

Health Coach to Moms: Fall in Love with Your Food

Written by Ginny Grimsley
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Tips to Jumpstart an Affair Your Jeans Will Remember

A lot has changed for 21st-century women, but one thing hasn't: Moms still juggle insanely busy lives and their needs usually fall last on the list, says Columbia University-certified health coach Beth Aldrich.

That includes eating – as in, really loving what you eat. Because you didn't really love that bag of chips you downed while watching "An Affair to Remember" for the 200th time, did you?

"How could you?" asks Aldrich, author of the award-winning new book, *Real Moms Love to Eat* (www.RealMomsLoveToEat.com). "Who could possibly be aware of chips with Cary Grant on the screen?"

It's wonderful to take pleasure in food, she says. It's even OK to eat the things we shouldn't every once in awhile – just be sure to savor every bite. "Eating in front of the TV is not savoring," Aldrich says..

"There are also plenty of great healthy ingredients that you can turn into new foods to love, even healthier versions of those favorite comfort foods from childhood. You'll finish meals feeling energized, emotionally satisfied and best of all, not guilty. And, oh yeah! You'll look great in your skinny jeans!"

Aldrich offers ways to kick off the romance:

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- **Make it all about YOU:** Get back to the basics, remembering the pleasure inherent in the food experiences of your childhood. Think of the simple joy you had crunching into a sweet apple. How does that compare with the high-fructose corn syrup-drenched, refined wheat-flour products that leave you bloated and craving more? Whole foods – those eaten in their natural, unprocessed state, such as a baked potato versus French fries -- give you a fuller eating experience, increase energy and help you look great!
- **Get naked with raw foods:** Our earliest ancestors were hunter-gatherers who foraged for and consumed a wide variety of caloric intake, mostly consisting of raw veggies. Your body will thank you not long after you include more raw food into your diet, but you don't have to go the full Monty right away. Add fresh berries to your breakfast yogurt, include fresh nuts with your lunch, or replace coleslaw from the supermarket deli with a fresh recipe made from scratch.
- **Tame your cravings dragon:** One of the swiftest paths to an unhealthy snacking binge is ready-made, highly-processed sweets and baked goods. The craving-attack occurs when moms are busy and haven't planned their meals for the day and it leads to a spike in blood sugar, a crash and then – another monster-sized craving. Have healthy options ready to go. Nutrient-dense whole grains such as quinoa, whole-grain toast with sesame butter, and oatmeal will turn that dragon of yours into a pussycat in no time.
- **Hungry for more lovin'?:** Think you could force yourself to eat an ounce of dark chocolate every day? High-quality dark chocolate – the kind that doesn't have all the fillers – actually has lots of benefits, not the least of which is ... it's chocolate! Dark chocolate contains natural chemicals that serve as mood boosters and elevate serotonin levels, which enhance our sense of well-being. Health benefits range from keeping blood vessels elastic to increasing antioxidant levels.

"The wrong way to look at the whole-food diet is as an obligation," Aldrich says. "You are doing your body and your taste buds a favor by excluding unnecessary sugar, salt and processed fats from your diet in favor of a variety of spices, fuller textures and a sexier figure."

About Beth Aldrich

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Beth Aldrich is the founder of RealMomsLoveToEat.com and a certified health coach through Columbia University and the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. Her new book, "Real Moms Love to Eat: How to Conduct a Love Affair with Food, Lose Weight and Feel Fabulous" won a 2012 National Indie Excellence Book Award. Beth is also a lifestyle green-living expert, writer and public speaker. She is the founder of For Her Information Media, LLC, with productions such as the PBS TV series For Her Information, the radio show A Balanced Life with Beth Aldrich, and her blog, RealMomsLovetoEat.com. She lives in Chicago's North Shore with her husband and three sons.