

# Body & Mind

Edited by  
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## The benefits of a raw food diet



Ever wondered what it would be like to wave goodbye to hot dinners? Raw food recipe book author **Alison Andrews** reveals the benefits of a life away from the oven

Raw food recipe author Alison Andrews, 34, has been, in her own words, 'on a journey with raw foods since 2005'. Based in Dubai, Alison (pictured right) runs a website dedicated to all things raw, [www.loving-it-raw.com](http://www.loving-it-raw.com), where her recipe ebook features all manner of healthy, fascinating alternatives to today's processed favourites. If you're feeling lethargic after another summer of overindulgence, this autumn could be the time to turn over a new leaf and embrace a healthier you. Here, Alison gives us the lowdown on what it means to be a raw food vegan.

### What's the philosophy behind raw foodism?

Humans are the only species to cook their food, and few others suffer from the range of degenerative diseases common to us. Fruits are the most vitamin-rich of all foods and vegetables are the most mineral-rich, so if you eat a diet based on fruits and vegetables you'll have more energy, clearer skin, brighter eyes,

slower ageing, less illness, better concentration and focus, improved fitness, improved tolerance to the sun and better hormonal balance. Plus, you'll feel happier.

### Are there ways of 'cooking' food while keeping it raw?

Fruits don't need anything to be delicious, but of course they can be

## 'Nothing compares to how fantastic you feel on a 100 per cent raw diet'

blended up into fruit smoothies or even fruit desserts, and vegetables can be blended into fantastic soups and sauces. As far as 'cooking' goes, you can dehydrate foods (which removes their moisture) to mimic cooked foods, such as flax crackers and raw breads and cookies.

### Which food groups are excluded completely from a raw vegan diet?

A good question to ask to decide what foods we should or shouldn't be eating is: could I make a meal of it in its natural state? Can you make a meal of raw eggs? Raw meat? And would you want to? In a raw vegan diet, all animal products are excluded, so there's no meat, fish, dairy or eggs. These foods are highly acidic to the body. Casein, the protein in milk, is alleged by some studies to be the most potent carcinogen known to man.

### How easy is it to eat out in Dubai while living by a raw food philosophy?

It isn't very easy. I think a raw food restaurant in Dubai, like the ones you find in New York, would do very well here – that's a shout out to any potential restaurant owners! On the whole, raw vegans are not catered for here much at all. Magnolia has some raw options, but they're tiny and quite expensive. Circle does nice salads and fresh juice, though we take our own dressing. Basically, the raw

food situation is quite behind here, so we eat much better at home than when we go out.

### What do you eat on an average day?

At the moment I've been having a two-litre jug of blended watermelon for breakfast. For lunch I have 10 bananas and a pack of frozen strawberries blended together, or a green smoothie, which is 450g of spinach blended with 10 bananas. Dinner is more fruit – rambutans, clementines or lychees – followed by cucumber noodles (cucumber put through a spiraliser to make noodles), and a nut cheese dressing (cheese made from blending cashews, lemon juice, sundried tomatoes and celery), or a big salad or green soup.

### Do you ever miss eating a cooked meal?

We haven't been 100 per cent raw; we eat some cooked vegan food occasionally for social convenience, but the side effects of eating cooked food, even in small amounts, is just not worth it for us. Nothing compares to how fantastic you feel on a 100 per cent raw, high-fruit, low-fat diet.

### Is there anyone who shouldn't eat a raw-food diet?

No, this is a diet anyone can thrive on. If anyone is concerned about any aspect of the raw food lifestyle, I'd recommend they read *The 80/10/10 Diet* by Dr Douglas Graham, which is considered the 'bible' of raw food nutrition. *The China Study* by Dr T Colin Campbell is another great book that everyone interested in health and longevity should read.

For more info, visit Alison's website, [www.loving-it-raw.com](http://www.loving-it-raw.com).

To buy raw food supplies, visit [www.besupernatural.com](http://www.besupernatural.com). Dubai's Holistic Institute will be holding a basic raw food workshop on October 21 at 7pm. Dhs285 per person, or Dhs255 for early bookings (04 450 3524)

