

The Eating Diaries

We asked three toned and trim women of different ages to reveal the details of their diet and exercise habits. Read on to discover how they stay so slim.

The Organic Devotee

Manuela Testolini Nelson, founder of Gamillah Inc., early 30s

"I never have big meals and I snack often, so I don't overindulge. I try to stick to an organic diet and never eat red meat or poultry. For me, it's harder to keep weight on than take it off, so I focus on weight training, and because of travel I just work out when I can."

Daily Diet and Exercise

10:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M. Two or three whole eggs with mushrooms, tomatoes, and garlic; a slice of flax bread; and a cup of maté tea with a bit of honey.

1:00 P.M. I snack all day: yogurt with granola and berries, fruit, raw almonds, dark chocolate, and two protein shakes with flax sprouts, rice milk, and fruit.

2:00–4:00 P.M. If I'm eating out, I'll have salad with grilled wild salmon or soup with a vegetarian sandwich on multigrain bread. Anything with hummus is great because of the added protein. I take a lot of vitamins, drink Pellegrino or tea, and never have soda or artificial sweeteners.

8:00–10:00 P.M. If I've had fish for lunch, I'll have pasta with vegetables for dinner. If I didn't have fish for lunch, I'll have tilapia with sautéed Swiss chard, salad with beets and feta, and rice. I have a glass of red wine with dinner and fruit or a citrus sorbet for dessert.



1:00 P.M.

8:00 P.M.



12:00 A.M. I'm a night owl, so I can have dinner at 10:00 P.M., work out at midnight, and get to bed at 2:00 A.M. I work out after dinner twice a week and in the late morning one day a week. I have a Smith machine on which I do squats, dead lifts, calf raises, and shoulder and chest presses and an elliptical machine that I use on the highest resistance. I also do tai chi once a week.

What the Experts Say

NUTRITION *Lisa R. Young, R.D., nutrition consultant in NYC, adjunct professor at New York University; portionteller.com.* "Overall, Manuela's diet is high in fiber, protein, and antioxidants. Particularly for someone on a vegetarian-based diet, she gets plenty of protein from eggs, fish, hummus, and cheese. In fact, she would be better off swapping one of her protein shakes for an extra yogurt, which has calcium that protein powder lacks. The feta in her salad is high in sodium and fat, so she should try low-fat/low-salt instead. At breakfast, she should mix one whole egg with a few egg whites to reduce fat and cholesterol."

FITNESS *Tate Maloy, trainer at the Sports Club/LA, Beverly Hills; tatemaloyfitness.com.* "It sounds like Manuela's challenge is weight gain, not loss. She should look to a nutritionist to determine her resting metabolic rate, which will tell how many calories she needs to maintain her ideal weight. If the goal is to put on a few pounds, she should continue focusing on strength training by scheduling it four or five times a week. Finally, sleep allows the body to recuperate and regenerate tissues; if she isn't getting enough, it could prevent Manuela from achieving her fitness goals."

The Superfit Mom

Christina Zilber, founder and creative director of Jouer Cosmetics, early 40s

"I never skip meals. You wouldn't want to be around me if I did! What works for me is good old-fashioned self-restraint: I leave food on my plate and don't go for seconds. But I'm not militant about food. I eat what I crave, even if that means French toast on Sunday morning and popcorn at the movies."

Daily Diet and Exercise

7:15 A.M. A bowl of All-Bran Buds cereal mixed with Horizon fruit-filled yogurt and fresh berries, half a grapefruit, and a cup of green-ginger Tazo tea.

9:00 A.M. I try to exercise four to five days a week. On Mondays I have a yoga class, and on Tuesdays and Fridays I take a semiprivate Pilates class. Thursday I'm in my home gym with a personal trainer doing weight training, walking on the treadmill, and jumping rope. On weekends, I go for a hike in the hills around my house.

10:30 A.M. I hate taking pills, so I mix David Kirsch vitamin-and-mineral powder with water. I try to drink two liters of water throughout the day.

12:30 P.M. Lunch in the office: a Cobb salad or another chicken-filled salad. My one major vice is Diet Coke. I drink one with every lunch.

2:15 P.M. As I'm running out of the office to pick up my kids from school, I grab a couple of pieces of red licorice for the road.



3:00 P.M. Borba Replenishing vitamin powder mixed with water.

4:00 P.M. If I'm going out to dinner, I snack on a Kashi granola bar or string cheese with a handful of walnuts or almonds. If I'm eating at 6:00 with my family, I don't usually have a snack.

6:00 P.M. Dinner: tomato-and-burrata-cheese salad and a little of what the kids are eating—usually steak fajitas, turkey meatballs, or lasagna—with a glass of red wine.

9:00 P.M. Before bed, I drink half a liter of water. If I need something sweet, I'll have a Popsicle or a Fudgsicle.

What the Experts Say

NUTRITION Says Young: "Christina's breakfast is excellent—high in fiber and protein for sustained energy. But because she has a cheese-filled salad at lunch and again at dinner, she should be aware of portions, as cheese is high in saturated fat. She should also incorporate some fish into her diet two times a week, not just for variation but also to add protein and omega essential fatty acids. Christina seems to have a bit of a sweet tooth when it comes to snacks. It's okay to have some treats every now and then, but if she replaced her afternoon licorice fix or her evening Popsicle with a piece of fresh fruit, she would satisfy her sugar craving while adding valuable fiber and antioxidants to her diet rather than just empty calories."

FITNESS Says Maloy: "Christina has a lot of variation in her exercise routine, and it seems as if she's balancing happiness with health. Hiking outdoors, taking yoga and Pilates classes, and working with a trainer challenges her in new ways every day, keeps her motivated, and prevents burnout. Christina also has a schedule, which gives her workouts some structure. If she's happy with her body, I think she should keep doing exactly what she's doing." ▶

The French Food Lover

Nicole Miller, clothing and housewares designer, early 50s

"My mother was French and raised me to believe that every meal should be a pleasure; I don't eat anything unless it's delicious. I'm not into counting calories, and I like to eat real food. In keeping with my European roots, I have a big lunch and a small dinner, and I rarely eat dessert."

Daily Diet and Exercise

7:00 A.M. Three days a week, I go to the gym and work out with weights, doing a variety of exercises for my arms and legs, in addition to run/walk intervals on the treadmill or 10 minutes on the bike. I just started taking a private Pilates class once a week, and I stay active on the weekend skiing and biking. Ever since I had my son, who is now 10, I don't have trouble keeping my weight down. Chasing him around is great exercise, and I weigh less now than when I graduated from high school.

8:00 A.M. Black espresso and a whole-wheat baguette with French butter. I don't like to be starving at 11:00 A.M., so sometimes I also have a Liberté Méditerranée Plum and Nuts yogurt, the closest thing I've found to European yogurt.

10:00 A.M. Once a week, I splurge and have a whole-milk cappuccino, no sugar.

1:00 P.M. A steak or duck-breast sandwich on a baguette with lettuce and tomatoes, which I bring from home or order in, with a beet-and-mixed-green salad and a few apple or orange slices. I drink Pellegrino throughout the day.

3:00 P.M. Plain black tea or a bottle of Metromint Spearmint Water.

4:00 P.M. If I really need a snack, I'll have a handful of pecans and dried cranberries, but I don't snack much.



8:00 A.M.



1:00 P.M.



4:00 P.M.



7:00 P.M.



7:00–8:00 P.M. Because I eat a substantial lunch, my supper is small. I might have broccoli rabe or cauliflower and pine nuts with grilled meat, fish, or a small portion of pasta. I rarely eat dessert. I don't take any vitamins or supplements, and I drink alcohol only when I'm going out. Even then, I'll have just one drink. I never have soda or use sugar substitutes.

What the Experts Say

NUTRITION Says Young: "Nicole's diet, though it includes enough protein and antioxidants, is very low in calcium. Many women start to see signs of osteoporosis in their 50s, and a diet rich in calcium is crucial to bone health. Nicole mentions that she hates to be starving at 11:00 A.M., so she should try a piece of cheese on her morning baguette instead of butter. The protein will keep her feeling fuller longer, and it's an easy way to add calcium to her diet. The steak and duck she often has at lunch are very high in saturated fats. I'd recommend fish rather than meat and salad rather than a baguette a few times a week, and she should try not to have grilled meat more than once a day. Dried cranberries, like many dried fruits, are often sweetened with sugar and high in calories.

She should swap them for a bowl of fresh strawberries or blueberries. Finally, Nicole needs to start taking a multivitamin to maintain overall health."

FITNESS Says Maloy: "It sounds like Nicole has genetics on her side. She works out for her health, not to control her weight. She walks, bikes, spends time with her family—it all seems to be working for her. Nicole is smart to combine strength training with Pilates, as they really go well together to emphasize posture and muscle balance, but I recommend having a trainer supervise and assist with her strength training. Women commonly experience bone loss at this age, and proper weight training is a great weapon in the fight against osteoporosis. It's also key to do 20 minutes of cardio a day, minimum, whether it's on the treadmill or the bike or jumping rope." ■