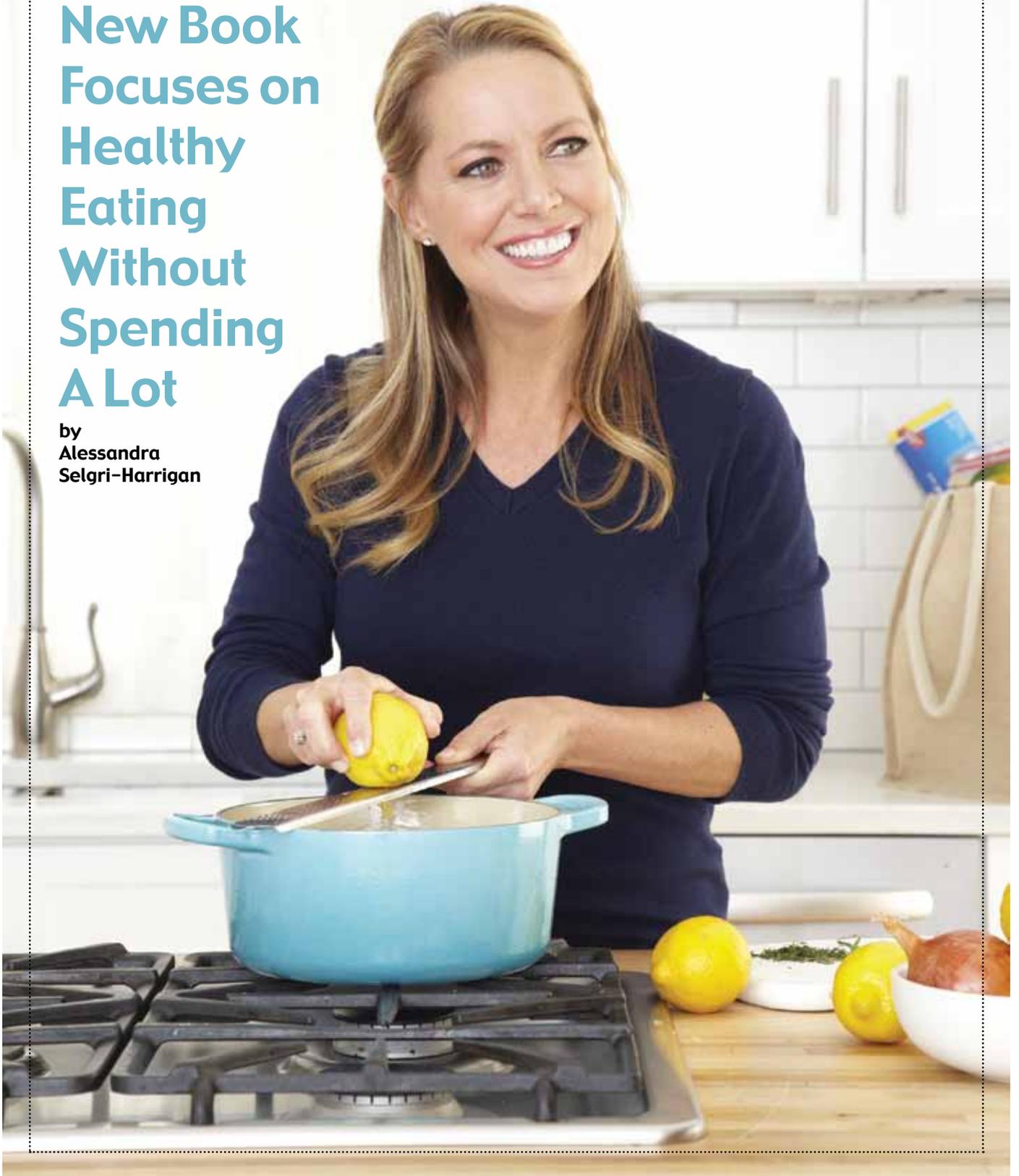


# Melissa d'Arabian's New Book Focuses on Healthy Eating Without Spending A Lot

by  
Alessandra  
Selgri-Harrigan



Many of us think that to eat healthy we have to spend a little extra but Melissa d'Arabian's new book shows how you can find great ingredients at your local supermarket.

"Supermarket Healthy" is d'Arabian's second cookbook. Her first "Ten Dollar Dinners: 140 Recipes and Tips to Elevate Simple, Fresh Meals Any Night of the Week" was released in 2010 and quickly became a New York Times bestseller.

As a working mother d'Arabian knows what is like to be short on time to prepare a healthy meal. But despite her busy schedule she values sitting down together to eat dinner as family.

D'Arabian, who moved to Coronado four years ago, loves the small town atmosphere and the fact that her sister and her family live nearby so her daughters can grow up with their cousins.

D'Arabian had four daughters in three years and with only one income she tried to save money. Through a homemade video on how to make yogurt at home and save \$1,000 she quickly was noticed by the Food Network. She became a contestant and won season five of "Food Network Star" a reality show in 2009. The prize for winning was her own show "Ten Dollars Dinners."

"Supermarket Healthy" has over 130 recipes which include supermarket, kitchen and entertaining strategies. D'Arabian has a unique approach to the recipes offering many tips to substitute ingredients if necessary, healthy pantry must-haves, kitchen strategies and blueprints - a way to vary the recipe. For example for the rigatoni and meatball recipe, the blueprint shows five kinds of meat to choose from and then two styles - traditional and exotic for the meatball ingredients.

The book offers recipes for any taste and runs the gamut from pasta, seafood, meats, salads, sandwiches, snacks and desserts. Her pantry must-haves for dry storage include pasta, beans, and canned fish; for the refrigerator milk, bold cheeses, raw unsalted nuts; and for the freezer bacon, vegetables, fruit and chicken.

Her love for cooking started when she was five years old growing up in Arizona. Her single mom who put herself through college and medical school did her best. "My mom was not a great cook. Every year

we had a mother-daughter Christmas party and we would cook for days. "That's how [I learned] cooking for other people makes them feel welcomed and loved in your home," she said.

D'Arabian graduated from the University of Vermont and went on to earn a Master's Degree from Georgetown University. She began working in consulting and moved on to corporate finance at Disney in Burbank and then to Euro Disney in Paris, France where she met her future husband Philippe. "When I lived in Paris I lived next to some of the best open markets... so you could get fruit from the fruit vendor, meat from the butcher. I fell in love with the ingredients. I already loved to cook but when I moved to Paris I loved the food and changed the way I cooked. It was more ingredients driven," said d'Arabian. She also credits her mother-in-law who lives in the South of France for introducing her to the more mediterranean ingredients.

We asked d'Arabian what are some of the recipes from her new book she would use to create a picnic for Concerts-in-



*Southwest Chicken Salad, recipe pg 28.*

the-Park. She pointed out the Southwest Chicken Salad which features smoked paprika vinaigrette, corn, carrots, black beans, baby spinach and tomatoes. Also the Kale and White Bean Caesar salad served in individual mason jars and the Flourless Fudgy Dream Cookies made with chickpeas which replace flour and eggs. "The dream cookies are my favorites. There is some sweetness but also fiber and protein," she

said. The cookies only contain 48 grams of calories. She said going to the concerts is one of her favorite things to do and her daughters ask to go every Sunday.

D'Arabian loves all the different aspects of her job. She writes a nationally syndicated column for the Associated Press, is a TV host, a judge on "Guy's Grocery Games" and a contributing writer for Food Network's FN DISH blog. About the TV part of her job she said, "I connect with the crew... the fellow judges we laugh together... I love TV and love being part of it."

D'Arabian is also a speaker for organizations she cares about. "I love that I get to meet people, be part of the event and have a platform and talk about causes I care about," she said. D'Arabian is a voice for suicide prevention since she lost her mother to suicide. She is also a champion for No Kid Hungry "Share our Strength" campaign since she grew up in a poor household.

D'Arabian just finished filming a web series for the Food Network which will be announced in a few weeks. She currently has a web series called "Picky Eaters Project: Melissa's Mealtime Redesign" on Food Network.com.

Although d'Arabian travels a lot she coordinates her schedule with her husband's and she makes sitting down at dinner as a family a priority. "We connect. It's grounding. It's huge priority even if it means going to Boney's and getting a roasted chicken and making a kale salad. [The table] is where my family connects," she said.

About her "Supermarket Healthy" book she explained that it's about healthy food first and then affordability. "It's all meant to be affordable, attainable, accessible, but not a \$10 dinner," she said.



"Supermarket Healthy" retails for \$24.99 and can be found at Bay Books, other bookstores and online.