

Introduction

It's been four years since the previous edition, and although the core message is the same (*Choose good food: food is medicine*), we have updated each section to incorporate new evidence from the current medical literature, and revised almost every page to be more useful to the reader. The *Twelve Reasons to Eat a Mediterranean Diet* (pages 15–31) include five new reasons, each accompanied by its own lifestyle prescription. We've taken a closer look at the issue of processed food, a category which has veritably exploded with ready-to-eat (or drink) products and food substitutes (pages 59–61), and added a section on critical thinking (page 12) to remind us that learning *how* to think through conflicting dietary advice is essential. There are about a dozen new recipes, and if you want to find an old favorite (or a new one), see *Recipes* on pages 152–153. Inspired by feedback from our diabetes and heart disease prevention and reversal classes, we've revised and expanded *Important Ingredients* (page 114) and *Vegetables to Keep Handy* (page 120) along with *Meal Planning* (page 134) to better answer the question, “What should I eat?” The recommendations are still simple, sustainable, and accessible – busting the myth that eating well is complicated and expensive.

Miles and I grew up eating good food – in fact, many of the recipes in this book are straight out of our childhood. Mother always understood the importance of whole food, and was cooking Mediterranean-style decades before it was a household word. We didn't realize back then how ahead of the curve she was, of course, but we sure ate well. She taught herself to cook after she married, and raised seven children with minimal resources but a lot of common sense and intellectual curiosity. When we moved to Western Australia in the 1960s, she tackled challenges like learning to make proper tea and cook with a wood stove, and we later took over a

country inn and restaurant (with a huge wood-burning kitchen stove!) in the little town of Denmark on the Southern Ocean. Fishermen brought us tubs of just-caught fish; a local lady collected our compostable food scraps and sold us fresh-picked vegetables; the bakery sent over trays of still-hot bread each morning; and we bought grass-fed meat from the butcher shop owned by the family who raised the meat on their farm.

Our food-related focus continued with natural food stores in Pennsylvania, Seattle, Portland, and Cottesloe, Western Australia. After Miles finished medical school and residency we began working together in his medical practice, and once again food came to the forefront. Miles would poke his head out of an exam room and say, “Hey, Mea, we need some brown rice recipes in here.” Thus *Good Food, Great Medicine* was born.

As the book reaches more people, questions keep coming: Where do I get good bread? What yogurt should I buy? Should I eat wheat? What about meat? Eggs? Dairy? Is this sugar better than that sugar? Can I really reverse my type 2 diabetes? How can I get off my blood pressure drugs? (The answers are found in the first 110 pages.)

As for the actual business of cooking, we don't assume you are in the kitchen because you love to cook or have plenty of disposable time. Pages 9–109 explain *why* you are standing in your kitchen with a knife in one hand and an onion in the other, and the rest of the book suggests what you can do with the knife and onion once you're there – a sort of kitchen starter kit. It reflects the uncomplicated whole food Mediterranean philosophy we grew up with as well as the principles on page 9: eat real food, prepare it yourself, keep it simple, make it taste good, and double the vegetables.

Mea Hassell

