



# eat here

HOW TO CONSUME LESS AND BE JOYFULLY SATISFIED WITH EVERY MEAL.

# now

It started with a single potato chip in a paper cup. I was sitting in an auditorium with several hundred other people—all of them staring into their cups as I was into mine—while Zen priest and cookbook author Edward Espe Brown instructed us in the fine art of mindful eating.

Instead of shoveling my chip into my mouth, I paused to inhale its scent, examine its curves, feel its brittleness, and notice the oil it left on my fingers. Finally, I took a bite. As I carefully chewed, my taste buds flooded with sensations. All around me, I heard slow, deliberate munching.

When the room had quieted, Brown asked for comments. I laughed at the wisecracks (“Do you have any more?” “How about one drop of water to wash it all down?”), then reflected on my experience. The chip seemed stale, even rancid. The grease was off-putting, the rank taste offensive. By paying complete attention to a snack I often crave—and usually consume by the bagful—it lost a lot of its appeal.

This marked the beginning of my appreciation for the value of mindfulness, the Buddhist concept of bringing full and conscious awareness to the present moment. When it comes to food, I quickly learned, cultivating mindfulness means eating healthier, deriving more pleasure and nutrition from meals, and connecting to oneself and others in powerful ways.

### Clear Your Head

Good nutrition has as much to do with how you eat as with what you eat. “Eating with a clear head helps prevent overeating, undereating healthy foods, and consuming unwanted foods,” says Susan Albers, Psy.D., author of *Mindful Eating 101: A Guide to Healthy Eating in College and Beyond*.

It also establishes the optimum conditions for digesting food, assimilating nutrients, and burning calories. “The same switch in the brain that turns on stress turns off digestion,” says Marc David, author of *The Slow Down Diet: Eating for Pleasure, Energy, and Weight Loss*. “Even a mild stress response diminishes the ability to digest and metabolize.” Cortisol, the main stress hormone, also desensitizes the body to pleasure, so you don’t enjoy what you’re eating and you may be driven to eat more.

Mindful eating helps regulate your appetite as well. “When you eat with awareness, your body knows how much it needs,” David says. Your brain has time to notice the scent, taste, and texture of food and to register when you’ve taken in sufficient nutrients and calories.

“When you reach that level of true nourishment, an incredible thing happens,” says Halé Sofia Schatz, author of *If the Buddha Came to Dinner: How to Nourish*

*Your Body to Awaken Your Spirit*. “You eat a small amount of food, and it’s enough.”

### Feed Your Soul

Each time you prepare and eat a meal, you’re nurturing your spirit as much as you are your physical body. “Feeding is about the compassionate act of taking care of yourself,” Schatz explains. It allows you to connect to the sacredness in yourself and, by extension, in everyone and everything else.

“Food is more than the total of its chemical constituents; it’s also who grew it, who cooked it, and whether it was produced with care,” David says. “The more present you are, the more you experience all the energy and history in each bite of food.”

That heightened consciousness can strengthen other relationships: with your family or table companions; with the web of people who grow, transport, and prepare what you eat; and with the natural forces—soil, sun, water—that provide you with food. It also sharpens your ability to distinguish what (and who) is healthy for you.

“As you begin the awakening process and become aware of yourself as a sacred being,” says Schatz, “you let go of detrimental behaviors and relationships and seek out healthier connections.”

I can attest to that. After I performed the Ceremony of Eating Just One Potato Chip, I had a real sense of the power of mindful eating: It informs me what food really tastes like and whether it was made with love. It brings me closer to the cycles of the earth and allows me to appreciate their beauty and abundance. It enables me to eat less and yet come away from the table feeling truly satisfied and blessedly full.

### Carrot-Daikon Salad with Lemon Vinaigrette

[SERVES 4]

- 1 cup peeled and grated carrot (about 1 large carrot)
- 1 cup peeled and grated daikon radish (about 1 small daikon)
- 1 bunch arugula, washed and chopped
- 1 cup sunflower sprouts
- ½ avocado, sliced
- handful of sunflower seeds

### Lemon Vinaigrette

- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ½ small shallot, diced
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced basil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

1. Mix the carrot and daikon together in a bowl. Arrange the arugula in a large salad bowl, then layer on the carrot-daikon mixture, sunflower sprouts, and avocado slices. Top with a sprinkling of sunflower seeds.

2. To prepare the vinaigrette, mix the olive oil and lemon juice. Add the shallot, parsley, basil, salt, and pepper, and whisk until well blended. Toss the salad with the vinaigrette and serve.

**Per serving:** 363 calories, 85% fat (36 g; 4.8 g saturated), 11% carbs (11 g), 4% protein (4 g), 4 g fiber, 44 mg calcium, 2 mg iron, 171 mg sodium.

### MINDFUL MOMENT

Grate the vegetables the old-fashioned way—by hand. This gives you time to see, touch, smell, and connect to the process of preparing your food. As you grate, notice your posture: Are your shoulders tense or relaxed and open? Notice how the texture and even the scent of the vegetable changes as it’s sliced. What is the experience of eating a grated carrot compared with biting into a whole one?

RECIPES AND MINDFUL MOMENT MEDITATIONS BY HALÉ SOFIA SCHATZ, AUTHOR OF *IF THE BUDDHA CAME TO DINNER: HOW TO NOURISH YOUR BODY TO AWAKEN YOUR SPIRIT*



## Wild Salmon Salad

[SERVES 6]

- 1 7.5-ounce can wild salmon
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice
- ¼ cup diced carrot
- ¼ cup diced celery
- 2 scallions, sliced into thin rings
- 2 tablespoons minced herbs, such as basil, parsley, or cilantro
- salt and pepper to taste

**1.** Using the back of a fork, mix the salmon well.

**2.** Add the lemon or lime juice, carrot, celery, scallions, and herbs; mix thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper.

**3.** Serve on a bed of greens, or use as a filling for a sandwich topped with sliced tomato, avocado, and sprouts.

**Per serving:** 173 calories, 34% fat (7 g; 1.7 g saturated), 15% carbs (7 g), 51% protein (22 g), 2 g fiber, 262 mg calcium, 1.4 mg iron, 616 mg sodium.

## MINDFUL MOMENT

Treat your kitchen as a sanctuary. Before preparing a meal, light a candle and take several deep breaths to clear your mind and center your body. Because this salad is so easy to prepare, pause to engage with each stage of the process—from opening the can of salmon to chopping the herbs—as if it were an extended meditation. To stay present, slow or exaggerate your movements.



FOOD STYLING: RORI TROVATO; PROP. STYLING: KATE MARTINDALE; WARDROBE STYLING: SHINKO/THE REX AGENCY; HAIR & MAKEUP: SAMELIA MILLER/ROUGE ARTISTS



## Fruit Salad with Papaya Poppy-Seed Sauce

[SERVES 4]

- 3 nectarines or peaches, sliced
- 6 apricots, sliced
- 3 plums, sliced
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup raspberries
- 4 sprigs of mint for garnish

## Papaya Poppy-Seed Sauce

- 3 small ripe papayas, peeled, pitted, and coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons poppy seeds

**1.** Wash and cut the fruit, and combine in a large bowl.

**2.** To prepare the sauce, blend together the papayas, vanilla extract, and poppy seeds. Purée until smooth, adding water to achieve a thinner consistency if desired.

**3.** Divide the fruit salad into individual servings and drizzle with the papaya poppy-seed sauce. Garnish with sprigs of fresh mint before serving.

**Per serving:** 197 calories, 8% fat (1.7 g; <1 g saturated), 86% carbs (45 g), 6% protein (3 g), 7 g fiber, 71 mg calcium, 1 mg iron, 5 mg sodium.

## MINDFUL MOMENT

There's nothing like summer to remind us of the glorious abundance of nature. Place the ingredients on a counter and spend a few moments contemplating their freshness and beauty. Take note of how no two raspberries are identical, how a blueberry's pigment varies from purple to deep blue. Feel the soft fuzz of the apricot's skin, so different from the cool smoothness of the nectarine's. Get close. The world invites your attention.

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# 7 STEPS TO MINDFUL EATING

## 1. GET FOCUSED.

To derive all the physical and emotional benefits available from a meal, you need to be free of distractions. Turn off the television or radio, put away the magazine, and clear the table of clutter. Create an environment that is calm, soothing, and conducive to paying attention.

## 2. SLOW DOWN.

"Make it your intention to be a slow eater," says Marc David, author of *The Slow Down Diet*. Take an hour for lunch, two hours for dinner. What do you do with all that time? Simply pay attention.

## 3. BREATHE DEEP.

Take five to 10 long, slow breaths at the start of each meal to center and focus, David advises. Deep breathing cuts stress, induces relaxation, and oxygenates and prepares the digestive system and the brain—a key digestive organ—for your meal.

## 4. BLESS THE MOMENT.

Say a prayer or blessing before you eat to gather your attention. Offering gratitude for your meal can also serve as a reminder of the network of people and natural forces that connects and sustains us.

## 5. USE ALL YOUR SENSES.

Notice the appearance, texture, and aroma of food before you even put it in your mouth. Then taste it, feeling it on your tongue and against your teeth as you chew, and pay attention to every nuance.

## 6. NOTICE EVERYTHING.

"People often confine mindful eating to their tongue, but it's really the sum of the entire experience," David says. A mindful approach encourages you to notice things without judgment or criticism: How are you holding your fork? What music or conversation can you hear in the background? Is the food triggering any memories or emotions?

## 7. EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS.

To refocus your attention, introduce something new to your mealtime routine. Try eating with chopsticks, testing new recipes or restaurants, or discovering exotic foods and spices at ethnic groceries, suggests Susan Albers, author of *Eating Mindfully*.



### Mediterranean Quinoa

[SERVES 4]

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups water
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
- ½ cup chopped scallions
- 1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup chopped cucumbers
- ½ cup chopped radishes
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 cup finely chopped parsley
- 1 small bunch sorrel or watercress, chopped
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup crumbled goat or sheep feta
- ½ cup pitted black olives
- salt and pepper to taste

**1.** Bring the quinoa and water to a boil, cover, and simmer on low for 20 minutes. Let the quinoa cool to room temperature, then transfer to a serving bowl.

**2.** Mix the garlic and scallions thoroughly with the quinoa. Add the remaining chopped vegetables and herbs. Stir in the lemon juice and olive oil. Finally, mix in the feta and olives. Season with salt and pepper.

**3.** Set aside for at least 30 minutes before serving, allowing the flavors time to blend.

**Per serving:** 384 calories, 50% fat (22 g; 5.2 g saturated), 39% carbs (39 g), 11% protein (11 g), 6 g fiber, 198 mg calcium, 7 mg iron, 388 mg sodium.

### MINDFUL MOMENT

How much do you know about the food that ends up in your kitchen? Could you say where the fruits and veggies were grown or how many miles they traveled to reach your home? Consider the people who contributed to producing them—from the farmer and the food packer to the truck driver, warehouse worker, and supermarket stocker. Think of all the natural elements and steps involved in growing just one tomato or cucumber. >>>

### Sea Vegetable Salad

[SERVES 6]

- 1 package (1.76-ounce) dried arame seaweed
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 orange pepper, diced
- 6 scallions, sliced into thin rings
- 3 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons brown rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon tamari or soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds

**1.** Soak the arame for 20 minutes in a medium-sized bowl with just enough water to cover. Drain the liquid and place the arame in a large serving bowl.

**2.** Add the remaining 6 ingredients and toss gently. Garnish with the sesame seeds and serve.

**Per serving:** 94 calories, 72% fat (8 g; 1 g saturated), 21% carbs (5 g), 7% protein (2 g), 2 g fiber, 43 mg calcium, 1 mg iron, 181 mg sodium.

### MINDFUL MOMENT

As you work, take note of the color, shape, weight, and scent of each ingredient. Handle one of the dried arame strands, for example, and explore its hue, texture, and taste. After you soak the arame, repeat the exercise. How is it different?

## Sun-Dried Tomato Dip

[SERVES 6]

- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 pound silken tofu
- 1 clove garlic
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh basil
- sea salt to taste

**1.** Rehydrate the sun-dried tomatoes by-plumping them in hot water. Drain the-water.

**2.** Place the tomatoes, tofu, garlic, lemon juice, and basil in a food processor or blender. Pulse or blend until a creamy consistency is achieved. Season with salt.

**3.** Spread on crackers and rice cakes, or serve with raw vegetables.

**Per serving:** 78 calories, 27% fat (2 g; 0 g saturated), 43% carbs (9 g), 30% protein (6 g), 3 g fiber, 99 mg calcium, 1 mg iron, 131 mg sodium.



### MINDFUL MOMENT

This scrumptious and simple-to-prepare dip invites improvisation. Spice it up with a dash of cayenne, black pepper, or cumin. Mix in chopped black olives or capers. Let intuition be your guide. 🌿