

Arugula, beet and cheese salad with fresh radicchio and walnuts



LUKE  
COUTINHO

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# New year, new gut

Done with December debauchery and looking for your next cleanse? Get on a healthy track with these expert-backed detox tips



Beets are low in calories yet high in valuable vitamins and minerals. They also contain a good amount of manganese, which is involved in bone formation, nutrient metabolism, and brain function

## NASRIN MODAK SIDDIQI

THE holiday season is over and a good cleanse is an ideal way to replenish the energy and start afresh. Nawaz Modi Singhania, fitness expert and founder of Body Art fitness centres, believes that having just come out fresh from festivities, and that too after the almost two years of lockdown—though cautious, nervous and careful—many of us have kind of overdone it. “We’ve overeaten, overdrunk, smoked more than usual and partied harder than we otherwise might have and perhaps come out of that with a little bit of excess weight. Many of us have fallen off our regular workout bandwagon, and are lagging a bit behind on the health front, and feeling a tad more exposed than we would like to feel. All of this makes it an ideal time to clean our act up and start afresh in the new year on the right foot.”

Echoing her sentiments, Alpa Momaya, senior nutritionist and head of R&D at Healthify.Me app, says, “The festive season is usually a deal-breaker in terms of diets. So, after indulging for the most part of December, into the first week of January, our stomach needs a break. In the spirit of taking up new resolutions, what tops the chart is to prioritise health and wellbeing and detox is a great option to put your digestive system on track and set the tone for a healthy rest-of-the-year. Besides, the fruits and vegetables available in season—colourful, fragrant and full of nutrients and vitamins—in January is a bonus if you want to start your detox journey. Now who doesn’t like a vibrant palette of goodness that would also help build immunity during the winter

months.

For those who are able to keep up with their goals, holistic lifestyle coach Luke Coutinho feels it’s a good time to start because there is increased motivation at the start of the year and it is a good way to give your body a much-deserved break from a series of festivities. “A clean body can reflect in other aspects of your health too—energy, mood, and a greater sense of wellbeing. It can take the load off your liver, so your efforts towards losing weight, achieving hormonal balance are more fruitful. Having said that, do keep in mind that while detox helps, there is no one single detox plan that works for everyone. It must be personalised to individuals’ needs and based on what suits them,” he warns.

Singhania believes most people’s New Year’s resolutions are about losing weight; instead, make it all about maintaining good health. “With this pandemic environment, life itself now depends upon maintaining our own health and fitness levels. The rules of detox are rather simple. Start with a tall glass of water with freshly squeezed lime to make the body’s acidic environment more alkaline. Include more nutritious home cooked meals, rather than eating out. Consume more fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds. Drink ample room temperature water. Get adequate quality sleep in. Cut out or at least reduce your intake of alcohol and smoking. Start up with some level of physical activity.”

Momaya thinks it can be tougher to start a detox diet than to

## Singhania’s detox essentials

- Cucumber lemon water: A bit of diced cucumber with squeezed lime in alkaline water makes for a great detox drink which is cooling to the body and gives you large amounts of Vitamin E, Vitamin C and essential minerals. To be consumed at anytime through the day.
- Aloe vera water is an easy one to make at home. Blend fresh aloe vera with water. Add a dash of lime juice and honey to taste. Aloe vera is known as a medicinal plant for good reason, as it has a multitude of beneficial qualities. It is rich in vitamins, potassium, magnesium, zinc, calcium, folic acid and so much more. To be consumed at anytime through the day.

## Momaya’s detox blends

- Start each day with a glass of lukewarm water with half a lemon juice squeezed in it to kick-start your metabolism.
- Green juice: 1 cup spinach + 1 cucumber + 1 apple + a handful of mint leaves + 1 amla/lemon juice and black salt to taste.
- Sunshine drink: 2 carrots + 2 orange segments + 1-inch piece ginger + 1-inch piece of fresh turmeric.



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continue one. "It is necessary that your mind agrees that this process is only going to help you get going. Detoxification is a natural way to flush out toxins from your body and enhance your body functioning. It is also relaxing and can boost your mood. So before you get started, you need to learn about the process of detoxification and persuade yourself to trust the process. If you feel it is difficult to do it alone, then you can always request your friends to join in and support you. Having said that, don't be too hard on yourself, especially if you put on weight post the completion of your detox process. Know that it is normal and could be because of hormonal imbalance, and underlying medical issues. Your slips and misses are generally because you design to have a long-term detox plan without thinking about the aftereffects." According to her, detox diets should be limited to seven to 10 days as these diets are lacking in many vital nutrients such as protein and fats, needed by the body. "Following a juice cleanse can provide a short-term boost for starting a new healthy eating programme or a quick reset after a few days of indulging, but it is not recommended as a long-term weight loss programme," she explains.

Couthino points to an important point that if you're partying at night, you still have almost 10 or 12 hours during the day which are within your control to do that one little thing that contributes towards your health. "Also, we mustn't complicate the concept of detoxification as much as it is today. Our bod-



Nawaz Modi Singhania recommends having a minimum of two litres of water every day, closer to three being better. Room temperature alkalinated water is best

ies have been designed to detox themselves. We have five elimination organs—lungs, skin, liver, kidneys, colon for a reason. Just keep them running optimally. Post new year and the celebrations, all we got to do is support the functioning of these organs. It could be through certain detoxifying foods, hydration, fasting, movement, sleep, breathing exercises."

Since the body has various ways of detoxing itself, detoxing doesn't need one to make extreme diet choices, as the body can flush out toxins on its own, believes Momaya. The best way to start a detox diet for a week is by omitting processed and packaged foods as well as fried and sugary foods. "Whole foods packed with nutrients are your best bet when you start your detox diet. Fibre-rich foods like fruit, veggies, and beans, as well as nuts, seeds, whole grains, lean protein, and probiotics, help in keeping the gut healthy and help in proper detox. Adding antioxidant-rich veggies in the form of soups, salads, steamed or stir-fried vegetables for main meals helps

one feel full as well as helps in flushing out toxins effectively. Adding fruit and vegetable juices can support detoxification and can keep one energetic as well. Choose fresh and organic produce as far as possible for a juice cleanse." Also, juices should be consumed immediately when made. You can also add filtered water to thin the juices. Do not strain the juices as the needed fibre will be lost.

Adding salads to your meals is another way of ensuring good health. "Raw foods are rich in enzymes and will help cleanse your body. You can also take this a step further, and adopt raw-till-lunch, where your first cooked meal of the day is lunch. Add cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, radish, mustard greens, as they help detox the liver and balance hormones. Adopt a no-sugar, dairy, and gluten challenge at least for a week. It's difficult but not impossible. Even if you are tolerant to gluten and dairy, do this at least for a week. You wouldn't know the difference not eating

these foods make until you don't try it," says Couthino.

Meanwhile, don't let Mumbai's ephemeral winter come in the way of your hydration habits. Stay hydrated, say experts as this acts as a medium to flush toxins out of your body. Singhania says, "Try to have a minimum of two litres of water every day, closer to three being better. Room temperature alkalinated water is best. Try and keep the sodium as low as possible, meals are best flavoured by herbs and with spices rather than with salt." Momaya, too, recommends to sip on water throughout the day. "Consuming too much salt can increase water retention

when on a detox diet. You can eliminate excess water and waste by increasing your intake of water and potassium rich foods and limiting salt intake to no more than one teaspoon a day," she adds.

Couthino recommends to add certain yoga asanas and breathing exercises to your regimen. "Asanas like parsva balasana (thread the needle pose), ardha matsyendrasana (half lord of the fishes pose/seated twist pose), vakrasana (half spinal twist pose), and parivrtta utkatasana (revolved chair pose) that focus on your lower abdomen and twisting motion are of particular value when it comes to detoxification. He also recommends following a good sleep schedule. "There is no way your body is going to detox if you aren't giving it a break," he adds. You could even give your digestion a break, by embracing fasting. After a phase of eating whatever and whenever, add discipline to your eating habits. The simplest way to do this is by adopting circadian rhythm fasting where you eat the last meal of the day by sunset, and enter a fasting phase till the next day, and break it only after sunrise.

About journaling, Momaya says, "It might seem a bit of a stretch, but it does help you recognise your progress and pushes you forward. The small achievements matter and when you pen down your tiny winnings, you take a big leap forward. All this will work if you are driven to make this work. What matters is self-motivation, thinks Coutinho. "You don't need to wait for a Monday or a January or the start of a week for that. You can start it right now."

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Alpa Momaya

The straws don't change colour or dissolve in the cup of milk; instead, they add flavour with each sip



## Flavour in a sip

**REVIEW** Newly-launched straws packed with flavouring balls inside them, promise to make your kid's milk-time fun and fuss-free

### KASTURI GADGE

GROWING up, our mothers made milk interesting for us by using flavoured supplements such as Horlicks, Milo, Bournvita or other flavouring essences available in syrup format. Things certainly have evolved since then. When it comes to adding supplements to drinks, the choices are endless. But, most of them are still available in powdered form and need to be mixed.

Strawfit, while serving a similar purpose—making plain milk get a likeable flavour—does have a unique way of doing it. These are straws packed with flavouring balls inside them, with added colostrum (the first milk that a cow produces right after giving birth). Available in three flavour options, these straws can simply be placed in lukewarm

milk, before you sip the milk through it. It doesn't change colour or dissolve in the cup of milk; instead, it adds flavour with each sip. Each straw is perfect to use with one cup.

We sampled all three flavours and found them rather palatable—its flavours were not too synthetic. A tad too sweet for our liking, the strawberry flavour reminded us of the bottled strawberry soy milk. The vanilla, while very mild, is perfect for grown-ups who don't like their drinks too sweet. Our favourite was the chocolate as it neither made our drink feel too sugary, nor did it leave a chocolatey coating on the tongue like the other flavouring powders in the market.

Strawfit's founders, Shashank and Rajat Jain, claim to have done

extensive research on the topic. They suggest that Strawfit comes with added vitamins, minerals, and antibodies present in colostrum, which boosts immunity and promotes growth. While we cannot verify this, Strawfit does show promise when it comes to flavour and fun.

The product, available in leading offline and online stores across India, has been designed for all age groups, but the primary target in our opinion remains kids. Having said that, one of the major reasons, parents add flavouring agents to the milk is to also change the colour of the drink and to make it visually appealing for toddlers. Here, while

the milk does not change colour, the play of small bubbles dancing in the straw with every sip is the only novelty it offers. The straw-style packaging makes it perfect to be used on the move.

The straw itself is also fully recyclable and Bisphenol A (BPA)-free. But, if you were to have one drink with Strawfit every day of the month, you may, by the end of it, be left with a huge collection of straws in your home.

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PRICE: ₹399  
for 30 straws  
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