

Foodways Journal Entry by Tracey Bobadilla

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Started the day off as always with neem and probiotics washed down with room temperature water before my run. While pondering life and all of its wonders on the run, I was captured by neem and wondered about its globalized path into my system.



Next up was oatmeal. I prepared it by boiling a half a cup of oats in one and a quarter cup of almond milk with cranberries and raisins. I ate it with a spoon out of a bowl and did not speak to anyone while I did so. It was warm and mushy and to me tasted like a perfect thing to eat on a cold wet day. As I was eating I noticed I chew a lot when eating oatmeal.



Drinking water from my water bottle reminded me that I need a stainless steel one. Even though it doesn't taste like plastic I'd rather not drink particles.

Midday pick-me-up. COFFEE!!! Smells like happiness. I ordered at the drive-through on the way home from my daughter's soccer game. Coffee is warm and soothes my soul. I held the cup with my hands and drank. It had a little bit of soy milk and a little raw sugar.



My snack, a banana courtesy of Honduras. I ate it with my hands because I don't think there is a need for utensils. I opened it from the top, but have heard this is incorrect because monkeys and other animals happen to open them from the bottom. I have never tried this technique and probably will never remember to do so.



PB&J for lunch because it's a busy day.... So far I hadn't spoken to anyone all day about what I'd eaten.



I think I had a pineapple yogurt next which was a quick fix to my hunger pangs as I was setting up for a party. No photo because I almost forgot to eat, let alone document.

Followed rapid fire by a wrap, salad, and dessert. The wrap was made with grilled eggplant, mozzarella cheese, and tomato, with basil vinaigrette. The salad consisted of mixed lettuce greens, olives, cucumbers, tomatoes, and onions. All of this was eaten rather quickly due to it being my daughter's birthday. I had some sweet square thing with chocolate and nuts and half of a cannoli which I did not like. After I inhaled my dinner I noticed that although my friends and I were seated at the table, I was so concerned with nourishment (which was eaten with my hands and a fork) that I was oblivious to the conversation.

The food for the party was procured from Legends Caterers, where we always purchase catering for her birthday. Given this fact, I have no idea how it was prepared, but the fact that I did not have to and could benefit anyway was of high value to me. This is interesting to note because generally I am extremely concerned with how our food is made as I have a child with severe food allergies. In this instance since I knew he would be eating something else, I lowered my helicopter and did not ask the company questions in regard to cross contamination and the like.

As I re-read this journal, it is interesting to note how time affects the purchasing and consumption of food. Because I had little time to make anything from scratch and because the princess had expectations, we ordered out. During the party I did not have time to enjoy my food because the day was busy. Knowing that I would be eating from this place initially made me

happy because everything, especially their pickles, is flavored so well. Time constraints severely limited my ability to savor my meal. However, as the quote on my dining room wall states, creating the memory of being in the company of friends and the ability to absentmindedly enjoy the conversation about my daughter and hers was more important than the actual food.



For me, my neem capsule was the ingredient to focus on. I had first learned about it during a yoga training where the teacher recommended a classmate use it as birth control which prompted me to do research as I had never heard of it. It was first grown in India and more recently in the Middle East; it is a tree whose leaves were used for Ayurvedic medicinal purposes. Now, according at least to the label on the bottle of capsules I take, it is manufactured in places like Florida. Known in Sanskrit, an ancient language, neem was called “nimba” which translates to bestower of good health. Apparently, named such due to its multi purposeful nature as a healer both inside and out, this leaf was said to have protected children from the sun and also the sun (in mythology) from itself. My usage is for intestinal purposes as I have a sensitive stomach, the neem in conjunction with the probiotics helps to maintain some sense of normalcy.

This is the most widely used purpose for neem as it comes in the form of oil, leaves, and capsules, which allow for ease of digestion.

In switching to the banana whose origins can be traced back to Southeast Asia, they currently come from tropical regions such as the one I consumed that is from Honduras which made its way from there to Trader Joe's in Princeton. Currently the United States is one of the greatest importers of bananas, and this is because we mostly lack the proper climate with which to grow them in and also explains why they are exported in large numbers from tropical places we assume to be countries of origin. Due to globalization, the banana is one of the most traveled and versatile fruits, offering numerous cultures the ability to implement it in various meals.

Oatmeal came to be consumed in the United States by ways of trade from England where they would use it as food for horses. In Scotland, however, oats were soaked and eaten as porridge. Fast forward to oats being used as a marketing tool by which a large corporation used the supposed health benefits of oats to attract more sales. Unknowingly, I eat my oats in a similar fashion to the Scottish by boiling them in milk instead of water and adding flavor in the form of cranberries, raisins, and honey. Then, I ensure it will stick to my ribs by adding vegan protein powder.

References

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