



THE SUNDAY TIMES

STYLE

1 JANUARY 2012

THE SUNDAY TIMES

**FLAVOUR
PUNCH**
THE DELICIOUS WAY
TO LOSE WEIGHT

.....
**WHAT LIES
AHEAD**

HOROSCOPE 2012
**WHAT THE
STARS HAVE
IN STORE
FOR YOU**

CLEAN & Serene

WHERE TO CALM DOWN, CHILL OUT

AND GET YOURSELF TOGETHER

We've all been there. You start the new year bursting with good intentions, then fast-forward two weeks and somehow, you're right back where you started. Deciding to diet is easy; sticking to it isn't. In contrast to diets that come to a quick, sticky end, flash cooking is an eating plan for the rest of your life. Not only will you lose weight, but you'll be inspired by this collection of easy, delicious and super-speedy recipes.

Flash cooking is about recipes that can be prepared in less than 10 minutes, healthy ingredients, and the 80/20 rule, whereby you eat healthily 80% of the time and relax for the remaining 20%. Follow this plan and you will see the excess pounds drop off, as bold tastes replace old habits, with surprisingly satisfying results. Now you really can cook your way to your optimum weight.

Too busy to make a lifestyle change? This programme is for you. The first step is to build a small arsenal of store-cupboard essentials that can be used to transform healthy cuts of meat, fish and poultry. Most ingredients are available in supermarkets or on the high street; the more specialist health foods can be ordered online. Don't make the mistake of waiting to start this plan when you are feeling less rushed off your feet, or not as stressed. You can change what you are eating and fit it into your lifestyle right now.

I have teamed up with the nutritionist Amanda Griggs to create this simple two-week programme that will help you lose pounds, if you need to, and gain wellbeing. We hope you will be inspired to kick-start the new year by replacing unhealthy eating patterns and slavish yo-yo dieting with a self-empowering new lifestyle, both in and out of the kitchen — including socialising at home or in your favourite restaurants. Because this is a plan for life, should you stray from your path, instead of wandering further and further into guilty oblivion, simply dust yourself off, get back on track and keep going. The road is long, but the results are worthwhile.

Eat, pray, CLEANSE

WEEK 1

PACK YOUR FOOD WITH
FLAVOUR TO TAME YOUR
APPETITE AND YOU'LL FIND
YOURSELF SHEDDING POUNDS.
LAURA SANTTINI INTRODUCES
HER REVOLUTIONARY DIET



DAYS 1-3

The first three days have been devised to get you in the zone, by alkalisng your system, regulating your appetite and giving the immediate weight-loss results we all need to feel motivated. During this time, I recommend reading Michael Pollan's New York Times bestseller *Food Rules*, which includes the genius insight: if you're not hungry enough to eat an apple, you're probably not hungry.

With the recipe plan outlined below, you should not feel hungry, but if you do, eat soup (see overleaf), which will pass through your stomach more slowly and stave off hunger. Instead of reaching for sweets, rather nibble on a crudité or have a sliced apple with a sprinkling of cinnamon angel dust (see below).

During this time, allow yourself a medium avocado per day (this should be reduced to a quarter of an avocado in days 4-7 and beyond). Add it to your salads, or mash with lemon, salt and pepper and use as a dip for crudités such as cucumber, carrot and celery sticks. It's perfect for in-between meals when you're feeling peckish but not hungry enough for soup.

EATING PLAN

Pre-breakfast

HOT LEMON GINGER TWIST

A cup of boiling water, allowed to cool to hot, with freshly squeezed lemon juice and a slice of lemon, some fresh mint leaves, a slice of fresh ginger and a pinch of cayenne pepper. If you're in a rush, simple hot water and lemon will do. Don't skip this step.

Breakfast

FRESH FRUIT PLATTER WITH CINNAMON ANGEL DUST

Use some or all of the following: apples, which are good cleansers and fillers, berries, pears, grapefruit, melons and kiwis, sprinkled with cinnamon angel dust. Avoid very sweet fruits such as bananas and tropical fruit. If you don't fancy fruit for breakfast, make a "green" lemonade by juicing kale (or similar greens), lemon, apple and celery. Add ginger if you wish. This cinnamon angel dust recipe makes enough to last for a month or so (it's not worth making a smaller amount).

50g coconut-palm sugar (ordinary palm sugar will do)
2 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground ginger
1 tbsp cacao nibs
1 tbsp chia seeds (from amazon.co.uk)
3 cardamom pods (optional)

Put the palm sugar, cinnamon, ginger and cacao nibs in a spice or coffee grinder and grind to a fine powder. Add the chia seeds (great for curbing appetite). Store in an airtight container, adding the cardamom pods to infuse the powder gradually if you like.

Drinks

HERBAL TEAS

If cutting out tea or coffee makes you miserable, continue to drink them, but limit yourself to one or two cups with breakfast only, either black or with a splash of lactose-free milk. Try to drink eight glasses of water a day between meals. And avoid alcohol in the first two weeks.

Lunch

Green flash soup, and raw rainbow salad with matcha green tea dressing.

Sweet-grass almond butter, pink grapefruit with maple goji granola, and turmeric and blueberry om-cake

Photographs: Con Poulos



GREEN FLASH SOUP

This recipe makes enough to last one person all three days. You can vary it by adding the organic green vegetables you like, including green beans, leeks, spinach, broccoli, courgettes and fennel, with spring onions, ginger, garlic, chilli and fresh herbs of your choice – no starchy root vegetables. Make a pot and eat whenever you are hungry. It can be served with a sprinkling of devil dust and a splash of golden elixir (see below).

3 onions
2kg courgettes
1 head of garlic
7.5cm fresh root ginger
750g washed baby spinach
2 yeast-free stock cubes, such as bouillon
4 tsp ground turmeric
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
25g fresh mint leaves
25g fresh basil leaves
Juice of 1-2 lemons (to taste)

Chop the onions, courgettes, garlic and ginger into chunks. Put in a large pan with 250g baby spinach, 3 litres of water, the crumbled stock cubes, turmeric and black pepper. Bring to a simmer, stirring, and cook for about 10 minutes, until the courgettes are soft. Blitz with a stick blender, adding the rest of the baby spinach and the herbs. If it's too thick, add more boiling water. Season with the lemon juice, salt and more freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serve with a drizzle of golden elixir and a sprinkling of devil dust.

DEVIL DUST

Use Japanese furikake seasoning, made with sesame seeds, nori seaweed and red shiso leaves (amazon.co.uk), mixed with cayenne pepper to taste. Prepare it in advance and store it in an airtight jar.

GOLDEN ELIXIR

Equal measures of a good omega oil (virgin cold-pressed with omega 3, 6 and 9 is ideal – try High Five Oil; groovyfood.co.uk) and a good-quality extra-virgin olive oil. Make up a quantity of this and store it in a cool, dry place.

RAW RAINBOW SALAD

Make a large mixed salad with lots of variety. Try grating raw carrot, courgette and beetroot, and add sprouted seeds or sprouted beans, sliced peppers, cucumber, tomato, mixed salad leaves and herbs and half your daily avocado.

Dress with 1 tbsp matcha green tea dressing, or lemon or lime mixed with a little gold elixir or organic cold-pressed olive, hemp or flax oil. Do not use vinegar.

MATCHA GREEN TEA DRESSING

Matcha has up to 137 times the antioxidants of regular green tea. It is also rumoured to help burn calories.

Golden elixir or good extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove of garlic, squashed
Lemon or lime juice
¼ tsp of matcha green tea (from teapigs.co.uk)
A pinch of wasabi paste or powder (or to taste)
Salt and black pepper
A handful of chopped fresh herbs (optional)

Raspberry ripple guacamole



Make a full jar that you can store in the fridge. Whether you are making the matcha dressing or any other, the ratio of oil to lemon should be 2:1. Don't have more than 2 tbsp of dressing a day.

Dinner

Green flash soup and hot rainbow-vegetable stir- or steam-fry, or steamed vegetables with tomato and basil salsa. Try to eat as early as possible.

RAINBOW VEGETABLE STIR- OR STEAM-FRY

Heat a little coconut oil (from Holland & Barrett) or light olive oil in a wok, add a little sliced ginger, garlic and chilli if you like. Add any chopped vegetables from the Foods to Eat list (see right) and a splash of vegetable stock or water. Cook *al dente*, season with Tamari soy sauce, a drizzle of toasted sesame oil and a sprinkling of devil dust.

TOMATO AND BASIL SALSA

SERVES 2

Keep any leftovers in the fridge for the next day.

250g chopped whole cherry tomatoes
10g torn basil
1 clove of garlic, crushed
10g chopped capers
A dash of Tamari soy sauce
Juice and grated zest of one lemon
½ fresh red chilli (deseeded)
3 tbsp golden elixir or extra-virgin olive oil
Ground black pepper and salt flakes (to taste)

Place all the ingredients in a blender and whizz into a salsa. Use to dress steamed vegetables.

FOODS TO EAT

VEGETABLES Flash meals should be made mostly of plants: leafy green veg, salad leaves or low-GI (glycaemic index) vegetables such as broccoli. Low-GI foods are digested more slowly, so you feel full for longer, and they provide more energy over a longer period of time. Eat as many of the following and as much as you like per meal: leafy green vegetables such as kale, spinach, cavolo nero; beetroot (1 medium beetroot a day), broccoli, carrot, courgette, cucumber, fennel, green beans, leeks, onions, peppers, salad leaves and chopped herbs, sprouting seeds, beans, tomatoes.

PROTEIN This is vital to healthy living and muscle maintenance, yet we tend to eat too much of it. A protein serving should be no bigger than an iPhone.

UNREFINED (COMFORT) CARBS

Whole grains such as quinoa, bulgur and spelt; brown rice; and pulses such as lentils and chickpeas, should make up no more than double the amount of protein you have per meal. In this eating plan, protein and carbs are not eaten together in the 80 zone, but can be combined in the 20 zone (see Getting the Right Balance, overleaf).



adding dried herbs and spices to a handful of salt flakes. Celery seed is excellent with eggs.

PINK GRAPEFRUIT WITH MAPLE GOJI GRANOLA

The granola is best made in advance, and will last for weeks when stored in an airtight jar. A handful also makes a great snack.

½ pink grapefruit
1 tsp honey

For the granola

100g jumbo rolled oats
100g pumpkin seeds
50g sunflower seeds
50g golden linseed
30g cacao nibs
1 tbsp coconut oil, melted gently in a pan
2 tbsp maple syrup
3 drops of vanilla essence
Grated zest of 1 lemon and juice of ½ lemon
50g goji berries

Heat the oven to 180C/Gas Mark 4. Combine all the ingredients, except the goji berries, in a mixing bowl. Spread the mixture in a thin layer on a nonstick baking sheet. Bake for 15-20 minutes, stirring a couple of times, until nicely golden brown. Keep a close eye on the mixture as the seeds can burn very quickly.

Remove from the oven and, while the mixture is warm, stir in the goji berries. Leave to cool. Halve the grapefruit and loosen the segments using a small knife. Top with 1 tbsp granola and drizzle with honey.

TURMERIC AND BLUEBERRY OM-CAKE

1 dsp low-fat pouring yoghurt
½ tsp turmeric
2 eggs
1 tsp maple syrup

Mix together the yoghurt and turmeric in a bowl until smooth. Crack the eggs into the bowl and lightly beat with a fork until just combined. Take care not to overbeat, as the om-cake will be too runny. Heat a nonstick frying pan on a medium-high heat and pour in the egg mixture. Sprinkle over a handful of blueberries and cook for 3-5 minutes, until the top is no longer raw and the bottom golden brown. Slide onto a plate, drizzle with the maple syrup and serve.

Lunch options

Simple soup and salad, i-lunch, raspberry ripple guacamole, iceberg wedge with beetroot and goat's cheese dressing, or instant miso stracciatella.

SIMPLE SOUP AND SALAD

The following root vegetables can now be added to the green flash soup recipe. Choose two of the following: beetroot, carrot, sweet potato, parsnip, jerusalem artichokes, and celeriac or peas. Serve soup with a large salad using any ingredient from the raw rainbow salad, plus your daily quarter

avocado and 1 tbsp of mixed seeds (pumpkin, sunflower, flax, hemp). Dress as usual.

I-LUNCH

Create your own lunch by adding vegetables or the raw rainbow salad to an iPhone-size portion of lean protein. Choose from: turkey, chicken, tuna, tofu, steak, salmon (poached or smoked), prawns, 2 boiled eggs (if you did not have them for breakfast). If you would like cheese instead, you can add half an iPhone worth of buffalo mozzarella, ricotta or feta. Do not eat cheese more than three times a week. A handful of walnuts is also a good source of protein. Add flavour with a spoonful of a low-fat condiment such as mustard, Santini Taste #5 umami paste or chutneys.

Dress your salad or vegetables with a drizzle of golden elixir or matcha dressing (above), or olive oil, fresh lemon juice, salt and pepper.

RASPBERRY RIPPLE GUACAMOLE

SERVES 2

If you're making this for one, there's enough to have with a salad the next day. If eating this, ditch your daily quarter avocado.

2 avocados
Juice of 1-2 limes
1 medium red onion, finely chopped
¼ tsp sumac
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
A handful of fresh herbs (coriander, or mint, or both)
100g raspberries
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 dsp 0% fat greek yoghurt, to serve (optional)

Peel and stone the avocados, then put the flesh in a food processor with the lime juice and blend until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and add the red onion, sumac, chilli and herbs. Mix lightly, then stir in the raspberries, lightly crushing them to create a ripple effect. Season to taste with salt, pepper and more lime juice if needed. Serve sprinkled with 1 dsp of mixed seeds and a selection of crudités (carrots, cucumber, celery, peppers) with the soup.

ICEBERG WEDGE WITH BEETROOT AND GOAT'S CHEESE DRESSING

SERVES 2

1 clove of garlic
2 tbsp 0% fat greek yoghurt
2 vacuum-packed cooked, peeled beetroot, sliced (don't use the ones with vinegar)
2 anchovy fillets, canned or bottled in olive oil, drained
A squeeze of lemon juice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
30g goat's cheese (blue or plain)
1 iceberg lettuce
A handful of finely chopped chives
1 tbsp pumpkin seeds, toasted in a dry pan
2 tsp golden elixir

Combine the garlic, yoghurt, beetroot, anchovies, lemon juice, salt, pepper and 10g of the cheese in

DAYS 4-7 EATING PLAN

Breakfast options

Choose one of these options: fresh fruit platter with cinnamon angel dust, sweet-grass almond butter on crackers, 2 boiled or poached free-range eggs, pink grapefruit with maple goji granola, or turmeric and blueberry om-cake.

FRESH FRUIT PLATTER WITH CINNAMON ANGEL DUST

Half a banana and tropical fruits such as mango, papaya and pineapple can now be added. For a more substantial fruit breakfast, add 1 tbsp low-fat live yoghurt: 0% fat greek yoghurt is delicious.

SWEET-GRASS ALMOND BUTTER

For a nuttier flavour, I like to use roasted almond butter, but any almond butter will do. The wheatgrass powder is packed with chlorophyll, nutrients, vitamins, minerals and essential amino acids. This makes enough to last 3-4 weeks.

170g jar roasted-almond butter
1 tsp wheatgrass powder (from Holland & Barrett)
1 tsp 10+ manuka honey

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl. You will have emptied the almond butter jar, so store the mixture in it. Eat on spelt crackers or rice cakes.

2 FREE-RANGE EGGS, BOILED OR POACHED

Season with devil's dust or salt and pepper, or whizz up a bespoke finishing salt in a grinder by



a food processor and blend until smooth. Remove and discard the outer leaves from the lettuce, then cut out 2 large wedges. Place one on each plate and spoon the dressing across each. Crumble over the remaining cheese and sprinkle with chives and toasted pumpkin seeds. Finish with a drizzle of golden elixir and freshly ground black pepper.

INSTANT MISO STRACCIATELLA

For those with a savoury palate, this soup will also make a highly nutritious alternative breakfast.

2 sachets of instant miso soup
2 eggs, beaten
2 tsp grated parmesan (optional)

Prepare the miso as per packet instructions. Beat the eggs with the parmesan cheese. Bring the miso to the boil and add the egg mixture in a steady steam, stirring continuously.

Dinner options

I-dinner with matcha and lime yoghurt dressing, and lightly boiled or steamed vegetables or seared salmon carpaccio.

I-DINNER

Choose from any of the following lean proteins: steak, skinless chicken, turkey, pork loin, fish fillets or tofu. Unlike the i-lunch, i-dinner is served with lightly boiled or steamed vegetables — no raw vegetables in the evening.

Any iPhone-size piece of lean protein (preferably free-range)

Either herbes de provence, baharat, garam masala or five spice — use shop-bought or make your own
Oil for cooking (optional)

Sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
Good-quality extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
Lemon or lime wedges, to serve

Matcha green tea finishing yoghurt

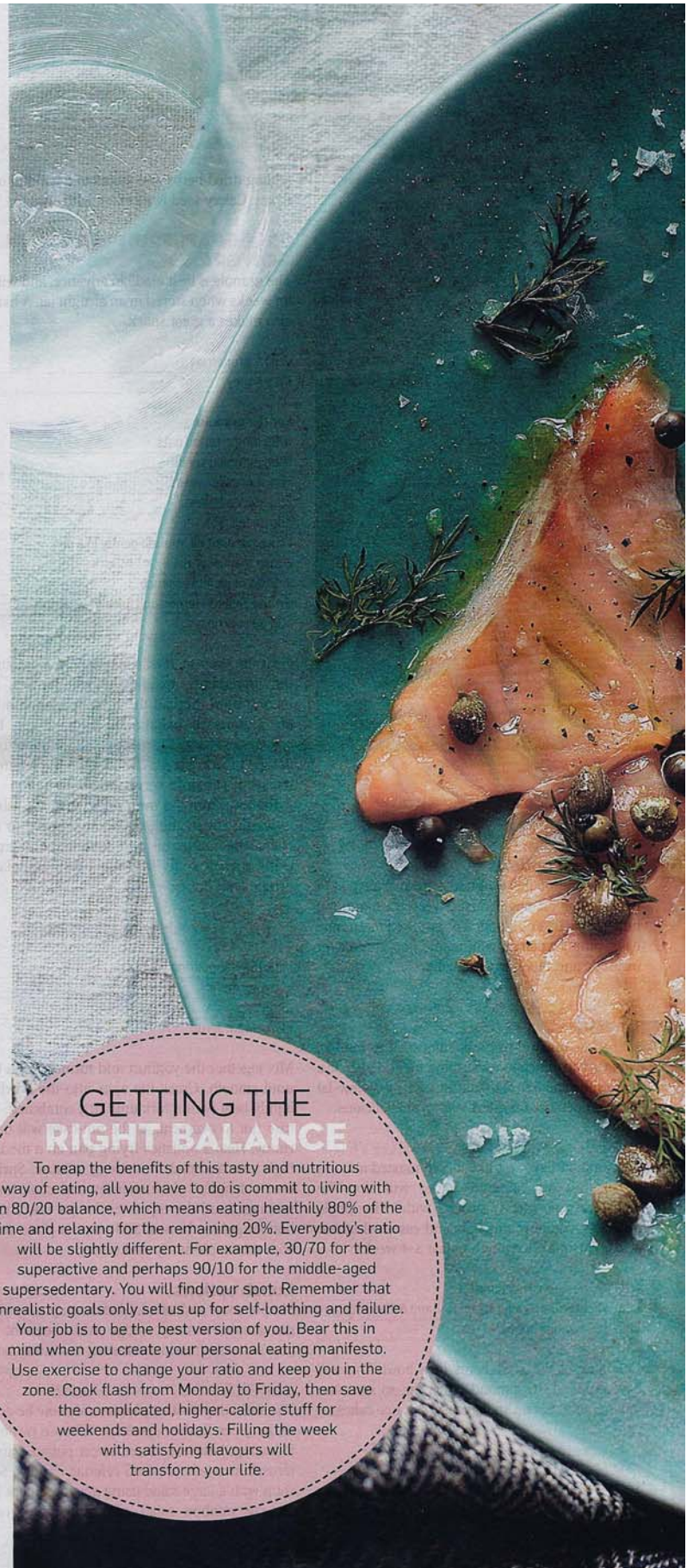
3 tbsp 0% fat greek yoghurt
1 tsp matcha green tea (from teapigs.co.uk)
1 tbsp chopped chives
Grated zest of 1 whole lime and a squeeze of juice
A pinch of wasabi paste or powder

Season your meat or fish with one of the seasonings and ½ tsp of olive oil. Grill or pan-fry in a lightly oiled pan until cooked to taste. Place on a serving dish and season with the salt and pepper and drizzle with a little extra-virgin olive oil. Combine the yoghurt with the matcha green tea, chives, the lime zest and juice and wasabi. Serve with the dressing and lemon or lime wedges.

SEARED SALMON CARPACCIO SERVES 2

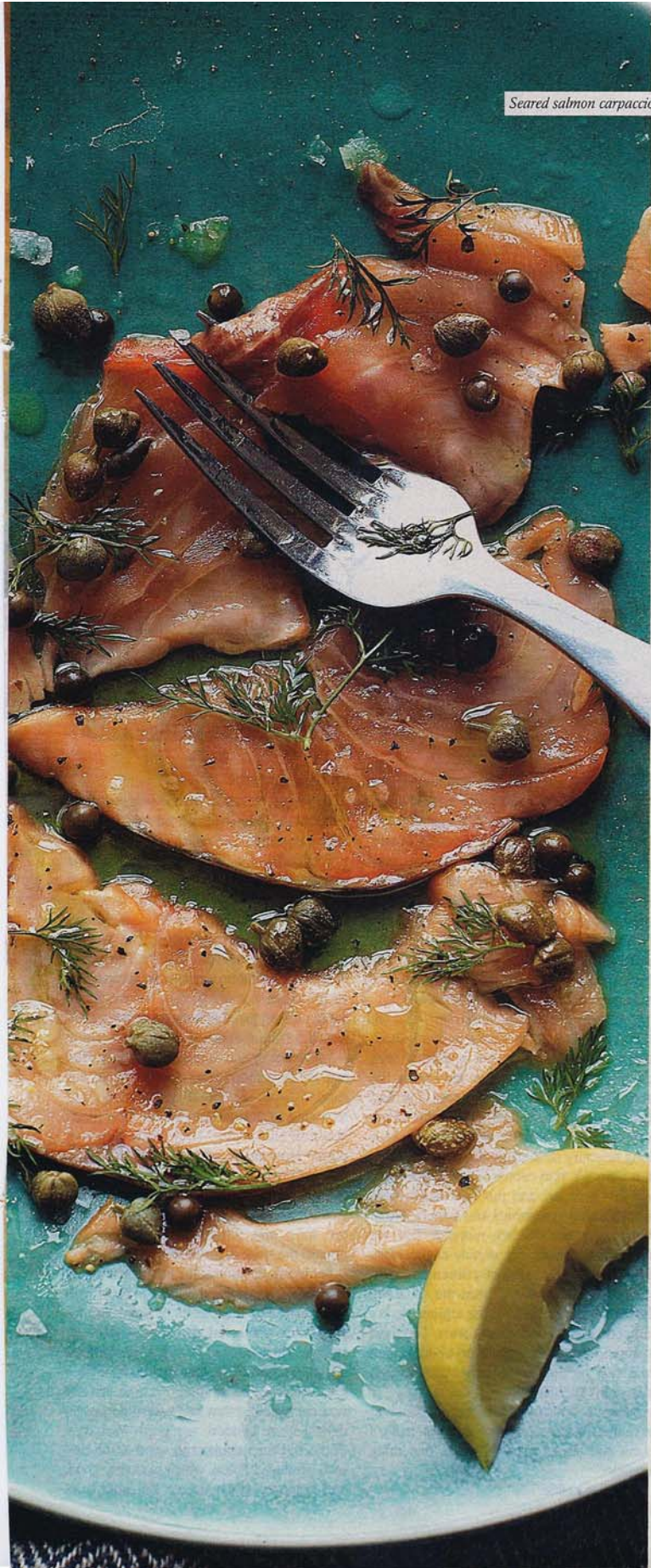
500g salmon fillet
Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
Extra-virgin olive oil
Handful of fresh dill
1 tbsp green peppercorns (drained)
1 tbsp small capers (drained and rinsed)
1 lemon or lime

Using a sharp knife, cut the salmon into thin slices (as if it were smoked). If you can't get the



GETTING THE RIGHT BALANCE

To reap the benefits of this tasty and nutritious way of eating, all you have to do is commit to living with an 80/20 balance, which means eating healthily 80% of the time and relaxing for the remaining 20%. Everybody's ratio will be slightly different. For example, 30/70 for the superactive and perhaps 90/10 for the middle-aged supersedentary. You will find your spot. Remember that unrealistic goals only set us up for self-loathing and failure. Your job is to be the best version of you. Bear this in mind when you create your personal eating manifesto. Use exercise to change your ratio and keep you in the zone. Cook flash from Monday to Friday, then save the complicated, higher-calorie stuff for weekends and holidays. Filling the week with satisfying flavours will transform your life.



Seared salmon carpaccio

LIFE STYLE DIET SPECIAL

slices really thin, put them between two pieces of greaseproof paper and flatten them with the heel of your hand. Arrange the slices on an ovenproof serving plate, without overlapping, to cover the entire surface. Season with salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, drizzle with a little olive oil, and add sprigs of dill, a sprinkling of green peppercorns and capers, and leave to stand for 10 minutes so the flavours can mingle. Heat the grill. Put the plate under the hot grill for one minute only, so the salmon is warmed through. Sprinkle with lemon juice and serve at once. Alternatively, use thinly sliced pink grapefruit instead of the peppercorns and capers. **O**

NEXT WEEK In part 2 of the flash eating plan, **Laura Santtini and Amanda Griggs** build on the basics and show how you can enjoy complex carbs without gaining weight

Flash Cooking: Fit Fast Flavours for Busy People by **Laura Santtini** (Quadrille £20). To order for £16.50, inc p&p, call 0845 271 2135 or visit thesundaytimes.co.uk/bookshop

WEIGHT LOSS = WELLBEING

It is difficult to lose weight if you have poor digestion. A healthy digestive system is one of the secrets to natural weight loss. A diet high in saturated fats, excess meat, sugar, preservatives and convenience foods slows your digestion, affecting your general health and reducing the absorption of essential nutrients.

Fresh green soups, salads, a little fruit and steamed vegetables require little digestion and are quickly assimilated from the upper digestive tract. Together with essential fatty acids, they supply excellent energy, minerals, vitamins, live enzymes, and other essential nutrients to keep your blood-sugar levels balanced. Eating a nutrient-rich diet will help you break the cycle of cravings, and as your blood-sugar levels are regulated, your body is stimulated to immediately initiate the loss of excess weight, encouraging new reserves of determination and willpower.

Continuing the programme with mostly plants and adding in your iPhone-size quality protein portions will further encourage fat loss. As you reach your goal, the 80/20 manifesto will become second nature as you balance your diet with some wholegrains and the right essential fat found in nuts, seeds and oily fish.

If you find yourself slipping back, have a green soup, fruit, salad and steamed-vegetable day to get you back on track, always ensuring that everything you eat is flavoured and wholesome.

Amanda Griggs, director of health and nutrition, Balance the Clinic

ST For Laura Santtini's flash flavour recipes and guide to superfoods, go to thesundaytimes.co.uk/style