

ALICIA ROUNTREE

# Fresh Island Style

Casual Entertaining  
and Inspirations from  
a Tropical Place



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# Quiet Time



On a tropical island, where the heat and sun get more intense as the day goes on—or alternatively, a powerful thunderstorm builds to a downpour—afternoons offer a natural pause. And I find that my energy, creativity, and well-being benefit from an afternoon check-in with myself.

Meditation is a crucial part of this; for me, it is vital for focus and productivity. If I skimp on my meditation practice, I feel the difference in what I accomplish during the day. I practice Transcendental Meditation (TM), for twenty minutes twice a day. That might sound like a lot of time, but it pays back in how it enhances the quality of what you do, and how you deal with people and difficult situations. That said, as with yoga, even taking two minutes during the day to concentrate on your breath can be extremely beneficial for energy and stress relief. Meditation is about creating inward focus, not emptying your head, so don't worry if your mind wanders—that's a natural part of meditating, and all you need to do is bring yourself back to your breath to return to a meditative state.

I find that my mind is the most open to ideas and inspiration after a few minutes of re-centering, so after I've meditated, I try to do something creative, such as sketching new patterns for my swimwear line. I never plan in advance what I'm going to paint, because when I'm in this centered frame of mind, I find that inspiration flows through me.

Mindfulness is equally important when it comes to eating, at any time of day. The best part about this is that it is not expensive or complicated to develop a mindful approach to eating. In general, I try to eat the best quality of food as possible (pure dark chocolate as opposed to candy bars; homemade treats instead of packaged ones), but I never think of food as "good" or "bad." The stress and guilt people feel about food can contribute to weight gain; if you instead choose foods consciously, trying to eat for fuel and taste rather than on autopilot you will enjoy everything you eat more and be healthier at the same time.



Quiet Time



Fresh Island Style

*This page:* Quiet time doesn't mean idle time; I'm most creative after I've taken time to re-center. This is when I love to work on prints for my swimwear line. *Opposite:* This painting is by my great-uncle Frank Avray Wilson, an early Abstract Expressionist in Paris and London. The ceramics are by Paul Jackson.



## BANANA TART

MAKES ONE 9-INCH TART,  
APPROXIMATELY 8 SERVINGS

*25 very ripe bananas*

*2 vanilla beans*

*One 9-inch pre-made tart shell,  
homemade or store-bought*

*Crème anglaise for serving (optional)*

Peel and roughly chop the bananas and place in a large saucepan. Slice the vanilla beans lengthwise and scrape the seeds into the pot, then add the beans.

Stir well to combine and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, for 8 hours. The bananas will give off a lot of liquid. Eventually the liquid will evaporate and the bananas will reduce significantly, leaving you with a smooth brown paste.

When the banana mixture is very dense, allow it to cool, then spread evenly in the tart shell that has been pre-baked for 15 to 20 minutes in a 300°F oven. Bake the tart filled with the banana mixture for 20 to 30 minutes, until the crust is golden brown. Top with crème anglaise, if using, just before serving.



## NONNA LIZZY'S OATCAKES

MAKES 12 TO 15 OATCAKES

*½ cup chopped walnuts*

*½ cup chopped almonds*

*5 cups rolled oats*

*1 stick (8 tablespoons) salted butter,  
melted and cooled*

*½ teaspoon ground cinnamon*

*½ cup dried cranberries*

*2 large eggs, lightly beaten*

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread the walnuts and almonds on a baking sheet and toast until golden and fragrant, 15 to 20 minutes. Line a second baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

While the nuts are toasting, mix the oats with the butter and cinnamon and set aside. Remove the nuts from the oven, cool briefly, then add the nuts and cranberries to the oat and butter mixture and mix well to combine. Finally, mix in the eggs.

Using your hands or an ice cream scoop, make 12 to 15 round balls of the mixture, approximately 3 inches wide, and place on the prepared baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown (and your kitchen smells good!), about 20 minutes. Let the oatcakes cool on the pan on a rack for 30 minutes before serving.





Pages 160-161: My mother's oatcakes are beloved by everyone in our family from the adults down to my niece, Kiera. They are simple and nourishing, so my mother makes a batch almost daily, and sends a tin over for Kiera's lunch. When the tin comes back in the afternoon, it's always empty. *This page:* The circular table stacked with books in the entryway of our home. This is the hub of the house, connecting the kitchen, dining area, porch, and bedrooms, so we often pick up books as we pass from room to room. It is also one of the favorite napping spots of our dog, Teddy.

## REFRESHING DRINKS

### SERVES 1

The food we eat affects how we feel, think, and act. Every day comes with a different challenge to overcome. So whether you're tired, crazed, stressed, scattered, or just need a pick-me-up, these juices will make you feel good. They ground, center, and revitalize.

If using a juicer, wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly and then press ingredients through a juicer.

You can also make these juices in a blender. Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Cut the fruits and vegetables into small chunks and place the ingredients in the blender with  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water. Blend on high until combined. If the consistency is too thick, add water in small amounts, blending between additions until the mixture is a slurry. Place a fine mesh strainer over a tall glass. Transfer the contents of the blender into the strainer and press firmly on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible. Drink immediately for maximum vitamin strength.

Leftover juice can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

#### APPLE CLEANSER

*2 apples, halved and cored*  
*1 pinch ground cayenne*  
*1 tablespoon maple syrup*

#### GLOW GREEN

*2 Granny Smith apples, halved and cored*  
*3 leaves kale, ribs removed*  
*Freshly squeezed juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon*  
*1 cup tightly packed spinach leaves*

#### RAINBOW CHASER

*1 apple, halved and cored*  
*3 medium carrots, peeled*  
*2 medium celery ribs*  
 *$\frac{1}{2}$  grapefruit, peeled, pith removed,  
and seeded*  
*1 orange, peeled, pith removed,  
and seeded*

#### RESTART RED

*1 apple, halved and cored*  
*1 medium beet, peeled*  
*3 medium carrots, peeled*  
*Freshly squeezed juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon*  
*1 small piece fresh ginger, peeled*

#### SUPER YELLOW

*1 pinch ground cayenne*  
*Freshly squeezed juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon*  
*1 pear, halved and cored*  
 *$\frac{1}{2}$  pineapple spear*

#### WATERMELON REFRESHER

*2 cups peeled, seeded watermelon cubes*  
*Freshly squeezed juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lime*







#### **SUGARCANE & LEMONGRASS DRINK**

If we want an afternoon drink that is refreshing, but still soothing, we have a glass of lemongrass water (or a chilled tisane). To make it, boil a few stalks of lemongrass and some sliced ginger until the water becomes the color of Chardonnay. Then chill for several hours, and strain into a pitcher before serving. Lemongrass water is delicious plain, but Mauritians often serve it with raw sugarcane syrup on the side, so you can sweeten to taste. (If you can't find sugarcane syrup, agave is a good substitute.) Using a stalk of lemongrass as a stirrer is a nice touch.





Though I practice TM daily, I also love sound meditation. Sound meditation is a type of meditation in which you are surrounded by bowls of different sizes, which are struck in various ways to produce deep, audible vibrations. The heavy tones of the vibrations pull you into a different realm of consciousness, resulting in a profound feeling of relaxation, peace, and well-being. Experiencing the vibrations in person is ideal, but you can also do it on your own by downloading sound-bath recordings.

“Taking time for yourself is essential for well-being. Committing to brief daily rituals of self-care does wonders for your mood, productivity, and creativity. The benefits you can reap from just a few minutes of inward focus are astonishing.”

## SMOOTHIES

EACH SERVES 1

In a juicer, blend all ingredients on high. Pour into a tall glass and enjoy. Feel free to use either homemade (see recipe below) or store-bought almond milk, or a nut milk of your choice.

### FOCUS SMOOTHIE

*½ frozen banana*  
*½ cup pineapple cubes*  
*1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lime juice*  
*2 Medjool dates, pitted*  
*1¼ cups almond milk*

### CURE-ALL SMOOTHIE

*2 frozen bananas*  
*3 ounces spinach*  
*1 Medjool date, pitted*  
*1¼ cups almond milk*  
*½ teaspoon spirulina powder*

### ENERGY ACAI SMOOTHIE

*½ cup blueberries*  
*¼ cup frozen acai puree, about*  
*½ 3.53-ounce package*  
*2 frozen bananas*  
*¼ cup frozen dragon fruit, about*  
*½ 3.53-ounce package*  
*3 teaspoons coconut pulp*  
*1¼ cups almond milk*  
*½ teaspoon flaxseed*

### INSPIRATIONAL SMOOTHIE

*½ cup frozen papaya chunks*  
*¾ frozen banana*  
*3 fresh strawberries, hulled*  
*1 cup aloe vera juice*  
*1 teaspoon probiotic powder*

### CALMING CHOCOLATE SHAKE

*1¼ cups almond milk*  
*2 frozen bananas*  
*2 Medjool dates, pitted*  
*1 teaspoon chocolate protein powder*  
*1 teaspoon cocoa nibs*  
*1 tablespoon coconut pulp*

### EASY ALMOND MILK

MAKES 4 CUPS

*1 cup blanched raw almonds,*  
*preferably organic*  
*2 cups ice-cold water*

In a high-powered blender, process the almonds until they have a very fine texture. Add the water and blend on high until the mixture is smooth and creamy.

Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

*Note: Use ice-cold water straight from the refrigerator so the mixture won't be lumpy. You will not need a nut bag to strain the almond milk.*





## AVOCADO TOAST

SERVES 2

*2 slices Einkorn or other whole-grain bread (see recipe on page 121)*

*1 avocado*

*2 tablespoons chopped cilantro*

*Salt to taste*

*Freshly ground black pepper to taste*

*2 thick tomato slices*

*½ cup loosely packed arugula leaves*

*Freshly squeezed juice of ½ lemon*

*1 tablespoon mixed seeds, such as sunflower, flax, and chia*

*2 poached eggs (optional, see Note)*

Toast the bread until golden and set aside.

Halve, pit, and peel the avocado. In a medium-size bowl, mash the avocado very roughly with cilantro, salt, and pepper.

Place the slices of toast on a serving plate. Spread equal amounts of the avocado mixture on each slice. Add a slice of tomato and a few arugula leaves on top of each. Drizzle lemon juice on top of each piece, and finish by sprinkling the seed mixture over both. Top with poached eggs, if using.

*Note: To poach eggs, crack each egg into a teacup or a small bowl. Bring a saucepan full of water with 1 teaspoon of white vinegar to boil. When it is boiling, use a wooden spoon to swirl the water in a circular motion and gently slip the cracked eggs into the water. Lower the heat and cook gently for 5 minutes. Remove carefully with a slotted spoon or skimmer and transfer to toast.*