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Cherie Soria
Living Lightly

Raw Food Diets

Are They All The Same?

In my 13 years of teaching gourmet raw culinary arts and catering raw events, I have had the privilege of working with people from all walks of life, with different health challenges, different tastes, and who adhere to different kinds of raw food diets. I have catered events for Viktoras Kulvinskas, David Wolfe, Dr Douglas Graham, Vitalities Unlimited, Raw World, and had eight years of experience running my successful raw vegan culinary school, Living Light Culinary Arts Institute. I have found that there are as many different raw food diets as there are people. So, when I am asked what the differences are between various raw food diets, I must qualify my answer by first declaring that it is entirely a personal thing! It is literally impossible to define every dietary category, since there will be variations depending upon individual tastes, genetics/family traditions, and health issues. Still, there are some things almost all the experts in the raw community agree upon so, after stating what those are, I will talk about the (basic) differences in various raw food diets.

Most of the leaders of the various raw food diets agree (pretty much across the board) on the complete exclusion of animal products. There are a very small segment of raw food eaters who are raw meat eaters, but that is rare (pun intended). Most enjoy organic, raw, ripe, fresh, high water content, seasonal fruits and vegetables; some nuts and seeds; pure

free or low-gluten grains are the ones most often recommended for grain-eaters (teff, amaranth, quinoa, etc). Periodic fasting is highly recommended.

Most say no to legumes (unless sprouted), processed foods (especially cooked starches, like wheat products), processed sugars, and all products containing chemicals (including toothpaste). Here are the major differences in the various Raw Food Diets:

Fruitarianism

Most fruitarians eat whole fruits in their simplest form. (Fruits are categorized as seed bearing and giving of themselves freely. This includes non-sweet fruits that are normally consumed as vegetables—like tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, peppers, avocados, and sun-dried olives.) Some fruitarians also consume greens that are trimmed from the plant without causing harm to the plant, and coconut and nuts since they are freely given. Many fruitarians choose this diet based primarily on spiritual and ethical concerns.

Natural Hygiene

Natural Hygienists eat foods similar to fruitarians, with the inclusion of greens and other non-starchy plant foods. Their goal is to obtain natural health. Hygienists eat whole food in their simplest form, with very little, if any, preparation (no juices or fractionated foods); eat sequentially (one food at a time, until satiated, before moving to the next food); eat fruits first, as much as desired, with attention to good food combining; dark leafy greens are included in abundance; fractionated fats (oils) are discouraged, and whole food fats, like avocados, nuts and seeds are eaten sparingly. Occasional water fasts are encouraged. Good digestion is key.

They say no to fermented foods; stimulating foods like chilies, garlic and onions; sea vegetables; salty foods, other than celery; and supergreen foods like spirulina, blue-green algae, and wheatgrass.

emphasize vitality as well as digestion. They include a variety of recently harvested greens; sprouts; ripe fruits and vegetables; soaked nuts and seeds; live vegetable krauts; fermented nut and seed cheeses and other cultured foods containing acidophilus and other probiotics (friendly bacteria); and some sea vegetables. Wheatgrass and other concentrated green drinks and green soups are encouraged and young greens like sunflower and buckwheat are enjoyed in abundance. Foods dehydrated at low-temperatures are eaten on occasion. Stimulating and salty foods are limited. Attention to food combining is recommended, since good digestion and high vitality is key for Live Foodists.

Raw Foods Enthusiasts

Raw Foods Enthusiasts (also called Raw Fooders or Raw Foodists) eat a variety of raw, plant-based foods, including all the above, with more emphasis on flavor and comfort foods. Dehydrated foods like crackers, cereals, sprouted raw breads, and emotionally satisfying foods like desserts are included. Foods are sometimes warmed or marinated in a food dehydrator to create the textures and flavors of cooked foods. Food preparation can be simple or gourmet. This raw food diet is where many people start in their transition, because it is the most flexible of the raw food diets.

Do some people cross boundaries and combine two or more categories of raw food diets? Absolutely! Diet is a personal matter. It depends on so many factors, including where you are on your path. If all you want to do is add more raw food to your diet, you are a raw food enthusiast, even if you still eat meat and potato chips! Even the most focused fruitarians concur that a healthy lifestyle is about a lot more than just food – so don't be hard on yourself if you aren't always eating just for the health of it!

If you want to allow yourself a little



Linguini Parody with Truffle Cream

Serves 6

- 1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms, softened in 1 cup water for 1 hour

Pasta Noodles

- 8 medium zucchini (courgettes) cut into long strips
- 2 teaspoons solar dried, natural sea salt

Sauce

- 1/2 cup pine nuts, soaked 2 hours
- 1/2 cup cashews, soaked 2 hours
- 2 teaspoons truffle oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon nama shoyu

Other Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon dulce flakes
- 1 teaspoon kelp powder
- 1/4 cup kombu
- 1 cup Roma tomatoes, finely julienned
- 1/2 cup red onion, finely julienned
- 1/2 cup yellow bell pepper, finely julienned
- 1/4 cup capers
- 1/4 cup minced parsley, for garnish
- fresh ground pepper, to taste

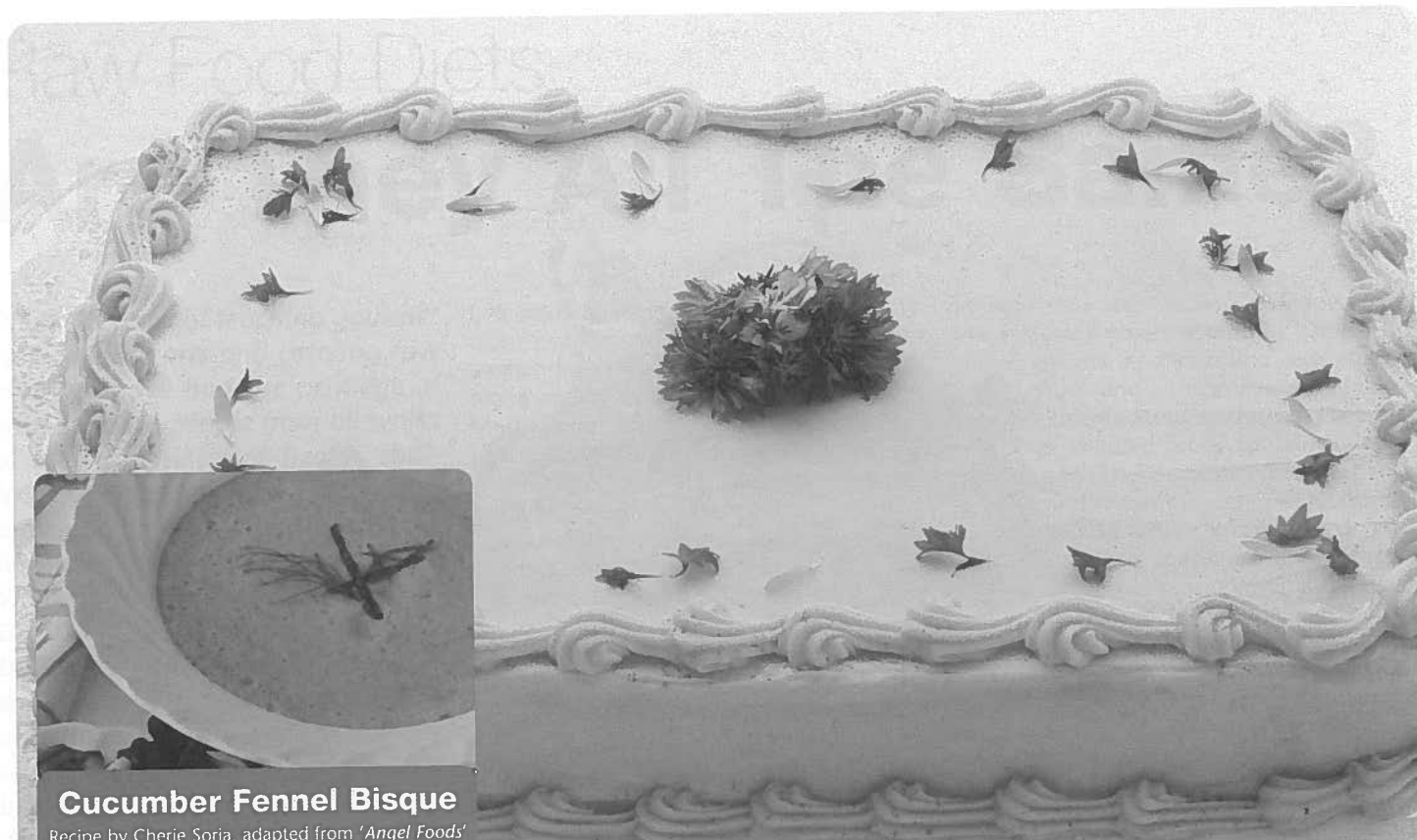
1. Cut the zucchini into long, thin strips resembling linguini. (A Spirooli is perfect for this application.) Sprinkle the salt on

2. After one hour, drain the mushrooms, reserving the water for use in the sauce. Dice the mushrooms and set aside.

3. Combine the ingredients for the sauce in a blender adding a small amount of the mushroom soaking water, as needed, to make a very thick creamy sauce.

4. Drain the zucchini noodles thoroughly, gently squeezing the noodles to remove more liquid. Toss the noodles with the sauce and other remaining ingredients.

5. Garnish with minced parsley and a



Cucumber Fennel Bisque

Recipe by Cherie Soria, adapted from 'Angel Foods'
Serves 4

- 4 cucumbers, peeled
- 1 bulb fennel
- 1 avocado, peeled and seeded
- 1/4 cup cashews, soaked in water for 2 hours
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoon fresh dill weed, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 cups pure, non-chlorinated water
- 1/8 bunch mint, slivered (to use for garnish)

1. Loosely chop 3/4 of the cucumbers and fennel and put them in the blender with half the avocado and add remaining ingredients, except the mint. Blend until smooth, adding water as needed to make a thick creamy soup.

2. Dice the avocado and the remaining cucumber and fennel and gentle toss together to form a concasse. Divide the concasse into the soup bowls equally, forming a small mound in the center of each bowl.

3. Gently pour the soup into each bowl, being careful not to disturb the concasse.

Pineapple Coconut Cake

Serves 8-12

Filling

- 3 cups dried pineapple, cut into pieces
- 1/4 cup pineapple juice
- 2 cups fresh pineapple, finely diced

Cake

- 3 cups dried shredded coconut
- 3 tablespoons Rapadura (or other raw sweetener)
- 3 tablespoon young coconut meat

Coconut Cream Topping

- 2 cups young coconut meat, chopped
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1/2 cup agave nectar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon almond or coconut extract

Pineapple Coulis

- 2 cups fresh pineapple
 - 1/2 cup dried pineapple, ground
- 1.** Grind dried pineapple in a food processor until it is finely ground.

3. Put coconut and Rapadura in the food processor and grind for a couple of minutes, until it is powdery, but not sticky.

4. Add fresh young coconut meat and pulse, until well blended.

5. Press the coconut mixture firmly into a 7" tart pan, or glass casserole dish, to form a crust.

6. Fill tart shell with the pineapple mixture and, if desired, top with Coconut Cream Topping and serve with Pineapple Coulis.

To make Coconut Cream Topping, combine ingredients in the blender and blend until smooth and creamy.

To make the Pineapple Coulis, put dried and fresh pineapple in blender and purée until smooth. Keep refrigerated until ready to eat. Keeps for several days in the fridge.