

■ Book review

Porter's 'Hip Chick's Guide' cleanses body, mind to remedy winter blues

A macrobiotic chef joins a food regimen with philosophy in her new book

BY AMY LICHTY
PULSE REPORTER

Fighting the winter blues is never easy, especially with Eugene's notoriously gray skies and long winters. There are things people can do, however, to improve their mood and enhance their performance even on the rainiest and gloomiest day. And what better way is there to make you feel happy than by looking rockin' hot on the outside on those cold, dismal days? Or even on the warm, sunny ones?

"The Hip Chick's Guide to Macrobiotics" by Jessica Porter is a solution to fighting the winter blahs all year round. Not only does this book give detailed instructions on how to rid the body and the cabinets of those overly processed foods that can make you feel like crap, but the entire first half is devoted to making over the most important parts of one's body — the mind and the soul.

Porter uses macrobiotics — a diet regimen used by famous and incredibly fit celebrities such as Madonna, Gwyneth Paltrow and Demi Moore — as both a cleansing of the body and of the mind. She encourages readers

with wit and humor to find an inner peace that will bring a new sense of enlightenment and will lighten the waist at the same time.

"One of the things I love about macrobiotics is that there is a food component and a philosophy component — theory and practice tucked side by side on your fork," Porter writes. "You can start with your brain or with your belly. You may want to jump straight to a de-sludging diet tomorrow or just read some of the philosophy over brown rice and see what happens next."

Porter seems to know what she's talking about. She is a macrobiotic chef, cooking instructor, hypnotherapist and even has her own radio show in Portland, Maine. She studied macrobiotics at the Kushi Institute and managed its program for nutritional consulting to the seriously ill. Porter explains what originally sparked her interest and how she got involved with the macrobiotic craze with language that keeps the reader interested and inspired.

I had heard of macrobiotics because of the famous clients it serves, but I never was interested enough to find out what it actually entailed. And what I seem to have found is that it is a system that will change almost every aspect of your

life — from what you eat to what you wear to ultimately and most importantly how you feel. The foods included in the standard macrobiotic diet are whole grains, a variety of vegetables, beans and bean products, sea vegetables, soups, pickles, desserts, condiments and nonaromatic teas. Items such as highly refined sugars, chemicalized and processed foods, nightshade vegetables (such as potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant), dairy products, eggs and most other animal products are all discouraged and thrown out of daily intakes.

"By practicing macrobiotics," Porter writes, "you will achieve a radiant mind ... By tuning in to the bigger forces, we are freed from former limits; illnesses reverse themselves, unnecessary conflicts disappear and we become peaceful, playful and free."

Porter also includes more than 80 recipes to get you started on developing a new lifestyle. Crispy Rice Treats, Lasagna, Tofu "Egg" Salad, Tempura and Black-Eyed Pea Croquettes with Mustard Barley Malt Sauce are just a few of the, um, delectable dishes found in "The Hip Chick's Guide To Macrobiotics."

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DIVA: Film forum hopes to expand in the future

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normally shown in Eugene.

"DIVA's overall goal is to be a catalyst for the visual arts in downtown Eugene, so we're continuing the same kind of goals for the Second Friday Film Forum," Eric Ostlind, also a member of the Media Arts Committee, said. "We show independent films and artists that would otherwise not be seen at any other places in Eugene. We're sort of in a niche; we show films not usually able to be shown here. They're not big enough to go to the multiplexes or even to the Bijou."

Another goal for this film forum is to expand and grow into showing more than just movies.

"We're going to be working with more music and computer animation as well, so it's not just film, but visual and performance arts," Ostlind said.

Last month, the Media Arts Committee created what they call "OpenLens," an open mic-type event that gave local filmmakers the chance to show off their work in front of a live audience and gain valuable feedback. According to DIVA's Web site, the event was a "rousing success with over 80 film enthusiasts attending the screening of local and regional independent films." "OpenLens" is currently only scheduled as an annual event, but given the amount of

interest in the first event, another "OpenLens" may be planned for spring 2005.

"OpenLens" was really interesting because we had like 10 or 11 local artists from Eugene and about six artists from places like Ohio, Michigan and Illinois," Weintraub said. "They all came and showed their work. The attendance was huge, so people were sitting and standing in the halls. It was a really good turnout."

The Media Arts Committee is also adding other film and visual arts events throughout the month and the rest of the year. A schedule of events can be found on DIVA's Web site, www.divanow.org.

"We're definitely interested in getting more U of O students and faculty to come down and see our stuff and get involved," Ostlind said.

The first Second Friday Film Forum of 2005 will be held Friday night in DIVA's gallery, at 110 W. Broadway in downtown Eugene. At 8 p.m., filmmaker Steve Swanson will present and discuss his documentary "West Coast Drive-Ins," which explores some of the 30 remaining drive-in movie theaters on the West Coast and provides 12 interviews with owners and supporters upholding them. The cost is \$2 to \$5 on a sliding scale with donations welcome.

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