

A hand is holding a clear glass filled with red wine. The background is a solid, deep red color. The word 'contents' is written in a white, elegant script font across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the glass and the hand.

# *contents*

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# *introduction*



*For* the past 30 years I've been involved in overseeing, and creating the culinary delights at the Dru Yoga Centres in the UK and abroad. Years ago I realised how vital a part food plays in the experience people have on a course or retreat—for some folks it even seems to be the main thing!

Many people ask me how we make the food. 'What are the secrets behind your cooking, Keith?' My own personal secret is that the way you cook the food, as well as the ingredients and the method, makes a huge difference to how it turns out.

So here are some of my recipes and the knowledge applied, hopefully to help you love cooking more with every day.







Dru Yoga is part of the ayurvedic system of health and medicine, so we follow these principles in the preparation of our food. In this book I have included a special section on Ayurveda with recipes and health tips, so you can understand more about your own body's constitution and which foods will suit you best. Ayurveda recommends a mainly vegetarian style diet. To help with this there is a chapter on how to make wonderful meat-free meals that are both deliciously satisfying and nutritionally balanced.

You'll also find recipes and a concise guide to the macrobiotic style of eating. At Dru we have taken a lot of inspiration from the macrobiotic philosophy which, like ayurveda, also seeks to restore balance in the individual.

In this book the most important message is in the title 'Cooking with Love'. Here I reveal everything you need to know about how to add that extra something to make your food uniquely special. You'll also learn fascinating facts about the nutrition, history, mythology and legends of my favourite ingredients.

My childhood headmaster used to say, 'I've taught them everything I know and still they know nothing.' I'm sure this won't be the case after you've read this book! Even if I say it myself, there's something here for everyone.







*Our* main residential centre is in Snowdonia National Park, North Wales. Each week people from all over the world pass through our doors to learn Dru Yoga and Meditation and enjoy our retreats. The centre is set in a glacial valley dominated by the ancient Cambrian Mountains. Clear mountain streams run off the hills into the valley, rivers and waterfalls below.

The delicious wholesome food combines with the inspiring location, relaxation and therapies to give an experience that fully satisfies the senses. Our aim is to give you an unforgettable retreat complete with practical health techniques you can use in your everyday life.

Guests often want to take our chefs home with them so they can continue to have Dru food at home. Legally we can't allow that, but this book is the next best thing—your guide to creating a Dru kitchen in your own home!

**Your guide to  
creating a Dru  
kitchen in your  
own home!**



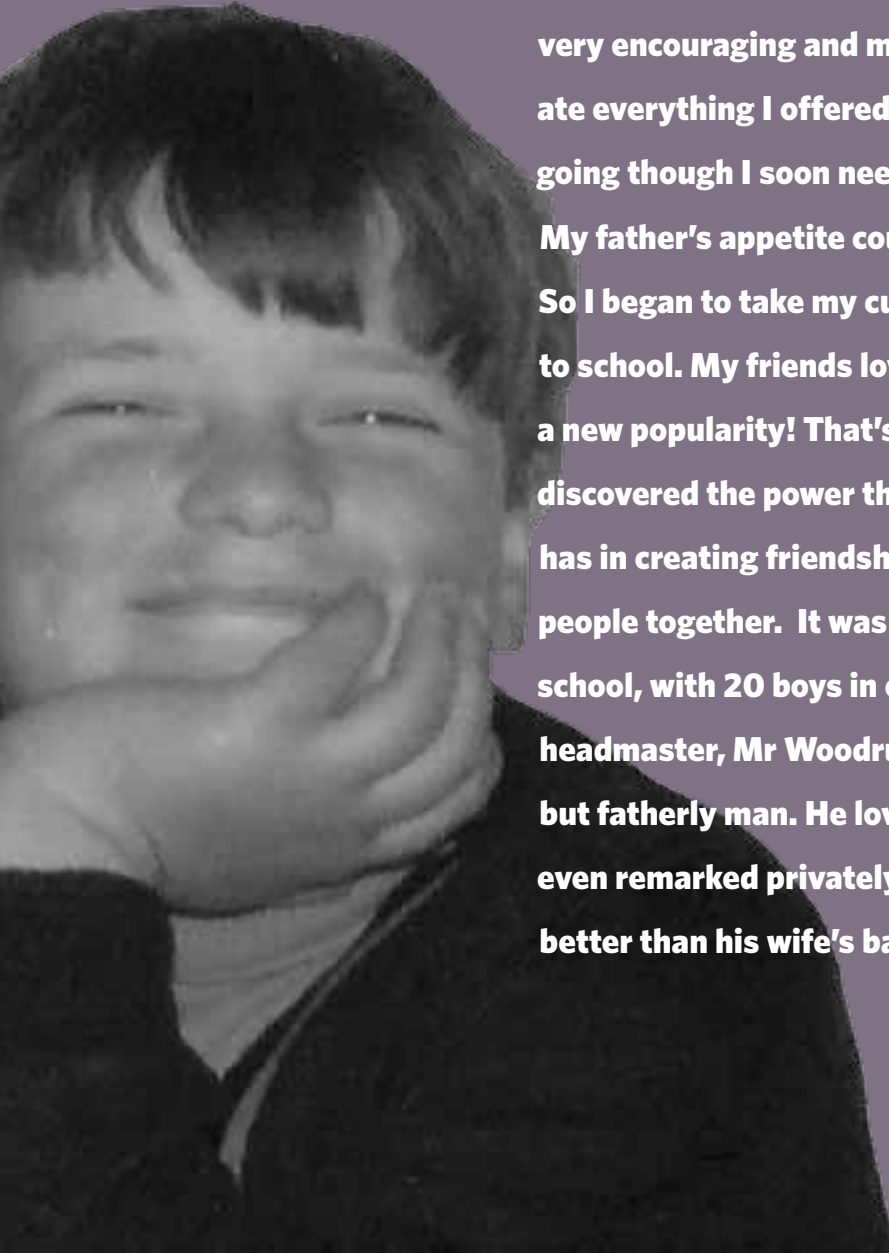


# *early beginnings...*

**Me aged 9  
watering my  
vegetable  
garden**







*I* discovered cooking at the age of 9, making cakes and breads from recipe books at home. My mother, luckily, was very encouraging and my dad politely ate everything I offered him. Once I got going though I soon needed a new outlet. My father's appetite couldn't keep up! So I began to take my culinary creations to school. My friends loved it and I found a new popularity! That's when I first discovered the power that sharing food has in creating friendship and bringing people together. It was a small village school, with 20 boys in our class. The headmaster, Mr Woodruff, was a stern but fatherly man. He loved my cakes and even remarked privately that they were better than his wife's baking!



**My class  
mates who  
caught the  
cooking bug  
from me!**



My friends soon started baking too and it actually became a bit competitive—we vied with each other to see who could make the best bread and lightest cakes. Instead of running around like normal boys, we spent the break times sharing and eating our baked goodies and eagerly presenting them to the headmaster. As a result we all started to put on a bit of weight, and our class can still clearly be identified on the old school photos as slightly more rotund and contented looking than the rest of the older and younger boys.

Our interest in food then went beyond cooking to gardening and growing herbs. Our headmaster allowed us to cultivate parts of the school grounds and we each developed our own vegetable patches. We set up a shed complete with a gas stove to make tea. Men love their sheds, but we started early; we were like old men in the bodies of 10 year old boys. We spent our spare time discussing seeds and gardening tools, followed by a daily inspection of each other's gardens. The headmaster was delighted and held us up as splendid examples of how young men should be. We bathed in the glory, needless to say—and pretended to look down on the rest of the school, who spent their time in more childish pursuits such as running around!

Mr Woodruff was so pleased with our class that he took us on a fantastic summer trip to Switzerland by Lake Lugano. We couldn't go by jet plane back then, so it was a classic boy's adventure—by land and sea. We took the ferry from Dover to Calais, then a 24 hour train journey through France to the Italian speaking part of Switzerland.


We loved the continental food, boat trips, taking the cable car to the top of the mountain and walking down again through cool green forests. Mr Woodruff was a true British Gentleman, complete with an air of confident superiority (especially in France we noticed). He could speak French and Italian and made sure that 'his boys' got the best of everything.

Once I nearly pushed my luck one day though. Mr Woodruff was a chain smoker and one day, as he was lighting a cigarette, I said to him innocently, 'You shouldn't smoke, Sir.' Sudden silence. (Imagine a spaghetti western when the outlaw walks into a bar and the piano stops playing.) In those days you never ever corrected a teacher. But instead of telling me off he asked, 'And why not, young Squires?' 'Because my Grandad died a few months ago from smoking' I replied in extreme earnest. He smiled suddenly, breaking the tension much to everyone's relief (mine especially). From then on every time he lit a cigarette I would always say to him, 'You shouldn't smoke, Sir.' He would nod at me sagely...but carry on anyway. I was the only boy who was afforded this special privilege. Anyone else who tried it got a clip round the ear. My career in health advice had begun!



A couple of years later I joined the boy scouts and was instantly dwarfed by 15 year olds twice my size. With no proper scout master the big boys ran it their way—gangland style. I found a survival strategy though... as luck would have it my dad ran a large builders' merchants and everyday he'd come home and empty out his pockets on the kitchen counter. This just happened to be at my eye level and I soon found I could harvest off a few coins without being noticed. I used this money to buy bags of chips for the bullies during the break. I suddenly became really popular, discovering that free food was the best way to distract the bullies! I found I loved taking the orders, running up to the chip shop and rushing back to dish it out. It started getting really expensive though. Luckily, I got old enough to start working for pocket money with my dad at his shop—so I then had a legitimate source of income.

After school I moved to Bangor to study at the university—it was there I met the Dru team. I used to help out at their fruit and vegetable shop (now a health store called 'Dimensions'). Late one morning I felt really hungry. It didn't seem right to go upstairs to make food just for myself, so I cooked enough for everyone. That decision changed my life. The next day everyone asked me to be the resident chef. I'd created a new role for myself! It was mostly trial and error to begin with. The shop always had a box of random vegetables that needed using up so it was my job to make use of these. I had no idea about vegetarian cooking (apart from making cakes) and this cookery book wasn't available then. However, it was fun being creative and making up my own recipes from what was on offer.




**It's handy  
having your  
own health  
store...**



During the 1980s interest in Dru Yoga grew quickly, and so did the numbers of people visiting the Centre. I started off cooking for four or five people. This seemed to double every few months. It wasn't long before we started running yoga conferences, which started at 100 delegates—and these too doubled each year. Before I knew it we were providing vegetarian food for thousands of people!

For the next 10 years we ran yoga courses mostly from large houses, constantly amazed at how many meals we could cook from a single cooker in a domestic kitchen. In 1997 we established our very own Dru Training Centre in North Wales, complete with commercial cookers and that blessed creation—a pass-through dishwasher!

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large stack of white plates. The person is wearing a red and white vertically striped shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a kitchen setting with a window and some items on a shelf.

**That blessed  
creation—a  
pass through  
dishwasher**



## FAVOURITE VEGETABLES

**COURGETTE** This popular vegetable is related to squash plants brought to Europe from South America. Bred over some generations this is a fairly recently developed vegetable from about 125 years ago. Originating in Italy where it is called zucchini which literally means 'little squash'. Courgette is the French name which is widely used in the UK, and by us in this book.

We use a lot of courgettes because they are easy to cut, and cook quickly. They are very versatile and can be fried, steamed or baked. If we ever start running out of food its easy to make a quick tomato sauce and fry some courgettes in olive oil, add a bit of tofu, for a five minute dish! Handy when there is a queue of hungry people.

In the UK big courgettes are called marrows, they change as the skin gets tougher and the flesh softer, and with more seeds in the middle. They can be sliced into

rings, deseeded and baked with delicious fillings, or just steamed and served with butter and black pepper.

**CAULIFLOWER** The cauliflower started off in the middle east cultivated from wild varieties of cabbage. It first appears in Europe about 800 years ago, and became popular in France during the 1600's. The normal white colour of the florets is a great contrast to the greens, reds and oranges of the other vegetables. Cauliflower was introduced to India in the 1800's by Europeans and is now one of their most important winter crops. We use it a lot, as a steamed vegetable and served with a creamy cheesy sauce I am in heaven! Alsoa favourite in my spicy Indian dishes.





**BROCCOLI** or Calabrese is named after its origins Calabria in Italy, and broccolo, which means “the flowering head of a cabbage” in Italian . It was first cultivated by the Romans and has remained popular in Italy ever since. It was brought to the UK in the 18th century and used occasionally as an exotic vegetable. Its long journey to fame started when it was taken to the USA with Italian immigrants. It was here it started to become more widely known in the 1920’s, and its popular use spread to Europe. Green and tree like, it looks fantastic on the plate. Easy to cook and delicious its a cabbage family favourite. Even children ‘will eat their greens’ if you give them freshly cooked broccoli.

We use lots of it and steam it so it just right with a bit of crunch but not raw or soggy.

**SWEET POTATO** Like butternut squash, sweet potato is a very versatile ingredient. It is delicious and easy to cook and tastes good even without the addition of other ingredients. So the cook just has to be careful not to add any flavours that mess it up!

The name potato comes from the native word for this vegetable, ‘batatas’ which became ‘patatas’ in Spanish. They are like regular potatoes or yams though not related to either. In their native South America there are many varieties but only a few are edible. The varieties of cultivated sweet potato vary in colour from reddish orange to white. Those with colour are sweeter than the ones with white flesh.

Sweet potatoes were exported from South America to Asia well before European contact. Polynesian traders brought them across the Pacific to New Zealand and from there they reached Japan and Korea.

Like the spud, sweet potatoes are cheap, easy to grow and nutritious and have become popular a staple food in warm climates all over the world.

**SWEDE** This is a shortened version of its original name ‘Swedish Cabbage’. It was created in Sweden from a cross of turnip and cabbage. In Scotland they are called neeps, and a favourite national dish is ‘neeps and tatties’ which is swede and potato mixed. They are normally mashed with butter and served separately.

Many of our European visitors aren’t familiar with this hardy vegetable, as in a lot of countries they are just used to feed cattle. But this tough little root is surprisingly good, and goes sweeter and more orange as you cook it.

I love it mashed with butter and fresh ground pepper. It is also great with other root vegetables in soups and stews. It is not so good roasted as it tend to get a bit dry and tough.

**SPINACH** originated in Persia and spread from there to India and China, and around 800AD spinach moved through Europe. It became popular because it grows early in spring before a lot of other crops were ready. So became an important food in ‘the hungry gap’ where the winter foods were running out but summer ones not ripe yet.

Florentine is a word used to describe dishes with spinach, like egg florentine. This started because spinach was popularised in France by the Italian wife of the French King Henry II, Catherine de Medici who originated from Florence

Popeye the Sailor Man relied on spinach to give him extra strength, this was based on a faulty calculation by Emil von Wolff who in 1870 put the decimal point in the wrong place thus recording 10 times the level of iron. This was not noticed until 1930 leading to the popular misconception.



**AUBERGINES** The name aubergine has a French origin. Its commonly called name is 'egg plant', so called because the original varieties were smaller and white coloured—resembling eggs. Aubergines are from the same family as potatoes and tomatoes but originate from India, where they have been cultivated for thousands of years. From there they spread to the Middle East and Europe. They didn't reach Britain properly until the 17th century. Indian aubergines are much smaller than their western cousins.

**CARROTS** Carrots were originally grown for their seeds and leaves, like the closely related plants dill, cumin and fennel. As a root vegetable, it didn't taste great. It was later cultivated to make its roots sweeter and less woody.

The original carrot that came from Persia and Afghanistan about a thousand years ago, was a purple colour. Even today carrots in India are a pinky red.

They became popular in Europe in the 1600s and the familiar orange carrot was cultivated in the Netherlands as a patriotic

gesture to their royal family whose symbolic colour is orange. This dates back to William of Orange who founded the modern state of The Netherlands. Carrots are probably the most successful example of vegetable propaganda! These nationalistic roots spread all over Europe and were then taken across the Atlantic to USA with European settlers.

During World War 2 the carrot was again employed as a political agent, this time by the British. The bright colour of carrots is due to its beta carotene content. This can be converted by the body into vitamin A which is needed for good eye sight. It was publicised that pilots were eating more carrots so they could see better in the dark, but really they were using radar. My family really took this to heart and as a child I had to eat lots of carrots 'to help with my night vision'.

The more politically neutral and original 'wild carrot' is still an important herbal remedy. It is used as a kidney tonic in the same way as parsley.

