



introduction



There is much evidence associating low-calorie diets with many long-term health benefits. A restricted diet is thought to reduce our risk of developing serious illnesses like diabetes and cancer, and to help us live for longer. It is not altogether reasonable, however, to expect people to follow a continuously reduced-calorie diet, and more commonly it is recommended to include two low-calorie days each week, while the remainder of the time, eating normally. On fast days, women should consume no more than 500 calories, and men, no more than 600 calories.

During their fast days, many people choose to follow a traditional three-meals-a-day routine, with a low-calorie breakfast, lunch and dinner. Others prefer a light start to the day, saving up their calories for a hearty meal in the evening. Alternatively, you could start the day with a larger breakfast, eating just very small meals for the rest of the day. As long as you stay within your calories, you can mix-and-match in whatever way suits you best. *The Fasting Day Cookbook* allows you to do just this, with a delicious range of simple recipes for breakfast, lunch and dinner – and even a chapter on snacks and drinks – all of which you can eat, guilt-free, on your fasting days.

Each recipe includes a total calorie count at the top of the page and the calorie brackets are colour-coded for ease of use (see the table over the page) so that you can plan out your day – there are also some suggested meal plans on pages 180–7 covering a range of calorie limits.

Following a diet doesn't mean you have to miss out on all your favourite foods. In fact, flavour and variety are what will stop you feeling like you're on a diet at all. The recipes in this book make use of many slow-release energizers like oats, beans and lentils to help you feel fuller for longer, drawing inspiration from all kinds of cuisine, including Chinese, Indian, Thai and Italian. Start the day with a cranberry Morning Muffin (page 19), Huevos Rancheros (page 22) or a Low-cal Fry-up (page 32). Enjoy a midday meal of Grilled King Prawns with Chilli Soy Sauce (page 45) or Fattoush (page 53), and end your day with well-deserved Minted Lamb Escalopes (page 116), Chicken with Herby Nut Stuffing (page 127) or Lamb and Bamboo Shoot Red Curry (page 135). There is a wide variety to pick from, so you can eat different, exciting meals on every fast day.

For many dieters, snacking is a hard habit to break. *The Fasting Day Cookbook* has

this covered too. With ideas from as low as 40 calories, choose from an irresistible range of snacks to see you through the day: Saffron Scones (page 159), Oaty Fruit Bites (page 160) or for when chocolate is the only answer, a luxurious Rich and Dark Spiced Hot Chocolate (page 163).

One of the main complaints when following a new eating plan is the amount of preparation involved, or the inconvenience of providing for other family members at mealtimes. Many of the recipes in *The Fasting Day Cookbook* are designed to serve four or more, meaning you can supplement them with extra side dishes to provide a filling meal for the rest of the family. Many other recipes are suitable for making in larger batches and freezing for upcoming diet days.

With such a tempting range of meals and snacks to choose from, you'll be able to eat just as well on your fast days as on your feast days!

Colour-coded calories

Using the easy-to-follow coloured stripes at the top of each recipe you can plan your daily intake at a glance. Each recipe also includes an exact calorie count.

- 0-100 calories per serving
- 101-200 calories per serving
- 201-300 calories per serving
- 301-400 calories per serving
- 401-500 calories per serving



Grilled Stuffed Peppers

135

CALORIES PER SERVING: 135

Serves 4 | Preparation time: 20 minutes | Cooking time: 20 minutes

A colourful salad full of flavours evocative of the Mediterranean – smoky grilled peppers, aromatic fennel and garlic, and a sweet balsamic vinegar dressing.

2 small onions
2 red peppers
2 yellow peppers
2 garlic cloves, peeled
2 tbsp capers
1 tbsp fennel seeds
3½ tbsp olive oil
1½ tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp roughly torn flat-leaf parsley
coarse sea salt and pepper

Peel the onions, leaving the root end intact, and cut into quarters. Drop them into a pan of boiling water and cook for 1 minute; drain well.

Preheat the grill to high. Halve the peppers lengthwise cutting through the stems, then core and deseed them. Arrange on the grill rack, skin-side up, in a single layer (you may need to do this in two batches). Place the onion quarters and garlic cloves on the rack too. Grill until the pepper skins are blistered and well charred. Turn the onions and garlic as necessary, but let them char slightly too.

Place the peppers in a bowl, cover with a plate and allow to cool slightly, then peel away their skins. Arrange the peppers on a serving platter. Fill the cavities with the grilled onions and capers.

Put the fennel seeds in a dry frying pan and toast over a medium heat for a few minutes until they begin to pop and release their aroma. Transfer to a mortar and pestle and coarsely grind them. Add the grilled garlic and grind to a paste. Transfer the garlic paste to a small bowl and whisk in the oil and vinegar.

Sprinkle the parsley, sea salt and pepper over the salad and spoon on the dressing. Serve at room temperature.



Day 1

481

TOTAL CALORIES PER SERVING: 481



136 **Breakfast:** Mini Pancakes with Smoked Salmon (page 16)

105 **Lunch:** Sugar Snap Peas with a Minted Lemon Dip (page 42)

240 **Dinner:** Warm Roasted Vegetable Salad (page 121)

Day 2

497

TOTAL CALORIES PER SERVING: 497

204 **Breakfast:** Huevos Rancheros (page 22)

98 **Snack:** Butterbean Hummus Crispbread (page 157)

195 **Dinner:** Tomato and Peach Salad with Avocado Salsa (page 111)