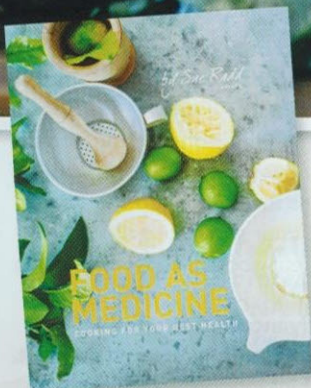
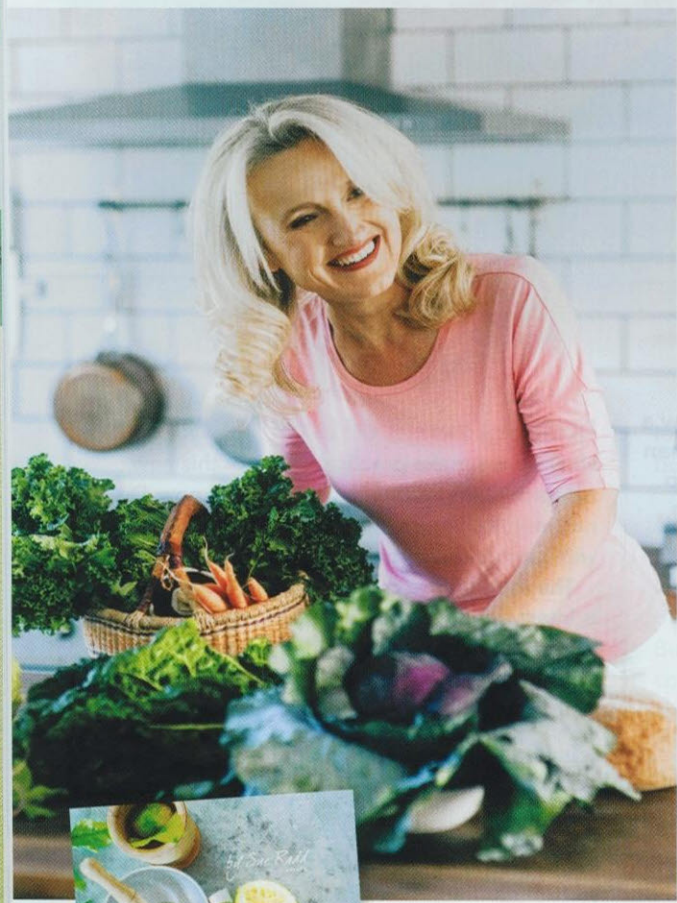


How I stay healthy

by cookbook author & dietitian **Sue Radd**



Find 150 plant-based recipes in Sue Radd's new cookbook, *Food as Medicine: Cooking for Your Best Health*. From good bookstores (\$55, Signs Publishing).

Studying plant-based diets at uni changed dietitian Sue Radd's eating habits. Her Mediterranean roots were the inspiration behind her cookbook of meat-free recipes.

My grandmother inspired my love of food. As a child in Croatia, I spent my days either in her kitchen or garden. She made everything from scratch and always said 'what you make at home is always better than what you buy at the shops'. She was ahead of her time, and stopped using lard and dripping well before everyone else did.

I was brought up with a reverence for quality produce. Growing up in the Mediterranean, fruit was highly esteemed – a luxury that was served at the end of a meal.

Breakfast sets the foundation for how I eat for the rest of the day. I always have some kind of soaked rolled whole grain with ground linseeds, fresh dates and cinnamon, topped with berries and fresh walnuts.

I often go 5-6 hours without eating. I don't usually snack and I think that may be the key to how I have maintained my adult weight without ever dieting or weighing myself.

I like to cook once to eat twice, so lunch is always brought from home. It's usually home-cooked leftovers – I'll always have a stash of food in my freezer. It's very rare that I purchase lunch out, because I simply don't find the food that's on offer to my liking – neither in flavour nor in nutrition.

We eat a lot of legumes and vegetables. I love foods from all cultures, but lots of my cooking is Mediterranean, such as baked giant lima beans in a tomato sauce or a chickpea casserole. These are served with a big raw salad or cooked bitter greens, and bread. (Find these great recipes and many more in Sue's cookbook *Food as Medicine: Cooking for Your Best Health*).

We drown our greens in extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice. Not only is it absolutely delicious, but it preserves the greens so you can keep them in the fridge for up to five days. I buy my olive oil in large cans and then decant a lesser amount into a small, dark glass bottle, which I then store in my kitchen cupboard.

In Australia, we're obsessed with eating huge slabs of meat. In the Mediterranean, sometimes just a plate of fresh vegetables cooked properly is served as the main meal.

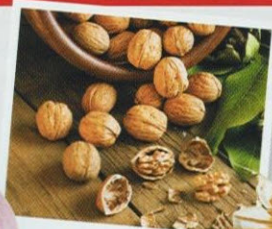
I was quite the carnivore until I hit uni. I shudder at what I used to eat – lots of refined carbs and meat. It was when I was studying nutrition science that I saw the evidence for the increased health benefits of plant-based diets. It was never about weight loss; I just felt better eating that way.

I'm somewhere between vegetarian and vegan. I don't base my cooking on what I can and can't eat, it depends on what the recipe calls for. For instance, I don't eat a lot of dairy, but I use feta for seasoning which is how it's used in Greece. You won't see Western-style yellow cheese in my fridge, because that was never part of the traditional Mediterranean diet! **hfg**

“Meat no longer needs to be the main event... vegies should be the star”

5 THINGS SUE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

I pig out on fresh figs when I travel to Greece each year – I could eat a kilo a day!



Home-shelled walnuts taste better than the ready-shelled ones.

I use good-quality extra virgin olive oil generously in all my cooking.



I grind my own linseeds to add to my breakfast.

Soy milk is always in my fridge as a dairy alternative.