

CLEAN LIVING GUIDE



STAPLES FOR COOKING ON THE FLY

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Spices, Herbs & Salts

Having an arsenal of herbs at your disposal makes cooking off the cuff delicious and fun. Try buying whole spices and grind them fresh with a mortar and pestle. This releases the fragrant oils and imbues your food with bolder flavors than powdered spices can. The most versatile, affordable and effective mortar is the Mexican Molcajete, get the details here: <http://tinyurl.com/zzxfra>

Buy your spices from bulk bins and you'll be able to stock up on all of these for a modest investment. You can find bulk herbs + spices at health food store and coops. Search for health food stores in your state here: <http://www.greenpeople.org/NaturalFood.html>

Pick your favorites spices and herbs, but if you're not sure where to begin try these to start:

- Celtic Sea Salt (for cooking)
- Himalayan Sea Salt (for topping)
- Fresh Black Pepper (best whole)
- Cumin (a world of difference when whole)
- Cinnamon (powdered works)
- Cardamom (best whole)
- Turmeric (fresh and powdered are great)
- Coriander (best whole)
- Fenugreek (only buy whole – powdered really loses its flavor)
- Smoked Spanish Paprika (Must have! Gives a meaty smoked flavor to veggies.)
- Plain Paprika
- Red or Yellow Curry (preferably both)
- Whole Nutmeg (you'll need a microplane: <http://tinyurl.com/jjxrt8d>)
- Allspice (powdered ok)
- Bay Leaf
- Sage
- Tarragon
- Oregano

Consider stocking up on a few premixed spices and toppings – some of my favorites include:

- Aloha Spice Company
- Frank's Finest
- Eden Organic - Seaweed Gomasoi + Plain Gomasoi

Grow a few of your own. A few pots of herbs will create a life-affirming atmosphere in your kitchen and give you the versatility of fresh herbs at a moment's notice.

Fats & Oils

Using oils on cold foods such as salads or for low heat cooking is great, but when cooking or baking on high heat be sure to use stable and nutritious fats. Most oils are high in antioxidants and have many benefits, but poly-unsaturated oils will oxidize under high heat. This makes them carcinogenic and inflammatory. Because coconut and palm oils are rich in saturated fat, they are your best option for high heat vegetarian cooking.

If you're not vegetarian, you can also use animal based fats for cooking on high heat. Get your animal fats from local farmers who will verify that their animals live on pasture (cow's consumption of grass is what makes butter nutritious), that they're healthy and happy, and as a result have not been treated with antibiotics or hormones. Many cities now have butchers that only source meat from pastured farms – seek one out! They'll have all the fats you need. Or talk to the farmer's at your local Farmer's market. If you can't get butter from a trusted dairy, try **Kerry Gold** – pasteurized, but pasture raised and widely available, or get it on Amazon: <http://tinyurl.com/z3z4vnz>

- **Oils:** coconut oil, palm oil, extra virgin olive oil (try **Bariani**: <http://tinyurl.com/jjjkueq>), flaxseed oil, toasted sesame oil (quality raw nut + seed oils: <http://www.rejuvenative.com>)
- **Fats:** raw or pastured butter, duck fat, tallow, lard (yes, lard! – but only from pastured cows)

Nuts & Seeds

Nuts and seeds are a terrific way to dress up many dishes: salads, soups, sautéés and grains. Plus, they're a great snack and I often use them in making of dressings and dips. You can whip up a great dressing for a boring ol' meal in seconds with the addition of nuts. Always have some around!

- **Nut Butters:** tahini, cashew, almond, peanut (sparingly, peanuts contains a carcinogenic mold)
- **Nuts:** pine, brazil, cashews, walnuts, almonds, pistachios
- **Seeds:** pumpkin, pepitas, sunflower, sesame, toasted sesame, hemp, flax (golden or brown), chia

Vinegars

Apple cider vinegar is a must have for dressings and many other food preparations. All the others are a nice addition, but not necessary.

- Apple cider vinegar
- Balsamic vinegar (Eden Organic makes one in a dark glass which contains the mother)
- Red wine vinegar
- Umeboshi vinegar

Sweeteners

All sweeteners should be used in moderation, but these few are the healthiest options. I generally have all of them around. Stevia is nice in iced coffee, xylitol in my morning shake, coconut sugar in cooking, maple syrup on oatmeal and honey for medicinal purposes.

- Stevia (zero glycemic)
- Xylitol (zero glycemic)
- Coconut sugar (low glycemic)
- Raw Honey (has other immune building benefits)
- Barley malt (has some minerals and nutrients)
- Maple syrup (has some minerals and nutrients)

Seaweed

Seaweeds can be used to add saltiness and minerals to a dish by sprinkling onto grains, soups, salads and more. There are many varieties of seaweed, below are a couple I like to have around.

- Dulse (my favorite for topping salads and soups)
- Kelp (great for using in soups and when cooking beans to help reduce bloating)
- Nori (a tasty snack, or for rolling fish and veggies, get the flakes to top salads or grains)

Condiments

Condiments are a terrific way to dress up a simple meal. However I wouldn't recommend most condiments found at the store. They're often loaded with sugars and other unhealthy chemicals. Below you'll find a few options for authentically healthy condiments and a few recipes to make your own. Many condiments are very easy to make and the health benefit is tremendous!

Traditionally most cultures paired their meals with lacto-fermented pro-biotic condiments. These toppings add enzymes to the digestive process and help to maintain a healthy gut flora, for a healthy immune system. Industrial food production changed the course of condiments when these healthful products, like mustard and ketchup, began to be produced with cheap vinegars to reduce labor, increase profits and shelf life. You can resurrect wise tradition and enjoy live, enzyme rich condiments by simply following the below links. Make your lacto-fermented condiments in large batches, because once you place them to store in the fridge they'll last for several months.

- Try these dressings and use them atop everything from salads and sandwiches, to fish and meat: <http://bit.ly/SJxLna> or <http://bit.ly/ugmbkh> (once you get the basic recipe down, it'll be easy to play and make other variations...)
- Buy lacto-fermented goods at www.rejuvenative.com: authentic ketchup, live salsa, sauerkraut, kimchi, nut butters, healthy chocolate spreads (avoid ones containing Agave)
- Plain yogurt is a great condiment on its own. Treat it like raita or Crème Fraîche.
- Check out my step by step guide to making lacto-fermented veggies: <http://bit.ly/OkueHw>
- Visit Cultures for Health at <http://bit.ly/lq7rIK> for recipes on lacto-fermented: mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, horseradish, pickles, chutney, relish, salsa, dressings and more
- Find recipes for fermented ketchup, mustard and more at Paleo Lifestyle: <http://bit.ly/fXcdV8>
- It will be useful to get some whey for the making of your lacto-fermented condiments. The easiest access to whey is by asking the cheese farmer's at your local Farmer's Market if they'll sell it to you. You'll likely get it for nearly nothing. Otherwise, follow these easy steps: <http://bit.ly/PjI4co>

Miscellaneous Must Haves

I always keep the following in stock. With the help of some herbs and spices, these few other ingredients will turn any vegetable, grain or protein into something tasty.

- Cooking wine. Keep a cheap Organic red and white on hand.
- Alliums! Always have plenty of onions, shallots and garlic stored away.
- Dried hot peppers.
- Butter + duck fat. Worth mentioning twice.
- Bone broth or veggie stock.
- Root vegetables stored in your crisper covered with towels. These veggies keep well and will save the day on many a night when you haven't had time to shop.
- Your pantry should always be full with a variety of dry grains and beans. These take a little foresight since it's best to soak them, but they keep well when stored in an air-tight jar in a dark cupboard and are a great resource when you haven't had the time to shop.

Kitchen Tools & Cookware

This is an essential aspect of a functional and healthy kitchen. Good kitchen tools will make cooking easy, fast and will prevent toxins from leeching into your lovingly prepared foods.

Basic Tools

- A mortar and pestle is a must have, this Molcajete is the most versatile and affordable: <http://bit.ly/NMGYZ2>
- A couple good knives will be your savior. These two are an INCREDIBLE value:
Paring knife: <http://tinyurl.com/j7mvs26>. Chef's knife: <http://tinyurl.com/hbezcz29>.
- A mandoline will remarkably reduce chopping time. This one works great for a good price: <http://tinyurl.com/jdsutcg>
- A salad spinner is a must! Not only for washing greens, but for storage too: <http://tinyurl.com/z7whpgx>

- A few good wooden cutting boards are crucial. NEVER use plastic. Plastic boards trap bacteria in the grooves that cannot be eliminated even with the heat of a dishwasher. Not to mention you get plastic into your food. Wood cutting boards are naturally anti-microbial, beautiful and can be affordable too, especially bamboo. Try this set to start: <http://tinyurl.com/gpd9esa>
- A microplane is necessary for zest and nutmeg, amongst other things: <http://tinyurl.com/jjxrt8d>

Appliances:

- A good blender is another must have. If you can afford it, get a Blendtec or a Vitamix: <http://tinyurl.com/havjbyq> or <http://tinyurl.com/havjbyq>
- I also highly recommend having a hand blender: <http://tinyurl.com/glvwwtz>
- A juicer is recommended, but not essential. I have this one, it's easy to clean and does a good job: <http://tinyurl.com/gngrofq>
- If you don't have luck with stovetop grain cookin' then get this stainless steel bowl rice cooker: <http://tinyurl.com/hmll8dd> (The standard rice cooker is made with non-stick Teflon)

Pots and Pans

- For the most part you want to be cooking on stainless steel, cast iron and ceramic surfaces.
- NEVER use Teflon – even an unscratched Teflon surface releases toxic chemicals when heated.
- If you're short on good pots, invest in this excellent and very affordable stainless steel set: <http://tinyurl.com/gt4oeuu>. I own this these and can vouch that the heat distributes evenly, nothing burns and they're easy to clean.
- If you only want to add a pot or two to your collection, Dansk enamel coated pots are beautiful and a healthy choice. 2QT: <http://tinyurl.com/guhxue8> 3QT: <http://tinyurl.com/hu8nv5y>
- A cast iron pan is always handy: <http://tinyurl.com/hdwms3x>
- If budget is no issue, your life will be forever altered with the addition of a few Le Creuset pots, or better yet a whole set: <http://tinyurl.com/jduxeta> They really are that good.

Storage Containers

Your storage containers should be glass or stainless steel. Get this set from Glass Lock: <http://tinyurl.com/zf9b8ou>. You'll have containers for all occasions: storing a big stew, lunch, leftovers, cheese, condiments, and so on.

Never put anything warm or even slightly acidic in plastic – this includes tomatoes, lemon juice, most fruit, juices, yogurt, vinegar, etc. Plastic leeches toxins into food. Period. This goes for all plastics – there is no such thing as 'safe' plastic. You will find info claiming the contrary online, these claims are backed by *a lack of data*.

Simplify your life. Store your food in glass containers and wonder no more. You will still encounter plastics eating out, in packaged food, and even in your home or work environment, but if you eat mostly home cooking – you can greatly reduce your exposure!

- Glass is a safe, stable material, and so much prettier than nasty old plastic!
- If your lids are plastic, let food cool to room temp before sealing.
- Eat as few canned foods as possible to avoid the well-documented health hazard BPA. Buy dry, frozen or fresh goods instead.
- Store drinking water in a completely stainless steel bottle such as the Klean Canteen brand. Watch out for the ones that look stainless steel on the outside, but are lined with rubbery coating on the inside – that coating contains BPA or sister chemicals yet to get a bad rap.
- Chemicals found in plastics have been positively found to cause a myriad of diseases, including but not limited to: behavioral problems such as ADHD, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, gastrointestinal distress, damaging effects on liver and kidneys.
- Avoid saran wrap. Plasticizers, the chemicals that make it flexible [phthalates (DEHP)], are proven to cause developmental toxicity, such as birth defects and reproductive effects, such as decreased fertility, stillbirths, decreased testicular weight and tubular atrophy. They've also been linked to cancer, ADHD, other behavioral problems and autoimmune diseases such as Lupus.