

FEEDTHEYOGI NEWS

September 2009

Ingredients, Asana,
Interviews, Recipes,
Inspiration and more
from Feed The Yogi
and Relish Gourmet



Goodbye summer. Hello autumn.

September is the transitional month between summer and fall. We can still enjoy warm days but the evenings are getting cooler, the days are shorter and it's time to go back to school. The equinox is on September 22 of this year.

As we move into autumn it's good to take the time to reflect on the qualities of the season. Autumn is the harvest and a time to gather-together that which we will need to sustain ourselves through the winter. We gather fuel, food and warmer clothing. There's a natural tendency to become more focused towards studies, work and home life. In nature and in our bodies, autumn is the time of letting go, pulling inwards and preparing to be still.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine autumn is the season associated with the element of metal, the color white and lung/ large intestine meridian. The lungs

transport oxygen from the atmosphere to the bloodstream and release carbon dioxide from the bloodstream to the atmosphere. The large intestine is the last part of the alimentary canal and it's function is to absorb water from the remaining indigestible food matter and then pass useless waste material from the body. The lungs and large intestine are both organs of elimination, allowing the body to let go of waste and toxicity. In TCM the metal element is associated with the emotion of grief and the ability to let go (of grief and the cause of grief).

Autumn is the transitional time between summer; the season of abundance, extroversion, and fullness, to winter; the season of simplicity, inwardness and silence. In this season it's a good time to reflect on what you have gained and experienced in the previous, warmer seasons and to assess what you would like

to work on in the coming period of introversion.

Autumn is the time to stock up and come back to the basics. Make sure that you are eating a healthy and nourishing diet that will keep you warm and give you energy to focus mentally. It is important through the colder months to exercise and keep the body moving and breathing deeply. Moving mindfulness practices like yoga and martial arts are great forms of exercise and encourage inward reflection and awareness as well as strength and flexibility.

Try not to be sad about the changing of the seasons. Though we may long for endless warmth (or at least I do), it's important to appreciate and harmonize with the energy of each season and to take advantage of the qualities each one offers.

Happy autumn!

Yoga Asana Surya Namaskara

Most traditional cultures pay tribute to the sun or solar energy in some form or another, which makes sense, considering that life as we know it could not exist on this planet without the sun. Regardless of how you choose to honor the solar entity; ritual sacrifice, tanning, SUNdays, or cultural holidays are all potentials. It's interesting to ponder the idea that the sun, or solar energy also exists in each of us.

The solar or *yang* principle is the outward, assertive, doing, decisive nature of the persona. Balanced *yang* is clear, present, and able to take right action and make conscious decisions. Imbalanced *yang* can be either fearful, muddled and indecisive with a cold/damp physical imbalance or overly aggressive, controlling and prone to inflammatory, hot/dry symptoms.

Surya Namaskara or **Sun Salutation**, is a common sequence of asanas (postures) in Hatha yoga that is meant to honor the life-giving sun and bring balance to the internal solar principle. It is said that regular practice of Surya Namaskara done in the correct manner will ensure good health and vibrancy.

The origins of the practice lie in a worship of Surya, the Hindu solar deity. One can practice this sequence of poses with varying levels of awareness, ranging from that of physical exercise in various styles, to a complete *sadhana* (spiritual practice) which incorporates *asana* (poses), *pranayama* (control of breath), *mantra* (sound) and *chakra* (energetic centers of the body) *meditation*.

The physical base of the practice is a dynamically performed series of between nine and seventeen movements. These poses are ordered so that they alternately stretch the spine backwards and forwards. When performed in the usual way, each pose is moved into with alternate inhalation and exhalation.

Proponents of the use of *Surya namaskara* as part of the orthodox yoga tradition perform up to 108 repetitions at sunrise, which is considered to be the most 'spiritually favorable' time of the day. In a traditional Hindu context, Surya Namaskara is always performed facing the direction of the rising or setting sun.

In your personal practice you may choose to research and recite specific prayers or techniques, or simply give thanks to the phenomenon of the sun as it seems right to you. ☀



Surya, the visible god of the sun is also known as the lord of excellence and wisdom.

In this picture he is depicted driving through heaven in his chariot harnessed by seven horses representing the seven colors of the rainbow or the seven chakras.

Lord Surya's lower right hand represents the revolving or creative tendency (of the universe) and is offering a gesture of protection. His upper right hand represents the cohesive tendency in which he holds a chakra or discus symbolizing illumination of mind and destruction of demons. His upper left hand represents the tendency towards dispersion and liberation, here he holds the conch, symbol of the five elements of manifestation. In his lower left hand, representing the notion of individual existence, he holds the lotus flower which is the symbol of the causal power of illusion and the unfolding of creation as well being the symbol of truth, purity, knowledge and proper conduct (dharma).

Surya Namaskar Practice

1.) Stand in **Tadasana** (Mountain Pose) with your feet together. Take a few breaths to bring your awareness inwards. Try to balance your weight evenly between your feet.

2.) **Urdhva Hastasana** (Upward Hand Pose) Inhale as you extend your arms out to the sides and then up towards the sky. Bring your palms together and tilt your head back to gaze towards your hands.

3.) **Uttanasana** (Extension Pose) As you exhale fold forwards from your hip crease, sweep the arms out to the sides and place the hands to the ground beside the feet or set your hands to your shins. Exhale completely and look towards your knees.

4.) Uttanasana (head up extension) Inhale, keep your hands on the ground or to your shins as you lengthen your spine and look forwards.

5.) Exhale and step your left foot to the back of your mat, place your knee to the ground. Use your hands on top of your right thigh to stabilize your balance.

6.) Inhale and raise your arms up, look up towards your hands.

7.) **Chaturanga Dandasana** (Four Limb Staff Pose) Exhale and place your hands evenly to your mat, step your right leg back beside the right. Lower yourself down to your belly.

8.) **Bhujangasana** (Cobra Pose) Inhale and lift your chest and head up, slightly arching your upper back. Try not to use your arms to force yourself up, lengthen and lift from the muscles around your spine instead. Keep the back of your neck long by gazing forwards and slightly to the ground.

9.) **Adho Mukha Svanasana** (Downward Facing Dog Pose) Keep your spine long and come to all fours, tuck your toes, press into your hands and exhale as you lift your knees from the floor and descend your heels towards the floor. Your body is the shape of an upside-down V. Look to your knees. Spend 5 breaths here.

10.) Step your left foot forwards between your hands. Let your right knee rest to the ground, support yourself by placing your hands on your left thigh.

11.) Inhale and raise your arms up, look to your hands.

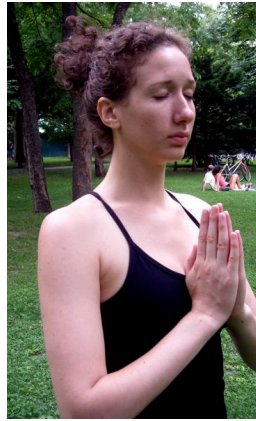
12.) Place your hands to the ground and step your right foot up beside your left.

13.) **Uttanasana** Exhale completely as you fold forwards and look towards your knees.

14.) **Urdhva Hastasana** Inhale as you extend your torso forwards and up back to standing, sweep your arms to the sides and then towards the sky. Look to the hands.

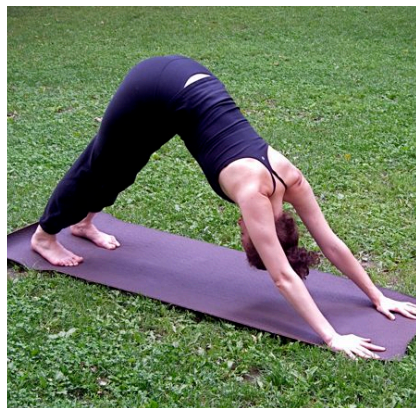
15.) **Tadasana** Bring your hands back down to the sides or the center of the chest.

Repeat as many times as you please. Change which leg goes back first.



Downward Facing Dog Pose

Try to create length in your spine by pressing the weight in your arms forward to the fingertips (out of your wrists) while bringing most of your body weight back into your legs. Bend your knees if you need. Breathe.



- These instructions are just suggestions. There are many variations and approaches to Surya Namaskara. I have chosen to feature what is a more accessible or easier variation for beginners. Anyone just starting a yoga asana practice should find a qualified yoga teacher to learn proper alignment.
- Pregnant women or people with structural injuries should consult a qualified instructor before practicing.
- It's best to practice all yoga asana on an empty stomach, either first thing in the morning before eating or at least 2 hours after a light meal or 4 hours after a heavy meal.



Fabulous fall foods

Smoky Tomato Bisque, Red Sauerkraut, Poached Pears

“To prepare foods which reflect the qualities of autumn, we must be aware of its abundant yet contracting nature. This awareness can be heightened by choices for more astringent as well as heartier foods and flavors. In addition, cooking methods should involve more focused preparation to supply the greater energy required by a cooler season.

The essence of food is received through the sense of smell, which is related to the Metal element and the lungs. The appetite is stimulated by the warm fragrance of baked and sautéed food. Concentrated foods and roots thicken the blood for warmer weather.”

-Paul Pitchford, [Healing With Whole Foods](#)

Coming into the autumn season its important to take advantage of the wide variety of the fresh fruits and vegetables of the harvest. Techniques like canning, jarring and drying are a great way to make the season’s abundance last into the winter months.

Pears are one the most nourishing foods for dry lungs which can become aggravated by the autumn element. Tomatoes are high in vitamin C and should be lightly cooked and always served with olive oil for proper assimilation. There is a plethora of information about the health giving properties of cruciferous vegetables; cabbage purifies the blood, regulates the stomach and mood and packs a powerful punch of antioxidants.

Eating fermented foods helps to organize and focus the scattered dispersion patterns in the body from the warmer seasons. Use warming spices and herbs to keep the metabolism strong. Try to cook with less water and at lower heat for longer periods of time to concentrate the flavors and energy of the food.

Most importantly, eat a wide variety of fresh, local foods. Take the time to prepare your meals with intention and a peaceful demeanor. Enjoy thoroughly.

Smoky Tomato Bisque

Serves 4

Preparation time 45 minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced
 5 garlic cloves, slivered
 1 tablespoon Spanish smoked paprika (more to taste)
 4 pounds of ripe Beefsteak tomatoes, cut into chunks
 4 slices of bread, torn into pieces
 4 slices of bread, cut into cubes
 1/4 cup fresh basil
 1 teaspoon sugar
 1/2 cup cream (vegans use coconut milk)

olive oil for frying
 sea salt and freshly ground pepper chopped, fresh parsley for garnish

1. Heat oil in a large, heavy bottomed pot, add onion and cook for 2 minutes, add garlic and cook for one minute more. Then add the paprika, tomato, torn pieces of bread, basil, sugar, 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 4 cups of water. Bring to a boil and then cover and simmer about 20 minutes or until the tomato has broken down.
2. Pass the soup through a food mill if you have one or stir through a fine sieve, pressing the juices out and removing the pulp. Return the soup to the stove, taste for salt, add more paprika one pinch at a time if you want more smokiness, and season with fresh pepper.
3. Stir in the cream.
4. Toss the cubes of bread with a little olive oil and a pinch of salt. Crisp the croutons on the oven at 350F until golden brown, about 5-8 minutes. Add the croutons to the soup and serve with a pinch of fresh parsley.

Red Sauerkraut

Makes about 1 quart

Preparation time 20 minutes plus 3 days

1 medium red cabbage, cored and shredded
 1 teaspoon fresh ginger root, grated
 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
 2 tablespoons salt

1. In a large plastic or metal bowl mix all the ingredients together. Pound with a wooden pounder or a meat hammer for about 10 minutes to release the juices.
2. Place in a quart-sized, wide-mouth mason jar and press down firmly until the juices come to the top of the cabbage. The top of the cabbage should be at least once inch below the rim of the jar.
3. Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for about 3 days (more if your kitchen is cold, less in very warm weather) before transferring to the refrigerator. The sauerkraut can be eaten immediately but it improves greatly with age.

“The proliferation of lactobacilli (lactic acid producing healthy bacteria) enhances their digestibility and increases enzyme levels. These beneficial organisms produce numerous helpful enzymes as as antibiotic and anti-carcinogenic substances. Their main by-product, lactic acid, not only keeps vegetables and fruits in a state of perfect preservation but also promotes the growth of healthy flora throughout the intestine.”

-Sally Fallon, [Nourishing Traditions](#)

Poached Pears

Makes 4 servings

Preparation time 20-30 minutes

4 medium pears, peeled and cored
 zest and juice of one lemon
 1/4 cup sugar

1. In a heavy bottomed pan bring 4 cups of water to a boil with 1/4 cup sugar.
2. Turn down to a simmer and add the lemon juice and zest.
3. Place the pears in the barely simmering liquid, add more water if needed to cover the pears. Cook the pears for 5-15 minutes depending on variety and ripeness until they are tender and slightly translucent but not soft. Test with a sharp pairing knife at the thickest part of the fruit.
4. Remove from heat and cool. Serve warm or chilled with some of the poaching liquid which you can reduce if you choose.

The pears in this photo are served with fresh whipped cream, port-preserved plums and freshly ground nutmeg.

For variations try blending a balsamic reduction into whipped cream and poaching the pears in tea, dry white or red wine.

FeedTheYogi Interview

Fruit Hunting with Adam Gollner



A group of friends and I used to have dinner parties a few times per month. Each time we would choose a different “destination” and cook dishes from that part of the world. Everyone was allowed to invite guests, all the guests had to bring wine. It was at one of these dinner parties that I first met Adam. Fast forward about four years to Facebook, and Adam and I (virtually) meet again after I stumble across his Fruit Hunters fan page. Fruit Hunting? You bet! I love fruit!! Lucky for me Adam agreed to let me interview him for FTY last time I was in Montréal. Unlucky for me our interview was an early morning after a big party, (for him, not me... Like I said, unlucky) and it didn't quite happen that day. Lucky for me again, Adam is a wonderful writer and promptly responded to my email full of questions. Here's the result:

FTY: What is fruit? What is the definition? How do you define fruit?

AG: Ah, the eternal dinner-table debate: is a tomato a fruit or a vegetable?

Actually, it's both. There are two ways of defining a fruit. The first way involves sweetness. Colloquially, a fruit is a sweet plant-part that can be eaten as dessert. The sweetness issue actually went to the United States Superior Court in 1890. They ruled that tomatoes are vegetables because they aren't sweet. Don't even ask about lemons — unless you want to hear the second definition. Scientifically, a fruit is the part of a plant that contains the seeds. Therefore

tomato, green pepper, avocado, cucumber, zucchini, pumpkin, eggplant and corn are all technically fruit. Why? They all contain the plant's seeds. Olives are fruits. Sesame seeds come from sesame fruits. A fruit is what happens after flowers have sex. Fruits are the result of a flower's ovule being fertilized. Fruits are love children, offspring of a fragrant union. Roses turn into rosehips. Lilies become bead-like fruits. Poppy seeds come from fruit pods whose sap is full of morphine. We bite into and spit out the husk of sunflower fruits to get at sunflower seeds. Any plant part containing a seed is a fruit. In botanical parlance, a fruit is the developed ovary of a flower, alongside any other structures that ripen with it and form a unit with it. Fruits are basically plant eggs. In human terms, think of a pregnant woman: a fruit is the plant version of the amniotic bubble that contains the unborn baby. The baby is the seed (or seeds, as with quintuplets); the entire spherical container in which the baby floats is the fruit. A fruit is how a plant gives birth. Fruits are seed-envelopes that contain within them the genetic coding that will further the entire plant. Their role is two-fold: to protect and nourish the seeds, and also to facilitate the dispersal of the seeds.

FTY: Why is fruit important?

-Culturally

AG: Fruits, like any food, are a doorway into a culture. The fruits we eat tell stories about who we are and what we value. Learning about fruits provides a deeper understanding of nature — and of human nature. There is a fruit underworld out there of people intensely devoted to fruits. There are reasons behind the bizarre fascination with fruits, and it has something to do with *biophilia*, the love of life.

-Politically

It took me about 4 chapters to try to begin answering this question, and that's barely a beginning. The fruit trade can affect a nation's entire economy. Being able to export fruits is phenomenally important to developing countries, yet many of them cannot sell their produce in North America.

We've also started to focus more on eating locally, yet we don't realize how that might affect a place like Haiti, which is trying to send us delicious, healthy mangos in the winter months. The local food movement makes sense environmentally, but it neglects the economic realities of an interlinked world. Just discussing this issue is a book-length endeavor — and there are thousands of other political issues in the world of fruits, from banana republics and unfair trade to pesticides and smuggling.

-Historically

Fruits are important historically because of their role in religious life. In the West, we were caught up with the idea of forbidden fruits, so we actually didn't eat that many fresh fruits. Only during the Renaissance did we start eating raw fruits. On a symbolic level fruits hint at a realm beyond duality. They are used as metaphors for experiences that can't be put into words.

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Fruits represent ideas we can't conceive of and places only found by those not seeking them. As St. Hildegard von Bingen once put it, *"In the fruit trees are hidden certain of God's secrets which only the blessed among men can perceive."*

FTY: What do you mean forbidden fruit?

AG: In the bible, fruits equated sin. And doctors

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believed fruit to be unhealthy. The physician Galen, whose 2nd century teachings prevailed for close to 1,500 years, cautioned against eating fruits, claiming they were troublesome in every way: they caused headaches, gullet distress, bad corruption, fevers, and even premature deaths. Galen believed raw fruits were to be used as a laxative. "We never need them for food, but only as a medication," he wrote.

FTY: What was the catalyst towards raw fruit during the Renaissance?

AG: The nobility was always ahead of the curve, in the sense that whatever they did was only later emulated by the rest of the population. Going against their doctors' orders, thrill-seeking sixteenth century royalty were among the first Europeans to consider raw fruits as delicacies.

FTY: Have you always been so interested in fruit?

AG: No. I mean, I used to like/dislike fruits as much as anybody else, but around 10 years ago I tasted some exotic fruits that blew me away. Then I encountered some fruit lovers who were like fully formed characters straight out of a story never written. Traveling to Brazil was the beginning for me.

It was a trip where I first became interested in fruits because I saw all these Amazonian fruits that I'd never heard of before. While in Hawaii on a freelance assignment, I realized there was a subculture of fruit people and their story could be a book. In Miami I met more people who made me laugh until I was crying. I just kept getting deeper and deeper into it, and pretty soon I was hanging out in the forests of Borneo and Tropical Africa. Whether or not you are into fruits, the book's first-person approach allows readers to experience things as I did, with the same sense of astonishment and bewilderment. I wasn't into fruits at the beginning, and other non-fruit freaks can come along for the adventure just by reading the book.

FTY: If you were stranded on a desert island and could only eat one fruit for the rest of your life, what would it be?

AG: I suppose the durian, but it would have to be a desert island somewhere near Indonesia or Malaysia so that the durians would be high quality. There are people out there who eat nothing but durians – durinarians – and if they can do it, perhaps I could too.

FTY: Why would a country/ retailer/ producer restrict market variety?

AG: Another massive question! I'll try to give a simple answer... Most consumers don't realize that good fruits are only available for a brief moment when they're in season. Retailers prefer to have low-grade stuff available year-round, so they don't focus on diversity. If we knew that good fruits existed, we might not buy the bad stuff any more, so supermarket chains don't want us to have access to the good stuff. They want us to buy sub-par fruits all year long. Another reason we don't have too much diversity in grocery stores is that fruit fly infestations from foreign fruits are a major threat to agricultural systems. Citrus canker is a disease that could cost California up to \$890 million in the event of an outbreak.

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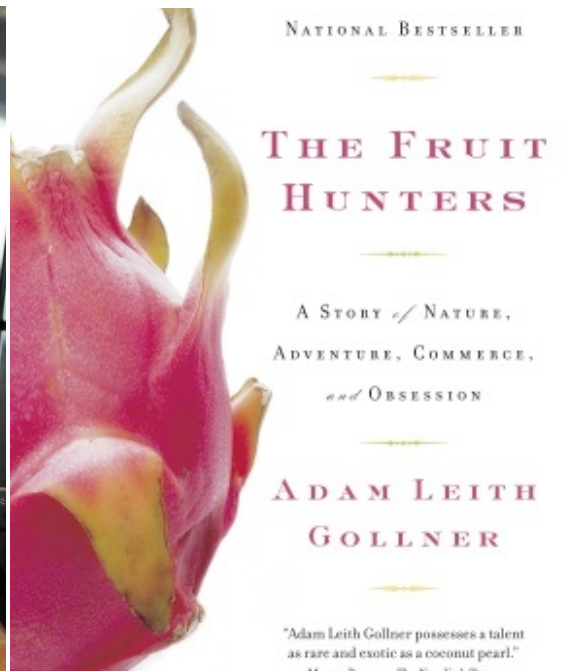
The Fruit Hunters

For sale on Amazon.com in the US, Canada and the UK

<http://www.thefruithunters.com>

Search "The Fruit Hunters" on facebook and join the club

Look sharp. There's a film version coming soon!



Fruit Hunting with Adam Gollner

continued...

A medfly plague would be even worse: if Mediterranean fruit flies were to take hold in California and continental America, it is estimated that they would cause \$1.5 billion in damages annually. It's for this reason that border guards are so stringent about keeping out fruits: smuggling can have disastrous consequences. Without pest concerns, importing fruits would be easier. Even though free trade agreements have eliminated many tariffs and other trade obstacles, unfounded phytosanitary concerns are often cited as a way of barring the import of foreign products. For cases when fruits genuinely harbor pests that could endanger domestic crops, these measures are vitally important. But in countless other instances, they are merely a way of blocking the import of fruits from developing nations.

FTY: Please talk about apples. They seem to be quite an important archetypal fruit, (Eve, John Lennon, Newton, Apple computers etc.) what are your thoughts?

AG: Apples are everywhere. There are over 20,000 named varieties of apples – not including all the countless other wild weirdoes that never merited a moniker. So many apples exist that we can't even count them all. Forget an apple a day – you could eat a different apple every day for the rest of your life, or at least for the next 55 years. There are apples that taste like raspberries, fennel, pineapple, cinnamon, watermelon, and banana-hazelnut ice cream. There is a variety of rectangular yellow apple that has a hollow core containing a mellifluous liquid that seeps out as you eat it. It's like the apple version of that gusher bubblegum with juice in the center. There are black-skinned Gilliflower apples, ivory hued White Transparents, orange-fleshed Apricot apples, and others with deep red interiors. A few summers ago, in the heirloom apple orchard at Vancouver's Strathcona park, I came across a nacreous apple identified by its tag as a Pink Pearl. As I cut out the first neat slice for some friends, we all gasped: its flesh was bright pink.

FTY: What's the next step for fruit hunting? How and will you continue the project?

AG: I'm writing another book that picks up where the last one left off. It's about immortality and the quest for never-ending life.

FTY: Do you consider yourself an activist? Why or why not?

AG: I consider myself a storyteller. I don't have any solutions, just stories.

FTY: Are you a fruitarian- why or why not?

AG: No! I'm not a fundamentalist in any way. I love eating fruits, and I start every day with fruits, but I like other foods too.

Thanks for reading the first issue of FeedTheYogi's newsletter!

All content is written and researched by Renee Sills for Feed The Yogi and Relish Gourmet. Please feel free to borrow from or reference any material contained herein, but please link back (or reference) and share the love.

Do you have an idea for an FTY interview or article?

renee@feedtheyogi.com