

# **The Essential Best Foods Cookbook**

**225**

**Irresistible Recipes  
Featuring the Healthiest  
and Most Delicious Foods**

**Dana Jacobi**

**Author of 12 Best Foods Cookbook**



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## CHAPTER ONE

# THE ESSENTIALS

Enjoying healthy eating should be easy. After all, many of the foods that are good for us taste good. Think of tomatoes, sweet potatoes, strawberries, even olive oil and chocolate.

Many medical and scientific studies prove that specific foods help reduce your risk for chronic diseases and help maintain optimal wellness, while nutritional guidelines from respected sources tell us how much of them to eat and how often. Yet working these good-for-you foods into real everyday eating still challenges most of us.

That is where this chapter comes in. Here is an overview of all the Essential Best Foods. If a recipe includes one you are not used to preparing, here is all the information you need to be comfortable using it. Along with its health benefits, here are also many ways to fit the food in with what you already like to eat, including how to use it in your own favorite recipes, and practical advice on buying and storing it.

As you see their benefits, plus the numerous ways to enjoy these Essential Best Foods, eating them regularly will become so effortless and delicious that without realizing it you will find yourself following a health-enhancing food lifestyle far too pleasurable to be called a diet.



## RED LETTUCE, ENDIVE, AND RED GRAPEFRUIT SALAD

### ● SECTIONING CITRUS FRUIT

To free the sections from any citrus, slice off the top and bottom of the fruit. Standing the fruit on its flat bottom on a work surface, work a knife down the side, following the curved shape of the fruit to remove the peel and white pith in strips. Holding the peeled fruit over a bowl, work the knife in along the membrane on both sides of the section, releasing the flesh into the bowl. Squeeze the juice from the membrane into the bowl.

### ● ANOTHER WAY

The vinaigrette is also good with romaine lettuce and baby salad greens.

Add slices of roasted chicken breast to make this a main dish.

*The grapefruit vinaigrette of this jewel salad topped with toasted pine nuts is a refreshing surprise.*

1	red grapefruit	4	cups red Boston lettuce torn into bite-size pieces
1	tablespoon Dijon mustard	4	cups red leaf lettuce torn into bite-size pieces
½	teaspoon salt	1	small endive, cut crosswise into ½" strips
	Freshly ground pepper		
¼	cup fruity extra-virgin olive oil		
4	teaspoons pine nuts		

1. Peel and section the grapefruit (see left), reserving ½ cup of the juice and the sections.

2. In a small bowl, whisk the grapefruit juice with the mustard, salt, and 4 or 5 grinds pepper until smooth. Continue whisking while adding the oil in a thin stream, until emulsified. Set aside.

3. Toast the pine nuts, in a dry small skillet over medium heat, stirring constantly, until they look oily then start to color, about 2 minutes. When the nuts are lightly browned in spots, spread them on a plate to cool.

4. In a mixing bowl, combine the Boston and leaf lettuces and endive. Toss with ¼ cup of the dressing. Divide the salad among 4 salad plates. Arrange one-quarter of the grapefruit sections over each serving. Sprinkle on the nuts and serve. Unused dressing keeps 3 days, tightly covered in the refrigerator.

*Makes 4 servings*

*Per serving: 172 calories, 16 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 1 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber*



## TURKEY AND SPINACH MINI-MEAT LOAVES

Per serving: 237 calories, 12 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 22 g protein, 8 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber

Using instant potato flakes in place of dried bread crumbs keeps these little loaves nicely moist. As single-servings, they also bake faster than the usual size. A friend claims they actually got her 8-year-old to eat spinach.

### ● SERVE WITH

Moroccan Tomato Compote (page 166) or prepared tomato sauce

### ● BEST INGREDIENT

I use Barbara's Bakery Instant Mashed Potatoes which are fluffy and made only of Idaho potatoes in their skin. Natural food

1	tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil	1	large egg white
1	medium red onion, finely chopped	1	teaspoon dried oregano
		¼	teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper
1	clove garlic, finely chopped	1	teaspoon salt
1½	pounds lean ground turkey breast, 90–93% lean	⅛	teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1	(10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry	2	large plum tomatoes, cut into thin crosswise slices
½	cup natural instant mashed potatoes		

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Line a jelly-roll pan with foil and set aside.
2. In a medium skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté until the onion is soft, 3 minutes longer.
3. In a mixing bowl, combine the turkey, onion mixture, spinach, potatoes, egg white, oregano, ground chile, salt, and pepper. Mix with a fork until blended. Shape the mixture into six 4" × 2" × 1" loaves and place on the prepared baking pan 2" apart. Cover with foil.
4. Bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and arrange 3 tomato slices in an overlapping row on top of each loaf. Bake until a thermometer inserted in the center

registers 165°F and the meat is no longer pink, 15 minutes longer. Let the loaves sit for 15 minutes. Serve immediately, accompanied by your favorite tomato sauce.

Makes 6 servings



# The Essential Best Foods Cookbook

A joyous celebration of the health benefits of good foods—with quick-to-prepare recipes for inventive, inspired dishes.

Which foods offer the most nutritional value? Which supposed smart choices actually fall short of their promised good? Expanding the scope of her popular *12 Best Foods Cookbook*, Dana Jacobi explores the micronutrient benefits in more than 60 common foods, including some unusual choices such as coffee, turmeric, and lemon zest, and provides a wealth of recipes that prove, as *Gourmet Retailer* has written: “we are in the hands of a wonderfully creative and talented cook.”

Did you know that green beans are a nutritional lightweight compared to the green soybeans called edamame? Or that zucchini is a weakling when rated against winter squashes packed with carotene, fiber, and more? For each “good food” she lists, Jacobi explains the science behind her selection—and shows how to savor each ingredient’s inherent “goodness” with her innovative spins on classic dishes like Kale Frittata or new combinations like Peanut Tomato Soup. Always mindful of the home cook’s need to get meals on the table quickly, Jacobi includes many dishes that take 30 minutes or less to prepare.

As cookbook author Jack Bishop has written of her *12 Best Foods Cookbook*: “Dana Jacobi proves that good nutrition and pleasure are not mutually exclusive. Her inventive, simple recipes satisfy our desires and keep our bodies healthy.”

**DANA JACOBI** has authored six cookbooks and written for *Food & Wine*, *Cooking Light*, and the *New York Times*. Her work has won a Gourmand World Cookbook Award and has been twice nominated for a James Beard Foundation Book Award. She teaches cooking classes in New York City, where she also lives.

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## CONTACTS

Publicity: Beth Davey, 212/808-1627, Beth.Davey@Rodale.com

Subsidiary Rights: Bob Niegowski, 212/573-0512, Bob.Niegowski@Rodale.com

Special Sales: Francesca Minerva, 212/808-1303, Francesca.Minerva@Rodale.com

International Sales: Andrew Malkin, 212/297-1503, Andrew.Malkin@Rodale.com

