

## Q&A with Sarah Wilson Sa

By KATE TARALA

Jan. 25, 2013, 10 p.m.



Sarah Wilson has a reputation as a bona fide foodie, hosting the first series of MasterChef Australia and boasting a long-running career as a journalist, kicked off with restaurant reviews. But two years ago the blogger and former Cosmopolitan editor quit sugar. She documented her experience on her blog before releasing an e-book. Her book, *I Quit Sugar*, was published this week. The book shares the qualified health coach's successes (and failures) in quitting sugar in an eight-week detox program. It also features more than 100 recipes.

### **The decision to quit sugar wasn't an easy one for you.**

I guess I just didn't want to do it. Most people are the same, they have a visceral reaction to the idea of having to quit sugar. There are the emotional associations, the dependence. I had this thing of, "my God, if I'm not allowed to have sugar, what am I going to do at 3pm when I have that energy slump; I'm not going to cope". But, then I was writing a column about quitting sugar and I had to try it for myself, so I used it as an excuse. I tried it for two weeks and got over the worst of it and it became super easy. Then I went to try and eat sugar again and it made me feel disgusting.

**Do you ever crave sugar?**

It's two years since I gave up sugar and I've done that a few times where I've said: "You know what, I want a piece of chocolate cake, I don't care any more". In self-destructive mode. My body tells me now, this is addictive and this is toxic. It's not a struggle any more because I'm reminded each time I eat sugar how revolting it makes me feel. It's immediate.

**Though you've cut out sugar, your eating plan is not a diet.**

My approach with this was I'm very careful not to label it a diet because diets are all about telling you what to do. It's very draconian and it's about restriction, which is terrible and makes everyone unhappy. I tell people, give it a crack, in the eight weeks get off sugar and then just choose, you don't have to do this. I do like to be upfront, including telling people: 'I'm going to show you how to do this and why I believe it works, but I'm not going to tell you that you must eat this, you must eat that.' Don't worry if you sneak in a Tim Tam, it's a good reminder why you're doing this because you'll feel ill.

**60,000 people have quit sugar because of your blog and book. Did you ever think it would affect so many people?**

No, not at all. I wrote it because I had just been blogging about it and people asked how I did it. So, I put all the information into an e-book and I thought I'd sell a couple of hundred, I really didn't think it would do so well. It's just been a natural process. I probably would have done it differently if I thought it would do so well but I think it's worked because it has followed my natural journey.

**What do you say to those hesitating about giving up their sweet vices?**

Some people respond to the weight loss message, though I don't really want to emphasise it too much. Pretty much everyone who has done the eight-week plan has lost weight. I had one woman contact me who lost 65 kilograms and somebody else lost 48 kilograms and so on. It will help you find your natural appetite, the one you had when you were a kid; it helps you recalibrate. The final thing would be, if you really don't like the idea of diets, think about it this way - it's basically cutting processed food out of your diet.