

John Cage

Macrobiotic Cooking

THE MACROBIOTIC DIET has a great deal to do with yin and yang and finding a balance between them. I have not studied this carefully. All I do is try to observe whether something suits me or not. Michio Kushi told me I should eat more root vegetables and less leafy ones, though he recommended watercress and parsley. The basis of the diet is the combination of brown rice and beans. This makes a protein and the rice very balanced. I've become very fond of it. Nuts and seeds are good, and vegetables may be eaten. They are good when their sugars are slightly caramelized (slightly burned); this is a matter of taste rather than diet. Some vegetables should be avoided: potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant and peppers particularly for those who have arthritis. Turnips, carrots, celeriac, the large white Japanese radishes (daikon); all these are good. Winter squashes are excellent. When possible eat not only the root but the leaves too of vegetables (including the carrot leaves). In this direction (away from beans or rice towards the right or sugar) avoid sugar. Eat as little fruit as you fail to resist. Or become very choosy; insist on the best wild strawberries, raspberries and melons. Honey is sugar; don't use it. Alcohol also is sugar. Liquids should be reduced during a day (including water, tea, etc.) to two quarts. Recently in Germany I met a doctor, Renata Kelleter who recommended more water, bananas, and apricots. I follow her advice. In the other direction towards meat, you can eat a little chicken or fish, avoid shellfish, and eat eggs not often, though they are permitted. Avoid red and all dairy products. The idea is to make a shift from the animal fats to the vegetable oils, and to reduce the liquids. Instead of brown rice you can have cous-cous, kasha, boughour (cracked wheat) quinoa. As far as quantities go, you should eat mostly grain, then beans, then vegetables, and least chicken or fish. Fresh salads are not good because they are too liquid. However, I eat tabouli which is not cooked. One very good way to prepare dandelion is to chop it up and sauté it in a little oil; then add tamari (health food soy sauce). I use Braggs Amino Acids instead of tamari (less salt).

TABOULI (wheat salad)

2 C fine cracked wheat 1 C ice cold water C minced fresh parsley 1 C finely chopped scallions 3 T minced fresh mint 3/4 C lemon juice 1 C olive oil (health food store variety, or, better, Canola 1 t salt 1/2 t black pepper (or more) (black pepper is OK)	Combine wheat and water and refrigerate for 1 hr. or longer. Add remaining ingredients. Refrigerate. Garnish with whatever (radishes, pitted olives, avocado).
---	--

BROWN RICE

Twice as much water as rice. If you wish, substitute a very little wild rice for some of the brown rice. Wash or soak overnight then drain. Add a small amount of hijiki (seaweed) and some Braggs. Very often I add a small amount of wild rice. Bring to good boil. Cover with cloth and heavy lid and cook for twenty minutes over a medium flame; reduce flame to very low and cook thirty more minutes. Uncover. If it is not sticking, cook it some more. If it is sticking to the bottom of the pan, stir it a little and then cover again and let it rest with the fire off. When you look at it again after ten minutes or so it will have loosened itself from the bottom of the pan.

Another way to cook rice: Using the same proportions of rice, bring to a boil and then simply cover with lid without the cloth, reducing the fire to low. After forty-five minutes, remove from fire but leave lid on for at least twenty minutes.

FRIED RICE

Sauté scallion in a little sesame oil. Add sliced celery, sesame seeds if desired, and mushrooms, with tamari or Braggs at the end. A fair amount of tamari. Perhaps a little lemon juice. Or use leeks instead of scallions. Or chopped dandelions or chopped carrot tops or a mixture.

Another way (without oil): Add to cooked rice some lemon or orange juice, pine nuts or chopped pecans or walnuts, and some chopped parsley, Italian or Chinese (coriander).

WALNUT CHICKEN

Marinate chicken breasts cut into 1-inch cubes in 2 T tamari, 1 T sherry, 1/2 t ground ginger or 1/2-inch piece of ginger overnight. Heat 2 T sesame oil (total = 1/4 C) over high flame and stir fry 2 sliced scallions, garlic clove cut into two pieces and 1 C of coarsely chopped walnuts. After three or four minutes remove garlic and transfer scallions and walnuts into a bowl. Add remaining oil and chicken pieces and marinade. Stir fry about five minutes, until chicken is tender and coated with soy mixture. Combine with walnuts and onions. Serve with rice.

ROAST CHICKEN

Get a good chicken not spoiled by agribusiness. Place in Rohmertopf (clay baking dish with cover) with giblets. Put a smashed clove of garlic and a slice of fresh ginger between legs and wings and breasts. Squeeze the juice of two or three lemons over the bird. Then an equal amount of tamari. Cover, place in cold oven turned up to 450 degrees. Leave for 1 hr. Then uncover for 15 minutes, heat on, to brown.

Now I cook at 350 degrees, 30' to the pound.

Or use hot mustard and cumin seeds instead of ginger. Keep lemon, tamari or Braggs and garlic. Instead of squeezing the lemon, it may be quartered then chopped fine in a Cuisinart with the garlic and ginger (or garlic, cumin and mustard). Add tamari. The chicken and sauce can be placed on a bed of carrots (or sliced 3/4-inch thick bitter melon – obtainable in Chinatown).

GRUEL BREAD

(These ideas come from the Tassajara Book)

Go through refrigerator, collecting food you no longer wish to eat: rice, beans, cooked vegetables or raw (parsley that's turned yellow, etc.). Include any liquids you may have saved (such as water from parboiling string beans). Put through Cuisinart and measure. Add more than an equal amount of whole wheat flour. Do not work with more than 5-7 cups of gruel at the same time. Mix and then knead (adding dry dill weed if wished) for about 45 minutes or an hour until it is consistent ("all of a piece"). Then put in oiled bread pans. I use corn oil. After putting it in, take it out and put it back upside down. (This oils the entire loaf.) Take a wild knife and make a deep indentation down the middle of the loaf. Cover with damp cloth and leave in warm place overnight. In the morning back at 375 degrees for one hour and 15-20 minutes.

NUT BREAD

Follow the recipe above, but use very few leftovers (rice and string bean water are fine). Add roasted unsalted nuts (walnuts, filberts, Brazil nuts, almonds, cashews, etc.). The nuts should be cut, but not very finely.

These breads are good with peanut butter (make your own in a Cuisinart). Or smoked salmon (the Gruel Bread only). Or a slice of avocado. Or alone.

TIBETAN BARLEY BREAD

<p>2 C barley flour 4 C whole wheat flour 1/2 C sesame seeds (roasted) 1-1/2 t salt 2 T sesame oil 2 T corn oil 3-1/2 C boiling water (spring water)</p>	<p>Mix flours together with salt. Add oil, rubbing flour between hands until oily. Add boiling water, using spoon to mix until dough begins to form, then mixing with hands; knead until smooth (long time). Place in oiled pan. Cut top lengthwise. Proof (cover with damp cloth and put in warm place 2-6 hours or overnight). Bake at 450 degrees for 20 minutes on middle shelf, then 400 degrees for 40 minutes on top shelf.</p>
---	--

GRANOLA

<p>6 C rolled oats 1 C wheat germ 1/2 C sesame seeds 1 C wheat flakes 1 C barley, rye, or soy flakes 3/4 C sunflower seeds Pinch of salt (this is not necessary)</p>	<p>Mix together and add: 3/16 C of oil (sesame and olive and corn) 13/16 C water Fill the cup of liquids to the brim with Vanilla extract</p>
--	---

Mix with hands. Bake at 325 degrees 1/2 hour, stirring at 15 minutes and at end. Leave in hot oven. Wait 3-4 hours or even 6. Repeat 1/2 hour baking process again leaving in hot oven.

MISO SOUP

About three heaping tablespoons of miso paste. There are as many kinds of these as there are whines or cheeses. A few turnips, carrots, and scallions. Any other vegetables. A bunch of watercress. In a little sesame oil, sauté the cut up scallion, then the carrots and turnips, not long. Then add 4 C of good water. When that comes to a boil, reduce the fire to low after removing a cup of water to put the miso paste in. Cover and don't simmer for longer than say 10 minutes. Meanwhile, you've soaked some WAKAME (seaweed). At the penultimate moment add the tenderest vegetables (seaweed and cress); others you've already put in. And after turning out the flame add the cup of miso paste dissolved. Serve. In hot weather, chill for about 20 minutes in the freezer.

ZUCCHINI SPICED

Add salt, turmeric sparingly, and finely chopped onion to heated oil. Stir for a minute, add zucchini cut in pieces. Stir (covered) for 5 minutes. Garnish with chopped nuts.

ZUCCHINI WITH SESAME BUTTER AND DILL

Cut each courgette lengthwise twice. Sear in hot oil, cooking as quickly and as little as possible. Then place in casserole with a small amount of oil and a sauce made of tamari, fresh dill (or dried) and sesame butter or tahini. Place in a moderate oven for, say, 45 minutes.

BEANS

Soak beans overnight after having washed them. In the morning change the water and add Kombu (seaweed). Also, if you wish, rosemary or cumin. Watch them so that they don't cook too long, just until tender. Then pour off most of the liquid, saving it, and replace it with tamari (or Bragg's). But taste first: you may prefer it without tamari or with very little. Taste to see if it's too salty. If it is, add more bean liquid. Then, if you have the juice from a roasted chicken, put several teaspoons of this with the beans. Black turtle beans or small white beans can be cooked without soaking overnight. But large kidney beans or pinto beans, etc., are best soaked. (So are the others.)

Another way to cook beans, which has become my favorite way, is with bay leaves, thyme, garlic, salt, and pepper. You can cook it with some kombu from the beginning. I know use the "shocking method." See Aveline Kushi's book.

And now I've changed again. A Guatemalan idea: Bury an entire plant of garlic in the beans without bothering to take the paper off. Cook for at least 3 hours.

CHICK PEAS

Soak several hours. Then boil in new water. Until tender. They can then be used in many ways.

1. Salad. Make a dressing of lemon or lime with olive oil (a little more oil than lemon), sea salt and black pepper, fresh dill-parsley, and a generous amount of fine French Mustard (e.g., Pommery).
2. Or use with cous cous having cooked them with fresh ginger and a little saffron.
3. Or make hummus. Place, say, two cups of chickpeas with 1/2 cup of their liquid in Cuisinart. Add a teaspoon salt, lots of black pepper, a little oil, and lemon juice

to taste. Add garlic and tahini. Now I no longer add salt, but instead a prepared gazpacho.

MUSHROOMS

Cut in reasonable pieces and sauté in canola oil (not too much oil). Cover a little and then uncover to reduce liquid. Before it is all gone, add a little Braggs. Taste to decide whether lemon is needed or pepper. (Use as a side dish or combine with rice to make Mushroom Rice).

NORI

The thin seaweed. Can be used with tamari and then wrapped around rice or it can be toasted over a flame and then crushed and used as a garnish on rice.

COUS COUS

Get a good fowl. Put in couscouisiere with finely chopped onion, slices of ginger and saffron and several cubes of chicken bouillon. After simmering for an hour and a half, cover with perforated part of couscouisiere filled with cous cous that has been mixed with a cup or so of water. After half an hour of steaming this (uncovered), remove to a large bowl. Hand mix until no lumps are present. Add a little more water and mix. Then steam for another half hour. Etc. (Do this three times) Add vegetables to stew at appropriate times, first carrots and turnips, finally zucchinis. Don't overcook these. Serve with chickpeas.

GREEN VEGETABLES

(Broccoli, Mustard Greens, Kale, Collard Greens)

1. Get a good Chinese bamboo steamer. And a wok (or Metal Chinese steamer without wok). Arrange vegetables in the steamer. Steam briefly so that they're still crunchy.
2. Sauté over high heat in heavy pan with a very little sesame oil. Without liquid. When slightly burnt, add Braggs.
3. Or parboil quickly, saving the liquid to use in soups or cooking of rice, etc. This is the way I prefer.

SQUASH (Acorn, etc.)

Bake without cutting open at 425 degrees for 1 hour and 15-30 minutes. (Do the same with any root vegetables. Some like rutabaga need more time, if very large possibly 2-1/2 to 3 hours.)

STRING BEANS

Parboil 7 minutes. Or if they are the fine small French ones or the very long Chinese ones, just 4 minutes. Make a dip of dampened wasabi (Japanese horseradish) (enough water to form a ball) with tamari. Or hot mustard and tamari.

VEGETABLE PATE

Cook 2 cups of soaked split peas or lentils in 8 cups of water 15 minutes. Add 1 cup of boullghour and stir for 15 minutes (to avoid burning). Add sautéed sliced onion (plenty) and Dijon mustard (to taste) plus salt and pepper.

MATSUTAKE

In a shallow baking pan make a bed of coarse salt. Lay lengthwise slices of matsutake on it. Let the slices be 3/16-1/4 inch wide. Roast in a hot oven briefly; don't let them dry out. Serve with quartered juicy limes.

HYPOMYCES LACTIFLUORUM

Clean and prepare in thick slices (3/8-1/2 inch). Brush with sesame oil. Broil. Then brush again with tamari alone or tamari with dampened wasabi or tamari with dampened hot mustard. Serve.

PUFFBALL LASAGNA

Treat 1/2-3/4 inch slices of puffball as though they were pasta. Make a mixture of flavorful mushrooms sautéed in sesame oil and then "salted" with tamari (*Polyporus frondosus*, *Craterellus cornucopioides*, *Marasmius oreades*, *Lepiotas procera*, *rachodes*, or *Americana*) and another of tofu mixed with miso to take the place of cheese. Alternate layers of these with the slices of puffball in a deep baking dish. Place in moderately hot oven until well amalgamated, about forty-five minutes or an hour.

ROOT VEGETABLES

Carrots, Turnips, Jerusalem Artichokes, etc. Place in a Rohmertopf (clay baking dish) in a hot oven for an hour or more with a little, very little, sesame oil. They may be covered with leeks and topped with a mixture such as one of those suggested for roast chicken.

SOUP DES JOURS

Choose a large round pot (e.g., Le Creuset). Start with water from soaking seaweed (Mekabu is especially good) or from cooking 100% buckwheat soba. Add any vegetables (roots and / or leafy ones and / or mushrooms: burdock, carrots, etc., first; at the last minute radish, turnip tops or even fresh carrot tops put through the Cuisinart) and / or beans, cooked rice, etc., but nothing cooked in oil. Keep on the stove, not necessarily on a fire except when warming up or adding root vegetables. Change the flavor each day by the addition of leftovers or an entirely new ingredient such as freshly chopped (in a Cuisinart) parsley or mustard greens. Before each serving add Bragg's Liquid Aminos or some other vegetable protein or tamari to taste, and freshly ground pepper. When it gets too dry add more liquid and vice versa. It is especially good served with freshly cooked or leftover soba or rice.

PESTO SAUCE WITHOUT CHEESE

Make as usual with fresh basil, pine nuts and garlic. Then add miso paste instead of cheese. Delicious in the summer with cold soba. Or in the water with hot.

OLIVE SPREAD

Pit about a pound of black olives or use about half a pound (plus) of olive paste. If green olives, add anchovies, not too many. Steam a cake of tempeh for about half an hour. Sauté one large chopped onion in a little olive oil. Combine everything in the Cuisinart. Let cook.

A FANCIER PATE

Sauté until dry 3/4 of a pound of mushrooms, preferably wild and tasty, e.g., the black trumpet. Chop four large onions and finely 6 large cloves of garlic.

After cooking the onions in sesame oil (not much) and stirring in the garlic and cooking it, add the cooked mushrooms and then 2 cups of leftover beans and a little more than that of leftover rice or other grain. Put two-thirds of the mixture in a Cuisinart and puree. Mix all by hand (not Cuisinart) with chopped basil (plenty), pine nuts, salt and pepper, pinch of cayenne, and chopped parsley. Decorate with 3 pieces of bay leaf. Put in a Rohmertopf, cover and cook for 1-1/2 hours at 400 degrees.

EXQUISITE SALAD DRESSING

Proportions indeterminate: tahini, tamari, and lemon juice (optional).

BREAKFAST COOKED CEREAL

Find Indian Meal Cereal (Walnut Acres). For each serving (1 cup of water to 1/3 cup of cereal) add 1/2 piece of Lemon Broil Tempeh (made by White Wave, Boulder, Colorado).

TOFU TAMALE

Made by Colonel Sanchez, Santa Monica, California. Steam. Eat with beans & rice & chili sauce (Desert Rose or Miguel's Stow Away).

ICE CREAM

You need *Il Gelataio* (super) available through Lello (201 939 2555). Quite expensive. Use 3 large bananas processed in Cuisinart. Add Roma (Kaffree) drip blend (as desired). Fill container (about 1/2 inch below churner) with Carob Soy Milk.