



## THE JERUSALEM POST Maimonides's diet, and non-dairy dining

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Friday, May 16, 2008 -- Cookbooks cling to a food writer the way pollen sticks to the legs of a bee, and I have no recollection of how some of the books that grace my shelf came my way. That said (slightly shamefacedly) many of these "orphans" have turned out to be very interesting.

Such as, for example, *The Life-Transforming Diet - Based on Health and Psychological Principles of Maimonides and other Classical Sources* by David Zulberg (Feldheim).

This is more of a "lifebook," actually, offering insights into how we form bad habits and tips for laying the foundation for better ones, delving deeply into both emotional and physical health, guided by the wisdom of the great Jewish sage who lived 800 years ago.

It turns out that the works of the Rambam, as this outstanding doctor of his time is known, are filled with nutritional advice, such as:

"Overeating is like poison to the body... most illnesses are caused by... gorging oneself and overeating even healthy foods."

"Exercise is a cornerstone in the preservation of health, repelling the damage done by most of man's bad habits."

The weight loss advice is no faddy program but involves the adoption of a comprehensive new lifestyle that embraces even the enormous temptations of Shabbat and festival eating.

"Get rid of all your clothes that are bigger than your current size," Zulberg advises. "You are never going to wear them again."

The Rambam on emotional health: "Happiness alone has cured or at least made milder many physical and psychological ailments."

"I KNOW how frustrating it can be to be unable to eat dairy products," writes Lisa Amelan. "But you can use soy milk instead of regular milk in any recipe, and it works very well. In fact, since I switched to soy milk for pancakes, they come out even better than before."

"I also use tofu 'sour cream' (from a health shop) instead of yoghurt (and occasionally sour cream), except in items one doesn't cook, like tzadziki or fruit smoothies."

### NON-DAIRY QUICHE

Crust: Any savory one you like

Filling: Any combination of the

following, but make sure to add

some onion as well:

sweet potato, cauliflower, carrot, leek,

squash, zucchini, mushroom.

Topping:

3-4 eggs, depending on the amount

of vegetables

1 cup soy milk

salt and pepper to taste

Mix the crust ingredients and press into an average-size baking dish. Bake blind for 10 minutes at 180°.

Saute the vegetables in olive or canola oil, one type at a time, to ensure uniform cooking and enable each to retain a more distinct flavor. Layer them on the crust, ending with the onion.

Mix the eggs, soy milk and seasonings, and pour over the vegetables. Bake for 30-45 minutes, until browned on top. Serve hot or cold.

THIS recipe, Lisa says, "is adapted from one by Deborah Lionarons. It is a great use for leftover salmon that is not quite enough on its own for a main dish. The tofu 'cream cheese' is a bit sticky, and if used alone will create a firmer, less creamy texture."

#### FISH PIE

Crust: As before

Filling: 2 160-gr. cans tuna, or the

same amount of salmon

1 egg

one container tofu sour cream and/or

one container onion-flavored tofu

"cream cheese"

2 onions, diced

a little oil

juice of 1/2 lemon

seasoning to taste

Saute the onion in the oil. Mix all the filling ingredients. If the mixture seems sticky, add a bit of soy milk. Pour into the crust and bake at 180 for about 1/2 hour, until browned on top.

#### MACARONI & TUNA CASSEROLE

250 gr. elbow macaroni or other pasta

one container tofu "sour cream"

one 160-gr. can tuna

3 tsp. prepared mustard

Cook and drain the pasta. Add the remaining ingredients. Place in an oiled baking dish and bake at 180° for about 1/2 hour until the top is deliciously brown and crunchy.

AFTER I wrote last time about finding chewing gum in my tea, David Ben-Israel from Herzliya commented: "I find the reaction of the Israeli restaurant manager very typical. I'm a foodie who loves to eat out, but it seems we customers are treated as though it is the restaurant doing us a favor, and not the other way around. I am at the point of a boycott

on eating out."

Someone else advised: "Next time you have to complain to a restaurant manager, do it firmly - and in English. That will give you the psychological advantage you need."

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