

NEW / NEW YEAR / YOU

EAT LIKE A CENTENARIAN

Across the world, several communities are known as blue zones or a set of characteristics that have produced the world's longest-lived people. Many live to a healthy 100 because their surroundings nudge them to practice the healthiest behaviors: moderate exercise, stress management, social connection and eating well. While each blue zone eats different regionally-based foods, they have many commonalities that contribute to their health and longevity. If you want to live to a healthy 100, include the following tips in your diet pattern.

BLUE ZONES

IKARIA, GREECE
LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA
NICOYA PENINSULA, COSTA RICA
OKINAWA, JAPAN
SARDINIA, ITALY

1 EAT A 90–100% PLANT-BASED DIET.

People in blue zones consume about 10 ounces of meat per month, in 2-ounce portions. Fish is consumed in 3-ounce portions up to 3 times per week. Cow's milk does not factor into many blue zone diets and eggs are eaten only two to four times per week. Be sure to choose whole foods versus highly processed food, like sweet potatoes, walnuts or kale.

2 GET A DAILY DOSE OF BEANS!

Beans are nature's perfect package - naturally low in fat and high in protein, fiber and phytonutrients. People in blue zones eat a half cup per day. Try lentils, chickpeas, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans or soybeans!

3 SLASH YOUR SUGAR INTAKE.

People in blues zones eat sugar intentionally, not out of habit or accident. They consume 7 teaspoons (28 gm) or less of added sugar daily.

4 MUNCH ON NUTS.

Nuts contain good-for-you fats and antioxidants. People in blue zones report eating up to 2 ounces (about 2 handfuls) of nuts per day.

5 CHOOSE WHOLE GRAIN OR SOURDOUGH BREAD.

These blue zone bread choices may promote healthy blood sugar levels and digestion due to the fiber in whole grains and the fermentation process in sourdough.

6 DRINK MOSTLY WATER

Water provides the proper hydration our bodies need. Unsweetened coffee and tea are also good blue zone beverage choices.