



# Demuth's Cookery School

Aradhana Kaur of Beautiful Heart Raw Kitchen brings her passion for food to help others rediscover their love of food and introduce a new way to nourish themselves.

A lifelong foodie and longstanding vegetarian, Aradhana describes herself as an intuitive chef. She teaches raw food workshops and one-to-one sessions from her kitchen and Demuth's Cookery School. Her knowledge, enthusiasm and joy for food are celebrated by students.

Aradhana has been 'mostly raw' since 2009 and has been teaching and inspiring others on their raw food journey since 2010. For Aradhana, it's part of a healthy lifestyle that nurtures intuition and connection, and paves the way to a happy and healthy long life.

## Why raw?

I've always been a foodie and in my journey, raw food was a natural progression from about 20 years of eating a vegetarian diet. I heard about the health benefits of eating raw food and my rationale was to future-proof my health. I'm anticipating living into my 90's and I want to enjoy my years, not be battling with health issues.

The concept of raw food trickled into my awareness over a period of years, from being on a detox retreat and finding a reference to Rudolf Steiner saying that a 70% raw diet was highly beneficial to health, to several years later trying raw chocolate made by a friend. The tipping point was when I listened to a webinar in 2009. The host, Karen Knowler, listed many benefits of raw food, I started eating raw food the very next day.

## What's the benefits - is it health?

Raw food is food that has been prepared below 118 degrees F, which is about 46 degrees C. Many vitamins are denatured by heat so by keeping the temperature low during food preparation, the vitality of the nutrients is preserved. We create dishes from vegetables, fruit, nuts, seeds, sprouted seeds, sea vegetables and superfoods. As I see it, by eating these living foods, I am rebuilding the cells of my body with light.

Raw food is an alkalising diet so this promotes health. The baddies for acidity are junk food, meats, dairy, grains, some fruit, bad fats and sugar – none of which feature in raw food. Meanwhile, the goodies are vegetables, especially raw green leafy veg, fresh herbs and spices, most fruit, sprouted seeds and wheatgrass. Diet is not the only factor, however, and stress is a major contributor to blood acidity, as well as toxins and parasites.

The raw food diet omits the common 'problem foods' such as wheat, dairy and sugar – but without any sense of deprivation as delicious meals are created using a different mindset and new range of ingredients. Raw food recipes offer a solution for people with food allergies and intolerances (apart from nuts!), e.g. breads, crackers, cookies, sweet treats etc.

For me, raw food is about balance and it is important to listen to your body. Initially I ate mostly raw food, including a few periods of 40 days of exclusively raw food for a cleanse. These days I eat a combination of raw and cooked foods.



## Budget?

People often ask if it's expensive to eat raw food. It's relative to what they're spending on food already. It's true that the cheaper items that fill you up, like bread, biscuits, pasta are off the shopping list, and instead vegetables, fruit, nuts and seeds are the main ingredients. Buying in bulk from a wholesaler or online can reduce your costs. I choose to eat organic food as much as possible and undeniably this costs more than non-organic ingredients. I prefer to ask: What is the cost of poor health? What would you prefer to fuel your body with?

## Would it mean a complete lifestyle change?

The change starts in the kitchen, in the food preparation habits/methods and getting organised to pre-soak nuts and seeds or make batches of food in the dehydrator. If you're used to eating packet food then yes, you would find you're spending a lot more time in the kitchen. But if you tend to make meals from scratch you might even find it's quicker preparing raw food! Just imagine, you don't have to wait for pans to boil or dishes to bake, and there's no greasy pots to wash up afterwards. You might find yourself throwing out the microwave and toaster and using the space for a juicer and dehydrator instead.

Eating in general becomes more conscious with raw food. More chewing is required so meals take a slower pace and you notice what you're eating. Eating out becomes more of a conscious choice, but these days there are raw or healthy options available on menus. Or perhaps you choose to make this the cooked meal of the day/week.

The changes are much deeper too – the palate changes, the 'sweet tooth' becomes less sweet, the tastebuds and sense of smell become more refined. As my body has become cleaner, I have noticed that my intuition has become sharper (this has then been boosted by practising kundalini yoga).

## Can some raw meals be easily incorporated into daily life?

Breakfast and lunch are the easiest meals to have raw. Juice, smoothies and chia pudding are an easy option for breakfast, whether you make it at home or grab one on the hoof – these are popular items on café and takeaway menus nowadays. If you have a kitchen at work, you can store a Nutribullet (a personal blender) to make your smoothies there. A raw porridge or flax cereal bowl are easy to mix up, or for a weekend treat I've made a raw version of cinnamon buns.

A raw lunch is pretty straightforward to make or buy. Salad is the obvious thing but be sure to bulk out the leaves and veg with something dense like avocado, seaweed, olives or sun-dried tomatoes, together with a dressing and some seed sprinkles to make it a filling



meal. You can top up a salad with raw crackers and nut or seed butter or a fermented nut cheese. Other lunch possibilities are no-rice nori wraps, flax or coconut wraps with salad, raw pizza, raw soup.

People tend to want a more substantial meal in the evening and can be stumped by what to eat for a raw dinner, but there are plenty of options (including raw lasagne, curry and cauliflower rice, thai curry and spiralized vegetable noodles, a mushroom burger prepared in the dehydrator). If you're aiming to eat 100% raw then go for it, but if not then don't beat yourself up. Dinner can be the time you return to your familiar repertoire of cooked dishes, and just add a salad for a raw element.

All in all, the key to easy raw food is organisation. Spending a bit of time in an evening or weekend to prepare batches of crackers, nut butters, energy balls etc is a worthwhile investment of time to stock up the larder so you can open the fridge or cupboard and prepare a quick raw meal or snack.

At my Raw Food Menu Planner workshops at Demuths I cover 'raw food shortcuts for busy people' to make life easier for everyone, however raw you choose to eat. ■

**To find out more please call Demuth's Cookery School, Bath on 01225 427938 or visit [www.demuths.co.uk](http://www.demuths.co.uk)**