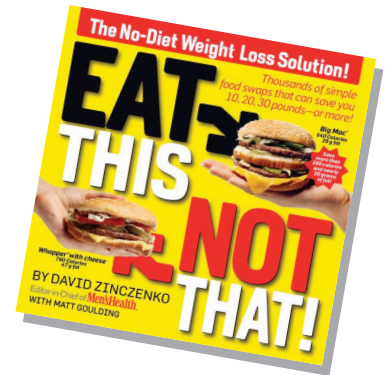


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'Eat This, Not That!'



I recently read a review of the popular diet book *"Eat This, Not That,"* in which author David Zinczenko informs readers how to avoid the perils of restaurant food. In the book, Zinczenko, editor-in-chief of *Men's Health Magazine* and creator of The Abs Diet, tells readers about secrets that he says the restaurant industry doesn't want you to know. Zinczenko researched, interviewed experts and did nutritional analysis on hundreds of food entrees served in popular chain restaurants, from Krispy Kreme to Maggiano's Little Italy and offered suggestions on calorie saving menu options.

For those who frequent chain restaurants, and who among us occasionally doesn't, the book is a good read. However, I'm going to assume that our readers are somewhat more discerning about what and where they eat, but still relatively uninformed about the health hazards of many of their favorite foods.

So, following is my own version of *"Eat This, Not That!"*

Discerning salmon

Let's start with the trendy, highly nutritious seafood, salmon. In the grocery store and at fish markets, you have the option of either farm-raised or wild-caught salmon. The only healthy population of wild salmon is in Alaska, where their habitats are still clean and intact. Alaskan residents would tell you that salmon is the "real" gold in Alaska. You've got to admire these fish. After leaving the streams in which they are born to explore the great oceans, they swim back, some-

times over 2,000 miles, to the river of their birth to deposit their eggs and then die. While they are out there in the ocean they eat a tiny orange fish called Krill. This is what gives Alaskan salmon their bright orange color. Krill are high in omega 3 fats, thus, the high omega-3 fat content of Alaskan salmon. Omega-3 fats help protect us from many chronic health diseases, including cancer, depression, obesity, diabetes, arthritis, heart attacks and strokes. Farm-raised salmon are fed dye pellets to give them the pink color that occurs naturally in free-swimming salmon. Additionally, antibiotics and hormones are used intensively in many fish-farms. There's more about farm-raised fish that's not very appealing, but I'll stop here and simply say, eat wild Alaskan salmon, not farm-raised.

Where's the beef?

Health authorities are quick to criticize beef, when in fact beef from a cow raised

on pasture and fed grass is even healthier for you than a chicken breast. Grass-fed beef is one-third to three times leaner than grain-fed beef, has fewer calories and provides two to four times more omega-3 fatty acids than feedlot beef. These grass-fed animals are hormone and antibiotic free. They live a low-stress life outside grazing in pasture, and in contrast to feedlot beef ... well, we've all heard the feedlot stories. It should be noted that there is a difference between "organic" beef and "grass-fed" beef. Beef can be certified as organic if the cattle have been given organic feed and are free of antibiotics and growth hormone implants. Although the meat will be cleaner, nutritionally, there are very few differences between "certified organic" and feedlot beef. With increasing consumers' concerns about how their food is grown, grass-fed beef is becoming more available.

Sowing your oats

Oatmeal is one of the best breakfast foods you can eat. Most types of oatmeal are high in nutrients and fiber but when it comes to getting the most out of the whole grain oat, steel cut oats are the best choice. They are higher in texture, fiber and flavor and have a lower effect on your blood sugar. Also known as Irish or Scottish oatmeal, steel cut oats maintain all of the nutrients from the whole grain oat because they are simply whole oats that have been cut into little pieces. These oats are a rich source of soluble fiber. Just three grams of soluble fiber from oatmeal daily in a diet

low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. Cooking time may be a little longer, about 15 minutes, but they are well worth the time. If time is an issue, and when is it not, cook a batch on a weekend and use for individual servings during the week. Steel cut oats can be found in most grocery stores. Avoid the instant, pre-packed and flavored stuff, since it has sugar, salt and other additives.

Watch your sweeteners

We are a nation addicted to sugar, and the food industry thrives on feeding our addiction. The most dangerous form of sugar is high-fructose corn syrup. It has become the principal sweetener in soda,

fruit juices, baked goods, canned fruits, dairy products, cookies, gum, jams and jellies. In fact, it's difficult to find a packaged product that doesn't have corn syrup as an ingredient. Because of a system of price supports and sugar quotas that have been in place for 25 years, importing sugar into the United States has become cost-prohibitive, which has opened up a huge market for American companies manufacturing this syrup. So what makes high-fructose corn syrup so dangerous? The body metabolizes fructose into triglycerides, which raises blood triglycerides significantly and increases the risk of heart disease. It is a major contributor to weight gain because foods with fructose may not turn off your hunger

signal. You actually get hungrier after eating foods containing high-fructose corn syrup because you're not satiated. The liver doesn't handle fructose well either, forcing it into a fat-promoting mode that leads to elevated levels of "bad" cholesterol and triglycerides. You will find high-fructose corn syrup listed in the "ingredients" area on a food product, not on the nutrition label.



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