

Creating a Sacred Kitchen: How to sanctify your eating space & make it holy

The Center for Mindful Eating
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• What is a Sacred Kitchen?

Sacred eating and cooking spaces are that are distinguished from the ordinary; they connect us to the transcendent, and also to the sacredness of the earth and all of life. We enter a sacred kitchen with the intention to engage in activities with the understanding that there is something larger than ourselves than our physical appetites; it is a space that we regard and relate to with reverence and awe; a place where we can engage in meaningful rituals that inspire us to treat our bodies and hearts as worthy of special care; it an area where that inspires mindfulness so we can appreciate the interdependence of life, “the garbage and the flowers,” as singer, songwriter Leonard Cohen tells us. A sacred kitchen is a nourishing space, not only physically, but also emotionally; it is a sanctuary, which represents gratitude, forgiveness, beauty and blessings.

• Why is a Sacred Kitchen important to mindful eating?

Mindful eating is the practice of eating with awareness and intention. It is also the practice of paying attention to the thoughts, feelings and sensation involved in eating, including hunger and satiation cues. It also means being aware of taste, smell, textures and colors of food and that what we eat is connected to all of life. A sacred kitchen helps us relate to every aspect of food in a holy way, as precious and sublime, not as something to take for granted. A sacred kitchen is an atmosphere designed to support mindful eating and is a constant reminder to relate to our food and all activities in the kitchen from a spiritual perspective, so we can feel the fullness in our stomachs as well as in our hearts.

- **Five ways to Create a Sacred Kitchen**

1. Relate to the kitchen area like a temple, synagogue, church, mosque, Yosemite, Yellowstone Park, the ocean and other holy spaces that inspire awe and respect for not just what's in it but also what it represents.
2. Keep this space immaculate and free from clutter; compost rotting food, donate unused food to a local food bank, reorganize food storage spaces; reorganize cooking and eating utensils, pots and pans, etc and donate what you don't use; organize dish towels, napkins, sponges, detergent, etc. so you feel inspired to relate to this space and what it contains with the aware that everything you do and eat in this space is intimately connected with all of life.
3. Remove all distractions such as radios, television, computers, newspapers, etc. Remind yourself that sacred space is meant to increase awareness not blunt it.
4. Place candles, plants, flowers, and some stones in key areas; practice eating in silence, if possible. Use the best dishes and tableware possible, rather than ones that are cracked or chipped. Making the space beautiful can help elevate the sense of dignity and grace that is inherent in mindful eating.
5. Bless your food and give thanks before eating; eat slowly and intentionally, aware of fullness and satiety cues; conclude by dedicating and sharing the blessings that have come from this meal or snack, to the benefit of all beings. Mindfully clean up.

- **Maintaining the Sacred Space for inner harmony and well-being**

At least once a week, clean and reorganize your sacred kitchen and do whatever needs to be done to elevate the space from ordinary to sacred. You will soon become more sensitized to the peace, calm and tranquility that comes with taking care of your sacred kitchen. Notice how your loving care and attention impacts your eating over time and how you feel when you enter and leave your sacred kitchen, and hopefully the physical and emotional nourishment that comes from contained within it.

For further questions and comments, please contact me at: drronna@gmail.com

May all beings have enough to eat.

