

Sexy Women Eat

Sexy Women Eat

Secrets to Eating What You Want
and Still Looking Fabulous

DIVYA GUGNANI

HARPER

NEW YORK • LONDON • TORONTO • SYDNEY

HARPER

SEXY WOMEN EAT. Copyright © 2011 by Behind the Burner, LLC. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information address HarperCollins Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022.

HarperCollins books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information please write: Special Markets Department, HarperCollins Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022.

FIRST EDITION

Designed by Eric Butler

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Gugnani, Divya.

Sexy women eat / Divya Gugnani. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-06-199882-9 (pbk.)

1. Weight loss. 2. Women—Health and hygiene. I. Title.

RM222.2.G783 2011

613.2'5—dc22

2010022212

11 12 13 14 15 OV/RRD 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Author's Note

This book is written as a source of information only. The information contained in this book should by no means be considered a substitute for the advice of a qualified medical professional, who should always be consulted before beginning any new diet, exercise, or other health program.

All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this book as of the date published. The author and the publisher expressly disclaim responsibility for any adverse effects arising from the use or application of the information contained herein.

Contents

Introduction **xi**

CRAZY BUT IT WORKS

Chapter 1

Spandex and Sports Bra Optional

3

Chapter 2

Ways to Say Good-bye to 150

11

Chapter 3

A Sweet Tooth for a Firm Ass

15

Chapter 4

Fat Mess vs. Hot Dress: You Decide

25

THINGS YOUR DOCTOR WON'T TELL YOU

Chapter 5

Eating Muffins Gives You Muffin Top

37

Chapter 6

Supersize It

49

Chapter 7

If the Apron Fits, Wear It

63

Chapter 8

True Life

71

Chapter 9

Beyond Metamucil

77

CHEAT SHEET

Chapter 10

Serving Size Sexy

83

Chapter 11

Takeout Tactics

85

Chapter 12

Ethnic Eats

91

Chapter 13

The Four O’Clock Problem

97

Chapter 14

Room Service

105

Chapter 15

The Morning After

113

YOU CAN’T MAKE THIS STUFF UP

Chapter 16

Liar, Liar, Plate on Fire

121

Chapter 17

Spot Secret

133

Chapter 18

How Not to Be a Heifer This Holiday

143

Chapter 19

A Mano Is Not a Man

149

LIFE LESSONS

Chapter 20

Office Space

155

Chapter 21

My Happy Pills

159

Chapter 22

Breakup Binge

165

Chapter 23

Food Cures All

171

Chapter 24

Mr. Martini

177

Acknowledgments 183

Sources 187

Introduction

I had a bowl-shaped haircut and buck teeth. My family called me “Beaver.” Just picture an eight-year old walking down the aisle of the supermarket and her dad screaming “Beaver” across the cereal boxes. No, my parents are not perverts. They are Indian immigrants who happen to have a profound sense of patriotism and didn’t realize the sexual connotation. They gave me that name because I was always as busy as a beaver (some things never change!). I’ve been trying to outgrow it ever since, but every now and then my sister just slips and lets it out like she’s on a loudspeaker. As if my childhood pet name wasn’t bad enough, I wore glasses and looked like a blind person dressed me for school each day. Why else do you think I hid in the kitchen when my parents had parties? It was time well spent, as I learned how to cook at a young age. My family is obsessed with food. At breakfast we discuss lunch, at lunch we debate dinner options, and after dinner we marinate our minds to start the drill all over again in

the A.M. We have two refrigerators in our house and every time you open one of them, you are sure to get hit in the knees with a piece of falling cheese or knocked out by veggies flowing out from the overstuffed shelves. When we entertain in the winter, we park our cars in the driveway and put food in the trunk because there is never enough room in either of our refrigerators. You can put any protein, fruit, or vegetable in front of me and I will find a way to slice, dice, and sauté it.

My passion for cooking and stints in two culinary programs eventually turned into a profession after a ten-year career in finance ranging from investment banking to venture capital. After coaching many companies of all sizes on building, growing, and selling their businesses, I retired as a full-time coach and became a captain. I founded and created Behind the Burner, a culinary media brand, which allowed me to blend my passion for food and fine wine with business.

At Behind the Burner we feature a network of experts in four fields: food, wine, mixology, and nutrition. We package our experts' (celebrity chefs, winemakers, mixologists, nutritionists, etc.) best tips, tricks, and techniques in the form of videos, articles, and blogs. Our videos get syndicated on broadcast TV (NBC New York Nonstop) and a large network of online media properties. I do regular weekend programming for WNBC, and we even have a podcast on iTunes for those of you who live life via gadgets. We offer discounts on the tools and ingredients the experts recommend so you can replicate restaurant quality experiences at home, in a flash, at a fraction of the cost.

So, with my new career, I officially eat and drink for a living. I jump from city to city with my team, eating and drinking all that America (and beyond!) has to offer. Does life get better than

that? I think not. With the help of braces (later InvisAlign) and Lasik surgery (thank God for both), this ugly duckling turned into a swan and smiles in front of cameras on a daily basis. Some of the best designers lend me clothes, hence masking my ineptitude to dress myself. I also stuff my face with the most delicious food, sip the season's best wines, and go bottoms-up on the latest cocktail craze.

Regardless of my job or position, I've always lived life with one philosophy: pick the job you love and it won't feel like work. Get the position that you enjoy; yes, the one that you would be happy to have even if you never got paid to fulfill your duties. Come into the office each day and give it your 100 percent. Scratch that. One million percent. Whether it was walking into 85 Broad Street at Goldman Sachs as an investment banking analyst or being a line cook on Sixty-third Street at Chef's Table, I lived each day as a sponge, ready to soak up every bit of information and learn every skill possible.

For the ten years prior to *Behind the Burner*, I paid my dues, climbed up the venture capital ladder, and eventually reached a point in my career where I had hours to spend in the gym (while minions crunched numbers in windowless cubicles, of course). Everything changed very quickly when I launched my own business. Just as fast as my six-figure paycheck disappeared, so did my personal time. Welcome to the life of a start-up. Good-bye happy hour with friends and hello twelve- to twenty-hour days filled with technical challenges, strategy meetings, delayed filming schedules, and much more. As a media entrepreneur at an emerging company I have zero minutes and zero seconds to dedicate to my personal well-being, therefore, the world has become my gym. Sleep is a luxury I can't afford. With a few mistakes

along the way and a string of not-so-suitable suitors, I've finally learned how to be fit and fabulous while enjoying every bite of my decadent lifestyle. Furthermore, if eating sweets is wrong, then I don't want to be right.

I went from roadkill to ravishing and lucky you is about to be served my culinary secrets learned Behind the Burner.

I'm a food slut, or in simpler terms, a woman who eats. For me, sexy is ravishing. It is confidence and beauty with an honest appetite and a healthy mind-set. Not someone who dates just to eat good meals and after getting wined and dined gives the purchaser of their expensive dinners a little nooky. I know a girl's gotta eat, but believe me, ladies, it's so much tastier when you've worked hard enough to be able to afford your dining adventures. Instead, I'm a new breed of food slut; someone with a disgustingly unnatural appetite; someone who scarfs down food quicker than anyone else at the table. Yet someone who has also learned that eating is a beautiful thing that can still leave you looking and feeling fabulous. So I hope you'll turn the page and dig into my little black book of tips to keep your body fit and your stomach full.

CRAZY
BUT IT
WORKS

Chapter I

Spandex and Sports Bra Optional

I Don't Sweat It When I
Can't Make the Gym

At 5:00 P.M. on a Saturday night I was riding down the company elevator (yes, we worked Saturdays), and John Corzine (former CEO of Goldman Sachs) asked me, “If I built a gym, would you use it?” My response was, “Hell yeah.” Sure enough, months later, Goldman Sachs had its own gym; rock-climbing wall and all. Better yet, we got workout clothes to prevent us from schlepping them back and forth to work and having people in the subway give us appalled looks. Wondering where that dirty sock smell was coming from? Not my bag! For those two years of my life, Goldman Sachs headquarters near Wall Street was my home. Early mornings, late nights, and constant travel left me little time to actually nest in my apartment. My bed was my only furniture friend and I saw it for about four to six hours a night—

if I was lucky! Most other nights I lived the high life—you know, sleeping on a managing director’s couch or my winter coat on the floor of my cubicle. My puffy North Face jacket made the best mattress, I soon discovered.

On the bright side, I must say the Goldman gym was paradise. The machines were not made of gold, although they probably could have afforded that, it was just a state-of-the-art adult paradise. I ran on the treadmill while watching all of the latest sitcoms (back in the day when it wasn’t *all* reality TV) that I secretly wished I was watching on my comfy couch at home. Thank God for Netflix. I took classes and even became a decent rock climber. One day, upon returning from the gym at 8:00 P.M. and ordering the maximum allowable food for my daily corporate dinner budget, I noticed a very nice pair of Via Spiga heels in the stall next to me in the bathroom. Hours later, after cranking out more numbers than any human brain should be allowed to hold, I returned to the bathroom and saw those Via Spiga heels in the same place. Either someone with very nice shoes was murdered in that stall, or someone had taken off her shoes and fallen asleep mid-pee (I highly doubt passing out during mid-shit was possible). I assumed it was the latter. It turns out one of my fellow analysts was taking a much needed nap on the can. She had even walked up two flights of stairs to my floor so that no one from her department would recognize her shoes!

You may think you are Superwoman, but truth be told, we all need to sleep, especially if we want to maintain our ideal weight. So, ladies, get it while you can—even if you have to nap in bathroom stalls. When you get enough sleep (and I don’t), you won’t rely on sweets and carb-filled snacks as much to stay awake during the workday. That means fewer calories in your belly

for the day. Also, hormones affect your sleep. Two hormones, ghrelin and leptin (no, they are not gremlins), work together to control your feelings of hunger and fullness. Ghrelin stimulates your appetite and is produced in your gastrointestinal tract, while leptin tells your brain when you are full and is produced in fat cells. When you don't get enough z's, your leptin levels go down, which means your tummy doesn't feel full after you eat. Not enough sleep also causes spikes in your ghrelin, which stimulates your appetite, so you reach for all of the cookies in the cookie jar. Now, back to bathrooms . . .

Months later, one of the assistants in my group was making panting noises from the handicapped stall and I realized she was doing jumping jacks. I asked her why she didn't just go to the gym. She told me doing jumping jacks in the Goldman Sachs bathroom was all the exercise she could get as a mother of a toddler who also commuted forty minutes a day to work. Just when I thought I had it rough sleeping in a cubicle, I realized life could be worse.

For the years that followed, I didn't have the luxury of a workplace gym, but I kept up the bathroom exercise (I prefer jogging in place rather than doing jumping jacks, especially when I can't get a handicapped stall) and made a point of walking to work regularly and walking home. It allowed me time to destress, relax, and be alone with my own thoughts (scary!). If you know me, you'd know that I don't sweat much. So, lucky me, I got to work without the need to spray on perfume upon walking in the door. Because I loathe mornings, A.M. workouts in the gym are not my cup of tea. Instead, I would go home, work out, and then make myself a simple and easy dinner. No thirty-minute meals in my house. More like fifteen-minute meals or five- to ten-minute ones

if I was superorganized. Daily groceries were picked up on my walk home, of course.

During the day I kept dumbbells under my desk. I'd break them out in the middle of conference calls to prevent myself from being entirely bored out of my skull. I wore ankle weights under my Theory pants. The key was that no one ever knew that I was burning more calories and building muscle with each step I took. I'd hoist myself up on the kitchen counter while heating up my lunch to get my biceps and triceps toned—talk about successful multitasking! Every now and again, someone would walk by my office and see my face bobbing up and down while I did body lifts with my office chair. While my co-workers wanted to check me into the nearest insane asylum, I was just trying to stay fit in any way possible while working the heinous hours that were par for the course given my career in finance. I had turned my office into my own personal gymnasium, making use of every feasible object around me in order to stay fit. This was far from mental, it was pure genius. I felt that little spurts of exercise would get my heart rate up and help me burn off all my calorie-laden meals more efficiently. During a brief stint working in Palo Alto, California, I kept sneakers in my desk drawer and walked around our company parking lot during lunch. I took the stairs every chance I got. Trust me, if you saw my egg-cracking toned ass, you would too.

Speaking of ass, I got off mine every time I had to ask a colleague a question. In the world of e-mail, I admit to being a regular abuser, communicating via screen to people two feet away from me. Technology has made us lazy, but I still value human interaction, especially when I need to discuss important business matters that can be lost over mistyped words. Every now

and again someone will notice that I'm lifting my legs constantly under my desk to tone my thighs. After all, I've got my mom's genes but clearly not her body shape, since her thighs are about half the size of mine. Some of us just have to work for it.

My favorite office gadget of all time is the headset. I couldn't live without it. I was on the phone constantly, but would pace around my office like a frantic wannabe Wall Streeter (stress ball in hand, of course) and burn calories, even while on the phone. When I drove to meetings or got dropped off, I would get out far away from the entrance, just so I could get a walk in before getting stuck in a windowless conference room for hours. These little sporadic spurts of exercise would boost my energy level and help me concentrate better all day. They also helped me get good quality sleep at night, a rarity in my life, as you know by now.

Overall, I've got a new take on fitness. It's gotta be part of your everyday life, not just two hours of a kick-ass routine with a personal trainer. A lot of my exercise occurs without having to watch overly confident men trying to lift weights that are just too heavy for them. Spandex and sports bras are not mandatory for burning a few extra calories. I prefer my exercise to be simple and not too sweaty. I have a horrible habit of multitasking while I work out. At my last venture capital firm, we had yet another company gym. I frequently took conference calls while I was climbing flights of stairs on the Stairmaster. I confess I did kill a few BlackBerries by typing e-mails and dropping them on my feet while walking on the elliptical machine. A combination of strength training (and that doesn't mean carrying your overstuffed purse around town—that's just bad for your back) and cardio is the perfect recipe for a toned body without having to feel the burn of overdone workouts.

I also try to swim a few days a week. My father threw me into a pool when I was about two years old and I've been a fish ever since. If there is a body of water in sight, I need to be in it—minus the man-made lake at Central Park. As the CEO and host of *Behind the Burner*, I've found that my knees and back pretty much hate me. They suffer about four hours a day of standing in pencil-thin Jimmy Choos and Louboutins. When I'm exercising, I try to spare them and stick to swimming, which is oh so much better on my joints than running and other forms of cardio. Swimming also helps me build my endurance and power through long days of filming. It builds muscle mass, strengthens and tones muscle while protecting joints from strain and stress. Additionally, swimming forces me to wear a bikini all year long, reminding me summer isn't the only time to tighten those abs.

In the winter, people get lazy. The only walking they do is to the fridge, and strength training involves carrying lunch back to their desk. Don't fall into this trap. Even though that winter sweater hides love handles quite nicely, they will be out for public display when you take that much needed winter beach vacation. I will also admit to wearing a pedometer and tracking my steps (particularly in the winter). It's a fun experiment where I get competitive with myself and try to take as many steps as possible. I log on and monitor my steps quite obsessively. Oh, and the dorky black thing clipped on my nice shoes is a constant topic of conversation and makes the day more thrilling.

One late night, pounding away on my Mac keyboard in bed, I started watching some infomercials in the background. Okay, I'll admit, I can be a sucker. I have a Ped Egg and a few hair gadgets too! But I haven't succumbed to Bumpit yet, don't worry. Besides, my hair isn't even flat. Anyhow, what I did fall

victim to was an infomercial for 10-Minute Trainer and immediately ordered it—I love how I’m referring to the trainer as some troll pet about to whip my ass in shape. But come on, who doesn’t want to work out for ten minutes a day and look like they spent hours in the gym? When the package arrived at work, I tore it open and got started right away by popping the CD in my work laptop. I discovered the workouts were easy and the ten minutes just flew by. I got my heart rate up pretty significantly and I felt like it was time well spent. I mixed it up between cardio, yoga, and abs.

Over the next few months, I modified the workouts and even put in my own moves—impressive, right? I have been committed to exercising ten minutes a day about four days a week, regardless of how many restaurant openings and parties I attend on a daily basis. I made a commitment to myself that ten minutes is so little to spare.

And no, I am not some spokesperson for this workout tape. The point is simple: if I can take ten minutes to watch some catfight on a reality TV show I can definitely take ten minutes out of my day to work on my own body. And so can you.

My Seven Best Kept Nutrition Secrets, Revealed!

1. *Forget family-style:* Recent studies have found that when people are served pre-plated food as opposed to empty plates with a platter of food in the middle of the table, they eat up to 35 percent less.
2. *Pop to it!* Nutritionists have found that people who ate one cup of microwaved popcorn thirty minutes before lunch

consumed 105 fewer calories at the meal (just make sure you choose plain, lightly-salted popcorn, and hold the butter!).

3. *Meaty mushrooms*: Research reports that people who ate mushroom-based entrées felt just as satisfied as when they'd eaten those same dishes made with meat. Substituting mushrooms for meat is a great way to cut fat and cholesterol.
4. *Incredible and edible*: Eggs aren't just for breakfast—they make great additions to salad and portable snacks because they pack a punch of protein and amino acids.
5. *Slimming salads*: Did you know that eating a salad before an entrée can reduce your overall calorie intake by as much as to 12 percent?
6. *Kick the cravings*: The greatest numbers of cravings occur late in the day, when our blood sugar tends to drop. So arm yourself with a handful of nuts or a piece of fruit to snack on.
7. *Wine not?* Wine has positive effects in more ways than one. Studies show that people who drank one glass of wine a day had slimmer waistlines than those who drank no alcohol. Cheers!