

What I Eat

December 17, 2016

Morning Quesadilla

Egg, mushrooms, cheese, onions, tortilla, hot sauce, guacamole, salsa

Salad

Grilled chicken, goat cheese, beets, spinach, walnuts, dried cranberries, balsamic vinaigrette

Fruit Bowl

Acai with granola, strawberries, blueberries, banana, honey

Chicken Tzatziki

Rice and lemon yogurt dressing



Introduction

I am from all across the United States. I have lived in California, Colorado, Wisconsin, Michigan and Texas. My family is from Michigan and still lives there today. My grandparents on both sides are from Lebanon. They live in Dearborn, MI which has a large population of Muslim

immigrants. I grew up around a lot of Lebanese food in my grandparents household but it was rarely made at home. I have lived in New York for 6 years and work as a teacher. I am 30 years old and have an adorable shih tzu (see below).



Eating Habits

For the most part I try to eat as healthy as I can. To me, healthy usually means homemade, not necessarily "healthy" in terms of nutrition or calories. I love to cook so I try and make dinner at home about 3 times a week. On the weekend, I usually eat out a lot more and often abandon any healthy

choices I made over the week. I have a bad habit of not eating breakfast during the week and usually having a big dinner. When I let myself get too hungry, I overindulge. I have a habit of eating by impulse, which usually means grabbing the saltiest option available. Unfortunately, I also have to really try to incorporate fruit into my diet because I don't crave them. I order out far too often when I do, its usually for fried and cheesy food.

Dietary and Lifestyle Considerations

I live on the the go, and have very limited times to eat during the workweek. Therefore I need foods that are "grab and go" and are transportable. I also do not eat red meat as well as most meats. I stick to fish and chicken and occasionally turkey. I stopped eating red meat when I was 12 and it just seems silly to pick it back up now. Lately I have been cooking mostly vegetarian.



Relationship to Food

I've always had a weird relationship with food. I grew up in a household where food was nothing but fuel. Neither parent liked to cook and had complicated relationship with food themselves. I grew up with a single mom who often had very little money. We never got any of the "fun" foods that people around me did; Doritos,

Lunchables, soda, candy bars, etc. These foods were restricted, and when we did get them, it was a huge treat. Therefore, in my adulthood, I still find myself craving these foods. I know they are not good for me, yet I have a strange desire for them. I think being told I couldn't have them in my childhood left me forever longing for things I could have.



My early relationships with food was one of restriction and limit. I was a struggled with my weight as a child and teen, and was restricted from food. This I'm sure was in an effort to "help" me. I didn't really understand what was healthy at that point, so to me, it meant not eating very much and severely restricting my options. I used to thoroughly read the labels on food looking at carbs and calories. This left me viewing food as a negative force in my life.

Only now as I am discovering my love for cooking, spices and new tastes is my relationship to food becoming a positive force in my life. I don't beat myself up and indulge those missed craving from childhood when I need to. I also realize that food can be both fuel and enjoyable at the same time. Carbs and calories can be good for you, and you actually do need some fat and sugar in your life!



Food Choices

My food choices are determined by convenience, cost and personal preference. I choose things that are often portable and I can take while running out of my house or having a quick lunch between classes. Cost is always a factor, especially in New York, and I have to juggle between eating healthy and not spending a whole paycheck at Whole Foods. Since I moved to New York by myself I

have been able to make different choices about the food that I buy. Personal preference is now a big part of my decision making and I am able to experiment and try new things. However, my choices are often still rooted in tradition and memory. There are certain foods I might gravitate to when I am feeling nostalgic or homesick. Home is never too far from my mind or my stomach!