The Mediterranean Diet Slideshow

MEDITERRANEAN NUTRITION and DIET

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

- The climate is a typical Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and mild, rainy winters. Crops of the region include olives, grapes, oranges, tangerines, and cork.
The Mediterranean diet is a modern nutritional recommendation inspired by the traditional dietary patterns of southern Italy, Crete and much of the rest of Greece in the 1960s.

On November 17, 2010, UNESCO recognized this diet pattern as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Italy, Greece, Spain and Morocco, thus reinforcing it not only as a fundamental part of their history and background, but also as a great contribution to the world.

Despite its name, this diet is not typical of all Mediterranean cuisine. In Northern Italy, for instance, lard and butter are commonly used in cooking, and olive oil is reserved for dressing salads and cooked vegetables. In North Africa, wine is traditionally avoided by Muslims. In both North Africa and the Levant, along with olive oil, sheep's tail fat and rendered butter (samna) are traditional staple fats.
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• HISTORY of the MEDITERRANEAN DIET

  – Although it was first publicized in 1945 by the American doctor Ancel Keys stationed in Salerno, Italy, the Mediterranean diet failed to gain widespread recognition until the 1990s. Objective data showing that Mediterranean diet is healthy first originated from the Seven Countries Study.

  – Mediterranean diet is based on what from the point of view of mainstream nutrition is considered a paradox: that although the people living in Mediterranean countries tend to consume relatively high amounts of fat, they have far lower rates of cardiovascular disease than in countries like the United States, where similar levels of fat consumption are found. A parallel phenomenon is known as the French Paradox.

  A diet rich in salads was promoted in England during the early Renaissance period by Giacomo Castelvetro in A Brief Account of the Fruits, Herbs and Vegetables of Italy. He attempted, without success, to convince the English to eat more fruits and vegetables.

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• The Mediterranean diet is often cited as beneficial for being low in saturated fat and high in monounsaturated fat and dietary fiber. One of the main explanations is thought to be the health effects of olive oil included in the Mediterranean diet.

• The Mediterranean diet is high in salt content. Foods such as olives, salt-cured cheeses, anchovies, capers, salted fish roe, and salads dressed with olive oil all contain high levels of salt. A study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry shows that people who followed the Mediterranean diet were less likely to develop depression.

• In addition, the consumption of red wine is considered a possible factor, as it contains flavonoids with powerful antioxidant properties. Mireille Guiliano credits the health effects of the Mediterranean diet to factors such as small portions, daily exercise, and the emphasis on freshness, balance, and pleasure in food.
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- The Mediterranean Diet is the best way to live many years with a high quality of life. It is also the best way to keep your body in shape, your skin clean and beautiful and your internal organs working properly. It the best diet to lead you to a proportional weight and don't endanger your health with urgent and unbalanced malnutrition. These fast diets may allow you to lose a few pounds, for a time, a weight that you will regain later after having lost part of your health. You may not know immediately, but the aftermath will come later.

- In 1965 Dr. Ancel Keys, after completing the “Seven Countries Study” divulged the fact that in Crete, where 40% people food intake was olive oil, the heart diseases were considerably low. The research was made with more than 12.000 persons from Finland, Greece, Italy, Japan, Holland, USA and Yugoslavia.

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The Original Mediterranean Diet characteristics are:

1) High consumption of virgin olive oil.
2) High intake of vegetables and fruits and legumes.
3) Use of non refined carbohydrates (portions to be adjusted to physical activity).
4) Consumption of fish, specially oily (or "bluish" one) three or four times a week.
5) Consumption of milk and derivatives, cheese and yogurt (the original cheese was fresh goat cheese). Keep an eye on the saturated fats of the dairy products. Do not consume too much!
6) Three or four eggs per week.
7) Moderate consumption of meat and saturated fats (natural, not artificially hydrogenated!).
8) One or two small glasses of wine a day, preferably red and at the main meals. White wine and beer are alternatives.
9) Nuts as snacks.
10) In "special occasions" Mediterranean traditional desserts.
**Mediterranean Countries and Their Food**

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