

EAT YOUR MEDICINE

Taste and health needn't be mutually exclusive concepts, as these recipes from forward-thinking restaurant The Willow show

‘Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.’ So said the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates, a man who’s still recognised as the founder of medicine as a rational science, so he knew a thing or two. In this day and age, of fad diets and ‘clean’ (read ‘restrictive’), eating it’s a concept that struggles to make headlines yet it’s been taken to heart by The Willow, an award-winning new health restaurant and bar in Kingston Upon Thames.

The idea that wholesome food provides the foundation for good health is due a revival and The Willow is the first restaurant in the UK to translate this long-established view of nutrition into modern cuisine. Don’t worry though, the food is far from staid and worthy and, as you can see from the recipes here, there’s plenty for your taste buds to get excited about. The 100% gluten-free menu – including beers – recently picked up a prestigious gold award, reflecting their recognition and support of the increasing awareness of dietary requirements. They obviously walk it like they talk it.

‘Our health and how we feel every day is largely down to what goes on our plate,’ they say, ‘and our priorities for healthy eating should include unprocessed, diverse, lower carb, nutrient-dense food.’ This can be done by minimising highly processed foods while ensuring plenty of fresh, raw ‘real’ foods feature highly in your diet. How you prepare your food is important, too. ‘Avoid high-temperature cooking methods such as frying and grilling unless you keep it brief,’ they say. ‘Using slow cooking methods will minimise heat-damage to proteins, fats, vegetables, starches and other carbs. And only use healthy fats for cooking, such as extra virgin coconut oil, unfiltered extra virgin olive oil and butter.’

The Willow way isn’t rocket science, but if you try your hand at the following dishes you’ll see food can be tasty and flavourful, as well as being good for you.



HEALING FOOD

TUNA STEAK WITH ROASTED VEG SERVES 1

100g red, yellow or green peppers
10ml organic extra virgin coconut oil, plus extra for frying
Dried thyme
80g 100% seaweed tagliatelle
200g taro root, available from larger supermarkets or Asian shops
10ml organic extra virgin olive oil
160g tuna loin
70g tomatoes, chopped
1g basil, finely chopped

1 Lightly coat the whole peppers with the coconut oil and thyme and roast on a baking tray for around

45 mins. When they’re done, remove from the oven and set aside to cool, then skin and slice them.
2 Soak the seaweed pasta in boiling water for 10 mins, drain and set to one side.
3 Thinly slice the taro root (similar to a thick crisp) and fry the small batch in coconut oil heated to 160°C for about 60 seconds, then drain on a kitchen paper-lined tray to absorb the excess oil.
4 Pan fry the tuna in coconut oil until ‘medium’ done.
5 Place the seaweed in a pan over a medium-high heat for 1 min to warm through, then drain.
6 To serve, mix the seaweed with the tomatoes, 10ml olive oil, the peppers and basil. Place the seared tuna on top and add garnish with the taro crisps.



BLUEBERRY AND PISTACHIO BEER BROWNIE MAKES 10

175g chocolate pistoles (buttons)
150g unsalted butter
100g coconut sugar
2 eggs
1g Himalayan pink salt
80g gluten free flour, sifted
5g gluten free baking powder, sifted
20g pistachio nuts, chopped
100g fresh blueberries
100ml gluten free stout beer
For the raspberry coulis:
Xg fresh raspberries
Xg palm sugar
xml water

SMOKED MACKEREL SALAD SERVES 1

80g smoked mackerel
60g beetroot
100ml water
100ml white wine vinegar
50g coconut sugar
250g onions, finely chopped
10ml extra virgin olive oil
Squeeze of lemon
40g watercress
10g capers
1 soft boiled egg, peeled

- 1 Flake the smoked mackerel.
- 2 Gently boil the beetroot and chop into cubes.
- 3 To pickle the onions, put the water, white wine vinegar, and coconut sugar into a pan, and gently bring to the boil. Remove from heat, then add the onions. Leave to cool down and drain.
- 4 Make a dressing by mixing the olive oil with the lemon juice. Place the watercress and capers in a bowl, pour over the dressing and mix lightly. Add 30g of the pickled onion, the remainder can be stored in an airtight container and refrigerated; it will keep for four weeks.
- 5 Cut the egg in half, place on top to garnish.

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Get 10% off your meal at The Willow, Kingston Upon Thames. Call 020 3034 2424 to book your reservation, or email info@yourwillow.co.uk, quoting **HEALTHY FOR MEN**.

