

BEST BOOKS ON... LOSS OF INNOCENCE
Patricia Nicol

FINALLY, we're into May, the month in which we herald summer with Morris men and the like.

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* begins in 'the latter part of May'. On a country lane, peddler John Durbeyfield, is addressed as Sir John by the parson, then told he descends from nobility. This expectation-raising revelation will ultimately lead to ruin.

Meanwhile, John's daughter, Tess, is marching a traditional May Dance with her white-clad Marlott village women's club. Tess is 'a fine and handsome girl', whose 'mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape'. It is these eyes that draw the attention of Angel Clare, passing through on a walking tour.

Hardy subtitled his book 'A Pure



Woman Faithfully Presented'. Now regarded as one of Hardy's greatest novels, it troubled some critics at the time with its sympathetic portrayal of a 'fallen woman'.

Of course, at every juncture, it is a man — be he foolish, mercenary, selfish, cruel or hypocritical — who precipitates the naive Tess's 'fall'.

Henry James also made a critique of English society in *What Maisie Knew*, a tale of warring high-society divorcees shuttling their blameless daughter between their households and lovers. No real effort was made to protect her innocence.

In *The Go-Between*, by L.P. Hartley, its adult narrator rediscovers a diary and with it the traumatic suppressed memory of his summer as 'postman' for the upper-class Marian and her tenant farmer lover.

'I felt with a bitter blend of self-pity and self-reproach, that had it not been for the diary, or what the diary stood for, everything would be different. I should not be sitting in this drab, flowerless room... I should be sitting in another room, rainbow-hued, looking not into the past but into the future: and I should not be sitting alone.'

Today, you would hope the flagrant abuses of power and privilege chronicled here might not happen, or be called immediately to account. But, as most of us know, that's still not always the case.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS FROM HISTORY

Delightful lost tips from the Daily Mail archives

When feeling tired and overcome with sleep, plunge hands into cold water for a few minutes and you will feel quite refreshed.

ORIGINS: Daily Mail, May 8, 1896

by Louise Atkinson

PRINCE HARRY appears to be cutting a sharper, slimmer figure in the run-up to his wedding and speculation is rife that Meghan might have nudged him towards the London gym much loved by her future sister-in-law, Pippa.

He has been spotted coming in and out of KX (pronounced 'kicks'), the exclusive Chelsea gym where Pippa famously trimmed and toned her slender frame in preparation for her wedding last year.

It could be the top-of-the-range gym equipment, expert personal trainers and disco-themed spinning studio that are transforming Harry's beefy, beery body, but it's very likely Meghan has put him on the special green juice diet that KX recommends.

The diet is the brainchild of nutritionists Aidan Goggins and Glen Matten, who have dedicated their careers to investigating the powerful natural properties of certain foods. Their ideas hit the mainstream when they were enticed into working together with KX gym.

Their aim was to devise a 'fast-track' diet that would guarantee maximum athletic performance and speedy weight loss. The result was the Sirtfood Diet book, which hit the bestseller lists when released in 2016.

The KX ethos is so Sirtfood-entrenched that much of the on-site restaurant is 'sirtified' with on-message Sirtfood salads (£20), green juice (£12) and energy bites (£3.50).

Despite Pippa's obvious success with the regime, there's nothing girly about the Sirtfood Diet. Chocolate, coffee and red wine are allowed, and, unlike the intermittent fasting regimes so popular with many men, there's no requirement to go hungry.

Goggins recommends the diet as a 'performance enhancer' for premier-ship footballer clients, top rugby players and Sir Ben Ainslie's America's Cup sailing team.

However, the diet's creators have come under fire from dietitians for devising a regime that strays from government advice.

The initial seven-day kickstart suggests green juice as a meal replacement, which goes against the Food Standards Agency's balanced EatWell Guide plate or the food pyramid that NHS dietitians typically fall back on.

But Goggins and Matten indignantly point to their eminent qualifications: both have a masters degree in nutritional medicine. Goggins is also a qualified pharmacist.

They hit upon the idea of Sirtfoods after following up on an investigation into the life-enhancing properties of a plant chemical called resveratrol, found in grape skin and red wine, which scientists speculated could hold a key to longevity.

The duo discovered that other foods — such as walnuts, capers, red onions and dark chocolate — contain specific natural plant chemicals that appear to be able to activate genes in our bodies.

These genes are known as sirtuins — so Goggins and Matten named the foods with the most abundant natural chemical profile 'Sirtfoods'.

Each Sirtfood provides a different combination of phytonutrients and supposed health benefits, but the pair found that combining Sirtfoods appears to enhance their active powers.

'One food might contain a chemical which helps prevent fat formation and another helps increase fat disposal,' explains Goggins, 'you could eat a whole

It's helped the Prince lose half a stone. And you can STILL enjoy wine and chocs. The downside? Gallons of yucky green juice...

Should you put your CHUBBY HUBBY on Harry's diet?

field of kale, but get nowhere near the benefit that a Sirtfood-loaded meal would bring.'

The authors were so excited about the proposed effects on blood sugar levels and fat metabolism that they agreed to a trial into the health impact of a seven-day intense boost of Sirtfoods.

GOGGINS says: 'The trial was designed to measure how the diet stimulated rejuvenation and cellular repair.

'We added a degree of calorie restriction, because studies show it is good for longevity, so we knew people would lose weight, but we had no idea the average weight loss would be half a stone.'

That's one big reason the Sirtfood diet appeals to men.

'The dieting culture has got stuck in a rut, with experts advocating eating less and less.'

'Suddenly, everything that you enjoy seems to be bad for you. People are getting fed up with conflicting messages and confusion. It's such a shame,' says Goggins.

'When giving up food is routinely offered as the "solution", surely something has gone very wrong.'

'Our seven-day plan is an optional kickstart. The most important message is to be adding Sirtfoods to your existing diet — the benefits come from the

foods you eat, not from foods you have to avoid.'

THE DIET

What you should eat:

- Buckwheat
- Capers
- Celery (as green as possible, eat the leaves, too)
- Chilli (ideally bird's eye or Thai chillies)
- Dark chocolate (85 per cent cocoa solids)
- Coffee (drink it black to get most nutrients)
- Extra virgin olive oil.
- Green tea (ideally matcha, but ceremonial grade is not necessary)
- Kale
- Garlic or lovage (available from garden centres, or buy seeds)
- Medjool dates
- Parsley
- Chicory
- Red onion
- Red wine (ideally Pinot Noir, which contains more resveratrol than other grapes)
- Berries (cherries, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- Turmeric
- Walnuts

FAST TRACK

THIS is the 'hyper-success' phase which promises you'll lose 7lb in a

week and significantly boost your health. It combines fasting with a super-boost of Sirtfoods. Repeat every three months.

DAYS 1-3

3 green juices
 1 main meal (packed with Sirtfoods)
 Max 1,000 cals per day

DAYS 4-7

2 green juices
 2 main meals
 Max 1,500 cals per day

● SPREAD the juices throughout the day, and drink an hour before or two hours after meals.

- No eating after 7pm.
- Drink plenty of water, black coffee, green tea.
- No alcohol (apart from in cooking) or fruit juice.
- 20g of dark chocolate (85 per cent) per day.

MAINTENANCE PHASE

CONSOLIDATES weight loss, at 1lb per week.

1 green juice per day (30 mins before breakfast or mid-morning).
 3 meals per day packed with as many Sirtfoods as possible.

- One glass of red wine with a meal 2-3 times per week.
- No processed meat (sausages, salami, burgers).
- Limit red meat to 500g a week.
- Eat wholegrains.
- 'Sirtify' your meals.
- Evening meal no later than 7pm.



AFTER



BEFORE

DOES IT REALLY WORK?

WOULD the Sirtfood diet perform its slenderising miracles on my 54-year-old graphic designer husband, Jonathan Woods?

If we could both lose half a stone while still eating chocolate and drinking red wine, I was sure he'd be willing to give it a try.

So I added the 20 top Sirtfoods to my weekly shopping list (plus a cheap-as-chips juicer because you

can't do this diet without one). I struggled to find lovage — a nettle-like salad leaf. True Sirtfood fans grow their own from seeds, but green celery leaves are nutritionally close enough.

If you're new to juicing, be warned, stuffing handfuls of kale, rocket and parsley into a narrow chute is a messy task. Repeatedly re-juicing the resulting pulp (as advised) to extract the powerful sirtuins sends things off the

RECIPES TO SLIM DOWN YOUR MAN

THE GREEN JUICE

MAKES 1 SERVING

- 2 handfuls (75g) kale
- Handful (30g) rocket
- 5g parsley
- 150g green celery (2-3 stalks), plus leaves
- ½ green apple
- Juice of ½ lemon
- ½ level tsp matcha powder

JUICE the greens, then the celery and apple and squeeze in the lemon. Makes 250ml juice.

Add the matcha to each glass (whisking to mix it well) just before drinking it. Top up with water to taste.



SIRTFOOD BITES



A GUILT-FREE treat made from Sirtfoods if you're peckish between meals. Eat 1-2 per day.

MAKES 15-20

- 120g walnuts
- 30g dark chocolate (85 per cent)
- 250 Medjool dates, pitted
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 tbsp ground turmeric
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1-2 tbsp water

BLITZ walnuts and chocolate in a food processor. Add all the other ingredients except water and blend until the mixture forms a ball. Add water drop by drop as needed.

Roll into bite-sized balls (cover in cocoa or desiccated coconut if you like) and refrigerate in an airtight container for an hour before eating.

They keep for a week in the fridge.

SUPER SIRT SALAD

SERVES 1

- 50g rocket
- 50g chicory/radicchio leaves
- 100g smoked salmon slices/tinned tuna/cooked chicken or 100g tin of cooked green or Puy lentils
- 80g avocado, peeled, stoned and sliced
- 40g celery, sliced
- 20g red onion, sliced
- 15g walnuts
- 1 tbsp capers
- 1 large Medjool date, pitted and chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Juice of ¼ lemon
- 10g parsley, chopped
- 10g Lovage or celery leaves, chopped

PLACE salad leaves on a plate, then mix all remaining ingredients and serve on top.



four small bright green glasses of juice. Ten minutes to make it, 15 minutes to clear it all up.

The juice, which fans call 'rocket fuel', is something only the truly committed could honestly enjoy. It's like liquidised salsa verde: bitter, piquant and best knocked back like a shot of tequila than a soft lovingly-sipped smoothie.

Jon took one slug and immediately spat it out, muttering: 'Disgusting!' But no pain, no gain, so he persevered (grumpily), swilling his mouth afterwards.

For the first three days, you must survive on three glasses of juice and one meal (albeit enhanced by Sirtfoods).

Without a personal trainer snapping at his heels, Jon found the process tough. But he said the acrid bitterness of the juice made it an effective appetite suppressant.

It turns out the key to 'sirtifying' any meal is no more complicated than throwing in as many of the top 20 Sirtfoods as you can fit on the plate.

So a Sirtfood salad is like any other salad except you add radicchio leaves with rocket, parsley, walnuts, dates and scatter it with tiny capers. We both agreed it is delicious — a cornucopia of health-giving foods in a bowl.

Coffee is a Sirtfood, so that helps ease hunger pangs, and a little dark chocolate is allowed. Plus, the matcha green tea powder you stir into the green juice has a caffeine-like effect which keeps you buzzing. And, let's face it, the 1,000 calories a day limit is still

more than the 600-800 you're allowed on a 5-2 Diet fast day.

On day four, the protocol changes to two daily juices and two Sirtfood-enhanced meals (up to a 1,500-calorie max), so life did begin to ease back to a healthier version of normal.

Already we'd both noticed our clothes were a little looser. At the end of the week we were thrilled to find we had both lost the promised half-stone and — joy! — much of it from our middle-aged middles.

After this kickstart you are advised to move on to the 'maintenance phase' of the diet (explained above) where you whizz up one green juice a day and pack as many Sirtfoods into your normal meals as you possibly can.

We still eat a lot of kale (rendered palatable when roasted in salt and olive oil or tossed in a pan with butter and garlic) and I make a batch of green juice most weeks.

I sprinkle berries and walnuts over my breakfast, substitute buckwheat for many rice and flour-based dishes (buckwheat pancakes, buckwheat risotto) and the only onions I buy are red (not white).

Jon's diet is marinated in Sirtfoods whether he likes it or not, but I can't persuade him to join me in that juice. He says that it's a Sirtfood step too far, and he's convinced he's getting all the Sirtfoods he needs in his glass of red wine.

RECIPES and text taken from *The Sirtfood Diet and The Sirtfood Diet Recipe Book*, by Aidan Goggins and Glen Matten, both published by Yellow Kite.

