

EXCLUSIVE: ELVIS AND ME...A WINK TO A LEGEND, FROM A LEGEND

CALABASAS

LIFE AT ITS BEST



THE NEW ME:
To see how I achieved my dramatic 50-pound weight loss, turn to *A Fresh Start* on page 100.

A FRESH START

HOW I FINALLY FREED MY MIND AND BODY

What do I have in common with Ellen DeGeneres, Charlie Sheen, Michelle Branch, Mark McGrath, Gail O'Grady and Denise Richards? Not much, to be honest. Although we do share one important experience: at one time or another, we've all made the decision to join Fresh Dining and start living a healthier life. And after dropping over 50 pounds, I can tell you that I've never felt better.

Weight Watchers, Atkins, Slim Fast—over the last few years, I've tried them all. But none ever lasted, or allowed me to live a normal life. I'm way too busy at work, and the last thing that I want to have to worry about is what I eat.

Ever since I can remember, I've been overweight. And it has always been tough to deal with. Any clothes with style didn't come in my size, I had no energy and no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't lose weight. More importantly, if I did manage to shed a few pounds, I couldn't seem to keep them off.

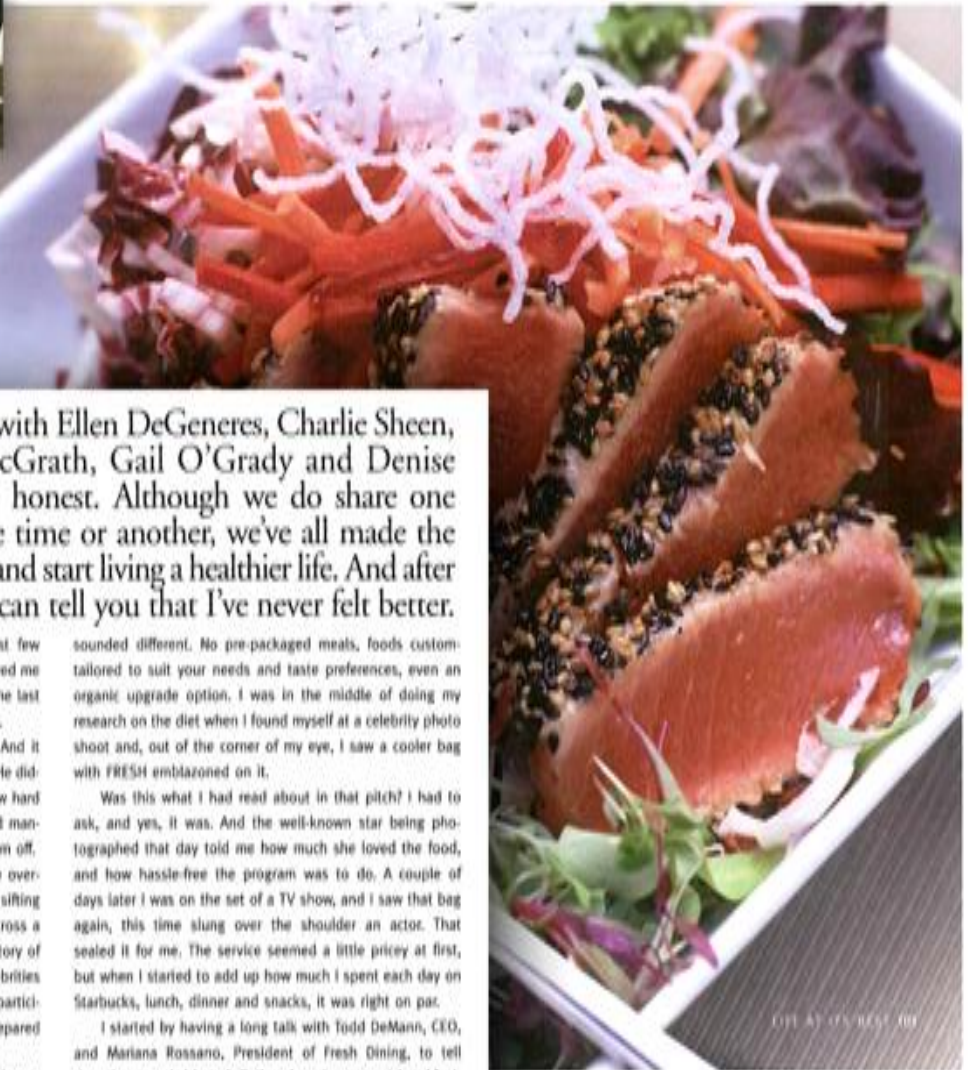
I had resigned myself to the fact that I would be overweight for the rest of my life. Then, one day, after sifting through editorial pitches for this magazine, I came across a proposal that stood out from the rest. As I read the story of fresh Dining, I learned about how a long list of celebrities whose livelihoods depend on their well-being had participated in the gourmet diet program of fresh food, prepared daily by a chef and delivered to your doorstep.

I had heard of food-delivery services before, but this one

sounded different. No pre-packaged meats, foods custom-tailored to suit your needs and taste preferences, even an organic upgrade option. I was in the middle of doing my research on the diet when I found myself at a celebrity photo shoot and, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a cooler bag with FRESH emblazoned on it.

Was this what I had read about in that pitch? I had to ask, and yes, it was. And the well-known star being photographed that day told me how much she loved the food, and how hassle-free the program was to do. A couple of days later I was on the set of a TV show, and I saw that bag again, this time slung over the shoulder of an actor. That sealed it for me. The service seemed a little pricey at first, but when I started to add up how much I spent each day on Starbucks, lunch, dinner and snacks, it was right on par.

I started by having a long talk with Todd DeMann, CEO, and Mariana Rossano, President of Fresh Dining, to tell them how much I hated dieting, how I never eat breakfast,



LIFE AT ITS BEST 101

FRONT & CENTER NUTRITION

Food getting prepped for delivery



Guest Check

TODAY'S SPECIALS ARE...

Here's a sample menu of gourmet choices for one complete day.

BREAKFAST: STRAWBERRY FRENCH TOAST WITH TURKEY BASIL SAUSAGE

LUNCH: ROASTED CHICKEN, RED BEANS AND VEGETABLE CONFETTI SALAD

DINNER: ROASTED PORK WITH APPLE AND PRUNE STUFFING, WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH PUREE AND SAUTEED PEA TENDRILS

DAYTIME SNACK: SHRIMP COCKTAIL

DESSERT: FRESHLY DIPPED CHOCOLATE COVERED STRAWBERRIES

most important meal of the day.

Eat more meals than I was already eating? I couldn't believe it! Then she explained that you need to eat within one hour of rising in order to speed up your metabolism, and that you're supposed to eat every four to five hours in order to be at your optimal metabolic potential. And the goal isn't just losing weight—it's being healthy.

I started the day after Thanksgiving, and I had just filled my belly with all of the foods I loved, like some bear getting ready to hibernate for the winter. Eating food was one of the most enjoyable things I did. What had I gotten myself into?

The first morning I woke up to find my Fresh bag waiting at my door. I was a little nervous. Then I opened it up, and sitting right on top was my menu for the day: steel-cut oatmeal for breakfast, a daytime snack of edamame with sea salt; a salad of mixed greens, currants, apples, walnuts and shared parmesan, topped with grilled chicken; filet mignon with Provencal ratatouille in a balsamic sauce for dinner; and chocolate angel cake with raspberries and coulis for dessert.

There was absolutely no way that this was going to work. I decided not to weigh myself for a couple of days because I figured that, with the food I was eating, it was going to take forever. Four days later I stepped on the scale, and I thought something must be wrong. Was it possible? I was down seven pounds? Just a week later, I had lost 12. I couldn't believe it.



Chef Michael Bowen



how I have a salad for lunch everyday and a normal dinner, yet I kept gaining. I was only eating twice a day — how could I be putting on weight? Mariana explained to me that one of the most important things in a proper diet is eating small meals at multiple times during the day, and breakfast is the

Suddenly I started to feel better, have more energy and really got into the whole diet thing. That's when my new friend Mariana suggested that I try the company's personal training option. They'd send a personal trainer to my home to meet with me, discuss what I was looking for with my and then come up with a training regiment by examining my fitness needs, utilizing the best training method, dietary plan and exercise frequency in order to achieve opti-

FRONT & CENTER NUTRITION

meal results in the shortest period of time. Another confession: I had never worked out in my life. But I figured since the diet was working so well, I'd listen again and give a try. Since we were on the celebrity diet path, they sent me Mike Torchia — trainer to the stars. It was a little scary when I first looked Mike up on the Internet and discovered he was the one responsible for putting Matt Damon in shape for *The Bourne Identity*, while also working with Kime Catral, Ralph Lauren, Al Pacino, Kevin Spacey and the elite clientele



Personal trainer Torchia with Matt Damon



Fresh Dining's DeMann and Rossano



Me, then

Hotel Bel-Air and Beverly Hills Hotel.

What was I getting myself into? Fortunately, Mike explained to me that he understood that not everyone has the time to train like a Hollywood star preparing for his next role, which is why he works with each client to establish personal fitness goals that fit his busy life. We came up with a plan, and by the following week I had my trainer, Brett Bardnell, coming by the house twice a week and putting me through a tough, yet easy adjusted to, workout.

As each week passed, I'd get on the scale and check out my weight. Fourteen, 21, 34 pounds and counting. When I first started, I set a seemingly ridiculous goal of losing 57 pounds. I figure I could



Me, now

knock off 20, I'd be happy. But there I was, three months in, and the weight kept coming off.

One of the most difficult things I had to deal with at the time was having meals with my friends. It was a little uncomfortable for me the first time I met my lunch buddies at a local restaurant, hiding my Food under my arm and waiting for the server to leave table so I could take it out and eat. But as time passed, it didn't bother me at all. The nicer the restaurant, the funnier it was to see the reaction from people around me when I

walked in with my own food and meals. My friend Mitch and Ron have said over a number of lunches, "That looks better than what we're eating."

As I write this, I'm four-and-a-half months into my new life, and 52 pounds lighter. I'm eating healthier, feeling great and finally wearing some clothes that don't feel like I'm going to bust out of them, or are so baggy that I looked like I raided my father's closet. And the best part of it all is that there is no thought process involved. No counting points, no checking calories, no worrying about carbs and no need to spend time shopping for and preparing specific foods. You just open your cooler, eat the great food that you're given and lose weight. In my fast-paced life as a publisher, husband and dad, that's more than I could ask for.

For more information on how to eat like a star and still lose weight, go to www.freshdining.com



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