

# RAW AND LOVING IT!

BY JOY MOZZI



TOMATO CRACKER WITH CHEESE DISHES  
[photo by montalbetti + campbell]

**Coming from a background with a traditional English influence, my memories of Sunday lunches are ones of long, lazy hours, the family draped around the table. Sleepy and bloated after a huge roast with all the trimmings, potatoes roasted in the oil and fat from the meat, vegetables cooked till pulpy and covered with thick gravy. This was followed by a trifle drowning under whipped cream or a lemon meringue and, as we children became adults, liqueurs and coffee.**

**T**he afternoon was a write-off, adults nodding in chairs or watching television, impossible to get any movement out of them. Even worse, we were all smokers and in those days smoked indoors. We were oblivious to the harm we were causing our first daughter who was surrounded by 6 adults, all smokers. Naturally I continued in the way of my English mother providing meat and cooked vegetables every single night.



BANANA ROLL UPS  
[photo by by gifts from gaia]

We all knew what was supposed to be 'healthy' for us and that included big glasses of milk. My first daughter suffered with continual bronchial problems getting worse each winter, poor child.

Both my daughters became vegetarians as teenagers and, watching them, I gradually began to realise there was a better way to eat. In my mid-40's I was overweight, tired and taking medication for a thyroid problem. I saw an advert in a magazine for a health centre in Queensland and decided I deserved to look after myself for a change. That week changed my life.

Raw vegan food has turned back the clock for me by at least 10 years. I have lost 15kg effortlessly while still continuing to eat as much as I like whenever I like. There is no starvation or deprivation, only vibrant, colourful fresh foods in abundance. My hair stopped going grey, the pre-arthritis pains in my knees disappeared and



NASTURTIUM ROLLS  
[photo by montalbetti + campbell]

my flexibility is that of 10 - 15 years ago. I have also switched to a natural thyroid hormone extract and am filled with energy.

I am passionate about sharing my experiences with others especially mothers with growing children. I realise now that my genuine efforts to provide healthy cooked meals for my children, was destroying up to 80% of the vital nutrients and minerals that are needed for growing bodies.

Childhood allergies, diabetes, obesity and cancers have risen dramatically over the past years, some of which could be linked to the fuel (food) we put into our bodies. Many parents are concerned, confused and unsure what to do with the information overload about today's nutrition. Incorporating more fruit, vegetables and nuts into your daily diet is not difficult to achieve.

Toddlers love to be in the kitchen. From an early age, playing in the pots 'n pans drawer, banging wooden spoons and squashing sweet, sticky

fruits all over themselves, cupboard doors and floors. The love affair with food begins early. Encourage the senses - tasting, touching, seeing and feeling a soft banana, biting into a sweet nectarine, chewing on carrots and celery.



BANANA CAROB PIE  
[photo by by gifts from gaia]

Pre-school children are old enough to help with food preparation: washing produce, tearing up lettuce leaves, throwing a combination of colourful ingredients into a salad bowl or serving each one separately on a platter. If children help to prepare meals they are more likely to try a bit of everything. And as they get older and become more competent in the kitchen it will save you time.

School canteens in many areas are now starting to offer more healthy alternatives. Primary school children might find it challenging to enjoy healthy home packed lunches or to buy healthy food from the canteen, especially if their peer group are all munching on junk food. Again the home environment plays a large part - encourage conversation about different foods and their benefits. Get the children actively involved in packing their lunches. Take advantage of the fruit in season to make frozen sorbet and colourful sweet smoothies.

High-school children face even more dilemmas with peer groups. If they are armed with enough information and confident in their choices, they might even be able to convince their friends to enjoy a juicy pear or crunchy apple. Teenagers are vitally interested in their appearance. Knowing some of the benefits that may be experienced by consuming fresh foods will assist them in making choices.

Benefits could include:

- maintaining a healthy body weight
- clearing up acne
- helping with body odours
- an increase in energy levels and alertness in classes

Many parents and especially mothers try to be superwomen. This is an impossible goal to live up to. Remember that any small step in the right direction is a beginning.

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