

Raw gourmet cooking can change your life



Eating raw fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds has helped the Boutenko family reverse their chronic health conditions and feel vibrant. The family members pictured from left to right are Valya, Igor, Victoria and Sergei Boutenko.

By VICTORIA BOUTENKO
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Why raw? To me, it is not even a question. Everybody knows that fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds are the healthiest food. The question now is How to get off cooked foods? How to enjoy actually staying raw? I mean continuing to be social, going out, sharing tasty dishes with family, and so on? Is that possible?

When our family of four became began eating raw foods five and a half years ago, we were given no instruction on it. We were all suffering from chronic health problems. I weighed 280 lbs. and had severe heart problems. My husband Igor had surgery and was scheduled to remove his thyroid. Our son Sergei had juvenile diabetes. Valya, our daughter was choking from asthma. Doctors couldn't truly help us regain our health. There was a hope for us in raw food so we decided to try it for two months. It was very hard because we were addicted to sugar, coffee, poultry, dairy, pasta and other cooked foods. If you don't believe that cooked food is addictive, simply try not to eat it for a couple of days and see what happens.

Eating raw vegetarian was very hard for us, but we didn't have any other choice. Within the first two weeks of eating this way, our major symptoms disappeared! All four of us were really puzzled. Were we hallucinating feeling better or were we really on the right path to better health?

I called Sergei's doctor and told her that his symptoms were clearing. She was alarmed and replied, "It has nothing to do with your new diet, you're just lucky." When I called Igor's doctor to postpone his surgery, he talked to me as if I were mentally crazy.

We continued the raw foods diet because we felt healthier. In fact, we had so much energy that we all began a fitness program. My doctor advised me to stop immediately. Instead, we continued eating the same way and on Memorial Day, our family ran a very popular 10-K race called "Bolder Boulder".

The biggest problem with our newfound diet was the unavailability of information on it. We didn't even know where to look for it. We knew that a raw food diet worked for us, but information on it was scarce. In a matter of months, we had collected hundreds of recipes from books and bought juicers, blenders, and dehydrators for cooking tools.

Our family traveled wherever we could to meet other people who were eating the same way. In the Bahamas, we once placed an entire group of churchgoers (70 in all) on raw food cooking for ten days. From that experience, we have learned how to make delicious raw food meals in a way that even those on the standard American diet would love the taste. With all the health benefits and wealth of knowledge that we had acquired by doing lots of raw food cooking, it became more pleasurable and simpler to do. We like to share with others through classes and seminars on how to prepare raw food gourmet dishes and keep to this healthy lifestyle of eating.

Victoria Boutenko and her family offer raw gourmet cooking classes in Portland every Monday at SE Civic Center (Holgate and Foster). For more information, call 541/488-8865.

A historically correct first Thanksgiving

By JOY RAMOS AND CHUCK LARSEN
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For almost a century, we've been taught the "sugar-coated" half-truths about the First Thanksgiving. Its history has been blatantly romanticized, mythed and stereotyped. Why?

Thanksgiving was declared a national holiday in the late 1800's as part of a socialization program. Our country was trying to pull together with so many diverse peoples into a common national identity. Public education began and the first Thanksgiving fellowship was chosen as a symbol of Christian charity and interracial brotherhood for youths.

Pilgrims were used as the exemplary immigrants. Their White Anglo Saxon Protestant values became the preferred moral standard imposed on all new citizens. The grand effect has left many of us to either accept it as truth OR seriously question what it means to be a "real" American.

The following notes are historically-correct versions of the First Thanksgiving that are first-hand written accounts and contributions by historians. • The Puritans were considered outcasts and political aggressors in England. They staged an uprising

that completely overthrew the King and Parliament in 1649 and willfully imposed their "Rule of Saints" (strict Puritan orthodoxy) on the rest of the British people.

After being forced from England, the Pilgrims (a sub-sect of Puritans) headed for North America on the Mayflower and a hundred other ships. Their sole purpose was to establish their prophesied "Holy Kingdom" by taking lands away from the Native people. Based on the Bible's book of Revelations, they saw themselves as the "Chosen Elect" to "purify" anyone not aligned with their beliefs. Their means of religious conversion was through deception, treachery, torture, war and genocide.

- The Pilgrims encountered the Wampanoag Indians, a confederacy of Algonkian-speaking peoples known as the League of the Delaware. They held a basic mistrust of Whites and were guarded in showing charity and hospitality towards the settlers.

- Captain Miles Standish, the leader of the Pilgrims, invited Squanto, Samoset, Massasoit (leader of the Wampanoags) and their immediate families to the Thanksgiving celebration. The true reason for the invite was to negotiate a treaty that would secure the lands of the Plymouth Plantation for the Pilgrims.

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