



BEYOND THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

EUROPEAN SECRETS OF THE SUPER-HEALTHY

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Featuring 50 Mouthwatering and Nutritious Recipes

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SHARP ALPINE SUMMIT
OF MONT DOLENT (3,823 M)
IN THE MONT BLANC
MASSIF MARKS THE
MEETING POINT OF
FRANCE, ITALY AND
SWITZERLAND

You may read that Europeans are expanding their waistlines, but keep in mind that while 68 percent of Americans are overweight or obese (Journal of the American Medical Association, 2010) according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the obesity rate in Switzerland, Italy and France is around one-quarter of that in the U.S.! That's because on average, Americans consume about 4,000 calories a day—more than anyone else in the world!

The following health statistics regarding Switzerland, Italy, France and the U.S. are compiled from the World Health Organization, Eurostat and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Switzerland boasts one of the lowest obesity rates in Europe, averaging 8 percent (2007). This country also has the second highest life expectancy rate of industrialized countries (age 82) and a coronary heart disease death rate of 52.2 per 100,000 persons (2011). The death rate from diabetes is 8.2 per 100,000 persons (2011).

Surprisingly, considering all the pizza and pasta consumed by Italians, their obesity rate is only about 9.8 percent (2005). In Italy, the death rate from coronary heart disease is a modest 51.7 per 100,000 persons (2011). The death rate from diabetes is 12.4 per 100,000 persons (2011).

France boggles the mind with the lowest rate of coronary heart disease deaths in the European Union at 29.2 per 100,000 persons (2011). The death rate from diabetes is also at a low 8.0 per 100,000 persons (2011). Furthermore, obesity in France is an impressive 16.9 percent (2007).

In contrast, the United States has the highest rate of obesity in the world at a whopping 35.7 percent (2009 to 2010). Coronary heart disease death rate remains high at a staggering 80.5 per 100,000 persons (2011). The death rate from diabetes is also high at 15.2 per 100,000 persons (2011). According to the American Diabetes Association the total cost of diabetes was \$245 billion in 2012. According to the American Heart



Association, costs associated with heart disease will reach \$818.1 billion a year by 2030. The future of the U.S. health economy looks bleak.

As I dug deeper into these statistics, I learned that the people of Switzerland, Italy and France consume less sugar, less fruit juice and fewer soft drinks than those in the U.S. They also snack less, spend less time eating and more time socializing at meals. They eat smaller breakfasts, larger lunches and smaller dinners.

Portion sizes alone are an eye-opener, with an emphasis on quality versus quantity. Bottles of soda are 6 ounces, versus the 20- to 64-ounce supersizes here in the United States. Muffins, bagels and doughnuts are easily five times larger in the U.S. than in Europe. And Europeans don't even snack on them. They sell them to the tourists!

Europeans don't obsess about counting calories, carbs and fat grams; instead, they rely on their instincts, almost as if their bodies have a built-in counter! Europeans follow healthy habits, routines, and attitudes when it comes to food. Reading food labels on packaged food is less effective than actually touching, smelling and tasting fresh food.

Europeans know that good food costs more, and they willingly spend more than 10 percent of their incomes on food. In comparison, France spends 14 percent, and Americans spend 6 percent of their household expenditures on food. In fact, according to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Americans spend a smaller percentage of their income on food than people in any other country in the world!

For all the above reasons, people in this cluster of European countries—Switzerland, Italy and France—are truly the best role models for health-conscious people to follow, wherever they live.

What I had been searching for in the United States was now right before my eyes. I knew exactly what I needed to do to improve the health statistics and fight the obesity epidemic both at home and abroad.



FRESH PRODUCE AT A
LOCAL FARMERS MARKET

There's no doubt about it. Compared to Europeans, we Americans must be alert when we go food shopping. Otherwise, we find ourselves seduced into buying food that may do us more harm than good. In order to dodge the maze of potentially dangerous foods laced with GMOs, pesticides, additives, chemicals and preservatives, reach for natural, organic, local and unprocessed food. That makes it easier to avoid falling prey to the food industry's game of hooking us into buying deceptively advertised unhealthy food.

Europeans don't have to contend with this problem, because their supermarket shelves are stocked with more natural and less processed foods. The latest energy drink or trendy cupcake or cookie offering does not easily impress them.

Even though our food labels tout more health claims than you'll find on European food labels, there are ingredients lurking inside those packages that you would not want to consume. That "low-fat, low-sugar" pound cake *might* sound healthy, but it likely contains white flour and artificial sweeteners. Health claims make us believe that it's good for us. But ask yourself: "Do I really want to pay for empty calories and laboratory produced ingredients?"

Because our food industry is more of a free-for-all, and marketers are crafty, it's easy to believe bogus advertisements using misleading and meaningless words like *skinny*, *sports*, *vitamin* and *power*. Many brands of these so-called "healthy snacks and beverages" including enhanced water, energy bars and gluten-free bakery products are often no better than sugary drinks, candy bars and conventional snacks.

Lately, every TV show host and Hollywood celebrity is telling us what to buy, what to eat and what to cook for dinner. While apparently well meaning, these people are not registered dietitians and may be getting paid for endorsements. So take their advice with a "grain of salt."

Let's take a look at how you can best ensure that what you choose is not detrimental to your health and is, instead, safe, nutritious and delicious.

MERGE FRESHNESS WITH CONVENIENCE

There are several differences between shopping European style and shopping American style.

First, geography plays a role. European cities and villages have existed for centuries, and farms were always nearby to serve the community. Because transportation was not as modern as it is today, people ate locally. There was a local butcher for your meats and a baker for your breads and sweets. It was easy to run out and get a fresh loaf of bread from the corner baker, or stop by the butcher to pick up a roast for dinner.

RICOTTA CHEESECAKE (CRUSTLESS) WITH BERRIES

Serves 6

2 cups part-skim or lite ricotta cheese
1 tablespoon unbleached, all-purpose flour
1 egg plus 2 egg whites, beaten
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey or agave syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Nonstick cooking spray, olive oil
3 cups mixed frozen berries, thawed

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

In a blender, combine all ingredients except berries until smooth. Spray a 6-inch by 2-inch (or 8-inch by 1½-inch) round pan with nonstick cooking spray. Spoon the mixture into the pan and level the top.

Bake for 1 hour or until set and golden on top. Allow to cool.

Meanwhile, to make the berry sauce, place the berries in a medium saucepan and heat on low until softened. If the berries are tart, add your choice of natural sweetener, 1 teaspoon at a time. Cool and serve with sliced ricotta cheesecake.

If you prefer a flourless cake, then leave out the flour—it works well with or without flour.

Per serving made with part-skim ricotta and berries included (188 grams): 208 calories, 7 grams fat, 143 milligrams sodium, 29 grams carbohydrates, 2.6 grams dietary fiber, 10.8 grams protein.

YOGURT PANNA COTTA

Serves 4

2 teaspoons unflavored gelatin or powdered agar agar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fat-free milk or original almond milk
1 tablespoon honey or agave syrup
12 ounces nonfat Greek vanilla yogurt
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 cup fresh berries or diced seasonal fruit (for garnish)

In a small microwave-safe bowl, sprinkle the gelatin or agar agar over the milk and let stand for 5 minutes. After gelatin (or agar agar) has softened, heat the mixture in the microwave for 30 seconds. Stir to make sure the gelatin (or agar agar) is dissolved. If not dissolved, heat for 3 seconds more and stir again.

In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the honey or agave, yogurt, vanilla extract and milk/gelatin (or agar agar) mixture.

Divide the mixture among four ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) ramekins or custard cups. Cover and chill overnight. Before serving, garnish with berries or fruit of your choice.

Agar agar is a vegetarian gelling agent made from algae. The powdered form works well as a substitute for gelatin.

Per serving with berries (156 grams): 113 calories, 0 fat, 68 milligrams sodium, 18.6 grams carbohydrates, 1.8 grams dietary fiber, 9.8 grams protein.



Get Slender, Live Longer and Enjoy Italian Pasta, French Wine and Swiss Chocolate



“Beyond The Mediterranean Diet: European Secrets Of The Super-Healthy, explains how to be health-conscious without giving up the enjoyment of fine food.”

—**Mathieu Viannay**, Michelin-starred chef, owner of the famous *Mère Brazier* restaurant, Lyon, France

“Layne shows us that eating healthy is a lifestyle, not a fashion statement. Eating well means knowing your ingredients and choosing high quality food. *Mangia!*”

—**Alessandro Negrini** and **Fabio Pisani**, Michelin-starred chefs, *Il Luogo di Aimò e Nadia* restaurant, Milan, Italy

“Layne, a true gourmand with a keen interest and devotion to food, is the most creative nutritionist in her field.”

—**Starr Boggs**, top Zagat-rated chef and owner of *Starr Boggs* restaurant, Westhampton Beach, NY

“Layne has been a pioneering nutritionist supporting the organic and natural foods movement since the '80s.”

—**Irwin Simon**, Founder, Chairman and CEO of The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.

LAYNE (CENTER) WITH PAUL BOCUSE (LEFT) AND GILLES REINHARDT (RIGHT) AT THE PAUL BOCUSE RESTAURANT, LYON, FRANCE, 2012

“Layne hits the mark with tips for staying slim and healthy, and recipes featuring fresh, local, delicious food.”

—**Mark Retzliff**, CEO and Founder of Alfalfa's Markets, Founder of Horizon Organic Dairy

“Layne has done a great job using a lessons-learned approach as she encourages readers to adopt a more European style of eating,”

—**Dr. Judith Wylie-Rosett**, Professor and Division Head for Health Promotion and Nutrition Research, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

“Layne has been a visionary food and nutrition consultant for *Baby Moon Restaurant* for over 20 years. Our Hamptons celebrity patrons can't get enough of her mouthwatering offerings.”

—**John Gambino**, Owner, *Baby Moon Restaurant*, Westhampton Beach, NY



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