

I'd been following Siri Datta's "Wake Up & Roar" articles since they began, and found them interesting and intriguing enough that when the Raw Lifestyle was offered in a user-friendly form as the Mini Size Me programme, I signed up. OK, I wasn't that interested in mini-sizing, though like a lot of people I thought I could use shedding a few pounds round the tummy. But what attracted me to it was that it is a complete... well, "re-invention" might not be too strong a word, comprising the raw-food diet, yoga, meditation, and all the online support you could wish for.

It's a 40-day programme based round the elements and the chakras, during which you ask yourself some searching questions and give up all the harmful stuff most of us gobble up in one form or another — including caffeine, wheat, dairy and alcohol. Detox or what!

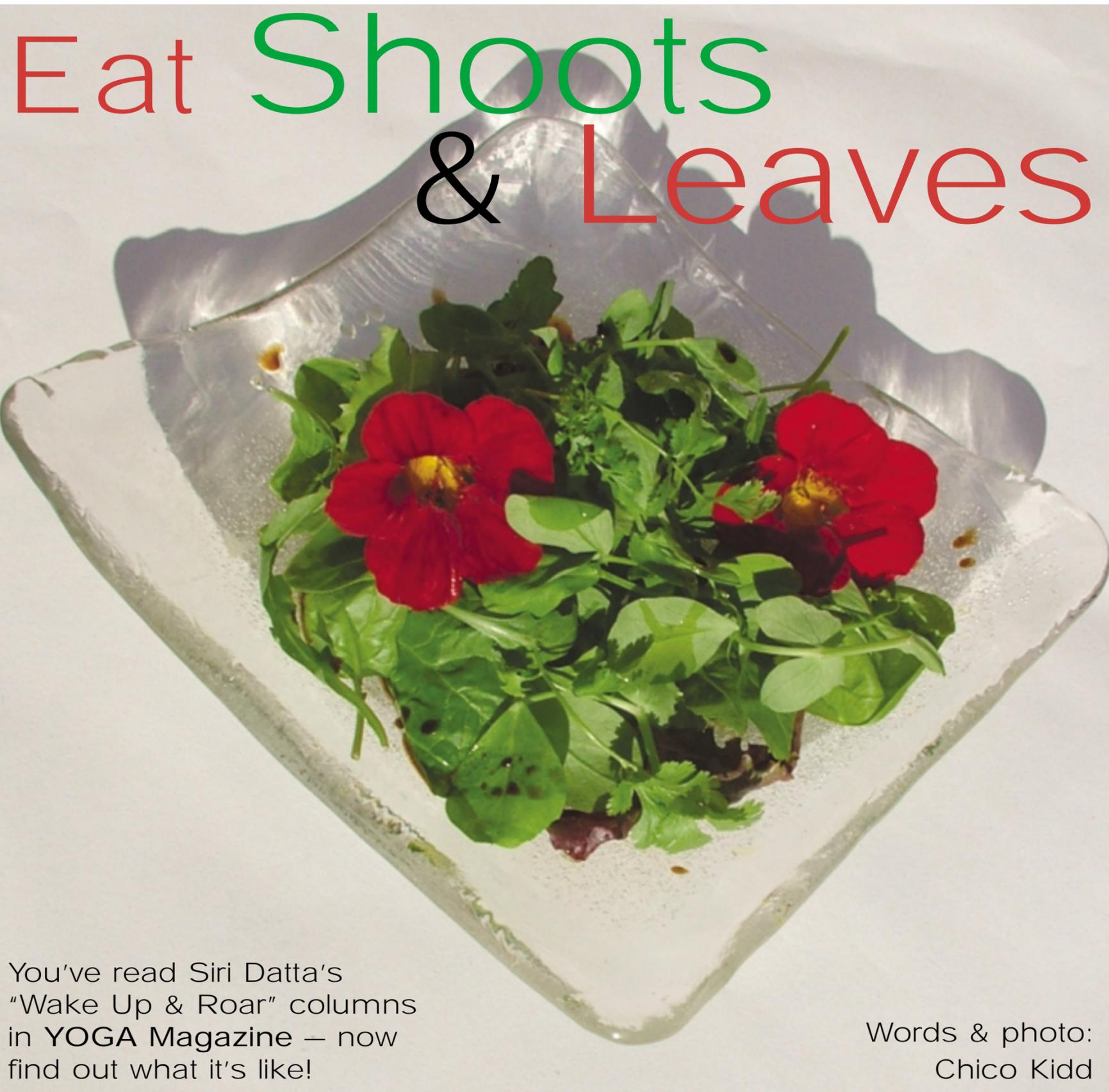
#### Who can benefit?

After signing up, we were asked to pick one category from a list that included: people with a lot of weight to lose or who only need to lose that extra stone, people who want to quit a habit, angry or explosive people, those stuck in a rut, and people who are depressed or have low energy. This identifies which yoga kriyas and meditation exercises you get. I thought that "stuck in a rut" probably described me best.

#### So what was it like?

Giving up caffeine was harder than expected. Normally I don't get headaches — but I got some very unwelcome caffeine-withdrawal ones! Pasta, bread, cheese and chocolate I missed, but not, surprisingly, my normal couple of glasses of wine with supper. Doing the kriyas was quite hard — patting the air for 6 minutes with one hand, for instance — but not half as tough as the meditation, which involved holding my arms in the same position for a full 9 minutes. I had to cheat to start with: at first I wasn't so much meditating as thinking "when will this be over?" However, I made a music playlist of tracks the right length for all the different bits, and that worked brilliantly well, taking my mind off the aches until I got used to doing it.

The diet (*theDelicious Diet*) is indeed delicious, full of lovely stuff; one thing it proves is that raw food is NOT boring! There were a couple of minor setbacks —



You've read Siri Datta's "Wake Up & Roar" columns in YOGA Magazine — now find out what it's like!

Words & photo:  
Chico Kidd

on Day One I was supposed to make cucumber and avocado soup but the avocados I'd bought were still like little rocks. So I couldn't make the soup; instead I made a salad with the rest of the ingredients and ate three little bananas.

I expected to lose some weight simply because of giving up alcohol — a glass of wine is around 200 calories a pop — but during the first week I actually put on weight (although I lost it again in the second week). The reason was obviously that as the diet lacks carbs like bread, pasta, and so on, it didn't fuel my running enough and so I wasn't able to exercise as much as I was used to. Half an hour's run is not supposed to make me feel knackered! So I worked out more with weights and did plenty of energetic yoga (in addition to the kriyas), which brought me back to the right exercise level. Over the 40 days I lost half a stone, which was about right for me. It is not a starvation diet by any means — nuts, seeds, oil, honey, olives, tahini, cacao and the like bulk up the fruit and veg; mind you, avocados, bananas and dried fruit aren't exactly low in calories!

All through you get as much support as you want online — both the Yahoo group and by email. This is brilliant as it means everyone can get a completely personalised programme.

Apart from those few caffeine headaches at the beginning, I didn't suffer any of the threatened detoxing symptoms of tiredness and discomfort. During the 40 days I was feeling brighter, lighter and more mentally alert, even more creative than I had been lately. The rut I was in was one of routine, doing the same things at the same time every day, and though I still prefer to exercise first thing in the morning I don't feel confined or constrained any more. I'm still in the kind of rut that everyone who works full-time has to be in, but it doesn't seem as deep as the Grand Canyon any more.

The book *Mini Size Me – a Yogic and Nutritional Approach to Outstanding Health and Vitality* is out now.

To join a Mini Size Me programme contact Siri Datta on 07966 451 292 or 07771 737317 or email [jeshoua33@aol.com](mailto:jeshoua33@aol.com).  
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