

THE ATHLETE'S PLATE

Real Food for High Performance

Whole foods for active lifestyles
No-nonsense nutrition guidelines
Buying locally, living green

85
RECIPES
for Quick, Fresh
Meals



ADAM KELINSON

The publisher has made every attempt to ensure the instructions and recipes in this book are correct. However, users should apply judgment and experience when preparing recipes, especially parents and teachers working with young people. The publisher accepts no responsibility for the outcome of any recipe included in this volume.

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1

Making Nutrition a Lifestyle

Athletes are busy people. They constantly cut corners to save time and balance the demands of their sport with everything else in their lives. Inevitably, what it means to eat well and prepare fresh, whole foods is lost in the pursuit of training, racing, and recovery. Yet food is fundamental to the performance athletes seek.

When I talk with athletes about their diets, they often rattle off a few foods they eat repeatedly, often with little enthusiasm. But when I ask these same people about their bike frames, wet suits, surfboards, or shoes, they sound like salespeople at a sports gear convention. As an athlete, you have to learn to become just as passionate about the most important tool you have: your body. Your body is the engine that drives the sports equipment you adore, and that engine needs premium fuel to produce high-quality power. Indeed, because your body is the foundation of any sport, you should treat it better than any piece of gear you own. Once you become attuned to incorporating whole foods and healthy cooking into your life, great-tasting, nourishing food will become another partner in your training.

I liken this to the “zone” that athletes talk about, where practice and training blend into action and thought becomes instinct. Nutrition is no

different. It is not something you should have to constantly think about as an external input; it should be something that is a seamless part of your life. Again, active lifestyles and athletes—especially endurance athletes—have particular nutritional requirements for training and racing, but the foundational concepts of this book will remain the same for the other 21 hours or so of your life that you are not working out. As such, you will not find any rules here to live by. Instead, you'll find guidelines that can fit into your own lifestyle in an effort to find your own balance.

Eating itself requires balance and can be divided into many parts: menu ideas, shopping, food storage, preparation, cooking, eating, and then cleaning up. Add to that the daily tasks of work, family, play, your personal needs, and the other bits of time that are necessary to make all of this happen, and the thought of actually cooking can become overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be. Eating can be fun and enjoyable, and cooking can be satisfying and easy, requiring little time. Cooking can, in fact, help you find balance and a connection to yourself, your family, your community, and the natural world.

Better Food, Better Performance, Better Health, Better Planet

A good nutritional program looks at more than simply what you eat. It is based on a holistic perspective that enfolds the planet and your lifestyle, and considers the quality of the food

you eat, its nutritional value, and its role in supporting your life and goals.

Good nutrition also depends on good sources of food. The integrity of what you eat depends on how foods are grown, handled, and prepared. As such, nutrition is more than just being told what to eat. Its long-term success relies on a relationship that each of us fosters through our connection to ourselves and our communities, by understanding where our food comes from and how its production is attuned to the cycles and health of the earth.

For many athletes, the difficulty in crossing the bridge between what to eat and how to do it within the time constraints of an active lifestyle is the biggest challenge to success. The key is to understand that the what and the how exist in the same place. Most people look at nutrition and proper eating as an external chore outside of their daily life. But prior to the academia of nutrition, native societies lived with great health on a diet based on local foods that were seasonally available and prepared using techniques that enhanced the quantity of nutrition in each bite, and made that nutrition more available to the body. Nutrition was part of their lifestyle, and they understood where it came from and that their health and the health of the planet depended on it. Contemporary society is structured much differently, but we can still incorporate similar dietary habits and skills that will improve our health, our performance, and our daily lives.

It is hardly news that athletic performance depends on nutritional intake. There are scores

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of scientists, dietitians, doctors, and sports nutritionists who focus solely on the relationship between the two. But nutrition is only part of the equation. The quality of one's food, how to integrate and execute that intake into daily living, and its impact upon the earth are elements that are often ignored.

Scott Jurek, ultrarunning's most accomplished athlete, who has won the Western States 100-mile endurance run an epic seven times, puts more miles on his legs in a week than I do on my car, but he still prepares virtually all of his own food. His training philosophy is based on the idea that for his body to positively respond to the rigors of training, he needs to create lifestyle habits that promote health in all aspects of life.¹ Simply put, your lifestyle must support your nutrition, and your nutrition must support your lifestyle. This is the holistic approach that will manifest success in all areas of your performance.

You don't have to master all the components of this concept, but you do have to understand that each part is equally important to the whole. During Dave Scott's six successive Ironman® triathlon championships, he would drain cottage cheese over the sink in his hotel room to get an edge on his competitors.² Clearly there is some absence of culinary excellence here, but he knew how important his nutrition was to his racing and took an active part in its execution. Although most athletes want to be told what and how to eat, personal success has to include personal participation. Once you begin to learn about one area, you will see how it naturally fits with the others.

The process of getting from one side of the bridge to the other does not need to be overwhelming. The road to athletic success is paved with practice, and nutrition is just another part of that practice. In order to make nutrition part of your lifestyle, however, it helps to have reminders that assist in decision making from day to day. The following guidelines are ones that you can take with you wherever you go and can begin to use as soon as you finish reading them. They are very simple tenets to use on a daily basis when you are faced with decisions about what foods to buy, where to buy them, and how they might affect the planet. Using them will keep you living a happy, healthy, and active lifestyle through each and every permutation of your athletic career.

Keep in mind, however, that these are not steps to accomplish and check off; they are concepts to embrace. The guidelines are a structure, but within them are many choices. For example, buying local foods is something that we all can do, but which foods you buy is dependent upon your lifestyle and flavor preferences. These guidelines will reconnect you with the needs of your body as they change from sport to sport and year to year.

The Big Three

These first three steps are fundamentally important. By practicing these three you will incorporate much from the others that follow.

Buy local meat and local produce, and buy organic. Purchasing your food locally

and selecting from organic foods will increase the flavor, freshness, and nutrient value of the things you eat, provide a connection point to the seasonal cycles and availability of your local foods, reduce your exposure to chemical fertilizers and pesticides, limit the impact that industrial agriculture has on the environment, support the infrastructure of your local economy, and save you precious time in your life from having to think about the best foods to buy.

In 1960, farmers made up 7 percent of the U.S. population. In 1994 that number dropped to 1.5 percent; today it is less than 1 percent in a population of 285 million. In 1935 the number of farms peaked at 6.8 million; today it is estimated as below 2 million. However, during this decline the overall population has increased along with the demand for agricultural products. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), “this increased demand has been met (and exceeded) with the aid of large-scale mechanization (the use of large, productive pieces of farm equipment), improved crop varieties, commercial fertilizers, and pesticides.”³ It is a model that has come to be known in the agricultural industry as “Get Big or Get Out”—which is exactly what has happened. As a result of this model, millions of farm families have been driven off the land, unable to compete with large-scale agribusiness. The get-big model has created a factory system of food production that has been tuned for maximum output. Yet studies have shown that yield increases “produced by fertilization, irrigation and other environmental means tend

to decrease the concentrations of minerals in plants.”⁴ As small, localized farms have left the landscape, the families that managed them and the nutrients in the food they grew have left with them.

The rapid decline of local farms has driven our personal resources farther from our homes. The system of corporate agriculture requires the consolidation of production, and as a result the agribusiness holdings are located a great distance from the people who ultimately purchase these foods. A study in Iowa showed that conventionally grown produce travels 27 times farther on average to its point of sale than does the same produce grown locally.⁵ The farther we are from the production of our food, the less we know of how it was grown; the greater the impact it has upon the environment for travel, packaging, and chemical input; the greater the opportunity it has for contamination; and the less money and jobs our local economies receive.

Buying food locally provides us with a point of access for knowing how our food is produced. You know who grows your food, where it comes from, and how it is grown. These are important factors for everyone trying to increase the health of their bodies as well as their daily performance.

“Local” does not mean that the food you eat has to come from your garden, the garden down the road, or even a farm within your community. The closer to home your food grows, the better, but “local” can encompass a valley, a watershed, a county, or a small geographic region. For instance, in New York City locally

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grown foods can come from a small garden in Brooklyn or from a farm 100 miles away in the Hudson Valley. What is important is to practice what Kirkpatrick Sale, in his book *Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision*, calls bioregionalism, which is the concept of getting to know the place where you live, the kinds of plants and animals that inhabit the area, the source of its waters, the soil, and its ability to sustain life within it. Having a connection to the land that supports you adds the crucial element to the sustainability equation that this symbiotic relationship requires and will help you make better decisions about how you can continue to support it.

Despite their freshness, local foods are not invariably organic, which begs the question of whether fresh, local, and conventional food is better than packaged, well-traveled organic selections. Studies have shown that the nutritive content of organically grown foods is, on average, 25 percent higher than similar foods that have been conventionally grown.⁶ At the same time, freshness counts for a lot, as does the environmental impact of long-distance shipping and its required packaging. My own hierarchy is local organic first, then local conventional, and then imported organic. However, this is not written in stone. Ultimately, by purchasing as much food locally as I can, I come to know the quality of those foods and how they are grown, which are the two most critical factors regarding the food I eat. Supporting local organic farming with my purchases also encourages my community to increase the availability of real foods.

Read as few labels as possible. The idea here is simple: fewer labels means less processing. Once you are no longer shopping for fresh produce, labels are a sign that you have greatly distanced yourself from your food source and its nutrients. Labels are indicators of processing, pasteurization and/or preservatives, and, most likely, refined carbohydrates and sugars—and that is true even if the packaged food was purchased in a health food store. They are also part of a system of packaging that adds to our waste stream.

Buying packaged food is inevitable, of course. So the corollary to this rule is, always read the label before purchase. Just because something is in a package does not mean that it is safe.

Labels and packaging indicate that the food product inside is a conglomeration of multiple ingredients that have undergone extensive processing among various producers and distributors. In almost every case, each food item in a packaged product has been pooled with the same item from other sources, with each one being handled differently en route to final destination. Let's take the salmonella contamination of peanuts in February 2009 as an example. Clif Bar is a producer of sports food products, and it was one of the first such companies to use organic ingredients in its formulas. It is a brand in the sports food world that health-conscious athletes have trusted and relied on. Clif Bar sources its energy bars' many different ingredients from a number of farms and food distributors, which ship the ingredients to a central processor where the bars are

made. With packaging that says “Made with Organic” on some products and the organic certification label on others, Clif Bars would appear to be a safe and healthy food source. But these labels can be confusing.

In fact, Clif Bar purchased peanuts from a company that did have organic certification for its facility. However, the peanuts in the bars were not organic. And that peanut supplier was also the one in which the salmonella contamination originated, from which nine people died and over 700 were poisoned. Reading the label may not have saved you from exposure, but it would have told you that not all of Clif Bar’s ingredients were organic, the peanuts being one of them. Keep in mind that this is not an indictment of Clif Bar but an example of how mass-produced, centralized food processing has replaced our own involvement with a false sense of security that what we purchase is safe to eat.

One must also keep in mind that almost anything in a bottle or can has been pasteurized, and the majority of packaged foods as well as some meats and produce are irradiated, cooked, or heat-treated to kill off potential pathogens. These are necessary steps in the centralized food production system, which due to its size, lack of quality control, and speed of operation has created environments and conditions where harmful pathogens can thrive. Keep in mind, too, that even when foods are cooked, irradiated, or pasteurized, they can be recontaminated and sold as safe.⁷ And as Rodney Leonard of the Community Nutrition Institute points out in Marion Nestle’s book *Safe*

Food, irradiation is not a particularly effective weapon against contamination. As he notes, “All irradiation will do is add partially decontaminated fecal matter to the American diet, a practice that is likely to cause food poisoning cases to skyrocket when bacteria develop the survival tactics to resist irradiation. All past efforts to ‘eradicate’ microbial organisms . . . have succeeded only in creating new generations of super bugs, and irradiation will be no different. . . . The solution to the food safety problem is to produce safe food.”⁸

Love yourself and your environment.

Life is not about what you do but what you bring to it. Without caring for yourself, how can you care about others? We can all choose to eat healthier foods, but how do we make that a sustainable process? The answer that I have found is that the love we have for ourselves has to be bigger than we are. That love has to connect us with something that provides motivation and inspiration that goes beyond our own harvest. Food choices have the ability to fulfill this. We can make the decision to care for our bodies and realize the implications of caring for others as well as the environment.

Think of the future for others. Understand that we are part of nature and rely on it for our health and well-being. If we take care of it, it will take care of us.

The Supporting Cast

Embracing the preceding Big Three will lead you to incorporating the following supporting

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players. They are nothing more than simple guidelines to keep in mind. My intention here is not to create a list of things to avoid, give up, or agonize over. Instead, the list is intended as encouragement to help you make some better-quality choices every day. This book is aimed at simplifying your life and increasing your performance. It's about providing you with the tools and resources to help you re-create your relationship with yourself, your food, and your community. From there, you can become anything you want.

Stay away from the processed corns and their by-products. Whenever possible, avoid high-fructose corn syrup, corn solids, corn syrup, cornstarch, and its associated by-products like maltodextrin and dextrose, with the exception of that grown and produced organically. Corn, of course, has been a staple food for centuries, powering some of the world's best runners, and in its natural state it continues to be a good food source today. In the modern Western diet, however, corn has been refined and processed into almost everything you find on a shelf in a standard supermarket. Corn is used today as a sweetener for sodas, jams, fruit juices, chips, condiments, sports gels, drinks, and bars; as a flow agent and binder for pills and tablets; as a stabilizer for bread, dough, and noodles; and as a feed for beef, chicken, pork, and fish.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in 2007, Americans consumed, on average, 40.1 pounds of high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) per person.⁹ There is a continuing debate about the nega-

tive health effects of HFCS as a major cause of childhood obesity and adult-onset diabetes, and many have also suggested it has been a major factor in heart disease, the increase of high blood cholesterol and triglycerides, and an increased clotting factor in red blood cells, leading to embolisms and strokes.¹⁰

One certainty about the overproduction of corn can be seen in its negative impact on the environment. Because corn is grown as a monoculture, where only one crop is planted over a large acreage, it requires large amounts of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. In addition, almost all corn used today has been genetically modified in some way to deal with the collateral issues involved with this type of growing.

Avoiding high-fructose corn syrup is not easy in processed foods, but it is easy in natural foods and when cooking at home. Honey and maple syrup are great natural sweeteners that can be found in their raw form; both contain amazing amounts of nutrients and minerals. Raw honey can generally be found locally, adding to its appeal. Other good choices include agave nectar or syrup (very low on the glycemic index) and stevia, which although not local is generally easy to find.

If you can't read it or pronounce it, don't eat it. This means the hydro's, mono's, tri's, trans', sat's, di's, phos's, pry's, -ate's, -ite's, and any combination of them. Food and eating are simple. You should not need a scientific dictionary to understand what you put in your stomach. Reducing the number of labels in your shopping cart simplifies the task of finding

nutritious food. What about bottled vitamins, you ask? As you will see later in the book, if you are eating a well-balanced diet based on the principles in this chapter, you can be confident that you are getting all the nutrients your body needs without having to find them on a label. Stay as close to the tree or plant as you can. You will get all of the nutrients that you need in a much more bio-available form.

Limit your chemical exposure. Personal hygiene products and household cleaners should be biodegradable and nontoxic. When clients describe a processed food or product they use, I ask what's in it. The invariable response is, "I don't know." If most people don't even have time to eat properly, how many of us have time to research those polysyllabic words on our personal and household products? Not many.

If you were to look into them, though, you would find that they contain petroleums, solvents, alcohols, phthalates, parabens (methyl, p-propyl, isobutyl, n-butyl, benzyl), and chemical additives that are known carcinogens. These products show up in cosmetics, shampoos, sunblocks, antiperspirants, auto lubricants and waxes, paints, and other industrial uses. These everyday items might contain minute amounts within single applications, but over the course of years they add up to measurable concentrations. In particular, they have been found to be present in the blood and tissues of women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Household products contain bleaches, phosphates, and other substances that will either kill plants and animals directly or stimu-

late the growth of aquatic plants and algae that indirectly kill fish and overtake water bodies. Check the ingredient list on the products you use and see how many of them contain these ubiquitous chemicals.

Fortunately, there are many environmentally advanced products on the market to choose from. Many have been around for a long time and boast formulas that are just as effective as the conventional chemical products. Moreover, most are widely available; see the "Resources" chapter for more information.

Eat with the seasons. Not everyone is fortunate enough to live in an area where an abundance of fresh food is available year-round, and even those places where fresh food is available are still subject to seasonal changes. However, the seasonal guide in the "Resources" chapter will help you find and take advantage of what is available in yours. Buying locally takes the thought out of this process and helps with menu planning, since all you have to do is show up and nature's peak flavor, freshness, and nutrient content will be there, waiting for you.

Don't cook what you can eat raw; save time and nutrients. "I don't have the time to cook" is something I often hear; my response is, "Do you have time to eat?" This book is all about reducing your time in the kitchen while improving the quality of what you eat. Decreasing the time you cook food and incorporating a large percentage of raw foods in your diet will go a long way toward saving time and improving your nutrition. In addition, you will find that for many foods, long cooking reduces

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the flavor and nutrient quality that fresh, locally bought organic foods have to offer.

The recipes in this book will show you techniques that will help you prepare meals quickly using a combination of foods, both raw and cooked, allowing you to eat well. After all, fresh, raw food contains all of the life force and nutrients that support a living plant along with enzymes that are crucial for its digestion. When we consume a diet based entirely on cooked foods, our bodies need to supply the necessary enzymes for digestion that were destroyed by heat during cooking. Consequently, enzymes that were to be used for other purposes, such as repair and recovery of muscles, become unavailable. Our bodies do not have an endless supply of enzymes, and the perpetual and supplemental use of them in this way will eventually lead to a breakdown in the body in some fashion.¹¹ This is why sprouts, vegetables, and fruits that are raw and still retain their life force, along with those that are lacto-fermented, like sauerkraut, pickles, and kimchi, are so good for you.

Soak, sprout, ferment, dehydrate. Grains, seeds, legumes, and nuts are very beneficial to an athlete's diet, as are foods that have been soaked, sprouted, or fermented. The techniques are simple, but they need to be incorporated into a daily schedule. As with anything, the more you do it, the easier it becomes. If you are limited by your schedule, however, don't limit your nutrient quality and quantity as a result. If you can't fit the time for soaking, sprouting, or fermenting into your day, visit the

"Resources" chapter of the book to help you figure out where you can buy foods that have already been prepared.

Include essential fatty acids and antioxidants. Essential fatty acids (EFAs) and antioxidants are important components in our daily living. EFAs are healthy fats, better known as the omegas (3 and 6), that the body cannot produce on its own. A healthy ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 is estimated to be about 4:1. However, as a result of the overconsumption of processed foods and the overuse of polyunsaturated vegetable oils and substitute fats, says Jeffery Boost, PAC, who collaborated on two studies on the levels of omega-3 in athletes' diets, 90 percent of Americans are deficient in omega-3s and have an abundance of omega-6. While omega-6 is essential, its pro-inflammatory abilities have been seen as a potential risk of heart disease when excessive amounts are present.¹² The recipes in this book will supply omegas along with antioxidants in your meals in the proper ratios, but it is important to be aware of their intake, as you are ultimately responsible for your own diet. Some of the better sources of EFAs are:

- Seeds and their oils: flax, hemp seed, coconut, and pumpkin.
- Nuts: walnuts, almonds, and cashews.
- Deep-sea fish: mackerel, bluefish, and fish oils.
- Blue-green algae: chlorella, spirulina, and leafy green vegetables are great plant-based sources.

Some reasons to incorporate EFAs into your diet are:

- Decreased inflammation of your joints and muscles.
- Lowered cholesterol and triglycerides in your bloodstream.
- Aid in the prevention of cancer cell growth.
- Reduced risk of high blood pressure.
- Regulate your food intake, body weight, and metabolism.

Studies have shown that consumption of omega-3 fatty acids, particularly eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), greatly increases the strength of the vascular system, improves heart health, and reduces joint inflammation. This is important for athletes who use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen. Dr. Joseph Maroon, the neurosurgeon for the Pittsburgh Steelers, prompted these studies after years of writing 10 to 20 prescriptions for NSAIDs each day (part of the 70 million each year) and seeing the effect the drugs had on his patients (from improper digestion to gastric hemorrhage) and himself. As an Ironman triathlete, Maroon developed an ulcer from the anti-inflammatory he was using to control his joint pain. After incorporating cod liver oil into his diet, his pain was gone. He put some of his patients on the same regimen and was able to record a 60 percent improvement rate in back pain and inflamma-

tion, to the point that some began to cancel surgery and eventually eliminated the use of NSAIDs altogether.¹³

I believe antioxidants are essential as well, particularly for athletes, because without them our bodies would break down. Antioxidants help prevent cellular damage in our bodies from oxidation. Their function is to collect the free radicals that cause damage as a by-product of oxygen use. Free radicals can cause heart and lung damage, skin degeneration, muscular soreness and fatigue, cancer, and a host of other bodily problems. When you live an active lifestyle, your body requires more care. You use more nutrients to support your activity, you lose more minerals and electrolytes because you sweat more, and your body is exposed to more oxidative damage because you breathe more. This is not an argument for sitting on the couch, but rather an acknowledgment that you need to care for your nutrition with more acuity. You can find antioxidants in all sorts of foods:

- Blueberries, oranges, watermelon, tomatoes, grapes, and strawberries.
- Leafy green vegetables, carrots, cranberries, and yellow peppers.
- Nuts, rooibos teas, and the now-famous acai berry.

You will find an abundance of antioxidants with foods from every season, and if you keep in mind the next guideline you will always have them in your diet.

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Eat a rainbow of colors. Keep it simple when you shop. Buy a rainbow of foods. The variety will ensure that you are eating balanced meals with complete nutrition. From there, let the recipes in this book help you use those products and allow your body and appetite to stimulate and inspire you further.

Hydrate with pure, filtered water. Our bodies are over 70 percent water, and water is responsible for the function of many of our bodies' cellular and physical operations. As with oxygen, we can't live without water, and also like oxygen, too much of it can lead to problems. When we sweat and breathe, we lose some of the minerals and electrolytes needed to keep our bodies going, especially if we are active. Replenishing with pure, filtered water is crucial to our survival. Unfortunately, some public water supplies are treated with chemicals and additives that destroy the natural composition of water, so it's important to use an environmentally friendly water filtration system instead of tap water when filling up that bottle for your next workout.

For athletes, it is especially important to include electrolytes and minerals in those drinks we hydrate with to help our bodies absorb and replenish nutrients faster and allow us to retain them for later use. There are many manufactured sports drinks and refuelers with artificial electrolytes and minerals, but sometimes they're unnecessary. Nature even has its own perfect sports drink in the form of coconut water. It contains an array of minerals, electrolytes, and sugars that the body can take in rap-

idly. In fact, coconut water so closely matches the body's blood profile that it was used as an intravenous fluid for field trauma during World War II.¹⁴

Enhance, don't supplement. Why supplement from a factory when you can enhance from nature? Supplements are nothing but substitutes for the real thing. A well-balanced diet can be enhanced by quality choices of EFAs and other specific foods, and this book will show you how to incorporate them into your everyday diet rather than seeking them as something that you need to artificially supply at the end of the day. Remember, staying as close to the plant as you can is the healthiest way to live, and there's nothing further from the plant than an artificial re-creation in a bottle. As legendary triathlete Dave Scott once told me, "If you put crap in, you're going to get crap out!"

Understand your own nutritional requirements. People are like snowflakes; no two are exactly the same. There are many nutritional basics that we can all follow, but from there we branch out in many different directions. As much as we would like to just eat what the person who won the race ate, it is not that simple. Be flexible, listen to the needs of your body, and be willing to respond to those needs when they change. The "Sports Nutrition" chapter of this book contains more specific information on the baseline needs of the athlete's diet.

Make exercise a part of your life, not part of your chore list. This is the core of sustainability. If you don't enjoy whatever

you do to exercise, it's not going to last. Life should be active, and an active life should be fun. Sometimes training can be challenging, or even drudgery, but it's all part of a cycle to achieve something greater, to push boundaries. There is something for everyone out there—it does not have to come in the form of a gym membership, a training program, or even running shoes. Keep trying new activities until you find something that you feel improves not only your health and well-being but also how you feel about being active overall.

You Don't Have to Be an Athlete to Have an Active Lifestyle

Not everyone can be, should be, needs to be, or wants to be an athlete. For the purposes of this book, we will consider an athlete as an individual who has a consistent training regimen for the intent of competing within a chosen sport. Within this definition there are varying degrees of intensity that range from the beginner to the age-grouper, the amateur to the professional, but all require a set of sport-specific nutritional considerations for performance improvement and refinement.

I have worked with actors, performers, dancers, yoga instructors, and other individuals who lead very active lives, and used certain aspects of sports nutrition with them, though not to the acute level that I use with those who are training to race. However, even those who are not athletes may need to eat like one. Whether you are someone who goes to the gym

on a regular basis, practices yoga, likes to surf, plays tennis, rides a bike, runs, or swims, or are a parent who chases kids around all day, the bottom line is that you need to eat—and your food, in habit and execution, should support a relationship with the environment, your community, yourself, and whatever type of lifestyle you want to live. Regardless of how you choose to be active, you can still be nourished with seasonal whole foods prepared in simple ways that are healthy and flavorful.

Industrialized living has separated us from a more natural lifestyle, one in which physical activity is a necessity built into each day for a range of purposes such as gardening, hunting, land and house maintenance, and tending to animals. Today, activity comes in many different forms, few of which have to do with self-sufficiency. A nationwide survey found that 70 percent of mothers believe they are similar to an athlete when considering all of their daily activities.¹⁵ Clearly, it is not just athletes who need solid nutritional information, and it's not just chefs who need to know how to cook. Everyone, in my view, needs to understand where food comes from and how to integrate nutrition and cooking into their lives in order to perform their best and live well.

The funny thing is that most athletes I know are some of the worst eaters I come across. Although their bodies may appear to be fit, they are almost always dealing with some kind of nagging injury, a cold or flu, fatigue, muscle pain, or a digestive problem. In many cases, I believe their diets could be at the root of their maladies. Exercise is not an excuse to eat food

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items that you would not eat otherwise. Those who are not athletes but who are active are at an even greater disadvantage and risk health problems if they have the dietary habits that include refined sugars, carbohydrates, and processed foods. And individuals who are not active in any way face almost certain illness if they eat that way.

What is most important to understand is that the basic elements of eating are the same for everyone. If you are an athlete, you can use the concepts and recipes in this book to enhance the science of sports nutrition to make cooking and eating a simple, enjoyable process that uses whole and natural foods as the source of your nutrition. If you are not an athlete, you can still mine lessons here. Remember, it is a *lifestyle of nutrition* that you need to learn first; you can then apply it so that it supports your particular needs.

The constitution and composition of your body change over time, and so does your ability to participate in sports. But there is no need to learn an entirely new form of eating for each stage of your life. Keep the basics the same and refine the specifics. Is there a better way to look at life than with the idea that to be healthy all you need to do is eat great foods and stay active? As Hippocrates wrote, “Let food be your medicine and let medicine be your food.”

Everything we do in life, right down to the simple act of breathing, requires a metabolic

action, which means that it needs to be supported by an energy source. Eating should provide your body with an energy source that invigorates you to do the things you need and want regardless of what they are. Food provides our brains with the energy to think, our bodies with the energy to move, and our hearts with the energy to put those things together and be the person that the world needs you to be. No matter what you choose to do, the important thing is how you do it. To bring the best of what you have to offer requires the energy to execute it. Food is the integral part of that energy; our individual activities rely on it.

An active life requires your active participation in your food and your health. Once you gain an understanding of how to build a supportive nutritional lifestyle, you will avoid overeating, you'll promote efficiency, and you will find the timing that will support and enhance your health and daily performance. The point of this book is not to fit you and everyone else into one program that happened to work for me. Its purpose is to introduce you to the techniques that others have used and give you the tools to execute those techniques to make the decisions that support your lifestyle, your palate, and whatever activities you participate in. The recipes are there when you need them, but they should also be a departure point for your own creativity. In the end, the more you know, the less you will have to think about it.



Grilled Sea Scallops with Watermelon and Arugula, page 194

Grilled Sea Scallops with Watermelon and Arugula

SERVES 2

This is nothing short of a five-star gourmet meal, yet it couldn't be easier to make. From flavor to texture to appearance, this dish combines them all. The trick to its success is a clean, hot grill that has been well oiled, and a little bit of patience—once you've put the scallops on the grill, you don't want to move them too soon. This is a perfect marriage between land and sea.

1 pound medium sea scallops
1 tablespoon olive oil
sea salt
1½ cups arugula
2 cups cubed seedless watermelon (½-inch pieces)

Dressing

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint leaves
2 tablespoons sliced scallions
1 tablespoon lime juice
1 tablespoon black sesame seeds
sea salt
1 small hot pepper (serrano, Thai, jalapeño, bird), chopped (optional)
1 tablespoon grated lime zest

PREPARATION

Rinse scallops and pat dry. Toss in a small bowl with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and a pinch of salt. Heat a grill or grill pan until you can hold your hand 3 inches above it for 3 seconds.

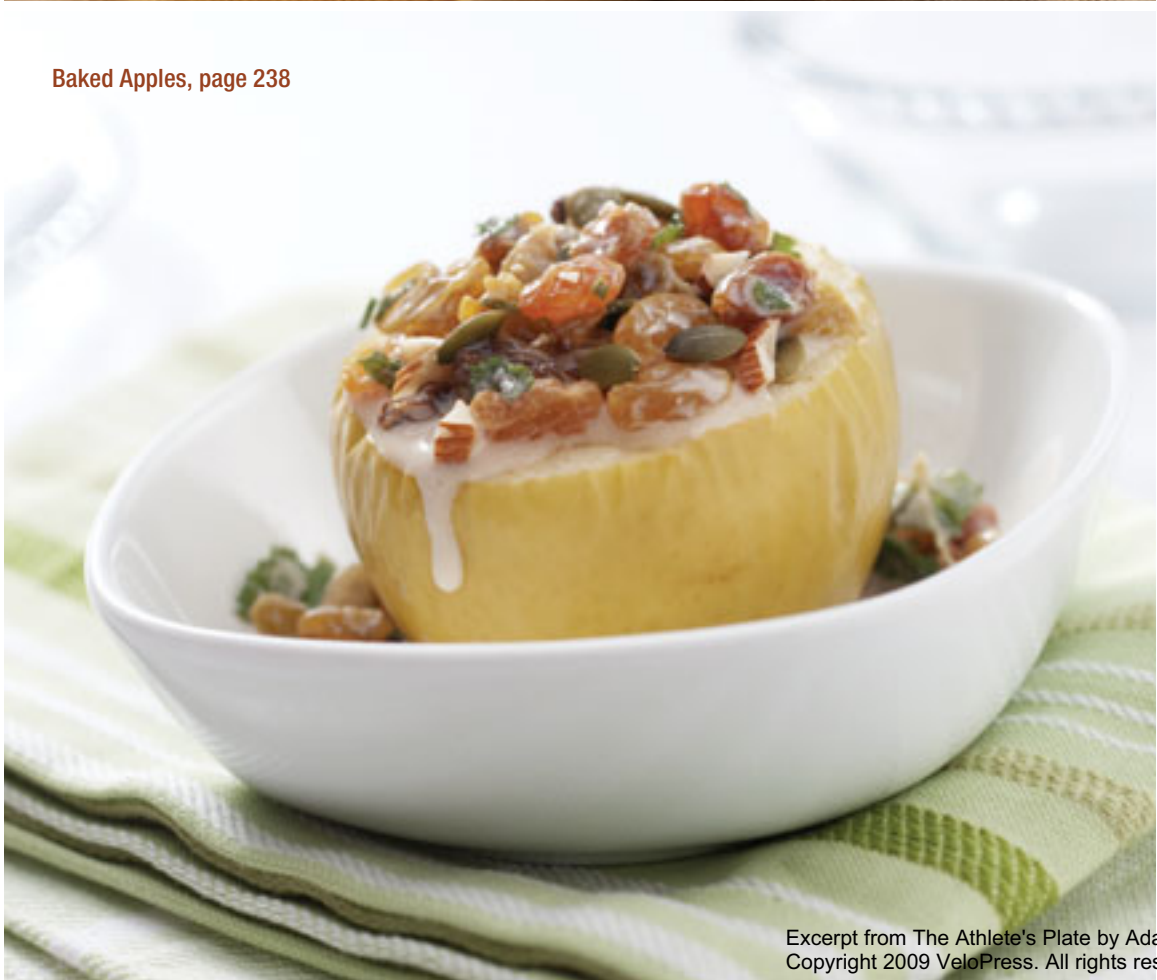
While the grill heats, prepare the dressing: Whisk together 3 tablespoons olive oil, the mint, scallions, lime juice, sesame seeds, salt, and hot pepper (if using). Taste for seasoning.

Brush the grill with some olive oil and cook scallops about 4 minutes on each side, until they turn white the entire way through and are slightly springy to the touch. Set aside to cool while you finish the salad.

In the same bowl used for the dressing, toss the arugula and watermelon in the dressing, and then add the scallops. Transfer to a plate and garnish with lime zest.



Morning Muffins, page 250



Baked Apples, page 238

Baked Apples

SERVES 1

Nothing says fall quite like the best apples of the season. These baked treats make a fantastic breakfast, hearty snack, or even better dessert. To top it off, your whole kitchen will smell heavenly in minutes.

1 large apple (Gala, Empire, or Granny Smith all work well), cut in half and cored

1 teaspoon almond, coconut, or sesame oil

1 teaspoon raw apple cider vinegar

1 tablespoon maple syrup, raw honey, or agave nectar

¼ cup raisins (dark or golden)

¼ cup crushed raw walnuts, almonds, or cashews

2 tablespoons hemp seeds, sunflower seeds, or pumpkin seeds

1 tablespoon grated raw cheese or fresh, raw goat cheese

1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint leaves

sea salt

PREPARATION

Rub the apple halves with oil and place flesh side down on small sheet pan in 200-degree oven (a toaster oven works great here). Bake for 15–20 minutes, until warmed almost all the way through.

While apple is baking, toss the rest of the ingredients together in a small bowl and mix thoroughly. Once apple is done, top warm apple with mixture.

GOOD ACCOMPANIMENTS

- Salad
- Sprouted bread of your choice
- Quinoa
- Kasha (buckwheat groats)
- Couscous



What's on your plate?

No matter which endurance sport you love, eating right makes a big difference in how you perform. But active lifestyles don't always leave time to prepare great meals. *The Athlete's Plate* solves the no-time-for-mealtime problem with 85 recipes that are quick to prepare, nutritionally complete, and seasonally fresh.

Professional chef and endurance athlete Adam Kelinson is your guide from the grocery store to the kitchen. He'll show you how to save time when you shop and prepare his delicious, balanced meals using local, organic ingredients. *The Athlete's Plate* sheds complicated nutrition programs and calorie charts in favor of a seasonal food philosophy that fits seamlessly into the lifestyles of active individuals.

Kelinson offers a worry-free way to balanced nutrition, incorporating all the macro- and micronutrients that you need to fuel and recover for training and racing. He steers you clear of supplements, pills, powders, and potions. Instead, he offers real food for maximum performance.

Whatever your sport, *The Athlete's Plate* will provide the information and inspiration you need to get your nutrition program on the right track.