

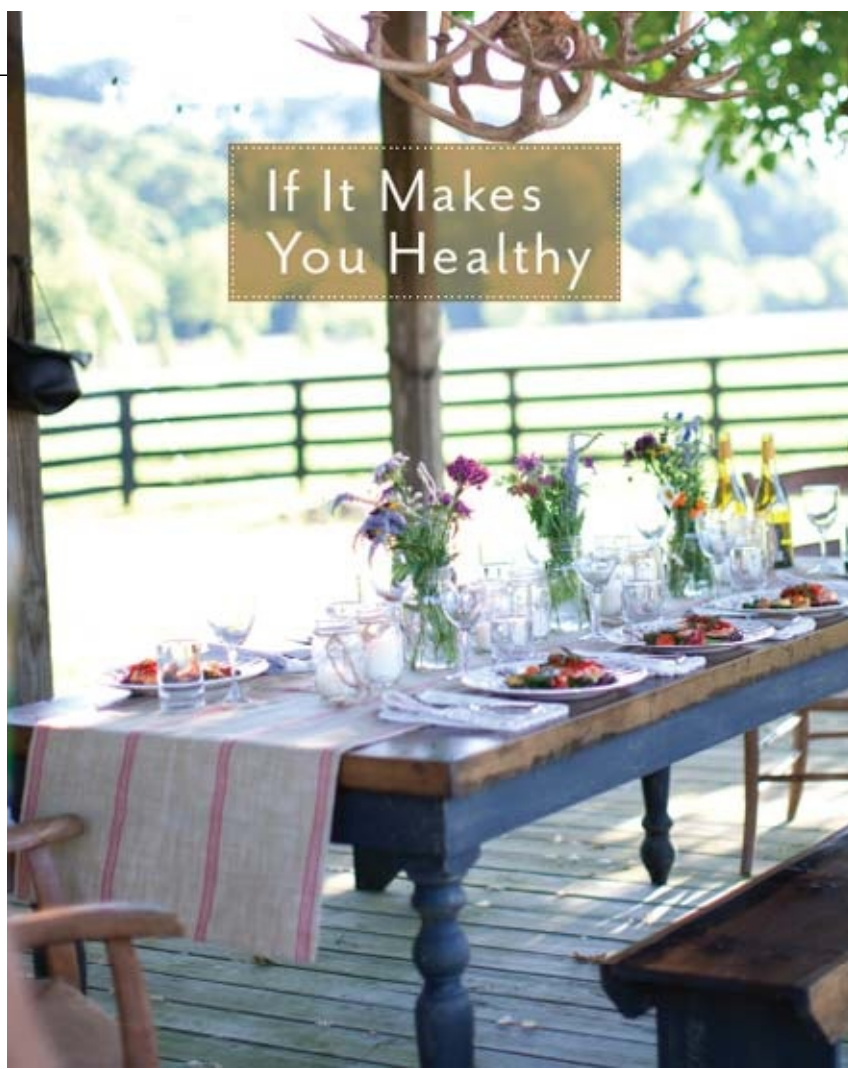
IF IT MAKES YOU HEALTHY

MORE THAN 100 DELICIOUS RECIPES
INSPIRED BY THE SEASONS

SHERYL CROW
AND CHUCK WHITE
WITH MARY GOODBODY



If It Makes
You Healthy





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*More Than 100 Delicious Recipes
Inspired by the Seasons*

SHERYL CROW *and* **CHUCK WHITE**

with Mary Goodbody • photographs by Victoria Pearson

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For my mother, Bernice, who is my hero and my favorite chef.

—SHERYL

For all the amazing people in my life. Most importantly, I would be nothing without God...anything possible with Him.

—CHUCK





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November 1, 2010

I met Sheryl Crow in her kitchen, of all places, in 2006. It was an inviting and comfortable room with well-used pots and an overflowing pantry; just a perfect space to discuss nutrition. You would have never guessed that she had just been diagnosed with breast cancer and was currently undergoing radiation therapy. She was dressed simply in faded jeans and a white T-shirt with her beautiful hair effortlessly pulled back. And though she beamed her famous and carefree smile, her eyes said that she was downright determined to learn everything she could from me. She was like a kid on the first day of school.

She jumped feetfirst and with good humor into the sustainable nutritional action plan I devised for her, which emphasized a serious dose of fiber, essential fatty acids, and other cancer-fighting foods. When it comes to nutrition, Sheryl clearly grasps that *she* is in the driver's seat and it is up to her to maximize her knowledge about optimal wellness and eating in the most preventative and life-affirming way. In following such a nutritional agenda, tastiness and ease are the keys to success. While clinical research has shown that we cannot ignore the role of nutrition in preventative health, nothing says we have to sacrifice pleasure at the table.

One of the first things Sheryl did in the weeks after our meeting was hire Chuck White, who cooks like an Iron Chef and yet is as sweet as a spring morning in his native state of Tennessee. He has been cooking for her and her crew ever since—often going on the road to make sure Sheryl eats right while she is on tour. Chuck somehow always manages to find fresh ingredients wherever Sheryl's schedule takes them, preparing meals that burst with appealing, nutrient-rich dishes. (The first time I met Chuck he prepared a dish I can only describe as omega-madness: A pecan-crusted trout served with quinoa noodles, which were to die for.) Believe me: Everyone wants to eat at Sheryl's table before a concert.

And everyone wants to eat at Sheryl's table at home, too: Sheryl's boys, Wyatt and Levi, gravitate to the kitchen when either Chuck or Mommy is cooking. Wyatt already eats just about everything his mom does and joins her at the dinner table every night, whether it's on the road or at home. Although Levi is still too young for much of the food that Sheryl eats, he will clearly benefit in the long run from her devotion to eating right. Having kids of my own, I know how gratifying it is to instill the little ones with healthful eating habits at an early age.

It's clear where Sheryl learned this altruism from—*her* own mother. When Sheryl was diagnosed, Bernice flew to Los Angeles. As soon as she arrived, she set about filling the freezer to the brim with batches of homemade nutritious soups she knew would appeal to her daughter. Describing these soups is easy: Think “creative-meets-nutritious...hello delicious!” Aren't moms the best? Clearly, Bernice's take-charge attitude and selfless passion run deep in the Crow family.

What I love most about *If It Makes You Healthy* is its realistic approach to cooking. Chuck incorporates the concept that it's okay to be a little indulgent every once in a while. He and Sheryl both believe that what matters is how you eat *most of the time*—and that *some of the time* it's okay to take a few liberties. His meals all start with antioxidant-bursting vegetables and from there he keeps things easy and simple. When special occasions arise, he adds a little opulence to the meal but never goes over the top.

Thank you Sheryl and Chuck for assembling a delicious collection of recipes supported by accessible information. *If It Makes You Healthy* is sure to reward anyone who reads it. Leave it to the rock star and her ingenious chef to show the rest of us how to do it right!

—RACHEL S. BELLER, MS, RD

Founder, Beller Nutritional Institute, LLC

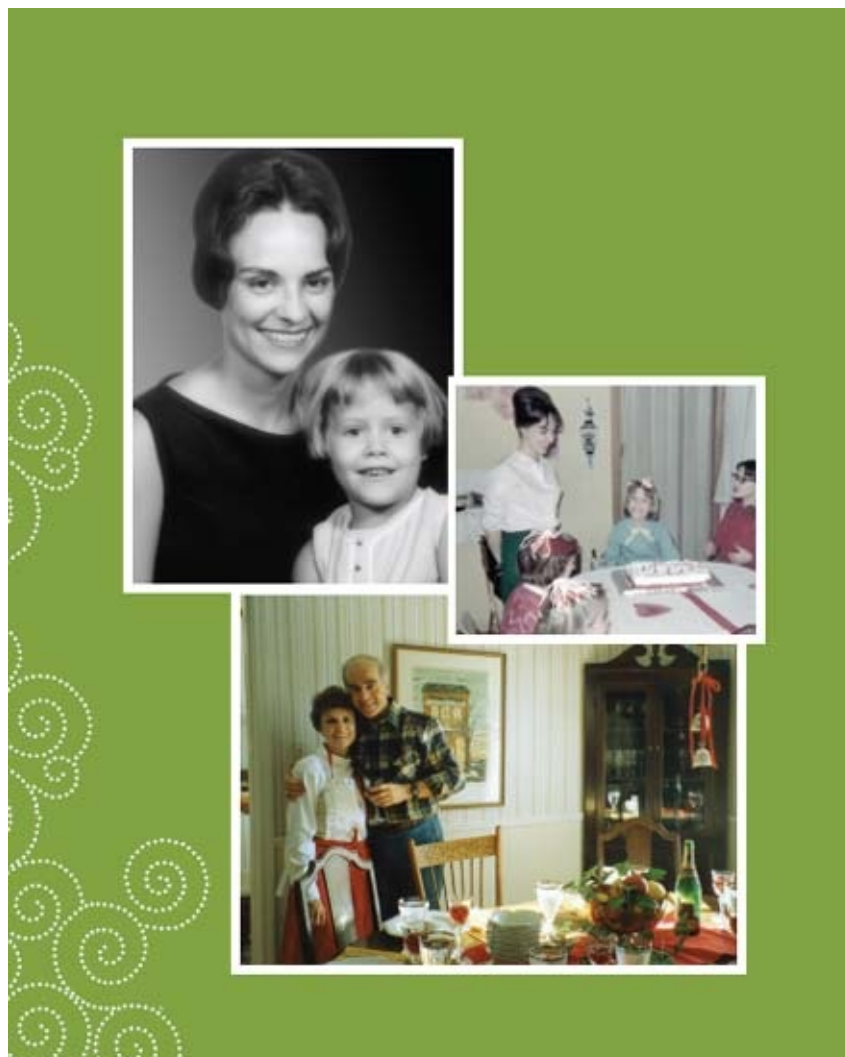


Introduction

When I was a kid growing up in Kennett, Missouri, life was pretty simple. I could walk to school every day, I could ride my bike anywhere in town, and I could always count on six o'clock dinner.

Dinnertime in the Crow household was a nightly event. Every evening, my family sat down to a tasty, well-balanced meal lovingly prepared by my mother. Mealtime was a wonderful ritual comprised of discussing the day's events at school and any other topics that might come up—no matter how busy our schedules would ultimately become, dinner was rarely missed.

My mother was and continues to be an excellent cook. She has always been someone who finds enjoyment in reading recipes. Considering there was no authentic ethnic food and certainly nothing consciously raised organic in my southern Missouri town, my mom always tried to be creative—I think she was the first person in our neighborhood to own a wok (although I vividly remember my father saying, "What are peanuts doing in the chicken!?). For the most part, we ate very Midwestern fare: pork roast, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and gravy. And cholesterol was never in short supply.



Because my mom was such a good cook, I never really took any interest in learning how to cook myself. Instead, I was one of four designated table-setters. When I left home, I didn't bother to learn because by then I had only myself to cook for. Meals were grabbed on the go, except on social occasions, and with a busy recording and touring life I found I lived mostly off hotel room service menus, tuna salad sandwiches in the dressing room, and overcooked catering spreads. It wasn't until I was diagnosed with breast cancer in February of 2006 that I began paying close attention to the foods put into my body.

Eating for Good Health

My cancer diagnosis was a real game changer for me, someone who has always been fit and healthy, although not a healthy eater by any stretch of the imagination. My cancer diagnosis screamed “vulnerable” to me. Never once in my life had I really considered what I put into my body as having direct connection to my wellness. Aside from the conventional treatment for my breast cancer, my oncologist suggested I meet with a nutritionist. That's when I was introduced to Rachel Beller, an extraordinary nutritionist, and I quickly became an enthusiastic student of wellness and nutrition. It just made sense to me. I learned the benefits of nutrients such as omega-3 (a fatty acid with disease-fighting properties), and lycopene (found primarily in tomatoes and which has been shown to help prevent cancer), and began to eat what I call an Eskimo diet—lots of salmon, brown rice, and colorful vegetables, the rule being whenever possible to eat the colorful version of a vegetable. I completed radiation in April, two months after the diagnosis, and headed out for a summer tour. Because it's always been challenging to eat healthfully on the road, I decided to hire a chef to cook for the band, the crew, and me. Not only did Chuck White come highly recommended, he really was an answered prayer on my road to eating for a healthy future.

Chuck White Enters My life

Chuck is modest and laid-back—he reminds me of a surfer—and I immediately fell in love with what he did with food. I wanted Chuck to continue with the nutritional path I was following so I connected him with Rachel. It was clear to both Rachel and me that Chuck had already been mastering cooking for health and wellness and was very current on all the latest dietary studies and information.

Chuck approaches cooking the way I approach songwriting. Just as I've grown up listening to great artists and building a repertoire of influences, he seems to have a dictionary of cooking references. He doesn't reinvent the wheel, but rather notes my particular tastes and pays careful attention to my health concerns and my energy level.

Being on the road so much and not being a great cook at home, I had become stuck in a rut eating the same things over and over, and Chuck has brought diversity and originality to my day. He was already incorporating into his own approach to cooking the steps that the nutritionist had recommended, but he has taken the job a hundred times further. He cooks with foods that are good for me and that I like and presents them in original and inspiring ways that are always delicious and often surprising. For example, incorporating lycopene into my diet is tricky because I'm not a huge fan of tomatoes, but Chuck came up with delicious soups with simple and unobtrusive tomato bases. I wanted to eat a lot of fish for the omega-3 nutrients that reduce inflammation, but found myself bored with grilled salmon

and halibut. Chuck came to the rescue, never being at a loss for ways to prepare fish that were fresh and original.

My nutritionist had suggested eating the more colorful version of any given vegetable whenever possible, because they have the most nutrients. Already being an ardent produce lover, Chuck introduced me to coleslaw made with just-picked purple cabbage that is full of vitamins. He visits both the farmers' market and supermarket and picks out what is freshest or in season. He selects produce with the brightest purples or oranges and whatever is highest in nutrients, and builds a meal around it. All this for someone who never realized that potatoes and cauliflower came in colors other than white!



Chuck's dishes incorporate spices that have cancer-fighting properties, such as cinnamon and cumin. There is much to know about spices that can be beneficial to general wellness and disease prevention and that each of us can easily incorporate into our daily nutrition routine.

As important as my health is and regardless of how dedicated I am to eating healthfully, I'm also a believer in the 10 percent cheat zone. This explains why I think it's important to have dessert. Chuck manages to make desserts that are tasty and extremely inventive—and still pretty healthy! For example, he makes a chocolate mousse thickened with avocado—which is truly amazing and maybe has to be tasted to be believed (the recipe is [here](#)). He also grills juicy summer peaches and fills them with lavender-infused [cream cheese](#).

Motherhood Changed Me Even More

Since I've become a mother, my appreciation for Chuck has grown even stronger. My kids are the most important part of my life, and like every mom, I want to nourish them with the best, most healthful food possible. I consider myself lucky that I have access to great food and recipes—thanks to Chuck's mentoring—that help their little bodies grow and thrive. I think the real struggle with feeding kids is being creative and not giving in to the mac-and-cheese box or the frozen chicken fingers, but instead finding ways to give them the tastes they love in a healthy way.

It's also important to me that my children grow up eating the same dishes I eat at mealtime. It's the way it was in my house growing up. In fact, I remember my mother saying on numerous occasions when one of us would complain about wanting something other than what we were having for that particular meal, "Do I look like a short-order cook?!" That's why I love dishes such as Chuck's quinoa pasta or his corn chowder, which happens to have popcorn sprinkled on top. What kid doesn't love popcorn? I know Wyatt does; and meanwhile, we are eating healthfully.

I have said time and again that I have been fortunate enough to travel the world and to eat in some of the best and most famous restaurants. I've eaten meals cooked by some of the most recognizable and most successful chefs in the business, but I can honestly say that the best meals I've ever had have been right here in my own home outside Nashville, where I live with Wyatt and Levi. In this book, I want to welcome readers into my kitchen and introduce them to Chef Chuck, the man who changed everything for me. I hope my readers will then set off on their own path toward a better, healthier way of living for them and their families.

A Word from Chuck

Before you read this book and try the recipes, let me explain how Sheryl and I feel about eating meat, poultry, and fish. We believe all animals deserve to be raised in their natural environments, whether that is deep in the ocean or an open pasture. When I cook for Sheryl and others, I make every effort to find responsibly, humanely raised beef, pork, chicken, and seafood. I look for wild-caught salmon, free-range chicken, grass-fed beef, and heritage pork. I talk to the purveyors at farmers' markets and visit farms near Nashville—or wherever I'm cooking—to uncover the best meat and poultry available.

Throughout the book, I write about these animals and offer tips and advice for finding them for your own table. Take advantage of the growing number of farmers' markets and seek out suppliers that ship high-quality and well-raised meats and chicken. Talk to your fishmonger and find out where he gets his fish and ask for the freshest he has. This is our soapbox. Our shared philosophy is woven through the book and is something about which we care deeply. We don't aim to hit you over the head with it, but we do hope you will come to appreciate how important these products are to our environment and health—and how great they taste.



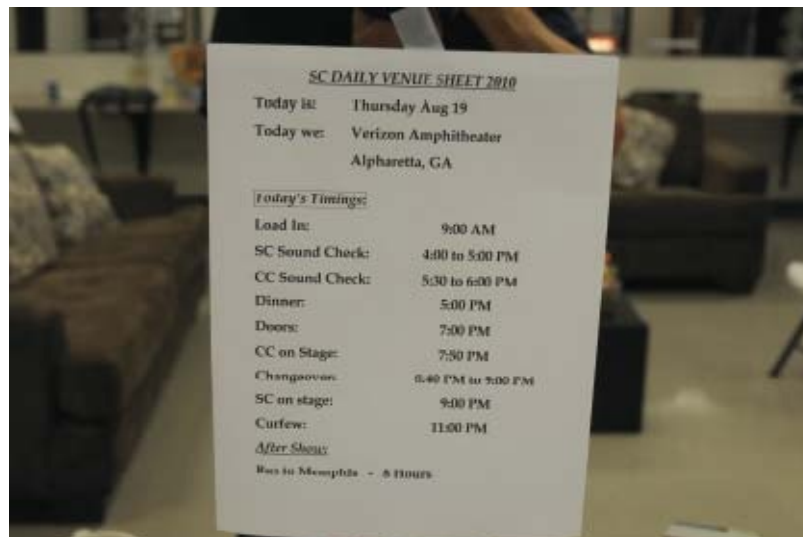


On the Road



It's a real challenge to eat healthfully on the road. Yet there is an emotional relationship to food that can really build the morale of the band, or deflate it. No one wants to eat overcooked food that has been sitting too long on the catering table, and so I depend on Chuck to prepare tasty, nutritious meals for my band and my family and me—nothing too heavy, too sweet, or too spicy, since we have to perform.

Supper on the road is more than grabbing a quick meal. It's a time for fellowship, which, for all of us, is as important as the actual gig. I believe it is a lot to ask people to leave their families and friends and travel across the country for weeks on end to support me, so it's really important to me that they feel loved and appreciated and taken care of. Taking Chef Chuck on the road with me is a gift to all of us. He gives us something to look forward to every time we sit down together to eat, and at the same time his food is giving us the energy and sustenance we need to do our very best when we walk out onstage.



Since Wyatt and Levi came along, life on the road is distinctly different from how it used to be. All the drugs, sex, and rock-and-roll...well, they never really existed on our tours to begin with, but suffice it to say that any sort of remnant of past rock-and-roll touring has been replaced by books and toys, bottle warmers and diapers, a bike with training wheels and a blow-up swimming pool. The key is to make the bus seem as much like home as possible. It's the same with snacks. Chuck has always done an amazing job of creating snacks and stocking the bus with gluten-free munchies, fruits, and all sorts of yummy fare for a three-year-old. Levi is working on getting some teeth so he can eventually eat what big brother eats!

I love touring. I love interacting with the audience, standing up in front of a full house and sharing my music. I cannot lie—it is an odd way to live. We go to sleep in one town and wake up in another. My kids don't know a different life, with the exception of when we are at home at the farm, and so it's important that they stay healthy and active. This means a balanced and healthful diet, but also means that I make our time together rich and fun. So, when we're on the road, I make every effort to do something special with Wyatt every day. This might be a visit to a local zoo, children's museum

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