

# Author Explores 'The Sacred Art of Eating'

By Sophie Braccini



Author Lisa Ota in her Tower vegetable gardens. Photo Sophie Braccini

statistic to the documentary "Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret." "This puts the power in our hands, this is not beyond us," she says. Her book makes the case that eating a diet primarily based on plant food is good for the body, the soul and the planet, and it can save money, too.

Honoring her heritage, Ota has also studied shamanism, a spiritual healing practice. She began to experience how everything is connected. She explains that people are constantly undergoing transformation and that based upon what we eat we can experience greater levels of vitality. For instance, cells in the body regenerate at different speeds — the liver every 150 to 500 days and the bones every 10 years, she says.

Guiding the reader through a series of topics — food for thoughts — she carves the concept of being imperfectly vegan, someone who will eat a mostly plant based diet, but with flexibility.

"Being imperfectly vegan is a spiritual path toward increased consciousness and unity of body, mind and spirit," she says. She explains that it gives choices to people who still will want to have turkey on Thanksgiving. She adds that if people cut back 10 percent of their meat consumption it would make a difference. Her book is full of advice on how to balance such a diet and where and what to buy. She even recommends how to grow your own vegetables. In her home she has installed Tower gardens that are set up to save on water, use no fertilizer or pesticides and is cost efficient.

Ota conducts seminars, workshops and webinars. Information can be found on her website at [www.sacredexploration.com](http://www.sacredexploration.com).

Perched in the less-travelled hills of Lafayette, Lisa Ota's house is a haven of peace and serenity. There, the local author and teacher has been able to combine her passion for food with her inner spiritual search.

It is there that she grows food in the most innovative ways, thinks and writes, and entertains thoughts on how to spread her words of wisdom and her vision of what healthy lives should be. She recently published "The Sacred Art of Eating," a simple and meaningful guide to a better way, in every sense, to sustain healthy lives.

Ota's book is not a recipe book; it is a guided reflection to support people's desire to improve their relationship with food in a more environmentally conscious way. It consolidates years of experience, intellectual pursuit and heritage.

From her childhood, Ota has been connected with the natural world and its forces. Her maternal grandfather was part of the Cherokee people and had a farm in the Ozarks. It was in her parents' cabin that Ota's mother taught her to pay attention to the little things, such as flowers and animals, and value their place on earth.

"From an early age I was con-

nected with nature and wanted to protect it," Ota says. She believes that people's unhealthy relationship with food hurts their health as well as the planet. Her book carves a path toward a multidimensional reformation of the way people consume food to renew their bodies.

In college, she studied to become a nutritionist. Coupled with her desire to protect the earth, her studies led her toward consuming a more and more plant-based diet.

"The number one thing that can turn the tide (of global warming) is moving away from eating meat," she says. She explains that the raising of cattle for meat and dairy produces more greenhouse gas than any other source. She refers that



Lisa Ota calls herself "Imperfectly vegan."

Image provided

# Amphora Nueva: The Oil of Champions

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Amphora Nueva oils and vinegars, being used at the Olympics in Rio, were already at Sochi Olympic Winter Games. Photo provided

the fresh and organic ingredients Crisafulli's team purchase locally to make healthy meals for the athletes.

"John (Crisafulli) used our products for the Olympic games in Sochi," says Nate Bradley, who manages the Lafayette store. "Apparently, our products were such a tremendous hit among the athletes in Sochi that he wanted to continue working with us for this year's games."

The San Diego-based caterer discovered Amphora Nueva's oils at a tasting in Los Angeles and reached out to the Bradleys. Bradley says that what makes this even more exciting for them is the fact that this connection was unsolicited and that Crisafulli actually went out of his way to find the highest quality oils available. He adds that some product placement firms pay large sums to have their product in Rio, while they will be paid to do it.

Crisafulli has selected over 30 oils and vinegars to be featured in various dishes and to be used as dressings. What makes Amphora Nueva special is the many years this family has partnered with olive oil producers all over the world, making sure that they produce according to their criteria to extract the maximum benefits and taste from the olives. Procuring all over the world allows them to follow the season and to constantly sale very fresh oils.

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