

ARTICLE **Food and Lifestyle, Global Healthy Challenges à la Mediterranean**

by Montse Monllau (@montsemonllau), Managing partner at EATINGSCHOOL.ES, October 2013

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Open letter to caring entrepreneurial minds –and some bites.

Views my own, after years of listening to health carers and food marketers. Hoping to exchange thoughts and consensus with some braves of you.



I've been passionately thinking about the triad Food products, Consumer behavior and Communication for all my career. I find it fascinating and meaningful when it leads to healthy human behaviours.

I live in Catalonia, the Mediterranean South-European land – crowned by the fashionist Barcelona-. Home of Mediterranean diet and cuisine that nurtured genial people as Gaudí, Miró, Dalí or Picasso. Millennia of adaptation to a privileged landscape and to the Iberian / Greeks/ Romans / Moors / Catholics, and now Global cultures have been sculpturing our everyday customs and behaviour.

Customs and behaviour that risk of not being strong enough to protect our wealthy societies (mine and yours, I bet) from richness self-destruction. I am referring to obesity, diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular or mental diseases, phantoms that defy personal development in wealthy countries (as combating malnutrition is for developing regions).

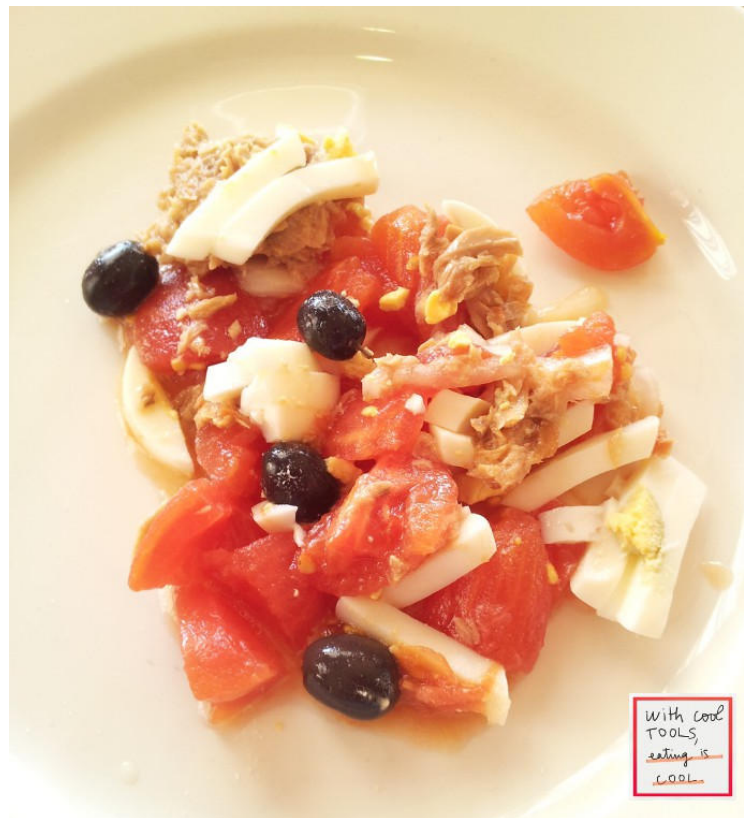
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WHO (United Nation's World Health Organisation) defines the escalating global epidemic of overweight and obesity – “globesity” – as global obesity pandemic, the preventable starting point of the fifth leading risk for global deaths.

At least 2.8 million adults die each year as a result of being overweight or obese. In addition, 44% of the diabetes burden, 23% of the ischaemic heart disease burden and between 7% and 41% of certain cancer burdens are attributable to overweight and obesity.

It's a global drama to me, a preventable One. Knowing how to take care of ourselves and educating our decisions would be empowering each one of us, citizens of this interconnected world, to live longer and live better. And we have the power.



I live in a country where superb food products are available and enjoying food is a part of our way of life. We are so proud of our traditional dishes and cuisine! I have also known other Mediterranean cultures -such as Italian and French- and I have felt the same degree of pride for the ancient sageness towards their food style and the privilege of having their foods.

By the other hand, the paradox is that these Mediterranean countries suffer still from the same chronic health troubles that less foodist countries do.

So, we could agree that cool food availability and a strong food culture is not enough to achieve wellness...

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My mother cooks paella every Saturday as my grandmother Carmen did. Mediterranean food may be on our DNA already but, is it on our skills too?



Something is broken in the way we live that it's not so cool as we may think.

Have we lost the good manners?

Although we can still enjoy local delicatessen -such as olive oil, rice, *jamón*, fish, seafood, legumes, fruits or nuts- today we are losing, every day a bit, the pattern of the wealthy lifestyle we inherited.

As society members, **we are losing our ancestors sage habits.** I understand that today it's harder to keep concentrated on what does good to your mind and body than it was 50 years ago when life was harder but simpler. We have so many distractions, so many tasks to do everyday... It's tough to skip tasty tapas and delicious pastry when you have some time off. It's difficult to move away for the sofa and decide to go exercise 3 times a week after doing all your tasks. It's miraculous to get a joyful dinner done quickly every day, to be ready and aware 24x7.

I want to take care of myself and educate my decisions to feel empowered. Obesity, diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular or mental diseases can put in risk my **happy Ageing**. It's a challenge for me to get fit and eat healthy. Further, my final goal it's not only to arrive to fitness, but to stay there forever! **Being fit and maintaining a lifestyle** that shall rise my **quality of life** and **longevity expectancy** is my desired new normal.

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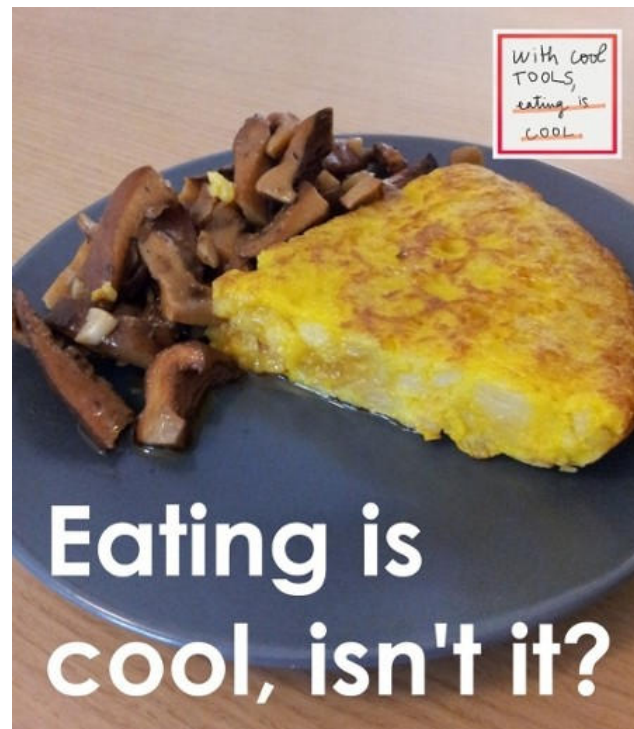
No matter where you live, you may be feeling the same. It's a lifelong human challenge keeping fit and eat healthy.

We, humans who are living on planet Earth this era, face this kind of personal and global challenges: Developing ourselves to our maximum of age and life quality according to our personal circumstances. Habits and behaviour are the key to any improvement; you will surely agree to this.

But there is hope.

Habits and behavior can be learned.

Do you remember when you started using SMS or Messenger or Facebook or Twitter services? One day it was a new tool to help you with some need of yours, and the next day it became automagically part of your daily habits. Part of your life.



Providing the people with means that help them achieve their personal goals is my professional challenge. Goals such as **keeping fit, eating well and getting organized**. I am determined to help **build projects** that work on this, and if you are a capable caring mind I would like us to get joined to this endeavour.

Eating is the most crucial action you make for your wellness. By deciding what to buy and what to, definitely, eat every day, you play your -and your family- healthy cards.

Mediterranean culture can add some tasty tips & tricks to the design of better ways to eat and be well. I'm collecting some thoughts and data in my new blog **With cool tools, eating is cool**.

Step by and, if you are a caring entrepreneur courageous mind, let me hear you. Hope you enjoyed. Salut! Montse.

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