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BODY COACH
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THE BODY COACH

FIND OUT FROM THE PROFESSIONALS HOW EATING RIGHT CAN KEEP YOU YOUNGER, FITTER AND FULL OF ENERGY.



Fad diets promising dramatic weight loss abound, and people generally welcome the idea of being able to shed extra pounds fast. For professional nutritionists diets aren't about weight loss but about health: what we should be eating for optimum health, energy and vitality. Island Life talks to Caroline Bienert, a German nutritionist now resident in Mallorca, about what we should be eating and for all round well being. And for those who still think healthy food is bland or boring, Caroline teams up with Fosh Food each month to present a cooking demonstration of highly nutritional and very tasty meals.

Many of us do not eat a healthy and balanced diet. How do bad eating habits affect our health and wellbeing?

Long-term malnutrition and an unbalanced diet lead to deficiencies, for example, a lack of vitamins and minerals. This can lead to physical impairment - constantly feeling tired, exhausted and worn

out. The body becomes acidotic and this results in chronic or degenerative conditions such as rheumatism, arthritis, psoriasis or high blood pressure. Malnutrition also speeds up the skin's aging process. Be warned: these negative processes occur slowly and inconspicuously!!

Meat and saturated fats seem to have a bad reputation among health and diet advisors. Should we aim to cut out meat from our diets if we want to be healthier? Are vegetarians healthier than meat eaters?

It is the dose that makes the poison! Of course we can, and should, eat meat, but it should be organic, lean meat, and we should only eat limited quantities of it. Vegetarians should always make sure they eat plenty of beans lentils and pulses for protein, as they are not getting the protein that others get from meat. In general, it is not true that vegetarians are healthier: they often have a vitamin B12 deficiency, which results in less energy and vitality.





Nutritional advice seems to change all the time and new miracle diets appear every week. How do we know what advice or diet to follow?

I do not endorse or promote any one diet. I believe there should be no general prohibitions as there are no generally "bad" foods. What people need to understand is that each individual is different and has different requirements, so no one diet can suit everyone. My approach takes into account the unique metabolism of each individual. Every person leads a different life under different circumstances so that what is recommended for one person may not be the best for another. My programme, the Bodycoach, begins with an in-depth analysis to gain an overview of the person's way of life. Allergies or indigestion usually have nothing or only little to do with individual foods or substances and a lot with an unbalanced diet over many years.

It is often said that the Mediterranean diet is very healthy. Which aspects specifically do you think make it a healthy way of eating?

Traditionally, the Mediterranean diet was very balanced, with plenty of fruit and vegetables, olive oil, fish and shellfish and not much meat. Of course, meat is much easier to get hold of these days and people eat more meat and less vegetables. Have

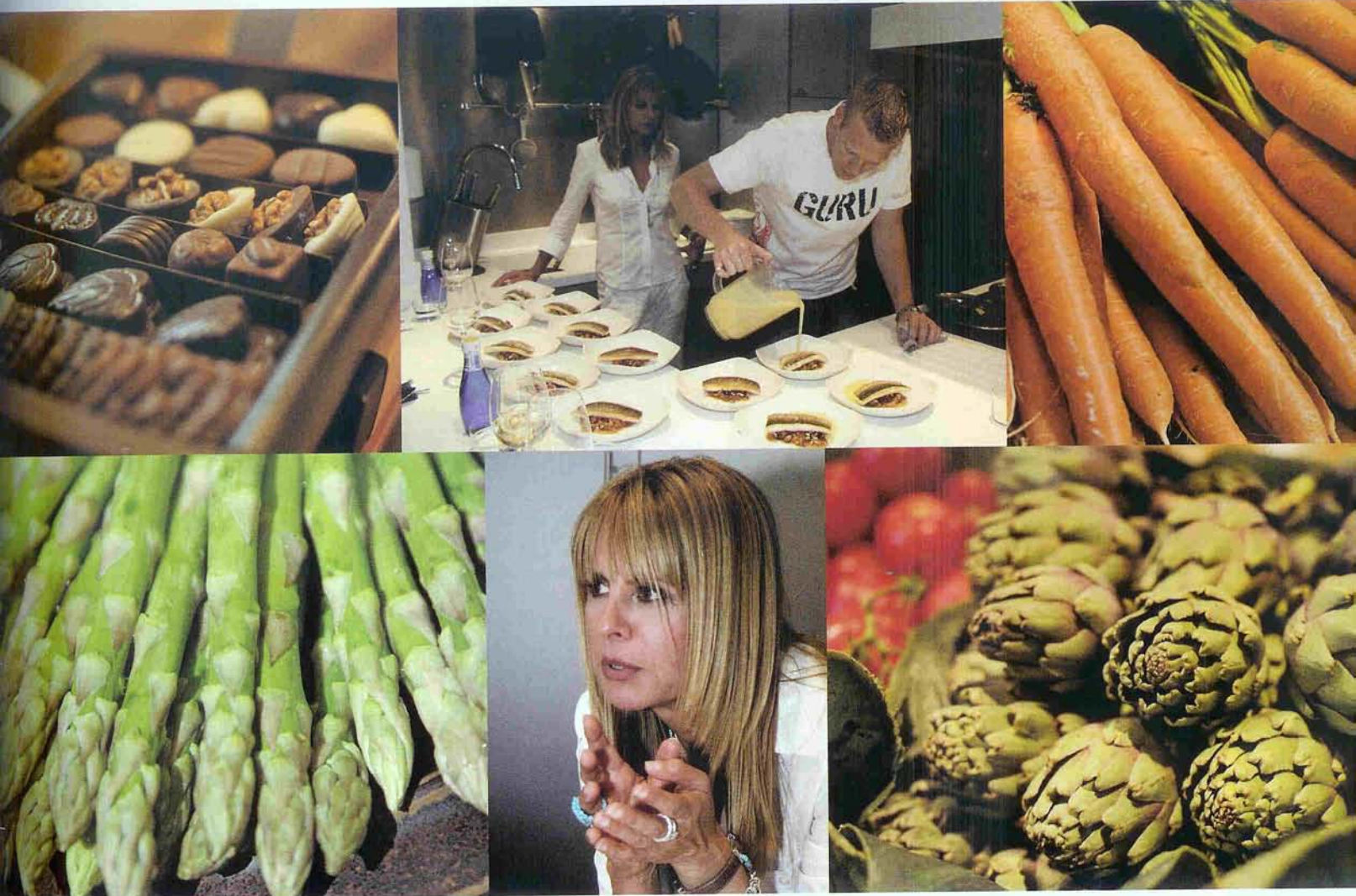
a look at the tapas on offer and they are mainly meat-based. However, in theory it is the high vegetable content and the variety of ingredients that make it a healthy diet. Also olive oil has many healthy properties and Mediterranean dishes rarely use butter or cream.

What is the most common bad eating habit you see?

Sugar!!! We eat too much sugar, although most people aren't even aware of where the sugar is "hiding". In my counseling session, I see it over and over again - sugar is often consumed completely unconsciously. A large part of my coaching is therefore information, education and teaching people awareness of the ingredients and produce they consume. Also, we often eat too many carbohydrates and too few fresh vegetables - a direct consequence of too much fast food.

What foods should we avoid eating at all costs?

I do not believe in prohibiting foods. Eating should be a pleasure. If you have an appetite for fast food, then you can indulge in that too once in a while. As long as it doesn't happen on a regular basis, it's not generally harmful. I always try to also find healthier alternatives with my clients: instead of the bag of potato chips snack on a few sunflower seeds, or exchange the milk chocolate for good quality dark chocolate.



What foods would we be well advised to include in our diets for better all round health?

Fresh vegetables, every time! However, preparing them right is also important. Steaming is the best way to prepare vegetables as it retains most vitamins and nutrients.

Which foods can help boost energy and vitality?

Again, plenty of fresh vegetables and fruits are the best way to give your system a boost. Avoid fast food and processed foods.

What is the ideal breakfast to set you up for the day ahead?

Again, there is no general rule, as every person has a different metabolism. Generally, emphasis should be laid on the meals at noon and in the evening. But for many people breakfast is essential as well. Generally you should drink a lot before noon. A glass of ginger tea and a lot of water is a good way to start one's day. Fruit with sheep's yoghurt is just as advisable as whole wheat bread.

Does it make much difference whether you buy organic vegetables or just the regular variety?

The difference between organic and conventional products is immense. Conventional produce contains 22 times more toxins than organic food. Often a fair amount of research is necessary to find out who really offers organic produce nearby. But it's worth it! And

at the end of the day demand will determine supply...If you shop at a market always ask about what you are buying and whenever possible go for the organic option, even if it is more expensive - you simply cannot put a price on health.

Which foods can help to slow down the ageing process?

The anti-aging recipe for success is consistency! Organic food - and consistently three times a day. I've observed over and over again that people struggle to eat healthily consistently but once you establish a pattern and get into the habit of eating plenty of fresh organic produce, it becomes normal.

What are detox diets and how do they work? Is this something that can be attempted at home without professional advice?

Deep tissue detox can only be carried out with professional help. It involves eliminating the toxins that build up in the system over time. Those most affected by toxins in the body are smokers, frequent flyers, and people with high-level and long-term medication. In "the bodycoach" I analyze the biochemical status and on this basis develop a therapy. But toxins such as mercury, which can enter the body for example through dental treatment, are a common cause for discomfort and illness. A complete detox can take up to 12 months. ■