international MACROBIOTIC school

Online Holistic Nutrition & Cooking Year

Online/Intensive Course Details
February – September 2027
Course code 02.27.1

Holistic Nutrition & Cooking Year

A Year That Can Genuinely Change Your Life

If you're reading this, something in you is probably ready for change.

Maybe your health isn't where you want it to be.
Maybe you feel low in energy, overwhelmed, or disconnected from yourself.
Maybe you sense there is "more" to life — more clarity, more purpose, more vitality — but you're not sure how to access it.

The **Holistic Nutrition & Cooking Year** is designed for exactly that place.

This isn't just a nutrition course. It's a deeply supportive journey into your health, your emotions, your lifestyle, your relationships, and your life direction. It's a year where you don't just learn information — you experience transformation.

We Work With the Whole of You

Many people are drawn to this course because of its truly holistic approach.

Together we explore five key aspects of your life:

- Your physical health
- Your diet
- Your emotional world
- Your lifestyle — including work and relationships
- Your deeper life direction and purpose

Rather than looking at these separately, we create a whole picture of how these areas interconnect and influence one another.

When you begin to see your life in this integrated way, things make sense. Patterns become clear. Change becomes more possible.

Real Tools for Real Change

Throughout the year, you'll learn practical, empowering tools that you can use immediately in your own life:

- 14 inspiring, hands-on cooking classes where you learn to create delicious, deeply nourishing plant-based meals
- Do-in (self-shiatsu) exercises to move energy, release tension, and strengthen your body
- How to balance yourself with the classical meridian system
- Emotional listening and supportive skills that deepen connection — with yourself and others
- Health assessment and lifestyle guidance rooted in macrobiotic philosophy and Chinese medicine

Change in one area of life can be powerful. Change across physical, emotional, energetic, and spiritual levels that can be truly life-changing.

By the end of the year, most students experience:

- Improved or healed health issues
- More energy and vitality
- Greater inner calm
- More emotional freedom, openness and happiness
- A stronger sense of connection and purpose

For Your Own Healing — Or a New Career

Some students join purely for themselves. They want to feel better, understand their bodies, and live with more balance.

Others join because they feel called toward a new path, and may be considering:

- A career change
- Adding holistic skills to existing professional work
- Starting a small practice
- Teaching cooking or retreat catering
- Offering health guidance within their community

This course gives you the foundation to do both.

You will learn how to:

- Offer basic Health Guidance
- Design balanced, plant-based wholefood meals
- Teach others simple, effective cooking methods
- Guide Do-in exercises for energy flow
- Use listening skills to support emotional awareness

Both are equally welcome. Interestingly, many who start “just for themselves” discover a passion they didn’t expect… and continue into the full three-year professional training.

After this first year, you can continue onto the second year Holistic Nutritional Therapist to:

- Qualify as a Holistic Nutritional Therapist
- Train as a Healing Chef
- Become a Wellbeing Shiatsu Practitioner

And onto the third year Advanced Holistic Nutritional Therapist course to:

- Qualify as a Advanced Holistic Nutritional Therapist
- Become a Medicinal Cook
- With optional training to become a Shiatsu Therapist

Throughout years two and three, your own healing and personal development continues to be deeply supported.

A Learning Experience That Truly Supports You

This course has the first 14 days teaching online allowing you to study from home, and ends with a 9 day onsite intensive at the school in south Devon, England for more practical, embodied and interactive learning. It is possible to participate in the intensive online, but we highly recommend that you attend the residential for hands on cooking, Do-in, Oriental diagnosis and other practical studies. There is then an online theory assessment in September.

The format is ideal for people living at a distance, so you can study at home for most of the course, and travel to the school just once for more personal and practical learning. The online part of the course runs from February to July and is partly on weekends and also on some Wednesdays. The intensive is at the beginning of August.

The course includes some practical work to do at home, helping you apply what you are learning in your own life.

The group is limited to just 10 students so:

- There's plenty of time for you to ask questions.
- You can feel safe in the small group.
- You will receive lots of personal guidance.
- You are supported in your individual healing journey

There are also small-group online tutorials, giving you extra time with the teachers for personal help.

You will receive thoughtful feedback on your written work and cooking, helping you grow in confidence and competence.

There are theory and practical assessments at the end of the year — but these are supportive and foundational. If you haven't done exams in years, don't worry. You will be gently prepared.

What Students Say

"This course has been life-changing, self-affirming and generally so rewarding for me. I have found such a connection with myself, spiritually, emotionally and with the wellbeing of others."
— Charlie

"I would suggest this course to others straight away! It is a great course for self-healing, macrobiotic understanding and to make the base for a business."
— Silvia

If You Feel the Pull…

This year can be:

- A reset for your health
- A deep reconnection with yourself
- A foundation for meaningful work
- A doorway into a new chapter of your life

If something in you feels curious, ready, or quietly excited — trust that. This course is not just about learning how to cook or eat well. It's about learning how to live well.

The next step is simply to fill out the application form on our website page for the Holistic Nutrition & Cooking Course, and the school principal Oliver Cowmeadow will contact you for an informal interview to answer any questions you have, and to ensure everything is in place for you to get the most from this course.

Course Dates

There are 23 days of teaching plus additional tutorials and a final theory assessment. The first 14 days are all online, followed by a 9 day intensive at the school.

Online

February 27 & 28
March 3, 17
April 10 & 11, 28
May 12, 26
June 2, 23, 30
July 17 & 18

Intensive

August 1st to 10th

Online

September 29 for 2 hour assessment

Start and Finish Times

The online days to start at 8.30am and end at 5.30pm UK time. The intensive starts with supper on the first day at 6pm, and ends at 2pm on the last day.

Course Layout

Online days look like this:

8.30 – 9.30 Do-in exercises and learning the meridian system
10.00 – 1.00 Morning class, with a tea break in the middle
2.30 – 5.30 Afternoon class, either a cooking class or theory or workshop

The Intensive starts at 6pm on the first day, and ends at 2pm on the last day. Intermediate days are like this:

8.00 – 9.00 Do-in and learning meridians
9.00 – 10.00 Breakfast
10.00 – 1.00 Morning class
1.00 – 3.00 Lunch and break time
3.00 – 6.00 Afternoon class
7.30 – 9.00 Occasional tutorial or extra class

Fees and Paying in Instalments

The course fee is £2600, with an Early Bird reduced fee of £2400 for deposits received before October 15th. A deposit of £500 secures your place on the course. The course fee includes:

- All teaching days
- 400 pages of course notes
- Three meals per day during the onsite module
- Personal tutorials and feedback on all home study tasks.

Paying the remaining fees:

- Pay the remaining balance of £2100 by January 27th.
- Or pay 8 monthly instalments of £268.75 (includes £50 admin fee)
- Or if needed, 10 monthly instalments of £215 (includes £50 admin fee)

With Early Bird payment:

- Pay the remaining balance of £1900 by January 27th.
- Or pay 8 monthly instalments of £237.50 (includes £50 admin fee)
- Or if needed, 10 monthly instalments of £195 (includes £50 admin fee)

We understand that the financial commitment is significant. If you are keen to join the course and feel your finances are standing in the way, please contact us to see if we can offer some flexibility to make it possible for you to join this course.

Booking Your Place

To apply:

1. Complete the Application Form on our website page for the Holistic Nutrition & Cooking course.
2. You will then be contacted to have an informal interview to make sure everything is in place.
3. You will then receive an offer of a place and can secure your place by paying the deposit or full fee for the course.

Ideally, you will already have some experience of holistic health and plant-based eating. If not, we recommend attending an introductory course at the school beforehand. This could be an online or onsite course, our website has details of all our currently offered courses.

Most importantly, you will bring:

- A strong interest in health and healing.
- Enthusiasm for making positive changes in your own life.
- You have the practical space and support in your life to fully attend and participate on all the course modules and full studies.

Accommodation

We have on site accommodation at Murtwell in twin or single rooms for the onsite module from £25 to £60 per night. A room to yourself is possible depending on availability. Please contact the office for further information and to check availability before making payment. Camping or campervan options are also available.

Meals

During the onsite module all meals are provided, with the highest quality organic and local foods. These are prepared by our own chefs, and during cooking classes. As well as nourishing you well, they also demonstrate how to plan balanced wholefood meals, which adds further to your learning.

We welcome students inviting partners or close family members to lunch or supper on occasion, so they get a taste of what is being taught at the school. If you want to invite family this needs to be pre-booked with the school at least 5 days ahead so we can tell the cook and order extra food. There is a charge of £6.00 for breakfast and £12.00 for a lunch or supper.

What You Will Study

All teaching is in English, so you need to be conversant in this language. We also make every effort to help students whose first language is not English.

Philosophy

Understanding nature, your body, food and health using yin and yang, the Five Elements theory, life energy (Chi/Ki/Prana), and the shiatsu/acupuncture meridian system.

Health Studies

How to create long-lasting health by making balance in your daily food, lifestyle, exercise and activities, emotions and relationships.

Study of the Five Elements in relation to food, organs, psychology, lifestyle and self-healing. How to nourish all five energies within us, and create a balance between them through our food and lifestyle.

Study of the causes and healing of common health problems using specific foods, flavours, cooking styles, exercises, lifestyle changes and emotional healing.

Throughout the course there is time given to looking at the healing of physical and emotional problems of students, giving individual guidance to each student.

Diagnosis

Practise traditional Eastern medicine visual, listening, questioning and touch diagnosis, to understand your own and others health condition in-depth. Develop insight into constitutional types and present health conditions.

Visual diagnosis of a person's present health condition using facial colour and facial diagnostic areas, sclera diagnosis, the hands, feet, and the hair.

Questioning diagnosis using yin and yang, the Five Transformations, the energetic and physical functions of organs, and prevalent moods and emotions.

Cooking

Become an excellent healthy wholefood plant-based cook, creating amazing breakfasts, soups, main meals, desserts and tasty snacks.

Learn menu planning for healing specific imbalances, for long-term health maintenance, and for gourmet cooking. The classes are almost entirely plant-based, with one optional fish cooking class.

Cooking beans, tofu, seitan, tempeh and other vegetarian high protein foods.

Cooking the full range of vegetable cooking styles.

Using the ingredients and cooking styles of the Five Elements to create meals with five different energies, for seasonal eating and for healing specific imbalances and health problems.

Gourmet party and entertainment cooking.

Emotional Healing

Understanding and accepting your emotions as an important part of health. Learning to feel and express your emotions in a safe environment, and resolve old deep seated emotions still held in your body.

Develop good listening skills to enhance your personal relationships and offering emotional support to others.

How to overcome emotional eating.

How to use the breath to release old stuck feelings and emotions.

Physical & Energetic Practices

Practice Do-in exercises including meridian stretches, abdominal massage, breathing techniques and meditation, for greater physical health and wellbeing.

Learning the position of the 12 classical meridians and particularly useful points on them, for both diagnosis and treatment of common imbalances and health problems.

Deep abdominal massage, and palpation of the abdomen to diagnose the condition of the internal organs. Abdominal and breathing exercises.

Developing inner calm and mindfulness.

What You Need on the Online Days

Clothing

Please wear loose, comfortable cotton clothing for the morning exercise sessions.

Notes

You will be sent extensive course notes to print or use on your computer. You will also need some paper or a book for making additional notes.

Effective online technology

Please make sure you have a strong internet signal and a suitable computer or laptop. Phones are not ideal due to your picture being too small in Zoom meetings.

What to Bring on the Intensive

Clothing

As well as your normal daily wear, please bring loose, comfortable cotton clothing for doing exercises in. Bring anything needed to tie your hair back, and closed shoes for cooking in. You may also want to bring walking boots and warm clothing for outside walks.

Writing Materials

You will need A4 file paper or a book to write your own additional notes.

The Teaching Team

The main teachers for this course are Lara Holmes and Oliver Cowmeadow, with other Macroschool cooking teachers.

Oliver has been studying, practicing and teaching macrobiotics since 1980, and has a wealth of experience in Holistic Nutritional Therapy and Shiatsu, guiding thousands of clients and teaching many people over the last forty years. He has an enormous amount of experience to pass onto students, and has written five books on food, healing and shiatsu.

Lara graduated from the three year training at the IMS in 2014 and practices as an Advanced Holistic Nutritional Therapist and skilled cooking teacher. She is also the head cook at the school. She is passionate about communicating the ideas of macrobiotic health and healing, and creates the most amazingly attractive and tasty balanced plant based meals. Lara will be your Course Tutor guiding you individually on your learning and personal development during the course.

Personal Development

This is a year of learning — and often profound inner change.

Many students notice:

- How eating a balanced plant-based diet increases their physical and emotional health.
- Greater acceptance and healing of emotions.
- Greater self-awareness of what creates good health and wellbeing in their lives.
- Healing of physical symptoms and problems.
- A stronger sense of their life direction.

You will be supported by teachers and peers throughout this process. However, if deeper emotional work arises, we recommend having additional professional support at home.

Your Attendance

Hopefully students will be able to fully attend all of the course, however if some days have to be missed due to illness etc. this should not exceed 10% of the course, or 3 teaching days. If you miss days, it is your responsibility to make up the missed work. This is most easily done by getting together with other students who attended the missed days. If more than 3 days are missed, you will need to book extra tuition time with teachers to cover the missed work, which will be charged at their normal hourly teaching or consultation rate.

Home Practice

Between modules there are various kinds of work to consolidate your learning. This is mostly practical, in which you put what you have learnt in classes into practice. This includes recording food diaries, cooking, and interviewing and diagnosing people, plus some self-development exercises. The amount of work is around 4 to 5 hours per week. Please make sure that you have the time to do this home practice as it forms an essential part of your learning.

Assessments & Certification

You will receive a certificate as a Holistic Nutrition Guide & Wholefood Chef upon:

- Minimum 90% attendance
- Completion of homework
- Passing theory and cooking assessments

This also forms the foundation for progression to further professional training on a second year Holistic Nutritional Therapy and Wellbeing Shiatsu course, and third year Advanced Holistic Nutritional Therapy and Medicinal Cook training.

If you do not pass an assessment, we will guide you on what extra study or practice you need, before retaking the assessment. The fee for retaking assessments is £50 for a cooking or theory assessment.

What Is Special About This Training?

- The small group size with lots of personal support
- A holistic approach integrating our physical, emotional and spiritual health
- In-depth understanding of Far Eastern medicine
- Strong practical cooking and health diagnostic skills
- Emotional healing integrated with nutrition and lifestyle medicine
- Clear professional progression pathway
- With further study learn a range of professional skills in working with individual clients, teaching plant based cookery, Do-in and health and wellness classes, and cooking for retreats, families and groups.

Our courses are approved by the Macrobiotic Association and Complementary Medicine Association, for ease in joining their professional registers.

Book List

Below are books that you will find useful to read. You may want to buy some of them, others you may want to borrow. Many of these books are on sale at the school.

Philosophy

Macrobiotics: An Invitation to Health and Happiness, George Ohsawa. GOMF.
The Order of the Universe, George Ohsawa. GOMF.
The Book of Macrobiotics, Michio Kushi & Alex Jack. Japan Publications.

Health Studies

Natural Healing Through Macrobiotics, Michio Kushi. Japan Publications.
Macrobiotic Home Remedies, Michio Kushi. Japan Publications.
The Macrobiotic Path to Total Health, M Kushi & A Jack. Ballantine Books. Traditional Acupuncture:The Law of the Five Elements, D Connelly.
HealingYour Emotions:Angela & John Hicks.Thorsons.

Diagnosis

Your Face Never Lies, Michio Kushi.Avery Publishers.
Reading The Body,Wataru Ohashi. Penguin Compass.
Your Body Never Lies:The Complete Book of Oriental Diagnosis, Michio Kushi. Square One.

Cooking

The Self-Healing Cookbook, Kristina Turner. Earthtones Press.
Cooking with Angela, Angela Agrati-Prange. Chisinau.
Aveline Kushi's Complete Guide to Macrobiotic Cooking, Aveline Kushi.
Macrobiotic Desserts, Michele Cowmeadow. Cornish Connection.

Emotional Healing

Helping the Client, John Heron. Sage Publications.

Bodywork

Mind Your Body, A.Scott and S.Wale.Devon School of Shiatsu.
The Fourteen Classical Meridians, Sue Hix.
Shiatsu A Practical Introduction, Oliver Cowmeadow. Ebury Press.

Getting In Contact

For administrative matters such as dates, payment of fees etc. please contact the school administrator, Karen Evans.

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A Message from School Principal Oliver Cowmeadow

We live in strange times where the majority of people in the developed world have forgotten the basics of how to create and maintain their health and happiness. As a result we are seeing ever increasing levels of mental illness, degenerative disease and disconnection.

We offer fantastic teachings on how to become more conscious of ourselves and our lives, and how to create balance and health through our daily food, activities and lifestyle. I have personally found it a fascinating study and a very effective way of maintaining my health and guiding my life, and have seen thousands of people transform their lives using these teachings.

At the International Macrobiotic School we are committed to helping as many people as possible find their path in life, and create the health and fulfilment they want. We also aim to train excellent cooks and health practitioners who are able to go out and help the many, many people who are waiting for good guidance. If you want to find a new way of living, or want to become a guide for the future of humanity, we would love to welcome you onto our courses.

Wishing you health and happiness,

Oliver