

Welcome to the Paleo Lifestyle!

Paleo Easy As 1-2-3 is a simple plan to have you eat well and eat healthier foods at the same time. If you are new to Paleo, you will get started on the road to eating less processed food and enjoying delicious meals. If you're a seasoned Paleo follower, you will increase your eating pleasure with new creative recipes that make eating healthy easy and enjoyable. Sometimes referred to as the Stone Age, Primal, Caveman or Hunter-Gatherer Diet, the basis of the Paleolithic way of eating is simple. Before processed food, people relied on whole foods – that is, foods as they appear in nature - for sustenance and energy. Once processed food became the mainstay of our eating, sugar and grains became central to what we eat. Advocates of the Paleo lifestyle argue that these carbohydrates are not what nature intended for us to eat. Farmed foods and food processing created an unhealthy lifestyle. So, to return to healthy eating, you need to follow a diet similar to what cavemen ate.

It's important for our health that we make our own choices about what's in the food we eat. But being selective about what we eat does not mean we can't have great tasting food. This is the first book in a series dedicated to creating wholesome meals that taste great.

I am an expert chef with a keen interest in encouraging people to prepare their own food. I know how to cook well, choose the best ingredients available, create tasty dishes and write recipes that work. I am also a published cookbook author. When my first cookbooks were published, I was the executive chef and owner of an award-winning country inn. Those cookbooks were, to a great extent, about me. They

told my story through recipes and anecdotes. The photos featured my cuisine, presented the way I chose to plate it.

But this book is not about me. If you're interested in eating well and eating healthy, this book is written for you. You won't see before and after photos of people eating Paleo. You won't see photos of me cooking or even of the food I prepare. As a matter of fact, I've chosen not to include photos for a reason. I want this book to be about you participating in

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your path to better health – cooking wholesome dishes, enjoying what you eat and looking forward to preparing great meals. I want you to use these recipes to tell your story – a story about eating better and enjoying food more. I want you to personalize the recipes and present them in a way that pleases you. In short, I want you to enjoy cooking them. And of course, I want you to enjoy eating them too.

We've become a society of food voyeurs. We like to watch other people cook. There is evidence that we spend more time watching cooking shows than we do actually cooking. The cookbooks we spend top dollar on are "coffee table" books, featuring gorgeous photographs of the recipes and designed to stay out of the kitchen. Many of the most popular cooking blogs include beautifully styled photos of the food discussed. There is even a phrase to describe this – food porn. It's pervasive, especially on the Internet and in social media. How pervasive? Let's see. I just Googled the phrase and got about 143,000,000 results in 0.24 seconds. That pervasive. Somehow cooking has become removed from our daily activity.

We as a society no longer participate in preparing the food we eat, so

it's no wonder we eat so much processed food. We eat out a lot too. Of course, I am not lobbying for you to never eat out again. (After all, I owned a restaurant!) And I also want you to enjoy all types of cookbooks (my previously published books featured beautiful photography). But my main goal here is to help you begin making better choices and participating in your food preparation. Like so many things in our passive lifestyle, we need to stop watching and start doing. We need to cultivate a culture of cooking. We need to place it at the top of our list, like many of us do with a daily workout at the gym, surfing the Internet or however we spend our extra time.

Why Easy as 1-2-3?

Through years of experience, I've come to believe that eating well and eating healthy go hand in hand. Both can be accomplished through three easy steps:

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- 1) Limit consumption of processed food by cooking food ourselves.
- 2) Seek out high-quality, fresh ingredients from a trusted source.
- 3) Use recipes for creating delicious, healthy meals that are simple to execute.

As a professional chef, I have spent countless hours creating delicious dishes. The operative word here is "creating." Not cutting and pasting, not reordering ingredients – actually getting into the kitchen and coming up with fresh, interesting dishes. And then figuring out how those dishes can be turned out consistently. That's where expertise and a passion for good food come together. Creating food that tastes great

and using quality ingredients is not just the domain of a professional chef. It's possible for everyone. It's the basis of good habits that can help you lead a healthier life.

Recently I was watching a television commercial for a well-known prepackaged diet plan. I suddenly realized what bothered me so much about it (other than the fact that the food looked terrible). Why would anyone give over the responsibility of preparing their food to a corporation? Why would they accept that it's better to eat a commercially prepared meal in a box than one created in their own kitchen? The answer is tragically simple: It seems easy – easy to let someone else make the decisions, easy to let someone else add they want to add, easy to let someone else package it to make it shelf stable and attractive.

You may be thinking, "Easy is good, right? I LIKE easy!" Maybe it's what attracted you to this book (which I am grateful for). So what's the trade-off? This answer is simple too: your health. By choosing processed foods in any form, you trade your health. Did you realize that's what you were doing when you wandered down the frozen food aisle looking for "easy?" I would guess you never really thought about it. Today I want to encourage you to start thinking about "easy" in a different light. It will change your life. What you're about to find out is that it can also be easy to eat well and eat healthy – it just takes a plan.

How did this happen to us? One could argue that the convenience foods of the '50s started a trend for prepackaged foods that led us to

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where we are today, and perhaps there is some truth to that. But I can tell

you that, growing up in the '60s, I almost never ate prepackaged foods as a kid. My mom cooked. Sometimes we wished we could be the cool kids and have TV dinners! But we didn't prevail. I won't say we never had any food from a box or jar or can. But for the most part, we did not. Part of it was economics: Cooking from scratch was cheaper. And part of it was that my mom wanted to know what she was feeding us. Thank you, Mom. I see moms (and dads) today wanting the same for their kids. I watch them check labels and study nutritional information – and all of that is a good start. But that's all it is. We need to move to a place where most of our food does not come with a label. Where it doesn't come in a box, bag or jar (even one made from recycled materials)! Check your grocery cart next time you're at the store. If the majority of the food in there doesn't have a label, you're on the right path. Otherwise, it's time to reconsider. Cooking our meals is nothing new. In fact, it's as old as our species. It's been argued that the invention of cooking is what led to the rise of humanity. Fire freed us up to do other things. Our brains grew in size. We spent less time chewing and more time doing! We can get there again – we just have to make the effort and conscious choice. Like any other habit, it will become easier over time. And eventually it will simply become what we do!