



# **The Conscious Kitchen: The New Way to Buy and Cook Food - to Protect the Earth, Improve Your Health, and Eat Deliciously**

*Alexandra Zissu*

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**Your everyday food choices can change the world—and make meals taste better than ever**

For anyone who has read *The Omnivore's Dilemma* or seen *Food, Inc.* and longs to effect easy green changes when it comes to the food they buy, cook, and eat, *The Conscious Kitchen* is an invaluable resource filled with real world, practical solutions.

Alexandra Zissu walks readers through every kitchen-related decision with three criteria in mind: what's good for personal health, what's good for the planet, and what tastes great. Learn, among other things, how to:

- Keep pesticides, chemicals, and other harmful ingredients out of your diet
- Choose when to spend your dollars on organic fruit and when to buy conventionally grown
- Avoid plastic—including which kinds in particular and why
- Figure out what seafood is safe to eat *and* is sustainable
- Use COOL (country of origin labels) to your advantage
- Determine if a vegetable is genetically modified just from reading its PLU (price look up) code
- Decipher meat labels in the supermarket
- Cook using the least energy—good for the earth and your wallet
- Eat locally, even in winter
- Understand what “natural” and other marketing terms really mean
- Buy packaged foods wisely

Navigate farmers' markets, giant supermarkets, and every shop in between to find the freshest and healthiest local ecologically grown and produced meat, dairy, fruits, and vegetables—no matter where you live

With *The Conscious Kitchen* as your guide, you will never again stand in the market bewildered, wondering what to buy. You can feel confident you are making the best possible choices for you, your family, and our planet.

ALEXANDRA ZISSU writes about green living, food, and parenthood. She is the author of *The Conscious Kitchen*, coauthor of *The Complete Organic Pregnancy*, and contributes the “Ask an Organic Mom” column to The DailyGreen.com. Her stories have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Green Guide*, *Cookie*, *Details*, *Bon Appétit*, *Self*, and *Health*, among other publications. She is also a public speaker and “greenproofer,” an eco-lifestyle consultant. Visit her website, [www.alexandrazissu.com](http://www.alexandrazissu.com).

## **The Conscious Kitchen: The New Way to Buy and Cook Food - to Protect the Earth, Improve Your Health, and Eat Deliciously Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Conscious Kitchen: The New Way to Buy and Cook Food - to Protect the Earth, Improve Your Health, and Eat Deliciously for online ebook**

### **Lara Adler says**

Such a great book! I was really happy to find another person who was so interested in ALL the different areas in which "greening" can happen in our life. Diet is important, but what we use to cook with and eat on also have a profound environmental impact, and Alexandra Zissu does a stand up job of laying it all out there in a fun and easy way. This is easily a book I would recommend to ALL of my health coaching clients!

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### **Betsy says**

I learned a lot from this book, but my favorite part was all of the resources. About half way through (it was an impulse selection from the library) I realized that I am going to need to go and buy a copy so that I can use it for reference.

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### **Tiffany says**

Very helpful reference for sorting out all those confusing, competing priorities and labels: organic, humane, grass-fed, free-range, fair trade, hormone-free, local, etc. to make decisions that might actually matter when grocery shopping and cooking. What do locavores eat in the middle of winter in northern states? Is it really worth buying organic veggies shipped across the country or around the world? What do all those claims mean on food packaging? It never occurred to me that maybe bananas don't need to be part of my diet. (I'm nixing them.) Some of the additional resources she provides, such as websites that list safe seafood, are especially useful. The author can be a little pushy or sanctimonious in her tone at times, but I was able to read past that. Some of the advice is really rudimentary, too - a lecture about bottled water? Really? But overall, useful and motivational.

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### **Jennifer says**

Very interesting book, nothing new in terms of information but presented in a different way. Thought it was funny that on the same page the author goes on about how bad bananas are in terms of their carbon footprint, a sidebar mentions a locally grown crop a consumer could try is the paw paw. THEN the sidebar says if you can't find paw paws locally, go to X website to order them! Um, contradictory advice?

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### **Jessica says**

I was so excited to read this book since on the cover it said it included "...advice and recipes from: Michael

Pollan...[and]Barbara Kingsolver...", but I was disappointed overall. Although there is some good advice on various issues with eating consciously, the tone of the book is a little pushy about everything. It is very important for me to eat humanely raised, organic food, but I appreciate books that don't try to cram that down your throat. For a lot of people converting from "conventional" eating to more organic/humane eating is a process that can take time to integrate into their lives and this book seemed to imply that if you eat anything "conventional" you are terrible. Basically even though I agree with most everything in this book it was overall too preachy for my taste.

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### **Orea says**

A handy guide to all kinds of things that you have in your daily life. She presents her views very concisely and if you want to investigate things further she mentions lots of different web sites to check out.

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### **Anna says**

I think this may be a good resource for those making gradual changes in their permanent kitchen; it condenses many different authors' works on sustainable foods and kitchen items. Some topics are covered too fully and some not enough, in my opinion.

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### **Carly Fabian says**

A great intro book that covers all the basics for someone looking to transition their food and cooking habits! Very relatable and easygoing, and it can be easily read in one sitting. It is also full of good references to other books and websites which I appreciated. The only thing I would have liked to see was more reference to the global situation/history of food production and global inequality. The author seems to wonder about it in a long section on bananas but just left it at that and generally only talks about American health and the environment as a whole

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### **Dana says**

This is a very enlightening book. Also a little frightening to me. It gives great ideas on what foods to eat only organic and which things are ok if not organic. It explains why non-organic foods are bad for you - and sometimes I think ignorance is bliss. It is interesting that canned tuna is healthier than fresh - because it is from smaller species w/ lower levels of mercury. This book has made me think about and become more aware of where my food comes from, how it is grown and how it is packaged. The book also discusses proper kitchen ware - the proper materials for pots and pans and food storage, appliances and more.

I was inspired to clean out my pantry, refrigerator, and pot and pan cabinet yesterday. When I went shopping today, I paid more attention to where the food I bought came from. I bought locally made corn chips (ok, I know corn is bad and chips are bad, but I hope the local part helps), and local milk and yogurt and eco-friendly kitchen trash bags. It would take a lot to pry me away from all the plastic in my kitchen - food storage and zip lock bags - although I do use glass jars for many things. Reading the part about getting rid of all plastic made me feel like the rich man in Mark in the Bible:

And she said to her, "author, all these healthy things I am trying to do." And the author, looking at her, said to her, "You lack one thing: go, recycle all the plastic kitchen items you have and give your aluminum pans to the poor and throw away your non-stick pans, and you will have a healthy, conscious kitchen. Disheartened by the saying, she went away sorrowful, for she had many plastic storage containers and non-stick pans in her kitchen.

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### **Denise Klein says**

This should be a must read for every person who cooks. It should be the 'bible' for every person who owns and uses a kitchen. I realize that sounds a bit extreme but it opened my eyes to so much of what we do wrong.

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### **Elizabeth says**

Like a 2.5....

This was an impulse check-out at the library. Unfortunately, this book was published back in 2010 and as Zissu herself acknowledges, information on organics, etc etc change very rapidly so the book is really outdated. For example, it suggests checking out a website of which fish is okay to get before you get to the store--nowadays there's an app for that!

The layout of the book is rather confusing and Zissu's writing style is pretty dry. It's just not a very engaging book--it is chock full of information though. None of the topics she raises is particularly new, but she did list a bunch of websites I'm interested in checking out and seeing if they're still being updated. So there is that.

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### **Teechbiz says**

Lots of helpful advise and recipes from Emeril Lagasse, Barbara Kingsolver, Dan Barber, and others.

I found it very informative

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### **Faith says**

Even though I've read a lot of books on this topic, this was still informative and a quick read. It has a lot of basic information, definitions and reasons behind things I've heard. Like, why should I avoid plastic in cooking? What does USDA Organic actually mean? It also has a lot of great websites listed throughout the book.

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### **Amy Chan says**

"Not enough of us know that our salad greens and chickens are being dunked in chlorine baths to disinfect them, that bottled water is actually overpriced tap water shipped around the country in questionable plastic containers that taint their contents and overwhelm our landfills, that dinner might contain genetically modified food, that vegetables have been sprayed with probable carcinogens and possibly even chemical pesticides currently banned in the United States but still used in countries we import from, or that animals and seafood are fed animal by-product, waste, or even arsenic, which sicken them and us."

Ah, isn't that a nice way to end the day? Arsenic and waste for dinner, anyone?

Writing is relax and clear, with some interesting information at beginning. So far, most are basic "organic and local is proven to be good" though. However, the writer does show that she know what she's writing, so I am looking forward to it.....

Updates: Very informative - but all just basic information that any person who are already conscious about food would know. If you are completely clueless about food process and safety, this a good book to begin. But you have the hobby of questioning the source of your food, this is just a 101 book.

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### **Sophia Chang says**

Instead of focusing on problems the way many food and sustainability books, which I still think is a wonderful to educate ourselves on the issues of these two, this simply advises you on what you can do to live a more sustainable and healthier lifestyle. Zissu has read many, many books and has conveniently compiled all of the tips in one book.

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