

Chapter 1

What is Paleo?

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding the foundations and history of the Paleo lifestyle
 - ▶ Identifying the stars of a Paleo diet
 - ▶ Recognizing the benefits of feeding the body with proper nutrition
 - ▶ Enjoying sweets with a Paleo approach
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The Paleo diet has become very popular worldwide because it's less of a diet and more of a lifestyle that you can follow without calorie restrictions. This lifestyle emphasizes eating natural, wholesome foods that feed the body with proper nutrition. Living Paleo helps you get to know your own body better and achieve optimal health, preventing diseases, healing inflammation, and boosting youthful energy.

Avoiding harmful ingredients and choosing high-quality foods (from organic produce to pasture-raised animal proteins) transforms lives, and thousands of people are reaping the benefits of eating this way. Unlike fad diets, the Paleo diet is quite simple; it gives you a template to choose nutritious foods while making you aware of the foods that your body can't efficiently digest and absorb. Because Paleo isn't a restrictive diet, you don't have to give up eating your favorite foods — including sweets and treats! You may just have to approach making them a little differently. The dessert recipes in this book follow the primal nutritional blueprint and are made with truly natural ingredients. This chapter introduces some fundamental Paleo principles.

Picking Up the Basics of Eating Paleo

The *Paleo diet*, also known as the *caveman* or *primal diet*, is based on the simple nutritional principle that you should consume only the foods your body was designed to eat. It attempts to emulate the whole, unprocessed nature of a hunter-gatherer diet by eating foods rich in nutrients.

The fundamental idea behind this concept is the fact that the human genome has changed very little in the last 40,000 years — only about 0.02 percent, according to studies. It has been 12,000 years since the onset of the agricultural era, which is a drop in the evolutionary bucket, but long enough for some people to develop at least a degree of tolerance to agricultural-based foods. The degree to which individuals can tolerate agricultural-based foods may depend on a variety of factors, including ancestral background, age, and health status. It's important to consider that the last few generations have grown up on heavily processed foods and with other circumstances that have not fostered good gut health (a lack of breastfeeding or exposure to antibiotics and other drugs, for example). The result is that many people today already have a compromised gut that reduces tolerance to agricultural-based foods. In addition, the characteristics of the food and proper preparation methods come into play, as modern grains have been bred to be much different from the grains consumed even 200 years ago and traditional preparation techniques that make grains safer to consume have been lost in our culture.

The foods you eat therefore manipulate how your genes function and perform. Your genes are a living being, always adapting and growing. Premature aging and other conditions most people chalk up to bad genes are often actually the result of genes that have changed because you didn't supply your cells with proper nutrients. The good news is that the nutrients an individual consumes can influence whether certain genes are turned on or off.

For thousands of years, our hunter-gatherer ancestors depended on essential *nutrients* to sustain life. Traditional cultures throughout history recognized the need to consume nutrient-dense foods in order to support health and encourage fertility. The Okinawans and the Mediterraneans, for example, knew by careful observation that eating certain foods was necessary to ensure the community's long-term survival.

These essential nutrients are far different from what conventional wisdom considers optimal today. For decades, the party line in the Western world has been that health means exercising more and eating fewer calories, less fat, and more grain-based carbs. But a wealth of scientific research supports the strong correlation between the recommended consumption of industrialized foods and the epidemics of diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease you see today. The following sections break down what should and shouldn't be on your Paleo menu to be fit, lean and strong like your hunter-gatherer ancestors.

Filling up on Paleo-friendly proteins, carbs, and fats

When you adopt a Paleo lifestyle, you no longer eat what's known as the Standard American Diet (which is full of processed junk). Instead, your focus

turns to eating whole foods from high-quality proteins, carbohydrates, and fat, including meat, poultry, fish, eggs, non-starchy vegetables and fruits, nuts, and seeds. In the following sections, I take a closer look at each of these nutrients.

Protein

Protein is essential for every cell in the body. It fuels the body to support strong muscles and healthy bones and build and repair tissue. Animal proteins provide complete sources of amino acids that the body can't produce. The most suitable sources of protein are from healthy, pasture-raised animals that didn't receive antibiotics, hormones, or genetically modified feed. Beef, lamb, pork, seafood, and raw dairy are easy to absorb and supply the body with protein as well as healthy fats, vitamin D, and selenium. Game animals such as goats, rabbits, wild boar, and venison (deer) are also good options. Eggs supply the body with omega-3 fatty acids and key micronutrients such as vitamins A, D, and B. (Head to the later section "Fat" for more on omega-3s and other healthy fats.)



Purchase the highest-quality animal protein you can find. Meats should be labeled as *organic*, *grass-fed*, and *grass-finished*. Poultry and eggs should be *free-range* or *pastured*. Fish and other seafood should be *wild-caught*. Dairy should be *organic*, *grass-fed*, *unpasteurized* (raw), and *non-homogenized*.

Carbohydrates

Studies indicate that on average, traditional hunter-gatherer societies ate between 3 to 50 percent of their total calories from carbohydrates depending on the latitude at which these societies lived. But the types of carbohydrates they consumed were very different than what health authorities recommend today. For thousands of years — until the Industrial Revolution — humans ate whole-food sources of carbohydrates from fruits, starchy tubers and plants, seaweed, nuts, and honey. In contrast, the Standard American Diet today consists mostly of highly processed and refined carbohydrates, such as the grains and sugars found in breads, pasta, cereals, pastries, and more.

Assuming you have a healthy metabolism, the bulk of your daily intake of carbohydrates should be between 15 to 30 percent. If you are trying to lose weight or have blood sugar problems, aim to get between 10 to 15 percent of total calories from carbohydrates daily. Non-starchy vegetables can be eaten freely throughout the day assuming you can digest them well. Two to five servings of fruits is recommended daily unless you have blood sugar issues or are trying to lose weight, which in case you should choose to eat low-sugar fruits like berries. Eating starchy plants is recommended in the range of two to four servings daily unless you are trying to lose weight or have blood sugar problems.

Tracing the history of the lowfat lie

Health authorities and the media have demonized eating fats for years, telling you it makes you fat and causes heart disease, all based on flawed research done by Ancel Keys and his *Seven Countries* study that started in 1947. Keys was a member of the nutrition committee at the American Heart Association, and he went on to the U.S. Senate to promote his hypothesis that saturated fat causes heart disease. That's when the low-fat craze started and people began consuming highly processed vegetable

oils such as soybean and canola oil (margarine) and a diet high in refined carbohydrates. It was during this time that the occurrence of diabetes, obesity, cancer, and gallstones skyrocketed. Eating a lowfat diet high in refined carbohydrates changes the efficiency at which your cells transport blood sugar, proteins, hormones, bacteria, viruses, and tumor-causing agents through your body, thus leading to these modern-day diseases.

Here are some nutrient-dense, wholefood Paleo carbohydrates:

- ✔ **Non-starchy vegetables:** Asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, mushrooms, onions, leeks, garlic, peppers, zucchini, carrots, tomatoes, and seaweed
- ✔ **Leafy greens:** Collard greens, kale, Swiss chard, mustard greens, lettuce, spinach, parsley, and arugula
- ✔ **Starchy tubers and root vegetables:** Sweet potatoes, plantains, yams, yucca, tapioca, arrowroot, squash, and pumpkin
- ✔ **Fruits:** Berries, cherries, apples, pears, grapefruit, apricots, peaches, and figs

Fat

Consuming fat is not only essential for your health but also critical for cell construction, nerve function, digestion, hormonal balance, and vitamin absorption. For example, the human brain is composed of 70 percent fat. Over the course of millions of years, humans depended on fat to survive and evolve.

Fats aren't all the same, and they aren't all bad for you; each type of fat affects the body in a different way. The following list details the healthy fats you can make part of your Paleo lifestyle:

- ✔ **Long-chain saturated fats:** *Long-chain saturated fats* make up 75 to 80 percent of fatty acids in most cells in the human body. When you eat foods containing this type of fat, your body stores the fat and converts

it into energy efficiently and without toxic by-products. These healthy saturated fats can be found in fattier cuts of pastured-raised meats such as beef, lamb, and pork, as well as raw/pastured dairy. If you have a healthy metabolism, eating saturated fats with every meal will give you energy and properly nourish your body.

- ✓ **Medium-chain saturated fats:** *Medium-chain saturated fats* are a type of saturated fat that the body easily metabolizes and digests, passing them directly through the liver. This compatibility makes medium-chain saturated fats a great source of energy. They're also high in antioxidants and *lauric acid*, which is a fat that acts as an antibacterial and antiviral. They're abundant in pastured butter, and in coconut products; coconut flakes, coconut milk, and coconut oil are delicious, highly nutritious sources often featured in the dessert recipes in Parts II and III.



Desserts aside, coconut oil is a great fat to cook and fry with because it can withstand high temperatures well without oxidizing and becoming toxic like other fats do.

- ✓ **Monounsaturated fats:** Another healthy fat are monounsaturated fats. Good sources of this fat include beef, green and black olives, olive oil, avocados, lard, and macadamia nuts. Together with long-chain saturated fat and medium-chain triglycerides, monounsaturated fat is a great source of fuel and essential for the body to function optimally.

- ✓ **Polyunsaturated fat (omega-6s and omega-3s):** *Polyunsaturated fat* is another name for the essential fatty acids known as omega-6s and omega-3s. Omega-3 fatty acids occur in nuts and seeds; cold-water fish such as salmon, sardines, herring, mackerel, and cod; and ruminant animals. Omega-6s are naturally present in a wide variety of foods but are also found in excessive amounts in industrialized oils such as canola, soybean, corn, and cottonseed, among others. Omega-6 fatty acids are pro-inflammatory; consuming them in excessive amounts sets the stage for modern inflammatory diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.



The body functions best when your diet consists of a 1:1 ratio of omega-6s to omega-3s. This ratio is as high as 25:1 in people that eat a Standard American Diet because processed foods are loaded with omega-6 fats. To ensure you're getting the appropriate omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acid ratio in your diet, get your fatty acids primarily from seafood and other animal sources and avoid processed foods.

Knowing which foods to avoid

The number-one objective of the Paleo lifestyle is to remove toxins from your life while adding back a wide variety of nutrient-rich whole foods, encouraging habits that can improve your health, and lowering your risk of suffering from modern degenerative diseases. Obesity, diabetes, infertility, and heart disease are commonly considered “common” disorders that everyone is at risk for. The truth is that these diseases weren’t a common part of humans’ evolutionary history for over 2 million years. For example, numerous studies have shown a strong correlation between the occurrence of diabetes, heart disease, and other neurological conditions and the consumption of refined carbohydrates. These chronic inflammatory diseases were reported to be nonexistent in these societies before the people adopted a diet of refined carbohydrates and other industrialized foods. Eliminating the processed foods in the following sections from your diet is therefore vital for maintaining good health.

Cereal grains

Humans didn’t start eating grains until the beginning of agriculture around 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. This span seems like a very long time, but it accounts for only about 3 percent of human existence. And as I note earlier in the chapter, our genes and digestive systems haven’t changed much since then.

The problem with cereal grains (such as wheat, corn, rice, barley, oats, rye, and millet) is that they all produce compounds intended to keep predators away; unfortunately, those compounds are also toxic to humans. They act as *antinutrients* in the human body, preventing the absorption of nutrients and also damaging the lining of the gut. One such toxin you may be familiar with is gluten.

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley to which a large number of Americans are intolerant. Gluten intolerance takes many forms, but the most severe is *celiac disease*, which causes the body to attack itself, preventing sufferers from absorbing not only the gluten but also important nutrients. Even a lower-grade gluten intolerance can lead to inflammation, which is why grains have no place in a Paleo lifestyle.

Industrial processed and refined oils

Refined vegetable oils and other processed oils aren’t naturally occurring fats like butter or lard; they’re heavily processed oils promoted as healthy, lowfat alternatives to saturated fat and found in most processed foods. These oils are loaded with pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids and are linked directly to inflammatory conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma,

and cancer, just to name a few. Here are the industrialized oils you need to remove from your Paleo diet:

- ✓ Vegetable oils: corn, canola, soy, sunflower, cottonseed, safflower, rice bran, and grapeseed
- ✓ Margarine
- ✓ Peanut oil
- ✓ Sesame oil



Many of these oils are artificial trans fats, the worst type of fat you can consume. They're made by a process called *partial hydrogenation*, in which hydrogen molecules are added to vegetable oil to make it solid at room temperature so it resembles animal fats such as lard and butter. They're promoted as *heart-healthy*, but these industrialized oils are very high in pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids and cause a number of metabolic disturbances. Canola oil, corn oil, cottonseed oil, soybean oil, and margarine are just a few examples.

Refined sugar

Chemically speaking, sugars aren't all the same. Some sugars (such as fructose) occur naturally in foods such as fruits and honey; eaten in moderation from whole-food sources, these sugars are easily digested for most people. Refined white table sugar is composed of glucose and fructose, but in excessive amounts. It and high fructose corn syrup are found in nearly every packaged product, from candy to frozen dinners to canned vegetables, making moderation practically impossible. Fructose is extremely addictive and promotes unintentional overeating. When the majority of your calories come from refined sweeteners as opposed to whole food sources of protein, fats, and carbs, you run a higher risk of gaining weight and developing inflammation, heart disease, and other serious health conditions.



Significantly reducing your consumption of white table sugar and eliminating all artificial sweeteners and highly processed corn syrups from your diet revives your taste buds, allowing you to appreciate the true flavor available in real food. Soon broccoli and carrots will taste like a sweet treat to you!

Soy

Just like whole grains, soy is promoted as a health food, but many soy products are linked to a laundry list of health problems. The problem is that the Standard American Diet contains way too much processed soy, which is directly responsible for a number of serious metabolic and hormonal dysfunctions. For example, processed soy found in most all processed foods causes hormonal imbalances in women and can potentially cause infertility.

A study by the Harvard School of Health back in 2008 revealed that men who consumed the equivalent of one cup of soymilk a day had 50 percent reduced sperm count when compared to men who didn't eat soy. Babies fed exclusively with soy formula rather than breast milk receive an overload of estrogen in their blood — equivalent to five birth control pills per day. Soy also inhibits the body's absorption of vitamins and minerals. These are just a few examples of the harmful effects of soy.



Soy is added to just about every processed and packaged food, sometimes under a sneaky name such as natural flavoring, artificial flavoring, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, hydrolyzed plant protein, or vegetable gum. Keep an eye out for these additives.

Opting for organic, local, in-season Paleo products

Because the Paleo lifestyle focuses on the nutrient density of the foods you consume, buying organically, locally grown and in-season fruits and vegetables guarantees you're eating more nutritious foods. (*Nutrient density* refers to how nutritious a food is relative to its calorie content; high nutrient density means lots of nutrients for relatively few calories.) Research studies confirm that organic produce is higher in vitamins (particularly vitamin C), minerals, and antioxidants and lower in pesticide residues than conventionally grown produce. Antioxidants are what make fruits and vegetables so healthy for humans. The chemical pesticide, herbicide, and fungicide residues found on conventionally grown produce have been shown to be particularly harmful to developing fetuses, babies, and young children.



Organic foods do typically cost more, so if you're stretching your organic grocery budget, focus on the following produce (and a few other items):

- ✓ Leafy greens
- ✓ Berries
- ✓ Apples
- ✓ Peaches
- ✓ Grapes
- ✓ Papayas
- ✓ Nectarines
- ✓ Celery
- ✓ Sweet bell peppers

- ✓ Lettuce
- ✓ Spinach
- ✓ Potatoes
- ✓ Green beans
- ✓ Kale/collard greens
- ✓ Zucchini
- ✓ Squash
- ✓ Hot peppers
- ✓ Baby foods
- ✓ Dairy (full-fat)
- ✓ Beef
- ✓ Chicken
- ✓ Eggs

A few fruits and vegetables are relatively safe to eat when grown conventionally because they're less likely to hold pesticide residues:

- ✓ Avocados
- ✓ Coconuts
- ✓ Pineapples
- ✓ Mangos
- ✓ Kiwis
- ✓ Grapefruit
- ✓ Cantaloupe
- ✓ Cabbage
- ✓ Sweet peas (frozen)
- ✓ Onions
- ✓ Asparagus
- ✓ Eggplant
- ✓ Cauliflower
- ✓ Sweet potatoes



Considering location and season is also important when choosing Paleo foods. Most produce sold in big chain supermarkets is grown hundreds or even thousands of miles away from your neighborhood store shelves. Throughout its long journey to your dinner table, much of the nutrient content is lost. When picked ripe, however, fruits and vegetables contain far more vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. The best option is therefore to shop at your local farmer's markets, ensuring you're eating produce as close to harvest as possible.

Reaping the Benefits of Eating Paleo

A lot of people discover the Paleo diet because they want to lose weight, improve their health, or determine whether they have some kind of food sensitivity. Others hear about it through success stories of people healing chronic diseases and getting off prescription medication. Regardless of their reasons, almost everyone who tries the diet for at least 30 days feels better and sees improvements in body, mood, and energy level.

The main difference between Paleo and diet plans is that you don't have to count calories; restrict your intake of fat, sodium, and cholesterol; or even starve yourself.

Putting real food first — the nutritious foods your body was designed to eat — the Paleo lifestyle helps you get well and stay well. Reducing chronic inflammation, losing weight, looking younger and more vibrant, and improving your energy level are just a few of the benefits you can expect from living Paleo.

Decreasing inflammation

The human body creates two types of inflammation. *Acute inflammation* is the redness, swelling, aches, pain, and discomfort your body uses as a natural response to heal a physical injury, illness, or infection.

Another kind of inflammation is called *chronic inflammation*. This serious condition often goes undetected for a period of time and attacks your cells, tissue, and blood vessels and can even lead to death. Conditions associated with chronic inflammation include diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, autoimmune disease, Crohn's disease, arthritis, asthma and allergies, and thyroid dysfunction. These diseases were nonexistent in our Paleolithic ancestors until the birth of agriculture.

Myriad factors contribute to these inflammatory modern conditions, such as excessive stress, sleep deprivation, lack of exercise, and antibiotic use. But the top contributors are the pro-inflammatory foods in the Standard American Diet:

- ✓ Refined sugars and artificial sweeteners
- ✓ Industrial seed oils and other hydrogenated trans fats
- ✓ Refined grains
- ✓ Conventionally raised meats and dairy products

These pro-inflammatory ingredients are found in the majority of processed foods (breads, pasta, condiments, pastries, and so on) eaten by most people today. Incorporating a nutrient-dense Paleo diet into your life can control, prevent, and even heal chronic inflammation.

Losing weight by improving food quality

Reaching and maintaining your ideal weight is easier with Paleo. The Paleo diet is much more satiating than other diets because of its focus on healthy fats, quality protein, and fiber from fruits and veggies; you can eat less and still feel full. Constantly fighting hunger and starving yourself is a hard lifestyle to maintain, which is one of the big reasons other diets fail.

Another reason the Paleo diet is so effective for weight loss is that it focuses on the health of your cells and on healing your body from inflammation and other metabolic imbalances. Losing weight is basically a side effect of your improved health. Paleo becomes a healthy cycle: You eat better, so you feel better and have fewer cravings, which makes you want to continue to eat better.

Look younger and more vibrant

Paleo nutrition changes your body's vitality from the inside out. For example, as your body's metabolism and inflammation heal, you begin to notice significant improvements in your skin, nails, and hair. More specifically, your skin repairs itself from common conditions such as acne, eczema, and psoriasis when you eliminate inflammatory foods and replace them with collagen-rich Paleo foods such as bone broth, gelatin, and connective tissue such as tendons and skin. You increase the elasticity and smoothness of your skin, making it look more vibrant and healthier.

Following the Paleo blueprint also makes your nails stronger and your hair look strong, shiny and thick. Eating high-quality red meat and shellfish supplies your body with zinc and iron, which are essential nutrients for healthy-looking nails and hair.



A lot of people avoid eating egg yolks, but the egg yolk is an extremely good source of biotin, which is also great for hair and nails. (Remember to always check with your doctor first if you're on a yolk-free diet for medical reasons.)

Balanced energy throughout the day

Following the basic Paleo diet plan means boosting your energy levels and having constant, steady energy to function properly throughout the day. This vitality you feel comes from the simple elimination of refined carbohydrates (sugars and grains) and vegetable oils, and other artificial ingredients from your diet and the introduction of healthy fats that boost your metabolism. Coupling these better food choices with some of the Paleo lifestyle choices in the following section — getting physical activity, making sleep a priority — gives you the energy and focus you need to go about your busy day without feeling like you need a mid-afternoon nap.



If you're switching to the Paleo diet from a diet high in processed and packaged foods, your body may take some time to adjust. During this period, you may have sudden dips in energy.

Here are some tips and tricks to help you feel more energized throughout the day:

- ✓ Drink a small cup of tea or coffee.
- ✓ Stimulate your brain with something new. Look up a new word or anything else that interests you.
- ✓ Crank up some music that excites you and makes you want to dance and sing out loud.
- ✓ Stand up, move around, or go for a walk.
- ✓ Get 15 to 20 minutes of sunshine.

Going Beyond Primal Nutrition

As human beings we all have individual differences, but because our genes express themselves in a very similar way, we are all very much alike. Through the course of evolution our biochemistry and physiology have remained

similar for thousands of years and that is the main reason why the Paleo template works so well regardless of our individual differences.

The Paleo diet puts real food first as the foundation. But Paleo goes far beyond a diet plan; it's really a lifestyle. Your food choices, movement, habits, thoughts, sleep patterns, and stress levels are all responsible for how you look and feel. This section explores some basic lifestyle strategies you can model to achieve optimal health and wellness.

Managing stress

Being able to manage stress is one of the most important steps you can take toward a healthy lifestyle. Regardless of whether you eat the “perfect” diet or get plenty of exercise, living under chronic stress still puts your body at risk for conditions such as heart attacks, diabetes, and autoimmune disease. Here are just a few of the stress-related symptoms that have a significant effect on your health:

- ✓ Hormonal imbalance
- ✓ Blood sugar spikes
- ✓ Mood swings
- ✓ Food cravings
- ✓ Infertility
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Memory loss
- ✓ Weakened immune system

Managing stress isn't easy, especially in today's busy world. Acknowledging and accepting that you're living with chronic stress is a difficult thing, but developing the courage and strength to admit you need to make a change is important to control this silent killer. I personally struggled to manage stress; for many years, I worked at a job that put me under severe stress, and it took a huge toll on my health and well-being. I knew that eliminating stress completely from my life wasn't possible, but I used some of the following approaches to reduce it:

- ✓ **Learn your limits.** Don't take on more projects than you can handle. Saying *no* to people is completely fine and acceptable.
- ✓ **Choose your company wisely.** Hang around people that cheer you up and stay away from people that drag you down.

- ✔ **Don't dwell on the news.** You don't have to hide under a rock, but if current events are getting you down, consider cutting back on news coverage and online news feeds.
- ✔ **Manage your time effectively.** Make a to-do list with the tasks that need to be accomplished the next day, allocating a specific time for each task. On your longer-term schedule, prioritize tasks by order of importance and due date, and either drop unimportant tasks from your list or outsource them to someone else.
- ✔ **Engage in activities that give you pleasure.** For example, walk on the beach, go for a hike, go dancing, hang out with friends, and so on.

Getting a good night's sleep

Achieving optimal health depends on whether you get adequate sleep. Your body just can't attain a healthy state if you don't sleep enough — at least six hours and preferably eight to ten hours. A lot of people ignore this reality because of the large list of things they think they need to accomplish each day, but it must become a priority.

When you get enough sleep, you can improve your tolerance for stress, your energy levels, your mood, and your memory and mental clarity. Your body gets stronger and better able to fight sickness, and you may perform better athletically.

Luckily, following the Paleo lifestyle can help you sleep better for a few reasons:

- ✔ Adding healthy fats and eliminating refined carbohydrates stabilizes your hormones and blood sugar.
- ✔ You have proper *circadian rhythms* (the internal 24-hour cycle that regulates your body's processes). Your cortisol levels are in balance and are highest in the morning and lowest in the evening.
- ✔ Spending time outdoors and in sunlight drives cortisol production.

To ensure you get a quality, restful night's sleep, try these tips:

- ✔ Avoid sweets (including fruits), alcohol, and caffeine in the evening.
- ✔ Eat your dinner at least two hours before bed.
- ✔ Dim the lights and turn off electronics at least an hour before bedtime.
- ✔ Invest in some good blackout shades to darken your bedroom completely.

- ✔ Go to bed early and rise with the sun.
- ✔ Make sleep a priority in your life and adjust your schedule so you can get the appropriate amount for your body to rest.

Moving like our ancestors

Another fundamental principle of the Paleo lifestyle is moving like our ancestors, which means engaging in plenty of low-intensity exercise, with some or occasional high-intensity activity. It mimics the lifestyle of Paleolithic folks, who would, say, go for a hunt and then suddenly find themselves running for their lives from a chasing predator. (After all, hunter-gatherers didn't have treadmills.)

In your modern-day life, you can accomplish this kind of movement by simply moving at a slow pace, lifting heavy things, and sprinting sporadically. Slow movement can include anything from walking, hiking, or gardening to performing manual labor. To get the weight and sprinting activity, try lifting weights at a gym and running or doing bicycle sprints; do these high-intensity exercises intensively for short periods of time. Joining a CrossFit gym is a great way to engage in this kind of exercise with the assistance of instructors supporting you and helping you with each step.

Having Your Cake and Eating Paleo, Too!

If you're reading this book, you probably have a sweet tooth. I know I do! Liking sweet foods is part of being human; it's hard-wired into your genes. Eating sweets makes people feel a sense of pleasure and has even been shown to help reduce stress and depression.

But not all sweets are the same. Different sweeteners — honey, maple syrup, refined sugars, high fructose corn syrup, agave — all have a different impact on the body when consumed. I believe that sweet treats can be part of some healthy diet, as long as you know what the limitations are for your own specific health problems and goals.

The recipes in this book are just what you've been looking for to maintain a healthy body while satisfying your natural sweet tooth. Excluding sweets from your vibrant life is unnecessarily restrictive, and restriction isn't what the Paleo blueprint is all about. Your primary goal is always to feed your cells

with nutrient-dense whole foods while enjoying living a balanced, sensible life. That is why every recipe in this book was carefully developed with your health and well-being in mind, using the richest, best-quality ingredients packed with vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats.



What you won't find in this book are recipes made with ingredients that weren't part of humans' evolutionary history: grains, gluten, refined white flours, artificial sweeteners, refined sugars, soy, and other chemical-laden foods.

Whether you have a birthday party and need a decadent chocolate cake or you just want to satisfy your natural sweet tooth with a savory chocolate chip cookie, the recipes in this book show you how to make nourishing sweets without sacrificing taste or feeling guilty or deprived.