

Eat, Drink and Be Gorgeous. A Nutritionist's Guide to Living Well While Living It Up

By: Esther Blum

Published by: Chronicle Books, 2007

Reviewed: Aug 2008

Esther Blum is a New York-based registered dietitian, certified dietitian/nutritionist and certified nutrition specialist. She shares her secrets for enjoying a healthful lifestyle without missing out on the fun. The target for this book is single, working women at the peak of their social life with the premise that "sexing up" nutrition, New York style, makes it more appealing.

Pros

Sassy advice is appropriately packaged in a smooth, shiny, girly pink and black book design with a bad girl edge. This makes the book attractive and alluring and it's a good match for the light girlfriend-y tone.

It is entertaining to see how the edgy playful tone knocks the ho-hum out of nutrition and turns up the fun with food and sex.

The advice on moderation and exercise is very wise and the direction about organics being a personal choice is sensible. There is very practical information for healthier options in the Splurge and Solution section.

Cons

The book is ultra heavy on supplements, with recommendations for acne, PMS and even dandruff. We don't buy the supplement recommendations. No evidence is provided and references are lacking.

We were surprised that a Registered Dietitian would rely so heavily on supplements and dole out questionable information. Dietitians are educated to be very savvy about the fact that nutrients at high intake levels can have adverse effects. Some of Blum's suggestions exceed the recommended levels.

Some of the facts were puzzling, for example, pasteurization cuts down the calcium levels in milk. Some were just plain wrong, for example, canned vegetables being "probably devoid of nutrients" and, egg yolks having more protein than egg whites. And some facts needed to be made clearer, for example the idea that exercising first thing in the morning on an empty stomach burns 30% more calories than exercising later in the day.

Bottom Line

We would recommend reading the first chapter which focuses on general nutrition, but beyond that we can't stand behind the nutrition/supplement-based recommendations. The book is great for a laugh, but don't run out and buy all the supplements that are suggested. It's a fun read at first, but we question the science and would not suggest that readers take it seriously.