Clarion Review

Health & Fitness

Your Heart Needs the Mediterranean Diet: Learn How Mediterraneans Have Kept a Healthy Heart for Centuries

Emilia Klapp
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Four Stars (out of Five)

> *The Mediterranean diet is a synergy of health and aesthetics and although each component of this diet contributes with an array of benefits on its own it's the combination of all of them that makes this diet so powerful.*

Motivated by the untimely deaths of her mother and three peers Emilia Klapp shed an Americanized health-style characterized by fatty processed foods and pursued a degree in dietetics. Now she advocates for a better way combining menus and practices widespread in her native Spain and throughout the Mediterranean region with scientific information regarding antioxidants free radicals and the circulatory system.

The delivery is in a series of discussions between Klapp and a fairly uninformed client named Al who wishes to take better care of himself. Al is fond of coffee and ice cream; he reduces lunch hour to a few minutes because his job in quality control is so demanding. When asked if he walks regularly the response is: "What do you mean?" In other words he could be anyone.

Instruction begins with an overview of "The Pillars" including olive oil the primacy of vegetables and the integration of physical activity into regular daily activities. From there the case turns more individual with a readable balance between biochemical processes and keeping it interesting in the kitchen. The author is wily enough to show the positive reactions of coworkers and family to a person who models healthier behavior making the effort more attractive. Ancient mysteries like what exactly makes the most nutritious (and expensive) olive oil "extra virgin" are uncovered: it is cold pressed without the introduction of extractives like

sodium hydroxide and hexane.

Emilia Klapp is a registered dietitian in the Los Angeles area. Her Spanish upbringing adds further credibility to claims and recommendations. Medical statements are born out by references of topflight university research and the majority of them jibe with informed common sense. Two specifics are questionable: organic fruit is sweeter than conventional fruit and exercise can be effectively “cumulative” in blocks of a few minutes and still be beneficial. The benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids are mentioned but fish receive only brief coverage. Large print questions inserted into the text help a skimmer find points of particular interest. The thirteen recipes are typically uncomplicated containing ingredients found at most grocery stores.

Your Heart Needs the Mediterranean Diet presents a manageable integrated approach to cardio fitness using traditional Old World foods and habits. A better future is practically assured by implementing past practices and a universal story is sometimes best told in a personalized dialogue between teacher and student.