



FOREWORD

You're a journalist, an anti-sugar evangelist, a businesswoman; you've fronted *MasterChef*. What is your background? I am the eldest of six. I grew up outside Canberra. We kept goats for milk and meat and did a lot of things with recycled materials. Dad was a public servant who commuted into town [Canberra] every day on a motorbike. We're all very anti-consumption. I worked from 11 in a nursery, I also ran my own business making dolls' house furniture and painting library bags for toy shops.

You became *Cosmopolitan* editor at 29. How did that fit in with being anti-consumption? It was very strange for my family to witness me heading off to become a *Cosmo* editor: none of us has ever been very interested in fashion. It worked out fine because it was a job; I was able to focus on running a business.

How far back does your interest in food go? At uni I worked as a waitress and I was really passionate about it. In my early 20s I dated a chef. We would win competitions and travel around the world to wine conferences. Then I did work experience at the *Herald Sun*'s Sunday magazine. The editor asked me for ideas for the food pages. I ended up running them for three years.

Was being diagnosed with Hashimoto's (autoimmune) disease your lowest ebb? Yes, and I left *Cosmo* because of it. I reached a point where I thought, "I'm going to get well, and I'm going to have to do it myself." Around that time I was offered the *Sunday Life* column. Soon after that they asked me to audition for *MasterChef*.



10 Questions
SARAH WILSON, FOOD WRITER, 40

What now? I feel like I've "arrived" and I'm going to enjoy it. My autoimmune disease is under control and I've had good news about my health. I'm running a business that employs 11 people.

Your book *I Quit Sugar* has been hugely successful – 100,000 sold in Australia, a bidding war for US rights. Why? It's called "I quit sugar", not "you must quit sugar". That's the difference. People are tired of restrictive messages. And a lot of it is timing. We were getting to a point where the amount of sugar in



our diets meant everybody was feeling it. I started with blog posts and talking to scientists, then turned that into an e-book. It did well, which took me by surprise.

Nutritionist Cassie Platt responded with her own book, *Don't Quit Sugar*.

What is your response? To not add fuel to the fire. She thinks she got unwell from quitting sugar. I will always clarify my position, but I don't need to defend myself.

A blog you wrote about the dire effects of eating two chocolate croissants and how you recovered generated a lot of flak. How do you answer critics?

I don't have the energy to get upset about that stuff anymore. My post was about making people feel OK about so-called lapses. I've campaigned against "diet thinking" for most of my career.

You've had a wide range of jobs.

What is your greatest talent? Maybe having a wide range of jobs! Spinning plates; being able to keep a whole heap of things going at once.

You don't have much furniture. Why? Buying material possessions is something that I don't take lightly. I do a lot of research. The last year has been the busiest 12 months of my life and my priority was being where I needed to be; often that was overseas. I got a couch last weekend and I can say with some confidence that it's the most sustainable, environmentally sound, ethical couch you can buy in Australia. RACHEL BAXENDALE

I Quit Sugar For Life, Pan Macmillan,
\$34.99, out Tuesday
