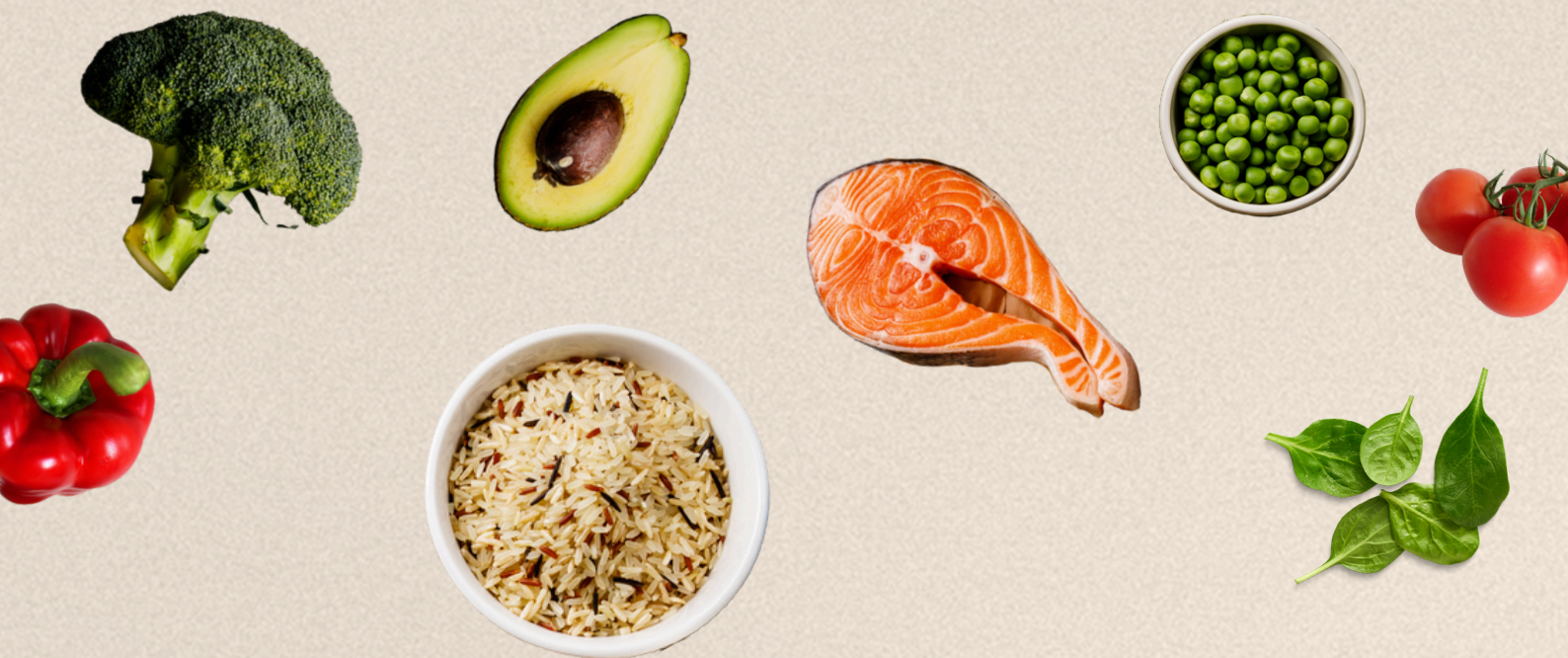




WELL NOURISHED[®]

How I Shop

Georgia's Guide to
Real Food for Your Family

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Disclaimer

This Guide is for general education only and isn't personal medical advice. Always consider your individual health needs, medications, and medical conditions. Please speak with your GP or qualified practitioner before making significant changes to your diet, supplements, or lifestyle. If symptoms are severe, new, or worsening, please seek medical care.

A note before we start

Getting to where I am now with food has been a journey, and I want to be upfront about that. There was a time when I was shopping purely to avoid additives, checking labels, choosing the versions without the numbers, making sure our sauces and snacks were additive-free, and feeling like that was a win. It absolutely was a start.

But the less I shopped at the supermarket and relied on products with ingredient lists, and the more I cooked from scratch with fresh, whole ingredients, the more my own and my family's health shifted in a positive way. That was the real turning point, moving away from allowing a big corporation to do my cooking for me, and reclaiming that in my own kitchen. It shifted consistently, in ways I couldn't ignore.

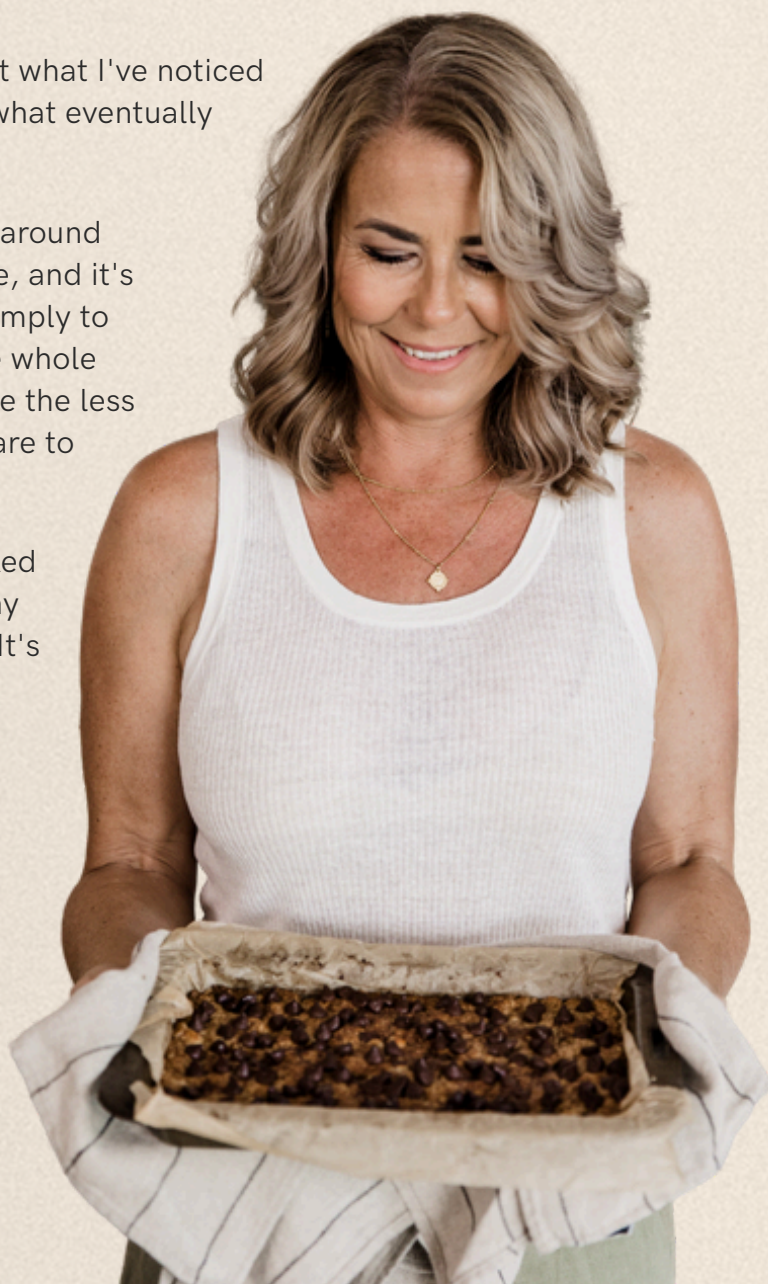
After almost 30 years as a naturopath and my own evolving journey as a mum, I've come to understand that anything processed is still processed, even the healthier version of it, and the less we need to rely on packaged food, even the good packaged food, the better off we tend to be.

This isn't about doing it perfectly. It's just what I've noticed in clinic and in my own kitchen, and it's what eventually shaped the way I shop now.

The goal isn't to be fearful of food. Fear around food is exhausting and counterproductive, and it's not something I encourage. The goal is simply to shift the ratio, more fresh produce, more whole ingredients, fewer labels to read. Because the less you need to read a label, the closer you are to eating real food.

This guide is how I shop. It's what's worked for me, my kids, and my family over many years as a busy naturopath and real life. It's not the only way. But if you want a practical, honest place to start, this is mine.

Georgia xo



Fresh Produce



Fresh vegetables and fruit are the foundation of everything. My first choice is always my local farmers market, produce picked closer to harvest, often grown by people you can actually talk to. If that's not accessible, a good greengrocer or a fresh produce delivery box service are both excellent options. Supermarket produce is fine when it's your only option, but it's worth knowing that out-of-season and imported produce is often stored for extended periods and, in the case of imports, must be treated to meet Australia's biosecurity requirements. So do your best to avoid 'imported' produce.

What I look for: in-season, locally grown where possible. Seasonal produce is at its nutritional peak and hasn't been sitting in cold storage for weeks. If you have any outdoor space at all, even a balcony or a few pots, growing some of your own produce is one of the most rewarding things you can do for your family's health. I live on a tiny block and grow citrus, curry leaf and bay leaf in pots, plus an assortment of greens and herbs. They're very low care, they save money, and there is something genuinely satisfying about cooking with something you've grown yourself.

I avoid pre-cut vegetables. Cutting vegetables accelerates nutrient loss, and pre-cut produce is typically treated with citric acid and calcium chloride to prevent browning and maintain texture. It's not that these additives are dramatically harmful, but you're paying more for something that's nutritionally inferior to a whole vegetable you cut yourself at home. There's also something to be said for the life force of food, the closer something is to the way it grew, the more intact its nutrition.

I understand the convenience of jarred garlic and pre-minced herbs, but I don't use them. Fresh garlic has genuine medicinal properties that are significantly diminished once it's been processed and sitting in a jar. It takes less than a minute to crush a clove. That one minute is worth it.

Eggs



There's been significant controversy in recent years about eggs labelled as free range not meeting the standards consumers expect. My honest recommendation: source your eggs from a farmers market, a trusted local producer, or a farm you've researched directly. If you're buying from a supermarket, look carefully, "free range" labelling in Australia has had some questionable history and the standards have not always been what they appear.

Meat & Seafood



This is an area where your source matters enormously. My strong preference is a local butcher I have a relationship with and trust.

Beef, look for 100% grass fed and finished. This is important because cattle can be grass fed for part of their lives and then grain finished before slaughter, and some producers use "grass fed" loosely. The words you want are "grass fed and finished" or "100% grass fed."

Supermarket meat, there are documented practices in the industry of adding water and sodium (sometimes phosphates) to chicken and some beef to increase weight and extend shelf life. Some markets also use controlled atmosphere packaging that can make meat appear fresher than it is. I notice a genuine difference in how supermarket meat cooks and tastes compared to what I buy from my butcher, and that difference is real.

Bovaer, this is worth being aware of. Bovaer (3-NOP) is a feed additive being used in some cattle farming to reduce methane emissions, positioned as a carbon neutral initiative. It has regulatory approval in Australia, but long-term human health data is still limited. I'm personally not willing to have my family be part of that experiment while the science catches up, and I choose to source meat from producers I can verify are not using it. Time will tell whether those concerns are founded, but until then I'll err on the side of caution.

Seafood, wild caught over farmed where possible. I get mine delivered from **The Butcher Crowd**, who stock wild caught salmon, barramundi and smoked salmon. It arrives frozen, which is really convenient and means I always have good quality seafood on hand.

Mince, the broader context of food fraud globally (and the Four Corners investigation closer to home) has made me cautious about pre-minced or ground meat from unknown sources. Buying mince or whole cuts from a trusted butcher (and asking them to mince it for you) is the most reliable option if mince is a regular part of your cooking.

Dairy



Milk, I look for organic, non-homogenised milk. Homogenisation breaks down the fat globules in milk to prevent cream separating, and while it's considered safe, I prefer to eat as close to what nature provides as possible. Our family has used raw milk for many years, I know that's a personal decision and it's not widely available, but for those who are interested, it's worth researching. If you're buying from a supermarket, avoid anything labelled reduced fat, low fat, or skim. These are heavily processed and the removal of fat doesn't make them healthier, it makes them less nutritious and less satisfying.

Pure butter only. Nothing spreadable, nothing blended with other oils. Grass fed or organic where possible. Read the label: it should say cream (and sometimes salt). That's it.

Yoghurt, full fat natural or Greek yoghurt. Never flavoured, never low fat. Add your own fruit, honey, or vanilla if you want flavour. Flavoured yoghurts are typically high in sugar and low in the beneficial bacteria that make yogurt worth eating in the first place. **Kefir** is also beneficial if you enjoy it.

Cheese, look for cheese made from real dairy with cultures. Avoid anything processed, spreadable from a tub, or with a long list of unrecognisable ingredients. Cheese should have milk, cultures, salt, and sometimes an enzyme. That's the list.

Nut & Plant-Based Milks



If you're buying nut or plant-based milks, read the label carefully. Many commercial varieties contain added sugars, thickeners, and refined seed oils, which rather defeats the purpose of choosing them for health reasons. Look for versions with a short, recognisable ingredient list, ideally just the nut or grain and water, with nothing else added. Better still, make your own. Homemade nut milk is simpler than most people think, and you know exactly what's in it.



Herbs & Spices

Herbs and spices are genuinely medicinal. Even in small amounts they contribute significantly to both flavour and nutritional value, and I believe they're one of the most underrated parts of a wholefood diet. So it's particularly frustrating that this category has been so compromised by food fraud.

The Four Corners 'Duped' investigation found lead chromate (a toxic industrial pigment) in some turmeric products available in Australia. Lead chromate is not permitted as a food additive, it was being used to make turmeric appear more vibrantly yellow. The Hoyts brand was among those identified.

My recommendation: buy herbs and spices from brands with transparent sourcing and regular testing. Do your research on the brands available to you, and where possible choose certified organic. And don't be afraid to contact your preferred brand directly and ask what quality control measures they have over their spices, what testing they do, and where they source from. Doing this not only helps you make a more informed choice, it sends a clear message to these companies that consumers are paying attention and that this is what we expect from them if they want to keep our business. The reality is that without forensic testing of every batch, we do have to extend some level of trust, but we can make that trust conditional.

Berries



Fresh berries are among the most heavily sprayed produce available, and unfortunately the thin skin means residues aren't removed by washing. Unless you can find certified organic fresh berries (they do exist, particularly at farmers markets), frozen organic berries are an excellent alternative.

I keep them in the freezer regularly, they're great in smoothies, yogurt, overnight oats, and baking.

Olive Oil



My primary cooking oil. Look for extra virgin olive oil with a harvest date on the label (not just a best-before date), and ideally single origin. Extra virgin means it's been cold pressed without heat or chemicals, which preserves the polyphenols and antioxidants that make olive oil genuinely beneficial. You may also see "robust" on the label, this refers to polyphenol intensity, which is a quality indicator and a sign you're getting a more nutritionally dense oil.

If it's very cheap, be sceptical, olive oil adulteration is a documented global problem and cheap olive oil is frequently blended with refined seed oils. I tend to buy it when it goes on sale at the supermarket (which happens quite regularly) and stock up, so I'm getting good quality at a lower price rather than compromising on quality to save money.

Oils to avoid entirely: vegetable oil, canola oil, rice bran oil, corn oil, grapeseed oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, soy oil. These are refined seed oils, heavily processed using heat and chemicals, and can be pro-inflammatory when consumed regularly. They have no place in my kitchen.



Legumes and Pulses

I buy canned legumes for convenience, organic chickpeas, cannellini beans, and lentils are widely available and reasonably priced. When I have the time, I soak and cook dried legumes from scratch (they taste significantly better) and freeze them in salted water in glass containers so I always have them on hand. It's easier than it sounds and works out much cheaper.

Canned Tomatoes & Passata



I use both, and I prefer passata in glass where I can get it, the acidity of tomatoes can interact with the lining of cans over time. When tomatoes are in season and on special, I buy a large batch, oven roast them with garlic and herbs, and freeze them in glass containers. We have a recipe inside the membership for exactly this if you want to try it.



Canned Fish

Canned fish is a convenient and affordable ways to get good quality protein and omega-3s into your family's diet regularly. What to look for on the label: fish packed in 100% extra virgin olive oil is the best option. If it says "olive oil blend," put it back, that means it's been cut with refined seed oils.

Otherwise, fish packed in brine or spring water is perfectly fine. When it comes to salmon specifically, look for wild caught, it's nutritionally superior to farmed and worth the small price difference where you can find it

Condiments, Sauces & Mustards



I'm selective here. Most commercial sauces are high in sugar, refined oils, or preservatives. I look for short ingredient lists with recognisable ingredients. Mustard should contain mustard seeds, vinegar, salt, not a paragraph of additives. Soy sauce is worth buying tamari (wheat-free) or a traditionally brewed variety. Apple cider vinegar with the mother. Real fish sauce without added sugar. It takes a bit of label reading initially but once you know your go-to brands it becomes second nature.

Dried Fruit



Always sulphur-free and vegetable oil-free. Sulphur dioxide is used as a preservative and to maintain the bright colour of dried apricots and other fruits, the brown, less attractive dried apricots are actually the unsulphured ones, and those are the ones I buy. Vegetable oil is sometimes added to prevent clumping. Check the label and look for fruit that's just... fruit.



Sweeteners

My philosophy with sweeteners is simple: use them sparingly, and when you do, make them real.

Raw honey is my first choice, local and unprocessed where you can find it. Local raw honey retains its natural enzymes, antioxidants and antimicrobial properties, all of which are destroyed by commercial processing and heat treatment. It's also one of those ingredients where the quality difference between a good local raw honey and a supermarket variety is genuinely significant. If you can find a local beekeeper or source it from a farmers market, it's worth it.

Pure maple syrup is my other go-to for baking and cooking, just make sure it's 100% pure maple syrup and not maple flavoured syrup, which is essentially refined sugar with flavouring added.

What I avoid entirely: refined white sugar as a staple, artificial sweeteners of any kind, and anything marketed as a "natural" sweetener that comes with a very long processing story, agave being the most common example. The goal isn't to eliminate sweetness from your family's diet, it's to use real, minimally processed sweeteners in reasonable amounts, which is exactly how humans have eaten for most of history.

A final thought

Health is my highest value. I'm willing to invest in food quality and make adjustments to my budget to be able to do that. **But I also know that's not possible for everyone, and this guide isn't meant to make you feel like you're failing if you can't source everything from a farmers market or primary producer.** It's meant to give you a clear picture of what I look for and why, so you can make the choices that make sense for your life and your family. Do what you can, where you can.

Consistency over perfection, always.



The Well Nourished Capsule Pantry

*Everything you need to cook almost every recipe in the **Well Nourished membership***

FRESH PRODUCE

Seasonal vegetables and fruit, locally grown where possible

EGGS

Free range from a trusted local source

MEAT & SEAFOOD

Grass fed and finished beef, pastured chicken from a trusted butcher
Wild caught fish and seafood

DAIRY

Organic non-homogenised full fat milk preferably
Pure butter (cream and salt only)
Full fat natural or Greek yoghurt (or kefir)
Real cultured cheese

OILS & FATS

Extra virgin olive oil (single origin, with harvest date) preferably 'robust'
Butter, ghee, coconut oil, lard, tallow for higher heat cooking

CANNED AND JARRED

Organic chickpeas, cannellini beans, lentils, black beans
Passata (glass jar preferred) or canned tomatoes
Canned wild caught fish (salmon, tuna, sardines, mackerel) in pure extra virgin olive oil or brine or springwater

GRAINS AND DRIED GOODS

Rolled oats, brown rice, quinoa, buckwheat
Wholegrain or sourdough bread (short ingredient list)
Dried lentils and split peas (or any other legumes you use regularly)
Flour of your choice (spelt, buckwheat, gluten-free), preferably wholegrain

NUTS & SEEDS

Raw, unsalted, almonds, cashews, walnuts, macadamia nuts, pecan nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, chia, coconut, almond meal and pure nut butters.

DRIED FRUIT

Sulphur-free and vegetable oil-free

CONDIMENTS AND FLAVOUR

Tamari or traditionally brewed soy sauce
Apple cider vinegar (with the mother)
Real fish sauce (no added sugar)
Mustard (simple ingredients)
Miso paste (organic)

HERBS & SPICES

Certified organic where possible, turmeric, cumin, coriander, paprika, cinnamon, mixed herbs, dried chilli, sea salt, black pepper

SWEETENERS

Raw honey (preferably local), pure maple syrup, rice malt syrup, rapadura or coconut sugar.

FREEZER STAPLES

Organic frozen berries
Frozen wild caught seafood
Cooked legumes in salted water (homemade)
Batch-cooked roasted tomatoes (recipe in the membership)
I also bulk buy meat and freeze it for convenience

The majority of recipes inside the **Well Nourished Family Membership** are designed to be made from this capsule pantry. No one-off ingredients, no specialty store runs, just real food, made simple.

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