

Raw Food for Beginners Menu Plan for Transitioners and Those Choosing All-Raw

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Information sheets and sample menus adapted from content appearing in the forthcoming *Raw Food for Beginners* book to help you on your raw food journey!

Copies will be available to order online at www.fresh-network.com once published.

Menu Planning

Variety is key – make sure that you’re getting a broad range of foods and ingredients in your menu plan and that you adore everything!

Step inside for important information about how to design a menu for you,
whatever amount of raw food you wish to eat.



A Transitioner's Menu

A transitioner's menu needs to be especially flexible, as often cravings for junk foods and sweet foods, as well as other addictive substances can appear out of the blue and put a very real spanner in the works. By ensuring that you fully satisfy your hunger at every meal with fresh fruits, salads and organic whole foods, you will be doing all you can to lessen the chances of this, and you'll also be helping yourself in a multitude of other ways, such as learning how to stabilise your blood sugar levels and, in turn, your mind and emotions. This sense of balance and inner calm plays a huge part in setting you on the straight and narrow along a path which can only ultimately benefit you, even if things do seem a bit intense at the start!

If intense is not your preferred approach, then good for you! As I frequently comment, going raw is a lot like the fable of the tortoise and the hare - **slow and steady wins the race**. Those who dash off thinking it is easy and their desire to win is all they need, inevitably make a wrong move, doing too much too soon and often ending up back where they started.

With this in mind, your only priorities are really to decide what you're aiming for, and how much raw foods you'd like to begin adding in to your weekly menu. Remember, it's entirely your own decision; there are no prizes here for making the biggest splash or "going raw the fastest" – it's sustainability that counts.

I know what a potentially exciting and transformative time this is for you, especially if much or all of this is completely new to you. Only you know how you are feeling about it all, and what your hopes are for this new way of eating. Perhaps you are raring to go, or maybe slightly worried or anxious - whatever you might be feeling right now, I am excited for you, and recall with passion how my first few weeks and months of raw and living foods felt so incredibly inspiring to me back when. If your experience is even half of what mine was then, I can't wait to hear how your health and outlook on life changes as a result once you get going.

The menu that follows has been designed with all transitioners in mind and will help enormously in giving you a good idea of what good food combinations look like, as well as encompassing other important considerations. All in all, it will provide a well-considered working plan for you to copy, amend or build on.

In the meantime, while you prepare to plan, or spend a few days experimenting loosely with the ideas presented here, keep your eyes peeled for healthier options when eating out or shopping for cooked foods. Food quality has increased enormously over the past few years, and organic and wheat-free, sugar-free or whatever-free alternatives are now readily available in most restaurants and supermarkets. The new additions to your shopping basket could make all the difference.

Whether you opt for 50% raw, 75% raw or all-raw, swapping to organic whole foods *will* make a marked difference to the way you look and feel, so if you're going to eat cooked foods or eat out socially, at least make your choices the best. But if you want to look and feel your best, don't be fooled into thinking that organic and whole is enough - at the end of the day cooked food is still 'dead food' and what's the point of buying great food only to cook all the goodness out of it? Up your game whenever you feel like it – there's nothing wrong with beating your own target!



A Transitioner's Menu *continued*

But before you get going, just a few final words of guidance. Chances are that if you currently consider yourself to be in reasonably good health, there will be days when eating more raw is not only going to be really appealing to you, but also you'll find it a breeze - you may even find it hard to believe how good you are feeling and feel so motivated by it that you want to go all the way with it. But just a minute! Just as you're about to fill up your larder with all raw foods and throw out any remaining cooked foods and your saucepans, you may well find yourself entering detox mode, or getting a big craving for something "forbidden" and you may wonder what on earth is happening. All this is perfectly normal. In fact, usually what we consider to be the most bleak and trying times are actually those when your body is hard at work releasing old toxins, and preparing to step up to the next level - so it most definitely *isn't* the time to revert to old patterns - your body is getting quietly excited! Do the best you can until the cloud blows over, pat yourself on the back for what you've done so far, and take extra good care of yourself emotionally and I guarantee that in a day or two you'll be back to your new self and raring to go once again. Remember, you are probably trying to change the habits of a lifetime, so keep reminding yourself that it will take time to adjust and have fun while doing so. And finally, **keep reminding yourself of the reasons you chose this route in the first place** and revisit the reasons you listed on Day 1 and your BIG WHY.

Final tips:

If you're aiming for 50% raw – make sure that at least half of your plate is raw food (this one's easy!)

If you're aiming for 75% raw – try to eat an all-raw breakfast and make sure that $\frac{3}{4}$ of your plate is raw for your other meals. Beware cups of tea and coffee or glasses of wine that may knock you off track!

Also know – whatever you start your day off with is what you're most likely to crave for the rest of the day. So if you eat toast for breakfast, don't be surprised if you want sandwiches for lunch or pasta for dinner! If you can start your day with fruit, a smoothie or nut milk, or even raw muesli, you are practically guaranteed to make healthier (and rawer) choices for the rest of the day. Just keep placing one foot in front of the other!



A Transitioner's Menu – An Example

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Sweets	Drinks
* Monday	dried fruit com-pote with nut milk (100% raw)	jacket potato with coleslaw, baked beans & side salad (about 30% raw)	basmati rice with a multitude of chopped raw veg-gies/salad items (about 70% raw)	unlimited fresh fruit (100% raw)	pure water + smoothie (100% raw)
Tuesday	smoothie (100% raw)	lettuce, cabbage or nori wraps with raw filling (100% raw)	healthy vegetarian curry with wholegrain rice (0% raw)	fresh fruit + handful of raisins (100% raw)	pure water + young coco-nut drink (100% raw)
Wednesday	fruity two (100% raw)	pasta salad (about 50% raw)	raw veggie spaghetti with cooked or raw sauce or pesto (about 70% - 100% raw)	frozen fruit shake (100% raw)	pure water + nut milk (100% raw)
Thursday	fruit salad (100% raw)	wholegrain rice and marinated raw veg-gies (about 50% raw)	wholemeal organic vegetarian pizza with large salad (about 40% raw)	unlimited fresh fruit (100% raw)	pure water
Friday	smoothie (100% raw)	wholemeal pitta breads stuffed with fresh avocado salad (about 70% raw)	organic oven-baked chips (fries) and large fresh salad (about 60% raw)	knickerbocker glory (100% raw)	pure water + fruit juice (100% raw)
Saturday	green juice (100% raw)	unlimited fresh fruit (100% raw)	raw pizza and salad (100% raw)	raw ice-cream + fruit & nut surprises (100% raw)	pure water + fruity fizz (100% raw)
Sunday	raw muesli (100% raw)	organic cooked vegetable soup with sprouted bread (about 20% raw)	nut pâté or loaf with salad or veggies (100% raw)	unlimited fresh fruit (100% raw)	pure water + green juice (100% raw)



An All-Raw Menu

Planning an all-raw menu is in many ways much easier than planning a transitioning one - first you don't need to worry about how much or little cooked foods to buy - you just buy all raw, and second, you're less likely to yo-yo between raw and cooked foods because the more raw you eat, the more raw you'll want.

If you're interested in planning an all-raw menu you're likely going to fall into one of two camps. The first is the "newbie" camp. If you're in this camp this is the first time you're attempting to eat an all-raw diet and are probably feeling quite excited about everything but have one question remaining, that being "How on earth do I pull all of this information together?" If this is you, hopefully everything we've talked about up to this point will have made the fundamentals clear for you, so all that remains now is for you to actually sit down, take a look at the recipes, plan your menu out and start experimenting.

Camp two is the one containing all those who have tried all-raw before, or are even currently eating all-raw, but want to get back on track or check they are doing things right. If this is you, chances are that you will find the menu planning enlightening and inspiring, bringing all the pieces of the jigsaw together neatly for you once and for all.

When it comes to planning your all-raw menu, I am the first to recognise that even if we eat an all-raw diet we all have very different eating requirements, and no two people, raw or otherwise, will always be happy to eat the same meal at the same time. Because "advanced" raw food eating is primarily intuition-led, raw food eating has the potential to become something of an art form where menu planning goes out the window and you simply eat when your body asks for food and whatever it decides to order.

Another anomaly that could come into play when planning an all-raw diet for those of you falling into camp two, is the occasional need to eat less or fast for a day or more. If you are new to this concept, the best way to honour your body's request for a rest is simply to eat lightly for a day or so, rather than fast, but choose your days well. Good days to eat lightly for maximum benefit include days off work, holidays, or weekends when you can do whatever you wish, and divert your attention away from food and into having fun. My favourite ways of spending a day of light eating are when I turn my spare time into a 'spring clean fest' and detox my surroundings as well as my body. During this time I love to eat just fruit all day, maybe a salad at night, and use all the freed up energy to completely sort a room or two, or catch up on lots of paperwork or start a new project. In my rather more relaxed pre-motherhood days, I would spend days like this laying in bed, reading, relaxing, watching uplifting films, or writing in my diary; I'd use the time to detox my mind and let it unload itself over the course of the day, so that my mind would feel lighter too. Days like this can give you a real kick-start and make you feel so fresh and light that you're soon ready to get back on the fast track again with a happier, more refreshed outlook. I encourage you to have days like this at least once every 4-6 weeks, but make sure you have plenty of ideas ready and waiting for what you're going to do with all your free time!



An All-Raw Menu *continued*

In line with this, a more extreme (and beneficial) approach is to fast completely for a day once in a while. This is where no food at all is eaten, but plenty of pure fresh water is drunk in order to keep hydrated, and to flush out all the wastes which will inevitably be released. Some people do this one day per week, as part of their regular routine. If this appeals to you, or is something you already do, obviously your menu plan would take this into account and one day each week would be blank. Depending on how you feel about handling food on such days, this might be the ideal time to make up batches of foods for the week ahead, such as dehydrated crackers, some pâtés and 'cheeses', to freeze some bananas, or just to get your shopping list together.

There's no doubt about it - light eating or fasting is the ultimate way to get a lot done in your day, feel lighter and cleaner in yourself and lift your spirits in the cheapest possible way. If you're considering fasting for longer than three days, be sure to research the subject first and ideally have some professional supervision.

Those of you interested in creating an all-raw plan will actually be as diverse in where you're starting from as the people who are following the transitioning plan, so only you will know what level you are ready to come in at. The only thing I would especially like to warn about at this point is over-zealousness and/or obsessive behaviour, both of which I have seen in more than a few people trying to follow a raw food diet over the years. The main thing to watch out for in yourself is any tendency to let your mind run the show which would lead to your eating according to a certain belief or idea you have about what you *think* you should be eating, or what constitutes the perfect diet. This is *not* the way to go... As a result of this kind of thinking, some people in the past have thrown themselves into what they believe to be the "ultimate" eating plan, such as adopting an all fruit regimen, or a raw food plan that works for others but not for them, and have run into serious health problems as a result. Likewise some people have pushed themselves to comply with another type of imaginary ideal connected with raw foodism and have felt as much a slave to raw eating as they did to any other 'diet'.

The beauty of raw eating is that as your body adjusts to natural foods, your mind has the opportunity to let go a little, and to surrender more often to the messages your body is giving out. **If there's one final tip I can give you as you venture out into eating raw yourself, it's got to be to continually check in with yourself, and ask yourself honestly what your body is *really* asking for, not what you think it should be asking for, and to honour that.**



An All-Raw Menu – An Example

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Sweets	Drinks
* Monday	pure water & fruit juice	marinated veggies	stuffed vegetables	fresh fruit	pure water smoothie
Tuesday	single fresh fruit	lettuce, cabbage or nori wraps	soup	fruit & nut surprises	pure water
Wednesday	freshly squeezed fruit juice	flax crackers with topping	veggie spaghetti with sauce or pesto	frozen fruit shake	pure water
Thursday	fruit salad	nut pâté or loaf with salad or veggies	fruit smoothie or pudding	biscuits / cookies	pure water young coconut drink
Friday	smoothie	pizza crackers with mixed green salad	lettuce, cabbage or nori wraps	"ice-cream"	pure water
Saturday	green juice	tabouleh	pizza and salad	"chocolate" pudding	pure water frozen thick shake
Sunday	raw muesli	crudités with dip	veggie burgers with mixed salad	knickerbocker glory	pure water winter punch

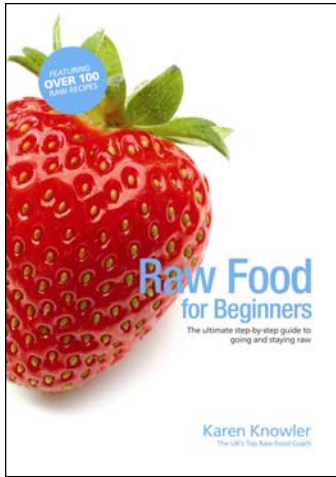


A Blank Menu for YOU

Fill this in according to your taste preferences, goals, needs,
- taking special care **to include all of the things on your vital ingredients list**
as well as comfort foods - foods and drinks you're not ready to let go of yet, and so on.
Re-work it until you are 100% happy that you will feel nurtured
and genuinely good about eating this way.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks	Drinks
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					





Happy Menu Planning!

I hope these menu plans provide you with some good basic 'ground rules', insights and ideas of how you can create *your own best menu*.

The information on these pages were taken from work which will be published in full or in part within my forthcoming book, *Raw Food for Beginners*. Please note that these menus are not prescriptive but are shared merely to give ideas and inspiration as to how a menu might look.

Any questions or queries, you are always welcome to email me at karen@therawfoodcoach.com

Here's to a vibrantly alive you!

Warmest wishes, *Karen Knowler*

If you need some help with your diet and going raw, or transitioning to a raw food lifestyle, you may be interested to know that I offer the following:

Raw Food for Beginners 1-Day Intensive Classes

Raw food recipes and demos galore! 8 people, classes throughout the year. See www.karenknowlerblog.com for full listing.

Raw Food for Beginners Weekend Courses

Teaching you the 7 Steps to Going and *Staying Raw* as well as masses of raw food recipes and demos. 8 people per class, classes throughout the year. See www.karenknowlerblog.com for full listing.

Personal Coaching & Consultations

If you'd like some personal assistance on your raw food journey – whether that be food-related, life-related or both, I can help. I work via telephone as well as in-person, and amazing results are regular occurrences! Call or email for more details.

Coming Soon!

Go Raw! Telecourses

Launching in summer 2006, these 8-week telecourses will kick-start you on your journey to rawdom. Stay tuned! They're hot!

