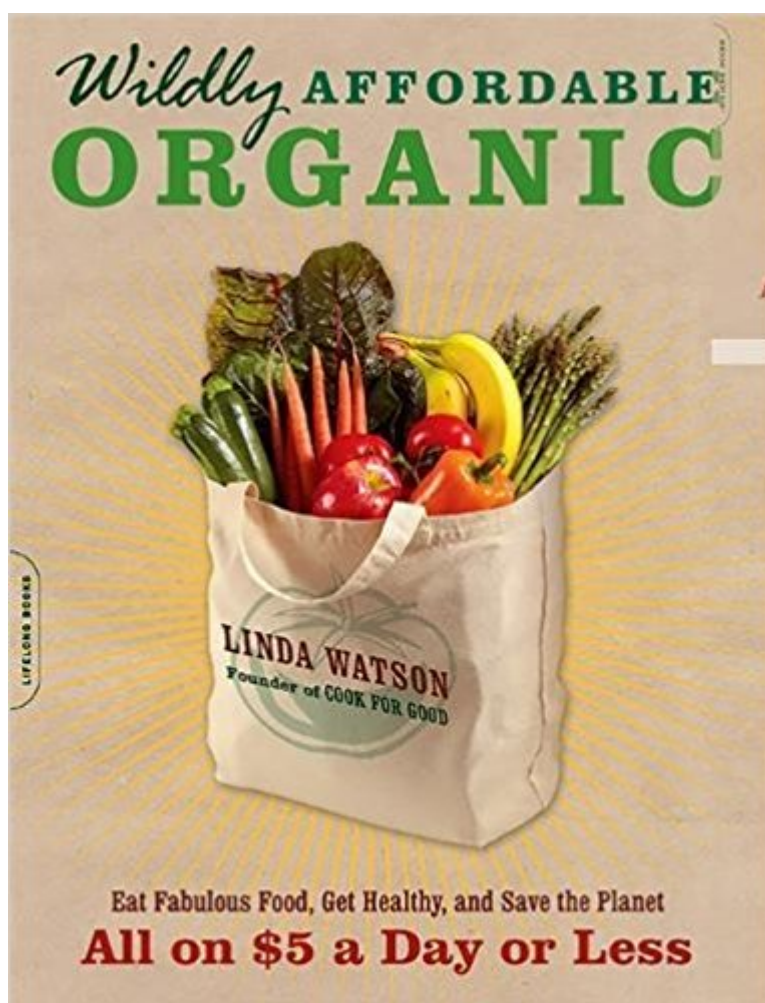


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Wildly Affordable Organic: Eat Fabulous Food, Get Healthy, And Save The Planet--All On \$5 A Day Or Less



Synopsis

Buy Green. Eat Green. Save Green. If you've wanted to eat like it matters but felt you couldn't afford it, *Wildly Affordable Organic* is for you. It's easy to think that "organic" is a code word for "expensive," but it doesn't have to be. With these ingenious cooking plans and healthy, satisfying recipes, Linda Watson reveals the incredible secret of how you can eat well every day--from blueberry pancakes for breakfast to peach pie for dessert--averaging less than two dollars a meal. Get ready for wild savings! You'll discover how to: Ease your family into a greener lifestyle with the 20-minute starter plan Go organic on just 5 a day--or go thrifty and spend even less Take advantage of your freezer and freeze your costs Find the best deals at your local farmers' market or grocery store Cook easy, scrumptious, seasonal dishes from scratch Packed with tips for streamlining meals, from shopping and cooking to washing dishes, this book shows how sustainable living is within everyone's reach. Slow global warming with delicious dinners? Lose weight, save money, and save the polar bears at the same time? When you live the *Wildly Affordable Organic* way, it is possible! Join the movement to change the way you eat--and keep the change.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Library Journal, 4/22/11 #147; Watson demonstrates realistic ways to cook inexpensively yet healthfully without living in the kitchen. Well written and full of useful ideas and tips #133; Verdict: With the twin concerns of health and food costs very much on consumers' minds lately, this is likely

to be popular. —Kirkus Reviews, 5/15/11; A unique addition to the genre, this sustainable take on everyday meal planning is both practical and contemporary. —

—Portland Oregonian, 6/7/11; Most of the recipes are simple and time-saving, offering lots of options for on-the-go people. —

—Technorati.com, 6/27/11; [A] strong introduction to organic cooking, offering recipes that will appeal to vegetarians, vegans, and people who just happen to love fruits and veggies. The money-saving and health benefits are added value. —

—Tucson Citizen, 7/1/11; Part cookbook and part shopping guide, Watson gives readers the tools they need to eat well and reduce their impact on the environment without spending top dollar. —

—San Francisco Book Review, August 2011; Watson's recipes are simple, her methods make sense, and readers are left wanting to put her ideas into action. —

—Curled Up with a Good Book; Armed with this book and Watson's tips, strategies, and clear-eyed investigation, anyone with a sincere desire to eat well on a tight budget can easily and quickly transition to just such a healthy lifestyle; Wildly Affordable Organic is something of an epiphany, what with the detailed budget and expenses included and the vast array of possibilities. This one should be required reading in high school Life Skills classes and for every household. —

—Midwest Book Review, August 2011; This book tells how to eat healthy on three dollars a day and packs in tips for healthy organic food preparation on a budget, from menus and recipes to shopping and food options. —

—Health and culinary collections as well as general and homeowner libraries will relish this approach. —

—Prevention, October 2011; The barriers to cooking organic; hefty price tags, hours over a hot stove; vanish, thanks to these quick, delicious meals you can make for less than 5 a day. —

—InfoDad.com, 7/7/11; Most useful for its shopping information and its well-constructed once-a-month, seasonal shopping lists; these are what elevate it above standard advocacy books and above other cookbooks containing recipes similar to the ones here. —

—Girlfriendbooks.com, 7/20/11; Remarkable. —

—USA Weekend, 7/17/11; Secret weapon. —

—Grandparents.com, 8/2/11 "Try [these recipes], and you'll see that organics can be an attainable and delicious option for your family. —

Linda Watson, the founder of CookforGood.com, created her wildly affordable cooking plans after being inspired by a national challenge to eat on a food-stamp budget. She credits her background in project management helping her to not just survive but thrive on just a dollar a meal per person. Her 2013 SNAPcut Challenge used WAO recipes to cook organic and local even on the newly reduced food-stamp budget. Linda has a certificate in Plant-Based Nutrition from eCornell and the T. Colin

Campbell Foundation. She's had a wildly varied career so far, including developing a top-secret expert system, working with Tom Clancy and Douglas Adams on computer games, and riding the dot-com wave with eGarden.com. Today she teaches cooking through classes, books, and videos. Watson lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband.

I had hoped to find this book in a store so I could give it a once over before purchasing it. Alas, every single bookstore I went to did not have it in stock and my library's two copies were checked out! Now that I've purchased my own copy, I'm a little disappointed in the book. On the whole, the author does accomplish her mission of proving your meals can be almost 100% organic on a very simple budget. However, the scope of her experiment is not entirely adaptable to everyone's lifestyle (though I don't think anyone ever promised it was). My chief complaint about her meal plans is that they are very monotonous overall. If you choose to follow one of her plans, you WILL streamline your kitchen work; you WILL have wholesome, nutritious food on the table; and you WILL be subsisting on beans and pasta for the rest of your natural-born life! Sigh... it's not exactly what I had in mind. [I was also very surprised that one's "breakfast" while following her plans is -- more often than not -- a mere slice of bread smeared with peanut butter. Homemade bread or not, friends, that's not a breakfast, in my book! I'd be hungry well before lunch!!!!] I love to cook and I'm an adventurous eater -- it's why the premise of the book grabbed my attention. I currently make out weekly menus for our household and shop accordingly and we do have a food budget. I already know how to use our freezer to boost that budget and save time, and it's no great revelation to me that processed foods are the enemy of any budget. We do limit our meat consumption and have also a few vegetarian meals each week, but we are not willing to go completely meatless. I read in the previewed pages on this site of the author's own eating preferences (she doesn't claim to be vegetarian but only eats meat when there's no other option while her husband eats meat only when they eat out), but I had hoped her meal plans would be a bit more flexible in regards to including at least some small portions of meat, poultry, and fish. In spite of the less than imaginative meal plans, I was hoping this book would offer some timely tips to help us cut some corners I was having trouble figuring out on my own. Instead, I found the content to be more useful for someone who was COMPLETELY new to this subject area. It's not that I consider myself an expert, it's simply that there wasn't any new, earth-shattering information in this book for me. That being said, if you ARE new to the concept of cooking on a budget (or even the concept of cooking in general) and you're trying to incorporate homemade, REAL foods into your diet but you lack some cooking skills and some simple but solid recipes, you could stand to glean a lot of information from this text. All of the

information contained in it is solid, trustworthy, and backed up not only by the author's own experiences but also several other reputable sources on the subject. The beginning sections are also an interesting read as you can see how the author's methodology unfolded and really get a sense for the importance of her work.

I recently re-discovered this book. I purchased it initially in May of 2012, when I had a one-year-old and was still trying to figure out the balance of being a new mom, purchasing/making healthful and affordable (!) meals in a manner that is manageable with a one year old. I was totally sold on this short book at the time. I read it quickly and that weekend I decided to implement it immediately. I was okay, at the time, with it being "flexitarian", though I feel that is a mis-leading description. This book is vegetarian (with the minimal use of dairy and eggs). In fact I would say 75% of the plan (and if not, at least half) are totally vegan. Anyhow, I went out to the grocery store and went full force. This book relies heavily on the ideas behind Once a Month Cooking (freezer cooking, where you cook a large batch of many meals at one time and then eat them throughout the month). Naively I ****knew**** I would love it all and made huge batches of food. And then I took my first taste test of the food and began the following few bites into utter disappointment. The best of it we found to be bland, the worst of it was completely tasteless to us. The whisk bread didn't work for me (although, being 2 years ago now I cannot remember what exactly didn't work). And I had huge portions of food we didn't like at all. I immediately became disillusioned with the book totally, deleted it from my Kindle, and moved on. I read other books about eating healthfully in an affordable manner that is practical for busy families. My budget and our eating practices leveled out. Until here recently when, once again, I was struggling with our grocery bill, frustrated with figuring out meals, etc. As I was skimming through I once again came across this book, remembered that I already owned it and decided to download it again. Well coming at it from a different perspective (as a much more experienced "practical" cook, with a lot more experience in meal planning and taking the dynamic of family into consideration) I liked this book much more. The book is basically: *One chapter talking about how she got the idea to try this. (She read that it was nearly impossible to survive on the food stamp allotted money of \$1/per person/per meal.) She decided to try this on her and her husband and see if she could do it. (She could but she found that trying to purchase on a weekly basis made it very difficult, being able to purchase once-a-month and bank the savings from bulk purchases made it very, very possible.) *One chapter about the experiment (It started with her bread not rising on the first day and them eating it anyways because they didn't have the budget to buy something else. It ended with her figuring out a ton of ideas to stretch the dollar and still eat

mostly organic and her husband saying, "Can we continue to eat this way?")*One chapter about what to buy organic, and where to scrimp if you need to*The Strategy divided by season and starting with winter*The second half of the book is recipes (again, I wasn't a fan of them)So what is her strategy? The basic idea behind it is cook one big weekend (stocking up in bulk to cook a lot of food at once) and have many meals, breads, and desserts out of the freezer.I am now to the point with cooking that recipes are more outlines to me so I know I don't have to follow them to the "tee"

ÃfÃ Ã â ÑÃ Â| I've decided to give this method a go again but with some changes:1) I am going to be using meat in many of the meals. (Really what's the difference between making pasta sauce and making pasta sauce with meat? Not much ÃfÃ Ã â ÑÃ Â|) I love how these kinds of recipes (bean and vegetable centric) can stretch meat: especially since local, organic, grass fed (etc) meat is very expensive.2) I am going to be using my own recipes. You can easily google for recipes that work with this method. What I knew to look for were recipes that could be cooked in batch easily, would utilize seasonal vegetables, and freezes well.The recipes I came up with are:bread, pizza dough, biscuits, and other homemade bread products (I make them up to the point of letting them rise and then freeze. I've actually been doing this for a while with pizza dough, making two and then freezing one. But it does make a lot of sense to make 4 at a time and freeze 3 of them. Then you have a whole month of pizza dough ready to go (if you eat pizza once a week, that is).Pasta Sauces (especially keeping homemade meat & vegetable marinara sauce on hand ÃfÃ Ã â ÑÃ Â| then dinner just requires heating up the sauce and some whole wheat pasta, adding a side salad if you are feeling particularly energetic ;))Soups (bean soup, chili, vegetable soup, vegetable and beef stew)Bean Dishes (economical and freezes well): (bean burritos, bean & taco meat mixture, bean & meat sloppy joes, bean & meat burger patties)3) I am not going to do the gigantic weekend cooking. I don't like doing that. I don't like spending an ENTIRE Saturday cooking even if that means I get the rest of the month "off". I plan on just doubling (or quadrupling) recipes as I make them and freezing the extras. As I've mentioned with pizza dough, this has worked really well for us so far. It's not really that much more work and it's so convenient to have homemade food in the freezer and an easy dinner 20 minutes away.4) I am not going to take the method too seriously. This is exactly what my problem was last time. We are very blessed and not limited to \$6 a day for a grocery budget and we are able to have more variety than she suggests. (Although I read somewhere that most people eat the same 20 meals over and over again and that seems pretty accurate to me.) My plan is to get to the point where I am cooking 2 big batches a week, 1 unique meal of anything we want to eat, and eating from the freezer for the rest.So the big takeaway points:Save money by:Buying some things in bulk or larger sizes (flour for example)Buying large amount of produce

when it is seasonal and therefore cheaper (or produce you grow) Using beans and seasonal vegetable to stretch more expensive ingredients (meat and dairy) Have a plan. Plan out your meals, snacks, and desserts. I know this was a long review, but I hope it can be helpful :) I think her "method" and the "idea" behind all of this is good. I think her specific meal plan is probably not going to work well for others due to preferences, dietary choices, and personal taste. However, I think seeing her seasonal meal plans and how she organizes it is a great jumping point to figure out what works for you and your family. :) With everything I've said in mind, I would recommend the book. :)

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