A close-up photograph of a hand holding a clear glass pepper mill, grinding pepper into a dark bowl filled with a colorful salad. The background is softly blurred, showing a kitchen setting with warm lighting.

PASCALE NAESSENS

# Natural food

## THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY

# Contents

FOREWORD Kris Verburgh	<b>6</b>
FOREWORD Paul Jambers	<b>7</b>
FOOD THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY	<b>9</b>
FOR MANY PEOPLE IT IS LIBERATING	<b>10</b>
OUR WESTERN WAY OF EATING	<b>12</b>
GOOD FOOD COMBINATIONS	<b>14</b>
NATURAL INGREDIENTS	<b>20</b>
FATS	<b>26</b>
KEEP IT PRACTICAL	<b>31</b>
RECIPES	
Quick and easy lunches	<b>33</b>
Delicious vegetable dishes	<b>53</b>
Surprising with cheese	<b>67</b>
From the river and the sea	<b>79</b>
Shellfish and crustaceans	<b>102</b>
The golden spice: turmeric	<b>119</b>
Real meat: you can taste and feel the difference	<b>143</b>
Enjoying the occasional 'sin' is an art	<b>169</b>
RESPECT FOR YOURSELF	<b>178</b>
FAST CARBOHYDRATES	<b>182</b>
MY DESIRE FOR SIMPLICITY AND BEAUTY	<b>185</b>
INDEX OF RECIPES	<b>189</b>
INDEX OF INGREDIENTS	<b>190</b>

# The power of healthy food

Kris Verburgh



**Healthy food works like medicine.** When people eat more healthily, they can throw 80% of their medication in the trashcan. These are often blood pressure reducers, antacid remedies, anti-inflammatory drugs, blood sugar regulators, etc. It is even possible to postpone the need for some surgical procedures. Researchers at Harvard University investigated a number of patients on a waiting list for heart surgery. Instead of undergoing surgery, they were put on a healthy diet. Within months, 80% of these patients had been removed from the waiting list. In other words, they no longer needed an operation thanks to their conversion to healthy eating. Similar research has also shown that patients who are systematically guided towards healthy eating are ten times less likely to have a heart attack than patients who are treated in a standard manner.

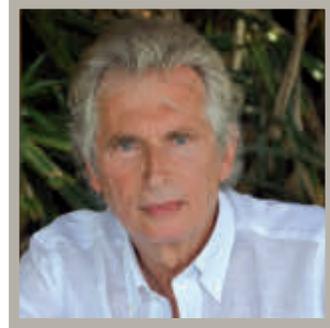
Or take diabetes, a 'chronic' illness that affects 40% of all Europeans at one time or another. A study by the University of Newcastle in England has revealed that diabetes can be a 'reversible' condition. Type-2 diabetes patients were put on a special diet (no bread, potatoes, pasta or rice, and mainly vegetables instead). The results were amazing: in just 8 weeks their diabetes had completely disappeared.

These and many other studies demonstrate the power of healthy food. But it is important that the change in dietary habits should be sufficiently drastic to have the desired effect. These changes need to go much further than the standard recommendations of the government or even of many hospitals. The scientific literature tells us that the healthiest diets are diets with a low glycemic index. These diets are based on foodstuffs that do not cause high blood sugar spikes. Sugar spikes accelerate the ageing process and increase the likelihood of age-related illnesses, such as coronary disease, diabetes and dementia. This means that we all need to eat less bread, potatoes, pasta and rice. These are foodstuffs that consist primarily of starch, and starch is a hidden sugar. Turning these scientific insights into daily practice requires a different kind of eating. Fortunately, this cookbook can offer readers plenty of excellent advice. It is a wonderful book with numerous recipes that are not only healthy, but also make it crystal-clear that healthy eating can also be deliciously tasty. Pure enjoyment, in fact.

KRIS VERBURGH is a doctor and author of the bestselling *The Food Hourglass - stay younger for longer and lose weight*.

# Her books reflect her personality

Paul Jambers



“Don’t do it!” I begged her. “Please don’t start a restaurant.” Pascale stood opposite me, proudly holding her recently acquired diploma as a restaurateur. I feared that the next step would be to open her own restaurant. I could already see it: ‘Chez Pascale’! Because I know that when Pascale wants to do something, she is a very difficult lady to stop. But a restaurant? No. Never.

For a time, she said nothing more about her plans. I saw, of course, that she was continuing to deepen her knowledge of the art of cooking. I also saw that she spent long evenings studying. Usually scientific books about food and diet. She devoured volume after volume, almost literally. She made notes. She contacted professors and leading dieticians. She followed various courses: healthy living habits, shiatsu and tai chi. At the same time, she took part in workshops organized by famous cooks. I let her do her own thing, but began secretly to hope that she had dropped the restaurant idea. Thankfully, ‘Chez Pascale’ never opened its doors. Instead, we had 3 books. They are now amongst the bestselling cookbooks in Belgium.

Pascale’s books are not just a flash in the pan, nor are they celebrity cookbooks, where a whole team of specialists and assistants actually dream up the recipes, with the role of the ‘famous face’ being limited to posing behind a cooker in the kitchen for the photographs. Nor does Pascale have a cooking program on television, which often produces these cooking books as a ‘spin-off’. No, she has none of that. The secret of her success is very simple: Pascale’s books reflect her personality. She does everything herself. She develops the recipes. She goes to the market to buy the ingredients. For the photo shoots, she cooks the meals herself. She directs the photographer. She does the styling. Of course, she writes all the texts as well. And last but not least, she compiles the layout of the book, page by page. But more important than all this, and the real reason for her success, is the fact that Pascale loves her readers. She wants to make people happier and the world a more beautiful place.

PAUL JAMBERS, TV-producer and husband of Pascale Naessens



# Food that makes you happy

- simple
- tasty
- healthy
- attractive

Pure Enjoyment is about much more than just cooking. It is about romance, communication, creativity, health and - above all - enjoyment.

It is not perhaps the art of cooking itself that makes this concept so attractive, but rather what you can achieve with it: your most wonderful and most unforgettable moments are often the moments you spend at your own table - and that is the reason why I do what I do. I want to enjoy as many of those super-moments as I possibly can. What's more, I also find great satisfaction and great freedom of expression in creating the right atmosphere, the atmosphere that makes these exceptional moments possible.

It is my way of withdrawing into a special world, a world filled with the people I love: my husband, my friends, my family. It is a world that I consciously wish to make more beautiful, a world that I am happy to be in. I create a setting in which all the different senses are stimulated. The elegance of the table, the romance of being together, the pleasure of delicious food, the freedom of good health... that is what I call pure enjoyment!

It gives a very special feeling to create your own world, and it really is very easy. All you need to do is try.

# For many people it is liberating

I had never thought that my books would have such an effect. I was touched in particular by the grateful reactions from so many readers, and this continues to be my strongest motivation for carrying on with my work. It is about people who, after years of searching, have finally found a way of eating that gives them satisfaction. At last, they can both eat and enjoy! They write to tell me that they now have more energy, that their food tastes better than ever before and, above all, that they are healthier and no longer need to battle against those excess pounds. For many people this is liberating, an act of empowerment. All I can say is that my recipes are a simple and natural way of eating, and certainly not a diet! What's more, you can start straight away.

I have not only tried to explain my way of eating as clearly as possible, but also to back it up with scientific evidence. Because that is where much of my inspiration comes from: the professional and scientific literature. Of course, you can just start cooking and ignore all the theory. Because every recipe in this book conforms to that theory, whether you are aware of it or not. Either way, you will soon experience the pleasure and the benefits of healthy eating. You will feel fitter and might even lose weight - whilst at the same time enjoying your food more than ever before.

I have put a great deal of love into this book. It is a reflection of the way I eat and live. I have created the recipes myself and they have been 'tested' (with great pleasure!) by my husband and my friends. Making a book in this very personal manner is an intense process, but I couldn't do it any other way. Yes, it is my passion, and I hope that you can feel that passion and taste it in the recipes. Enjoy!

With best wishes.

Pascale Naessens

# Carpaccio of figs with feta

WORK: 10 MINUTES - COOKING TIME: 7 MINUTES (ROASTING THE PINE NUTS) - SERVES 2

6-8 figs  
4 oz feta  
1 handful of fresh herbs  
(e.g. basil)  
pine nuts

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Brown the pine nuts for several minutes in the oven.

Cut the figs into thin slices and arrange them on a plate. Crumble the feta with your hand over the figs and sprinkle on the roasted pine nuts. Season with just a little black pepper and some fresh herbs, like basil. Pour on a good splash of olive oil.

## Tip: figs

There are different types of figs, ranging from yellow and green to dark blue and deep purple. The purple ones are the sweetest and the tastiest, and are most frequently found in the shops during the autumn months, from August to November. Figs must be fully ripe and must have a blood-red color inside. Unripe figs have no flavor and also contain a milky juice that can cause skin rash and irritation. Ripe figs cannot be kept for long and should therefore be eaten and enjoyed as quickly as possible.

Figs are rich in polyphenols, minerals and fibers. They are good for the heart and the arteries, and also counteract inflammation, constipation and bronchitis.

*Figs make you happy.  
They are a real pleasure,  
a truly divine fruit.*



# Steamed mackerel with zucchini strands and baby tomatoes

WORK: 10 MINUTES - COOKING TIME: NONE - SERVES 2

2 steamed or smoked  
mackerel fillets  
2 zucchini  
15 baby tomatoes  
1 lemon

Wash the zucchini thoroughly and cut them into strands using a special slicer (see tip). You will discover that when you reach as far as the seed rib it will no longer be possible to cut more strands. You can either throw the rib away or use it as an ingredient for a vegetable soup.

Wash the lemon thoroughly and cut a number of thin slices from the peel. Only cut off the yellow part without any white bits (the white is very bitter). Cut these slices into thin strands as well. Squeeze the juice out of the lemon.

Add the lemon juice and a good splash of olive oil to the zucchini strands and season with a little salt and plenty of pepper. Add the halved tomatoes.

Cut the mackerel into wedges and serve them on top of the vegetables. Finish with the lemon strands.

## Tip: mackerel

Mackerel is one of the healthiest fishes to eat. It is rich in omega 3 and vitamin D. Just as importantly, it is not a farmed fish, so that it is pure and natural.

## Tip: zucchini strands

Use a special slicer with serrated teeth. Quick and easy!

*Super healthy, super fast and super delicious!*



# Salad with ricotta and feta

WORK: 10 MINUTES - SERVES 2

## VEGETABLES

4 tomatoes  
1 red onion  
1 red bell pepper

## SALAD OR HERBS

flat-leaf parsley  
2 spring onions  
  
2 tablespoons of ricotta  
1 slice of feta  
juice of 1 lemon

Take a large bowl.

Cut the tomatoes and the red pepper into large pieces. Cut the red onions into fine, half rings. Finely chop the parsley and the spring onions. Place all the ingredients in the bowl.

Crumble the feta into the bowl and add the ricotta. Season well with plenty of black pepper and a little salt. Add a splash of olive oil and the lemon juice.

Stir all the ingredients well, so that all the flavors intermingle - because that is what makes this recipe so tasty!

## Tip: for a take-along lunch

The flavor and structure of the vegetables improves the longer they are allowed to stand. This means that this recipe is ideal for a take-along lunch. You can add plenty of other herbs, depending on your personal preference (for example, basil).

*Tasty, creamy and full of flavor.*



# Chickpeas with pan-fried bell peppers

WORK: 3 MINUTES - COOKING TIME: 7 MINUTES - SERVES 2

- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 red onion
  
- 1 can of pre-cooked chickpeas
- 1 teaspoon of cumin seeds

Put the cumin seeds in a pan for 2 to 3 minutes on a medium heat until the seeds' aroma is released. In the meantime, remove the seeds from the bell peppers and cut into strips. Cut the red onion into rings. Pour a good splash of olive oil into the pan and fry the vegetables until they are cooked. Season with salt and pepper. When the vegetables are ready, add the drained chickpeas. Allow them to cook with the peppers, until they are warmed through. Can be served either hot or cold.

**Tip:** flat-leaf parsley

Finely chopped flat-leaf parsley is a delicious addition to this recipe, especially if you are planning to use it for a take-along meal.

*Delicious and filling  
- both hot or cold.*



# Lacquered chicken with haricots verts

WORK: 5 MINUTES - COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES - SERVES 2

2 chicken fillets  
11 oz haricots verts  
4 cloves of garlic

3 tablespoons of balsamic  
vinegar  
3 tablespoons of (mild)  
soy sauce

Boil the haricots verts and the (whole) cloves of garlic until they are cooked through in a pan of water with a little salt, pepper and a splash of olive oil.

Cut the chicken into strips. Pour the soy sauce, balsamic vinegar and a tablespoon of olive oil into a pan. Fry the chicken in the pan until all the moisture is absorbed. Stir continually, especially at the last moment.

Serve the chicken with the haricots verts.

This dish is delicious either hot or cold.

Tip: garlic

Boiled garlic loses much of its powerful flavor, so that you can eat it whole. It melts like butter in your mouth and is surprisingly tasty, as well as being very healthy.

*This chicken is so yummy!  
And the garlic melts like  
butter in your mouth.*





# PURE

by

PASCALE NAESSENS

for

**SERAX**  
TABLEWARE

I make the plates, the crockery and the recipes. Cooking delicious food in beautiful ceramics is pure romance and pure communication.

My newest collection for 'Pure' is my range of oven dishes.

## **www.lannoo.com**

Register on our website and we will send you a regular newsletter with information about new books and interesting, exclusive offers.

## **www.purepascale.com**

Recipes, texts, styling, design concept: Pascale Naessens

Photography:

**Heikki Verdurme:** pages 1, 31, 32, 33, 37, 39, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 85, 87, 93, 95, 99, 102, 103, 105, 107, 109, 110, 111, 113, 115, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 133, 135, 137, 139, 140, 141, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 157, 159, 165, 167, 168, 169, 171, 173, 175, 177, 187

**Diego Franssens:** cover, inside cover and pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 30, 64, 65, 66, 67, 78, 79, 81, 83, 91, 100, 101, 131, 142, 143, 181, 184, 185, 186, 188, 191

**Wout Hendrickx:** pages 35, 43, 51, 63, 89, 97, 116, 117, 144, 145, 161, 163

Layout: Whitespray

English translation: Ian Connerty

If you have any comments or questions, you can contact our editorial team at:  
[redactielifestyle@lannoo.com](mailto:redactielifestyle@lannoo.com)

© Lannoo Publishers, Tielt-Belgium, 2014

D/2014/45/534 – NUR 440-441

ISBN: 978 94 014 1983 3

All rights reserved. Nothing from this publication may be copied, duplicated, stored in an automated database and/or made public in any way, shape or form, whether in an electronic, mechanical or any other manner, without the prior and express permission of the publisher in writing.