



LIGHT MEAL: A simple leaf wrap.

No cookery cookbook

Eating Ethically

GRAHAM
HOWE

I ENJOYED the most delicious vegetarian food I've ever tasted at the launch of *Rawlicious*, South Africa's first "uncooked" cookery book. "This is no ordinary cook-book. First, no cooking is done. And second, it describes a whole new paradigm in relation to food," claim co-authors Peter and Beryn Daniel, two talented local chefs who teach "superfood" courses all over Southern Africa.

They had created a feast of vegetarian dishes based on 140 raw recipes in their groundbreaking cookery book.

I'll admit I anticipated a glass of bubbly. Instead, we toasted the end of the working week with an alcohol-free "Cape Classic" – a detox drink made from aloe, apples, ginger, lemon and buchu.

Our hosts, a radiant picture of health, said it was good for us. While buchu is an immune-booster, aloe ferox is a source of essential sugars called glyconutrients. There was more to our refreshing green elixir than you might think.

Imagine a "radically radish" cleanser, "a shot of grass" (wheatgrass) or a melon cream smoothie. In *Rawlicious*, the authors explain the art of blending and juicing with easy-to-follow instructions from sprouting your own garden and raw kitchen to tools and techniques. Their recipes for 40 health drinks are based on the science of preserving all the anti-oxidants, amino acids, enzymes and nutrients of freshly extracted juices.

This was going to be a lunch with a difference.

We tucked into scrumptious snacks of hummus made from sprouted chickpeas ("never cooked or canned"), a flavoursome coriander pesto (sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and brazil nuts), salsa and a non-dairy nut cheese fermented with probiotics. While we dipped our flour-free flax, nori and sesame crackers, Peter answered our questions about the science of the "superfood" movement which has sprouted all over the United States and United Kingdom.

The authors argue, "Raw food is not a diet – it is a lifestyle. Uncooked foods provide us with more nutrients. Forms of cooking such as steaming, boiling, baking and frying destroy sensitive molecular structures. At high temperatures up to 80 percent of the nutritional value of food is lost. Good fats become bad fats and turn into trans fats."

Lunch was a learning curve. Beryn served us a sublime starter – whipped avo with garlic and coconut oil, topped with a mock



TASTY: Spinach quiche.

"tuna mayonnaise" of raw cashew nuts.

Beryn, a trained pastry chef who has worked in England and Switzerland, explained: "This is a vegetarian mock-up of what we served in our chef days – an avocado *fouette*, traditionally served with whipped cream and crab or tuna concasse."

"Leave room for mains," warned Peter. "People assume plant-based (vegan) foods are not filling. The nutritional density of raw food will make you so full you won't want to snack on

carats in my diamonds."

Well, she never tasted Beryn's jewel of a salad.

How do you stock a raw kitchen? The cookery book advises: "Destock all toxic foods from your kitchen, throw out your microwave and put your toaster at the back of the cupboard!" I asked Peter whether they ever heat food. He explains: "Raw food is not necessarily cold food. Cooking means heating anything beyond 47°C – above which

enzymes are destroyed. Cooked food requires far more energy to digest." (In fact, *Rawlicious* has eight tempting soup recipes, from mango-carrot to miso.)

"We focus on alkaline-forming foods – green leaves, sprouts, above-ground vegetables and sea vegetables.

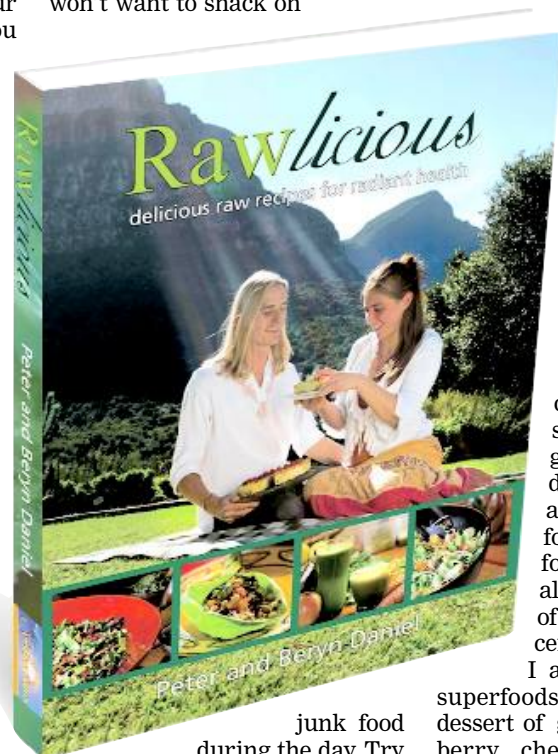
Animal foods, especially meat, are considered the most energetically draining to digest. Animal foods and highly processed foods are highly acid-forming. Our internal alkaline balance is one of our primary health centres."

I asked Peter to define superfoods over a delicious dessert of granadilla and gooseberry cheesecake on a raw almond, cacao and pecan base.

"Superfoods are whole food supplements that are exceptionally rich in nutrient density with incredible healing potential," he explained.

Many superfoods – goji berries (for longevity), raw cocoa beans (mood-enhancing nutrients), Peruvian maca (for stamina and vitality), hemp seed (a complete protein source) and spirulina (a wonder algae) – are key ingredients in their recipes and can be ordered online.

Rawlicious: Raw Recipes for Radiant Health sells for R265 at www.superfoods.co.za with easy recipes and guides to growing your own greens, sourcing superfoods and health. Call 0861 000 976, or e-mail info@superfoods.co.za



junk food during the day. Try a handful of goji and cacao mix instead."

We moved on to mains – a heavenly quiche topped with marinated red pepper, onion and tomato on a base of dehydrated buckwheat seed.

"Suitable for gluten-sensitive people," says a proud Beryn, serving pasta made from spiralised raw sweet potato softened with salt and lemon juice and coated in pesto. Beryn's favourite salad (it says so in the cookbook) comes with micro-greens and sunflower sprouts from the garden, carrot, cabbage, baby tomatoes, avocado and parsley tossed with figs and gooseberries.

Mae West said: "I never worry about diets. The only carrots I worry about are the number of