



POST OPERATION

**Peter's Delicious, Nutritious Recipes
for Recovery**



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Introduction:

What Matters to me is helping others, especially those who have the same challenges as me. I was born with a unilateral cleft lip and palate. Since the age of 4 months, I've had 8 operations on my mouth, nose and ears for hearing. Doctors told me I could not bite, chew or suck on a straw while I recovered. I had to keep my mouth still while I healed. My family was given the job of finding foods I could eat without using my jaw. The answer was a great kitchen appliance most people have at home – a blender. Now my favorite foods could be blenderized, so I didn't have to miss out on almost anything. And if you're wondering how I swallowed all the food, a large oral-feeding syringe with a big hole at the tip made it easy. If you can't afford a blender, people are always very willing to lend theirs for a couple of months.

Healthy eating has always been important in my house so when I was still able to eat a variety of nutritious foods that also tasted great, my recoveries became that much easier. My parents have always given me a lot of love, and taught me about caring for others. Their efforts to find me edible, delicious food during my recoveries were one way they showed their love for me. And when I thought about that and our years of healthy eating, the idea for this cookbook arrived.

So this is what I wanted to share with you - a book of blenderized foods that are delicious whether you are recovering from an operation or just hungry. Maybe your mouth is sore after seeing the dentist, or maybe you are a lot older and don't have any teeth at all. I hope you'll find a variety of foods in this book to enjoy. I have tried to include a selection of recipes for every meal of the day: porridges, soups, stews, smoothies and healthy desserts.



All money raised through the sale of this e-Book will be donated to charities like LCCA, Clapa, Smile Train, Changing Faces and other charities that offer medical treatment and support to people with facial disfigurements all over world.

If you cannot afford to make a donation, please enjoy these recipes anyway.



Notes:

These are some my after-care guidelines, following my bone graft from my hip to my gum line. Please ask your doctor, nurse or nutritionist if you need something different.

Oral Hygiene:

It is important to note that if you've had any sort of operation in your mouth you should keep the area as clean as possible and observe hygiene guidelines from your doctor or dentist.

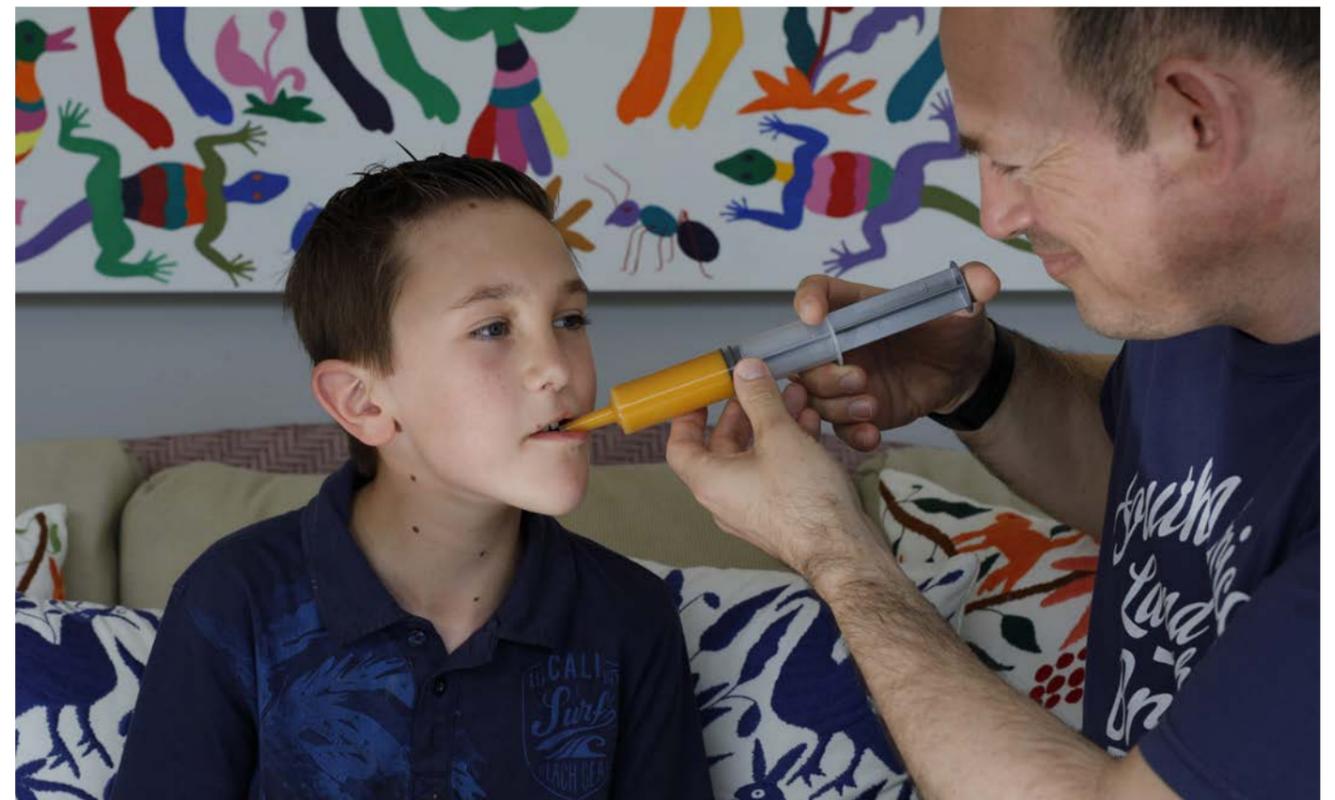
These guidelines usually include rinsing your mouth with an antiseptic solution twice a day and using a water and salt mixture after every meal, as sometimes you can't brush your teeth for a long time after surgery. My mom brushed my teeth on the opposite side of the surgery for weeks with a small, soft toothbrush.

My Surgery:

Day 1 to Day 3 - After my bone graft surgery I was on clear liquids for 3 days. I was ONLY allowed to have water, clear soup broth, tea (with no milk/cream), apple, cranberry and/or white grape juice (no pulp), clear jelly, popsicles (but not on a stick as you could damage your surgery and no bits of fruit in them), clear sodas, sports drinks and rehydrating drinks.

Day 4 to 6/8 weeks - No chewing or biting at all. You must be able to swallow your food without chewing and if its too hard to swallow, then it needs to be blended again into something more liquid. Some people cannot afford a blender so they need to mash the food very well by hand and then add liquid like water, juice, gravy, cream, milk (nut milks, coconut milk) to make it soft and easy to swallow. I suggest using a small plastic spoon so you don't have to open your mouth too wide and if you accidentally bang your teeth it wont be as hard as a metal spoon.

We figured out that it was much easier to continue using a large, oral syringe that we initially got from the hospital, and then to buy more from the pharmacy. After a while the syringes started to stick and then we knew it was time for a new one. It's a lot easier to use a syringe if someone helps you by holding it and slowly pushing the plunger while you swallow.



I was not allowed to have any crunchy, chewy, hard or sharp foods as they can destroy the stitches and move the bone graft, which would make the surgery fail.

For example, I couldn't have:

- Bread (especially whole grain)
- Cereal
- Fried rice or noodles
- Crisps
- Bacon
- Nuts
- Crackers
- Candy

But I did have a lot of smoothies. All the smoothies in my cookbook follow the advice I was given. They don't contain any of the following:

- Seeds (which can get stuck in the wound)
- Whole pieces of fruit
- Fruits that have seeds
- Raw vegetables.

Food Allergies: Please be aware that we have tried to exclude foods that commonly trigger allergy responses. *The exception is one recipe with peanut butter.* Only you know what foods are best avoided.

Consistency: Each recipe recommends a quantity of liquids. Some people may need their soups, smoothies and stews with more or less liquid. Please change the quantities to best suit you.

Stews for the family: Sometimes we made stews for the whole family and only blended the portion for me. But mostly we all had blended food. We even made a stew with turkey for Thanksgiving!

Keeping weight on: We were told when we left the hospital that a lot of people lose too much weight during the recovery process and struggle to get enough protein, fats and carbohydrates. I didn't lose any weight by eating the delicious food in this book and I looked very healthy, with nice red cheeks. These recipes are for feeling full, keeping weight on and not for detoxing. Wherever possible, we used full fat milks, yoghurts, and tins of full fat coconut milk. Also, it is important to find a protein powder you like to ensure you get enough protein during your recovery. This is best added to smoothies.



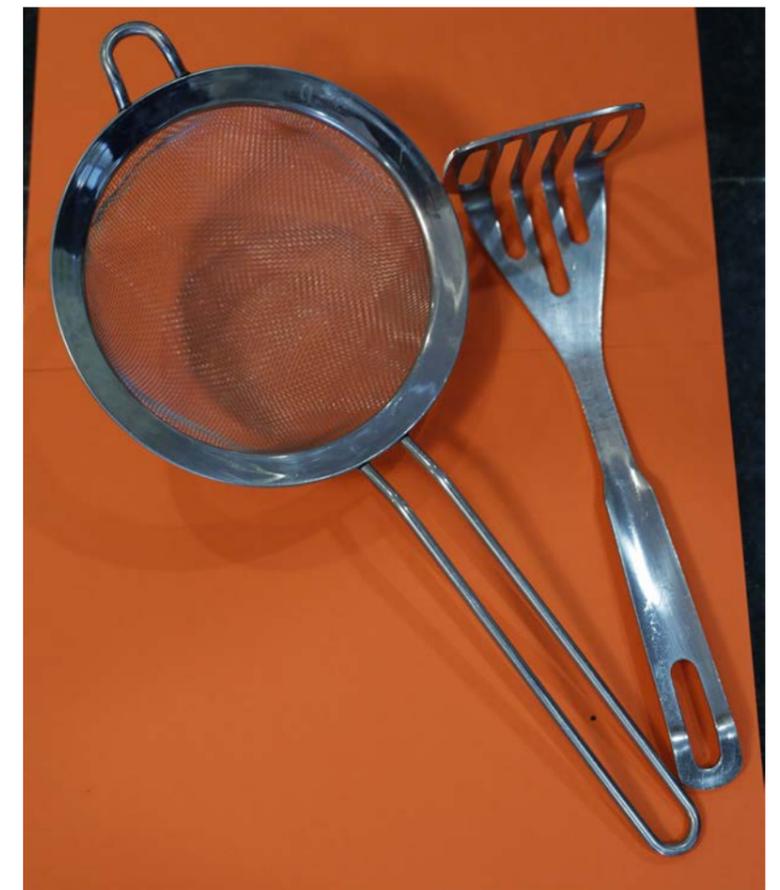
Prepare in advance: A practical idea is to cook and freeze these foods in advance. Then, when you are busy and don't have time to cook you can just open the freezer and defrost something.

Travel: You can fill 100ml containers with your culinary creations, put them in plastic bags, and take them on planes as long as you can show security an explanatory letter from your doctor. You may need more than one plastic bag!

We used flasks like these for going on trips and they are useful as they keep food very hot or cold. We even travelled with them in the suitcases in the main hold of the plane so that we had instant food on the other side. Great for school or work lunch as well.

Eating out: We found restaurants were really helpful when we asked them to make me soups and smoothies. It was only a matter of telling them what I could eat. The kitchen took care of the rest.

Other utensils: If you don't have a blender you will have to mash your food until it is very soft which means you really need to overcook it. Put it through a strainer to make sure you get rid of the small bits.



Breakfast

Sometimes I wake up in the morning really hungry. I was probably dreaming of this scrumptious porridge all night!

Yummy Porridge

- 1 cup Oats
- 2 Apples, peeled and cored
- ¼ C Coconut Milk
- 1/8 TBS Cinnamon
- 1 Banana
- 1 TBS honey

Boil oats and apple until really soft, add to the blender along with the remaining ingredients. Blend until smooth.



Soups and Stews

Bone Broth

During most of my operations I was only allowed clear liquids for the first three days. This bone broth, a kind of clear soup, was a welcome change from all that apple juice, grape juice and water.

Everyone has heard that chicken soup is good for you when you have a cold. In fact, one of the nutrients found in chicken broth, cysteine, is very similar to one to be found in bronchitis drugs you buy at the pharmacy. But this one has the advantage of being completely natural.

Here's an interesting fact. In the Far East broth it is believed to be so important for healing it is prescribed to anyone with broken bones. Bone broth contains a lot of collagen, a kind of protein that occurs naturally in many parts of our body. It acts to support and strengthen muscles and makes up bones, teeth and cartilage to name just a few. So if you are ever unlucky enough to break a bone don't forget this soup!

If you don't feel like making your own broth you can buy it in powdered form in different flavors.

What you need:

If you make your own stock you will be getting a much healthier soup than one made with stock cubes. It can also act as a stock for other dishes featured in this book.

Here's what you need to make bone broth:

- Stockpot with two handles
- Colander or Strainer
- Long Handled spoon
- Fresh, raw bones to fill your cooking pot 2/3 full. Mixing poultry and meat bones is fine. Go for the healthiest bones you can find – organic and free range are best. Animals raised in feed lots or cages can contain chemicals that aren't good for you.
- 1 piece of dried Kombu Seaweed
- 1 TBS apple cider vinegar/lemon juice
- Onions, Carrots, Leeks, Garlic, Celery
- 2 Bay Leaves



Recipe:

Put your raw bones in a large pot of filtered water. Use enough to cover the bones.

Add a piece of dry Kombu Seaweed, 1 TBS apple cider vinegar (1 TBS lemon juice if you don't have vinegar) and bring them to boil. The vinegar helps pull the healthy minerals out of the bones.

While it is boiling, roughly cut the vegetables and add them to the pot, along with 2 bay leaves. Reduce the heat to simmer and keep it at simmer for about 12 hours. Add more water when needed. Partially cover it with a lid.

Please note, you need to continually skim the brown foam off the top as you see it developing. You can leave the pot on the stove top as it happily simmers away.

After 6 hours, take the bones out of the pot and put them on the chopping board to smash them so that the important marrow gets released. You can do this with a meat tenderizer, which looks like a square hammer. Put everything back in the pot.

After 12 hours, cool it down and drain through a sieve. During the first 3 days after my surgery we drained it through a nut milk bag as well to make doubly sure there were no tiny bits.

Keep some broth to make your recipes and put the leftover amount in ice cube trays and freeze.

Once frozen, pop them into a Ziploc bag until you have an entire bag of frozen iced stock cubes. This is a very handy way to add the broth to your soups or stews.



Meriam's Soup

- 500 gm Sweet Potato, peeled and chopped
- 3 Leeks
- 1 pkt/4 oz Watercress
- 2 Carrots
- 3 Celery sticks
- 1 Red Onion
- 3 Cloves of Garlic
- 5 Cups of Bone Broth/stock
- 2 TBS Olive Oil

Chop all the vegetables. Fry the onion and garlic in olive oil until softened. Add the rest of the vegetables except the watercress. Stir for 5 minutes. Pour in the bone broth/stock. Boil until the vegetables are cooked and soft. Add the watercress for 2 minutes. Put into blender until smooth.

Chickeney's Chicken Stew Soup

- 8 boneless chicken thighs
- 3 Carrots
- 2 Leeks
- 1 Parsnip
- 1 piece of Ginger
- 2 Celery sticks
- 2 Sweet Potatoes
- 1 Onion
- 2 Cloves of Garlic
- 5 cups of bone broth
- Olive oil

Brown the chicken thighs in a large pot with a little olive oil. When brown, add the onion, garlic and ginger until soft. Add the carrots, leeks and celery along with the 5 cups of bone broth. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add the sweet potatoes and parsnip. Simmer for further 10 minutes. Blend until smooth.





Butternut Squash Soup

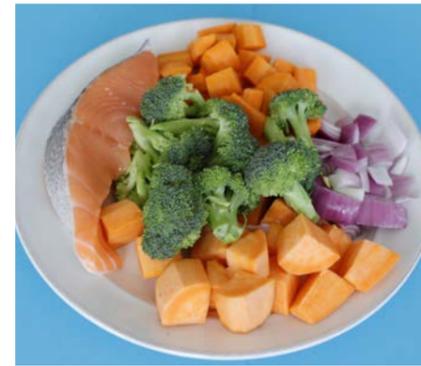
This is a yummy, smooth soup that my family loves. It has thyme, garlic, and plenty of bone broth. The sweet potatoes and butternut squash go together really well.

Large Butternut Squash, about 4 lbs., cut in half
2 Sweet Potatoes
1 large Onions, roughly chopped
2 Garlic cloves
1 tsp of thyme
4 cups of Bone Broth, or Stock
Olive oil
Pinch of salt

Preheat the oven to 350 F to roast vegetables.

Cut up the squash, onion, garlic and sweet potato and lay on a baking tray. Splash generous amounts of olive oil over the top. Sprinkle with thyme and mix together. Roast for 30 minutes until all are tender and heat the bone broth.

Once everything is cooked and soft, cool the mixture and blend until smooth. Serve reheated.



Salmon Soup

1 Sweet Potato, peeled and chopped
1 Large Carrot
1 boneless Salmon (or Cod) fillet, remove skin and slice into pieces
Parsley
1 ½ cups of Broccoli
1 Onion
2 cups of Bone Broth/Stock
2 tbs Olive Oil

Heat olive oil in saucepan and add onion, carrots and sweet potato.

Keep on medium heat for 5 minutes.

Add the broccoli, salmon and bone broth. Simmer for 10 minutes and then blend.

Add (herbed) salt to taste.



Lamb Stew a la Blender

You might think of stew as one of the most challenging foods to eat since it is so chunky and chewy. But here's another food that can be put in the blender!

What you need:

- 1 lb Lamb, cut into cubes
- 1 Red onion, chopped
- 1 clove Garlic, chopped
- 2 Sweet Potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 head of Broccoli chopped
- 1 cup of cooked Rice
- 2 stalks Celery, chopped
- 2 large Carrots, chopped
- 2 cups of Bone Broth/stock
- Herbed sea salt
- 2 tbs Olive oil

Fry and brown garlic, onion and lamb in casserole pan. Add all vegetables. Add seasoning and some bone broth/stock. Cook on stove top until vegetables are soft, on medium heat.

Once the stew is cool, ladle into blender.

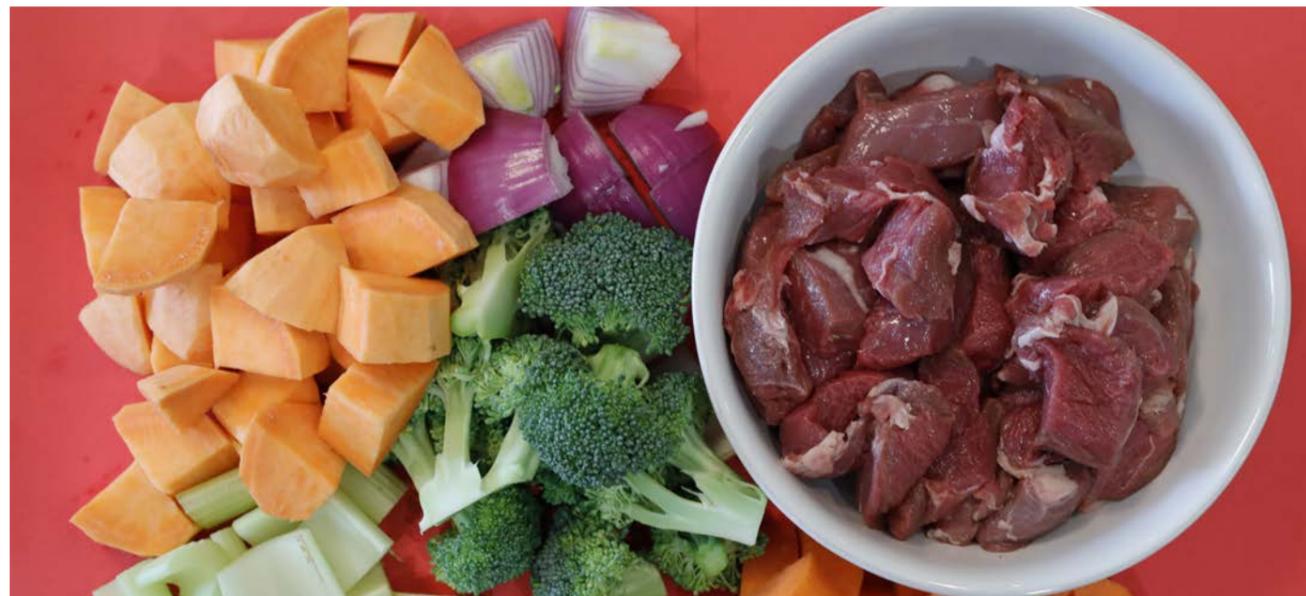
Add rice and blend.

Add salt to taste.

Reheat to eat.



Don't forget those side dishes that are practically blenderized already, like mashed potatoes mixed with cooked and softened sweet potatoes. I always like butter and cream added in too. Yummy! Just spoon the blended lamb stew over the top and you have a delicious meal that will really fill you up!



Smoothies

Smoothies can be anything and everything you want them to be. Sweet or savory, nutritious and filling. They can be a refreshing breakfast or an alternative to the usual sandwich at lunch. Wash and chop your ingredients, blend them up, pour into a tall glass and enjoy. If the mixtures are too thick, just add more liquid. And if you want to sweeten them up, put in a bit of honey. You will get 1 - 2 servings from each recipe depending on the amounts added to the blender and the size of your glasses. For extra protein don't forget your old friend, protein powder, and some more fluids to thin it out.

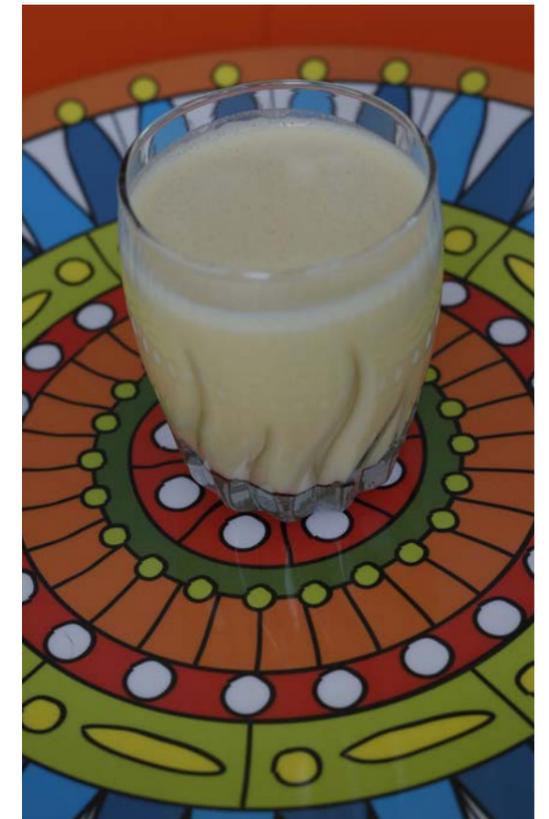
Pete's Powerful Red Recovery Smoothie

- 2 Kale leaves, ripped up, or similar amount of spinach
- ½ Beet, small
- 1 Apple (cored)
- 2 cups of Coconut milk

The Green Monster- who's a nice guy, really

If you want to make this one even greener, add a few pieces of store bought dried seaweed. Soak the leaves in a bowl of water while you prepare the other ingredients.

- Spinach leaves, 1 handful
- Cucumber, ½ large
- Apples, 1 - 2, cored
- Celery, 2 sticks
- Avocado, ½ large
- Watercress, 1 handful
- small bit of parsley



Mangana Mousse

- 1 cup of chopped Mango (frozen is fine)
- 1 Banana
- 1 scoop protein powder (of choice and flavor, I used chocolate)
- 1 cup of milk/almond milk
- 2 cups of Coconut milk
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract



Pear-banana-cado Punch

Turmeric, in this recipe, is a spice well known for its anti-inflammatory properties.

- 1 Pear, pips removed
- 1 Banana
- ½ large Avocado
- 2 cups of Full-fat coconut milk
- ¼ tsp Turmeric



Yo-yo Bacado

This one is really fresh and light. Good for a pick-me-up.

- 1 Banana
- 1 Avocado
- 1 Apple (cored)
- 1 cup Plain Yogurt
- ½ cup Almond milk/milk

Peter's Peach Party

If you want to sweeten it more add a spoonful of honey.

- 1 TBS Peanut Butter
- 1 tin of Peaches in juice/syrup
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ½ cup milk/almond milk



DESSERTS

Peter's Classic Chocolate Mousse

This dessert is absolutely great! And you will never guess its secret ingredient.

- 4 dessert spoons of Cocoa powder
- 1 Banana
- 1 Avocado
- Juice of ½ Lemon
- 2 tbs Honey
- 1 ½ Cups of Almond Milk/Milk



Add all the ingredients into the blender. It is best to have the same amount of banana as avocado. Blend and taste afterwards. If it doesn't taste sweet enough add a little of your favorite sweetener.

Lastly, simple dessert can be the best! Try slightly melted ice cream or hot chocolate.

That's it. I hope you like all the food and you recover well. I had a lot of fun re-making all these with Mum, Dad and Lanie.

Get well soon,

Peter.



The End



Written by Peter Strachan with the help of Sharron Hawker. I spent a lot of time asking Lanie and my Mum and Dad for their input.



Dedication: To Leilani Santiago and everyone in the world.