

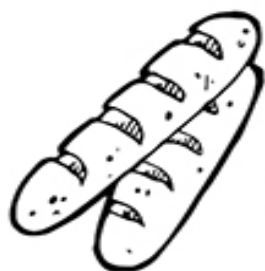


The

# Joy of Plenty

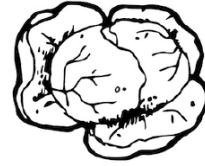
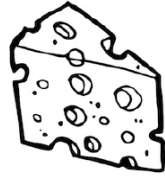


How to multiply your food dollars  
to eat like kings and queens



**ISABEL MONTCLAIRE**  
*with* CHARLOTTE LEHAN



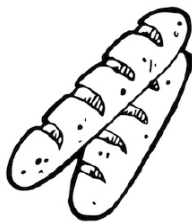


The

# Joy of Plenty



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to eat like kings and queens



ISABEL MONTCLAIRE  
*with* CHARLOTTE LEHAN





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## APPRECIATION *for* THE JOY OF PLENTY

*“I’ve been concerned about the rising cost of food for quite a while but didn’t know what to do about it. Now with the Plenty Method, I have a clear plan for eating well without breaking the bank.”*

*—Michelle Ripple*

*“My wife lost her job last year and we had to drastically cut expenses. The ideas presented in The Joy of Plenty were a lifesaver. We went from spending about \$700 to \$425 a month without changing our diet.”*

*—Elliott Davenport*

*“I recently accumulated a backup food supply to give me a sense of security and safety in these tumultuous times. The suggestions in The Joy of Plenty showed me how to buy extra food and stay within my current budget. I had tried to put extra food away for years but couldn’t afford it. I can’t believe how peaceful I feel now with that back-of-mind worry gone.”*

*—Elizabeth Gatsby*

*“Healthy food is frightfully expensive and I want to feed my children well. The Joy of Plenty helped me transform my pantry into a nutritional powerhouse stocked with superfoods and I was able to do this without spending more money.”*

*—Stacey Maddox*

*“I have wanted to eat more organically grown food so I don’t have to worry about the toxic pesticides and growth hormones I may be eating. Now my diet consists of mostly organic food and my quality of life is so much better, thanks to the Plenty Method.”*

—Tanner Flynn

*“For years I have wondered what I can do to contribute to planetary health. The Joy of Plenty informed me that my food buying decisions have enormous impact. Her vision of the Food Hive network gives me hope that we can join together to create health for our planet.”*

—Carter Brooks

*“For a long time I have wanted to eat better food than I could afford so I could explore the world of gourmet food. The Joy of Plenty taught me how to buy the best food on the planet without spending a ton of money. Now I feel as if I am a five star chef in a farm-to-table restaurant”*

—Isabel Montero

*“I live in a small rural community and sometimes good food is difficult to get. The Joy of Plenty showed me how to form a small food buying group with family, friends, and neighbors to access a wide range of food I had no idea existed.”*

—Channing Quinn

*“In this world of two-dimensional social media, I have sorely missed having face-to-face conversations. The Joy of Plenty creates opportunities to connect in real time, in the real world. I am astounded how this has improved my sense of connection and community. Her idea of the Food Hive network is positively brilliant.”*

—Jesse Remy

*“Before the Plenty Method, my kitchen was a wreck and all the clutter ruined my appetite. Isabel told me it doesn’t need to be this way! I followed her tips*

*and reorganized my entire kitchen and pantry. Her “Pantry Method” of cooking helps me put delicious food on the table almost instantly.”*

*—Rae Vegas*

*“The suggestions recommended in The Joy of Plenty have positively changed my approach to food’s production, storage, preparation, and consumption. The full spectrum of eating food has been elevated as a part of my life. Better for me, better for my community, better for our planet”*

*.—Mike Rodgers*

*“Inspiring and timely, The Joy of Plenty showed me I don’t have to be a prisoner of prepackaged convenience food any longer. Beautiful and plentiful food is available for my family by tapping into the simple method of food pooling and storage presented by Miss Montclair. I couldn’t be more optimistic about the future of good quality food for everyone!”*

*—Karen Karlsen*

*“For a long time, I have been deeply disturbed about the corporate control of our food supply and have felt nothing I can do will matter. Isabel’s suggestion that we can rise up together in the SWARM – Supporters of Worldwide Agricultural Reform Movement – just by increasing our organic food purchases by 10 percent was so uplifting. She is a true visionary.”*

*—Celeste Tudor*

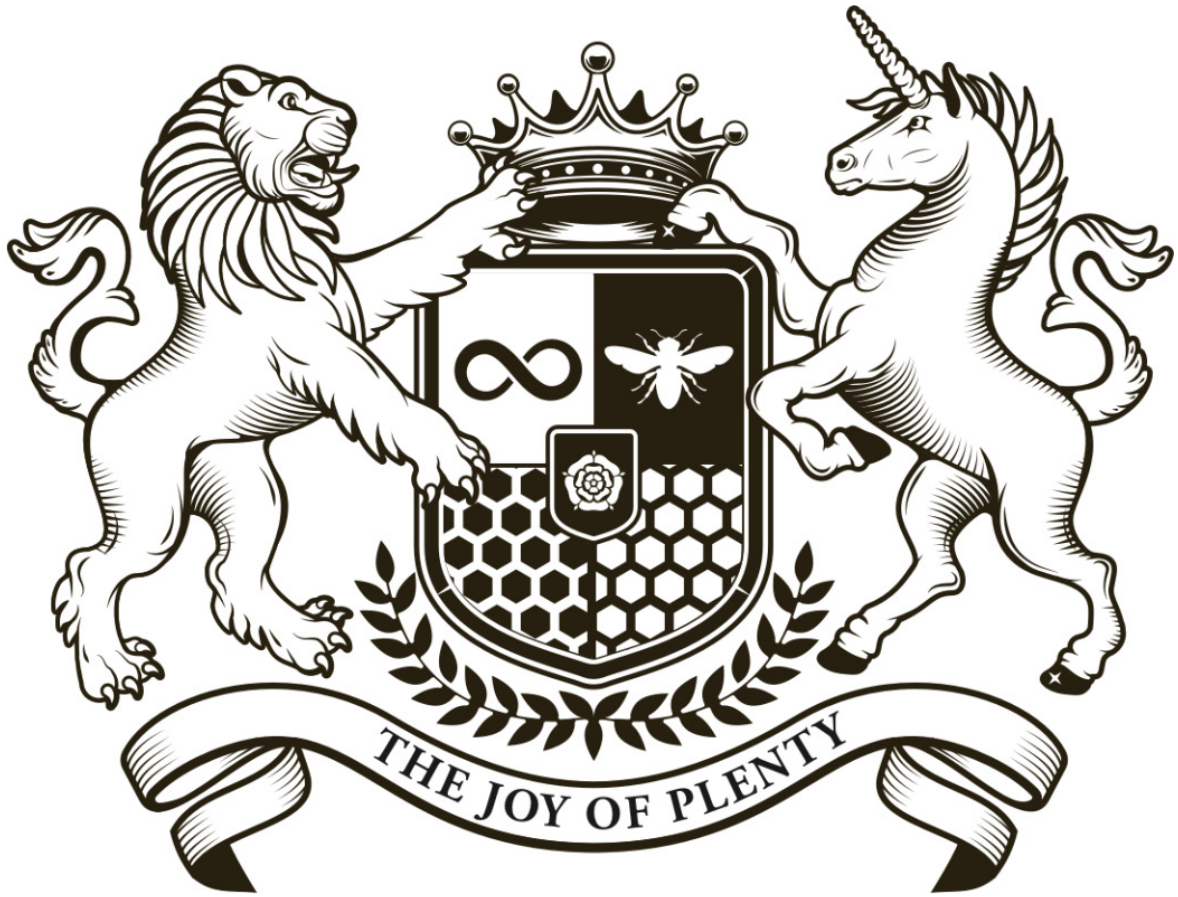
*In memory of  
Elizabeth, Elmer, Steve, Lolita, and Clarin  
Thank you, superstars, for your  
ongoing help on this journey*





Happiness becomes joy when shared.

*Mario Bisio*



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# Preface

I PRESENT MANY IDEAS IN THIS BOOK AND YOU MAY FEEL OVERWHELMED at first. If you do, please sidestep being overwhelmed by using only the ideas here that suit you. This is not an all-or-nothing approach to food. The intent of this book is to provide food for thought, to start a conversation and to inspire you to take some of the basic steps outlined in this book.

I place a high value on truth, accuracy and sincerity. I have included primary source documents where appropriate. I am not responsible for any inadvertent errors, inaccuracies, or misinterpretation of any of the information presented in this book.

Some jurisdictions may not allow people to open containers of food and then divide the portions and the cost. Therefore, I prefer to use the word *share* rather than *buy, sell, or trade*. Please thoroughly educate yourself about safe food handling practices and understand the risks of foodborne illness from the careless handling of food.

I accept no responsibility for sickness or loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from any action because of the material in this publication.

# The Plenty Method

THE PLENTY METHOD, DESCRIBED ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, WILL HELP you feel more joy, ease, and peace around the whole topic of food. It's a six-step practice that adds value to your food dollars and transforms the way you find, buy, share, store, and prepare food. After you read *The Joy of Plenty*, you will have all the tools you need to do the following:

- add value to your food dollars (bring down the cost of food by about 40%)
- continue to eat well despite skyrocketing prices at the grocery store
- accumulate a backup food supply to make you feel safe and secure in these tumultuous times
- include more organically grown and humanely raised food in your diet
- feed your children the best food on the planet
- create more opportunities for face-to-face social connection
- create a beautifully organized pantry full of superfoods
- prepare healthful meals quickly with ease and fun
- do your part to support the pollinators, reduce food waste, and contribute to planetary health

*The Joy of Plenty* teaches you how to form a small food buying group to access the wholesale and local farm-direct markets. You and your family, friends, and neighbors will learn how to combine an order to buy and share food in bulk. Go on a treasure hunt to find hidden food sources you never knew existed! You can join together to keep your pantries well stocked

regardless of soaring food costs. It's possible to do the Plenty Method solo but when you rally with your family, friends, and neighbors it's a lot more fun!

I will take you out of the grocery store to visit wholesalers or farms instead. I'll show you how to buy the best food on the planet for reasonable prices. *The Joy of Plenty* includes advice on how to upgrade your pantry to a nutritional powerhouse, accumulate a backup food supply, prepare great meals in under 30 minutes, and experience more joy and freedom around the whole topic of food.

I envision a network named the Food Hive network, built by everyone who uses the Plenty Method including the suppliers, to help bring down the cost of food. The instructions to build this network are in the book. Your participation matters!

The practice is a holistic approach that not only helps you eat better, it creates community too. If you want more opportunities for face-to-face social connection and need a reason to connect, joining the Food Hive network provides the perfect excuse. You can help build this shared resources network to strengthen the connection we have with others and our planet through food that is clean, nutritious, and affordable. One person can make a difference and that person can be *you!*

If all this seems overwhelming, remember that Saint Francis of Assisi said, "Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is possible and suddenly, you are doing the impossible." My goal is to offer you colorful ideas to enthusiastically share and discuss. Strike up a conversation with family, friends, and neighbors. Take small steps, swing into action, and have fun!

I would love to hear from you! Please write to tell me of your progress and suggestions, and of course, to ask any questions you might have .

—Isabel

Isabel@plentymethod.org



# How to Use the Plenty Method

THE PLENTY METHOD INCREASES THE PURCHASING POWER OF YOUR FOOD dollars (brings the cost of food down by about 40 percent) and you can use the money you save in many ways. Sometimes the cost savings are so great that you wonder how it happens. For example, I can buy at wholesale one gallon of soy sauce for the cost of two 16 ounce bottles bought at retail and it is the same brand. Other times, the cost savings are modest, maybe only 15 to 20 percent. But the savings average out to be about 40 percent over time, or, you will pay 60 cents instead of a dollar for the same item when you follow my recommendations.

- The value added to your food dollars gives you the opportunity to:
- Reduce the overall amount of money you spend in your food budget. For example, if you currently spend \$600, the Plenty Method can help you get it down to about \$360.
- Help you manage skyrocketing food inflation. You won't have to take food out of your cart and put it back on the grocery store shelves when you realize you are way over budget. You won't have to reduce the quality of food you eat, such as buying margarine instead of butter.
- Accumulate a backup food supply. The Plenty Method is the ideal food storage system to help you prepare for unforeseen circumstances or emergencies. You'll be surprised how easy it is to put away a year's worth of food. In an emergency, you can eat the way you usually do. No unappetizing survival food is necessary because you store the food you eat in your day-to-day life.

- Buy organically grown and humanely raised food. Organic food usually costs somewhere between 25 to 40 percent more than conventionally grown food, so you can add these to your diet and still stay within your current budget.
- Upgrade your diet yet spend the same amount you currently do. For example, you could buy almonds, hazelnuts, or pecans in addition to peanuts. Olive oil instead of canola oil. Authentic Italian Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese instead of domestically produced parmesan.

In the following pages, I emphasize the use of the Plenty Method to upgrade your diet from conventional to organically grown and humanely raised food because that is what I did. The dramatic changes I experienced in my physiology, well-being, and overall quality of life astounded me. My saliva took on an indescribably sweet flavor. My complexion glowed and my muscle tone became firmer. I felt increased inner peace, less anxiety, slept better, and my digestive system seemed more at peace. I realized that food raised in harmony with the earth just *felt* better to eat in addition to tasting delicious.

These notable changes compelled me to investigate how our food was grown and raised and I started to ask myself questions. When I eat the flesh of an animal that was confined as it was raised, can the tortured energy then enter my body and cause me to feel anxious and unwell? My sense of inner peace and well-being increased so dramatically after I stopped eating what I named “*processed beings*” (animals raised in adverse conditions) I wondered if I absorbed their negative energy. I imagine the same holds true for a plant doused with toxic pesticides that diminish the plant’s life force. While these ideas may seem far-fetched, they are

commonsense to me. After all, if we are what we eat, aren't we also what our food eats?

In my quest to know more, I did a deep dive on the effects of pesticide residues on our health. For two years I plunged far into the caverns of the National Institute of Health Library, the data base that houses scientific studies. With the help of two medical professionals, I read many studies until I understood the conclusions. I was aghast that the general public was mostly unaware of the detrimental health effects of pesticide residues in our food. Why?

With further investigation, I discovered something that I did not expect — an entity I named the Supercide Operative (as in **pesticide**, **insecticide**, **herbicide**, **fungicide**). The operative is a conglomeration of agricultural chemical corporations that work in unison to keep the public in the dark about the damaging effects of pesticides. The operative infiltrates governments and makes the rules, regulations, and laws that govern pesticide usage. The image I see is a giant black demonic octopus with tentacles that penetrate every nook and cranny of the “food system” (the process of getting food on our tables). The process begins when a farmer plants a seed and ends when a shopper plucks an item off the grocery store shelf in anticipation of preparing a meal.

The Supercide Operative runs in the background to make certain that people will remain unaware of its workings and the severe damage that pesticides do to people, pollinators, and our planet. The result of my research is a 28 page book titled “*Supercide Me: how pesticides are making us sick and what we can do about it*”. Everyone, *and I mean everyone*, who reads this book has said they will transition from eating conventionally grown to organic food. If, as a society, we can get organic food production up to 10, a tipping point will occur and organic will be majority of food

produced<sup>1</sup>. This is a goal of both *The Joy of Plenty* and *Supercide Me*. *Supercide Me* is available as a free download at [thejoyofplenty.org/books/supercide-me/](http://thejoyofplenty.org/books/supercide-me/)

Pesticides also seriously affect our pollinators, the tireless workers who help produce 70 percent of our food. I learned that pesticides weaken the bees' immune system and they suffer from a severe health crisis. In the winter of 2020-2021 45 percent of bees in the United States died over the winter and this has been a trend for 15 years<sup>2</sup>. I sadly imagine a horror story where a civilization's entire agricultural complex comes crashing down as it slowly poisons itself. Under current trends, this could happen. Being a big picture thinker, it makes sense that the sooner our society can reduce pesticide use, the better.

My friend, Sunny, coined the acronym "The SWARM" (Supporters of **W**orldwide **A**gricultural **R**eform **M**ovement). It's time to say a loud and resounding **NO** to the game the pesticide giants play of profits at any cost. We can rise up in a thunderous and loving way to demand transformation of our food system into one that is kinder, gentler, and considers the health of all its inhabitants. One person can make a difference and that person can be **YOU!**

My desire is that the book's emphasis on the Plenty Method's ability to upgrade your diet from conventional to organic food will open new vistas and possibilities. I encourage you to consider adding more organic food to your diet, if you have not already done so.

The ideas I present in this book may overwhelm you at first. Let these new ideas slowly sink in and percolate and go at your own pace. Find family, friends, and neighbors to work with to inspire one another and share ideas. Please take these ideas and adapt them to increase your joy and well-being, just like they did for me.

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<sup>1</sup>The Rensselaer Institute “Minority Rules: Scientists Discover Tipping Point for the Spread of Ideas”  
<https://news.rpi.edu/luwakkey/2092>

<sup>2</sup>United States Honey Bee Colony Losses 2021-2022  
<https://beeinformed.org/?s=bee+colony+losses+2021>