recharge and nourish yourself both inside and out. Five morning sessions will introduce you to the 5 pillars of raw food indulgence: fermented foods, tasty vegetables, interesting salads, snacks & crackers and healthy sweets. On this break you will learn how to prepare and eat indulgent, delicious raw food and go home feeling light and radiant.

Under the expert tuition and coaching of Gabriela Lerner, founder of Radiant on Raw www.radiantonraw.co.uk and qualified health coach and raw food educator, you will discover just how delicious and easy to prepare healthy nutritional raw food can be! Gabriela is a member of the International Association of Raw Food Teachers and Coaches and has trained as a health coach with the Institute of Integrative Nutrition.

Price: Starts at £1395 per person, sharing, for full board in the luxury accommodation of the Vivenda Miranda Romantic Boutique Hotel. For more information and to book, visit the website

Website: www.tinyurl.com/rawvitalityweek

Art of Life Yoga and Raw Food Retreat

Date: Sunday 19 October to Saturday 25 October

Location: Ubud, Bali

Description: Filled with inspiring talks and transformational workshops, you'll be satiated from the inside out. We'll be staying at the amazing Dragonfly Village, a paradise resort amidst the rice fields just a few steps from the cultural town of Ubud. Indulge in a week filled with yoga, meditation, gourmet raw food cuisine and local Balinese spiritual culture.

Price: US\$1,750

Website: www.artofliferetreats.com

David Wolfe's Longevity Masterclass

Date: Sunday 26 October, 09:00-18:00

Location: The Light, Euston, Central London

Description: Join rawfood legend David Wolfe and hundreds of other vitality enthusiasts for a full day Longevity Masterclass. David Wolfe will guide us through recent game-changing discoveries, into the science of optimal health, longevity-extension and physical and mental youthening. Meet hundreds of other inspired vitality enthusiasts, explore over 25 vibrant health businesses from across the UK and taste a plethora of delicious raw-food creations.

Price: £79

Website: www.davidwolfeday.co.uk

Prepping your kitchen for Plant-Based Wellness by Grace Quantock

eBook review by Rob Hull

A workbook style booklet to help beginners change to a healthier diet. It comes as a PDF file which you can fill in on screen or print out to fill in. It suggests a vegan diet (not something I personally recommend), with a mix of raw and healthy cooked food. The whole process of changing your diet is covered including what kitchen equipment you will need.

It starts at the very beginning, sorting out your food cupboards, choosing which foods to keep and which to get rid of (but without being "preachy" or making you feel bad about eating anything. There are ideas for how to change less optimal foods for more optimal foods.

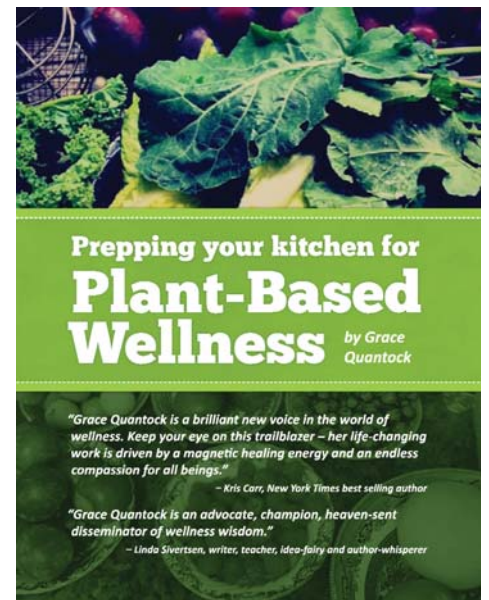
There are some slight contradictions, all processed sugar "Must go. Completely.", but then later kombucha is recommended, I'd be really annoyed if I had got rid of my sugar only to realise that I needed it to make kombucha...

The food journal is very clever, rather than just logging what you eat, it also gets you to think about how particular foods make you feel, which is very important.

The final section of the booklet includes a selection of recipes. They are designed to be quick, in ways that shock me, the first ingredient in the first recipe is "1 can chickpeas". Ok, no judgement from me, maybe some people really don't have time to boil their own chickpeas, but clearly this booklet is not written for me!

There is a focus on getting organised, if you're the kind of person who takes a shopping list with you when you go shopping, you will probably like the ideas.

The design is great, although it is a two column layout which doesn't work very well on screen, having to



scroll up and down (unless you have a screen large enough to view a whole A4 page at a time), although fine if you print it out.

PDF ebook, 26 pages. Available for £12 from

www.gracequantock.com/plantbasedwellness/

The Core Juice Bar, Swindon old town

Review by Theresa Webb

In May, a friend invited me to join her friends and family at a small gathering in Cornwall for a long weekend. A small group of us left London early one Friday morning and drove down towards Swindon where they had planned to stop off at a café for breakfast along the way. By 9am we'd arrived in old town Swindon and imagine my surprise and delight to discover a huge fronted juice bar open and ready for service directly opposite the 'greasy-spoon' café where my co-travellers had been heading towards.

Imagine! Of all the areas to stop at en-route, it was here! Upon entering 'Core', I could hardly contain my joy at finding them.

I entered fully aware that I'd taken a sufficient packed breakfast and enquired as to whether it'd be OK to eat in there and they very kindly allowed me to sit at a sofa...

The 'Core' interior comprises of a couple of comfy sofas & low tables; a series of seats & tables and a bar area at the window; all tastes catered for. They also use an upstairs section for workshops and catering events.

The style is clean and smart, with a stylish design frontage; simple, comfy – coffee style chick – combined different areas and styles.

Blendtec Machines are all lined up on the counter for fresh smoothies, complete with a juicer behind the bar. An attractive wooden crate of fresh bottled juices sat on the counter waiting for collection and the staff explained that they had started to provide a juice fast service to locals, who collect their juices either daily or weekly and they prepare them freshly on the premises.

A calm set up, due to the music being off for the latter part of the visit, for which they apologised but I secretly thought was far more pleasant and in their favour as the 'gym style' pumping music at that time in the morning, felt a bit too much in this environment!

A Community Notice board displayed many local events and businesses.

The 'Core' Menu: Fresh Juices & Smoothies including Nut and Seed 'milks' and Basic raw snacks.

Staff: This is a young team of 3 main members of staff, primarily motivated by the juicing effects towards health and who have got into serving and offering a more versatile raw menu as a result. This was not a hugely varied offering but they are aiming to be so. They had a pot-luck \pop-up restaurant planned for the evening and had already held one event. Their collective raw food related experience did not appear to extend far beyond this but they know their aims in terms of their juicing programme for customers and they provide good service with enthusiasm.

I shall definitely return when en-route to Cornwall in future and recommend



it as a great stop-off to anyone heading towards (or from) the West Country.

The Core Swindon, 4 Devizes Rd, Swindon Old Town.

Tel: 01793 610300

Email: info@thecoreswindon.com

Web: www.thecoreswindon.com

Open Mon to Thur 8am to 5pm

Sat 9am to 5pm

Sun and bank holidays 10am to 4pm

FERMENTATION FETISH

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS SO
HERE IS A PICTURE AS WELL AS SOME WORDS.



FEEDS OFF OF HONEY INSTEAD OF DANGEROUS SUGARS, IMPROVES LIVER FUNCTION, CONTAINS ENZYMES, PROBIOTICS AND B VITAMINS, REMOVES TOXICITY FROM INTESTINAL TRACT, CULTURES OMEGA 3, 6, 7 AND 9 INTERNALLY OUT OF MONOUNSATURATED FATS, PURIFIES THE BLOOD, REMOVES MOLD FROM BODY TISSUE, REMOVES FLUORIDE RESIDUE FROM THE PINEAL GLAND..... WE COULD GO ON BUT WE THINK THIS PAINTS THE PICTURE ADEQUATELY

JUN HERBAL PROBIOTIC ENZYMATIC ELIXIRS

www.foodforconsciousness.co.uk

Purple Balance Raw Snack Bars

Review by Rob Hull

I just got sent the new raw snack bars from Purple Balance to review. Firstly, the packaging is perfect - bright and colourful, you can't miss them in the shops:

For me, I'm very happy that they are sweetened with raw honey (the same top quality raw honey we sell on Funky Raw), which seems quite a rarity in ready made raw foods. This is along with dates means there is no refined sweeteners, not even coconut sugar. All the bars are great, with a wonderful moist and chewy texture.

The **Lemon Pie** was probably my favourite. A good strong lemon flavour, great soft and chewy texture, 45g is just too small!

The "**Wild Pecan Choco Cake**" was also delicious! It was chewy with a little bit of crunch from the pecans and hazelnuts. The flavour was great, mild chocolate flavour, sweet but not too sweet.

The **Goji and Vanilla Cookie** was also very tasty. With 28% goji berries you can see the deep red colour of the bar. Plus the vanilla flavour comes though making this a top quality snack.

The **Raspberry Cake** was slightly disappointing. Same great chewy texture as the others, but the raspberry flavour was very light. I got bursts of it now and again. Although having experimented with raspberry powder myself trying to make raspberry flavoured cakes, I know how difficult it is. 5% raspberry doesn't give much flavour compared to only 0.2% vanilla in the goji bar giving a wonderful flavour!

All in all, to be recommended. They are made in the UK, and you should be able to find them in your local health food store. If not, ask them to start stocking them. The recommended retail price is £1.89, so a bargain for taking with you as a nutritious snack.

RRP £1.89. Available in health food shops and online from various places.
www.purplebalance.co.uk

At Funky Raw we have them for £28.99 for a box of 18, and £7.49 for a pack of 4, one of each flavour.
www.funkyraw.com/shop



Recipes

Want your recipe to appear here? Email it to magazine@funkyraw.com Free magazine if used.

Pizza Kale Chips

100g kale
100g cashew nuts
45ml nutritional yeast flakes
5ml oregano
1 garlic clove
6-8 sun dried tomatoes
Black pepper

Process cashew nuts into powder. Add other ingredients except kale. Process further. Then add a small amount of water and process to a thick paste, adding more water as necessary. Massage into kale and dehydrate until dry.

by Marie Bussy



Strawberry ice cream in banana pancakes

Pancakes

2 Ripe bananas
30-45ml Flax seeds
30-45ml Water

Blend ingredients together. Spread a thin layer onto baking paper and dehydrate until dry. Cut to required size.

Ice cream

150-200g strawberries
½- 1 banana
Squirt of agave nectar
50g almonds
50ml water

Process almonds to a powder. Add all other ingredients and process further to make a smooth, thick liquid. Freeze. Defrost in fridge before eating to soften.

by Marie Bussy



Tropical Toffee Thickie

2 green coconuts
2-3 bananas
½ cup pitted dates
1-2 tablespoons mesquite powder (Peruvian Carob)
1-2 tablespoons bee pollen
4-6 drops toffee flavoured stevia
Pinch of cinnamon

Directions

Hack your way into and extract the meat and water from the green coconuts.

Place with all other ingredients into your blender. Blend well.

If using dried dates you will need to soak them first. I recommend some nice squidgy medjool dates.

Feel free to half the recipe, this amount is about 2 meals worth for me and great for when you have a lot of physical activity ahead.

If you don't have toffee stevia, don't panic, the other ingredients make it taste of toffee anyway :-)

by Heather Gardner - www.consciousearthcompany.com

Raw Chocolate-Raspberry Brownie Bars

I love finding flavours that work well together, and this classic pairing of chocolate and raspberry is perfect. The layers of this recipe work so well together; the chocolate nut base has the perfect crunch to it, the raspberry layer is soft and sweet and the chocolate layer will leave you wanting more.

Serves 4-6

Ingredients for Base

1 cup raw nuts (either almonds, macadamias or cashews work well. You can use one type or a mixture)
1/3 cup cacao powder
3 Tbsp. coconut oil, melted
12 Medjool dates, pitted

Ingredients for Middle Layer

2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries
2/3 cup raw cashews
4 Tbsp. shredded coconut
6 Tbsp. organic maple syrup
1 Tbsp. coconut oil, melted

Ingredients for Top Layer

1/2 cup of cacao butter (or melted coconut oil)
1/2 cup of cacao powder
1/4 cup of organic maple syrup

Directions for Base

Add all ingredients to a blender and blend until all the ingredients are well mixed and the macadamias are crushed.

Add mixture to a lined tin, smooth out with a spoon and place in the freezer to set.

Directions for Middle Layer

Blend all but the coconut oil in a high speed blender until smooth.

Add coconut oil and blend until well combined

Add to the base and smooth over with a spatula or back of a spoon and place into the freezer for at least 1 hour.

Directions for Top Layer

Melt the cacao butter in a double boiler on low heat (I highly recommend shaving or chopping the cacao butter into smaller portions before adding to the double boiler).

Add the organic maple syrup to the double boiler and whisk until combined.

Whisk in the cacao powder.

When well combined pour over the middle layer and smooth over with the back of a spoon

Put back into the freezer and let it set completely (around 1 hour).

Remove from the tin, slice straight away and store in an airtight container in the freezer (I recommend the freezer as the raspberry layer softens easily).

by Vanessa Vickery - www.becomingness.com.au



Avocado-Seaweed Salad "Arame Style"

Who eats enough minerals?... I mean, I don't even know if that's possible. Anyway I'm always on the lookout for more. Truth be told, while I love miso soup (here's a recipe, if you'd like to make some) and nori rolls, and eat dulse regularly, I don't really eat any of the other seaweeds much. Even so, every now and then, I have my moments when I'm inspired to reach for a different kind and here's the result of one of those moments documented...

With fresh spring onions and crisp Persian cucumbers added....mmmm...what's there not to like!?

Why Eat Arame?

Seaweeds, in general, are a nutritional powerhouse. They are very rich in minerals (calcium, magnesium, iron, zinc), are the greatest sources of iodine, have incredible healing properties, and are alkalising foods. They have cancer-fighting properties, especially when it comes to "estrogen-induced" cancers, such as breast cancer, for example.....And, as if that wasn't impressive enough, they're anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, full of antioxidants, and are a wonderful food group to make friends with if you want beautiful skin!

Arame is rich in vanadium, a trace mineral that is important for supporting the body's ability to metabolise carbohydrates and regulate blood sugar levels. Other great sources of vanadium in the raw foods kingdom are dulse, cinnamon, and cacao.

Ingredients

avocado
cucumber
red radishes
aramé
green onions / spring onions

For the dressing

rice vinegar / umeboshi plum vinegar
sesame oil / tahini
water
black sesame seeds
chili flakes
salt, if desired

Method

1. Soak the arame in water for at least 10 minutes and up to half an hour

(Save the soaking water for soups or to give it to your plants! It's very rich in nutrients, especially minerals.)

2. Make the dressing by mixing equal amounts of oil / tahini and vinegar and adding some water if necessary to "thin it" to achieve the desired strength. Add salt and chili flakes if you prefer and mix in some sesame seeds. Put it aside.

3. Slice the onions thinly and put them aside to "breathe".

3. In the meantime, slice / chop up the rest of your vegetables and place them in a bowl.

4. Cut the avocado in halves, remove the pit and score them lengthwise and crosswise so that you end up with little cubes, then, using a large spoon, scoop out the fruit and add it to the veggies.

5. Drain the arame and toss everything in a bowl with the dressing. Serve on plates and sprinkle with more sesame seeds.



by Dita -
rawfoodfortruth.blogspot.com



Coconut Chai

We have been sharing this a lot recently either cold or warmed depending how we feel & how the weather is outside. It is a hug in a cup.

My daughter is really into coconut mylk. It is a great weaning food. When we were in Peru we were making this fresh almost daily with fresh, rather young coco's. We would make the most delicious, sustaining smoothies filled with banana, lucuma (fresh), mango & coconut mylk. We miss them & this chai is kind of an ode to our beloved smoothies we shared there minus the fruit. When making this mylk we always muse on our days there visiting the coco Senior who would crack us open fresh coco's with which we would proceed to devour the water in minutes. Ah sweet memories.

Coconut mylk is FULL of goodness it is the perfect weaning food as it is rich in lauric acid which mothers milk is abundant in. Lauric acid is a medium chain fatty acid which has anti fungal & anti viral properties. Coconut mylk is also rich in a few of the b vitamins; choline & folate as well as containing mucho potassium, phosphorous, iron, calcium & magnesium. Interestingly it has a relatively good content of selenium.

Coconut is also an antioxidant rich food.

We always choose organic to be sure that we are receiving these amazing nutrients from our food.

You can enjoy this mylk sweetened or unsweetened – we love it with a little raw or local honey in. Sweetening this brew of love heightens the flavours.

To make the mylk, 1litres worth of heavenly nectar:

Crack open a fresh organic coconut, peel away the hard outer shell.

Strip the brown skin off the white flesh.

Chop into rough pieces.

Add 1 cup of coconut flesh to a high speed blender, with 4 cups of living or filtered water,

Blend for about 1 minute.

Strain the liquid through a nut mylk bag or sieve.

Discard the coco to recycle on the earth, use as an exfoliator in the bath or shower or dehydrate to make some coco flour.

Add the coco mylk back to your blender with;

1 tsp cinnamon, 4 green cardamom pods, good scraping of nutmeg, ¼ tsp vanilla powder or ¼ vanilla pod, a heaped tsp of raw or local honey (optional)

Blend all for about 30 seconds,

Strain the liquid through a sieve.

The chai is now ready, pour into your chosen drinking vessel, sit back & enjoy.

To enjoy this chai warmed add slightly cooled boiled water to your blender with the coconut flesh instead of cooler water.

We love freezing some bananas then blending them with this chai, to make a delicious ice cream ~ the combination is just incredible, do try it.

by Nicola Pledger - blessedgratitude.wordpress.com

'Crackers' for sweet toppings!

I love toast! There, I said it – you all know now! Since going raw it's been really hard to give up but I did it – although - I still crave it. I wondered for a long time what it was about toast that I loved so much and it turned out that for me it was the toppings I put on it and not the toast itself – to be specific – sweet toppings! So now all I needed to do was make a raw cracker that could handle my sweet toppings. I've experimented quite a bit but just wasn't happy with the result - that is until recently! See if you agree after trying my recipe below!

Ingredients

1 cup ground flax seeds
1 cup soaked sunflower seeds
1 chopped apple
3 tbsp fresh ground coconut
4 -6 tbsp filtered water

Method

Place flaxseeds, apple, water and all but 2-3 tbsp of sunflower seeds into blender. Blend. Add more water if needed. Place this mixture, the remaining sunflower seeds and the coconut in a bowl and mix together.

Spread out onto 1-2 dehydrator sheets depending on how thick or thin you want them. Score the mixture into cracker shapes! Dehydrate at say 43°C for approx. 8 hours one side then flip over for another 8. I put them on a higher heat (63°C) for the first hour. If too moist, leave them in for a bit longer.

by Jackie Balderstone - rawelevations.co.uk



Topping shown – coconut butter, raw honey and sliced banana!

Thoughts on “Weeds”

Of course, they're not really weeds... Chris Lane looks at local wild roots as a coffee substitute, polycultures, and more.

2 April 2014 - I predict a future occupation - inulin-rich root roaster, taking the place of Coffee roasting. Dandelions, Burdock and Chicory are especially high sources of this type of carbohydrate. Once they're dried thoroughly the texture is like those edible chalk sticks I used to have as a kid. Once they are dry they break easily into pieces, to be dry roasted in a pan. There's such a fine line between perfectly roasted and over, that I'd recommend from experience that you don't do any other task while they roast. Keep them moving to prevent scorching and enjoy the wonderful aromas that ensue. Keep trying them as you go and when they're ready, Don't Dally! Tip them straight out on a plate or tray to cool. It's not necessary to grind or pound them to a powder. Sometimes it's nice. A slow heat gives more leeway but backfires if patience runs out.

Thinking of the role that these plants play in life, they bust down with a main tap-root, right into the subsoil given chance, mining minerals to bring to the surface. Like a biological pipeline, a lifeline even. Without these type of roots the topsoil would rapidly deplete. One of Nature's ways of refreshing the topsoil. So when we harvest these roots we can enjoy their deep, rich flavours and get our medicine too. They have a bitterness we need, and increasingly crave with use. There's a wonderful book available for free download called: *Weeds: Guardians of the Soil* by Joseph Coccanouer that explains further and I highly recommend it!

After reading that, my dad had great success at home with leaving Docks

1. Available to read online free here: www.tinyurl.com/soilweeds
Printed versions are available for a small fortune from Amazon (it's out of print!)

and other wildflowers in place. It was wonderful to be in a garden of such tolerance and understanding. Obviously the key is management. As long as they are continually chopped and dropped on the surface they won't have chance to set seed. It can really help to make sure to cut the growing tip or crown of the plant. It's that much harder to recover from and they should give up the sooner for it. When they die off any roots that remain will decompose, creating channels. Oxygen, water, earthworms, roots and the whole food web of the topsoil will then follow the path of least resistance down, abundant outpourings of life and vitality following in their wake. It also happens that crop plants can piggyback ride with the weed roots, reaching depths they couldn't on their own. It becomes clear when all turns lush and deep green. That's nutrient-dense food right there. It becomes glaringly obvious that cooperation is the rule here, not competition.

It's not always worth worrying too much about the species that go best together, thinking instead about the function being filled. They're adaptable, willing to learn new dances. My feeling when I'm around a polyculture of plants is that it's so Interesting. Plants grown in blocks, with bare soil around do not hold a fraction of the fascination. I come away feeling 'very practical, very ordered', but it's hit and run. Harvest the veg and get outta there. Time is money, must crack on. I lose myself in a polyculture. It's a forest in miniature, overlapping layers and niches, all the various leaf shapes occupying different spaces, grabbing every possible ray of sun. It's said that the overall

yield is greater from a polyculture, even though each crop could yield more in monoculture. So this is a peek into my current understanding, which can only deepen with time, as I embark on my own piggyback adventure with weeds. Many plants to be grown, or to help grow at least, many observations to be made. Much fun to be had!

6 April 2014 - I didn't realise when I made the prediction of root roasting that the future I imagined would be so immediate and so personal. I took a walk down to the river and who should be there but Burdock! I returned home for a spade, a dog, a camera and some shoes. Then dug around on 4 sides and levered back till a 'snap!' before teasing out the most delightful, fat, earthy smelling roots. They gather some crazy powerful earth energy down there. One person has commented "it just tastes like it's really good for you!" Their roots were punching down through solid clay, no hint of organic matter I could see. Docks doing the same all around here.

I was happy only to take the top part and let anything below rot or grow on again if they've strength. I snapped a piece off each and placed it back in the top of the hole, firming it in a little. In some areas where they grew densely I chose to thin them without replanting, doing them a bigger



favour by giving them all a touch more room. Same as in a garden really. It brings me back to the knowledge that gatherer-hunting is gardening. The gardens here are in such need of Burdock and their ilk, after being driven over and compacted constantly down the years. Many plants could fill this function, whether monocarpic or polycarpic. That is, plants that set seed just once, or multiple times, before dying. It can be slightly more nuanced than annual, biennial and perennial. Daikon Radish is commonly used because they're monocarpic (annual), easily killed in a few frosts and the tops make great chicken or human food. It is said that they can grow 30 inches down, breaking through hard pans as they go. A plant I'd like to know much better.



Once back in the kitchen I set to, processing the Burdock roots. I scrubbed them and finely grated some, skins on, chopping the rest as a roast vegetable. Some of the grated ones I dried over the woodburning stove, before pan roasting in batches. They crumble to a coarse powder very easily while still hot, rubbing between the hands. Now ready for adding to tea mixes,

adding minerals and savour. Some of the raw, grated ones I put in a demi-john with water and honey, and later, roast Dandelion root. An experiment in root beer, an attempt to recreate a childhood memory, with the twist of sacred alcohol. Fizzy pop, Ben Shaws... I can still see the can. Purple with jaggedy silver edges and exaggerated pictures of the plants I doubt they contained.

I wanted to know if the cuttings of Burdock root would behave like a first year or second year plant, being a plant that usually completes its life cycle in two years. I now know that it behaves like a second year, even from a very small fragment of root that's put back in the hole, and the resulting inflorescence is much reduced in size.



Burdock - *Arctium lappa*, in the Daisy family, Asteraceae - not the Dock family, the Polygonaceae as might be thought from the name. Burdocks are in fact 'a Thistle', which is obvious from the flowers and seed heads.)

The Marvelous Medicine of Wild Meadowsweet Herb

Heather Gardner shares her knowledge of this wonderful plant: its healing properties and how to use it.

If you take a turn around your local meadow in the height of summer you will surely see the creamy coloured, fluffy flower topped plant called meadowsweet (Latin *Filipendula ulmaria*). Inhale deeply as you merrily dance past and you will be rewarded with the scent of honey on the breeze. Meadowsweet is an absolute herbal sweetheart of mine but does not make it on the list of well-known herbs that we use regularly. When I was a child I suffered badly with stomach upsets, one of the reasons why I began my quest for healing knowledge. As I was doubled up in pain with a bloated poorly belly my mother would give me herbal potions containing meadowsweet much to my relief.

A Little Herbal History on Meadowsweet

Though not a well-known herb, meadowsweet, also called queen of the meadows, meadowort or bridewort, has an illustrious history. Plant historians say that the name meadowsweet may be more to do with the famous drink mead than the meadows it adorns. Meadowsweet is one of the herbs that lends its flavour to the famous drink called mead, a fermented honey wine favoured among Celtic societies, and drank for a whole moon cycle after a wedding to ensure fertility.

Meadowsweet was also made famous in ancient Irish mythology as the plant given to one of the heroes of Ireland Cúchulainn, to calm his fits of rage and fevers. This was a warrior who would take on whole armies single-handed and defeat them.

Meadowsweet was also a revered plant in ancient Welsh mythology. In the Mabinogion (the ancient Welsh book of magical tales), Gwydion and King Math of Gwynedd conspired to create the flower maiden Blodeuwedd

by mixing oak, broom and meadowsweet. In Carmarthenshire (where I was born incidentally!) also Wales, meadowsweet was found amongst the human remains in a Bronze age cairn and has been found at other burial sites in Scotland.

In medieval times it was a popular herb amongst the kings and queens of England for digestive issues. Queen Elizabeth 1 preferred it to any other plant to strew in her chambers to make them sweet smelling.

It was from meadowsweet that aspirin was born. Although willow has a longer history of being used to control pain due to its high content of salicylate, and was used by Hippocrates 'the father of medicine' in the 5th century, it was actually research on meadowsweet that led to the discovery of aspirin in the 19th century. This drug is now synthesised in the lab but we can still utilise these plants as nature's gentle pain reliever.

Benefits & Uses of Meadowsweet

Before we get lost in the mists of time with romantic tales of queens and heroes lets explore what this helpful herb can do for us today!

Meadowsweet is truly a herb that can help us for many modern day complaints and is worth a place in every household herbal first aid collection. Apart from the fact that it tastes delicious, reminiscent of elder flowers with a sweeter honey flavour and can be drunk alone as a refreshing infusion or used in combination with



Meadowsweet at Kampenhout, Belgium by Hans Hillewaert

other herbs for a tasty tea. It comes with healing benefits that are perfect to counteract stressful 21st century living.

Meadowsweet can aid the following ailments:

- Indigestion
- Excess stomach acid
- Heartburn
- Gastritis
- Stomach ulcers
- Diarrhea
- Inflammation of the digestive tract
- Headaches
- Reduces fevers
- Promotes sweating
- Muscular aches & pains
- Arthritic & rheumatic aches
- Cools inflamed eyes when cold infusion is applied

To use meadowsweet it is easy to pick the fresh flowers if you have them growing nearby. Be sure you know exactly what they look like or ask an expert, there are poisonous plants with white flowers also that grow in the meadows such as poison hemlock and water hemlock from the Umbelliferae plant family. Or buy the dried flowers from your health-shop or herbalist. Making an infusion is the easiest and yummiest way to access its healing benefits. Just add 1 teaspoon of dried herb per mug of boiling water and infuse for a minimum of 5 minutes preferably with a lid on. Here are some more recipes to try.

Stomach Soothing Infusion

Ingredients:

1 part meadowsweet flowers
1 part marshmallow leaves & root

Directions:

Marshmallow like meadowsweet is also very soothing and healing to the stomach and digestive system, it is very good in any cases of irritation and inflammation. Just mix equal parts of the fresh or dried herbs and allow to steep in just under boiled water. For 1 cup use 1 teaspoon of each and for a pot use 1-3 tablespoons of each. Other herbs that will also help a poorly tummy that can be added in as well are mint, fennel and liquorice. Serve with lemon and honey if desired.

If you need more stomach soothing action then you can mix a tablespoon of slippery elm powder (use sparingly however as this plant is an endangered species) with some of the cooled herbal infusion and take this every few hours.

Meadowsweet Infused Chia Pudding

Ingredients

8 Meadowsweet flower heads
1 cup of almonds
4 cups of water
½ cup of chia seeds
1 cup of fruit mashed (strawberry, banana etc)

Optional Flavours

½ cup of coconut flakes or coconut milk (solid part from a chilled can)
1 vanilla pod seeds scraped out or natural extract

1 tsp orange/lime zest, or orange blossom/rose water

1 Tbsp Lucuma powder

Natural sweetener of choice (honey, maple syrup, coconut sugar, stevia)

First make some almond milk. Blend 1 cup of almonds with 4 cups of water and strain through a nut milk bag.

Pick 4-8 springs of meadow sweet (you can use elderflower as well), you can add other herbs and wild edibles that you like, such as lemon balm, sweet cicely, basil, lavender, mint, rosemary, sweet woodruff and any others.

Add the flowers and herbs into a nut milk bag and then place into the almond milk, to save straining later. Leave to infuse overnight if possible or a few hours. When ready to use, squeeze the bag to extract the flavour and remove. Alternatively make the almond milk with chilled meadowsweet infusion instead of water.

Stir ½ cup of chia seeds into the milk. Mash the fruit and stir in along with your choice of flavours. You can add any sweetener you like in whatever quantity you feel it needs though try without, as it is sweet enough already! Allow the pudding to firm up for 1 hour or longer. Serve chilled topped with chopped fruit and cacao nibs or chopped nuts.

Tasty Tip - If you use the flower infused almond milk when you next make raw ice cream in an ice cream maker then you will be in for a treat!

Meadowsweet Ice Cubes & Lollies

Put 2 cups of organic apple juice into a pan with 4-8 meadow sweet flower heads, with some lemon, lime or orange zest. Bring the juice slowly to a light heat (finger temp not boiling or steaming). Remove from the heat and allow to infuse for 2 hours or longer. When cooled and tasting of meadowsweet, strain the juice from the flowers and add to ice lolly moulds or ice cube trays. Freeze and serve as lollies or in summer drinks.

Meadowsweet Aches and Pain Balm

Melt a cup of coconut oil over a bain marie, and add in 5-6 fresh heads of meadowsweet or half a cup of dried herb. Leave the mixture to simmer slightly (keeping it as cool as possible, you can take it off the heat and then

reheat again so as not to reach too high a temperature) over the heat for 10- 20 mins or better yet sit it on top of a warm dehydrator.

Strain the mixture through a colander or a cloth (not plastic), and pour into a completely dry and clean glass jar. Add in 5-10 drops of lavender essential oil or any other you prefer. Oil of wintergreen is very powerful in cases of aches and sprains. If you leave it plain you will enjoy the scent of the flowers. Allow to cool with the lid off and when solidified, add the lid, label and date. If you live in a climate where coconut oil is liquid then make ¼-½ of the quantity of oil with cacao butter.

Note to the recipes: If you cannot find any meadowsweet and want to try them anyway, sub elderflowers instead and enjoy.

Enjoy your merry meadow munching adventures!

Heather Gardner is a passionate teacher of plant-based, conscious living. Her mission is to educate people on how the power of plants, used as food & medicine, can restore a wild sense of wellness & love you back to loveliness. Her knowledge of plant-based living is rooted in her homesteading upbringing on a wild Irish mountainside, where her herbalist mother taught her about herbs, wild foods and plant cuisine. Heather is a naturopathic nutritionist, hedgerow herbalist, forager, yoga instructor and natural beauty educator, a raw food chef, teacher & writer.

Heather is the Wild Edibles and Herbal Medicine director at Tera Warner's Body Enlightenment University, a raw chef and teacher, yoga teacher, naturopathic nutritionist, hedgerow herbalist and health & beauty educator. A lifelong 3rd generation vegetarian, Heather began learning about herbs and wild foods at a young age from her herbalist mother while growing up homesteading on an Irish mountainside. She has over 10 years experience as a Natural Remedies, Health & Beauty manager. She has learned extensively from some of the worlds leading health pioneers and has several decades working in plant food kitchens under her organic apron!

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www.facebook.com/therawteacher
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You can check out her courses here:
tinyurl.com/Womens-Herbal-Health
tinyurl.com/wild-edible-course

No matter how healthy your diet is, are you still battling with Comfort Eating?

Fiona Robertson shares her thoughts on Eating with Feeling.

Do you sometimes overeat? Especially at parties and social occasions? And then have the guilt of what we ate, but carry on eating, and then worry about the consequences. If it were as simple as eat less and exercise more then we would all be fit as fiddles, however I suggest that many of us are not and we are all still craving more energy in every working day, and at night time turning to food to comfort us.

My recent and most burning question has been, why do we comfort eat?

For many of us, my self included, eating is a function, a practical part of the day, a distraction and has been used as a form of entertainment. A social norm to help us reach a goal, eg to feel full, give us an energy boost, to warm us up or just a habit formed from learnt patterns, eating at set times even if were not actually hungry. The more I delve into this subject the more there seems to be a huge amount of conditioning about what and how we eat.

With a few mindful changes we can all start to change our relationship with food. Yes we all have one, a relationship with ourselves and with the food we eat. Have you heard it said "How we are with something is how we are with everything". What I have noticed for myself and with my coaching clients is that, how we are with our food and our style of eating is actually how we are with everything. For example, if we are confused so will our eating habits be. If we are functional and practical we will be equally functional in our relationship with our food. And also if we are obsessive so will our diets and regimes of eating be and all our relationships. Hence a lot of my work is directed at our emotions, rather than at what we eat, this is to help people have a better and healthier relationship with food.

Don't get me wrong, I think I love food and eating it, but seldom these days have I really, really enjoyed my food to the extent that I can relish the idea of eating a meal. The flavour, the texture, taste and smell of a good meal. I know

that too is quite different for everyone. So I have taken myself off on a journey to re-discover what I really like with no rules to follow, no good and bad foods, no must have lists of super healthy foods. I am un-conditioning myself. I am going for foods that attract me, be they raw, cooked, sweet, savoury, sour, spicy, delicious or bland or my typical comfort family favourites, that enable me to feel fully happy with what I eat. And still somehow getting that loved feeling that comfort eating creates. My typical routine has been all about detoxing, fasting, vegetable juices and really healthy options, including raw food and experimenting with recipes to get the flavour and passion for food back.

I listened to my body as she chose what was delicious for me. I listened to my body after I ate to see how she reacted to the food, and I considered the environment I had just eaten in, the atmosphere, the setting, my timing, and my thoughts.

I have discovered that I have naturally gravitated towards lighter foods at times and heavier foods at others. And if I felt the need for heavier foods due to extra stress in my outer world, with situations like leaving my home, separating from my partner, finding a new home and the prospect of moving, then I have taken the foods that I felt at the time would fulfil me.

I have also made another huge change, I honour myself with my style of eating, I sit more comfortably, I set the table, I turn off the TV, shut off my iPad, I don't answer the phone and I actually look at the food I am about to consume. When I did my Reiki and energy healing course we were taught to bless our food and not talk during the meal, much the same as saying grace before we ate and I have brought this back into my eating routine too.

Getting back to the question of why we comfort eat, my self discovery is that if we are continually mindless with our choices of what and how we eat we are out of control and not listening or enjoying what we consume. To absorb any of

the necessary nutrients we need to be relaxed and feel safe when we eat, or we are in flight or fight mode with our bodies stressed and all the energy is going not to digesting our food, but to our muscles to get ready to run. Our digestion system actually shuts off. In the past I have often eaten while moving, walking, driving, etc. I eat really healthily and enjoy it, I love my Juices and healthy foods but I know now that I can feel that my body is far from enjoying them as I am sitting on the edge of my chair, or running out of the door with a juice in hand to drink whilst I drive or after yoga class.

This whole quest to un-condition myself around my eating habits has brought about a remarkable change, in not *what* I eat but *how* I eat. I am now mindful and really enjoying my food in a relaxed atmosphere and I can taste so much more. What's even more noticeable is that I have less and less need to comfort eat after my meal. My food is now all so much more satisfying and fulfilling to me.

It is Fiona's aim to help you feel better, feel more alive and happier by listening and tuning into and respecting your unique body wisdom. She uses a detoxing and a raw food program to make your body more sensitive to your environment and to hearing your inner body wisdom.

Fiona is the creator of the Home Detox Box an easy to follow 7 day DIY cleansing program you can do from home. She also runs regular cleansing and detox retreats in France and really enjoys seeing her guests change and grow in one week. You can join Fiona on a coaching program to resolve your comfort eating habits and get to know yourself, and what and how you eat in such a unique way that will allow you to let go of old damaging habits and feel free and aware of your body's needs and real desires.

Fiona is passionate about showing you how to listen and translate your gut intuition, for every situation and circumstance that appears into your life from this day forward.

Find out more at www.retreat-biarritz.com and www.home-detox-box.com ☘

Alcohol on a Raw Food Diet

Why are alcohol and soft drinks so popular? What can you drink instead? Rob Hull shares some ideas and a recipe.

Over ten years ago, not long after I started eating a raw food diet, I gave up alcohol, believing that it was unhealthy, even if "raw" like some wines. At the time, it was definitely the best decision for me, especially as I used to drink a fair bit socially and just cutting down probably wouldn't have worked very well.

After four years or so of very strictly not drinking any alcohol, I remember trying a glass of homemade wine, but I didn't particularly like it! Several years later, when we were travelling in France we discovered a French brand of kombucha which was 1.7% alcohol. I'd tried kombucha before and not really liked it, but something made us buy a bottle and we loved it. The brand is Germline and we found it all over France in the organic shops so we drank it regularly while we were in France. Until recently we'd never seen it in any other country, but then we found it in a health food shop in Lisbon. Never seen it in the UK, due to its alcohol content a shop would need an alcohol license to be able to sell it. (Brands of kombucha in the UK usually have an alcohol content below 0.5% which is allowed.)

Fast forward a couple of years and I came across the following in the book *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon:

"We offer the theory that the craving for both alcohol and soft drinks stems from an ancient collective memory of the kind of lacto-fermented beverages still found in traditional societies. These beverages give a lift to the tired body by supplying mineral ions depleted through perspiration and contribute to easy and thorough assimilation of our food by supplying *lactobacilli*, lactic-acid and enzymes."

This started to tie things together in my mind and I started learning more about making low alcohol fermented

drinks. *Nourishing Traditions*, by the way, is an excellent book with lots of fermented food recipes (some raw, some cooked) including lots of fermented drinks. In issue 25 of Funky Raw I gave our recipe for a fermented grape drink inspired by this book.

This led on to my current experiments with mead. This is essentially honey wine, the very first recipe in the book *Wild Fermentation* by Sandor Katz because it is so simple to make. Mead is usually between 8 and 20% alcohol, but I make a very mild version which I estimate to be around 1% or less. It is very refreshing, particularly in summer, and a perfect replacement if you are trying to give up or cut down your alcohol consumption, as well as being a digestive aid with its probiotic bacteria.

Recipe for 1 litre

125 ml raw honey

850 ml spring water or filtered water

I like to use kilner jars for all my fermenting, it makes the process so easy.

Half fill the jar with water.

Add the honey.

Stir until all the honey is dissolved.

Top up with the rest of the water so the jar is almost but not quite full and give another stir.

Cover with a clean cloth or tea-towel which stops flies and dust getting in, but allows in wild yeasts. Stir a few times a day.

After a few days (more in winter, less in summer) you will see small bubble forming, particularly when you stir. At this point, seal the jar and leave to ferment (no more stirring required). This is where the kilner jar comes in useful - the seal allows any excess gasses to escape, but doesn't let air in. If you use a jar with an airtight seal, you will need to open it every now

and again to stop the buildup of gasses which could cause the jar to explode.

If any scum forms on top, just remove it with a spoon.

It is ready when you like it! For me, it starts being ready at around 1 week, and is at its best at about 2 weeks and then fairly quickly starts to go a bit vinegary. It is sweeter when younger, and over time the sugar is converted into alcohol, and then the alcohol starts to get converted into vinegar. In theory, you could put it in the fridge when it gets to your preferred flavour and it should keep for a while, but we don't have a fridge at the moment so I haven't tested that.

The temperature where you store the ferment will affect the speed, so in general it will ferment faster in summer and slower in winter.

The kind of honey you use affects the flavour of the final drink - darker, stronger honey like heather or chestnut produces a stronger drink.

Once you have the basics, you can then experiment with adding flavourings. I've tried various fruits, I particularly liked it made with grated apple, I used 2 apples for a 1 litre jar. I tried grated lemon peel once and that seemed to slow down the fermentation. I've also tried using chaga mushroom powder, I used 3 heaped teaspoons for a 1 litre jar, it resulted in a very good flavour.

At the moment, I'm making a batch with a light multifloral honey and fresh lemon verbena, I think it's going to work well. I left the lemon verbena in the jar for the first two days then took it out, which is what you will need to do with some types of flavourings otherwise they may go bad.

Read more from Rob at rawrob.com ☘

Fermentation Spirit Adventures

Kenny Bountiful Sun and Holly Paige continue the exploration of alcohol and fermentation, looking at Jun.

Food fermentation and its virtues are now becoming widespread in the public awareness due to the fact that its utilisation not only provides delicious culinary experiences and flavours but also if done properly and with some knowledge of what ingredients are most advantageous to use, the benefits to human health and longevity can be astonishing. As some of you who are familiar with our work may know we have a passion for the fermentation arts and have been educating the public on the subject for quite some time now. After researching this subject it was surprising to discover the depth one can go to if one does enough digging.

Fermentation: A mystical Journey

(Kenny) For me it has been an incredible journey not only on a physical level at which I have acquired tremendous benefit and as far as I can gather, from observation, has allowed me to be stronger and has fortified my immune system. Also, the spiritual effects have been very noticeable. To cut a long story short the various cultures I have been working with have been communicating with me telepathically as is the case with plant spirit shamanism, influencing each step I have taken along the journey. For example the kefir culture with its various symbiotic organisms started to speak very loudly to me within days of commencing its utilisation as a superfood and medicine. What I mean by that is I started to get 'downloads' that included scientific data about itself which were later corroborated by the literature that I studied on the subject. Needless to say I was rather intrigued by this experience, so much so that Holly and I decided to begin working on a manuscript for our soon to be published

book 'Fermentation Fetish'.

Subsequently we became the first people in the UK to make the traditional high mountain Tibetan beverage Jun commercially available.

This leads us to the subject matter of this article regarding how a myriad of cultures around the world have utilised yeast and bacterial cultures in conjunction with the spirit realm through the means of ritual and prayer to produce psychotropic brews like mead and various other health producing inebriating beverages. Perhaps the oldest of these brews is what is currently referred to as mead or "honey wine" due to the fact that honey is the oldest easily accessible form of sugar on the planet and occurs in many locations as opposed to something such as sugar cane or even grapes. Mead is something that is referred to as a sacred beverage fit for consumption by gods and goddesses as well as mere mortals, according to various mythological literary sources. It has been said that the fermentation of honey (which in most cases is mead) produces a beverage which allows humans to temporarily tap into transcendental realities. Recently we were chatting to our friend Kate Magic from rawliving.eu in regards to our herbal honey kombucha like drink, Jun. She described it as 'almost psychedelic'.

The alcohol paradox

Alcohol for the most part is something that is frowned upon in the modern raw food or alternative health movement, and there's a very good reason for this. If used excessively, alcohol can be very detrimental, as is obviously evidenced all around us, particularly here in the UK which at one point had a public house on every corner. It is slightly

different now due to the smoking ban in pubs, bars and restaurants that came into play on July 1st 2007 which means that people are just drinking commercially made alcohol in the comfort of their own homes. This kind of alcohol is somewhat akin to the very dangerous pharmaceutical products so prevalent in the market place in that certain compounds found in plant materials are isolated and super concentrated to produce an unnatural imbalance. This often produces side-effects which would not occur if various of the components held within the plant matrix were present, so as to modulate the action of the isolated compound and mitigate any potential harmful consequences of its use. It is very well-known that the abuse of commercial alcohol causes brain damage and cirrhosis of the liver, whereas in traditional fermentations of alcohol like mead and the various preparations found in a myriad of cultures around the world these detrimental side-effects are not found.

There are a plethora of studies that indicate that moderate alcohol intake actually promotes longevity. (There are at least 36 studies pertaining to this subject alone on Pub-med) which makes sense if you look at what happens in nature with the spontaneous occurrence of alcohol that happens for example when the wild indigenous yeasts present on fruits that fall on the jungle or forest floor begin to consume the sugars in the fruit essential for their proliferation and growth. Animals in the wild are well documented to consume alcohol for example the pen tailed tree shrew, a Malaysian bird consumes a tremendous amount of alcohol for its size. It feeds on the fermented nectar of flower buds from the Bertam palm

plant. Scientists found in the 2008 PANS study 'they seem to have developed some kind of mechanism to deal with that high level of alcohol and not get drunk'.

So then, it seems that alcohol in the appropriate context is not the 'big bad wolf' we have been led to believe.

The chemical analysis of some ancient Nubian skeletal remains by Emory anthropologist, George Armelagas and medical chemist Mark Nelson published in the American Journal of Physical Anthropology revealed that as early as 550 to 350 BC man was not just utilising fermentation of alcohol which is documented in other geographical locations way before then but was actually doing it strategically. The Nubian study shows that there was regular consumption of the antibiotic tetracycline most likely in their beer. This obviously debunks the idea that antibiotics were first discovered with penicillin in 1928. Says Armelegas "We tend to associate drugs that cure diseases with modern medicine but it's becoming increasingly clear that this prehistoric population was using empirical evidence to develop therapeutic agents, I have no doubt that they knew what they were doing".

There are various fermented beverages out there like water kefir and kombucha that could perhaps be used in a way that allows one to access the psychoactive components of the plant kingdom, but as far as we have observed they are weakened hybrid strains of more robust cultures like for example the one we have been promoting, Jun.

Known primarily for its use in the high mountain regions of Tibet¹, Jun is a healthy and delicious sparkling elixir containing enzymes, B vitamins, and pro-biotics. Jun is a fermented beverage and like kombucha, it is tra-

ditionally brewed from tea and a probiotic culture; however, unlike kombucha, the Jun culture digests honey instead of sugar. And so all the benefits of honey are combined with the detoxifying and energizing effects of the nutritious jun culture. Jun is a more powerful culture than kombucha, remaining active at lower temperatures and creating a more potent product. We like to think of it as the wise man's kombucha. The alcohol content is higher than kombucha due to the lower brewing temperature and slowed fermentation because of the presence of antibacterial honey compounds. We keep the alcohol content as low as possible.

(Holly) Brought up on the euphoric effects of traditional elderflower beer, brewed by my Welsh father, the emergence of these herbal honey jun fermented drinks have reconnected me and helped me put into context some of my earliest experiences in life. When, as a teenager, I began to drink in pubs and clubs I was shocked by how different the impact was on me and also by the ensuing hangovers. Traditional alcoholic beverages have far more than the one dimensional effect of modern commercial alcoholic drinks. In the processes of industrialisation and dealing with the logistics of mass production and distribution ingredients lists have been simplified and nutritional profiles lost. To refer to another example, it's not widely known that before the industrial revolution each loaf of bread was made with a variety of grains not just wheat and some of these grains (unlike wheat) contained the crucial B17 vitamin which can so easily be omitted from our diets today.

Our jun has the added dimension of medicinal and mind enhancing herbs. The fermentation process extracts the medicinal components in the herbs in several ways, and the herbs often add a another interesting dimension which complements the effects of the alcohol. One of our favourite references in this whole adventure has been Stephen Harrod Buhner's 'Sacred and Herbal Healing Beers'. In this book he explains how fermenting many herbs actually make them psychotropic i.e. effecting the mind or mood. In our current cerebrally (left

hemisphere) dominated state psychotropic herbs can help stimulate the right hemisphere of the brain and connect us to our creative, intuitive, spiritually connected state. Thus the word 'spirits' for alcoholic drinks which traditionally were a psychoactive experience.

One of the plants traditionally used in British beers was elder. We have been gathering elderflowers in the lanes and by the river Brue near our home in rural Somerset. The brew we made was so delicious we just knew it had to become our sixth variety and on reading about the use of heather in traditional ancient and sacred British brews we decided to combine the two for a delicious new flower beverage and made the most delicious brew. Working with the spirits of the plants reminds us about the real meaning of the word 'spirit' in connection to alcoholic drinks. I have very much felt the spirits of the ancestors around whilst we have been doing this, in particular that of my father, now an elderly man and in a dreamy state. We are finding that herbs and plants from different cultural traditions are weaving together in our concoctions, the cacao from the Aztecs, the chaga from northern Europe, the ginkgo from the Orient and so on. We got as far as as the Amazon with our Jungle jun and now we find ourselves back home by our local river and Celtic roots with the elder and heather.

Brewing with the jun culture is obviously different to with brewer's yeast, the amount of alcohol is much less unless it is left in a warm place to ferment longer and it is held in an organic living matrix. Working with the life force in whatever form changes one's view – basically to a more life affirming one. And living foods and beverages of course transform our life experience.

You can find out more about Holly and Kenny's fermented products and fermentation classes at

www.foodforconsciousness.co.uk

Jun: www.tinyurl.com/lmehnfq

Cultured veg and other ferments:
www.tinyurl.com/18gqe5g

Fermentation fetish classes:
www.tinyurl.com/lxnjjjj ☼

1. Editors note: According to Sandor Katz in *Wild Fermentation* "The lack of credible information on Jun leads me to the conclusion that it is a relatively recent divergence from the Kombucha family tree. Some websites claim that it comes from Tibet, where it has been made for 1,000 years; unfortunately, books on Tibetan food, and even a specialized book on Himalayan ferments, contain no mention of it."

Feeding Your Baby when Breastmilk Isn't Available

Alison Ottaway shares her story on feeding her baby in a way that the standard 'healthcare system' disagrees with.

"Whatever happens, we are in this together", was how my partner, Rob, couched it. And when I heard that **I knew something bad was coming**. I wasn't expecting it to be quite so dreadful though. As the next line left his lips, my heart plummeted into my stomach.

We'd had a **challenging couple of months**, parenting our newborn, Gabriel. Whilst the birth had been amazing, feeding hadn't gone how I'd imagined. I'd had poor milk supply, meaning I couldn't provide all he wanted. He'd had a tongue tie that had needed 2 operations and some traumatic post-operative procedures to correct. And between us we'd had latch problems, poor milk transfer and thrush.

I was exhausted. I'd hardly slept, was really run down and hadn't spent time with my beautiful boy. For most of the previous few weeks I'd been attached to a breast pump, expressing milk...which due to a quirk of my health issues, was taking me 10 hours a day. I was trying to come to terms with the fact that **I knew I couldn't continue** like that and that the top-up milk we were using for Gabriel would have to become a larger part of his diet if I was to stay in one piece.

The one thing I felt blessed around was the fact that we had found the **home-made baby milk formula** that is part of the **Weston Price** nutritional system, something that had transformed our own health over the previous few years. I was so relieved to be able to give my little one a food made of whole, un-processed ingredients – including raw milk - with a nutritional profile the same as breast milk. I knew I'd be giving him the next best thing, that it would help

him develop and build his immunity. And he looked so healthy on it.

So hearing the news Rob brought me hit me hard. He'd been on the phone to a paediatrician who knew about the milk we were feeding Gabriel. **She'd argued with him about what we were doing, saying that she would report us to social services. She had no choice.**

My response was immediate and hysterical: Social services?! They take children away...

We'd got to this point by telling the truth. And right then it seemed like it had been the worst decision we'd ever made. We'd told the health visitor, who'd acted like it wasn't a problem, but then told the GP, who brought us in and suggested we might see a paediatrician. That very afternoon, unknown to Rob and I the hospital was contacted – hence the call from the very shocked paediatrician.

I can't express in words what I felt when contemplating what the consequences of our truthfulness might be.

This little one, so loved, so cherished, taken away from us because we wanted to give him the best possible nourishment.

I felt so many emotions. At the top was the most overwhelming fear, followed by disbelief, anger and frustration.

Wild thoughts ran through my head – could we leave the country?



Rob and I have built our lives on living consciously, in integrity. I spent most of my childhood afraid to speak my truth, hiding behind my 20 stone girth, and I felt the consequences of that. Since meeting Rob I'd learned slowly, that speaking the truth is possible and preferable. It's a holistic way of making things right, of finding peace and it's plenty preferable to trying to get everyone to like you (my previous strategy).

We made a choice about our child's food as informed, caring, conscious, intelligent parents. It was a choice based on our own overwhelmingly positive experience with the tenets of the Weston Price system and based on values and beliefs we hold so strongly – that whole, natural, unprocessed food is what we are meant to eat and gives us the most amazing health, healing and immunity.

We couldn't lie now. Rob had made such a convincing case for it over the phone that he'd shocked the paediatrician...and when we looked deep inside of ourselves we knew this was the best thing for Gabriel.

Raw Milk Baby Formula Makes 36 ounces (approx 1 litre)

This milk-based formula takes account of the fact that human milk is richer in whey, lactose, vitamin C, niacin, and long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids compared to cow's milk but leaner in casein (milk protein). The addition of gelatin to cow's milk formula will make it more digestible for the infant. Use only truly expeller-expressed oils in the formula recipes, otherwise they may lack vitamin E.

The ideal milk for baby, if s/he cannot be breastfed, is clean, whole raw milk from old-fashioned cows, certified free of disease, that feed on green pasture.

Ingredients

2 cups (475ml) whole raw cow's milk, from pasture-fed cows

¼ cup (60ml) homemade liquid whey (See recipe for whey, below)

Note: *Do not* use powdered whey or whey from making cheese (which will cause the formula to curdle). Use only homemade whey.

4 tablespoons lactose

¼ teaspoon *bifidobacterium infantis* (a probiotic)

2 or more tablespoons good quality cream (preferably not ultrapasteurised), more if you are using milk from Holstein cows

½ teaspoon unflavoured high-vitamin or high-vitamin fermented cod liver oil or 1 teaspoon regular cod liver oil (make sure it is high quality)

¼ teaspoon high-vitamin butter oil (optional)

1 teaspoon expeller-expressed sunflower oil

1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons coconut oil

2 teaspoons Frontier brand nutritional yeast flakes

2 teaspoons gelatin

1 ⅞ cups (440ml) filtered water

¼ teaspoon acerola powder

Instructions

Put 2 cups filtered water into a pyrex measuring pitcher and remove 2 tablespoons (that will give you 1 ⅞ cups water).

Pour about half of the water into a pan and place on a medium flame.

Add the gelatin and lactose to the pan and let dissolve, stirring occasionally.

When the gelatin and lactose are dissolved, remove from heat and add the remaining water to cool the mixture.

Stir in the coconut oil and optional high-vitamin butter oil and stir until melted.

Meanwhile, place remaining ingredients into a blender.

Add the water mixture and blend about three seconds.

Place in glass bottles or a glass jar and refrigerate.

Before giving to baby, warm bottles by placing in hot water or a bottle warmer. *Never* warm bottles in a microwave oven.

Variation: Goat Milk Formula

Although goat milk is rich in fat, it must be used with caution in infant feeding as it lacks folic acid and is low in vitamin B12, both of which are essential to the growth and development of the infant.

Inclusion of nutritional yeast to provide folic acid is essential. To compensate for low levels of vitamin B12, if preparing the Milk-Based Formula (above) with goat's milk, add 2 teaspoons organic raw chicken liver, frozen for 14 days, finely grated to the batch of formula. Be sure to begin egg-yolk feeding at four months.



Homemade Whey

Makes about 5 cups (1.2 litres)

Homemade whey is easy to make from good quality plain yoghurt, or from raw or cultured milk. You will need a large strainer that rests over a bowl.

If you are using yoghurt, place 2 quarts (1.9 litres) in the strainer lined with a tea towel. Cover with a plate and leave at room temperature overnight. The whey will drip out into the bowl. Place whey in clean glass jars and store in the refrigerator.

If you are using raw or cultured milk, place 2 quarts (1.9 litres) of the milk in a glass container and leave at room temperature for 2-4 days until the milk separates into curds and whey. Pour into the strainer lined with a tea towel and cover with a plate. Leave at room temperature overnight. The whey will drip out into the bowl. Store in clean glass jars in the refrigerator.

Sources

Green Pasture Fermented Cod Live Oil is recommended.

In the USA this and some of the harder to find ingredients can be purchased from www.radiantlifecatalog.com

In the UK, it can be purchased at www.funkyraw.com

These recipes are adapted from www.realmilk.com/how-to/recipes-for-whole-foods-baby-formula/ where you will find more information including a nutritional comparison between breast milk and these formulas, plus also a raw liver formula. The Real Milk website can also help you find where to buy raw milk.

But how could we not lie when the potential consequences had been laid out?

That night I stayed awake, veering between writhing in agony over the situation and sitting in prayer – calling on the presence that had miraculously guided me to a place where I could restore my fertility naturally, and looked after my unborn son in my womb.

Help me, help us, help him.

We had been told to bring Gabriel in to the hospital the following day – he must be checked and have blood tests done. Whilst I was looking into my little ones eyes and savouring every precious moment I had with him, Rob was researching, playing to his strengths. *Who else had used the formula, what had happened, how did social services work, what were the risks?* The internet searches and telephone calls made it clear that everyone but one Mum using this formula in the UK (and there are plenty of people using it) had lied to medical authorities and many hundreds more were lying in the USA.

Just before we left for the hospital we went for a walk with our little one in the sling. We held hands. Looking out over the beautiful rolling hills, at my request, we bravely verbalised what our ideal outcome of this situation was.

We wanted to **tell the truth**, we wanted the consultants to **understand why** we were choosing this and realise that we had our little boy's **best interests at heart**, we wanted **all the tests done on Gabriel to come back fine**, we wanted the doctors to **allow us to continue to feed Gabriel this milk** and leave us alone to get on with our lives. We wanted **medicine to know people were choosing this formula for their children** and we wanted to create **a path where people weren't scared of coming forward stating this was their choice**, where everyone else who held our beliefs didn't feel they had to lie.

We held those visions strong in our thoughts as we closed our eyes for a moment and held each other – our little one snuggled up in between us.

I kept thinking of our ideal outcome all the way to the hospital – we had that, along with Rob's hours of research and amazing ability to debate and discuss with such clarity, intelligence and level-headedness, and our own conviction that we were 100% doing the right thing for Gabriel.

And then every moment took on the sort of significance they do when you know that in a few hours everything could be different. We'd know by the time the next evening came, by the time I sat in this car again...and with each footstep I felt as if I was stepping towards something that would shape our destiny as a family.

There followed, in Tunbridge Wells hospital, the most challenging, amazing, terrifying, emotional hospital visit I have ever made.

Gabriel was weighed, measured, prodded, poked, checked, looked at and into. I stayed with him, soothing his tears as the doctor took two goes at inserting a needle into his hand to take his blood. I held him to me as Rob eloquently discussed the whys, hows and wherefores of our choices with the paediatrician. I couldn't believe how amazing he was. The doctor listened and responded and so did Rob – both being open enough to have some empathy for each others perspectives.

The paediatrician had, since her phone call with Rob, spoken to her boss, the most senior consultant paediatrician at the hospital and **he'd let a tiny shaft of light into the situation**. A man with many years in paediatrics, **his grasp of infant nutrition moved beyond the corporate world of formula alternatives and his knowledge of immunity and traditional methods of feeding babies when a Mother's milk was not available stretched beyond the leafy Kent suburbs**.

And as I listened, and looked down at my obviously bursting with health little boy, I started to believe that maybe, just maybe, **a small miracle was going to happen here**. *Maybe we were going to get our ideal outcome?* The thing that we had both said was what we wanted.

Gabriel passed the physical examinations – he was officially as healthy as I already knew he was. And we were told that, providing the blood test results were normal and he remained healthy, although the hospital did not agree with what we were doing, they would be willing to accept it.

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. This was what we wanted.

Was this really happening?

Was the threat of him being taken away dissolving?

Could we go back to 'normal' parenting issues?

...suddenly lack of sleep, deciphering bowel movements and understanding what tears mean didn't seem so hard.

In that moment, I knew deep down that my little one would be healthy on this feed...so this was the license for us to **carry on doing what we believe in**, having been **truthful**, having **acted bravely in integrity**.

Thanks to Anna at Arnica who was a great support and thank you to Dr Kent and Dr Day at Tunbridge Wells Hospital for stepping out of the mould that the health visitor and previous doctors would have me believe medical staff are cut in.

Thanks to Weston Price Foundation for this amazing formula and thanks to my beloved, Rob.

When you act in integrity miracles happen.

Alison is founder of the life-change movement Path Less Trodden – her passionate, yet down-to-earth message being born out of the many successful transformations she's made in her own life: She found freedom from weight issues, losing 140 pounds; transformed debilitating health into a vibrant, youthful body and went on to prove her doctor wrong, naturally conceiving a child; broke free of the corporate world to build her own business, and left her native UK to discover a new life in Italy. Alison coaches, speaks, creates and write to guide others, who know they can be and do so much more, to a life of passion, authenticity, joy and fulfilment. Find out more at www.pathlesstrodden.com ✿

Clay, Laughter & Healing

Jolita shares her experience at Quinta do Sol in Portugal.

I love clay. I have been using it to make pottery, to beautify and cleanse my body externally and internally. There is something earthy and primal about it that makes me connected to the earth and myself.

When I heard about this Adobe course, building with clay, I enrolled immediately without thinking. That was the clay calling me to be playful and explore other usages but this time within the building realm.

I arrived at Coimbra bus station and was picked up by one of the hosts - Jorg. He was friendly and open and made me feel at ease. We had a relaxed conversation about our lives and experiences and I also told him about coming to get some inspiration about how I could cover my geodesic dome structure. I felt that my experience on this farm will be fun.

For five days I joined a little community - Ana Banana, wife of Jorg, their little home educated son Malik, some Woofers and other guests. I had a little resistance at the beginning, thinking how I am going to fit, but I consciously decided to relax into the experience and go with the flow.

On the first evening that I arrived I was invited to participate in filming a short video with the aim to raise the money for Ana Banana's daughter

Zara's education. We we asked to dress up in funny costumes and follow Ana's script. At first it felt stupid to me, but then my inner child took over and we all seemed to have a good experience. Also stepping out of my comfort zone was very healing.

On the following days, as the weather permitted, we were focused on plastering the dome shaped building with adobe. We were using local clay from the farm mixed with rock sand, water and straw. Jorg has taught himself how to build with adobe and he is still experimenting and perfecting the techniques. He was sharing his knowledge and experience within the building process.

But my stay on the farm wasn't just about building with clay - as Jorg and Ana are both clowns and use laughter in their everyday lives, I too became part of this laughing experience.

Ana healed herself from muscle pains and aches with laughter, after she had injured herself by immersing herself very enthusiastically in rebuilding her own house. She also used laughter to help her through pain and fear while giving birth to her son Malik.

I was witnessing Jorg being fined by the road police and then afterwards laughing so loud to release the tension, that I spontaneously joined him laughing ha ha ha ha ha he he he he...

By laughing so often I realised that laughter is really a powerful healing tool - it cleanses and detoxifies the body and emotions, releasing endorphins, it helps us to detach and see the situation with a fresh perspective. It tones and relaxes stomach muscles, making one feel more relaxed.



We also had a beautiful healing circle evening when each of us had the opportunity to receive healing, massage and love from the others. What a delightful experience!

Jorg offered for us to try acrobatics one day, which I have never tried before and dreaded, but his calm and confident presence made me feel safer and curious to try. I didn't regret trying- I learned to trust and let go. It was clear that the fear was in my mind, by consciously allowing myself to surrender I felt joy and pleasure.

I wanted to thank Ana and Jorg for a delightful experience. I really enjoyed healthy balance between work and play. I also released my inner clown by laughing whenever I felt like without being ridiculed. From now on I want to create more space for laughter in my life as another healing tool for releasing fear, tension, insecurity, over thinking, blocked emotions and to bring more light for myself and others.

Ana and Jorg both speak English and Portuguese. Jorg also speaks German. They run various courses and workshops. For more information go to www.escoladoriso.com

Jolita is healer, kundalini yoga teacher and artist. You can see her artwork at www.redantart.eu ☘



My Journey into the Amazon Jungle Abyss and Healing my Soul

Susan Laing shares her healing journey.

I am back! Back from the Amazon jungle after spending a whole month in the beautiful hot tropical *zumba* country Brazil. It has been some journey! Some things we encounter and experience on our journey of healing on such a deep and profound level it is difficult to put into words and sometimes best left to the privacy of the individual. So here I would love to share with you a snippet of my experience of my healing and plant medicine and my privileged encounter with the Huni Kuin indigenous people.

A little bit about my past health

I have been on a journey of healing since falling ill a number of years ago, having suffered from *chronic fatigue syndrome* - CFS – what ever that means and is also a bit of *wish washy* umbrella label. CFS does not really say specifically what the cause may have been or make a fair diagnosis especially in the orthodox world. *Its mitochondria not hypochondria* is quite a good analogy. However I suffered from many a physical ailment from losing weight, dropping down to just under 7 stone (44.5kg), having jaundice and losing my period for 2 years. I was basically never the same person as I was before falling into this space. I lost my *joie de vivre*. Some may call it losing their soul and some may refer to it as a kind of Humpty Dumpty who fell off the wall and broke into pieces only to put his or her pieces back together again. In Chinese Medicine they refer to it as a break in the electric or chi energetics.

I will share with you a little of my past 'story' so it can make sense to anyone reading this and understand the amazing healing that took place in

the jungle.

All I knew was after parting (my choice) with a long term partner I encountered another very brief 'relationship' with a young handsome man. I had made the decision to part for very good reasons due his very dysfunctional relationships with everyone around him. So it was not long after breaking up I was running on a treadmill in the gym. It was during these moments I felt extremely overwhelmed with grief and sadness that all I wanted to do was to run away from the intensity of the pain but little did I realise it was nothing to do with the brief encounter I had just experienced, but more to do with unresolved past child hood emotional traumas – *the wounded child*. In that moment on the treadmill I remember so clearly that everything seemed to have felt channelled into this 'break-down'. I felt I was running away from the world. I heard and felt a physical tangible snap within my body. And then all of a sudden *woosh...* I experienced an instant fever. It was like someone had injected me with an extreme intense heat and I began to sweat profusely and abnormally. I had to stop running there and then. I went home and I felt nauseated. From that day on I was never quite the same person. I would cry without any reason and just burst into fits of tears. I began to crave food that I never liked before. And I could not think straight. I felt anxious and couldn't relax at any time or sleep. I became exhausted and depleted over time. I also reached depths of despair and experienced feelings of suicide and thought I was



dying. I had pains down the sides and back of my legs. And I couldn't feel emotions of love that I could experience before. I had become numb. There were many other numerous symptoms but I won't go into them here.

I believe my soul had left my body for the second time in my life.

These symptoms went on for many years only then did I discover organic raw food and then Lifefood and various methods of detoxing. Plus I experienced and attended many therapies based on emotional and spiritual healing from Buddhism, meditation, to body electronics and so on. These all helped my well being tremendously. I was after all off work for a total of 4 years. Sold my house gave up my work and much more.

My discovery of the Shamanic path

Later on the path of healing I discovered what I had always been looking for, the **shamanic** path. I **discovered my long lost connection to nature**. I was born in the African jungle and lived there for 12 years and I used to have my own little mantra at 8 years old "*be at one with nature*".

I joined a Shamanic Drumming group and discovered journeying with the

animal and spirit guides. My very first journey was an amazing experience where I found myself questioning everything I had ever believed in. I had journeyed into other dimensions. As soon as I closed my eyes I *flew the eagle* and flew over the red rocks in Indian territory. I then continued to experience Egypt and the felt the presence and saw a powerful Egyptian Queen. I noticed all the in-depth detail of her headdress and costume jewelry covered in gold and turquoise. And then after this journey I continued into another dimension and I seemed to travel into the prehistoric age where I encountered a giant turkey and much more! All this within 20 minutes, or was it 20 minutes of another time? Bam! I never really knew about any of this so I found myself on Google searching for related information. And then that was that! I was convinced I really had journeyed into other dimensions. I was excited! I continued to experience other energetic shamanic experiences such as astral travelling and *shapeshifting* type encounters. Once I saw my body turning into a falcon during the day whilst walking outside with a dog in the countryside. Many a time my body has turned into various snakes including the Australian Aborigine Rainbow snake. I have encountered quite a few of these wonderful experiences. I have noticed when I have felt upset and emotional I have encountered animal shapeshifting. I feel I am blessed and protected by the spirit world.

So it was not long after experiencing the healing sound of the Shamanic drum that I discovered **PLANTS!** I joined quite a few shamanic plant ceremonies from Iboga to San Pedro, Peyote and Ayahuasca, where I felt a connection to the plants in such a deep profound and beautiful way. Once I remember hearing the plants sing on one occasion after a peyote ceremony and I asked for guidance from them. It was from there on I started to communicate with the plants. This is my reality and how I ground myself.

I was sitting in a circle amongst friends after sharing indigenous plant snuff – medicine from the Amazon, rape – pronounced *happe* and I was listening to the Ayahuasca *Icaro* sung

by female Peruvian shaman with a so soft sweet beautiful voice. I heard the words “I am your mother, come back to me”. It was at this moment I knew I had a deeper connection to this spirit plant than before and I knew I was going to spending more time with *her*. The next thing I knew not long after attending an Ayahuasca ceremony in Europe I was off to the Amazon to spend my time with the Huni Kuin Indigenous Tribe and their spiritual shaman leader.

The journey into the Amazon jungle abyss

The journey to reach into the heart of the jungle was a long one. It involved 4 plane journeys and a 7 hour bumpy road taxi journey shared with 5 other Brazilians to eventually reach the little sprawled town of Tarauaca located on the edge of the Amazon jungle in the Acre region of Brazil. I stayed in a beautiful little cheap and cheerful yellow painted sun blessed hotel only to meet up with the other jungle travellers and our wonderful apprentice shaman who was to guide us during the whole of the trip.

We bought and collected our necessities for the trip from our mosquito nets, hammocks and mini groovy bright blue or white wellington boots and oh... loads of insect repellent lotion and potions!

So we set off up the winding river with its muddy coloured waters so mystical and full of jungle *majick*. The river was full of *majick* and we were lucky enough to encounter the elusive Amazonian pink dolphin on our slow boat journey into the Amazon. We had many a moment emptying the slow leaking canoe whilst indulging in Brazilian Amazonian wild fruit and eating the local food cooked on the small boat stove. We did our best to pick up a few words and phrases of the Brazilian lingo. The children on the boat were so keen on teaching us and turned it into such fun and games especially with a the gorgeous young boy with big wide eyes.

One of the most exciting experiences on the boat journey was our encounter the sacred Ayahuasca

Joboya snake. Our guide had one as a short term pet but needless to say he escaped. We had the privilege to hold it in our hands for a short scary but exciting time and we were advised to stay peaceful and quiet as the snake is sensitive to noise or sudden movement, just like most animals are.

Eventually after 4 days on a slow boat, after encountering a true Amazonian heavy long rain fall we reached the 5th village of the Huni Kuin Tribe deep in the heart of the Amazon jungle. Our welcome was something I will never forget as we were greeted from the village river banks by numerous painted-faced smiling Huni Kuin children who were only too pleased to help us with our huge plastic bags full of newly bought jungle necessities.

We were glad to set our feet on *terra firma* where we knew we would be staying for a while longer.

The Amazon jungle has a voice and an energy that permeates through every part of your being. It is unlike anywhere else I have ever been and I have travelled many a place. The virgin jungle abyss is full of beautiful sounds from singing crickets, various symphonic frog deep croaks and many a macaw *squaks* and screeches. There are so many different bird sounds too. I could almost hear them as words sounds in the native language. One bird in particular made a sound that reminded me unbelievably of a car alarm!

First night at the village of the Huni Kuin

So resting our first night in one of the unusual wooden houses built on stilts, with our ‘room’ open to the surrounding night’s sounds emanating from every tree, plant and animal we



shared a few hours gazing into the blanket of jungle darkness with the sky illuminated with billions of twinkling stars only to feel gratitude at having come this far. This first night I saw a spirit of the forest. It appeared as a moving shadow almost resembling someone with a black cloak. I felt a little anxious so my jungle companion and I called to the shaman...

"I have seen something just over there". His presence and reassurance of "all was okay" and "not to worry" immediately calmed me down. After the shaman went off to his bed I could still see the spirit of the forest move in all shapes and sizes but never seemed to move from the same spot. So eventually in the early hours of the dark morning we decided to go and sink into our colourful cotton hammocks.

Learning how to find a comfortable position in a hammock was a new experience after sleeping on the floor at home. As you can imagine every day was full of new experiences. One of them included my attempt to communicate with members of this tribe. My knowledge of their language was sparse compared to the other travellers.

I noticed how humble, grounded and focused the Huni Kuin people were. The children were shy and seemed unsure of us. I was aware of their gaze, watching every thing about our dress and hair, especially my braided hair. As time went on I also noticed how they liked to share their food amongst everyone. The children brought us new local fresh fruit goodies each day. I also noticed that they also never had seconds at meal times and often shared a plate. I could not digest most of the cooked food. So I did my best to compromise and eat the simplest of the food. The first time I ate cooked *table*-salted white rice, the next day I noticed my ankles had swollen which is not good a sign. I even indulged in some of the wild caught alligator, deer and fish. But again this was not for my body. I had been eating mostly uncooked organic raw vegan food for 7 years. Previous to this I was a so called vegetarian. I was also aware of how concerned the Huni Kuin people were about my limited diet.

The jungle sand flies were making a feast of me! I noticed one of the girls

who came out with us did not have any problems at all. And I am sure it was due to my temperament and how the food affected me that they chose to eat me. It is a well known fact that food can change the blood with in a short time of ingesting it, making a tasty concoction of blood elixirs for them. I lived in Africa for 12 years and never experienced this before.

The First Ayahuasca Ceremony

Not long after arriving in the village of these beautiful souls of the Huni Kuin during the first ayahuasca ceremony I experienced the most beautiful sounds sung by the children and women. Whilst they sang during the ceremony I could feel their sweet and pure souls via the ayahuasca vibrations. Touching somewhere deep inside of me. The plants were singing with them. The Shaman spiritual leader could whistle a tune with such ease and the notes he seemed to create again were so de-light-full.

I found myself going through a deep cleansing healing with the ayahuasca, rape and various other Amazonian jungle medicines. I could feel my body going through many changes *within*. During the first ceremony I was so aware of the support from the Huni Kuin people. My body seemed to shake continuously and uncontrollably almost like having rigours. My jaws were chattering and my head was shaking. I was shifting some very deep energy. I could feel the energy gradually move up my body like it had been stuck somewhere for a very long time until eventually I would sob and purge several times. Plant medi-



cines have an amazing capacity and wisdom to scan the body and go to the very parts that need attention and healing. People often say it is like having 10 years of psychotherapy in one night. But oh so much much more. It is spiritual in every sense. Something very profound and subtle can happen within most people that have had the chance to experience plant medicine – **nature in all its glory**. We in the west often forget about the spirit and only tend to focus on the body physical ailment with a *stuck* limited label and the same with the mind. Yes, plants have an infinite wisdom and consciousness way beyond what we as a human being will ever understand. It is meant to be this way. Nature has many secrets so that we may bow down to something greater than us. It is the shaman who can communicate with the plants and cosmos.

When you are out deep in the jungle abyss you can *feel* the jungle energy.

The departing of one of the travellers

Around day 5 one of our travellers had to make her way back home as she was in a lot of pain with her infected root canal. I was sorry to see her go. But it was a necessity. I remember feeling the urge to join her as I was finding my experience difficult with my numerous sand fly bites and food issues. I felt like I wanted to run from all that I was suffering. But something inside of me knew I had to complete this trip here. I had been *called* to come here. The strong **knowing** to stay outweighed the *urge to flee*. It wasn't anything to do with the place, it was just my continual feeling of fatigue, foggy head and constant crazy itching. At times I felt I was going insane.

Drinking fresh Mother Ayahuasca vine elixir water

So I decided to stay on for more *medicine* and spiritual healing. We were taken on another boat journey further into the jungle to collect some locally grown ayahuasca vine and make our very own brew. We were only 36 km away from one of the *truest* isolated indigenous Huni Kuin tribes. No Western man had managed to find their way into this tribe as they did not wish for any contact with the outer world. An arrow would be shot in your direction if you were to

approach this tribe. I found this knowledge exciting! (Not the arrow shooting!) I had seen and heard of this tribe via National Geographic photos taken from above flying helicopters. Anyway back to the boat trip... I suddenly came over with extreme nausea and felt quite sick. I was also hallucinating. Had the shivers too. I began to feel quite anxious as I felt I was losing my mind. I began to communicate with the jungle plants on the riverbank edges. I remember smelling a strong sweet flowery aroma from the jungle at this point. I had smelt this before as we were travelling up the river on our way into the jungle village. So I asked the plants to help me feel better and to take away any spirit that did not belong in my body. I also asked the shaman for some rape which I thought would help move some of this stuck energy. The nausea just became worse and I began to purge. I instinctively knew I had to chant the Huni Kuin Icaro for the rape medicine and as did this I could feel the energy of the words in my body. I was aware of energy being stuck in my upper chest and eventually it gradually shifted upwards. The rape has a wonderful affect on moving stuck energy. So I had 3 lots of this medicine during this boat trip. I knew I had received some healing from the plants. Eventually we reached our vine destination and once again landed on *terra firma*. We walked through the dense tree jungle. We chopped and collected the ancient ayahuasca vines but I was not really present, I felt I was standing outside my body and I was sweating profusely whilst watching everything during the cutting of the vine. We then had an amazing experience. We drank the water straight from a piece of freshly cut ayahuasca vine. Which when squeezed the *elixir water of happiness* dribbled into our open mouths and as soon as the water drops touched my lips I could feel the energy from this plant and I began to laugh! Eventually we returned to the village and I took to my hammock for the rest of the day not wishing to eat any thing at all or do anything.

Sacred body painting

The day after we arrived in the Huni Kuin village was another new experience – the day of **sacred face** and



body painting. The designs and patterns were to enhance and protect our energy. My face painting design represented the Joboya snake which was to protect me from negative energy or spirits. When the Huni Kuin woman finished painting my face and I looked into the mirror I actually scared myself! The painting looked quite intense and warrior like. If I scared myself I wondered what someone else would think. Just imagine walking down the local high street back home! My arms were painted with the alligator design which represented strength. I am sure this was chosen because of the food issues.

The paint dye is extracted and crushed from various locally grown plants and their seeds. The natural dyes varied in colour depending on the seed used. The red seeded fruit in the picture below seems to have more significance than the other dyes used. It can also be applied and used on open small wounds .

Anyone can face paint. The Huni Kuin people are creative beings. Making many things from beaded jewellery to clay pots and much more.

I noticed that they lived in the moment. There was **no stress** in the jungle. So everything was done with ease and completed eventually.

Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished~ Lao Tzu ~

Their energy flowed with the moment. Staying there in the jungle with the Huni Kuin taught me to live more in the moment for sure. There was also no internet. Imagine that! No



TV or computers and mobile phones. This was bliss for the time we were there.

The Huni Kuin lived in **harmony with nature**. They only took what they needed and left the rest for another time.

The women spent time with young children and many a child was seen suckling on the mothers breast anywhere, anytime. So I could see plenty of 'women time' together and the same for the men. This made sense to me as I am sure it would to many people. Where the younger boy or girl could learn skills from the same sex. Yet at the same time when the children and adults loved to play football the women joined in too and they were exceptionally good at playing football. I could see that there was indeed a harmony between the sexes. Not like in the Western culture, where we seem to have created a polarising of the sexes. Seeing them as so different when in actual fact we are more similar than we think.

We were invited to join the children whilst they danced in our new *skin attire*. So with painted faces we joined in the fun. Sometimes the children would dance and sing for hours on end. It looked like a sort of *meditational trance* and it seemed to have a grounding affect on all the children. It was also a form of play and connection amongst them all. They danced bare foot and sang, and after a few times dancing along with them, we joined them barefoot too. It was such an amazing grounding and heart filled experience.



Healing my heart

After a few more ceremonies, after many purges, which included purging parasites (the parasites seemed to come from the base of my head during a projectile purge) and many bowel evacuations I felt my body had become much lighter. In many ways. Did you know most plant medicines are anti parasitic and are full of many nutrients. After the 4th ceremony I knew **my heart had been healed**. I felt extremely **grounded** and **in my body** for the first time in many many years. This was the reason I had travelled all the way into the jungle abyss. Everything I had experienced during the jungle trip had mimicked the moment I had fallen ill on the treadmill. Except in the jungle it seemed to go on over a longer period of time. The wanting to run away from discomfort and pain, to the fever I experienced on the boat. I think the whole jungle had collaborated helping me to heal. Including the sand flies! I realised this after leaving the jungle. There was many a time I had chosen to *flee* in my life and this time I had chosen to go through all the suffering and healing only to come out the other side.

I felt like a true warrior.

Kambo – frog medicine

Kambo which is affectionately referred to as 'frog medicine' was also on the 'menu' of Amazonian *medicini*. Which I love. Nature's very own immunity booster and vaccination.

This potent frog toxin which is excreted from the frogs skin is applied to the surface of your skin and within



minutes you are purging, detoxing nearly every cell within the body and the blood. The whole experience usually last from around 20 -30 minutes. The toxin is applied in such minute doses to each individual. The medicine contains many peptides which reduce inflammation and boost your immunity working on the physical body. It also removes many spiritual

blockages and realigns the chakras working on the psychic and spiritual bodies too.

My first encounter with kambo before coming to the jungle was indeed a powerful one. I had focused on my intention and then during the projectile purge I noticed I had expelled something heavy and it made a *dunk* noise in the bucket. I never thought anything of it until I had to empty and rinse out my bucket and behold I had purged a small pebble about the size of my pinky finger nail. Oh my goodness. I have heard stories of *energy transformation* before and it got me wondering as you can imagine. The energy of intention. And the release of the energy... maybe transformed and became solidified? Is this possible? After all *everything is energy*. After this I became a kambo enthusiast.

The last ceremony

Just before the last ceremony after taking some more Amazonian *medicini* I encountered a wonderful vision. As I was resting in my jungle hammock I closed my eyes and started to meditate. I could see this coloured light energy in my body and so I decided to watch and enjoy it for a moment. Then I opened my eyes and I could see the same energy in the jungle across the river from my hammock. The energy lines seemed to project from my eyes – many red *graphic* lines all connected

from me and into right into the jungle. I then became aware and heard some of the men speaking near by who were working on the ceremony hut. As they spoke and laughed I could see these same red energy lines move like you would see in a moving electrical graph chart. Each word they spoke, depending on the tone affected the way these red energy lines moved. I was transfixed. Then, when they put on a CD with the Huni Kuin ceremony songs I saw this huge vortex appear above the ceremony hut where the music was being played. This vortex was shaped like a funnel. It appeared to go so far into the sky... so far up where I had never seen before. It went into the cosmos, where



I saw many other images. I then realised how powerful these words were. I realised all that I had learnt about what we say and think really does go out into the universe. Dr Emoto and Messages from water had been one of my favourite books. An epiphany! *You know when you know* but when you really see it, in *reality* is a different thing. The goodness and how powerful it was. It was met by the cosmos with the same energy. To see how we are all connected. Beautiful. I shared this with the Huni Kuin people after the last ceremony. I saw many a thing in the jungle... but that's another story

The last ceremony was indeed beautiful just like the rest of the ceremonies but this time I noticed my energy had changed. I was extremely grateful for my experience with the Huni Kuin tribe and their Shaman. Grateful for sharing their wisdom. Grateful for everything I had experienced. Being in the jungle and participating in the ceremonies is indeed a lifetime encounter not to be forgotten.

Sand fly bites

Towards the second week my bites which were all over but my lower arms and lower legs, had taken a turn for the worst with all my itching. They seemed to ooze fluid continuously. For a moment they would form a scab and then after changing into another long sleeved top the scabs would stick to the cotton top and then they would once again, be open. I had many a fresh Amazonian plant pack applied and plant juice squeezed over the bites which felt extremely soothing. But this didn't last for long. I had even used my own urine on the bites as I knew this was of great benefit. I also noticed my skin was beginning to burst into blisters filled with pus. All very strange. And some bites would disappear then reappear. Jungle majick? By the end of the journey I was at my wits end. My left ankle had swollen quite a bit. And by the time I reached the Uk my left lower leg had trebled in size. I ended up in the Tropical Disease unit in London hos-

pital. I was on an intravenous antibiotic drip for 2 days. Plus a short spell of anti parasitic tablets. All yuk I must say. First time ever, spent in a hospital bed in my whole life! I continued on oral antibiotics for a further period of time. I had suffered a secondary staphylococcus infection. Plus a sand fly parasitic infection **Leishmaniasis** en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leishmaniasis I cannot omit how grateful I felt for having the hospital and staff take care of me.

Even though I had this diagnosis and that diagnosis whilst in the hospital, I knew I had experienced some sort of *initiation in the jungle*. It was all meant to be. I also knew that if I had been able to eat my usual type of food, raw food as people know it or what I eat which is more specific... **Lifefood**, I would never have been prone to this. Within **hours** and days of changing what I ate after coming back into the UK I could see many a transformation take place on my skin. As I practice naturopathy and nutri-

tion, etc, I wished to heal naturally and with nature. It is all I understand and know of. I also added to my daily intake an anti parasitic herbal remedy and carried out *liver* cleanses. This helped remove any toxin overload I experienced during my travels but more so especially the build up of any pharmaceutical drugs I had taken. Lastly but not least I had taken a *massive* dose of probiotics – Jubbs Lifecolloid probiotic. Eventually I started to apply a combination of organic essential oils to my skin as well. All is well.

All plant medicine is *my food and nourishment* .

Plants have a consciousness and wisdom that may help heal our mind body & spirit so that all bodies are integrated so we may unite and connect

Susan also writes for

Naturalcures.com and is currently writing a book. Find out more at www.iridologyforhealth.co.uk ❁

RFD (Raw Food Dude)

Sally Holloway

RFD wondered whether he was eating too much raw food...



When ...



He turned into a stick of celery!



*It's okay, then he woke up -Phew!

Sally Holloway's 44 page book *Sprouting In The UK, How to grow, Greens, Beans and Superfoods* is available from sallyholloway.com for £2.99 or Amazon Kindle for £1.53.

What is a true retreat?

How may we cleanse our bodies and minds to support a more conscious life?

Do you find that after a retreat you feel relaxed for a while but modern life soon takes over again? Learn what a true retreat is with **Robin Littman**.

The traditions

For many religions, the cleansing of the body has been a key part of supporting a life of devotion on the premise that in purifying the body, the mind is also cleansed and the pull of the world no longer obstructs connection with the Divine.

In various branches of Christianity there is encouragement to fast or restrict one's diet following the tradition of Jesus in the desert – and before him, Moses, who fasted before receiving the Ten Commandments.

In the Eastern Orthodox church fasting is an important spiritual discipline as it connects the body (Soma) with the soul (Pnevma) which they see as not being separate. What affects one affects the other. This is known as the Psychosomatic Union.

Hinduism includes such practices – directed to your favourite deity – and it is said that one who fasts and undertakes spiritual practice may be delivered from transgressions accumulated over hundreds of lifetimes...

Muslims believe that fasting is more than abstaining from food and drink. It also means abstaining from impure thoughts. During Ramadan, this increases our 'tagiva' (good deeds and God consciousness) thus harmonising the inner and outer spheres of the individual.

In the Jewish faith, Yom Kippur is the most important day of the year for fasting being related to repentance, atonement or gratitude – an opportunity to focus on the spiritual.

Buddhist monks that I know take the discipline of fasting into their every-

day lives and follow the Vinay rules that includes not eating after the mid-day meal.

In the region of Kasi, the Buddha once said to his monks: *I, monks, do not eat a meal in the evening..... I am aware of good health and being without illness and of buoyancy and strength and living in comfort.....You too will be aware of good health and living in comfort.*

Today's practices

Today? We go on 'detox retreats' - enticed by advertising that invites us to 'chill out, lose weight and enjoy a soothing massage'. When we get back home we feel so much better – for a while, and relaxed - for a while. Then our everyday life closes in on us. Our daily habits return. We go back to feeling stressed and tired. What's more, we put on the weight again.

Why is this? More than we are prepared to admit, we are still governed by what has been deeply embedded in the unconscious mind for many, many years. However often we say to ourselves in our more conscious moments: 'I really must change the way I eat, live, work' and more - but we don't. As Sigmund Freud famously said, 'We are driven by the Unconscious' and the famous biologist Bruce Lipton has confirmed: '90% of the mind is unconscious'

But what if we want to live a more conscious life? Our goal may be to live a life of higher awareness in this post-2012 planetary shift. But our everyday habits don't always bear this out.

As an example, the way we eat. Often we are still eating in a way influenced by the way our parents showed us.

We learnt it from them and it's comfortable, very comfortable – especially if we received it with love.

For this reason comfort eating helps us cover up those old emotional wounds. No wonder changing to a more healthy, nutritional and spiritual diet – based on incorporating as much raw food as we can, seems so difficult. As one author of a book on nutrition put it: 'It's easier to get someone to change their religion than it is to change their diet!'

So, even when we go on a retreat, its effect can be temporary and superficial. Maybe this is because the emphasis is on the physical with perhaps some mind-calming exercises such as yoga or a massage - a far cry from the ancient approach to cleansing the mind and body.

What is a true retreat?

Let us take a leaf out of the sacred books of the great religions. A retreat could be a time when we can seek to 'detoxify' our lives at many different levels.

At the physical level, we need to deal with the toxins we have imbibed over many years from all the processed food we have taken into our intestines and which has also affected the rest of our body. We also have toxins that we have taken in from the environment – the air, water and soil is contaminated by chemicals. Furthermore, unless we make the 'conscious' decision to buy natural products, there are chemicals in our toiletries and house cleaning fluids.

There are also toxins at the emotional level. Those negative beliefs that have such a powerful effect on our every-

day lives do so because they actually create our lives, following the process of the Law of Attraction. We may have suppressed them but they're still there. A retreat can give us the opportunity to revisit and then release these beliefs and old pain that get in the way of connecting to Source and leading a joyful life.

Furthermore, as our body is connected to our mind, it becomes a reflection of what is going on for us emotionally. All the research by Bruce Lipton, David Hamilton and others have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that our emotions – positive and negative - are manifested in the cells of our body producing illness – or excellent health.

Above all there is the effect of stress which quietly builds up over time with punishing effects.

We say 'My life is so stressful'. In my psychotherapy practice I see many clients who see their external lives – whether at work or in their relationships – as being the cause of their stress/depression/anger – and so on. It takes some time to get the message through that we are not stressed by our lives, we *allow* ourselves to be

stressed by the way we react to the external events in our lives. We are responsible for our own happiness and to be joyful is our true nature. If we can be in the moment now we can have that choice. If we are on 'autopilot' and in our habitual reactive unconscious state we will react to these events as we always have. In this way, unless we wake up to this truth, we will continue to live in this way till the day we die...

Quite apart from the effect this all has on our health, it also affects our spiritual life. Great sages of the past would go to a quiet place to be still, eating what is offered by Nature and experiencing a closeness to God/Spirit. We may do the same so that we may be reminded of who we truly are.

What a retreat could mean for us

If we believe that we are in this world but not of this world then we need to retreat from it from time to time to get in touch again with our true nature.

Yes, we need to detoxify our physical body. This we can do with raw food, juices and other cleansing techniques. Energy healing modalities can also support our desire to be free of the negative energies in the mind and

body – and sometimes we just need to rest.

At another level, we might be given the opportunity to see how our emotions have affected our body, so we can start on the journey of being free from their grip.

All of this can help us to stand back and perhaps see our life in a new way. Where are we going? Are we trapped in a non-fulfilling job? How are our relationships? Are we fulfilling our life purpose?

It was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who said that 'We are not human beings seeking a spiritual experience but spiritual beings seeking a human experience'. This is our mission.

Therefore, our 'unseen friends' occasionally whisper into our ears ideas about how we might be living our life differently in this particular lifetime.

By getting away from our everyday life, a retreat might help us to tune into that possibility.

Robin and Jenny Littman run retreats to support those who wish to detoxify at all levels and clarify their sense of purpose. www.reSource-me.com ✿

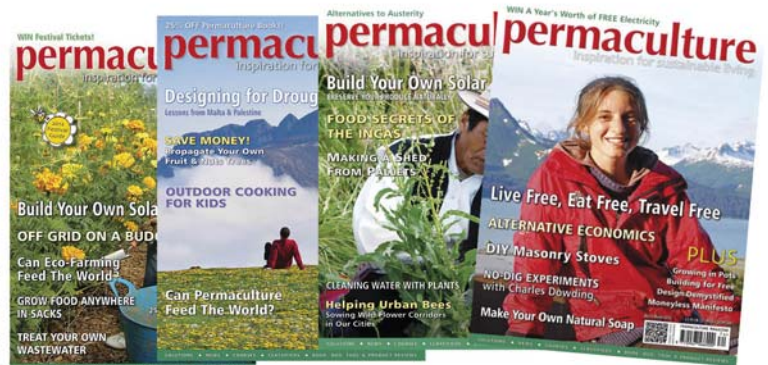
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Bhutan,

Aiming to be the first
100% Organic
country in the world



A report on the only country to dispense with GDP in favour of Gross National Happiness. By Frank Arrigazzi.

The Kingdom of Bhutan, also known as 'The Hidden Treasure' or the 'Mountain fortress of the Gods' is a vibrant country where religion and nature have come together; lush vegetation, snow-capped mountains, rushing rivers and a thriving Buddhist culture in a country that was virtually closed off to the outside world until the 1960s but began opening up in recent decades to become the world leading example of organic living that it is today.

This landlocked small Himalayan country with 700,000 inhabitants is tucked between India and China, only 306 kilometres across and 145 kilometres deep. It has been kept safeguarded from the pollution of the modern world to a great extent due to its mountainous topography. Because of its size and the fact that it is landlocked, Bhutan has also been named the 'Switzerland of Asia'.

In Bhutan there are only a few roads and they are kept in a good condition, there are no trains, a good local bus system, and only one airport located in the Paro Valley about an hour's drive from the capital, Thimpu, Western Bhutan. In the north of the country the Himalayan mountains contain the highest unclimbed peak in the world - Gangkhar Puensum.

Bhutan as one of the outstanding eco-regions in the world has no fossil fuels or nuclear energy and instead they sell hydro-electrical power, making it the only country whose largest export is renewable energy. They are also the world's only carbon sink; it absorbs more CO₂ than it gives out. They banned plastic bags, tobacco and the killing of any endangered species, all these initiatives shine through their unique statement of "Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product", based in

their four pillars; sustainable development, environmental protection, cultural preservation, and good governance.

Indeed, Bhutan is the first country in the world with specific constitutional obligations on its people to protect the environment and among its requirements are to keep 60 per cent of the country forested at all times. 70 per cent of Bhutan is covered with trees and 28 per cent of Bhutan is protected; there are four National Parks, four wildlife sanctuaries and one large nature reserve, and nine per cent of the country is declared a biological corridor.

The use of pesticides in Bhutan is restricted; they are imported by the Ministry of Agriculture and can be sourced through official outlets only in emergency situations, and not on a routine basis. This has only been used on around 1.5% of the country's agri-

cultural land and soon it is hoped to drop to zero, allowing Bhutan to be recognised as the first country to be 100 per cent organic.

Unlike many other popular travel destinations around the world Bhutan has adopted the unique policy of 'High Value, Low Impact' tourism, on the principle of sustainability (i.e. tourism must be environmentally and ecologically friendly, socially and culturally acceptable and economically viable). The 'Low Impact' approach is the reason why Bhutan has become a premium destination, rich in culture, tradition, religion, history and has successfully preserved its environment in its purest form.

By travelling to Bhutan, tourists are making a great impact on Bhutanese lives, as out of the daily tariff they pay, \$65 are kept as government royalty which will be used by the government to fund infrastructure, education, health and other programmes (healthcare and Medical is completely free for all Bhutanese and even foreigners).

Quality is not compromised as travellers in Bhutan have access to good and comfortable accommodation; one of the most outstanding hotels in Bhutan is from the By COMO group. Located at Paro Valley, close to many of Bhutan's great cultural landmarks

and Punakha Valley, the By COMO hotels in Bhutan have instilled within their concepts the same principles and traditions that Bhutan stands for.

'Uma' which means 'living house' is inspired by the landscape, spirituality and culture of the region and gives access to the country at its best, offering guided adventures by foot, bike or 4WD, they even look after your trip entirely, from visas to Druk Air flights to day trips and camping, the local guides are quite fluent in a few languages and will also be available to accompany guests to festivals and ceremonies.

Bhutan rich cultural heritage is also interlaced with religion, folklore and history and as a mark of respect the people still wear traditional national dress; men wear 'gho', a heavy knee-length robe tied with a belt and women wear 'kira', which is an ankle-length dress worn over a blouse and tied up with a brooch.

The most distinctive characteristic of Bhutanese cuisine is its spiciness. Chillies are an essential part of nearly every dish and are considered so important that most Bhutanese people would not enjoy a meal that was not spicy. They are not just served as an accompaniment, but often form the main ingredient of a dish. So while Bhutanese cuisine can be somewhat

spicy for some, it is memorable, and full of nutritious, seasonally grown organic vegetables and fruits, honey, mushrooms and vegetables. Grains such as rice, buckwheat and barley are also widely used and they are cultivated in various regions of the country depending on the local climate.

Even though Bhutan is very small, it has a surprising range of climates with a moderate monsoon season during the summer months. The Himalayan mountain range dominates the north, with perpetual snow and high winds and the southern plains and foothills are subtropical. From June to August, there can be some rainy days however the cloud cover creates impressive landscapes. The weather is best in spring (March to April) and again in autumn (September to November).

Frank Arrigazzi is a passionate entrepreneur with a background in nutrition and natural health. He began his career in 1991 working in the family business, a chain of health stores and holistic clinics, and thereafter spent years working as a researcher and as a holistic writer for natural health magazines. He is a qualified yoga instructor and has written an inspiring book call "Tip Top Spiritual Lessons" (find it on Amazon). He is also the founder of the Purple Balance health food brand: www.purplebalance.co.uk ☘



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