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EVERGREEN SPA & WELLNESS CENTER
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MIND YOUR FOOD—EATING AS MEDITATION

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Hours

Monday-Saturday

10am-6pm

(Closed Sundays)



*Listen to Sonja's
"Natural Health
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We all do it—well, most of us. We are checking our e-mail, the TV is humming along in the background and we have got a mental checklist of all the things we need to do running through our minds, all the people we need to call, bills we need to pay. We look down at our plates only to find the food has vanished without any recollection of having eaten it. We exist in our heads and let our bodies run on automatic, therefore missing out on one of life's great pleasures—the food we nourish our bodies with. It's time to let eating become the sacred act that it is. Allow your senses to become completely absorbed in your food—smelling, touching, seeing, tasting, chewing slowly and savoring every bite. Healthy eating is also to come into a place of gratitude, and be present to your meal. However, learning to be present in your body is something that will only arise through practice and dedication, and some lifestyle shifts. Giving yourself permission to slow down and setting your multi-tasking self aside will help you to get back in touch with yourself. Mind-body activities such as yoga and meditation will build your relationship with your body.

Start off by treating your mealtimes with the respect they deserve by simply being mindful. Mindfulness is simply the moment-by-moment awareness of life. Mindfulness is a return to paying attention to life. When we pay attention to our food—really pay attention— we begin to notice all sorts of wonderful aspects of the food, and we also become aware of how much we are putting into our bodies. Mindful eating helps us learn to hear what our body is telling us about hunger and satisfaction. There are many benefits to mindful eating such as reduced overeating, an increased enjoyment of food and improved digestion. Remember, digestion begins in the mouth with the action of saliva. If food isn't chewed properly it means that there is more work for the rest of your digestive system.

However, start small. Like all new habits, it is best to set realistic expectations. Choose one meal or snack each day and commit to focusing on mindful eating at that time. Especially stop multitasking at meal times. It is really difficult to focus on eating if you are doing other things. Set aside time for eating without other entertainment. Another way to minimize mindless munching is to get into the habit of only eating when you are sitting down and are able to give the food your full attention. No more snacking on the run. One of the joys of eating is sharing a meal with loved ones. It can be challenging to incorporate mindfulness in a social situation but it is not impossible. Turn the focus of the conversation onto the meal while you are actually eating. Share what you are experiencing in terms of flavors and textures, likes and dislikes. Or, at family meals, you might ask everyone to eat in silence for the first five minutes, thinking about the many people who brought the food to your plates. The cooking process can be as relaxing and enjoyable as eating, if you let it. The peace of mind that comes from knowing exactly what has gone into your food should make the whole process alone worthwhile. Always opt for quality and not quantity. By choosing smaller amounts of the best foods you can afford, you will not only enjoy it more but you are far more likely to be satisfied without having to overeat. Eating can be and should be your meditation. This holiday season make a special effort to become more embodied and let eating become the sacred act that it is and you will feel rewarded in many ways. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

HEALTHY HOLIDAY DESSERTS

SEARED SPICED APPLES—Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a dry skillet over medium heat, toast 1/4 cup almonds until golden brown. Let cool and grind into a fine powder. In a shallow dish combine almonds with 3/4 tsp chopped candied ginger, 1/2 tsp cinnamon, 1/4 tsp nutmeg, and 1/4 cup brown sugar. Brush 2 apples (halved and cored) with 1 egg white and press into the spice mixture. Heat 1 TBSP butter in a pan over medium heat. Brown the cut side of the apples in the pan for 1 to 2 minutes. Turn the apples over and add 1/2 cup water and 1 3/4 cups prune juice. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 1 hour, or until the apples are tender and the sauce is reduced to a thick syrup. Serve and enjoy!

PEAR CRANBERRY CRISP—Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a medium bowl combine 3 very ripe pears (peeled, cored, and cut into chunks), 1 cup whole cranberries, 1/4 cup maple syrup, 2 TBSP lemon juice and toss. Set aside. In another bowl, combine 1/2 cup oatmeal, 1/4 cup brown sugar, and 1 TBSP whole wheat flour. Cut in 1 TBSP butter until the consistency resembles coarse crumbs and the dough just barely holds together. Spoon the cranberry mixture into a 8x8-inch baking dish and spoon the dry mixture over it. Bake for 10 minutes, or until the topping is brown and crisp. Reduce the heat to 350 degrees and bake for 20 to 25 minutes more, or until the fruit is bubbling. Serve with whipped cream, crème fraiche or vanilla ice cream. ENJOY!

DECEMBER SPECIALS IN THE WHOLE FOODS PANTRY

Alexia—Ciabatta rolls w/rosemary & olive oil (frozen)	20% OFF
Alexia—Focaccia, 3 cheese w/asiago (frozen)	20% OFF
Rising Moon—Organic Ravioli & Tortellini—variety (frozen)	30% OFF
Gluten-free Pantry—Chocolate Truffle Brownie mix, W/F	30% OFF
Perrier—Sparkling Grapefruit water—1 Liter	25% OFF
Amy & Brian—Mangosteen Juice w/ Goji—8.45 oz.	25% OFF
Good Health—Peanut Butter Pretzels 5.5 oz.	30% OFF
Metromint—Goodberry Mint Water 16.9 oz.	25% OFF
Rapunzel—Organic chocolate/hazelnut spread 8.8 oz.	25% OFF
Bob's Red Mill—Dry soup mix variety	30% OFF
Ayala's Herbal Water—25 oz. variety	25% OFF
Angie's—Kettle corn, caramel 6 oz.	30% OFF
Simply Organics—Mulling Spices, 1.2 oz pkg.	30% OFF
Kiss my Face—Soy candles 12.75 oz. variety	25% OFF

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GREAT GIFT IDEAS

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“He that takes medicine and neglects diet wastes the skills of the physician.”

CHINESE PROVERB

HEALTHY HOLIDAY DRINK RECIPES

CHILLED HOLIDAY NOG (NON-DAIRY)

This creamy, sweet festive drink is pure holiday comfort. Your family won't believe it is dairy-free and highly nutritious! Prepare an Almond Cream by soaking 1 1/2 cups of raw almonds in water for 8 hours, drain, and rinse. Then, blend the almonds with 3 cups of water in a food processor and strain in a small wire strainer. Place the following ingredients in a blender: 2 cups of Almond Cream, 1/2 cup date paste (dates blended with a little water), 2 TBSP maple syrup, 2 tsp flaxseed oil, 2 tsp vanilla extract, 1/2 tsp nutmeg and 1/4 tsp cinnamon. Blend well! Add 2 frozen bananas and blend. Sprinkle with nutmeg and serve immediately.

GREEN TEA APPLE SPICE DRINK

Combine 4 cups water, 2 TBSP honey, 1/2 tsp nutmeg, 1/2 tsp cinnamon, 1 Granny Smith apple (seeded and coarsely chopped), and 4 strips orange zest (from 1/2 orange) in a medium pot; bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 2 minutes. Cover, remove from heat, and let steep 15 minutes. Strain through a fine mesh sieve over 1/3 cup loose green tea leaves, pressing all the juices from the apple. Let steep for 1 minute. Strain out the tea, reheat if necessary, and serve. ENJOY!

All of us at the

EVERGREEN COTTAGE wish you and your family a healthy and happy holiday season.

Thank you for your business and friendship!

