

Wellbeing

Your body is a temple
... so eat crab

Bride-to-be Maria Fitzpatrick will do anything to look good on her wedding day. In the first of a new series, she tries the 12-day 'Reset' programme



"You're allowed lamb chops?" It's Week 1 of my bridal fitness programme, and my fiancé already thinks I'm cheating on him. Where diets are concerned, I have serious commitment issues. I'll swear on a Sunday night that I'll change my ways, and cave in by Tuesday. But during the first phase of my "bride to be" health plan, devised by personal trainer Tom Marien to help me lose a stone and get fit, lamb chops are allowed. Well, according to tonight's meal plan, anyway. Tom has put me on a 12-

day nutrition and exercise plan that he calls "Reset" – an intensive burst of all-round healthy behaviour designed "to get you back to your original shop settings".

As well as avoiding alcohol, biscuits and refined carbs, I also have to eat set meals, drink two litres of water, and exercise for at least 10 minutes a day. Designed by Tom and his father, a cognitive behavioural specialist, this regime works on the principle that if anyone thinks they have to give up something they enjoy – be it

chocolate, – or do so, perceive a likely to lap abstinence however, fi

Dieting, pain barrier seven day: The meals salad or pe chicken wi rice, or chil dinner, fruit snacks. An my coffee.

I'm also exercise fo

What's green, slimy

Forget broccoli: now seaweed is being hailed as the new superfood – and it's rather tasty, says Jane Dunford

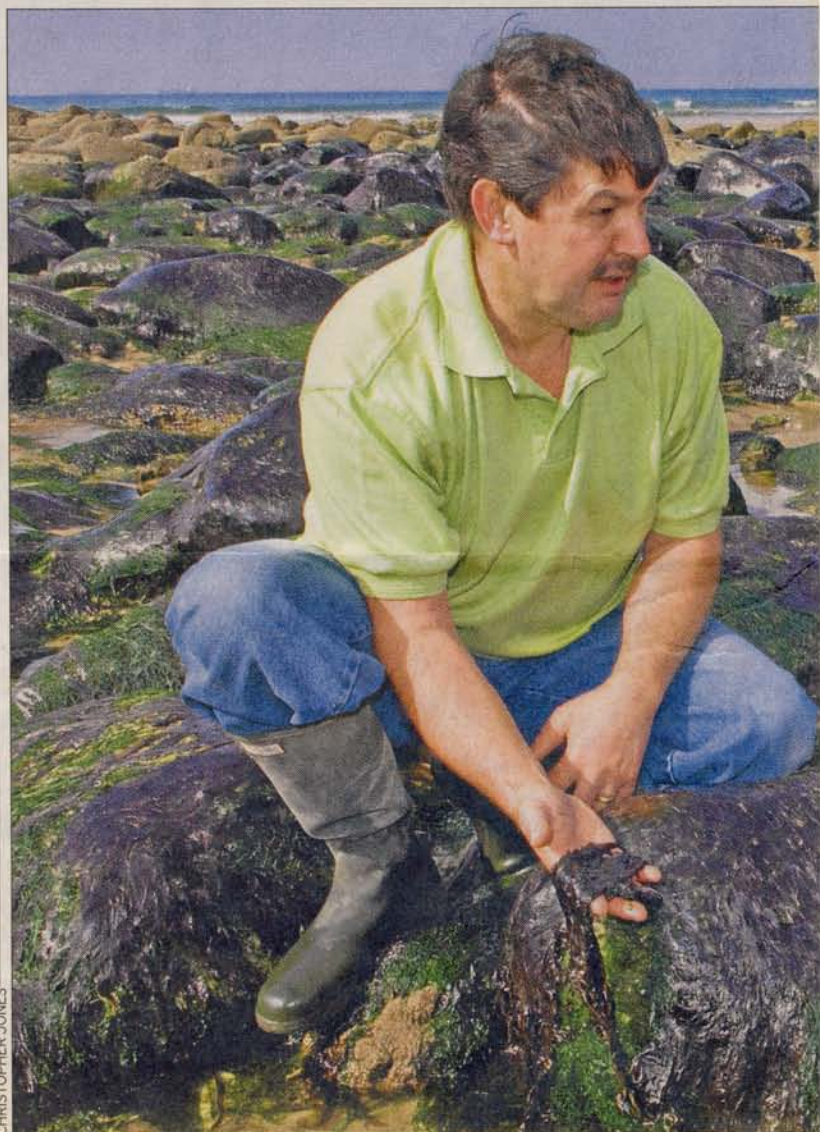
It's green, slimy and something few of us would consider putting in our mouths. But, following a string of recent scientific studies into the benefits of seaweed, it could soon be replacing superfood side-dishes such as kale and broccoli on the nation's dining tables.

The nutritional benefits of sea greens have long been recognised: pound for pound, seaweed contains more iron than sirloin steak, more calcium than cheese, and more fibre than prunes.

With an unusually high proportion of protein – as much as 48 per cent in some varieties – seaweed is also richer in essential vitamins and micronutrients than any other food group. A prime source of bodybuilding minerals such as iodine and potassium, it is also the only plant source of vitamin B12, which is necessary for the production of red blood cells, and which is often lacking in meat-free diets.

According to recent research, seaweed – which is part of the algae family – also contains a host of bioactive substances proven to lower cholesterol, reduce blood pressure, promote healthy digestion and even tackle the free radicals that can cause cancer. Some studies suggest that seaweed might also aid weight loss.

The brackish fingers that get washed up on the beach contain more sand than a seafront sandwich, which is why seaweed-hunters cut theirs fresh, from the submerged rocks on which it grows, rather than collect the scrag along the shoreline. Among seaweed's greatest consumers are the Japanese, who put so much of it



CHRISTOPHER JONES

though extremely high in cholesterol, pinkish crab meat is

low in saturated fat, is carbohydrate-free and packs 30g of

lean protein in a 100g serving. It is also nutritious, rich in



omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamins and minerals. It is a

source of selenium, which reduces oxidative damage to

cells, and chromium, which helps balance blood glucose levels.

alcohol or smoking anything they find difficult, they are a breeze. Twelve days of sweat and effort, feels achievable. For me, has its own charm - boredom - but, in, it's going well. The recipes are varied: Greek soup for lunch, with garlic and brown rice con carne for dinner or nuts for dessert. I'm still allowed to eat what I'm supposed to for one hour, four

How to Reset

- Avoid alcohol, sugars and biscuits, refined carbohydrates (wheat, pasta, white rice), dairy products
- Stop eating when you feel 75 per cent full
- Drink a minimum of two

litres of water a day. Miraculously, I've managed three sessions. For the exercise, I can join in an outdoor training session run by One Element, Tom's London-based fitness agency,

litres of water a day

- Exercise for 10 minutes every morning or evening
- Write down in a journal when and where you're going to exercise
- Fill in your diary every day, detailing what you ate, what exercise you have done, and how you are feeling.

or go running, swimming, cycling, walking (fast), play a sport, or hit the gym.

To motivate myself to go for a run when I least feel like it, Tom suggests I try

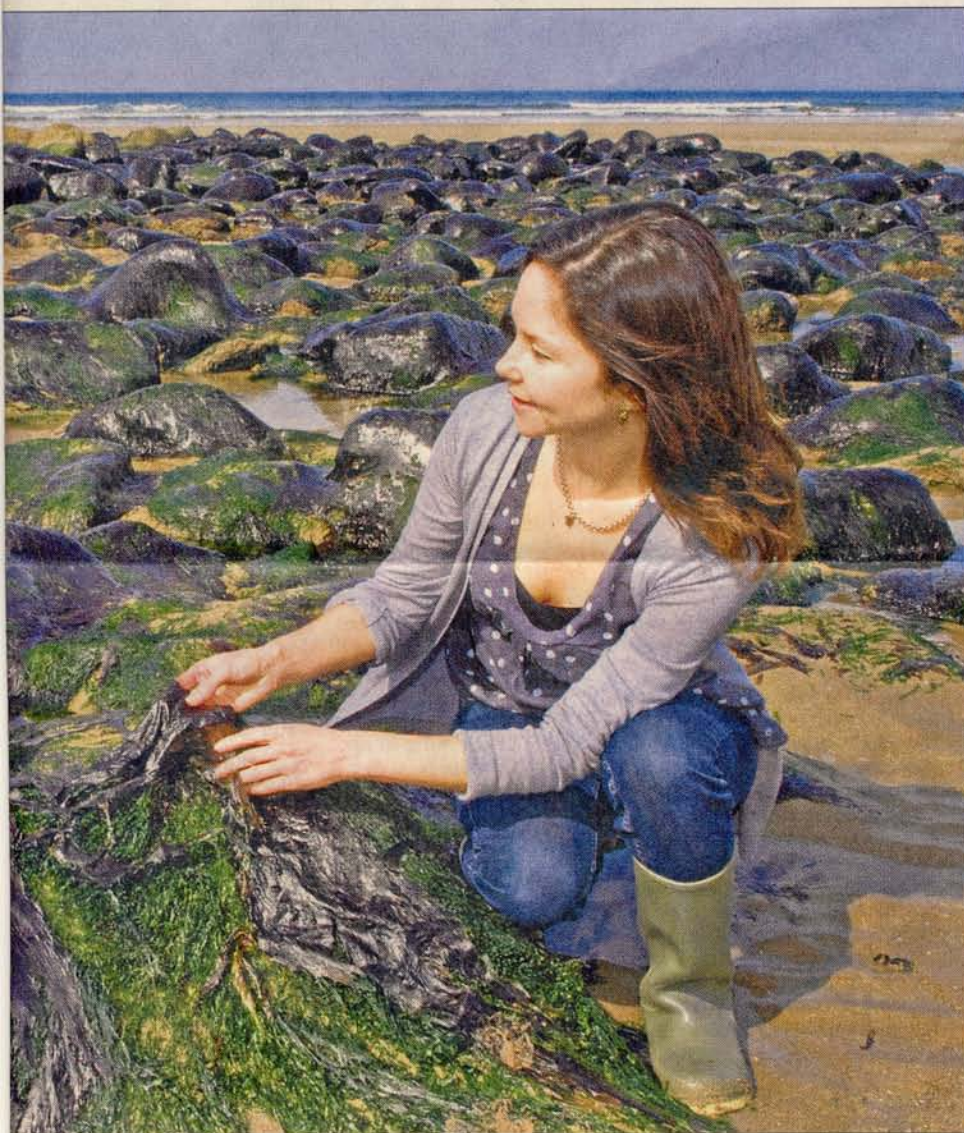
visualisation. He says I might be encouraged outdoors if I can visualise putting on my trainers and jogging from my front door. Before I can do that, though, I have to use a similar technique to find my trainers in the cupboard under the stairs.

I also have to keep a journal about how I'm feeling. Looking back over the week, the word "tired" appears a lot. Perhaps it's the advance planning for the set meals, that I'm not drinking much coffee (soya milk, my dairy substitute, makes me queasy), or it could

just be the shock of exercising. Either way, Tom assures me the lethargy will lift. Tonight I have my first one-to-one personal training session, and I'm feeling jittery. Here's hoping that I'm burning off some nervous energy. I'll let you know how I get on next week.

The 12-day 'Reset' plan, including recipes (training extra), is available from One Element (020 8871 1295, www.one-element.co.uk) for £20 plus p&p. Follow Maria's bridal fitness programme online at telegraph.co.uk/health

y and good for you?



Marine harvest

Seaweeds to forage for around Britain

Pelvetia (channel wrack)

- Leafy, fronded algae that holds its finger shape when "cooked" - to prepare, simply rinse through with boiling water and serve as an alternative to cabbage.

Broad kelp

- A thick and meaty variety that looks like pasta ribbons and requires soaking to reduce its salt content, and a thorough boiling to make it edible. Great as a stand-alone side vegetable, chopped into chunks in soups, or baked in a very hot oven into delicious crispy strips.

Purple laver

- With a distinctive flavour like olives and oysters, this smooth and fine variety boils down to a dark green pulp - perfect for making into laver bread, the traditional Welsh dish.

Sea lettuce

- Bright green algae found in rock pools. With a strong flavour similar to sorrel, it can be added to salads, or pressed and dried into crispy green sheets used to wrap Japanese nori rolls.

Cordia filia (sea spaghetti)

- Grows in billowing strands in deep waters, so you'll need more than a snorkel to harvest your own. When boiled, it has a crispy bite and the texture of beansprouts.