Yogic Recipes for Busy Lives

Simple & Natural Nourishment

SIVANANDA
Ashram Yoga Retreat
BAHAMAS

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SIVANANDA
Ashram Yoga Retreat
BAHAMAS

1-866-559-5167
(US and Canada only)
1-416-479-0199
(all countries)
www.sivanandabahamas.org
nassau@sivananda.org

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WHY A YOGIC DIET?

Does the word "diet" make you think of restriction, limitation, and resistance? This is how many people approach diet … but the yogis do it differently.

In the life of a yogi, a balanced diet is part of the yogic lifestyle, intended to make you feel nurtured, nourished, and satisfied. While the transition to a different style of eating can feel like brand new territory, the yogic diet focuses on satisfaction — not restriction. When you eat healthfully and in the proper quantities, you feel more energized, whole, and happy. These feelings then encourage you to keep up your eating style … not because you have to, but because you want to!

Yogis eat with a few core principles in mind:

SATTVA means "pure" in Sanskrit. When you make your food, keep it simple. There is no need for endless food combinations, pungent flavors, or overprocessing. Simple, natural foods will not only help your body and its digestive system, but sattvic eating will also improve your concentration and meditation practice.

MODERATION invites you to not overload the stomach. The yogi takes food as medicine, and while you can certainly can delight in your food, it's important to actually be hungry before eating! When you eat, half-fill your stomach, leaving room for some liquid, as well as empty space for the stomach's churning process to begin.

AHIMSA is the first ethical principle of yoga, translating to "nonviolence." This starts with an awareness of how foods comes to be, and avoiding foods that harm others. Yogis are traditionally vegetarian to avoid the harm of animals through the consumption of their bodies. The great yogis teach that optimal health is achieved without eating animals, and rather by eating life-giving foods, such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grains, and legumes.

This little booklet of recipes is a simple, accessible guide to inspire and assist you toward a yogic diet. We've included delicious recipes from our own Sivananda Cookbook and blog, as well as fresh ideas from some of our presenters and cleanse leaders who are experts in healthy eating. We invite you to delight in these taste treats, and share them with family, friends, and loved ones.

CARROT, WATERCRESS, BEET TRICOLOR SALAD

Enjoy as a light lunch or pre-dinner salad

Inspired by the Sivananda Cookbook

This refreshingly healthy salad draws on three powerfully nutritious vegetables: beets, carrots, and watercress. With these veggies alone, you'll get high amounts of fiber, vitamins, essential minerals, and phytonutrients.

Yogic Health Highlight Salads, among other raw, light, foods are especially well-received by the body during the warm, summer months. In Ayurveda, yoga's sister science, you can use food to balance your own body. So when the temperature is hot outside, eating cooling meals brings balance.

Superfood Favorite Have you noticed that walnuts are shaped like the human brain? This little cue from nature points us to one of walnut's most healthful properties — their ability to contribute to brain health! Walnuts contain a healthful supply of omega-3 fatty acids for a healthy brain and body.

Salad Ingredients (serves 2–3)

1 bunch watercress, trimmed
1 bell pepper, sliced
1-2 raw beets, grated
2 carrots, grated
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
1/4 cup walnuts

Dressing Ingredients

Juice of 1 grapefruit
1/4 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Recipe

1. Toss all raw ingredients together for your salad
2. Toast walnuts and sunflower seeds before adding them in (optional)
3. In a separate smaller bowl, mix the grapefruit juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper.
4. Pour the dressing over the watercress and vegetable mixture and toss again.

CREAMY AVOCADO ZUCCHINI NOODLES

The perfect side dish or light meal

From Katie Papo (Ambika), presenter of food and wellness programs in the ashram

If you're looking to make digestion easier and simpler for your system, zucchini noodles are the perfect pasta substitution. You can use a handheld spiralizer to curl your zucchini into noodles. Beets and carrots are also great vegetables to spiralize!

Yogic Health Highlight Whole and natural foods are the friendliest for digestion and well-being. When you can make your own fresh and simple sauces for your meals, you avoid the preservatives and additives that often accompany processed foods.

Superfood Favorite Avocados are an ideal ingredient for the creamy food lover, because they give the proper texture while still providing nutritional benefits, including fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants — and they have more potassium than bananas!

Ingredients (serves 1–2)

1 zucchini
1 small avocado
1-2 tablespoon nutritional yeast
Lime juice to taste
1/4 cup water
Salt and pepper to taste
Pinch of Spanish paprika on top (optional)
1/2 tablespoon Herbes de Provence or Italian blend seasoning (optional)
1/4 cup chopped cilantro (optional)

Recipe

1. Spiralize zucchini into noodles and put aside in bowl
2. Scoop out avocado into blender or food processor
3. Add in remaining ingredients and blend until smooth. Add small amounts of water if needed, as you go.
4. Add seasoning to taste.
5. Pour creamy avocado sauce over your zucchini noodles and mix well.
6. You can add in any raw vegetables you'd like, such as sliced bell peppers, cherry tomatoes, spinach leaves, or even fresh basil. You can also add nuts or seeds into your pasta at the end. We recommend hemp, pumpkin, or sunflower seeds.

SPLIT MUNG DAL

A fortifying and delicious go-to meal

From Dr. Govinda and Pramila, longtime friends of the ashram.

Split yellow mung bean dishes are often quick to cook, and easy to digest. Unlike many dal dishes that are stew-like, this recipe is purposefully dry. You may need to visit an Indian grocery store for some of these ingredients, but the trip will be worth it!

Yogic Health Highlight Spices provide more than just flavor and they also have health properties. Depending on the spice, they have the ability to aid digestion, prevent disease, reduce pain, and boost immunity.

Superfood Favorite Split yellow mung beans are not only high in protein and fiber, but they are easier to digest than most beans, making them a top choice for those who experience a sensitive digestive system.

Ingredients (serves 2)

1 cup yellow split mung beans
1 tbsp oil
1 tsp mustard seeds
1/2 tsp cumin seeds
10-12 curry leaves chopped
1/4 tsp hing (asafoetida)
1/2 tsp dry urad dal (white lentil)
1/2 tsp dry chana dal (split baby chickpeas)

Recipe

1. Rinse the mung beans
2. Boil water, then add mung beans and continue boiling until cooked, still slightly firm (around 12-15 minutes). Do not overcook or they will become mush. Set aside.
3. Heat up the oil.
4. On a medium temperature, add mustard seeds, cumin seeds, curry leaves, hing, urad dal, and chana dal. Stir and toss for a couple of minutes, until the dals are brown (the mustard seeds might pop); the heat will encourage the aromas and full flavors to emerge.
5. Add the cooked moong beans and stir to mix the flavors.
6. Season with salt and pepper to taste
7. Serve on its own or with rice and a refreshing side salad. Season with raw or roasted herbs. You can also season with fresh lemon juice or grated coconut to taste.

SPICY MASSAGED RAW KALE AND KALE CHIPS

Kale on the side — or as a snack

From Sanatani, leader of Detox Basics workshops in the ashram

Inspired by our own boutique's kale chip recipe, this delicious variation is an ideal way to get more greens into your diet. The massage technique used in this recipe makes the kale more digestible, so you can get all of its nutrient-rich benefits. You can eat them raw as shown, or put single layers of leaves in the dehydrator.

Yogic Health Highlight When you make vegetable chips in a dehydrator rather than in a hot oven, you preserve the enzymes of the veggies. With thin vegetables like leaves, this is especially helpful maximizing your nutritional intake.

Superfood Favorite The nutrients in kale can help prevent a range of health problems. Kale contains fiber, antioxidants, calcium, and vitamin K, and is also a good source of vitamin C and iron.

Ingredients (serves 2)

A bunch of fresh kale, any kind (12 or 15 stems)
1 avocado
1 tsp paprika
1/5 tsp cumin powder
1 tbsp nutritional yeast
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp tamari (or soy sauce is optional)
1 pinch of cayenne pepper (optional if you want spicy)

Recipe

1. Remove the kale stems and use only the leafy parts. Place in a big bowl.
2. Massage the leaves thoroughly with your fingers, along with the avocado. The kale leaves will become softer. This breaks down the fibers of raw kale, making it easier to chew and digest.
3. Add all the spices and condiments at once and massage again to mix the flavors.
4. It's ready! If you'd rather have crispy chips, place the saturated leaves in a food dehydrator at 115 degrees Fahrenheit for 3-5 hours, or in a conventional oven at its lowest heat for 5 minutes.

YUMMY SUPERFOOD NICE CREAM

Indulge your ice cream craving — without the guilt!

Inspired by the Sivananda Ashram Yoga Retreat Recipe Blog

Try our fruit-only ice cream recipe that you can make at home to cool you off and satisfy your sweet tooth. While we used mangoes in our recipe, you can substitute them with any frozen fruit.

Yogic Health Highlight Some people limit their fruit intake to just mornings or desserts. Yogis say, eat more fruit! This refreshing snack is filled with vitamins, antioxidants, and all the health-promoting properties of fruit.

Superfood Favorite Bananas are filling, natural, and delicious — and when blended frozen they make the perfect ice-creamy texture!

Ingredients (serves 1)
1/2 cup frozen bananas
2/3 cup frozen mangoes
2 tsp shredded coconut
2 tsp hemp seeds
1-2 tbsp water
Mint leaf (optional)

Recipe

1. Place frozen bananas, frozen mangoes, and 1 tbsp water into a blender.
2. Blend until creamy (add small amounts of water as needed).
3. Top with shredded coconut and hemp seeds.
4. Add a mint leaf, fresh fruit, or other topping as desired.
5. Optional: You can substitute the mango with any of your favorite frozen fruits, and you can also use any fresh fruit, nuts, or seeds as toppings. Be creative, experiment, and enjoy!

BONUS! WHY CLEANSE?

The upkeep of a healthy body is a crucial part of the spiritual path, making meditation, yoga, and spiritual practice possible. With a cleansed and pure body, the mind becomes peaceful and clear.

Correct nutrition and proper diet provide energy to the body and mind, while cleansing allows the body to reset. “Foods have a both a physical and an energetic effect, so detoxification truly does clear the mind as well as the body,” says Manu Dawson, practicing clinical nutritionist and leader of many of the detoxification programs at the ashram.

Maintaining a gentle yogic regimen is also a supportive cleansing practice. “Asanas and pranayama also physically remove toxins,” Manu says. “These are cleansing exercises you can practice every day to assist the detoxification functions of the body.” When let the mind and body relax through meditation, yoga, and spiritual reading, you free your energy up for deep healing.

Types of cleanses can vary, including raw food to juices to Ayurvedic herbs — and depending on your needs, you will respond differently to the various methods. Still, the purpose of cleansing remains the same: to give the body what it needs to renew and restore. When you’re cleansing, whether on your own or in a guided group, it’s important to meet yourself where you are. This could mean attending a 10-day cleanse — or simply having a cleansing juice in the morning.

GET STARTED Try our delicious Fresh Morning Juice recipe on the next page!

CLEANSE RECIPE: FRESH MORNING JUICE

Sip slowly in the morning after your first sign of hunger

From Petra Rakebrandt, presenter of healthy eating programs at the ashram

This tropically-inspired juice will get your day started with a boost! Each of the ingredients is packed with a handful of health-promoting benefits, including anti-inflammatory and digestive properties. Drink slowly and mindfully.

Yogic Health Highlight Yogis keep a diet high in fruits and vegetables for health. If you want to add more fruits and vegetables into your day, a morning juice or smoothie is a great start.

Superfood Favorite Parsley is rich in vitamins and supports the immune system. It also helps flush out excess fluids from the body, supporting kidney function.

Ingredients (serves 1)
2-3 slices of pineapple
1 handful of parsley
1 inch (or more) of fresh ginger, peeled
1 cup pure water or coconut water

Recipe
1. Blend the ingredients together.
2. Pour into a nice, big glass and sip slowly.
3. You have the option to strain when you pour to remove some of the pineapple and ginger fibers.

CLICK BELOW FOR MORE CLEANSE-FRIENDLY RECIPIES

DETOX GREEN JUICE

VANILLA CHIA PUDDING

Since 1968, Sivananda Ashram Yoga Retreat Bahamas has been welcoming people to its shores on Paradise Island, on a spectacular beach. The ashram is a spiritual home for the senior teachers who run the retreat and a welcoming destination for people from all walks of life to learn and practice yoga.

Those interested in learning more about yoga. Immersed in a yogic lifestyle alongside kindred spirits from all over the world, you immediately feel the benefits — and want more.

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