



Summer Solstice

Diet & Recipes



Table of Contents

3

Yogi Tea

4

Potato Soup

5

Mung Beans &
Rice

6

Hot Sauce

7

Golden Milk

8

Food of
the Yogis:
An Ayurvedic
Perspective

YOGI TEA

A blend of clove, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger root and black pepper makes up this richly spiced tea that helps warm the body; stimulate digestion, liver and spleen function; and gives support to the immune system. A hint of black tea supports energy and milk is added to complement the spices. (Almond or other milk substitutes may be used.)

INGREDIENTS

For each cup:

10 ounces of water

3 whole cloves

4 whole green cardamom pods, cracked

4 whole black peppercorns

½ stick cinnamon

¼ teaspoon black tea

½ cup milk

2 slices fresh ginger root

DIRECTIONS

Bring water to a boil and add spices. Cover and boil 15 to 20 minutes, then add black tea. Let sit for a few minutes, then add the milk and return to a boil. Don't let it boil over. When it reaches a boil, remove immediately from heat, strain, and sweeten with honey, if desired.



POTATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

1 quart potatoes sliced
1 quart celery sliced
1 quart onions sliced
1/8 cup raw minced garlic
1/8 cup cooking oil
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon turmeric
1 tablespoon cumin
1 tablespoon coriander
Pinch of cayenne
Salt



DIRECTIONS

Layer the vegetables in a large pot with the potatoes on the bottom. Fill with water and add salt. Bring to a boil and cook until vegetables are tender. Meanwhile, sauté the chili powder, turmeric, cumin, coriander, and cayenne in the cooking oil and then add to the soup. Add garlic at the end before serving.



MUNG BEANS & RICE

Also known as Kitchari, this is a perfectly balanced protein dish, easy to digest and very satisfying. Good any time of year but makes a particularly good winter diet.

INGREDIENTS

4 ½ cups water
½ cup whole mung beans
½ cup basmati rice
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup finely minced ginger root
3 cups chopped vegetables
2 tablespoons ghee or oil
¾ tablespoon turmeric
¼ teaspoon dried crushed red chiles
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon coriander
½ teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon salt



DIRECTIONS

Rinse the mung beans and rice. Add the mung beans to boiling water and cook until they begin to split. Add the rice and cook another 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Now add the vegetables.

Heat the ghee/oil in a sauté pan and add the onions, garlic, and ginger and sauté until clear. Add the spices and cook 5 more minutes, stirring constantly. Add a little water if necessary. Add this to the cooked rice and beans. You can substitute vegetables as you like, as well as use Bragg Liquid Aminos, tamari, or soy sauce instead of salt.



HOT SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

3 large onions, chopped
¼ cup dried crushed red chiles
8 ounces tamarind concentrate
16 ounces hot water
1 ½ cups sesame oil
1 tablespoon turmeric
10 whole small dried red chiles
2 cups apple cider vinegar



DIRECTIONS

Put the onions in a large bowl. Sprinkle with the crushed chilés. Melt tamarind concentrate in hot water. Add sesame oil and diluted tamarind to onions. Sprinkle with the turmeric. Add the whole chiles and vinegar. Stir and cover. Let sit overnight or several days for the fullest flavor. Store in the refrigerator. The sauce will keep a long time and get better and better. Yields 2 quarts.



GOLDEN MILK

Turmeric is the most healing root for the body. It comes from the root of a plant which is grown mainly in India but it has been used in many countries for thousands of years as a healing food. It is known to be beneficial to the inner organs, the spine and the joints. It is purifying to the blood and promotes general good health. It also has external healing properties and can be used in masks and baths for the skin.

INGREDIENTS

For each cup:

1/8 teaspoon turmeric

1/2 cup water

8 ounces milk or milk alternative

2 tablespoons raw almond oil

Honey to taste

1 cardamom pod (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Simmer turmeric in water until it forms a nice paste. Suggested cooking time is 8 minutes, you can add more water as necessary. Meanwhile, bring milk to a boil with the almond oil. As soon as it boils, remove from heat. Combine the two mixtures using a blender if desired. Add honey to taste. The cardamom may be cooked with the turmeric for added flavor.

Note that you can prepare larger quantities of turmeric paste as it keeps in the refrigerator for up to 40 days. The general ratio of turmeric to water is 1 part turmeric to 4 parts water.





food of the yogis

AN AYURVEDIC
PERSPECTIVE

By Jai Dev Singh

Ayurveda is not just a form of medicine that originated in ancient India, nor should it be thought of as simply a way of eating or utilizing herbs. Ayurveda cannot be boiled down to any one thing. Rather, it is a complete yogic system of living—the purpose of which is to optimize the body and mind for the heightening of consciousness. Healing is a natural byproduct of this process.

From time immemorial the yogis have known that the secret to creating a body that is strong, youthful and able to carry great amounts of prana, is based on the digestive force of the fire tattva, known in this context as Agni.

For the yogi, Agni is a very important concept to understand. The Latin word 'ignis,' from which the English word 'ignite' is derived, comes from the same Sanskrit root as the word 'agni.' Agni means that which ignites, which is fire.

All of life is based on this elementary fire. The agni of the mineral realm is the volcanic fire of the earth. The agni of the plant is the fire of photosynthesis, which transforms sunlight into prana—life. The digestive fire of the body (jathar agni) is the agni of the animal realm which transforms the pranic life force into the body's tissues.



It is then the job of the human being to transform the body and mind into consciousness through the fire of sadhana. It is through sadhana that we experience the most subtle and desirable aspect of agni, the radiant body.

While it may not be apparent at first glance, this menu is crafted to give you the best opportunity to take advantage of the profound sadhana you'll be engaging in throughout your experience.

If your agni has to work too hard with difficult-to-digest foods, you risk compromising the effects of your hard work. Poorly digested food results in what Ayurveda calls ama—toxicity that coats the body's tissues and hinders its intelligence. If you can stick to the diet, there is no doubt that you'll strategically position yourself for the best possible experience.

Magic Mung Beans

Mung beans and rice, also known as kitchari, is perhaps the most revered of all food preparations in the Ayurvedic and Yogic traditions. It is not by chance that this age old recipe is the staple of the solstice diet. Every good Ayurvedic practitioner knows that a mono diet of mung beans and rice is the best way to restore digestive health.

Since we know that the health of the entire body is dependent on our digestion, we begin to get a sense of why the Indian culture holds this food in such high esteem. Kitchari may be the most beneficial of all food preparations due to its ability to detoxify the body, while simultaneously kindling the digestive fire and providing nourishment to the tissues—a rare trinity of therapeutic effects.

For hundreds of years many yogis have eaten a simple diet of mung beans and rice in order to provide the optimum internal environment for the yogic experience. A diet of mung beans and rice provides a perfect balance of protein and complex carbohydrates that allows your body to detoxify while still feeling nourished and strong.

Within just a couple of days on a simple diet of mung beans and rice, the chemistry of the blood changes, the organs and tissues are allowed to restore from the chronic stress of dietary excess or deficiency, the body becomes energized, the stomach satisfied, and the mind crystal clear.



The Golden Herb

If I was allowed to use only one herb for the rest of my life, turmeric would be among the top considerations. The soup we're served every morning and the Golden Milk that is offered are both excellent ways to ingest a healthy dose of this incredible medicine.

The turmeric you take will help alleviate the aches and pains as its anti-inflammatory powers soothe the inner structure of the body. It kindles the agni, purifies the blood and the liver, soothes the respiratory system, clarifies the skin and is powerfully anti-microbial. The benefits of turmeric are vast and far too extensive to envelope in this short article. Take it at solstice and every other day of your life!

The Spice!

You'll notice that some of the meals pack a punch and can be quite spicy. Of course, the more heat you can handle, the more digestive capacity you can deliver to your organism. The more digestive capacity your organism maintains, the more efficient it will be in transforming its resources into heightened awareness. Let food be thy medicine and medicine thy food. With that being said, each person should be sensitive to their unique digestive environment and be realistic with what works for you and what doesn't. If you know that hot, spicy food creates havoc in your gut, enjoy the mildly spiced mung beans and rice for now.

When I first started attending Solstice, there was no way I could eat the spicy preparation of mung beans and rice. These days, the hot and spicy food is not a problem, but as a pitta person*, I still have to be mindful and make sure I don't overdo it.

Ideally, we can digest this additional heat into more metabolic power for the body. That metabolic strength of body acts as good fuel for the mind which can then work to 'digest' the unprocessed subconscious garbage (mental ama) via your sadhana.

As with anything else in the teachings of Kundalini Yoga, there are no extraneous parts, no unimportant details. Your banana at breakfast carries a weight that is not unlike the mudra you hold or the mantra you chant in any given kriya. Every piece has its purpose and every word has its wisdom.

*Pitta is one of three body/mind types in the Ayurvedic system. Pitta is primarily fire. Therefore, the pitta person has a tendency towards being fiery and intense.

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