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INTRODUCTION

The current statistics in a world of obesity is frightening, especially when considering the direct correlations to illnesses and diseases. The increases in these numbers are not only affecting Americans but many more countries in the world, according to information from WHO (World Health Organization). Even though these figures are high, people who want to do something about it can, since they have effective regimens like the well-known Mediterranean diet as a weight loss option.

Current Obesity Trends

Based on the staggering figures from WHO, approximately 2/3rds of all Americans adults can be classed as overweight. All of the high calorie hamburgers, sundaes, French fries, sodas, cheese cakes, ice cream and other popular food items are taking its toll. Even though American maintains the lead, as in many other areas, they are not alone in this problem because many other countries are now following the same patterns. If these current trends are not halted, the prediction for

2030 is nearly half of all Americans may be obese. While this problem is big and massive to the world, the change that occurs can be drilled down to a one-on-one choice. This means, if no one makes a change, it is up to the individual to take the information that they have learned and act on it.

The Mediterranean Diet Is a Lifestyle

Acting on it requires making a change. This change, however, is not finding another fad diet because they can only compound the problems. Instead, it requires making life style changes in the foods that people eat on a daily basis.

This is one of the major benefits to the Mediterranean Life style approach. With a growing body of evidence from the medical world (i.e. Harvard School of Public Health, Dariush Mozaffarian MD. DrPH. and others in the medical community), this diet is known for its numerous health benefits. From helping to prevent diabetes to the protection of cardiovascular diseases, this is a life style change that can help people remain healthy even when they are out socializing with peers and colleagues.

Benefits

The mass acceptance of this life style and its benefits can be confirmed by participants on the Mediterranean Coasts, since they have eaten this way for thousands of years. In this area of the world, it is not a diet plan but it is the way that the vast majority of the population eats. While leading healthy lives with regular exercises, they enjoy a wide range of different foods including yogurt, fish, poultry whole grains, fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, olives, and olive oil along with some cheeses. The foods that this culture eats are responsible for providing antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and fibre. All of these elements work in cohesion together to protect the person from all kinds of chronic disease and illness.

The current state of obesity in the world is disturbing because its impact is far reaching. From the increase in obesity to all kinds of illnesses and diseases, this is a problem that is being addressed on many different fronts. However, the ultimate decision to what occurs in the future will depend on each individual, as they choose what to and what not to eat.

So, with that in mind it's important to know that there is a solution to this problem and that is what we will cover in this guide. So without further ado let's dive right in.

CHAPTER 1 – THE MEDITERRANEAN WAY OF LIFE AND DIET

The Mediterranean diet represents a highly beneficial nutritional program originating in the Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Italy, Morocco and Spain and it is based on typical food patterns of these sunny places.

Combined with regular exercise, this health-improving diet, which only received recognition in the 1990's has a plethora of benefits on the overall human health and it is frequently compared to the French paradox.

This similarity is due to the fact that although the people in these Mediterranean countries consume large amounts of foods rich in fats, the Greeks, Moroccans and Italians have a low incidence of cardiovascular diseases, such as coronary heart disease and heart attacks.

The explanation lies in the fact that the fats incorporated in this diet are represented primarily by mono-unsaturated fats. This diet is also rich in dietary fiber and very low in saturated fats (less than 8%). Mono-

unsaturated fats are mainly found in olive oil (more than 75%), almond oil, whole cereals (unrefined and unprocessed), whole milk products, avocados and nuts.

In early 2013, a scientific study conducted on 7,500 people who have been observed over a period of 5 years revealed the fact that those on a Mediterranean diet lowered by 30% the risk of having a heart disease when compared to people on a low-fat diet alone. Furthermore, recent studies have also shown that this diet also provides better weight loss results than both the low-fat and low-carb diets.

With your busy and hectic schedule/way of life, you may wonder how to incorporate the Mediterranean diet into your lifestyle, in order to help you maintain optimum health and lower the risk of heart disorders, cancer, diabetes, premature death and Alzheimer s and Parkinson's disease.

At first, you might find it difficult to switch to this diet from your regular one, but the easiest way to integrate this healthy diet into your agitated lifestyle is to make the change gradually. The Mediterranean diet is very high in essential nutrients which provide a sensation of satiety.

The main issue with the fast food culture as the core of unhealthy diets is the fact that we eat, but we do not feed ourselves. The Mediterranean diet reverses this fact, because it is based chiefly on consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, moderate consumption of fish, poultry and dairy products as well as of red wine and of course the star of this diet, the extra virgin olive oil.

So basically, you have a large palette of diverse food groups at your disposal, in addition to the healthiest and tastiest alcoholic beverage, which is high in potent antioxidants (resveratrol and flavonoids in particular).

Therefore, there is no need to worry about missing your old diet because your body will be given all the essential nutrients that prevent it from craving your previous diet and, as a bonus, you will be pumped up with extra energy throughout the day. Furthermore, by providing you the sensation of "filled up", you will not feel on a mental level that you are fasting or avoiding certain favourite foods, as you might be inclined to think based on the technicality that it is a "diet". On the contrary, once you have begun to incorporate it progressively into

your lifestyle, not only you will feel the difference in terms of well-being and increased levels of energy, but you will realize that the Mediterranean diet represents a lifestyle in itself, which you can make it your own.

The first step you need to take in order to make this diet an integral and intrinsic part of your life is to consume all your salads dressed with olive oil and then incorporate a larger variety of vegetables/legumes in addition to your favourite ones.

Studies have shown that the oleic acid found in olive oil lowers the LDL cholesterol (the bad one) while increasing the HDL cholesterol (the good one) and in addition, it decreases the risk of hypertension and it has powerful anti-inflammatory properties.

When you adopt this healthy diet, it is important to drink plenty of water, because together they help you eliminate the toxins accumulated as a result of your previous diet and thus, cleanse your body properly. Moreover, this diet contains by its nature a high level of salt, so there is no need to add extra salt to your meals. A delicious, fresh and healthy salad, which is very easy to make is the Greek salad, which in addition to tasty vegetables like

tomatoes and cucumbers also contains feta cheese, olives and oregano, the most used Greek spice.

Also, try to add as a snack a different type of fruit, legume and vegetable each day, which will help your body make the switch more easily. You can also consume red meats but in small amounts, as well as moderate amounts of poultry and fish, the latter being very rich in omega 3 fatty acids, highly important for the health of your heart.

If you are worried about not getting the necessary amount of protein, you can rest assured because the fact is that legumes such as beans, peas, lentils, peanuts and soy contain a larger amount of protein and of a higher quality than red meat, so you are fully covered.

Furthermore, this diet is not at all time-consuming and it takes approximately 15 minutes to prepare a tasty and full of flavour meal. These recipes are fairly simple and easy to make, such as the lentil soup, very appreciated in Greece, as well as diverse vegetable and fruit salads, rich in textures, flavours and colours.

Remember that as long as you provide all the necessary nutrients for your body to function properly, it will adjust perfectly to the new diet, you just have to give it time, taking one step at a time. Your body will thank you later, because this diet lowers by more than 50% early death rates, typically associated with cardiovascular disorders.

Adhering to the Mediterranean diet will prove beneficial not only for your physical health and well-being, but for your mental and emotional health as well, because all these three elements are interconnected.

If you can add a little bit of exercise on a daily basis and proper sleep, in addition to incorporating the Mediterranean diet into your lifestyle, then you will have the perfect combination for an optimum health and wellness until you are old and gray.

CHAPTER 2 – THE ROLE OF OLIVE OIL IN OUR DIET

Olive oil is a type of fat extracted from the olive tree which is a traditional tree from the Mediterranean basin. It is produced by crushing whole olive fruits before the oil is extracted by either chemical or mechanical procedures. Olive oil is used in the cosmetics industry, pharmaceuticals and even in the making of soaps besides cooking.

Olive oil exists in a variety of grades depending on processing. For instance, extra virgin olive oil is considered the premium type. It is produced from the first crushing of olive fruits and is extracted through cold-pressing whereby no chemicals are added. Virgin oil is the second variety, obtained from the second pressing of the fruits and is considered the second-best type. Refined olive oil is obtained from refined virgin olive and it has an acidity level of over 3.3%.

The health benefits of olive oil are wide, a reason why it has been named the Mediterranean miracle. One of its main benefits is that it protects the body against skin,

colon and breast cancer. The oil contains phenolic antioxidants, terpenoid and squalene which are all anti-cancer compounds. The oil also has oleic acid which prevents chronic inflammation besides reducing the damage that free radicals cause to body cells.

Olive oil also reduces incidences of type2 diabetes. This is because the oil has monounsaturated fats like those found in seeds and nuts. These fats are essential in reducing risks of chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer. A Spanish study that was published in scientific journal diabetes care indicated that any Mediterranean diet which has olive oil is capable of reducing type II diabetes by over 50%.

The oil may be used to significantly reduce osteoporosis. This is a type of infection which causes reduction in the mass of bones, putting people at a risk of fractures. A test carried out on rats indicated that olive oil increases amounts of phosphorous, calcium and nitrates in the blood, which results in improved thickness of bones to reduce occurrence of the disease.

Blood pressure can significantly be balanced through intake of sufficient amounts of olive oil. Research

indicates that it is essential in reducing both diastolic and systolic blood pressures. It is helpful to people taking a diet rich in high amounts fat, whereby three ounces of the fluid each day significantly lower the blood pressure.

The amount of good and bad cholesterol in the body can be controlled by olive oil. The cholesterol considered as bad to the body is LDL, which can be controlled by olive oil because it contains the monounsaturated fats. The oil will also increase the amounts of HDL cholesterol, which is considered the best type of cholesterol in the body.

Olive oil has also been said to control depression. A Spanish study revealed that people who take hydrogenated fats which are mainly found in processed food substances had a 48% risk of suffering depression. In the study, olive oil controlled the risk of cardiovascular attacks, which share a common cause with depression, related to dietary plans hence inclusion of olive oil in the diet can greatly control the two.

So in essence this is an essential type of oil which is recommended for use instead of animal fats such as butter, where possible.

CHAPTER 3 – WHAT FOODS CAN I EAT?

Adopting the Mediterranean way of eating can increase the activity of your body immune system and help you reduce the risk of certain cancer types, heart diseases, the Parkinson's disease as well as the Alzheimer's disease. Here are the foods that you can eat when on the Mediterranean diet.

Whole Grains

Whole grains are considered as an integral part of the Mediterranean diet. This includes whole grain bread, whole wheat pasta, brown rice and whole wheat cereal. These foods are packed with lots of minerals, nutrients and vitamins that enhance the production of enough energy for your body.

Additionally, whole grains contain fiber which can help the body combat bowel movement changes and cleanse the colon, thus promoting weight loss in the midsection. To further weight loss, fiber gives you the feeling of satiety

quickly, thereby making sure that you don't overfeed.

Fresh Fruits and Green Vegetables

The Mediterranean diet advocates the consumption of fruits and vegetables in large amounts. Fresh fruits and vegetables contain a variety of minerals, nutrients and vitamins that can help the body function in its maximum potential. Furthermore, the vitamins and nutrients aid in initiating weight loss.

Fruits and vegetables contain antioxidant properties which combat the cancer causing free radicals. If you adopt the Mediterranean weight loss diet, put more emphasis on the dark leafy green vegetables and include them in virtually every meal.

Protein Sources

This diet concentrates on availing proteins from sources that don't have any associating with animals. Low-fat dairy products and poultry are eaten in very low moderation while red meat is rarely taken. Fish and other

types of seafood such as salmon, tuna, crawfish and herring are the main source of proteins in this diet.

Furthermore, seafood contains omega-3 which has been hailed for reducing inflammation and enhancing the production of healthy skin and nerve cells. Again, eating fish can help you moderate your cholesterol levels, improving your blood pressure and protecting you against diabetes and heart diseases.

Healthy Fats

This diet advocates for the use of healthy mono-saturated fats to cook. In fact, the mono-saturated fats such as olive oil are used for cooking, baking as well as a condiment. The healthy mono-saturated fats in olive oil replace the unhealthy saturated fats that pose great danger to the cardiovascular health. Again, virgin olive oil contains poly-phenols which have antioxidant properties. Raw nuts like walnuts, almonds and cashew-nuts are also taken to provide fat.

Red Wine

People who live in the Mediterranean region love taking wine, in fact, they incorporate wine in their meals especially dinner. Therefore, you should take a moderate amount of wine, especially red wine. Moreover, red wine contains antioxidant properties and can reduce blood clotting thus elevating the risk of strokes. Experts are of the opinion that drinking red wine can reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Alongside the aforementioned foods to eat in a Mediterranean diet, make sure that you spice up your food with natural and beneficial herbs such as turmeric. Such spices make the food tasty and contain properties and nutrients that can promote your health. Knowing what foods to eat in the Mediterranean diet will definitely help you to make healthy food choices.

CHAPTER 4 – THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET BREAKFAST

Let's be clear, breakfast is absolutely the most important meal of the day, I can't stress it enough. If you really want to set yourself up for success with the Mediterranean Diet eating a healthy and energy inspiring Mediterranean Diet breakfast every day is a must. Don't skip breakfast, and certainly don't eat fast food for breakfast. For some of us this is a hard habit to develop but once you do expect to see huge positive returns quickly.

Here's some Mediterranean Diet Breakfast Options I think you'll enjoy.

Toast with Cheese and Nuts.

Quick, easy and covering all Mediterranean Diet bases. Great for when you are pressed for time, or not up for cooking breakfast.

- * 3 slices whole wheat bread.
- * 2½ ounces low calorie cheese.

* 1½ tbsp crushed walnuts.

Toast your whole wheat bread in toaster. Spread cheese on bread and sprinkle nuts on top. Breakfast is ready!

Vegetable and Feta Omelette.

Eggs are a good friend to us in the Mediterranean Diet, no time more so than breakfast time.

- * 3 eggs
- * diced green pepper, red pepper and onion
- * sprinkle of feta cheese
- * salt and pepper to taste.
- * Hot sauce (optional)

Dice your pepper and onions, crack eggs and mix in bowl together. Pour into sauté pan. Flip sprinkle with feta cheese and plate. Add salt and pepper to taste, and lots of hot sauce for the adventurous!

Granola with Mixed Fruit and Almond Milk.

One of my own favourites. The almond milk really puts a nice spin on the granola and is perfect for those who are

lactose intolerant, and for the many who can't cut body fat while still consuming lots of dairy.

- * 1/2 cup granola
- * 1/2 cup almond milk
- * 1/2 banana
- * 1/2 apple
- * 1/4 cup blue berries

Core and cut up your apple, peel and cut your banana. Put granola, and all your fruit in bowl top with almond milk. This is a great breakfast for men in particular who studies have shown experience a natural hormonal boost from adding almonds to their diet! Enjoy.

Avocado and Banana Smoothie.

Having a few breakfast smoothie options is a wise Mediterranean Diet insurance plan. Here's one packed with healthy fat and protein too.

- * 1/2 avocado
- * 1/2 banana
- * 1 cup milk or almond milk.
- * a few ice cubes
- * stevia natural sweetener to taste.

Add all ingredients to your blender and pulse blend. Add stevia until you reach desired sweetness and blend further. Should you enjoy your smoothies less thick just toss in more ice cubes.

Using these Mediterranean Diet breakfast options as a model, it's very easy to plug in your own items according to your personal taste. Prepare your eggs how you prefer them, choose different fruit options for your smoothies and so on. This is something you can and should do to make your first meal something you look forward to and not dread.

Don't forget, the most important thing to keep in mind on the Mediterranean Diet is that breakfast is not a option, but a must! It's that big a part of your foundation for achieving the body and health of your dreams.

CHAPTER 5 – THE MEDITERRANEAN LUNCH

You really can't beat the Mediterranean Diet for being the near perfect combination of health enhancing, fat burning and great tasting in one package. The great tasting side of the Diet perhaps more than anything offers a explanation why so many find it much easier to stick with than other diets that may be effective but truly can't shake the feeling of restriction and restraint. No such problems here.

Try out some of these Mediterranean Diet lunch options and you will see what I mean!

Grilled Chicken and Greek Salad.

Healthy and packed with protein this is a lunch that's a favourite for many. Consider getting a small electric "Foreman" style mini-grill if you need one. Inexpensive and while following the Mediterranean Diet it will certainly be used often!

-
- * 4oz Chicken Breast
 - * 1 or 2 cups Spinach
 - * small amount of diced onions
 - * 1 diced tomato
 - * 1 tbsp crumbled feta cheese
 - * 2 tbsp olive oil
 - * garlic, salt and pepper to taste.

Season chicken with salt and pepper.

Put chicken on grill while dicing your onion and tomato. Flip chicken in 5 minutes. Toss salad with onions, tomato, olive oil and garlic. Cut chicken into strips and place on top of your salad. Sprinkle with feta cheese and salt and pepper to taste. The perfect 10 minute prep time for a great lunch. This can also be taken to work and eaten cold, just skip the olive oil until you are ready to eat.

Penne with Spinach and Roma Tomatoes.

Occasional pasta is fine on the Mediterranean Diet, just be sure to watch your portion sizes, especially if one of your goals is to lose body fat!

-
- * 8oz Penn Pasta
 - * 4 roma tomatoes, quartered.
 - * Small handful of spinach leaves.
 - * 2 tbsp olive oil
 - * salt and pepper to tastes.

Put penne pasta in boiling water, stirring to prevent sticking. Cut tomatoes. When pasta is nearly ready put on sauté pan with 1 tbsp olive oil, lightly sautéing tomatoes. Drain pasta and add to sauté pan, with spinach, extra olive oil and salt and pepper. Quickly toss, remove from heat and you are ready for lunch! A refreshing lunch that will leave you astonished this is "Diet" fare!

Hard Boiled Eggs.

Simple and packed with protein this is really my back up plan when all else fails or I need a snack in a hurry. Call me crazy but I love eating them with almonds! A great one - two punch of protein and healthy fats!

- * 4 Eggs.
- * ½ cup of almonds.

Place eggs in pot cover with water. Boil. About seven minutes, give or take, remove pot from heat cover and let cool. Peel and you are ready to eat with a side of almonds. A great idea, which I follow, is to always keep a dozen hard boiled eggs in the refrigerator. That way I'm always prepared should I need to eat and run, eat a healthy snack or grab something to take out with me for a quick lunch. This move alone will make staying on point with the Mediterranean Diet, much, much easier to do.

Mediterranean Diet lunch options can be fast, fun and healthy. Use your imagination and don't forget the occasional glass of red wine to wash it all down!

CHAPTER 6 – HEALTHY MEDITERRANEAN DIET DINNER OPTIONS

With a multitude of options available for dinner, the Mediterranean diet is easy to prepare and follow when dinner rolls around. Here are some of the favourite options.

Garlic Lime Grilled Chicken

- * 6 ounces chicken breast
- * 2 minced garlic cloves
- * 1 tsp salt
- * 1 tsp pepper
- * 3 tsp lime juice

In a container large enough for your chicken mix your ingredients to make your marinade. Cover both sides of your chicken with a brush. Leave in your refrigerator for at least a hour. You can take this time to cut up a onion, some tomatoes and a cucumber if you'd like your chicken with salad which is a great choice.

Turn on your grill and get it nice and hot. Throw on your chicken cooking for six minutes before flipping over. Cook until there's no pink inside.

When you have about a minute left, toss a cup and a half of your choice of salad (I like spinach) with olive oil to taste, top with your onions, tomatoes and cucumber, plate your chicken and dinner is ready.

Enjoy with a glass of heart healthy red wine!

Mediterranean Mozzarella Baked Salmon

- * 5oz Salmon Filet
- * 2 tsp olive oil
- * 3 tsp lemon juice
- * 1 tsp soy sauce
- * 2 oz mozzarella cheese
- * salt and pepper

One of my favourite Mediterranean Diet dinner options, easy to prepare, healthy and tastes amazing!

Combine the olive oil, lemon juice and soy sauce and marinate your salmon for 30 minutes. Set your oven to 350 degrees. Spray a oven tray with no stick spray and place your salmon on it and go into the oven. Check in 15 minutes to see if salmon has reached your desired temperature. I prefer mine medium rare. Pull out when ready, sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Top with 2 oz mozzarella cheese drizzle with balsamic vinegar and you're ready to go! Works well with lots of sides. Once again I prefer a small salad.

Grilled Swordfish with Zucchini and Squash pasta

- * 5 oz Swordfish
- * one small zucchini and one small yellow squash
- * a small onion
- * 2 tsp olive oil
- * 1 tsp lemon
- * salt and pepper
- * 4 oz of angel hair pasta

Cut your zucchini and squash into small half moons and dice as much onion as you'd like. Boil water for your

pasta. Rub the swordfish with oil and lemon and toss on grill. It cooks very quickly so pay attention - about 3 minutes on each side. Sauté your veggies in a pan while grilling fish. Throw pasta in water. Drain pasta when 3/4's done and toss in olive oil with veggies. Place in bowl and top with sword fish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste - also a bit of oregano adds a nice touch! Sounds good doesn't it?

Hope you enjoy these Mediterranean Diet dinner options!
Do you have any favourites I missed?

CHAPTER 7 – HEALTHY SNACK OPTIONS

Mediterranean Diet snack options can help you stay healthy and lose weight. Just by making some simple modifications in your regular meal habits, you can have many advantages and the Mediterranean Diet is one of the best solutions to choose.. You can select the following 10 snacks to help you in your nutrition plan:

1. Dried Apples

According to experts, women who eat dried apples every day can slightly improve their health. The equivalent of 240 calories of dried apples can lower the level of cholesterol 23 percent.

2. Red Wine

While enjoying your meal, a glass of wine is one of the things that matter, because the drink is full of antioxidants. In order to ensure the drink is beneficial to your body, you should not exceed the recommended

amount of one glass per day.

3. Yogurts

Yogurts are good for the Mediterranean diet, but not all. You must choose only low-fat, or non-fat products. One of the best options to choose is the plain Greek yogurt. In comparison to regular products, Greek yogurts can be tangy, thick & creamy and they contain a lot of proteins.

4. Pumpkin Seeds

The body makes serotonin from the tryptophan amino acid, which is contained by pumpkin seeds. This substance can help you sleep better and provide a good general mood.

5. Crackers with Tuna

The type of tuna which should be used is light tuna that is water-packed. Instead of using mayonnaise and other similar dressings, you can use olive oil for flavour, along with spices. You could add some vegetables too and consume the tuna with whole grain crackers.

6. Fruit Salad

Fruit can be great for dessert with any Mediterranean type of meal. Try to cut different types of fruit and do not forget to add berries, as they have antioxidant properties.

7. Baked Sweet Potato Fries

Sweet potatoes can be combined with olive oil and they contain carotenoids, which are antioxidant compounds that are known to protect you from cancer, heart diseases and other illnesses. Sweet potatoes can keep your glycemic level low, because of the fibers that they can provide.

8. Roasted Chickpeas

You could prepare roasted chickpeas with olive oil, paprika and salt. By rinsing, draining and pat drying two cans of chickpeas, you can obtain an awesome snack. The ingredients must be placed on a rimmed baking sheet and they could be drizzled with olive oil. The next step is roasting them into a hot oven for thirty to forty minutes. Salt and paprika must be added in the final roasting minutes.

9. Pistachios

Also called skinny nuts, pistachios have the lowest number of calories of all nuts. Also, skinny nuts have antioxidants. Overeating is discouraged with these ingredients, because eating them takes longer.

10. Nuts

Nuts are full of nutrients. But, for losing weight, they must be eaten with moderation. Eating not more than ten to twenty nuts at a meal can be the best thing to do. You can find on the market packs of 100 calories and these can be ideal.

CONCLUSION – RECAP AND START TODAY

Now that we have covered the benefits of following the way the Mediterranean's eat and given you options for meals. Let's now recap what we have learned and learn how to implement it straight away.

The Mediterranean style food is delicious and feels less like a diet than many of the health food choices available. If you haven't heard already, the latest research shows that a diet based on Mediterranean style cooking can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and heart attack by as much as thirty percent.

After conducting a study that lasted five years, researchers found that a diet consisting of foods such as olive oil, nuts, produce and fish was significantly more effective in reducing the risk of chronic conditions like stroke and heart disease than a low fat diet. Researchers believe that the combination of nutrient-rich compounds and healthy fats found in Mediterranean style food is

what accounts for the benefits to cardiovascular health that they found in the study.

That's good news for you. Mediterranean style food will keep you healthy and, as many others have found, it will help you lose weight as well. It's light on the wallet too. Many of the ingredients such as veggies, nuts, beans, fish and olive oil are inexpensive when compared to other dietary foods. If you have been living on protein bars, juice cleansers, and other supplemental food, then you're in for a surprise when you see how much cheaper Mediterranean style food can be. And, it's delicious too!

Following a Mediterranean diet is simple enough. Just add the following components to your daily routine.

- Eat mainly plant-based food. This includes fruit, vegetables, legumes, whole grains and nuts.
- Drink a glass of red wine with dinner. No more than seven glasses a week.
- Replace butter with extra-virgin olive oil or another source of healthy fats.

-
- Avoid salt. Use herbs and spices to flavour your food.
 - Eat more fish and poultry. You should have these at least twice a week but more often is fine.
 - Limit your red meat consumption. Red meat is still important, but try to eat it no more than a few times per month.

This is a diet that you can follow pretty easily. You can find extra-virgin olive oil in just about every super market along with fresh fruit and vegetables. If you can, try to obtain fresh fish from a fish market. For poultry and red meat, visit your local butcher to get the healthiest cuts.

I hope you enjoyed this introductory guide to the Mediterranean Diet and now get out there and start living the lifestyle.