

START HERE

Steady

Eating for calm, all-day energy — without crashes, cravings, or counting.

BETTER OUT CO.

A small idea that changes a lot

Most of us were taught to think about food as *more* or *less*. Eat less, weigh less, want less. But your energy — the kind that carries you steadily from morning to night without the 11 a.m. fog or the 3 p.m. collapse — almost never comes from eating less. It comes from eating in a way your body can comfortably keep up with.

Underneath nearly every afternoon slump, every sudden sweet craving, every “hangry” mood and restless 3 a.m. waking, there is often one quiet character at work: your blood sugar, rising and falling like a tide you can’t see.

The beautiful part is that you don’t need a monitor strapped to your arm, an elimination diet, or a single forbidden food to soften those tides. You need a handful of small, gentle habits — mostly about *order*, *pairing*, and *timing* rather than restriction. Nothing here asks you to give things up. It simply asks you to arrange them with a little more kindness toward your own body.

This isn’t a diet. It’s a way of eating that lets your body breathe.

I’ve gathered the small things that genuinely move the needle — the nuances I wish someone had handed me years ago — and left out the noise. Read it slowly. Take one idea at a time. Let the rest wait for you.

THE WHY

The rollercoaster & the rolling hills

Every time you eat, sugar (glucose) enters your bloodstream. That's not a problem — it's fuel, it's life. What matters is the *shape* of the rise.

When glucose climbs fast and high — think a pastry on an empty stomach, a glass of juice, a bowl of cereal — your body sounds a quiet alarm and releases a wave of **insulin** to bring it back down. But insulin is enthusiastic. It often overshoots, dragging your blood sugar *below* where it started. That dip is the moment you feel it: the yawn, the fog, the sudden, almost urgent need for something sweet to climb back up. And so the rollercoaster begins again.

WHAT THE DIP ACTUALLY FEELS LIKE

Fatigue that arrives suddenly · cravings for sugar or caffeine · irritability or anxiousness · difficulty concentrating · shakiness or a faint headache · hunger again barely an hour after eating.

If this is the texture of your afternoons, it's very likely not a willpower problem. It's a *shape* problem.

The alternative isn't a flat line — it's **rolling hills**. Gentle rises, gentle returns. Same foods, often the same meals, simply eaten in a way that keeps the climb soft. On rolling hills, energy lasts. Cravings quiet down. Mood steadies. And over years, this gentleness is also what protects your long-term metabolic health — the steady path and the healthy path turn out to be the same path.

The morning sets the tone

Here is a nuance most people never hear: in the early morning, your body is already running a little *hot* with cortisol — the natural wake-up hormone — which gently nudges your blood sugar upward before you've eaten a thing. It's the steepest, most sensitive moment of your whole day.

So the very worst thing we can hand it is exactly what we're taught to love: a sweet, starchy breakfast on an empty stomach. Cereal, fruit juice, a muffin, sweetened oats, toast and jam. We're pouring petrol on a fire that's already lit — and locking ourselves onto the rollercoaster before 8 a.m.

How you open the morning quietly writes the rest of your day.

There's a lovely, well-studied phenomenon here called the **second-meal effect**: a steady first meal makes your body respond more calmly to your *next* meal too. Breakfast isn't one event — it's the tone-setter for lunch and beyond.

The fix is simple and deeply satisfying: **open the day with protein and fat before anything sweet**. Savoury, not sugary. This is the single highest-leverage change in this whole guide — and as you'll see, it can look like almost anything you like.

A gentle truth here: even a “healthy” sweet breakfast — oats, a yoghurt-and-fruit bowl, a smoothie — is still mostly carbohydrate, and on that already-warm morning it climbs more than most people expect. Seeds and nuts soften the edge, but they don't change what oats fundamentally are. Whole-food fat and protein — eggs and avocado — simply give your morning a flatter, calmer line. So before the first bite there's a small ritual worth keeping, and after it, a breakfast so simple it's almost a joke. Turn the page.

A morning ritual

Three small things, done before breakfast even begins, that set the body up to meet the day gently.

Start with warm ginger & lemon

Before coffee, before food: a mug of warm (never boiling) water with a thumb of freshly grated ginger and a good squeeze of lemon. It's a centuries-old way to wake the body softly – rehydrating after a long night, warming the digestion before it's asked to work, and long loved as a gentle support for circulation and the body's own quiet drainage. If nothing else, you begin the day having done one kind thing before the world asks anything of you.

And rethink the coffee

Here's where I'll gently part ways with the crowd. As a daily ritual, coffee asks a lot of the body – it drives up cortisol, taxes the adrenals, and on an empty stomach spikes blood sugar at the very moment it's already highest. A true wake-me-up most mornings is usually a sign the system is running on stress, not rest.

So my honest take: coffee is better taken *the other way*. As a coffee enema, it does something altogether different – supporting the liver and the body's own gentle clearing rather than whipping the nervous system. That's the whole reason **Better Out Co.** exists, and it's a world I'd love to walk you through.

If you do enjoy the occasional cup, the single most important thing isn't how you store it – it's that it's genuinely **mould-free**. Coffee is one of the crops most prone to mould and the mycotoxins it leaves behind, and those don't brew away or store away: once they're in the bean, no airtight jar undoes them. They quietly burden the liver and immune system over time. So choose beans that are lab-tested or specifically mould-free, and keep coffee a treat rather than a crutch.

And go easy on the dairy

Dairy suits some bodies and quietly troubles others – bloating, congestion, restless skin. If it doesn't love you back, let it fade. If you keep it, choose full-fat and grass-fed where you can: the fat slows the sugar, and so much of the goodness lives in the pasture. (Raw, unpasteurised milk is a personal choice to research with care – it carries a genuine risk of harmful bacteria, so it isn't advised in pregnancy, for young children, or for anyone with a weaker immune system.)

Eggs & avocado, seven ways

Here comes the punchline of the whole guide, and it's almost embarrassing how simple it is: *build breakfast around eggs and avocado*. Protein, good fat, fibre, almost no sugar – the gentlest possible start to a day, every single time.

Without bread to fill the plate, the trick is to make it **generous** – so here's that brilliant base wearing seven heartier outfits. Each one is a proper, satisfying meal that'll carry you for hours. Pick one, rotate through them, and never agonise over breakfast again.

Instead of cereal...	→ Soft scrambled eggs on smashed avo, with a little tomato, cucumber & olive salad alongside
Instead of sweet oats...	→ A folded omelette with avo & herbs inside, sardines or mackerel on the side
Instead of toast & jam...	→ Fried eggs over avocado with leftover roast chicken pulled through it
Instead of a smoothie...	→ Soft-boiled eggs & avo wedges with a quick chicken-and-egg salad from last night's leftovers
Instead of a pastry...	→ An egg baked into an avocado, with olives, sun-dried tomatoes & sliced capsicum to round it out
Instead of pancakes...	→ Poached eggs over sliced avo & smoked mackerel, lemon & chilli over the top
Instead of a granola pot...	→ Avo mashed with lemon & olive oil, eggs any way, with grated fennel & toasted pistachios on the side

THE TWO-SECOND UPGRADE

Before the plate even reaches the table, scatter over a handful of **fresh herbs or micro greens** – parsley, coriander, dill, basil, chives, or any micro green you can find. No board, no extra pan, no time lost. Yet micro greens carry a remarkable concentration of nutrients for their size, and culinary herbs are quietly medicinal. It's the easiest health-boosting bomb in this whole book.

*Curious what each herb actually does for your body? That's a whole little world of its own – I've gathered it for you in the companion guide, **The Kitchen Apothecary**.*

Four quiet habits

None of these remove a single food from your life. They simply soften the climb. Master even one or two and you'll feel the difference within days.

1 Order your plate

Eat your vegetables and protein *first*, and save the starchy or sweet part of the meal for last. Same plate, same food — different order.

The nuance: fibre and protein eaten first slow how quickly the stomach empties and prompt gut hormones that blunt the glucose rise. Eating the bread before the salad and the bread after the salad produce genuinely different curves.

2 Never eat a “naked” carb

A carbohydrate eaten alone climbs fast. Dressed in protein, fat, or fibre, it climbs gently. So never let a carb go out undressed.

The nuance: fat and protein slow digestion, and fibre forms a soft mesh that sugar must filter through. An apple *with* a handful of nuts is a different event than the apple alone. Rice *beside* fish, greens and olive oil is gentler than rice on its own.

3 Move a little, soon after

A 10–15 minute walk after a meal — or even washing the dishes, tidying, a few gentle squats — is one of the most powerful tools you have.

The nuance: contracting muscles pull glucose out of your blood for fuel *without needing much insulin at all*. You're not walking to burn off the meal — you're giving the sugar somewhere kind to go. This is why a post-dinner stroll feels so good.

4 A spoonful of something sour

A little vinegar or lemon before a carb-heavy meal — a dressed salad, a splash in water, fermented foods alongside — takes the edge off the rise.

The nuance: the acid slows stomach emptying and helps muscles take up glucose more readily. Small effect, almost no effort — and it pairs beautifully with habit #1, since most salads are already dressed in exactly this.

The 3 p.m. crash, explained

That heavy, foggy, reach-for-something-sweet feeling in the early afternoon is so common we treat it as a law of nature. It isn't. More often than not, it was *baked in at lunch*.

A lunch that's mostly fast carbs — a sandwich and chips, a pasta bowl, a wrap and a sweet drink — sends glucose up sharply. Insulin rushes in to manage it, overshoots, and a couple of hours later you land in the dip. Your brain, sensing low fuel, does the most logical thing it knows: it demands quick sugar or caffeine. And the cycle resets.

The 3 p.m. crash is usually a 1 p.m. decision.

So the cure for the afternoon lives at midday. Build lunch around a generous palm of **protein**, plenty of **vegetables or salad**, a little **good fat** (olive oil, avocado, nuts, cheese), and let the bread, rice, or pasta be the *supporting act* rather than the star. Order it the right way round. Take your short walk after. The afternoon that follows will feel like a different day.

A SMALL DISTINCTION WORTH KEEPING

True hunger builds slowly and will accept real food — eggs, leftovers, nuts. A **blood-sugar dip** arrives suddenly and demands something *specific and sweet*, right now. Learning to feel the difference is quietly life-changing: the dip doesn't need feeding so much as preventing.

A GENTLE DISTINCTION

Not all carbs are equal

We've said it kindly a few times now: carbs aren't the enemy, and timing matters. Here is the next layer of that same kindness — *which* carb matters too.

The gentlest carbohydrates arrive still wrapped in fibre, water and nutrients: **pumpkin, squash, sweet potato, carrots, beetroot, quinoa, buckwheat, whole oats, lentils**, and slow, properly fermented **sourdough**. They rise softly and nourish you on the way up. The steepest arrive stripped of all of that — white flour, fluffy commercial bread, most pasta, plain sugar. Fast in, fast out. And they don't only feed you.

WHAT YOU FEED, GROWS

Inside you lives a whole garden of microbes. The helpful, fibre-loving bacteria thrive on vegetables, whole grains and that cooled resistant starch. The less welcome residents — including yeasts like *candida* — feast on refined sugar and white flour. A diet heavy in quick carbs is, in effect, fertiliser for the wrong crop: for some people that shows up as bloating, cravings that won't quit, or recurring yeast troubles.

So feed the garden you actually want. Slow, whole, fibre-rich carbs grow the good bacteria; sugar and refined flour grow the rest.

This is also why a slice of genuine, slow-fermented sourdough sits so differently from soft supermarket bread: the long, patient ferment pre-digests much of the starch and the fast-acting baker's yeast, leaving something gentler and more nourishing. If you love bread — and who doesn't — simply love *good* bread.

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO GO DEEPER

Everything in this guide is deliberately gentle — small shifts, nothing forbidden. But some of us are carrying more than a wobbly blood-sugar curve: a truly imbalanced gut flora, stubborn candida, chronic inflammation, mould toxicity, lingering infections, real and exhausting symptoms. If that's you, and you're ready to make your health a genuine priority, gentle tweaks may not be enough — you deserve a proper clean-up and restoration.

*I've poured that deeper work into a companion guide on **deep healing & restoration** — the path I'd walk if I were starting over. As always, please walk it alongside a practitioner who knows your story; this supports real care, it never replaces it.*

— Laura



A NOURISHING CHAPTER

Gut-Loving Magic

*Bone broths & slow-cooked soups – the most
steadying, restorative food there is, and the
perfect way to open any meal.*

Liquid nourishment

Almost every traditional culture kept a pot of broth quietly simmering. They didn't know the biochemistry — they simply knew that a bowl of slow-cooked bones and herbs made the sick well and the well strong. They were entirely right.

When bones, marrow and connective tissue simmer for hours, they release collagen, gelatine, amino acids like glycine and proline, and a wealth of minerals in a form the body absorbs almost effortlessly. Here's what that gentle alchemy offers:

GUT HEALTH Gelatine and collagen help soothe and seal the gut lining — the foundation of digestion, immunity and calm. This is why broth sits at the heart of nearly every gut-healing tradition.

METABOLIC HEALTH Pure protein and fat with almost no sugar: broth nourishes deeply without disturbing your blood sugar at all. A naturally steadying food.

CELLULAR INTEGRITY Glycine and proline are the very building blocks your body uses to repair tissue, skin and joints — raw material for cellular renewal, sipped warm.

STEADY GLUCOSE With no fast carbs to spike it, a bowl of broth keeps you on the gentlest possible line — comfort and fullness with a flat, calm curve.

A small bowl of soup before a meal is one of the kindest things you can do for your blood sugar.

It works on every front: the warm liquid and protein take the edge off hunger so you eat your meal more slowly and calmly, the gut is primed, and the glucose rise that follows is softer. Open lunch or dinner with a little broth and the whole meal behaves.

Herb-Healing Chicken Soup

FREE-RANGE · SERVES 4-6 · THE ONE TO KNOW BY HEART

The original medicine. A whole free-range bird, slow-simmered with healing herbs until the broth turns golden and restorative. Make it at the first sign of a sniffle, or simply on a Sunday.

YOU'LL NEED

- 1 whole free-range chicken
- 2 onions, halved
- 1 whole head of garlic, halved
- 3 carrots, 3 celery sticks
- A thumb of fresh ginger
- A thumb of fresh turmeric (or 1 tsp dried)
- Bay, thyme & a handful of parsley stalks
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- Sea salt & a sprig of rosemary & sage
- Fresh herbs, to finish

THE METHOD

- 1 Place the whole chicken in a large pot with the onions, garlic, carrots, celery, ginger and turmeric.
- 2 Cover with cold water, add the vinegar (it helps draw the minerals from the bones), and bring to a gentle simmer – never a hard boil.
- 3 Add the bay and thyme. Simmer softly, partly covered, for 2-3 hours, skimming any foam.
- 4 Lift out the chicken, shred the meat, return as much as you like to the pot. Season well.
- 5 Finish each bowl with a generous scatter of fresh parsley, dill or coriander – their oils stay alive when added raw at the end.

A NOD TO YOUR APOTHECARY

The herbs aren't just flavour – the ginger and turmeric calm inflammation, the garlic protects, the parsley nourishes. To understand what each one quietly does, see the companion guide, **The Kitchen Apothecary**.

RECIPE TWO · THE DEEP MINERAL BROTH

Beef Marrow Bone Broth

MAKES A BIG POT · SIP DAILY · RICHEST IN COLLAGEN

Deeper and more mineral than chicken — this is the broth for true restoration. Roasting the bones first gives it a rich, almost nutty depth. Sip a warm mug on an empty stomach, or use it as the base for any soup or stew.

YOU'LL NEED

- 1.5–2 kg beef marrow & knuckle bones, grass-fed
- 2 onions, 2 carrots, 2 celery sticks
- 1 head of garlic, halved
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- A few sprigs of rosemary, sage & bay leaves
- A thumb of ginger (optional, warming)
- Sea salt, to taste

THE METHOD

- 1 Roast the bones at 200°C for 30 minutes until deeply browned — this is the secret to flavour.
- 2 Transfer to a large pot with the vegetables, garlic and herbs.
- 3 Cover with cold water and add the vinegar. Let it sit 20 minutes before heating, to start drawing out the minerals.
- 4 Bring to the barest simmer and hold there, partly covered, for 12–24 hours — the longer, the richer and more gelatinous.
- 5 Strain, season, and cool. A good broth will set to a soft jelly in the fridge — that wobble is the collagen, and a sign you did it right.

A slow cooker is perfect here — set it low and let it work overnight without a thought.

Slow Oxtail Stew

SERVES 4-6 · A MEAL & A MEDICINE IN ONE

Where broth becomes a feast. Oxtail is extraordinarily rich in collagen — slow-cooked for hours, it melts into a silky, deeply nourishing stew that's as restorative as it is comforting. The ultimate slow Sunday.

YOU'LL NEED

- 1.5 kg oxtail, grass-fed, in pieces
- 2 onions, 3 carrots, 2 celery sticks
- 1 head of garlic
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- A sprig each of rosemary & thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Beef broth (above) or water to cover
- Sea salt & a few sage leaves
- Parsley, to finish

THE METHOD

- 1 Season and brown the oxtail well on all sides in a little fat — don't rush this; the colour is the flavour.
- 2 Lift out, soften the onions, carrots, celery and garlic in the same pot, then stir in the tomato paste.
- 3 Return the oxtail, add the herbs, and pour over enough broth or water to nearly cover.
- 4 Cover and cook very low — on the stove, in a 150°C oven, or a slow cooker — for 3-4 hours, until the meat falls from the bone.
- 5 Skim, season, and finish with fresh parsley. The sauce will be glossy and rich with collagen.

One great pot

If there's one thing worth investing in for this way of eating, it's a large, heavy **cast-iron pot**.

A good cast-iron pot holds heat slowly and evenly — exactly what these long, gentle simmers need. A generous one lets you cook once and eat for days: most of these broths and stews keep beautifully for **2–3 days** in the fridge, deepening in flavour, and freeze even longer. There is a quiet luxury in lifting the lid on something nourishing you already made.

Make a big pot on a slow day. Sip it as a warm mug between meals, ladle a small bowl before lunch and dinner to steady what follows, and build quick meals on its foundation through the week. This is how nourishment becomes a rhythm rather than a chore — one pot, quietly feeding you for days.

THE LITTLE RITUAL

A small bowl of warm broth or soup, ten minutes before your main meal. It takes the edge off hunger, warms and primes the gut, and softens the glucose rise of everything after. Simple, old-fashioned, and quietly powerful.

Quiet amplifiers

Food is most of the story – but not all of it. A few gentle levers shape your blood sugar from the side, and knowing them explains a lot of mysterious days.

Sleep is a blood-sugar tool

After even a single short or broken night, your body becomes measurably more resistant to insulin the next day – the same meal will climb higher and you'll crave more sugar to cope. If you've ever felt ravenous and foggy after poor sleep, this is why. Protecting sleep is protecting your energy.

Stress raises sugar with no food at all

Cortisol, the stress hormone, tells your liver to release stored glucose to ready you for action. Under chronic stress, your blood sugar can stay elevated even when you haven't eaten. A few slow breaths before a meal, and a calmer pace while eating, genuinely change the curve.

Two small kitchen secrets

Cook, cool, then eat. Potatoes, rice, and pasta that have been cooked and then cooled (even reheated later) form “resistant starch” – a portion behaves more like fibre, feeding your gut bacteria and rising more gently. Last night's cooled potatoes are kinder than tonight's hot ones.

Whole fruit over juice, always. The fibre in whole fruit is the mesh that slows everything down. Juicing throws that mesh away and leaves only fast sugar – an orange and a glass of orange juice are not the same event for your body.

Minerals & hydration

So much daily tiredness, fog and that flat, drained feeling isn't really about food at all – it's about **minerals**. Our modern food is grown in depleted soils, so even good eaters often run low on the electrolytes every cell needs to make energy and stay hydrated. Topping them up can be genuinely transformative.

What I use

My own answer here is **Quinton** – pure marine-mineral electrolytes drawn from ocean plankton blooms, carrying up to 78 minerals and trace elements in the same balance as our own blood, so the body absorbs them effortlessly. No sugar, no flavourings, no fillers – the opposite of the sweet electrolyte powders on the shelf. It's the single thing that most lifted my energy and cleared my fog. quintonstore.co.za/LAURA40955

IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

A gentle day, start to finish

Not a meal plan to obey – a *rhythm* to borrow from. Notice the principles woven through, not the specific foods.

ON WAKING Warm ginger-lemon water – and go easy on the coffee.

Wake the body gently rather than whipping it with caffeine on an empty stomach. (And coffee's real magic? The other way – see Better Out Co.)

BREAKFAST Eggs & avocado, scattered with herbs.

Protein & fat before anything sweet – with a two-second handful of micro greens on top.

LUNCH Protein + plants + good fat; if there's a carb, make it a whole one.

Veg and protein first, starch last – and let the starch be squash, sweet potato, quinoa or real sourdough.

AFTER LUNCH A 10-minute walk.

Even around the block, or the dishes & a tidy-up. Give the sugar somewhere to go.

IF A DIP COMES Pair, don't chase.

Fruit with nuts, or yoghurt – not sweets alone. Prevention beats rescue.

DINNER The same gentle shape, a little earlier if you can.

Finishing a couple of hours before bed steadies overnight sugar & deepens sleep.

DESSERT? Yes – just after a meal, not alone.

A treat at the end of a balanced dinner climbs far more gently than the same treat on an empty afternoon.

FROM MY KITCHEN

Once a week we have a comfort-food night the whole family looks forward to. It begins with a big bowl of warm, herb-filled chicken soup – nourishing and grounding – and only then comes the pancake ritual: gluten-free flour, homemade macadamia milk, a drizzle of raw honey and lemon. Soup first means the sweetness lands on a body that's already warm, fed and steady. Comfort and steadiness, in the same evening.

– Laura



THE ART OF THE PAUSE

Rest & Repair

*On giving the body a break from digesting –
gently, and only when your rhythm allows.*

A GENTLE PAUSE

Intermittent fasting

Eating is work. Every meal asks the body to digest, to manage a rise in blood sugar, to clean up afterwards. When we give it a longer nightly break from that work — simply by widening the gap between dinner and breakfast — something restorative happens.

This is all intermittent fasting really is: most often a gentle **12–14 hour overnight pause**, finishing dinner a little earlier and opening breakfast a little later. No heroics. Within that window, the body shifts from constant digestion toward repair.

STEADY INSULIN A long pause lets insulin fall and stay low, giving the system a true rest — the opposite of all-day grazing.

CELLULAR CLEAN-UP Fasting hours encourage the body's natural tidying process, clearing out worn-out cellular debris.

FAT AS FUEL Once the easy sugar is used up, the body turns gently to its own fat stores — steadying energy and metabolism.

DIGESTIVE REST A break from the constant work of digestion frees energy for repair, and many people find their gut calms.

A VITAL NOTE FOR WOMEN

Here is something too often left out: **women are not small men**. A woman's body is exquisitely sensitive to perceived scarcity, because it is always quietly asking whether it's safe to reproduce. Long or aggressive fasting can disturb that delicate hormonal conversation — unsettling cycles, sleep, mood and thyroid.

So for women, gentler is wiser. A natural 12–13 hour overnight pause is plenty.

Longer fasts, if they suit you at all, are best kept to the first half of your cycle (the follicular phase, just after your period) and eased off in the week before it's due.

Always with enough food and protein in your window. If your cycle, sleep or mood shift, that's your body asking for more nourishment — listen to it.

DEEPER REST

A monthly day of rest

Beyond the nightly pause, there's real wisdom in giving the body a deeper rest now and then — perhaps **one day a month** — where digestion all but stops and the body drops into a deeper mode of repair.

This needn't be extreme. Choose the depth that feels right for you:

GENTLEST	A day of clear broths and a little fruit — nourishing and mineral-rich, while still resting the digestion. A beautiful place to begin.
DEEPER	A day of warm broths alone, letting the gut rest more fully while staying truly nourished and warm.
DEEPEST	A pure water fast for those experienced and well — the most complete pause, and the one to approach with the most care and guidance.

A fast day must be a slow day. This is the whole secret.

Here is where so many go wrong: they attempt a fast while running errands, working hard, chasing children, pushing through. To a body already short on food, that effort reads as *stress* — cortisol climbs, and instead of repair you get depletion, frazzle and a blood sugar that won't settle. The very opposite of the gift you intended.

So fast only when the rhythm allows: a quiet day with little to do. Rest, read, walk gently, sleep. Keep warm. Break the fast softly with broth or something cooked and gentle, never a heavy meal. And if a true slow day isn't possible this month, simply wait for one. Forced, it harms; gentle, it heals.

Fasting isn't for everyone. Please skip deeper fasts if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, underweight, a growing child or teen, diabetic or on blood-sugar medication, or have any history of disordered eating — and check with your doctor if you're unsure.

THE SWEET THINGS

Treats, baking & better sweeteners

Sweetness has a place in a good life — this was never about denial. The art is simply in *what* you sweeten with. Refined white sugar spikes hard and feeds the wrong gut residents; nature's sweeteners arrive carrying minerals, fibre or fewer consequences. Here are the ones worth keeping.

For drizzling & finishing (not heated)

RAW HONEY A true food — rich in enzymes, antioxidants and trace minerals, with gentle antimicrobial gifts. But its magic is delicate: **heat destroys it**, so never bake with raw honey. Drizzle it over finished pancakes, yoghurt or warm (not hot) tea to keep it alive.

For baking & cooking

DATES Nature's caramel — whole fruit, so they bring fibre and a genuine wealth of minerals (potassium, magnesium). Blend into a paste to sweeten baking naturally.

COCONUT SUGAR From coconut palm sap, with a little fibre and minerals and a gentler rise than white sugar. A lovely one-to-one swap in baking with a soft caramel note.

MONK FRUIT Intensely sweet with virtually no effect on blood sugar — a beautiful choice when you want sweetness with a flat curve. Often blended with erythritol; choose pure where you can.

PURE MAPLE SYRUP A real, mineral-bearing syrup (unlike imitations). Still a sugar — so a gentle hand — but a far kinder, more wholesome choice for baking.

THE GENTLE WAY TO TREAT

Whichever you choose, the *Steady* rules still apply: enjoy something sweet **after** a nourishing meal rather than alone, pair it with fat or protein, and savour it slowly. A treat on a steady body is a joy. A treat on an empty one is a rollercoaster. Same sweetness — entirely different landing.



ONE LAST THING

Hold it all gently

None of this is meant to be perfect. A celebration cake, a holiday, a bowl of pasta with people you love — these belong in a good life, and one meal never undoes you. The aim isn't control. It's *steadiness* — more good days, more even energy, fewer crashes that aren't your fault.

Start with one habit. Let your body show you the difference. The rest will follow when it's ready.

With care,

Laura Weyel

BETTER OUT CO.

This guide is for general education and encouragement only and isn't medical or nutritional advice for your individual situation. If you live with diabetes or another medical condition, are pregnant, or take any medication that affects blood sugar (such as insulin or other glucose-lowering medicines), please make changes alongside your doctor or dietitian — eating differently can change how much medication you need. If your relationship with food feels distressing, a registered professional can offer the kind of personal support a guide never can.