



THE TASSAJARA FOOD TRIP

Dedicated...

with feelings of great compassion to all those beings in the six worlds who have ever lived, and who are destined to live, and especially who are now living and suffering in the realm of the hungry ghosts. "To be free from clinging we must be free from greed."

"Love is not only the most important ingredient; it is the only ingredient which really matters."

(An old sign on the kitchen wall)

"For truly, no one can reach the Heavenly Father unless through the Earthly Mother."

The Essene Gospel of John

Traditional religions teach the importance of the proper selection, preparation, and manner of eating of food.

The recipes in this cookbook have been collected during the past eighteen months at Zenshin-ji: Tassajara Zen Mountain Center. Many of them have been developed by the student cooks here as we continue to experiment with our diet and its effect on our practice. The recipes toward the beginning of each section of the book are the most commonly served at Tassajara, and the simplest, while those at the end of each section are fancier and generally reserved for holidays and ceremonial occasions. Likewise, the types of food in the sections toward the beginning of the book, such as grains and vegetables, are the daily basis of our diet, our principal foods, while those toward the end of the book, such as treats and spreads are more for pleasure. Since we do not use meat, fowl or fish, they are not found in the recipes that follow. Although we do use some raw sugar, particularly in treats, only honey has been used in these recipes.

At Tassajara our diet is vegetarian, consisting of approximately 50% grains - chief among these brown rice -, and 35% cooked vegetables and beans - especially soybeans and lentils. These are perhaps the most important facts to know about our food trip. The final 15% consists of fresh or pickled vegetables, seeds and nuts, seaweeds, fruits and dairy products.

On special occasions between mealtimes we are served tea and a treat, often using raisins, dates, apples, or a relatively small amount of honey from our own bees as sweetening rather than sugar. Even vegetables such as baked pumpkin, acorn or butternut squash, or aduki beans are quite sweet.

However it is difficult to completely kick the sugar and sweets habit and even though the body and higher judgment say "No!", the mouth and sensual judgment say "Sock it to me!" So sometimes the

kitchen will put together a greed arousing richie with sugar and spices, and since it is the Buddha's way to take whatever is offered, as well as for other less impressive and pious reasons, most everyone will have some... or maybe lots.

But afterwards those who, indiscriminately practice non-discrimination, have partaken abundantly, or those whose bodies respond to sweets as most bodies respond to poisons - after months or years of avoiding sugars and sweet things - may find their karma quickly repaid and get mercilessly sick, or feel their body and brain accelerate as if they are on "speed", or just feel their legs tighten up later during sitting meditation, zazen. And they may each vow never to do such a foolish and greedy thing again - if they are not onto trying to accept themselves and their total life situation from moment to moment -. They know, however, that if someone were to offer them another treat at that very moment that they were formulating a vow and in misery, they would probably take it. As the Lotus Sutra teaches: "When creatures in this world delight in low and contemptible pleasures, then the Chief of the World, who always speaks the truth, indicates pain as the first great truth."

We generally eat simple, natural, whole foods which have not been industrially processed and which contain no chemical additives and preservatives. However, for example, we sometimes serve margarine as an optional spread with bread at lunch and we buy some commercial vegetable oils which are relatively inexpensive but which have preservatives added. Roshi says that when he goes to buy vegetables he always takes the worst one because he feels sorry for it. And since Buddha, when begging, would eat anything he was offered, even the poison which killed him, some say we should not become attached to being too pure and discriminating about our food trip.

Our gardens provide many fresh vegetables and herbs which are organically grown with homemade compost, imported truckloads of horseshit and chickenshit, and loving care from the garden workers. We use no insecticides or chemical fertilizers.

This diet, based on grains and cooked vegetables, is quite closely related to the food of most traditional societies and especially to the millenia-old regimen of Japanese and Chinese communities practicing the Buddha's Way. It is much less like the diets of tropical or desert wayfarers such as the yogi diet of India or Jesus' food practice followed by the Essene communities around the Dead Sea, since their climatic conditions, soil, and vegetation are so much different from ours, while those of Japan and China are quite similar. Nevertheless, our diet has been adapted through ongoing experimentation to our particular nutritional, climatic, cultural, and ecological needs and background. It is intended to provide adequately for our work energy and protein needs, to help develop a limber, relaxed, and healthy body, and an attentive, calm, sensitive mind.

Indeed, as Hippocrates said: "Thy food shall be thy medicine." It is of the greatest importance to the feeling of our daily practice. As each of our bodies is the result of our karma, we must learn how to maintain balance and moderation with food, and how to cure ourselves.

In the kitchen is a small altar on the wall. Nearby in italic calligraphy is written: "Handle the silence with care."

The student cooks offer incense to this altar and bow to the altar and to each other before beginning to prepare a meal and before taking food out of the kitchen to be served in the zendo or meditation hall. After night zazen at the end of each day before going to bed the kitchen crew meets together here to bow once again. In such an atmosphere an attitude of mind can develop which is essential to the preparation of good food to develop the highest judgment. We must continually remember and rediscover what we are doing here, where all work is seen as a form of meditation and as an offering.

The total consciousness or "vibrations" of the cook are transmitted to the food he prepares and to those who eat it. When we work and practice, we practice for everyone in our mutual interdependence. In Japanese monasteries only the older students with excellent judgment and the strongest practice are chosen to guide the food preparation. If a cook is skilled in combining healthy foods in the proper proportions, if he is centered and silent within as he works, if he is completely present with the sound of the wide-blade Japanese vegetable knife as it cuts down through a fresh carrot, if when kneading bread, he is just kneading that bread with "whole body and mind", then we and all sentient beings benefit greatly from his work as alchemist of the community and from his love. At the end of each meal before leaving the zendo each student bows in gratitude to the head cook.

As the meal begins, the sounding of the great wooden Buddha Drum shakes the zendo. An offering of food is made to the altar, placed before an ancient wooden statue of the Bodhisattva Maitreya surrounded by incense, candle, and flowers. The rifle-shot "crack" of the two hardwood clackers struck together begins the group chanting: "In the midst of the three treasures with all sentient beings, let us recite the names of Buddha..."

Meals are served in an atmosphere of formality and beauty. There is no talking. In silence we try to give full attention to the meal. However for some, especially newer students, pain in the back or legs from long periods of sitting zazen or sitting for meals distracts from mindfulness on eating. Dogen Zenji, the founder of the Soto school of Zen in Japan, taught the importance of doing one thing at a time: When sitting, just sit; when eating, just eat.

We take our meals sitting with the back upright and relaxed (usually) in lotus position on a meditation cushion (zafu) placed on tatami mats at floor level. Each evening the zendo is lit by the flames of kerosene lamps. A stream runs just outside which turns to a torrent in Winter and is softer than the crickets in Summer. On crisp autumn nights the steam rises from the wooden crocks of hot brown rice as the servers, holding the crocks high, walk down the two long aisles to bow to the altar before serving. In the Spring there is the fragrance of flowers, of incense, and the smell of hot miso soup.

But when the cold is sharp and falls below freezing, and the snow which covers the ridges north of our deep valley blocks the Tassajara road for months at a time, we may shiver in the unheated morning zendo, and food is our warmth. And at those times when we

must sit at meals with almost unbearable bodily pain, or the suffering of our own loneliness or sorrow, emptiness or anger, fear or despair, more from greed than from appetite, we may try to fill that inner void with food that has lost its taste, still knowing that a fire cannot be extinguished by pouring gasoline on it. And at those times when the mind is completely still, the stream and our own rhythmic breathing flows within us and fills us. And each particular sound as we are eating stands forth clearly from this great ground of silence.

Each student has a set of three nested eating bowls called "oryoki" in Japanese. Historically they evolved from the Buddha's begging bowl and are wrapped in white cotton cloth with chopsticks, spoon, cloth lap-napkin and drying cloth. The oryoki is opened and used with the same feeling and care for detail found in the Japanese tea ceremony.

No tea is served with the meal although we do drink tea each morning before breakfast during an hour-long study period and each afternoon in a break from afternoon work. (We work about three hours each morning and three hours each afternoon.) Also during a Sesshin we have a formal tea at midmorning each day and a final tea to close the Sesshin. (A Sesshin takes place at the end of each of our practice seasons, Summer, fall and Spring. It is seven days of silence and uninterrupted zazen (sitting meditation) from 4:00 a.m. until 9:15 p.m. each day.)

For liquids, hot soup is served with lunch and dinner and one may also drink a portion of the hot water, served after we have finished eating, with which each student washes his bowls before retying them in cloth. As a condiment for the grain dishes, gomasio (sesame salt) is served in a separate dish with breakfast and dinner.

Of greatest importance is to eat a moderate amount. Quantity spoils quality. Eating too much is the worst thing a person can do with respect to food. Roshi says to take 80% of what you imagine you need. In the Essene Gospel of John, Jesus teaches: "And when you eat, never eat unto fulness. Flee the temptations of Satan, and listen to the voice of God's angels. For Satan and his power tempt you always to eat more and more. But live by the spirit and resist the desires of the body. And your fasting is always pleasing in the eyes of the angels of God. So give heed to how much you have eaten when you are sated, and always eat less by a third."

It is equally important to chew each bite slowly and thoroughly until it is completely liquified and melts from the mouth without swallowing. "You must chew your drink and drink your foods," said Gandhi. Chewing is especially important with all grains since their digestion must begin in the mouth with enzymes in the saliva. Many students chew each bite of brown rice 50-150 times. The longer grains are chewed, the sweeter and more delicious they taste, and the more easily and completely their energy can be assimilated by the body.

Fasting is not generally practiced except, in some cases, to help cure sickness. Each student must find a balance between eating enough to provide for the energy needed to do our daily

work, yet eating moderately enough to maintain a light, clear feeling in body and mind. Jesus advised an initial seven day purgative fast for the sick and a regular weekly fast each Sabbath which, with a day of prayer, would bring perpetual physical and spiritual renewal. By trying to eat with moderation and flexibility, students at Tassajara undergo a slow, gradual change from the body and mind that results from our common cultural diet high in meat and sugar and low in grains. (According to the 1968 World Almanac the average American is now consuming 220 pounds of meat per year and 97.9 pounds of sugar. The sugar is 6.5% of the total diet and does not include the sugar found in canned foods. In America, grains, the traditional principal food of man, have reached a low of 9.5% of the total diet, and the largest item included is wheat flour. Fifty years ago the American diet was over 50% grain and about 10% animal foods. Today these figures are reversed. China eats approximately 60% grains; Japan 50%.)

It is easier to alternate between fasting and bingeing than to follow the middle way of sustained moderation. Eating less and less is often what we do before eating more and more.

The principal of No-Waste is basic to zen. Every other morning we have a gruel as the main dish in which all of the unused leftovers, grains, vegetables and soups are mixed together and heated up. It is a popular and delicious dish. Any of this gruel which is leftover is made into "gruel bread" by simply combining the gruel with whole wheat flour and baking. All vegetable trimmings are put into a pan for soup stock and then sent to our large compost piles which eventually return to the garden. Even napkins are carefully sent to the compost instead of being burned. Breadcrumbs are saved and used in soups and as croutons and the scrapings from the breadboard are put into the next gruel. By eating grains which are not milled we do not waste the bran layers which are rich in vitamins and minerals. By chewing well we do not waste the energy from each single grain and vegetable.

In The Training of a Zen Buddhist Monk, D.T. Suzuki writes: "Therefore the most basic principle in Zen temples is No-Waste. It is not uncommon for a priest who finds a single grain of rice on the kitchen floor to scold the cook severely."

The story is told of a master who, hearing of a wise man living in the mountains, wished to visit him. As he followed a stream leading to the man's cabin he noticed a vegetable leaf floating toward him. He turned around and went home.

It is surprising how often food is the topic of conversation at Tassajara, and of inner dialogue. "Shall I take 1½ or 2 ladles of hot rolled oats. I must leave room for seconds on carrots and toasted wheatgerm. But I ate a small dinner last night and will probably have to dig in the garden today which will take a lot of energy. If I take plenty I won't be thinking about food and give my full attention to the work. Yes, but if I take less like Roshi says is better, I will feel better about my practice. I fool myself by thinking I need more when to make my best effort from moment to moment would be to take less. I must face this fear of not having enough. Yes, but you must accept yourself from moment to moment. Why do I always have to make plans like this? I'll watch and see what I do when the server arrives.... I knew I'd take more but it's o.k. because, as the Lotus Sutra teaches..."

Maybe food is our love substitute. Many experience their own greed for the first time at Tassajara. Here the multitude of stimuli and the variety of diversions which ordinarily occupy the mind in the whirl of mundane, samsaric existence are suddenly gone, and replaced by nothing but the relative silence, the structured repetitive schedule, and the still choiceless awareness of things as they are from moment to moment at the eternal inter-section Here-Now. The small mind, being thought, in seeking activity may grasp for thoughts about food and eating. It is difficult at times to see pettiness and greed for what they are.

Gradually we learn to taste with the entire body rather than just the tongue. Once the palate becomes sensitive to the rich, natural, and rather subtle flavors of simple, whole foods, nothing else can bring the complete satisfaction of this diet. Spices, seasonings, and sweetenings are used more delicately and less frequently.

Most communities and households, including Tassajara and the household Earth, wish to eat well but inexpensively. Our food costs average about 48¢ a day per student. Each may eat as much as he wishes. When purchased in 100 pound lots, the cost per pound of our basic foods is: whole wheat flour 11¢, brown rice and rolled oats 12¢, lentils and carrots 14¢, soybeans 16¢.

A TYPICAL DAY'S MENU

<u>LARGE BOWL</u>	<u>MEDIUM BOWL</u>	<u>SMALL BOWL</u>
BREAKFAST:		
Rolled oats boiled #14	Soybeans #77-83	Pickles #76, 118-120
Rice cream #12-13	Garbanzo beans #90	
Cornmeal #24-25		
Gomasio #2		
BREAKFAST, alternate days:		
Hot gruel #37	Fresh fruit	Carrots #57-58
Gomasio #2	Dried fruit	Yams #55-56
		Eggs hardboiled
LUNCH:		
Bean soup #101-110	Noodles #27-28, 31-32	Bread #38-51
Vege. soup #111-117	Salad #91, 93, 94	Spread #131-142
DINNER:		
Brown rice #1	Miso soup #96-97	Vegetable #55-75
Gomasio #2	Wakame soup #98	
	Other soups #99-100, 112	

In these recipes t. = teaspoon; T. = Tablespoon
 See the glossary, p.62, for definitions of new words
 Try not to use these recipes rigidly. They are a starting point for creative experimentation. Try varying the ingredients, cooking time, amount of salt, pressure, herbs and liquid.
 Express your gratitude toward food by preparing it with love.

Thus, there is sensual eating and wise eating. When the body composed of the four elements suffers the pangs of hunger and, accordingly you provide it with food, but without greed, that is called wise eating. On the other hand, if you gluttonously delight in purity and flavor, you are permitting the distinctions which arise from wrong thinking. Merely seeking to gratify the organ of taste without realizing when you have taken enough is called sensual eating... Realize that though you eat the whole day through, no single grain has passed your lips; and that a day's journey has not taken you a single step forward. Uniformly abstain from such notions as 'self' and 'other'.

from The Zen Teachings of Huang Po

Of all disciplines, food-discrimination, i.e. partaking of only sattvic -pure, vegetarian food-, and in moderate quantities, is the most important. By means of this, the mind is rendered more and more sattvic, or pure, and self-enquiry more and more effective.

from Who Am I? by Ramana Maharshi

For your God knows well what is needful for you, and where and when. And he gives to all peoples of all kingdoms for food that which is best for each...

Eat not as the heathen do, who stuff themselves in haste, defiling their bodies with all manner of abominations.

For the power of God's angels enters into you with the living food which the Lord gives you from his royal table. And when you eat, have above you the angel of air, and below you the angel of water. Breathe long and deeply at all your meals, that the angel of air may bless your repasts. And chew well your food with your teeth, that it become water, and the angel of water turn it into blood in your body. And eat slowly, as it were a prayer you make to the Lord. For I tell you truly, the power of God enters into you, if you eat after this manner at his table. But Satan turns into a steaming bog the body of him upon whom the angels of air and water do not descend at his repasts. And the Lord suffers him no longer at his table. For the table of the Lord is an altar, and he who eats at the table of God, is in a temple. For I tell you truly, the body of the Sons of Man is turned into a temple, and their inwards into an altar, if they do the commandments of God. Wherefore, put naught upon the altar of the Lord when your spirit is vexed, neither think upon any one with anger in the temple of God. And enter only into the Lord's sanctuary when you feel in yourselves the call of his angels, for all that you eat in sorrow, or in anger, or without desire, becomes a poison in your body. For the breath of Satan defiles all these. Place with joy your offerings upon the altar of your body, and let all evil thoughts depart from you when you receive into your body the power of God from his table. And never sit at the table of God before he call you by the angel of appetite.

...For your eyes are used to darkness, and the full light of the Heavenly Father would make you blind. Therefore, you cannot yet understand that which I speak to you concerning the Heavenly Father who sent me to you. Follow, therefore, first, only the laws of your Earthly Mother, of which I have told you. And when her angels shall have cleansed and renewed your bodies and strengthened your eyes, you will be able to bear the light of our Heavenly Father.

from The Essene Gospel of John

THE TASSAJARA FOOD TRIP	p. 1
A TYPICAL DAY'S MENU	6
I. GRAINS	8
BROWN RICE	
OATS	
WHEAT	
BUCKWHEAT	
CORN	
II. NOODLES, PANCAKES, GRAINBURGERS AND GRUEL	19
III. BREADS, MUFFINS, CRACKERS	21
UNYEASTED BREADS	
YEASTED BREAD	
MUFFINS (and others)	
IV. VEGETABLES	28
V. SEA VEGETABLES	34
VI. BEANS AND SPROUTS	35
SOYBEAN PRODUCTS	
AZUKI BEANS	
GARBANZO BEANS	
PINTO BEANS	
SPROUTS	
VII. SOUPS	41
VIII. PICKLES	46
IX. BEVERAGES	47
X. SPREADS	51
XI. TREATS	53
TREATS REQUIRING NO COOKING	
TREATS REQUIRING COOKING	
BUYING WHOLE FOODS ... and BOOKS TO READ	59
APOLOGY	60
STAPLE FOODS USED IN THIS COOKBOOK	62
GLOSSARY	63