

REPLENISH YOUR CORE

Nelsons' deliver winning hand with Split Apple Retreat



New Zealand's Split Apple Retreat is unlike anything you've ever visited before. A quiet, luxurious hideaway built high into a cliff-face right on the ocean, a few minutes away from the South Island's stunning Abel Tasman National Park, it offers both every indulgence as well as the additional promise of exceptional good health. It's also the brainchild of Australian Poker Hall of Fame member Lee "Final Table" Nelson and his wife Pen.



AFTER living in the USA for the first 50 years of his life, Lee Nelson, a retired doctor, moved to New Zealand. He'd never been a serious player until he took up tournament poker in 1998. In the past decade, he has compiled the best record of any Australasian player.

The man coined "Final Table" claimed the World Open in 2005 and triumphed in the Speed Poker event at the 2005 Aussie Millions. He also took out the 2006 Aussie Millions main event, having outlasted a field of 418 players to pocket the \$1.3 million first prize.

He led the NZ team to second-place in the 2009 World Cup of Poker and holds a swag of Aussie Millions records for most titles, cashes and final tables. As recently as earlier this year, he placed ninth in the Aussie Millions Main Event while he took out the ANZPT Melbourne Main Event title in 2011.

Nelson is also an accomplished author, having written a book on prostate cancer (after surviving a bout of the disease), while *Kill Phil* and *Kill Everyone* are ranked among the best poker books of recent years. He was also the onscreen poker talent for TV show *Celebrity Joker Poker* and worked along side Joe Hachem on reality show *The Poker Star*.

His wife Pen is a highly qualified

chef who has incorporated the philosophies of ultimate health into her gourmet cooking, with a range of mouth-watering dishes that feature in their new, highly anticipated cookbook.

The Retreat's gourmet menu is individually drawn up for guests to take into account any dislikes and favourites, as well as dietary requirements, but is then designed to deliver optimal health benefits in a series of fresh, delicious, gourmet dishes. While you treat your tastebuds, relax in the knowledge that as well as doing your body a favour, it's odds on you'll be leaving lighter than you arrive.

There's also every opportunity at the Retreat to relax and pamper yourself with pristine surrounds, a saltwater pool on the deck, a spa and sauna, private access to beaches, massage, Pilates, personal trainer, acupuncture, meditation guidance and other stress reduction therapies.

Close by is some of the best bushwalking in New Zealand, as well as secluded beaches, sea-kayaking and a helicopter service for drop-off at even more isolated spots.

Split Apple Retreat emphasises understated Japanese-style quiet elegance and attention to detail. Using the natural materials of wood, stone, and granite and featuring all original

antiques and works of art, the Retreat is the ideal place to de-stress, relax and rejuvenate in absolute luxury and exclusivity.

Swim in the saltwater infinity pool, enjoy the Japanese onsen-style spa, steam room, or infrared sauna. A gentle path leads to a secluded beach at the bottom of the property and water taxis will pick you up from Split Apple Rock Beach for lovely walks in different parts of the breathtaking Abel Tasman National Park located on our doorstep. Wellness counselling with Lee or cooking lessons with Pen can be readily arranged.

The Abel Tasman National Park is world-famous for beautiful walking tracks past a series of secluded golden beaches and along the top of towering granite cliffs. Renowned too for its mild year-round climate, it offers a host of activities, including walking, kayaking, fishing, horseback riding, sky-diving, sailing, swimming with the seals and dolphin-spotting. A helicopter can be arranged to drop you at remote spots for walking or private picnics at otherwise inaccessible beaches.

There is no noise pollution at Split Apple Retreat – only the sounds of the birds and the sea. When combined with the gourmet thoughtful food with every ingredient imparting a benefit to health, you have the perfect environment for peace and rejuvenation in the most luxurious environment.

PUTTING SOME THOUGHT INTO YOUR COOKING

Foreword from the Split Apple Thoughtful Food Cookbook by Lee and Anne Pen Lee

WE've all been brought up to believe that there's no gain where there's no pain, and food was never any different. To eat healthily was about going without; denying ourselves the foods we love and replacing them with tiny portions of the tasteless, the unappetising and the dull.



But with a growing interest around the world in the link between food and well-being, and with epidemics of obesity, diabetes and general ill-health, the good news is that food can be both healthful and delicious.

Finally, here is a cookbook that proves it. Here we present dozens of recipes that are tasty, filling and also nutritious; the kind of food you'll choose because you'll love it, not just because it's doing you good.

Fabulous food can contribute to good health, fight ageing, guarantee weight loss, combat stress, crank up energy levels and promote longevity, if thoughtfully selected and prepared. And the proof, as they say, is in the pudding (and the rest of the meal).

So what is healthy food? And does what you eat really make that much difference to your health?

Consider this: The USA's National Cancer Institute attributes more than one third of all cancers to dietary factors. One third! That's an incredible statistic. So in the light of that, are you ready to take what you put on your plate seriously? Let us make it easy for you.

The Thoughtful Food Cookbook is a collection of enticing and easy-to-cook dishes that we've refined over the years at our beautiful Split Apple Health


Retreat in New Zealand. They look great, taste delicious and will leave you feeling the best you ever have.

They range from long-time family favourites – with a healthy twist – to exciting, new dishes that will inspire you to step out of your kitchen comfort zone and into a new world of flavoursome food that's doing you good.

This is about food that's going to make you better equipped to cope with what the world, your age and what your genes throw at you.

To make it easier, we divide food into three categories: Good, Bad and Indifferent. Bad food might taste good but actively does you harm. Indifferent food won't do you much harm but it won't do you much good either and it stops you eating the stuff that is good for you. And then there's the good food – the superfoods – that actively promote health and wellness and taste great too.

All those ideas about eating well – both in terms of health and sheer pleasure – have been brought together here, between the pages of this book. It's about "wellness" – and to us, that's all about being in the best physical shape you can be, while eating and drinking thoughtful food that's a true pleasure rather than a chore.



SPLIT APPLE THOUGHTFUL FOOD COOKBOOK

**Fast, fuss-free food
that will keep you
forever young**

Lee Nelson discusses the philosophy behind his latest venture in this exclusive excerpt from the Split Apple Thoughtful Food Cookbook by Lee and Anne Pen Lee.

IN 1997 I was diagnosed with a moderately aggressive form of prostate cancer. As a physician, I went to the medical literature and thoroughly researched the disease, studying more than 2000 medical papers.

From my research it became clear that the optimal treatment path was to combine both traditional and complementary medical approaches. I was surprised, however, by the wealth of medical studies that had been done on food and supplements, and included many of these as part of my overall treatment plan.

Now, 14 years later, I am free from cancer but my interest in nutraceuticals (foods that help promote wellness and longevity) has not waned, and I keep up with the medical literature on new developments. I wrote a book called Prostate Cancer Prevention and Cure to help non-medical men get through the maze of treatment options as well as complementary therapies for dealing

with prostate cancer.

I founded and run, with my wife Anne Pen Lee, Split Apple Retreat, a boutique hotel dedicated to good health, relaxation and indulgent luxury, just outside Nelson, New Zealand.

Pen is the chef at the Split Apple Retreat, and incorporates the latest developments in food science into new, mouth-watering dishes that are featured at the retreat. It is our absolute pleasure to share these with you in our cookbook.

Sometimes it seems like half the world is starving while the other half is eating itself to death, literally, with so many people in developed countries suffering from health issues associated with obesity, diabetes, cancers and a range of other ailments, much of it either caused, or contributed to, by poor food choices.

The answer, you'll be glad to hear, isn't doleful bowlfuls of bland, inedible mush. The Thoughtful Food Cookbook,

takes real food – tasty food – and looks at the science of what it does to our bodies to promote health and longevity.

For a start, most of our recipes use low glycemic index (GI) foods that stabilise blood sugar levels and reduce cravings (more on that later). Also, foods that are known to decrease inflammation, a common factor in virtually all degenerative diseases such as cancers, are to the fore.

When those two basic principles are understood – embracing low-GI and anti-inflammatory food – it becomes easy to create mouth-watering dishes promote health, control weight, reduce cravings, increase energy levels and possess powerful anti-aging properties.

Each day the human body is confronted with environmental stress. This comes from both internally and externally produced toxins, oxidative stress (which causes cell damage) and foods that result in hormonal changes, increasing weight and promoting

inflammation throughout the body.

Our meals provide nutrients that reduce or even reverse these destructive processes, help control weight – much more on that later – reduce sick days and make you more alert, focussed and productive when you are at work.

As you'll discover, all the science of healthy eating is interconnected, and even if we know what we should eat, for instance, low-GI foods, many of us don't really know why or, indeed, what they are. And what we also don't realise is that an imbalance caused by one problem can trigger a whole other set of health issues.

- *To purchase your copy of the Split Apple Thoughtful Food Cookbook, go to www.monarchbooks.com.au*

Strawberry and Prawn Saled



Ingredients:

- 15 prawns peeled, tails left intact and deveined
- 10 stems Chinese broccoli peeled and cut into 2cm lengths (or asparagus)
- 1 ½ cups organic strawberries topped and cut in halves

Salad dressing:

- 2 tsp garlic crushed
- ¼ cup shallots thinly sliced

- 2 stalks of young celery with leaves chopped
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce + 1 tbsp fish sauce (optional)
- 1 tbsp xylitol
- 4 hot fresh chillies chopped (optional if you like it hot)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Spring onion and mint leaves to garnish

Method:

Bring water to the boil in a pot and blanch the prawns until they just turn pink.

Remove from pot and place into a bowl of iced water. Allow to cool, drain and put on the side. Blanch broccoli in a pot of fresh boiling water; remove and place in an additional bowl of iced water. Allow to cool then drain. Combine prawns, broccoli and strawberries together.

Combine all salad dressing ingredients and toss with prawn mixture. It should taste spicy and sour. Serve garnished with spring onion and mint leaves.

Wild Mushroom Risotto



Ingredients:

- 1 cup risotto rice or black rice (preferable)
- 1 cup mix dried wild mushrooms, washed and soaked in 6 cups of warm water (minimum of 1 hour or

overnight)

Alternatively 6 cups of vegetable stock

Olive oil to cook

3 garlic cloves, crushed

1 onion chopped

1/2 cup dry white wine

1 carrot finely diced

1 tsp lemon zest

10 stems asparagus cut into 1 cm length and blanched

1/2 cup Parmesan grated

Salt and pepper

1 tbsp parsley finely chopped

Method:

Rinse the rice with water and set to one side. Bring mushrooms and water to the boil in a saucepan. Reduce to a simmer for 15 minutes, drain the mushrooms from the water and keep the water in a separate pot on a low heat.

Or if using vegetable stock: drain water from mushrooms and set the mushrooms to one side, discard the water. Bring vegetable stock to the boil then reduce to a low heat.

Add 1 tbsp olive oil to an additional pan and sauté garlic until brown on medium heat then add onions, cook until slightly brown. Add rice into the pan and stir well with the onion and garlic. Pour in wine and continue to simmer for 2 minutes.

Add 1 cup of the simmering stock or retained water to the rice and allow to reduce, keep adding 1 cup at a time until all the stock is added – be careful not to reduce so much that the rice gets dry. Keep stirring to ensure the rice does not stick to the bottom. At this point the rice should have swelled, this should take approximately 30-40 minutes (if using brown rice add 10 minutes).

Add carrots, mushrooms, lemon zest and asparagus and allow to cook for 5-7 minutes. Season well, stir in Parmesan cheese, and serve immediately. Garnish with parsley.