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A sustainable Diet Sri Lankans should eat.

“Sri Lankan diet is an anti-inflammatory diet getting adequate nutrients, including herbs and spices with no calories, unlike the Western diets, mostly included meat, dairy and eggs, that poses an environment problem because the current food system already emits about one-quarter of the world’s greenhouse emissions”.

Sri Lankans world-wide eat a well-balanced diet. The staple dish of the people is rice and curry eaten daily, sometimes more than once a day. It is still the cheapest food that most Sri Lankans living in Sri Lanka can afford. A street packet of rice and curry in Colombo is priced within the range of the average person’s pocket and costs about 2-3 dollars.

This indigenous and traditional foods of Sri Lanka inherit a long history and unique traditions continued from several thousands of years. Sri Lankan food tradition is strongly inter-wound with the nutritional, health-related, and therapeutic reasoning of the food ingredients and the methods of preparation. The diverse culinary traditions and preparations reflect multipurpose objectives combining in-depth knowledge of flora and fauna in relation to human well-being and therapeutic health benefits according to a study paper of indigenous and traditional foods of Sri Lanka by Sachithra, Jagath, Chamila, Janitha published in the journal of Ethnic Foods in 2020.

Sri Lankan staple diet is a plant-based diet composed of one or two veggies, like pumpkin, cabbage or cauliflower, among others, accompanied by a finely cut vegetables called the ‘mallums’. Fish or meat is generally a once-a-week addition.

Gotukola mallum is a must with each meal, or mukuna enna. Gotukola is an herb in the parsley family. It has a long history of use in the traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine system.

Historically, gotu kola has also been used to treat syphilis, hepatitis, stomach ulcers, mental fatigue, epilepsy, diarrhea, fever, and asthma. Today, in the U.S. and Europe gotu kola is most often used to treat varicose veins and chronic venous insufficiency, a condition where blood pools in the legs.

Any mallung will be high fibre which cleans your bowels.

Most sedentary workers eat about half a cup of boiled white or red rice, and the daily workers including the farmers seem to eat a full plate of rice at least a full cup of white boiled rice, to provide sufficient nourishment to compensate for the hard strenuous outdoor work.

A cup of the cooked grain carries with it roughly 200 calories, most of which comes in the form of starch, which turns into sugar, and often thereafter body fat.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, as the population continues to rise and more people follow Western diets, the production of meat, dairy, and eggs will need to increase by 44% by 2050 — which poses an environmental problem because the current food system already emits about one-quarter of the world's greenhouse emissions.

The EAT-Lancet Commission on Food, Planet, and Health released a report in 2019 advocating for a diet that factors in both health and the environment. This "flexitarian" diet consists of eating plants on most days with a small amount of meat or fish per week.

In a flexitarian diet composed of plant-based dishes and fruits veggies, plant proteins like beans, lentils, whole grain brown or white rice, and eggs.

Though dairy like cheese, yogurt or dairy alternatives are included, most Sri Lankans avoid them due to expense and limiting their diet budget.

In the preparation of curries, primarily the veggies, rice and pulses are boiled and tempered for added flavor. These coupled with good fats derived from coconut and 100 per cent grass-fed cow/buffalo ghee are key to reducing inflammatory processes in the body and arriving at the ideal body fat percentage. Further in the cuisine for more taste and flavor spices that has no calories, are added.

Western diets start with frying of ingredients in oil for better taste, which is inflammatory, while in the Asian cuisine main ingredients are first steamed or boiled in water.

The downside of the palatable rice and curry consumption is that most people over-indulge by eating more carbs in the form of rice, and starchy underground roots e like potatoes, yams and inadvertently build towards increased cholesterol levels and type two diabetes and coronary heart disease over the long term.

Talking about biriyani, the starch in the rice becomes resistant in the cooking process involved in biriyani. It is recommended for diabetics in small portions.

Resistant starch functions similarly to soluble, fermentable fiber. It helps feed the friendly bacteria in your gut and increases the production of short-chain fatty acids such as butyrate. Short-chain fatty acids play a key role in gastrointestinal health.

Curry leaves or in Sinhalese called Karapincha are added to almost every curry with the other spices and ingredients in the cooking of spicy curries. They are packed with plant compounds that may help promote overall health by providing powerful antioxidant protection.

The Ayurvedic physicians recommend karapincha leaves for a variety of health benefits, including

Weight loss. ...

It can help in treating dysentery, constipation, and diarrhea. ...

Relieves morning sickness and nausea. ...

Eliminates bacteria. ...

Good for diabetics. ...

Good for eyesight. ...

Reduce stress. ...

Heals wounds, burns and skin eruptions.

Sri Lankans eat lot of dhal a most nutritious, you could find in the planet. It is very high in fiber and lowers the cholesterol and blood glucose levels. People having diabetes should eat more dahl than polished rice on their plates. When cooked well, dhal make for nutritious hearty and truly enjoyable meals. It can be enjoyed not only with rice but with flat rotis of all varieties.

Pulses or lentils are rich in protein, fiber, and iron. It is very popular in boarding houses and hostels because it is cheap to purchase though having much nutrition.

Moong dal is one of the healthiest dals, and Sri Lankans includes it in the breakfast, with chillie hot lunu miris and scraped coconut. You never get bored eating moong dal, and most Sri Lankans eat at least 3-4 times a week with breakfast.

Unlike the Western diet, Sri Lankan cuisine is known for its combination of herbs, spices, fish veggies, rice and fruits.

As mentioned earlier coconut a most nutritious fruit is used in all most all curries, such as veggies, meat, and fish.

Seafood also plays a significant role in the cuisine, be it fresh fish or preserved fish. As a country that was a hub in the historic oceanic silk road, contact with foreign traders brought new food items and cultural influences in addition to the local traditions of the country's ethnic groups, all of which have helped shape Sri Lankan cuisine. Influences from Indian (particularly South Indian), Indonesian and Dutch cuisines are most evident with Sri Lankan cuisine sharing close ties to other neighboring South and Southeast Asian cuisines.

Cinnamon is used in most curries. Cinnamon has many health benefits.

It has anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties. ...

Contains antioxidants with anti-inflammatory effects. ...

Its prebiotic properties may improve gut health. ...

Reduces blood pressure. ...

Lowers blood sugar and risk of type 2 diabetes. ...

Relieves digestive discomfort.

On the contrary Western diet is high in sugars, saturated fats and animal proteins yet low in fiber.

Western diet also known as the Standard American Diet is a modern-day style diet that mostly contains high amounts of processed foods, red meat, high-fat dairy products, high-sugar foods, and pre-packaged foods available in the supermarket loaded with trans-fat.

Sri Lankans are blessed with traditional foods containing mostly plant based, friendly to the environment minimum greenhouse emissions.

Remember biriyani is healthy in small portions

Hope this video talk was useful. Stay safe and goodbye for now