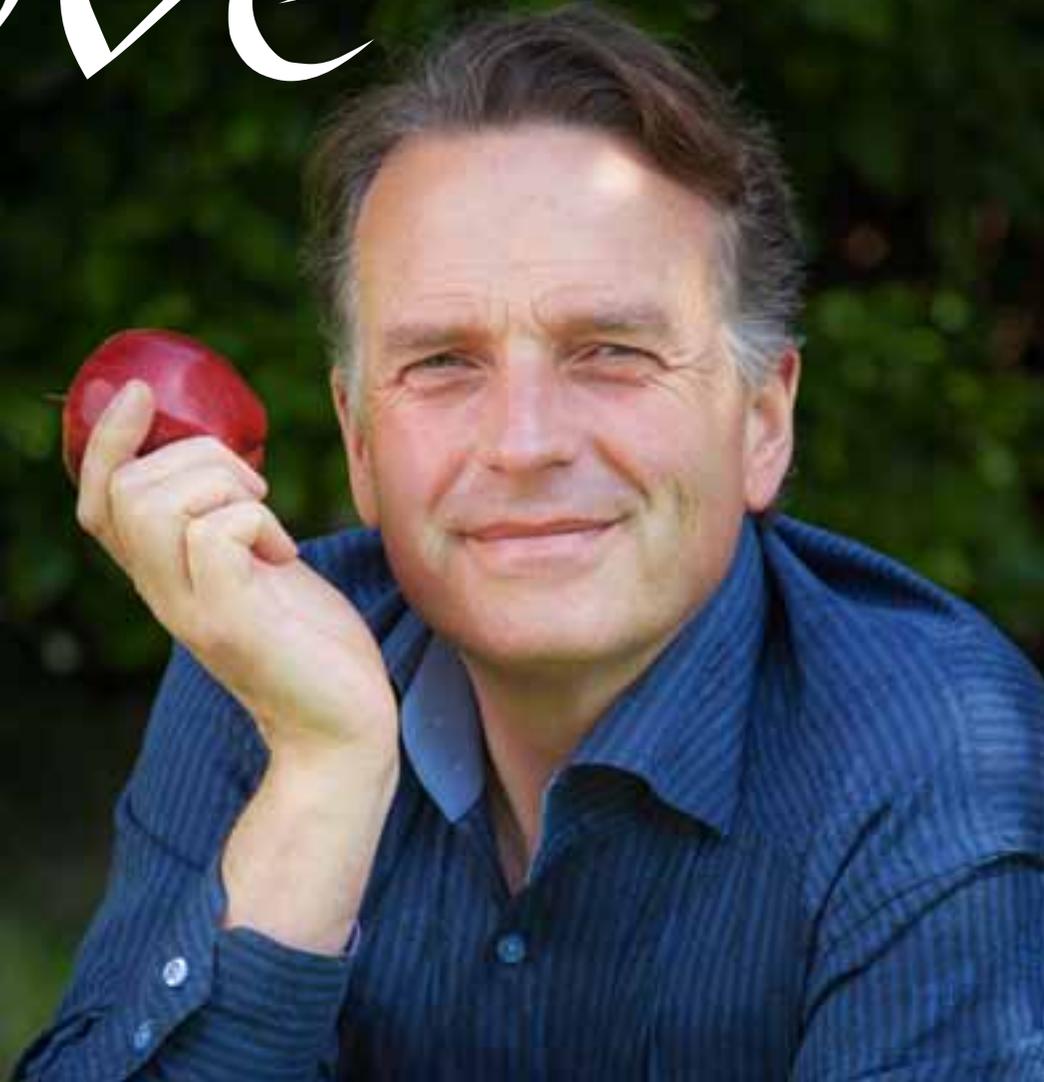


cooking
with
love

KEITH
SQUIRES



cooking
with
love



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A hand holding a glass of red wine against a red background. The word "Contents" is written in a white, elegant script font across the middle of the glass.

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Introduction



*F*or the past 30 years I have been involved in overseeing and creating the culinary delights at the Dru Yoga and Wellbeing centres in the UK and abroad. I realised years ago how vital a part food plays in the experience people have—for some folks it even seems to be the main thing!

Many people ask me how we prepare the food.

‘What are the secrets behind your cooking, Keith?’

My 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.

I hope they will help you love cooking more with each day.

Our main residential centre is in Snowdonia National Park in North Wales, 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.

Each week people from all over the world pass through our doors to enjoy our retreats and courses and to participate in our volunteer programmes. The delicious wholesome food combines with the inspiring location, relaxations and therapies to give an experience that fully satisfies the senses.

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







Dru Yoga is part of the Ayurvedic system of health. I've therefore included an introduction to Ayurveda, with tips and recipes, to help you understand about your own body's constitution. Ayurveda recommends a mainly vegetarian diet. To help with that, there's a chapter on the different aspects of healthy vegetarian eating.

In this book the most important message is all 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 unique and 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 that won't be the case after you've read this book. There's something here for everyone, even if I say it myself!

Early Beginnings...

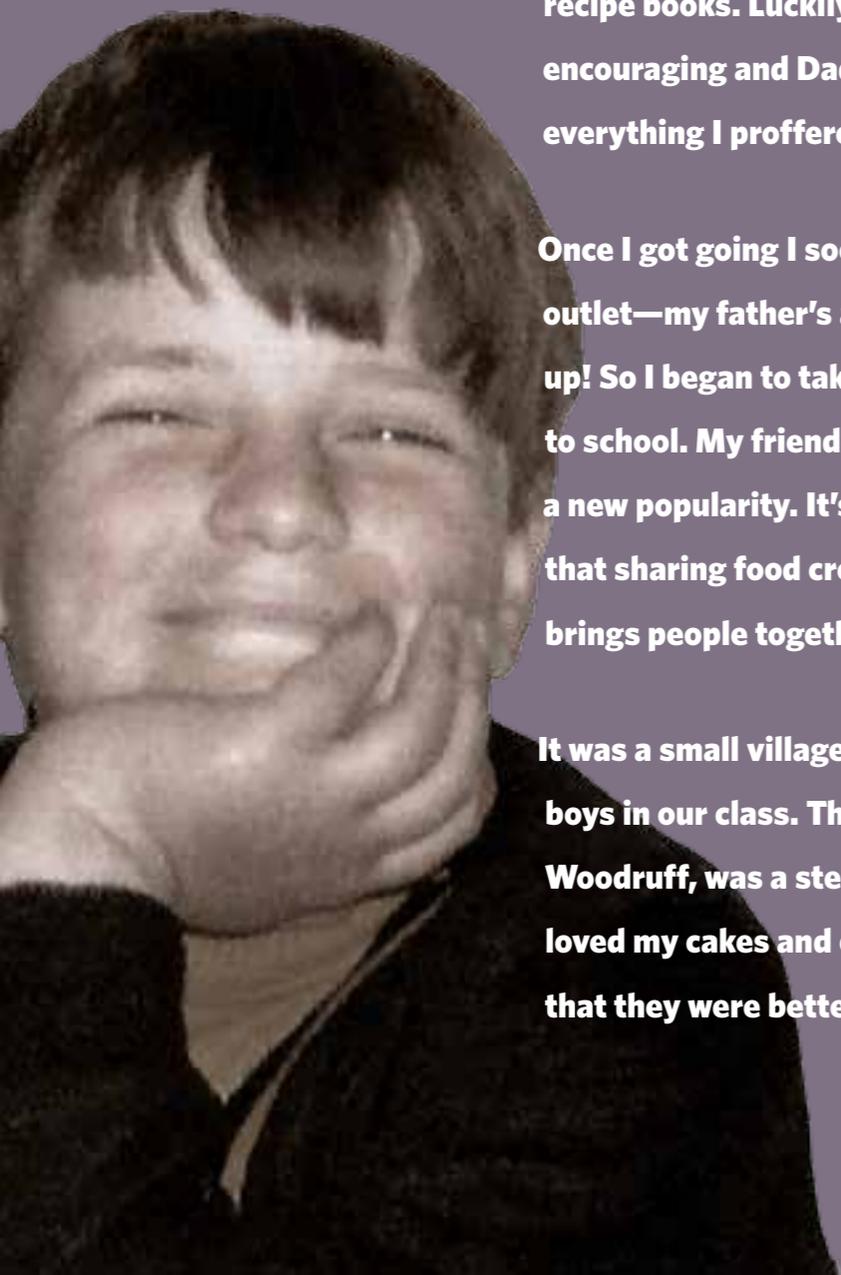
**Me aged 9
watering my
vegetable
garden**



I discovered cooking at the age of 9, making cakes and bread at home from my mother's recipe books. Luckily Mum was very encouraging and Dad good naturedly ate everything I proffered.

Once I got going 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 them and I found a new popularity. It's when I first discovered that sharing food creates friendship and brings people together.

It was a small village school, with twenty 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.



Soon my friends 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 eating and sharing our baked goodies and eagerly presenting them to the headmaster. As a result we all started to put on weight, and our class can clearly be identified on the old school photos as being slightly more rotund and contented looking than 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 patch. 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 ten year old boys. We spent our spare time discussing seeds and gardening tools, followed by a daily inspection of each other's gardens. Our delighted headmaster held us up as splendid examples of how young men should be. Needless to say, we basked in the glory and pretended to look down on the rest of the boys 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 boys' adventure—by land and sea. We took the ferry from Dover to Calais, followed by a 24-hour train journey through France to the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland.



**My classmates
who caught
the cooking
bug from me!**

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.

I nearly pushed my luck.

Mr Woodruff was a chain smoker and one day, as he was lighting a cigarette, I said, 'You shouldn't smoke, Sir.' Sudden silence (like in a spaghetti western when the outlaw walks into a bar and the piano stops playing). Everyone froze. In those days you never, ever corrected a teacher.

'And why not, young Squires?' Mr Woodruff asked quietly. 'Because my Grandad died a few months ago from smoking,' I replied in sweaty earnest. He smiled suddenly, much to everyone's astonishment and my relief. From then on, every time he lit a cigarette I would always say to him, 'You shouldn't smoke, Sir.' He would nod sagely but carry on anyway. I was the only boy afforded this special privilege. Anyone else who tried it got a clip round the ear. And so began my career in health advice.

A couple of years later I joined the Boy Scouts and was instantly dwarfed by 15 year olds twice my size. With no proper scoutmaster the big boys ran it their way—gangland style. I found a survival strategy. As luck would have it my Dad owned a large builders merchants and every day 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 them out. It started getting really expensive though. Luckily, I was soon old enough to start working for pocket money in my Dad's shop—so I then had a legitimate source of income.

After school I moved to Bangor to study at the university—it was there that 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 food 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 to be used up, so it was my job to make use of these. I had no idea about vegetarian cooking (apart from baking) 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. 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. Starting with a hundred delegates that, too, doubled each year. Before I knew it we were providing vegetarian food for thousands of people!

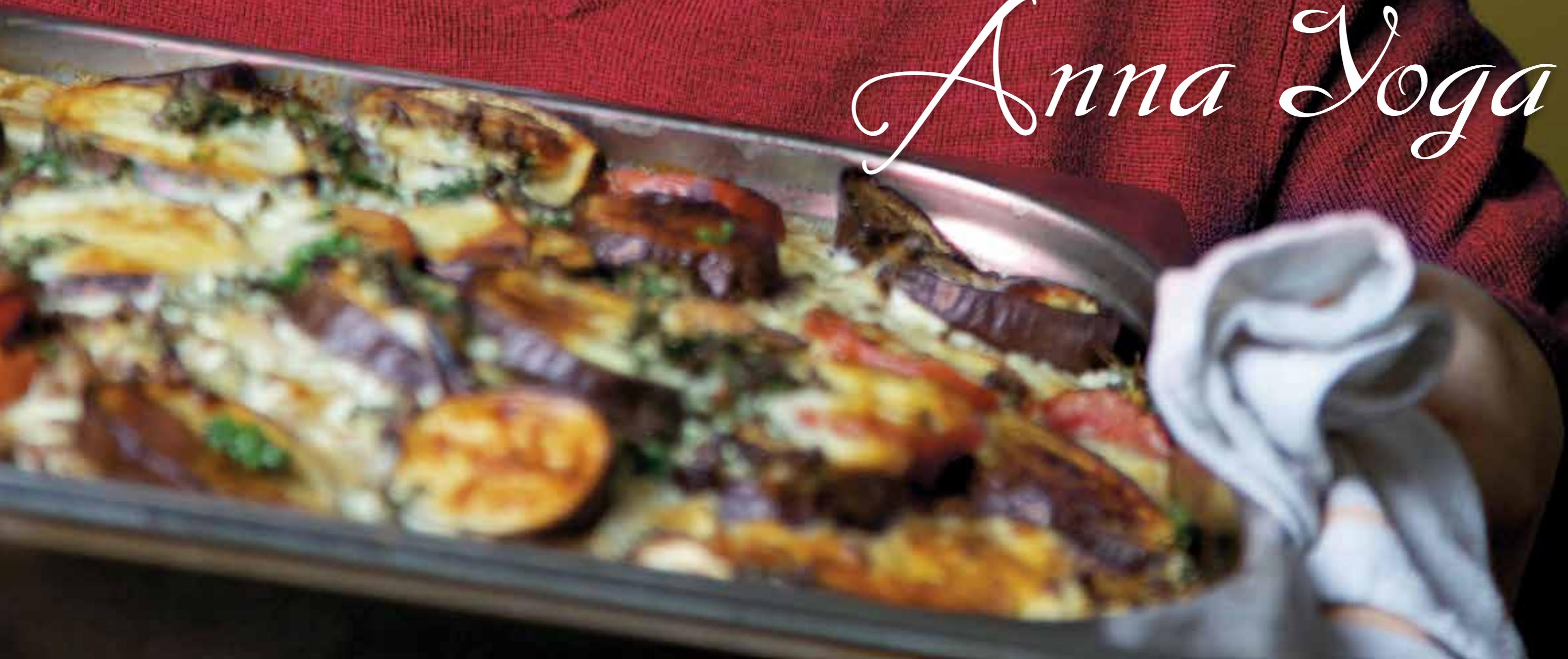
For the next ten years we ran courses mostly from large houses, always amazed at how many meals we could cook from a single cooker in a domestic kitchen.

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.



**That blessed
creation: a
pass-through
dishwasher**

Anna Yoga



*T*here's a whole branch of yoga called Anna Yoga, which literally means the 'yoga of food'. It's nothing to do with a person called Annie—'anna' is the Sanskrit word for food.

Anna Yoga, like Ayurveda, is about what and how you eat, but it places a greater emphasis on how food is first prepared and served.

**Anna Yoga
isn't named
after a yoga
teacher called
Annie**



PREPARING THE FOOD

Mental and emotional energy is expansive and affects not just yourself but other people as well. That's why some people have a 'wet blanket' effect when they walk into a room, while others can light up the same room with joy and enthusiasm. This same expansive energy is said to permeate the food we cook—meaning the ingredients can be tainted by misery or improved by joy and love.

Before I start cooking, I always try to create a good intention. I take a few moments to focus on my breathing and think about the people I'm cooking for. I ask myself to add love and light to the food. Then I light a candle and play some uplifting music.

When I was young and had a childhood illness, my grandmother used to give me either evaporated milk mixed with sugar and warm water, or some alcoholic 'concoction'. I now realise this may not have been the best medicine in terms of natural healing, but it was prepared with so much love and good intention that it seemed to work anyway.



SERVING THE FOOD

Another important but much underestimated Anna Yoga principle is how the food is served. Creating a nice environment and serving the food well goes a long way in determining how the food tastes and how well it is digested. A very special connection can be made between the person giving and the person receiving the food.

JALARAM—THE FEEDING SAINT

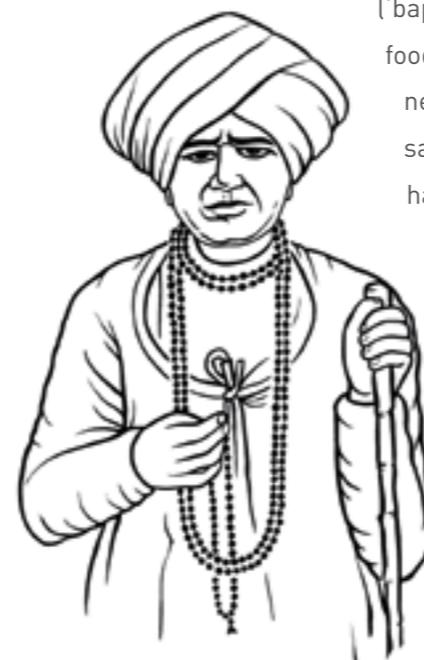
I often travelled to India organising the food for the Dru retreats we ran in Gujarat state. When I was in my twenties I first heard the story of Jalaram Bapa, a 19th century saint from a town called Virpur. He was famous for feeding the poor and healing the sick. What I found most fascinating was that he wasn't a phenomenon from the distant past. Jalaram passed in 1885, so at the time it was only 100 years since he'd been alive. I even met people whose grandparents remembered him.

Jalaram's career started by his giving food away from his father's shop free of charge. Of course this eventually got him into trouble.

He later established his own place, giving away free meals, relying on donations of food and money. It was a struggle at first; his wife even had to sell her wedding jewellery to make ends meet, something you only ever did as a very last resort.

Jalaram's was no ordinary soup kitchen; he and his wife knew the power of love. All the meals were made with spiritual devotion. Once a man in the village had a very serious stomach complaint. He didn't know how to cure himself and had tried everything. Then he had an idea, and made a mental promise to himself that he would donate a certain amount of rice to Jalaram if he got better. He didn't mention this to Jalaram or anyone else. To his amazement he did find relief and soon returned to health. With this and similar incidents Jalaram quickly became famous. Suddenly, if anyone was sick it became a tradition to go to see him in Virpur, donate some food and ask Jalaram for help.

Jalaram was like a kindly father figure. He was called Jalaram Bapa ('bapa' means father), a bit like a Father Christmas who is generous with food rather than presents. Jalaram was a celebrity in his own lifetime but never wanted to be treated as such. When asked for advice, he always said to feed everyone with love and see God in other people. Jalaram has been my inspiration for the last 30 years, and I try to infuse love into my cooking in the same way.



Jalaram always served his favourite dish: curried potato with kitcheri and kadhi (a special sauce made from yoghurt). Eat it with love and think of the miracles that happen every day.



Jalaram's Kitcheri

This is like the kitcheri that Jalaram made. It's a very simple, economical but nutritious dish. Every day this dish is served to hundreds of people who visit Jalaram's temple in his home town of Virpur in Gujarat.

Serves 2

75 g basmati rice
 50 g split mung beans
 400 ml water
 ¼ tsp salt
 pinch of black pepper
 ¼ tsp ground turmeric
 ½ tsp cumin seeds
 1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander
 2 tsp ghee
 ½ tsp grated fresh ginger
 ½ lemon *juiced*

Wash the rice and mung beans thoroughly several times.

In a medium pan, mix the rice, mung beans, black pepper, turmeric, ginger and water. Bring to the boil then turn the heat down to low, cover the pot and let the kitcheri cook for 30 minutes.

Stir occasionally to make sure the mixture is not sticking at the bottom. Add a little more water if it dries out. It should have a porridge-like consistency when cooked.

Melt the ghee in a pan until it becomes clear. Add the cumin seeds and stir until the aroma is released (about 1 minute) then mix into the kitcheri.

Add the salt, lemon juice and coriander. Stir gently until well-mixed.

Serve with Kadhi Sauce.

Kadhi Sauce

This yoghurt sauce, popular in Gujarat, is traditionally served with Jalaram's kitcheri. Yoghurt is fermented, which makes it sour but also easier to digest than normal milk—hence its popularity in Ayurvedic cooking.

Serves 2

250 ml water
1 tbsp gram flour
75 ml live yoghurt
1 tsp ghee
¼ tsp black mustard seeds
¼ tsp grated fresh ginger
pinch of chilli powder
pinch of asafoetida
¼ tsp ground turmeric
½ tsp jaggery
½ lemon *juiced*
½ tsp salt

Whisk the gram flour, yoghurt and 50 ml of the water till smooth. Boil the remaining water, and slowly whisk into the yoghurt mix. Heat the ghee in a pan, add the mustard seeds and cover. Cook until they splutter.
When most have crackled, remove from the heat.
Add the fresh ginger and powdered spices. Mix well.
Allow to cool a little then stir in the yoghurt mix.
Gently reheat and stir as you bring the mixture to the boil.
Reduce the heat, and then stir in the lemon, salt and jaggery. Simmer for a few minutes and keep stirring.
Serve warm with Kitcheri.

Gujarati Alu Sak

This recipe is thickened with gram (chick pea) flour which is gluten-free and high in protein.

Serves 2-4

500 g potatoes
peeled, cubed & steamed
100 ml live yoghurt
100 ml water
2 tsp gram flour
1 tbsp butter ghee
¼ tsp black mustard seeds
½ tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp fennel seeds
¼ tsp black onion seeds
1 bay leaf
2 cloves
1 cm stick cinnamon
pinch of asafoetida
¼ tsp chilli powder
¼ tsp ground turmeric
½ tsp ground coriander
1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander
salt *to taste*

Combine the yoghurt, water and gram flour in a bowl and beat well to remove any lumps.
Heat the ghee in a pan and add the mustard seeds and cover. When they crackle and pop, remove from the heat and let the pan cool slightly.
Add the rest of the seeds, bay leaf, cloves and cinnamon stick.
Replace on the heat and stir gently for a few seconds.
Remove from the heat again and mix in the powdered spices. Replace on the heat, stir for a few seconds.
Add the yoghurt mix while stirring continuously.
Bring to the boil.
Stir in the steamed potatoes and salt.
Garnish with fresh coriander.



Prana

Prana is the Sanskrit word for the vital energy that is present in all living things, including food. Not normally considered when discussing nutrition, it is in fact an essential component of what we eat—the food's own living energy. The most prana can be found in fresh, living food. It is said to be related closely to the sun's energy from which it came, through the process of photosynthesis.

Anna Yoga describes three types of food. *Sattvic* food is pure, healthy and full of nutrients and vitality. *Rajasic* food is overly spiced, salted or too oily. It stimulates the senses, but ultimately causes ill health. And finally there is *tamasic* food which is dead, low in nutrients and devoid of prana.

The prana levels in food are also influenced by the cook. In Ayurveda they even recommend having a healthy person prepare your food.

An excellent way to increase the prana in your body is through the practice of pranayama, which is a series of yogic breathing techniques. My favourite is nadi shodhana or 'alternate nostril breath'. It balances the left and right sides of the brain and is really calming and relaxing. (If you have high blood pressure, check with a yoga teacher before performing any pranayama.)

Nadi Shodhana

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATH

- > Close your left nostril by pressing with your little finger just below the bony ridge of your nose. Breathe in through your right nostril.
- > Place your thumb against the right nostril to close it as you release the pressure of your little finger against your left nostril. Breathe out through your left nostril.
- > Keeping your thumb and little finger where they are, breathe in through the left nostril.
- > Release the pressure of your thumb against your right nostril while at the same time pressing your little finger against your left nostril to close it. Breathe out through the right nostril.

Continue to follow the four stages in the cycle, opening and closing your nostrils as described. Breathe gently and naturally without strain. You may find that you can only perform a few consecutive rounds to begin with. Practise the technique regularly until you can maintain an even, steady alternate nostril breath for up to five minutes.

Fresh foods have the most prana, particularly if they are raw. Ideally every main meal should have a raw or lightly cooked component. Bean sprouts as a food are particularly high in prana as they are still growing. They are easy to grow at home and make a great snack or sprinkle. They are also easily digested and high in protein.

However, the best way to get a good hit of prana through your diet is to juice vegetables. Drinking vegetable juice can give you the energy and vitality from an entire bunch of carrots, a whole beetroot and half a head of celery in a single, easy to drink glassful. Try a fresh vegetable juice for yourself and you can really feel its power being absorbed.

A quick word about microwaves. A microwave can be convenient to reheat or defrost something quickly. But be aware that the rays disrupt the prana in the food and destroy its vitality. So use it sparingly, if at all.

My advice is to get a vegetable juicer and use it as often as you can





Vegetarian Food

At the Dru centres, all the food is vegetarian to help complement a healthy lifestyle. You don't necessarily need to be a strict vegetarian to be healthy though. Even a predominantly plant-based diet is a much healthier lifestyle choice than eating largely animal products every day.

In the USA, a congregation called 'Seventh Day Adventists' has many people who choose to be vegetarian. Other than their diet, their environment and lifestyle are similar to those of the non-vegetarians in the same congregation. Both groups were the basis of a scientific study. (Orlich, Fraser & Gray, 2014)

Overall, the study concluded that:

- > the vegetarians and vegans were found to be less likely to suffer from heart disease and cancer
- > vegetarians had less gastro-intestinal cancer (i.e. colon cancer, pancreatic cancer, liver cancer, stomach cancer), especially among lacto-ovo-vegetarians
- > vegan women experienced fewer female-specific cancers.

If being vegetarian was a new drug, everyone would want it



VEGETARIAN PROTEIN SOURCES

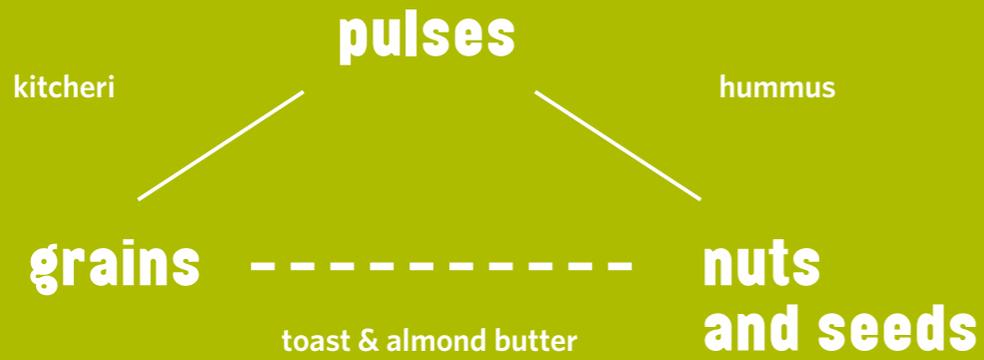
PULSES

A meat-free meal basically requires replacing meat with vegetable protein. The best plant-based protein sources are pulses (beans and lentils), although many people tend to be a bit wary of them, thinking you have to be up all night soaking them. Yes, some beans do need soaking but you don't have to stand there watching them! In the Dru kitchen, we use mainly split pulses such as split lentils and split peas because they cook more quickly, or small pulses such as mung or adzuki beans.

Some people also worry that pulses are indigestible and cause bloating. This can be a problem, but the secret is to really cook them well so that the indigestible elements break down properly. These are mainly carbohydrates or starch, which are chains of sugar molecules. Cooking breaks them into shorter chains, making them more digestible and slightly sweeter to the taste. They are broken down further in your mouth where the digestive enzyme amylase continues the process. Another good reason not to eat too fast!

I have included some Ayurvedic recipes which use herbs and spices to help make pulses more digestible.





————— **well-matched proteins**

----- **less well-matched proteins**

CREATING COMPLETE PROTEINS

The next thing to remember, when eating more vegetarian food, is that pulses in themselves are not a complete protein. In fact, some of the amino acids (the component parts of protein) can be in short supply. This is also the case for most proteins found in grains, nuts and seeds. Mother Nature has made it easy though; you can simply combine them. When combined, grains, seeds, nuts and pulses form complete proteins, and provide the right balance of amino acids for our needs.

The best combination of grains and pulses is normally in a 2:1 ratio, which is in fact the basic diet of a lot of cultures: for example 'rice and lentils' in India, 'corn and beans' in the Americas, 'pitta bread and hummus' in the Middle East and our very own British 'baked beans on toast'.

The good news is you don't need a degree in nutrition to eat a healthy vegetarian diet. This combination of grains and pulses provides a really good balance of protein and carbohydrate.

Using nuts and seeds as a vegetable protein source has the added benefit of providing omega-3 essential fatty acids, which can be deficient in a lot of Western diets. Again, nuts and seeds make a complete protein when mixed with pulses and/or grains. Using all three together is a sort of 'belt and braces' approach.

Keith's protein mantra: eat whole grains with half the amount of pulses and a sprinkling of nuts and seeds

Dairy products in moderation are a good source of protein. Ayurvedic recipes often include yoghurt, ghee, and one of our favourite ingredients, paneer.

A cow's diet greatly affects the nutrient content of her milk so whenever possible get your milk, cream, butter and cheeses from free-range, grass-fed cows.

The oil in green grass contains 50% omega-3 essential fatty acids and cows normally eat a lot of grass. They filter out the omega-3 and transfer it to their milk. Nowadays, to increase production, cattle are often kept indoors and fed corn and soya, both lacking in omega-3.





Another great source of protein is eggs, best when they are organic and from free-range, grass-fed chickens