cover story // the healthy chef



of 'food anxiety' among many people who are trying their best to do the right thing. When it comes down to it, we're all different and it's not a one-size-fits-all scenario.

My Polish aunt and uncle bought me my first bike and encouraged me to play sports, which helped build my self-confidence. So I took control of my health when I was nine years old and have never looked back. I managed to enrol myself in the local basketball team, started walking to school instead of taking the bus, and focused on eating fresh healthy foods.

I was influenced by other people around me and what I read and what I saw on TV. I loved to cook and used to make the healthy recipes I saw from shows such as Richard Simmons. Playing sports like basketball and netball also made my body strong and

I started to feel good about myself – if I didn't eat properly I felt weak and couldn't concentrate – so my sport suffered...
I needed to fuel my body so I could play well and feel healthy and energised.

You were lucky to have some great role models to encourage you to be healthy from a young age! Did they also influence your cooking style?

My cooking style is inspired by my great Polish aunt and uncle. They had it right: fresh fruit, vegetables and some protein. Aunty and uncle used to eat simply, but the quality and nutrition was there; stuff cover story // the healthy chef

like freshly made scrambled eggs served with vegetable sides or a milkshake made from strawberries from their garden, home-made yoghurt and a little honey for breakfast. Dinner was as simple as steamed garden vegetables drizzled with olive oil and served with grilled fish that my dad had caught after work. It was the no-fuss, budget-friendly sort of food that you could easily make yourself and be nourished properly every day. Don't complicate it; keep it simple and make it yourself.

You're also passionate about educating people on digestive health – why is that so important to you?

The inspiration for my Perfect
Digestive Health book stems
from my own journey and the
hundreds of emails I receive
from people on their personal
quest for better digestive health.
It began as a simple eating plan
but evolved to something much
greater as digestion is far from
simple.

The primary role of the digestive system is to break down and absorb food, providing our body with the fuels and nutrients it requires to function optimally. What we eat and drink builds the foundation of our health. We eat to obtain nutrients for our muscles and organs, to promote the growth and repair of our tissues, and to support our immune system in fighting disease. Nutritional medicine places a great emphasis on the digestive tract — the primary area where we receive the goodness from the foods that we consume. A healthy digestive system leads to a healthier body and mind.

'DIGESTIVE HEALTH' is a broad term that has a different meaning to each of us. We are all so different and have our own unique digestive systems. The foods that work for some may not work for others, which is why it's so important to stay positive and aim to keep your body as healthy as you possibly can.

What's one simple thing readers can do today to start improving their digestive health?

There are two things people all around the world can do to improve their overall health – including their digestive health:

- Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables; and
- 2. Start cooking meals at home. Food is the most powerful preventative medicine we have to treat chronic disease and what we eat forms the foundations to our health.

What do you love about cooking clean, healthy meals?

They are quick and easy to make and I love the way eating healthy makes me feel: full of energy and bouncing off the walls. Nutrition isn't as complicated as it is often made out to be. I get a lot of emails from people who are so confused and rightfully so! There's a sense of 'food anxiety' among many people who are trying their best to do the right thing. When it comes down to it, we're all different and it's not a one-size-fits-all scenario. What works for you may not work for the next person. My best advice would be to take a step back, breathe and listen to your body. We should all take the time to think about what foods make us feel good and what foods don't.

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Eat whole foods and customise your own diet based on your unique needs. When you eat well, your body thrives!

Do you ever indulge in the kitchen and if so, what in?

I love anything chocolate and always have a block of luscious dark chocolate around the house. I was a pastry chef in my 20s, surrounded by the best chocolate and cakes in the world. I tasted everything and still managed to fit this into a healthy lifestyle. It is important for me to listen to my body and sometimes I crave a little indulgence and that's ok. Having a balance in your diet is key to supporting your body.

What advice would you give to people experiencing challenges or obstacles on their journey to health and wellness?

There are always challenges but you just need to keep going until you break through. As CEO of The Healthy Chef I work mad hours! Having to build my business, deal with stress and maintain a fitness routine is the biggest challenge and it's important to remind yourself every day to take some time out for number one.

I like to focus on three areas; MY TRIANGLE OF SUCCESS:

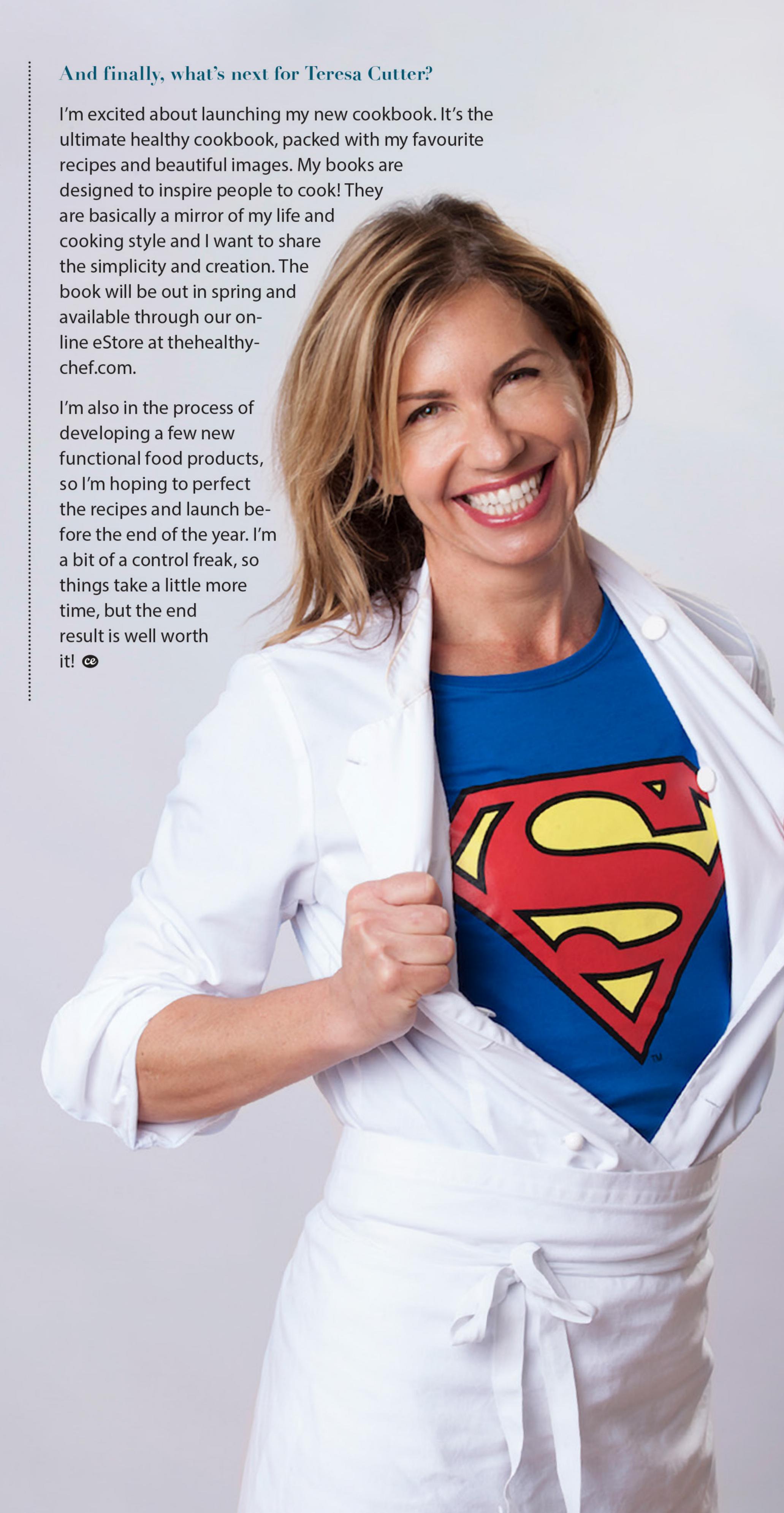
- 1. FOOD Keep it simple and pure focus on whole foods
- 2. **EXERCISE** Move every day and enjoy what you do
- 3. MINDFULNESS Rest and renew! Be mindful on what you do focus on getting quality sleep and take time out for yourself!

We agree, it's really important to take time for ourselves! But we all have days when motivation is low – how do you overcome this?

Some days I'm just too tired or run-down to do anything! That's ok... it's normal! I'm kind to myself and I've learnt to back off on my workload to recharge. Everyone needs it!

Tell us a little bit about how you are helping to spread the wellness message and where the Clean Eating readers can go to find out more...

The Healthy Chef website is designed to inspire and teach people on how to cook purely delicious food that is good for you. I post blogs and recipes up every week for free to the whole world and it makes me feel happy teaching people. Head to thehealthychef.com to check it out.



RECIPES FROM
THE HEALTHY CHEF:
TERESA CUTTER

Super Greens Vitality Sm

SERVES 2

I'm loving my Super Greens Vitality
Smoothie at the moment! This is the
ultimate smoothie that's bursting with
antioxidants and alkalising goodness.
Vitamins, minerals and antioxidants are
more potent through whole food consumption which is why drinking green
smoothies are the perfect way to nourish
your body.

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 green apple, chopped with skin (100g)
- 100g pineapple chunks
- 1 big handful baby spinach leaves (1 cup ~ 35 g)
- 100g small cucumber Lebanese
- 1 small stick celery (50g), chopped

- 1 lime, peeled.
- small sprig mint
- small sprig parsley leaves
- 1 small slither ginger
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/2 tsp Healthy Chef Matcha
- 1 tsp Cold Pressed Wheatgrass juice Powder
- 1/2 cup ice (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

COMBINE all the ingredients into a good high-speed blender. Blend until smooth and green.

SERVE in 2 large glasses. Garnish with limes and celery stalk. Enjoy and be nourished.

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Carrot gwo Ginger + Jusmeric

SERVES 2 GENEROUS BOWLS

This soup is packed with antioxidants and superfood goodness that will nourish your body from the inside out. It comes from my new book Perfect Digestive Health and you can feel the healing benefits as soon as you eat it. The quick cooking time allows for maximum nutrition and flavour so enjoy and be nourished.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 leek, washed and finely sliced
- 1 stick celery finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon fresh grated turmeric or 1/2 teaspoon
- 600 g carrot, thinly sliced with the skin
- 1.5 litres vegetable stock (hot)
- 1 French shallot, finely diced
- Pinch of sea salt
- Generous grind of black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

COMBINE stock, leek, celery, carrot, ginger, turmeric and shallot into a saucepan. Heat until boiling then reduce and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the soup from the heat and cool slightly. Blend until smooth. Pour the soup back into the saucepan to reheat and season with sea salt and pepper. Serve with a little chopped parsley or chives. Enjoy.



I love the simplicity of the dish and the extraordinary flavour that marries so well with any type of seafood, especially delicate proteins such as fish. Fish is high in omega 3s that help support the health of every cell in the body.

- 1 tablespoon grated fresh galangal or ginger I used galangal
- 1 tablespoon turmeric, grated
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 tablespoon tamari soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Generous pinch of ground black pepper
- 2 x 200g pieces white fish fillets (wild snapper or any white fish of your choice)
- 1 lime
- 1 bunch coriander leaves and stalk finally chopped
- 1/4 cup water or coconut water (if braising)

COMBINE ginger, turmeric, garlic, tamari, lime juice and olive oil into a bowl. For a smoother paste I love using my mortar which combines the ingredients perfectly. Fold in the finely chopped coriander root. Add the fish fillet and coat well. Wrap the fish individually using baking paper, foil or banana leaf. Make sure it is really well sealed into a lovely neat little pocket. Steam the fish for 10 minutes until cooked through and remove from the heat. Serve immediately with your choice salad or vegetables.

IF BRAISING:

HEAT a pan over a medium heat and add the fish fillet. Pour in 1/4 cup of water or coconut water then place on the lid. Reduce the heat. Braise for 8 minutes – occasionally coating the fish with the delicious juices. Serve with your choice of salad or vegetables.

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