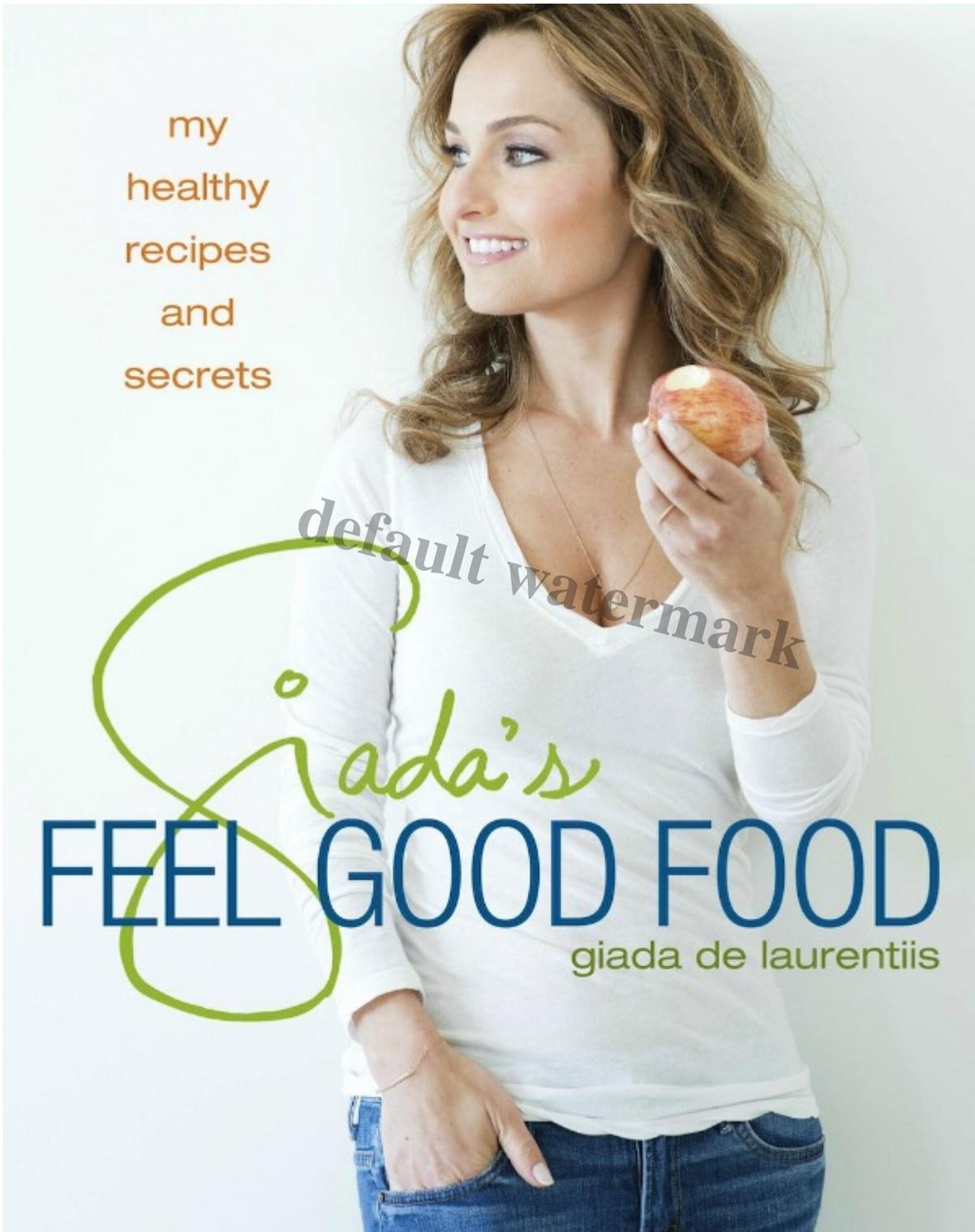


Giada's™s Feel Good Tips

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When I went to New York this past Fall I had the opportunity to hear Chef and Food Network Star Giada De Laurentiis give a talk on healthy eating. My good friend [Amy](#) lives in Connecticut and a restaurant and hospital in her area sponsored the talk. My husband knows Iâ€™m a fan of Giada and I own several of her cookbooks. He received an email from the restaurant and although he thought about deleting it, he also knew it would interest me. I have him to thank for the opportunity. Amy and I

enjoyed a fabulous dinner then walked across the street to the venue. It was a small group so we were able to see Giada pretty up close and personal. Unfortunately, no pictures were allowed. She is petite and is as gorgeous as she looks on television and in her cookbooks. Her grandfather is the late movie producer Dino De Laurentiis. She comes from good genes, but also leads a very healthy lifestyle.

Giada's secret is that she eats very small portions. She doesn't deprive herself of pasta, bread and her favorite indulgence chocolate. The key is moderation. Amy and I received a copy of her new cookbook, [Giada's Feel Good Food](#) as part of the talk. The book is a personal look into what Giada practices and eats to keep her body and mind healthfully balanced. At the start of a new year many people are focused on weight loss and improving their health. My new year typically doesn't get started until mid January. I have to ease into things and then after a few weeks my motivation starts to falter. There was a time I thought self-care was a dirty word. After all, isn't it selfish? It's more important to help others. As I've gotten older I realize how important self-care really is. If you don't take care of your body and mind your health suffers. It's not about being a size 2. It's about making healthy lifestyle choices and still enjoying life.

There isn't a one size fits all program to follow. Giada shares what has worked for her, but says it took time to discover what made her feel her best by tuning into her body. She started adjusting her daily habits when she became pregnant with her daughter. She was a sugar addict, but became more mindful of her sugar intake and ate more vegetables and protein. She began to feel better and also started buying more organic ingredients and produce. Her number one philosophy on eating is, "Eat a little of everything, but not a lot of anything."

I wish there was a one size fits all answer, but I've found sticking to a healthy lifestyle is a journey. I have a sweet tooth and like Giada I have Italian ancestors. I love fresh-baked bread and have a hard time saying no to the bread basket. It's something I'm not ready to cut out of my life and hope I never have to. It's not something I eat every day, but in moderation. Sugar however is another story.

Here are a few tips from [Giada's Feel Good Food](#) I found helpful.

1. Eat many times over the course of a day. Five smaller meals are easier to digest than three big ones. I stay more even keeled throughout the day when I practice this and it's how I prefer to eat.
2. Pay attention to portions. This is especially key if you're eating frequently. I need to pay more attention to my calorie intake.
3. Exercise is important, but it's also important to enjoy it. Find what you enjoy doing. I find I really enjoy yoga, but only take a class a week. I'm trying to make [daily yoga stretches](#) a part of my routine. I feel so much better after my yoga class.
4. Have a morning routine. Giada has a set routine at the start of every day: drinks two glasses of warm water with lemon to rehydrate, yoga, dunks her face in a sink of ice water and breakfast. My routine is: splash cold water on face, apply moisturizer to face, drink a glass of water while I'm waiting for my Kerurig to make my daily cup of coffee, read the [Daily Word](#), journal, [yoga stretches](#), breakfast of green smoothie or greek yogurt and sometimes a cookie with my coffee.
5. Giada also receives acupuncture treatments. They help her sinuses, but she also feels it rejuvenates the skin on her face. Sign me up! I've never had one done, but have been interested, especially if it will rejuvenate my skin.

Giada shares many more tips and an assortment of healthy recipes in her [book](#). The overall message I came away with is the importance of self-care and establishing routines that work specifically for you. Pay attention to what lifestyle changes are working and what isn't and make changes as you go along.

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banana, walnut & date smoothie
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I made her banana, date and walnut smoothie and there are a few other recipes I want to try. I'll share other recipes I enjoy in the future. Please leave any lifestyle tips that have worked for you in the comments. Cheers to feeling good in 2014!

Banana Walnut & Date smoothie

Recipe Type: beverage

Author: Giada De Laurentiis

Serves: 2

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups ice
- 1/2 cup coconut water
- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1/2 medium banana, peeled
- 3 tbps walnut pieces
- 2 dried dates, coarsely chopped

Instructions

1. Combine all the ingredients in the blender and blend on high speed until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve.

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