



Healing foods

by Kamalaya Naturopath Kate Upton



KAMALAYA
KOH SAMUI

“Let Food be Thy Medicine and Medicine be Thy Food”

Hippocrates (Ancient Greek father of modern medicine c. 400BC)

Foods have the power to heal, and our relationship with food provides us with the opportunity to nourish our health or undermine it. At every meal we can make choices to promote our vitality or to diminish it.

Every body is unique and there is no single diet that will be a healthful choice for everyone. We offer nutritional guidance consultations at Kamalaya and remotely via Kamalaya Connect because sometimes a nutritional approach should be highly individualised, particularly when disease states have already arisen.

However, there are certainly overarching principles we can broadly apply to understand the healing power of foods:

Quality

Look for the freshest, most vibrant raw ingredients for the highest level of antioxidants and vitamins; these will tail off as food grows older and staler. Be mindful of where you source your food. Choose organic where possible for higher micronutrient value and the absence of chemical pesticides. Source food locally to reduce its travel miles, to connect with your community and to ensure you are eating what is seasonally fresh.

Minimal Processing

Eat food that is as close to its natural state as possible so its nutritional value remains intact. Embrace simple and gentle cooking methods such as steaming, grilling, and sautéing as opposed to more aggressive methods such as deep frying. Avoiding highly processed food products will limit our intake of preservatives and other chemical additives such as colour and flavour enhancers.

Balance

However healthful one food may be, we will always need a balance. Learn to balance your macronutrients (fats, carbohydrates and protein) and get a full spectrum of micronutrients by having an inspiring variety in your diet. Cultivate your connection with your body so that it can guide you intuitively as to the right balance for you at any given meal.

Relationship

Food is a great connector. It is important that food is ethically and sustainably grown, prepared with caring intention, and enjoyed either mindfully alone or shared with friends. Paying attention to these aspects will enhance our relationship with food, with those close to us and with the wider community.

Our Kamalaya cuisine embraces and applies all the principles above, and with the transformational impact we see in many guests we can attest to its efficacy in supporting health. Our menu is designed around nourishment and choice rather than rules and restriction and is guided by a dynamic combination of ancient dietary wisdom and the latest nutritional science. Our detox menu is low-inflammatory, blood-sugar balancing and excludes all common dietary triggers. Where necessary, we can tailor dishes to meet further dietary requirements. But perhaps best of all, people enjoy their food at Kamalaya, with many finding it a memorable highlight of their stay.

Time and energy invested in improving your diet and revitalizing your relationship with food is well spent. The intimate act of selecting our food sets the tone for how we treat ourselves and how we prioritise our wellbeing. If you would like to learn more about the healing power of food, consider enrolling on our **'Fundamentals of Nutrition' course**.

Kate's Five Favourite Healing Foods

Sweet Potato

A great source of complex carbohydrate, providing a nourishing fuel for the body. Nutrient-dense and rich in vitamin A to support healthy vision, skin and a strong immune system. High in soluble fibre, which absorbs water and softens the stool, promoting positive gut health and easing constipation. Offering great versatility, sweet potatoes can be mashed, roasted, baked, used in curries or stews.

Oily Fish

Oily fish such as mackerel, anchovy, sardines, herring, salmon are an ideal source of protein, providing the building blocks for the body's tissues. They are also rich in Omega 3 fatty acids which are protective for the cardiovascular system, help to lubricate the joints and are essential for brain health and a balanced mood.

Avocado

Avocados provide a great source of healthy fat which is helpful for hormone production and protecting the skin barrier. Dietary fat is also required to absorb fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamin E, which is found in avocados and acts as an antioxidant, protecting the body's tissues from oxidative damage.

Watercress

Watercress is one of the most nutrient dense foods on the planet. It belongs to the family of cruciferous vegetables which research suggests may be useful in cancer prevention. Its bitter flavour serves to stimulate digestive secretions, helping us to break down food more fully and benefitting overall digestive health.

Lemon

Lemons are one of the most potent sources of vitamin C and help to maintain a strong immune system. They also contain potassium, calcium and phosphorus which act as electrolytes in the body, so adding a slice of lemon to water can increase hydration. The citric acid content helps to prevent kidney stones and improve digestion and the volatile oils found in lemon peel enhance the liver's capacity for detox.

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