

Lauren's Kitchen: Building your Plant Based Kitchen for 2016

Cleaning out and organizing my kitchen is a task I take on each New Year and again when I return from my summer weeks in Europe. Both times present an opportunity for a fresh look at what fills my shelves and drawers.

In addition to cleaning through my pantry staples, I assess the tools I have on hand and take account of what is useful and meets my needs, what I haven't used, and what needs to be replaced because it is not efficient or broken.

This past summer, having returned home from Germany and working a month out of my mother-in-law's efficient-to-the-last-detail kitchen, I took on the task of sorting my vast conglomeration of kitchen hand tools. First on the list to review was the odd assortment of kitchen knives, none that did any particular job really well. After enlisting the help of my favorite family researcher, I chose two. Over the last six months I have found that they excel at every task in my plant based kitchen. To say we chop a lot of fruit and veggies by hand is an understatement and these two definitely make quick work out of it all.

Knife Recommendations

Classic 8" Chef's Knife by Victorinox



Utility 4.5" Serrated Knife by Victorinox



Cutting Boards

While on the subject of chopping why not take a look at your cutting boards? These are tools used to prepare each and every meal at our house. After all the years of thinking plastic cutting boards are the way to go the truth is they are not. They happen to be tough on knives and actually harbor more bacteria than wooden boards because they are so prone to nicks and cuts. This article provides a bit more insight on the topic.

We happen to own bamboo cutting boards. Last summer I purchased a set of three that almost serves all of my needs. I'm adding this one for the New Year to replace the last plastic board we having been using for the vast amount of morning fruit chopping we do.

Test Drive

So now that you are ready for some serious chopping how about putting your new knives and cutting board to the test with this light and crunchy Shredded Salad from the archives of 101 Cookbooks?



Ingredients

2 teaspoons sunflower oil
1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons runny honey
fine grain sea salt, to taste
one small bunch of cilantro (leaves and stems), chopped

1/2 cup peanuts, toasted
1 bunch of scallions, shredded
2 cups finely shredded cabbage
1/2 cup mung bean sprouts
1/2 cup broccoli or pea sprouts
3 large stalks celery, thinly sliced on diagonal
2 tablespoons shoyu or soy sauce
1 tablespoon (brown) rice vinegar
toasted sesame seeds, black or white

[Full Instructions Here](#)