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# The Yoga Cookbook

By Sivananda Yoga Center, Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centers



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**The Yoga Cookbook** By Sivananda Yoga Center, Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centers

The teachings of yoga advocate a vegetarian diet, with special emphasis on foods that bring peace to body, mind, and spirit. *The Yoga Cookbook* contains more than 170 recipes prepared under the guidance of the world-renowned Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centers.

Illustrated with more than sixty beautiful color photographs, these delicious, easy-to-prepare recipes have an international flavor. Begin the day with Citrus Slices with Pomegranate Seeds and Carrot and Molasses Muffins. Savor Vegetable Ragout over brown rice, and still have room for a square of Gingerbread with Orange Butter Frosting. Serve Cinnamon Beans along with Herbed Polenta with Corn for an Italian-inspired feast. Treat yourself and those you love to Raisin Nut Balls, Banana-Nut Tart, or Chocolate Truffles. All are prepared with wholesome ingredients that increase vitality, energy, health, and joy.

Containing wheat-free recipes, guidance for vegans, and advice on buying, storing, and preparing the basic ingredients used in yogic cooking, and with special sections on feasts and fasts, *The Yoga Cookbook* brings this soul-satisfying, healing diet to experienced yoga students and beginners alike.



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## **Editorial Review**

About the Author

**The Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centers** are a worldwide network of teaching facilities that are recognized as among the foremost authorities on Hatha and Raja yoga. The purpose of the centers is to promote the teaching of the ancient science of yoga. There are twenty-five Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centers and Ashrams, with many other affiliated centers and teachers around the world.

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### **From the Introduction**

"Shortly after I began taking classes at the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center in America, I read *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga* by Swami Vishnu-devananda. Much of it was eye-opening to me, especially the chapter on the "Natural Diet of Man" (which I assumed included women). I was astonished that the concept of not eating meat had never crossed my mind. I had never met a vegetarian nor heard of vegetarianism -- this was 1962 America.

"One day my mother decided to cook a special treat. She bought some lobsters, filled the bathtub with water so they could await their fate in comfort, and put a big pot of water on to boil. As the live lobsters were dropped into the boiling water, I heard their screams. The thought crossed my mind, 'How could I cause such unspeakable suffering to my fellow beings, just because I liked the taste of their flesh?' I understood firsthand the yogic principle of ahimsa (non-violence) and never ate meat nor fish again."

*Swami Saradananda*

The recipes in this book are in accord with the ancient philosophy of Yoga and Vedanta -- the nondualistic philosophy that forms the metaphysical basis of yoga. Yoga prescribes a lactovegetarian diet for health and moral and spiritual reasons. This diet is an essential part of yoga, as it promotes a wellness that allows the rest of the discipline to proceed unhampered. A yogic diet is in itself a discipline of both body and mind, and is in accord with the spiritual principle of reverence for life, expressed as ahimsa.

Annamaya kosha (the physical body) is made of food. Our whole life can be seen as the effect of the interaction of food and life, or matter and energy, which are respectively food and the eater of food. Food is converted into energy, and energy uses food. Food is the door to a healthier life. It helps keep one free of bodily problems so the mind can concentrate and the spirit can grow. The process of cooking is a good discipline. It involves giving to others, organization, and frequently learning to work under pressure while staying calm. It also encourages cleanliness, imagination and responsibility. The yogic diet consists of pure vegetarian food freshly prepared with love. Perhaps as you achieve a proper, healthy diet you will be encouraged to tackle the other four principles of yoga -- exercise; breathing; relaxation; and positive thinking and meditation. Even if you are interested only in the physical yoga exercises, you will be surprised by the enhancement of your practice as you modify your diet.

### **The Three Gunas**

"Verily, this person consists of the essence of food."

*Taittiriya Upanishad, II. 1*

In yogic philosophy, the mind is formed from the subtlest portion or essence of food. If the food taken in is pure, the mind has the proper building materials for the development of a strong and subtle intellect and a good memory. A yogic diet brings inner peace to the body and mind and encourages spiritual progress.

All of Nature, including our diet, is categorized into three qualities, or Gunas: sattvic (pure), rajasic (overstimulating), and tamasic (putrified). A person's mental makeup may be judged from the type of food he or she prefers to eat. Yogis believe not only that "you are what you eat," but also you eat those foods that reflect your own level of mental and spiritual purity. As your life changes in a positive way, you will also see your food preferences improving. The yogic diet is based on sattvic foods.

### **Sattvic Foods**

"The foods which increase life, purity, strength, health, joy, and cheerfulness, which are savory and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are dear to the sattvic people."

*Bhagavad Gita, XVII. 8*

Pure foods that increase vitality, energy, vigor, health, and joy, that are delicious, wholesome, substantial, and agreeable are sattvic. These foods render the mind pure and calm and generate equanimity, poise and peaceful tendencies. Sattvic foods supply maximum energy, increase strength and endurance, and help to eliminate fatigue even for those who do strenuous work. They promote a peaceful attitude and are conducive to the practice of meditation.

Foods should be as fresh and natural as possible, preferably organically grown, not genetically modified, and kept without preservatives or artificial flavorings. They should also be eaten in as natural a state as possible - either raw, steamed, or cooked lightly.

Sattvic foods include:

**Grains** such as corn, barley, wheat, unpolished rice, oat, millet, and quinoa. Make sure you include in your diet coarse foods such as steel-cut oats and whole grain breads. These are good for the teeth and jaws, and they stimulate the processes of digestion and elimination. Grains supply necessary carbohydrates, the main source of energy for the body, and they also contain about half the amino acids that are needed to form protein.

**Protein foods** such as legumes, nuts, and seeds. Proteins are the "building blocks" of the body. The key to a healthy vegetarian diet is to eat a good mixture of foods to make sure it includes all the amino acids essential for making proteins.

**Fruits**, both fresh and dried, as well as pure fruit juices, provided the ancient diet of the rishis and raja yogis. Among the many different foods, fruits stand foremost in importance in the yogis' menu or regime. The curative effects of fresh juicy fruits are astonishing. They fill the body with vitalizing, or life-giving, minerals and vitamins, and roughage (fiber). They contain alkaline matter that helps to keep the blood pure.

**Vegetables** are important in the diet because they contain minerals, vitamins, and fiber. The diet should include seeded vegetables (such as cucumbers and squashes), all leafy vegetables, and roots or tubers. These are best eaten raw or cooked as lightly as possible.

**Herbs** for seasoning and herbal teas.

**Natural sweeteners**, such as honey, molasses, maple syrup, and apple juice concentrate, are much better for

you than processed sugar. Raw sugar is a traditional part of yogic diets in India, where, known as jaggery, it comes directly from the cane and is not processed. White sugar is best avoided in a healthy diet.

**Dairy products**, such as milk, butter, cheese, and yogurt, are traditionally an essential part of the yogic diet. However, modern dairy practices abuse the animals, filling their milk with hormones and antibiotics. We have, therefore, also suggested a vegan alternative for recipes, whenever possible. Even if you choose to use dairy products, we recommend you do so in moderation. They tend to intensify the production of mucus, which interferes with the natural flow of breath.

### **Rajasic Foods**

"Foods that are bitter, sour, saline, excessively hot, pungent, dry, and burning, are liked by the Rajasic and are productive of pain, grief, and disease."

*Bhagavad Gita, XVII. 9*

The yogic diet avoids rajasic foods because they overstimulate the body and mind. They excite passions and boisterous tendencies, cause physical and mental stress, bring a restless state of mind, and destroy the mind-body balance that is essential for happiness. However, remember this division of foods into sattvic-rajasic-tamasic is a comparative one, not an absolute. It is meant to help you gain the insight to change your diet in a positive direction. Hence, spices are used in recipes, but they are used subtly and may be phased out as your tastes become "sattvic."

Onions, garlic, radishes, coffee, tea, tobacco, and stimulants of all kind fall into this category -- also, heavily spiced and salted, chemical-riddled convenience foods and snacks. Sattvic food taken in the wrong place, such as "on the run," becomes rajasic. Refined (white) sugar, soft drinks, prepared mustards, pungent spices, highly seasoned foods, and anything excessively hot, bitter, sour, or saline are all rajasic and are best avoided.

Strong spices and condiments overstimulate the mind as well as irritate the mucus membrane of the intestines. Rajasic foods accentuate lust, anger, greed, selfishness, violence, and egoism, which are the barriers that separate people from each other and from their realization of the Divine. Rajas is the energy that creates dissension in life and wars in the world.

### **Tamasic Foods**

"That food which is stale, tasteless, putrid, rotten, and impure refuse, is the food liked by the Tamasic."

*Bhagavad Gita, XVII. 10*

Tamasic food makes a person dull, inert, and lazy; it robs individuals of high ideals, purpose, and motivation. In addition, it accentuates the tendency to suffer from chronic ailments and depression, and fills the minds with darkness, anger, and impure thoughts. Abandoning tamasic foods needs to be among the first positive lifestyle changes you make.

Meat, fish, eggs, all intoxicants, alcoholic beverages, marijuana, and opium are tamasic in nature. Meat-eating and alcoholism are closely allied. The craving for alcohol dies a natural death when meat is withdrawn from the diet.

Tamasic foods include all foods that are stale, rotten, decomposed, unclean, as well as overripe and unripe fruits. Also included are foods that have been fermented, burned, fried, barbecued, or reheated many times:

half-cooked, overcooked, and twice-cooked items, as well as stale products and those containing preservatives, for example canned, processed, and many prepared foods.

Mushrooms are included in this category, because they grow in the darkness. Also vinegar, because it is a product of fermentation and retards digestion.

Deep-fried foods are indigestible. The fat penetrates into them and the digestive juice of the stomach cannot act on them. The fine nutritive essence which is beneficial to health is destroyed by frying and the food takes on the quality of tamas.

Sattvic food taken in excessive quantity (overeating) becomes tamasic.

### **Guidelines for Healthy Eating**

"From food all beings are born. Having been born, they grow by food. Food is eaten by all beings and it also eats them."

*Taittiriya Upanishad, II. 2. 1*

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### **Users Review**

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#### **Sylvia Dasilva:**

Here thing why this particular The Yoga Cookbook are different and reputable to be yours. First of all reading through a book is good nevertheless it depends in the content than it which is the content is as delicious as food or not. The Yoga Cookbook giving you information deeper since different ways, you can find any book out there but there is no publication that similar with The Yoga Cookbook. It gives you thrill reading journey, its open up your current eyes about the thing that happened in the world which is possibly can be happened around you. It is possible to bring everywhere like in area, café, or even in your means home by train. When you are having difficulties in bringing the published book maybe the form of The Yoga Cookbook in e-book can be your option.

#### **Christy Brodersen:**

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book can be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the guide untitled The Yoga Cookbook can be excellent book to read. May be it can be best activity to you.

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