

food

Toronto based chef reveals vegan recipes

Surabhi Chauhan, Hindustan Times
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Raw foods and vegan diets are the latest craze among health conscious foodies. Chef Lisa Pitman, a Toronto-based certified raw cuisine chef and author of popular blog Vegan Culinary Crusade, was in the Capital recently to shed light on the alternate cooking method.

At an event organised by a non-profit organisation SHARAN (Sanctuary for Health and Reconnection to Animals and Nature) that educated people about lifestyle diseases, Pitman explained what makes vegan diet a great food option. Here's

what she had to say to us.

What are the benefits and risks of eating raw foods?

Raw foods are full of antioxidants and phytochemicals that help boost our immune system. Many of the vitamins in fresh fruit and vegetables are sensitive to heat and light so we lose some of their benefits when we cook them.

It also means staying away from processed foods like dairy, sugar, hydrogenated oils and flour. The biggest risk of eating only raw-foods is the potential weight loss. It's high fibre and low calorie content means you need to be sure you're eating enough.

How does one know if a vegan diet works for them or not?

I would say, give it a try. Find a vegan blog or cookbook, fill up your pantry with great staples and challenge yourself to eat animal-free for 30 days.

Vegetarian Indians seem to highly regard ghee/cow's milk fat. Do you think it hinders a healthy diet?

I can only speak for the research literature, which has found that animal fats and proteins are strongly linked to the development of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The work of T Colin Campbell, Caldwell Esselstyn and Neal Barnard provide excellent peer-reviewed studies that have demonstrated this relationship.

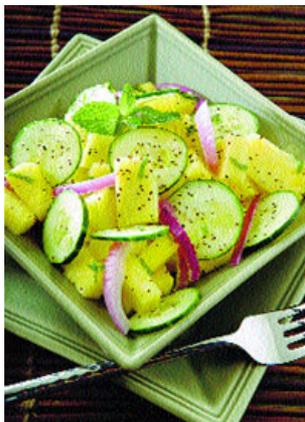
What has been your learning of the Indian palate from your visit so far?

I love that the Indian palate celebrates spice and savoury dishes throughout the day. It understands the intense, vibrant flavours available from plants - herbs and spices are used with brilliance. I've been inspired to play with new ingredients and create some raw vegan dishes based on the menus I've tried during my stay.

How does one bring healthier food options into their lives?

In the same way we bring harmful ones in. What we buy is what we will eat. I focus on filling my fridge with fresh produce. If the food in your home is all nutrient-dense and delicious then you're bound to start making amazing choices for your health.

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