



THE AVOCADO MAMA

HEALTHY KITCHEN BASICS

GUIDE

BY JENNIFER GLOODT

Stocking a Healthy Kitchen

In order to make healthy and interesting whole-food, plant-based meals, be sure to keep these staples on hand to keep you inspired.

Of course, your menu plan will change every week. There is no need to keep every one of these items in your kitchen at all times, but it is helpful to include most of these foods on a rotating basis.

Fruit and Vegetables:

Vegetables- especially: onions, garlic, cruciferous vegetables, leafy greens & mushrooms

(Cruciferous = Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, kale, and other leafy greens)

Leafy greens = kale, Swiss chard, bok choy, collards, dandelion, fresh herbs (cilantro, parsley, basil, dill, watercress, etc.)

Also: cucumbers, bell peppers, green onions, sweet potatoes, beets, carrots, radishes, and other more uncommon vegetables.

Fruit- look for ripe, in-season organic fruit: Apples, bananas, oranges, lemons, limes, stone-fruit (peaches, nectarines, plums, cherries), berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, etc.), mango, melon (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, etc.), kiwi, and other more uncommon fruit.

Beans and Whole Grains:

Black beans, chickpeas (aka: garbanzo beans), lentils, split peas, pinto beans, etc. (canned or dry)

Quinoa, millet, amaranth, brown and wild rice, oats (old fashioned, steel cut, and/or whole oat groats)

Spices and Seasonings:

Garlic powder, onion powder, Italian seasonings, paprika, turmeric, cumin, cinnamon, Celtic or Himalayan pink sea salt, no-salt seasoning, seasonal fresh herbs, and others you enjoy.

Raw Nuts & Seeds:

Almonds, walnuts, cashews, pecans, Brazil nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, sesame seeds, flax seeds, etc.

Sea Vegetables:

Nori sheets, kelp powder/flakes, kombu, wakami, spirulina, chlorella, etc.

Other (optional) Items

Miso, tahini, organic wheat-free tamari, olives, organic dried fruit (without additives), dates, maple syrup, raw agave nectar, nutritional yeast, vanilla extract (without alcohol if available), applesauce, apple cider vinegar, organic virgin coconut oil, cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil.

Also optional: whole-grain flour, almond flour, coconut flour, baking powder and baking soda, if you wish to bake.

Foods to Avoid

Just say NO to GMO

Currently in the U.S., the most common genetically modified foods are: Zucchini, Cotton (seed oil), Canola, Aspartame, Dairy, Corn, Papayas, Sugar, Soy, Yellow Squash.

The only way to avoid GMO is to buy/grow ORGANIC.

Keep It Real

Avoid artificial ingredients- flavors, colors, chemicals, preservatives, and additives. Trans-fats and monosodium glutamate (MSG) are not your friends.

If it's difficult to pronounce, and you wouldn't eat it as a separate ingredient on its own... it's probably not good for you.

Vegetable Oils

Canola, cottonseed, soybean, and corn oils are full of Omega-6 fatty acids. The Standard American Diet is already dangerously high in Omega-6. These oils are also genetically modified if conventional, and even the organic versions are highly processed. Heating these oils changes their composition and introduces dangerous free radicals when consumed. If you wish to use oil, look for cold-pressed extra-virgin olive oil, hemp seed oil, flax oil, and sacha inchi oil (only use these unheated).

Virgin coconut oil is the only oil that is considered safe to use heated, as the oil is not damaged when heated at medium temperatures.

Sugar

At the very least, avoid processed white sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, Splenda and Nutri-Sweet, etc.

The best choices for sweeteners are dates and stevia. Fresh and dried fruits are also good choices.

Still processed, but decent choices are: maple syrup, coconut nectar, and raw agave nectar. Newer sweeteners are now on the market, but do your research before using any of them- even the "healthier" options that you'll find in health food stores. Xylitol is one example- and it is said to promote dental health, while being a 1:1 sugar replacement.

Also Avoid as Much as Possible:

Processed meats and cheeses, processed junk food (packaged cookies, crackers, fried chips, etc.) These are not everyday foods- they are best avoided or only included on special occasions or holidays. There are healthier, more natural and organic versions of almost every processed food. Some may still be processed, but their ingredient lists are much shorter and healthier when used occasionally, and can help when transitioning to a healthier lifestyle.

READ THE LABELS! Remember, if you wouldn't eat the ingredients as separate foods on their own, they're probably not healthy.

NOTE: This may sound like a lot of foods to avoid, but there are many more foods to include, and endless ways to prepare them.

There are so many varieties of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and sea vegetables that will keep you inspired and satisfied.

Helpful Kitchen Tools

You can create delicious meals using only the most basic kitchen equipment, but you may want to have some specialty tools available for more variety and creativity.

*8"-10" Chef's knife and small paring knife (or a good knife set that includes these)

*Vegetable peeler

*Garlic press

*Cutting boards (use separate boards for plant-based and animal-based foods to avoid cross-contamination)

*Glass containers and jars for storing cold food, dry pantry items, and for soaking nuts and seeds.

*Stainless steel, cast iron, glass, and certain ceramic pots and pans are the healthiest for cooking.

*Food processor

*Blender

Other Tips

Stainless steel and glass are the safest materials for water bottles.

It is best to avoid storing and cooking food and beverages in plastic containers and aluminum foil.

(Plastic = leaching chemicals & BPA. Aluminum = leaching metal)

Safe Kitchen Cleaners

Vinegar: Mix equal parts vinegar and water for a safe all-purpose cleaner. You may wish to add drops of essential oils for a different scent. Some examples are tea tree oil, lavender, and eucalyptus.

Lemon: Use lemon juice to dissolve hard water stains and soap scum. You may also mix 1 part olive oil to 1/2 part lemon juice to use as a natural furniture polish. Lemon peels are also great at freshening up your garbage disposal!

Baking soda: use baking soda as a scrubbing cleaner just as you would with commercial scrubbing cleaners. Baking soda is also a great deodorizer- add to garbage cans, refrigerators and freezers to absorb odors. Try mixing baking soda and lemon juice for a great bathroom scrub!

Fruit & vegetable wash: Mix 1 cup water, 1 cup vinegar, 2 TBS baking soda, and 2 TBS lemon juice. Mix will be fizzy at first. Store in a spray bottle to clean your produce.

Food Sources

Choose organic whenever possible. Here are some ideas:

Farmers Markets: Many farmers markets include organic farmers- just ask, and they will tell you about their growing practices.

Conventional grocery stores: Organic produce is sprouting up all over the place- check your local grocery store to see if they are on board. If not, consider speaking with the produce manager to request more organics. Some grocery chains now carry many natural, organic staple items such as BPA-free canned unsalted beans and quinoa.

Health Food Stores: Depending on where you live, you can find organic produce and other items year-round at many health food stores such as Whole Foods Market, Fruitful Yield, and other independent stores.

Grow Your Own: Whether you live in a small apartment, or own a sprawling estate, you can grow at least some of your own food.

Sprouts can be grown from seeds indoors. An herbal window garden is perfect in a small space. If you have some outdoor space to call your own, consider a square foot garden. With even more space, and depending on which climate zone you live in, you can create a garden of plenty to ensure you have fresh, local, organic produce to enjoy.

Online: Organic produce delivered to your home! Companies such as Door To Door Organics and Green Polka Dot Box offer reasonably priced organic produce delivery to your doorstep. This is a great option if you live in an area without much access to organics. There are also online stores that cater specifically to those looking to purchase vegan and/or raw food products. Check out Vegan Essentials, The Raw Food World, and Amazon online for an excellent array of healthier food products.

Books and Movies

There are many inspiring books and movies available to help you discover and follow your path to good health and conscious living.

Here are some that I have found to be helpful:

Books

Movies

Diet For A New America- John Robbins	Food Matters
The Food Revolution - John Robbins	Forks Over Knives
Eat To Live- Dr. Joel Fuhrman	Vegucated
Disease-Proof Your Child- Dr. Joel Fuhrman	Earthlings
Super Immunity- Dr. Joel Fuhrman	Hungry For Change
Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease- Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn	Fat, Sick, and Nearly Dead
The China Study- T. Colin Campbell	The Get Healthy Now! series of videos
The World Peace Diet- Will Tuttle	Eating
The Engine 2 Diet- Rip Esselstyn	Raw For 30 Days
Green For Life- Victoria Boutenko	Peaceable Kingdom
The McDougall Program- Dr. John McDougall	
Crazy Sexy Cancer- Kris Carr	
Program For Reversing Diabetes- Dr. Neal Barnard	

For more healthy living tips, recipes, upcoming classes and programs, visit the Avocado Mama blog and website:

www.avocadomama.com

Enjoy,

Jennifer Gloodt

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