

Gisele's Chef Shares Nutrition Secrets

Gisele Bündchen & Tom Brady made headlines recently for their [uber strict diet](#), which is 80% plant-based and prohibits any inflammatory ingredients, including sugar, iodized salt, white flour, coffee, fungus, tomatoes, nightshades, and dairy. Their children snack on homemade spirulina fruit roll-ups, while mom and dad indulge in hearty salads.

[Joanne Gerrard Young](#) is the Brady-Bündchen family's private chef in Costa Rica, where they have a vacation compound. Joanne is a holistic nutritionist, master raw food chef, and wellbeing educator. When Joanne, founder of [The Healing Cuisine](#), isn't cooking for the Brady-Bündchen family, she is tailoring highly coveted cleanses for anyone from models to Costa Rican locals.

The dynamic Canadian-born chef gave us a glimpse into her fridge, and a few diet tips as well.

Christine: I've never seen a fridge like this...! I see a lot of exotic fruits. I know that Gisele is on a raw food diet when she stays in Costa Rica. What's in those glass jars?

Joanne: We have fresh juices—a green juice, a veggie juice, two superfood spirulina smoothies, and a chlorophyll tea which I make with burdock root and mint. And on the right is my hibiscus tea which is a rose-orange tea, for liver support.

Christine: You once said that, "they didn't want to do desserts anymore, for healthy eating purposes, but I shared all of my raw vegan desserts with them and they love them and have them all the time."

Joanne: Yes, and they have dessert at lunch time! It's not something you wanna do every day, obviously.

Christine: Do you follow a specific routine in the morning?

Joanne: My morning routine begins with a gratitude practice. I touch my feet to the floor and give thanks to the earth for her support and providing us with food. I drink two glasses of water, giving gratitude for the clean water that gives us life and cleanses toxins from our body. I have a green smoothie made of kale, aloe vera, spirulina, chia, hemp hearts, banana, pineapple, and papaya. Then I go for a moving meditation beach walk, kundalini yoga, or pilates.

Christine: What do you typically put in your green juice?

Joanne: I like to start with celery, cucumber, and apple. Then we add different herbs or aloe vera. If it's for a juice cleanse it depends on the client—if they're having weakness in the adrenals, we'll add daikon radish - if they're anaemic we might add more greens or do nettle tea. I adapt the recipe according to the person I'm cooking for.

Christine: You do juice cleanses too, right? Joanne: Right, once a year. There is no set time, it depends on my body and how I'm feeling. There was a year when I didn't do any and a year where I did two because I was having parasite issues. Christine: I see an orange-ish jar - is that sauerkraut?

Joanne: Yes, these are both krauts. There's a red cabbage kraut. There is also a carrot, turmeric, and green cabbage kraut. I eat a little bit of kraut everyday, I use it as a condiment - it's amazing. We call them colonizing probiotics. We take probiotics as a pill but we only have it in our system as we're taking it. But the kraut ferments, it has more colonizing probiotics. You have to let it come back to room temperature before you eat it though, as when it's in the fridge it's "sleeping."

Christine: I see different kinds of herbs on the middle shelf, and lots of fruits. Are those for your smoothies?

Joanne: There are lots of passion fruits and mangoes—all of those fruits go into my salads, parfaits, and juices - our breakfasts and lunches. I add the avocados to my smoothies to make them thicker.

Christine: You also have a bunch of zucchinis - I guess those are for the spiralizer!

Joanne: Yes! There are big zucchinis for the noodles. The mini ones, the little yellow squash, we marinate them and put them on our pastas, or we make salads with them. Or we slice them and marinate them and put them on our pizzas as toppings. Sometimes I marinate them with Asian flavours and put them on cauliflower rice or marinate them with Mediterranean flavors and put them on noodles. Or I make a Thai dish, like a coconut soup, and I add them to that.

Christine: You also have lots of green beans. How do you serve them?

Joanne: We marinate or blanch green beans to soften them a little bit. Green beans and cauliflower can be really hard on the digestive system—in terms of raw food, they are the hardest to break down.

Christine: What do you usually cook for Gisele? I know that she's completely gaga for your strawberry parfait.

Joanne: Yes! When she's here in Costa Rica she loves to eat big, elaborate salads.

Christine: Speaking of salads, what is your approach?

Joanne: There's so many different ways you can do salad! It doesn't have to be green. Sometimes I do tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions, and chickpeas. If you have a spiralizer, you can have all kinds of cool salads. Or you can do a warm salad—if you warm your dressing

it'll wilt it a little bit, which is nice - top it with warm, roasted sweet potatoes and toasted pumpkin seeds for a little salty crunch.

Christine: That sounds delicious. What are your favorite ingredients to cook with?

Joanne: Avocados for sure. In Costa Rica coconuts are amazing to work with - they are my favorite ingredient because they are so versatile. I make coconut yogurt. I also turn the coconut cream into sour cream, or egg yolk-tzatziki whipped cream. An older coconut's milk is great for a lemongrass coconut soup. Or you can make a coconut caramel. Then you have the shredded coconut, which I make my crusts with. Coconut is a really magical ingredient.

Christine: What is your go-to protein, since you're a plant-based chef?

Joanne: My favorite high-quality protein is hemp hearts. Victoras Kulvinskas, my mentor and teacher, has taught me that the most bioavailable form of protein are ferments - your sauerkraut is a huge source of protein. When you think of it on a biological level, they are actually living organisms - so it makes sense that they provide protein. Once you break down and cook a piece of steak you lose 85% of the protein. Raw kale or raw broccoli have more protein, comparatively.

Christine: What would you recommend to eat for breakfast?

Joanne: I recommend having water 20-30 minutes before you eat, not during your meal. I eat very lightly in the morning because all night the body is fasting - you've been detoxing all night. After your water, have some fruit - then mid-morning a little oatmeal. Lunch is my biggest meal of the day. Soup for dinner is really nice on your body. My favorite meal is probably rice and lentils! I really love ethnic food.