

In the kitchen with Natalie Seldon

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We caught up with UK-based fashion designer turned foodie about eating well, with style.

When [Natalie Seldon](#) traded the glamour of couture design for days spent in the kitchen, she knew she'd made the right decision. After studying fashion at university, working as a designer was a natural progression, but there was always something she felt was missing. "Food has somehow always played a big part in all that I've done...whether this was a love of drawing and painting close-up food at school, or basing fabrics for a fashion collection on the indulgent textures of ingredients," she says. "It soon became apparent I needed to pursue this life-long dream by turning it into a career."

After a stint at Leiths School of Food and Wine in London, she began working as a food editor for various national magazines, working alongside the likes of much-loved British chefs such as Jamie Oliver, Delia Smith and Nigella Lawson. More than a decade later, she still loves every minute of it. "Unbelievably, I've been in the food industry for well over 10 years now and have felt privileged to have witnessed so many changes - and thankfully mainly ones for the better," she says. "Seven years ago I went out on my own as a freelance food writer, food/prop stylist and food photographer, which is something I love more and more as every day brings something completely new and interesting."

Though she frequently shared her vibrant, seasonal and healthy recipes through her blog, [Pretty Edible Stylist](#), it was high time Seldon brought out her own cookbook. But more than just a collection of recipes, she wanted it to be about health. "Healthy eating, nourishing ourselves and cooking at

home is now such a huge topic and at the forefront of most people's minds, which I really welcome," Seldon says. "I've always been very aware about the benefits of nuts and seeds. Having suffered with a sensitive skin condition and bouts of IBS as a child, it led me to focus on ways I could cut back on dairy throughout my twenties which significantly helped clear up my conditions - as well as boosting my wellbeing and my energy levels. The notable benefits from my new, everyday choices were pretty instantaneous. And so my love affair with using nut and seed milks, butters and alternatives as a whole began."

It's only natural that this would be the theme of her first cookbook: *The Goodness of Nuts & Seeds* - a collection of mostly plant-based recipes with a lot of love behind them. "Mindful eating became even more important to me when my mum was diagnosed with cancer while I was writing *The Goodness of Nuts & Seeds*," Seldon says. "My whole family adopted a more plant-based protein diet to help aid her recovery, and I can personally attest to all the positives this brought [us]. I still eat lean meat in moderation, I've since embraced a plant-based lifestyle with my own personal approach to food centring on balance rather than restriction."

Though many of her recipes are vegan or vegetarian, Seldon says her food philosophy is, first and foremost, about joy. "We should all be led by the joy of food, and it's easy to lose sight of that. Think about the spritz of freshness when you peel an orange or the crackle and waft of deep savoury spice when you add curry leaves to a pan of hot oil, healthy eating is as much about pleasure as anything else."

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