

L E T T H Y
F O O D



B E T H Y
M E D I C I N E



PHILOSOPHER HIPPOCRATES SAID IT.
CHEF LAURIE ERICKSON LIVES IT. AND LOVES IT.

It can be argued that hobbies and habits are often acquired as we grow older. Yet passions, those essential elements that make us the happiest and which make us who we are, seem more likely rooted in youth and ripen with age to be harvested and enjoyed throughout our lives. *(continues)*





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And so it is with local Wellness Chef, Laurie Erickson and her life-long, unabashed passion for the trilogy that is food, cooking, and health. "As a child, my favorite toy was an Easy-Bake Oven," remembers Laurie. But her passion undoubtedly began early amid the childhood influences of times with her grandmother, an organic gardener and herbalist. "She was an amazing woman. Just about every time she and I were outside walking, she would pluck a plant or something, pop it in her mouth, and begin to tell me about its flavors and natural medicinal benefits. She opened my eyes and my mind and really planted the seed."

Nurturing that seed in her college work, Laurie studied nutrition and exercise physiology at Assumption College and Northeastern University, all while working as a chef and certified fitness instructor. After apprenticing at several fine restaurants in New England, Laurie started her own business: The Holistic Fitness Center for Health, Fitness, and Wellness.

In the nearly three decades since, Laurie's passion has shaped her enviable career of professional achievements and industry accolades while gaining legions of devoted fans of all ages who have joined her in the kitchen, found themselves immersed in her talents, and come away both inspired and changed.

Laurie delighted guests as pastry chef and demonstration chef during her six years on the culinary team at the famed Canyon Ranch Resort and Spa in Lenox, Massachusetts; her insights and recipes have appeared in *Family Circle Magazine*, *Spa Magazine*, *People Magazine's Your Diet*, *Best Life Magazine*, *Men's Health*, *The Boston Globe*, and *Restaurant News*; she has been the featured chef on the Travel Channel's *Epicurious* cooking show, on the PBS TV series *On the Menu*, and on the Tennis Channel; and she contributed recipes and cooking tips for The Canyon Ranch Cooks cookbook and for *The New York Times* new top-selling book, *Ultra Metabolism*.

Most recently, Chef Laurie concluded three years as Wellness Chef for Sea Island Company during which she developed a wellness-cuisine philosophy for Sea Island, presented wellness cooking classes for guests and members in the lifestyle kitchen at the Resort's Spa, and created special wellness menus for each of the Resort dining venues. *(continues)*



TOP: Hands-on learning is fun! Kathleen Brooks (left) and younger sister Lucy Brooks, during a recent cooking class at Chef Laurie's professional home kitchen on St. Simons Island. **ABOVE:** And now it's time to eat. All of Chef Laurie's sessions end with the best part: enjoying the recipes learned during the class! Here, Kathleen and Lucy about to enjoy the dishes they learned to prepare.

Natural Ingredients. Natural Talents.

At the core of her passion is Chef Laurie's relentless devotion to the amazing powers of whole, unprocessed foods without chemicals or preservatives. "It's all about natural foods in their natural states," she says.

And while there are today countless, highly skilled professional chefs who have eagerly adopted an understanding of wellness cuisine and more healthy ways to cook, there are very few with Chef Laurie's ability to emotionally engage those who join her in the kitchen. "I never felt that I was being taught or preached to; just wonderfully guided," says a recent attendee at one of Chef Laurie's wellness classes. "She is a warm and authentic person who just happens to be brilliant at inspiring people like me to change for the better. I've been to cooking schools. This was different, this was amazing."

Chef Laurie says her mission is simple: to help people, including and especially children, to find their way back to the kitchen. "That's where true health begins," she stresses.

And maybe, even before the kitchen. Prior to a cooking session, students may find themselves with Chef Laurie in a local supermarket on one of her eye-opening Intelligent Grocery Shopping excursions, searching aisle by aisle for healthy foods, discovering better choices and learning to read and understand nutritional labeling. "The only place we don't go is what I call 'Death Row'—the aisle with chips on one side and soda on the other," she smiled. "The secret is to stay focused, seek out the fresh, and don't go when you're hungry."

From shopping trips to kitchen tips, Chef Laurie hopes to encourage people to cook at home with a focus on meals, one dish at a time, that are easy, quick, nutritious, and highly satisfying. "Many of my most popular recipes have

just a handful of ingredients. Cooking that's healthier shouldn't be complicated or intimidating. Recipes need to fit into the reality of busy lives and mealtime schedules. And most folks have an intuitive sense of what we should be avoiding, what we should be eating, and why. My love is in showing people how."

And Here's How to Learn How.

With her vast culinary and nutritional knowledge, her years of wellness cuisine experience sharpened at some of the nation's top resorts, and after countless demonstrations to individuals and groups, Chef Laurie has now opened new avenues for sharing her passion with others.

Inspiration in Chef Laurie's Kitchen: For intimate groups of no more than eight, these absorbing sessions are offered in the large, professional kitchen in Chef Laurie's home on St. Simons Island. For youngsters to newlyweds and from busy moms to seniors, the mood is fun and the theme is constant: learning to create meals that are natural, easy and deliciously satisfying. From a grocery store trek for ingre-

dients to hands-on meal preparation, the result is inspiration without intimidation, and enjoyment without guilt.

At Home with Chef Laurie: Get the door...it's Chef Laurie! She'll come to your home and kitchen for a very personalized and relaxed session geared to you and your family's needs. She'll quickly get to know your family's likes, dislikes, eating patterns, snack habits, and dietary restrictions. From there, Chef Laurie will revamp your pantry and grocery-buying patterns, then demonstrate great new meals. And these classes can also include a separate 90-minute session with children in the home (ages 10 and up) with the goal of having them prepare dinner for the family.

On the Road with Chef Laurie: For resorts around the nation with spas, who wish to more fully support the spa/wellness experience, Chef Laurie travels to provide expert consultation and guidance to the classically-trained executive chefs at these facilities who may lack the knowledge needed to add healthier menu options. (Chef Laurie has recently just returned from consulting with the executive chef at Cambridge Beaches Resort and Spa in Bermuda.)



Chef Laurie is now developing two six-week Fall series to be offered in her home kitchen: "Healthy Everyday" covering Viva la Veggies, School of Fish, side dishes, appetizers, soups, sauces, and 10-minute meals (fees include instruction, recipe book and enjoying the dishes prepared); and "Healthy Around the World" with "visits" to Asia, Italy, Mexico, the Caribbean, Spain and the USA (fees include

Fall Series with Chef Laurie

instruction, recipe book, and enjoying the dishes prepared).

To learn more or to reserve your space (hurry, sessions are limited to ensure enjoyment) call Chef Laurie at 912.634.0697, or visit cheflaurie.com. And to see Chef Laurie's personal "10 Top 10" lists of ways to eat healthier, feel better and longer, see page 44 of this issue.

A Healthy Hundred

My "10 Top 10" Lists
for Eating Healthier, Feeling Better,
Living Longer

by Chef Laurie Erickson

Changing to a lifestyle that promotes your health and wellness need not loom before you as an intimidating ordeal of missed pleasures and self-denial. In fact, improving the way (and what) you eat can be easily approached on a simple and satisfying "bite-by-bite" basis. The following are my admittedly personal, but nonetheless proven, tips and favorites (in 10 easy to digest, bite-sized lists) that I've developed over my many years as a nutritionist and wellness chef for eating, feeling, and living better.



Top 10 Super Foods

- Fresh Ginger
- Blueberries
- Avocados
- Flax Seeds
- Nuts
- Broccoli
- Salmon
- Spinach
- Edamame
- Acai Juice

Top 10 Best Snacks

- A handful of nuts
- Hard boiled eggs
- Apple slices with almond butter
- A small can of chunk light tuna
- A quarter of an avocado
- One cup of vegetable soup with beans
- Hummus with celery sticks
- One cup plain low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit and two tablespoons granola

Small smoothie made with fruit, yogurt and some brown rice protein powder

3-4 oz. of cooked chicken or turkey

Top 10 Things I Enjoy Regularly (Without Guilt)

- Nuts
- Avocados
- Flax seed oil
- Olive oil
- Dark chocolate
- Beans
- Whole eggs
- Dates
- Chunk light tuna
- Wine

Top 10 Really Guilty Pleasures (That I Give in to Once in a Great While)

- Foie gras (I know, I know)
- Authentic tiramisu
- Osso Bucco (especially the bone marrow)
- Prosciutto de Parma

Fried oysters

Corned beef on rye with sauerkraut and mustard (Hey, I'm half German)

Fresh croissants (but only from Paris)

Real Italian cannolis

Buffalo chicken wings (but only on Super Bowl Sunday)

Broiled lobster with melted butter

Top 10 Things I Wouldn't Eat Even If You Paid Me (This list could be MUCH longer!)

- Cool Whip
- Margarine
- Hidden Valley Ranch salad dressings
- Krispy Kreme doughnuts
- Ritz Crackers
- Cinnamon rolls
- Diet soda
- Velveeta
- Swanson Hungry Man Frozen Dinners
- Any kind of fried dough

Top 10 Things You MUST Give Up to SLOW the Aging Process

- Smoking
- Sugar
- Alcoholic spirits
- Stress
- Fast foods
- Pre-packaged processed foods
- Anything with hydrogenated oils
- White Trash (white flour, white bread, white pasta, white potatoes)
- Sodas (yes, diet, too)
- Sunbathing without sunblock
- Driving with your teenage children

Top 10 Reasons You Should Cook with Your Kids

- They will eat what they make.
- Talk about application learning! (cooking teaches math, science, and reading)
- When they get older, they'll cook for you.
- They'll learn creative problem solving.
- Nothing like having an extra pair of hands in the kitchen!
- It builds self-esteem.
- They're more likely to remember being in the kitchen with you (than

what they got for their 10th birthday). They will grow up healthier. It's amazing how cooking together opens up the lines of communication.

My Top 10 Favorite Breakfasts

- Vegetable omelet; juice
- Bean burrito made with whole grain tortillas, Black beans, low fat cheese; fruit
- Chicken breasts, avocado and juice
- Vegetable hash with poached eggs
- Hot multigrain cereal with blueberries; juice
- Scrambled eggs with brown rice and spinach; juice
- Almond butter ricotta cheese and banana on multigrain waffle.
- Power smoothie: soy milk, rice protein, flax oil, fruit, egg whites
- Yogurt with granola and berries
- Chicken, apple, sausage and fruit salad; glass of milk.

Top 10 Magazines I Subscribe To (besides *Elegant Island Living*)

- Bon Appetit*
- Eating Well*
- Prevention*

- Vegetarian Times*
- Everyday Food*
- Journal of Clinical Nutrition*
- Saveur*
- Bottom Line Health*
- Alternative Therapies*

Top 10 Supplements I Take Everyday

(Consult your physician before adding any of these to your diet)

- Selenium
- Fish oil
- Folic acid
- Alpha lipoic acid
- Coenzyme q 10

- Spirulina
- Ginkgo biloba
- Milk thistle
- Magnesium
- Flax seed oil

If you would like to learn more about Chef Laurie Erickson's world of health, wellness and nutrition programs, see page 26 of this issue. Or you may call Chef Laurie at 912.634.0697, or visit her at chellaurie.com

