



— Food for Health —

Wellness Newsletter

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Embracing Your Passions in the New Year

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Every block of stone has a statue inside it, and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it.
I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.

— Michelangelo

THE GIFT OF YOU: EMBRACING YOUR PASSIONS, PURPOSE, AND WELL-BEING

Faced with a block of marble and a vision, Michelangelo, the famous Italian sculptor and painter of the High Renaissance, said:

“Every block of stone has a statue inside it, and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it. I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.”

The first time I heard this statement it brought me to tears. Since then, I have been moved to my core every time I reflect on its meaning. I think about you and others I've met along the way—what a gift you are to this world and to everyone who knows you.

How can I be so sure? Because you wouldn't be here otherwise.

Identifying Your “Inner Angel”

Sometimes it's easier to see the hidden gift—the angel, if you will—in others before we discover it in ourselves. Like my mom's knack for nurturing, or my husband's flair for lighting up a room and making everyone feel at ease. It's nothing they try to do; it's just who they are.

If you need help identifying your special gifts, ask someone who knows you well. You could also think about the things that light you up. What are you particularly passionate about?

- Animal welfare?
- Children?
- Feeding the homeless?
- Making people laugh?
- Writing short stories?
- Baking?
- Nutrition?
- Turtles? (one of passions!)

My core passion is helping people take inspired action to build the healthy body they were meant to live in. Some say this is my gift. It makes total sense because when I'm engaged in any aspect of it (i.e., writing, speaking at Heinen's Club Fx events, talking to customers), I feel alive, on fire, and full of possibility.

Pay attention to those things that lift your spirit, tug at your heartstrings, and come naturally to you. All are signs pointing to your passions and therefore gifts.

The World Needs You Well

Contrary to what some may think, self-care is not selfish; it's an act of love for others. Think about it, you can't bless others with your special gifts if you're not physically here on earth! In this way, self-care is essential.

You've heard me talk time and again about the importance of making fruits and vegetables part of your daily meals, so I'll skip that piece of the self-care puzzle and go right to rest.

Sleep is often thought of as a luxury rather than a necessity, but this type of flawed thinking puts you right in the center of a downward health spiral.

Our immune system, heart health, blood sugar regulation, emotional well-being, and brain function all rely on getting adequate rest. It's the single most important thing you can do for your health! Have you ever wondered why it's so

easy to catch a cold around the holidays? That's what happens when we prioritize last-minute shopping over sleep.

Key Takeaway

We all have a statue inside of us just busting at the seams to be revealed, so spend time on the things that fuel your fire this holiday season. Don't forget to make room for some much-needed rest and relaxation, too! And, when you are tempted to slack on sleep in lieu of buying another gift they probably don't need, take that as a sign that you should hit the sack. Give them the gift of a fully-charged you instead.



HEINEN'S WELLNESS DEPARTMENT ESSENTIALS FOR 2026



If you've ever felt overwhelmed upon walking into Heinen's Wellness Department, you are not alone. With so much to choose from, how can you possibly know what's right for you? In eager anticipation of the New Year, I wrote out my shopping list so that I could share it especially with you.

These staple vitamins, superfoods and homeopathy products served me without fail in 2025 and I am confident they will continue to support my health journey in 2026. Perhaps you can glean a bit of inspiration from it to build your own self-care regimen for the coming year!

VITAMIN AND MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS

Energy, immune health, and peaceful sleep are the benefits I enjoy from these six supplements.



- Trace Minerals ConcenTrace:** 40 drops go into the glass of water I guzzle when I get out of bed each morning. ConcenTrace delivers the essential minerals your body may be missing to support optimal energy, a calm mood,

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HEINEN'S WELLNESS DEPARTMENT ESSENTIALS FOR 2026 *continued*

healthy metabolism, and balanced nerve and muscle function.

- **Garden of Life Vitamin Code Raw B-Complex:**

B Vitamins are essential to supply energy and help form red blood cells. It's especially important to get enough Vitamin B12 as we age, since our ability to absorb it decreases due to less stomach acid. That's why I chase two B-Complex capsules with my morning ConcenTrace-infused water.

- **Nutritional Roots Vitamin D3 + K2:**

Vitamin D3 helps with calcium absorption and brings balance to your immune system by protecting your cells from chronic inflammation and invaders like viruses (the cause of colds and flu). Vitamin K2 works synergistically with D3 to direct calcium to the bones and away from the arteries. This supplement is best absorbed when taken with a meal.

- **Heinen's Zinc and Heinen's Quercetin:**

Zinc acts as a guard to inhibit viruses from replicating and quercetin is the natural pigment found in apples and onions that serves as a zinc booster. I take both with my dinner every night. History has proven this combination

works in my body to lessen the severity of colds; sometimes it prevents them altogether!

- **Heinen's Magnesium Glycinate:**

Known as the "relaxation" mineral, magnesium can help support healthy blood pressure, restorative sleep, bone health, and overall mood. For these reasons, I take two capsules about an hour before bed. The glycinate form of magnesium is highly absorbable and well tolerated by most people.

OATMEAL ENHANCERS

I really look forward to my daily bowl of oatmeal! It's fun dressing it up with all sorts of Rx-approved superstars like fresh berries, nuts, and seeds. Some of the more functional ingredients I mix into my oats include:



- **Navitas Goji Berries:**

An ancient superfood, Goji Berries have been used for over 2,000 years to promote vitality and longevity—thanks to their high levels of antioxidants.

- **Heinen's Flaxseeds and Heinen's Chia Seeds:**

These two seeds are worth eating daily because of their

high omega-3 fat content—an essential fat known for its anti-inflammatory properties. If you struggle with high cholesterol, blood sugar imbalance, constipation, or menopausal symptoms, be sure to add a tablespoon or two of ground flax to your oats or smoothie. It can help support your body through all these challenges.

- **Truvani Plant-Based Vanilla, Chocolate or Unflavored Protein Powder:**

To bump up the protein in my oats I whisk in a scoop of protein powder. Truvani is a true winner with its minimal-ingredient list and plant sources of protein (pea, pumpkin seed and chia).

SMOOTHIE BOOSTERS

I consider my daily smoothie to be the most powerful display of "food as medicine" thanks to these functional food powders:



- **Host Defense Reishi Mushroom Powder:**

Called the "Mushroom of Immortality", reishi is well known for supporting overall wellness and vitality, including

cardiovascular health, stress and immune support, and stamina.

- **Heinen's Beet Root Powder:**

Beets are rich in natural nitrates that the body uses to make nitric oxide, a compound known to lower blood pressure and support energy.

- **Heinen's Cacao Powder:**

Cacao is made from the fermented, dried seeds of the Theobroma cacao tree. It's one of the highest sources of magnesium and contains tryptophan to support a healthy and balanced mood.

- **Bare Organics Turmeric Root Powder:**

This inflammation-buster is responsible for boosting joint and brain health.

THERAPEUTIC TEAS

After my morning coffee I enjoy sipping on tea throughout the day for its medicinal and hydration properties.



- **Navitas Organic Matcha Powder:**

A finely ground, whole leaf green tea that contains L-theanine, an amino acid that promotes relaxation and helps relieve stress.

- **Traditional Medicinals Ginger and Chamomile Tea:** These herbs and spices help relieve occasional indigestion or nausea. It's a great tea to turn to when your eyes are bigger than your stomach!
- **Traditional Medicinals Herbal Cold Care or Traditional Medicinals Echinacea + Elderberry:** You never know when a cold will strike, so be prepared with one of these teas.

HOLISTIC IMMUNE SUPPORT

My medicine cabinet is never without these homeopathic remedies to help support my immune system during cold and flu season or whenever I'm feeling rundown.



- **Beekeeper's Propolis Immune Support Throat Spray:** Bees create propolis by combining plant and tree resins with their own enzymes. It combines the immune system of the plant with powerful antioxidant and antimicrobial properties, making it an effective immune-supporting compound for us! Do not use if allergic to bees.

KEY TAKEAWAY

My supplement routine fits my needs, just as yours should fit yours. For one-on-one guidance in selecting supplements that support your health goals, Heinen's certified Wellness Consultants are standing by to help.



Mel's Top PRODUCT Picks

STAY SOCIAL WITHOUT ALCOHOL

If you're looking to put the brakes on alcohol, but wonder how you'll handle social situations, here are three Fx™-approved functional drinks at your local Heinen's to help. The beauty of these mocktails is that they are made with ingredients that support your body's natural stress response, helping you relax without any negative side effects.



- **De Soi Très Rosé Sparkling Non-Alcoholic Apéritif:** Offers key ingredients that soothe stress, sharpen your mind, and calm your mood, including amino acid L-theanine and Lion's mane and reishi mushrooms.
- **Recess Black Cherry Mood:** Sparkling water infused with magnesium and lemon balm to help you unwind.
- **Kin Euphorics Bloom:** A functional beverage made with schisandra, a medicinal berry that helps fight adrenal fatigue and the negative effects of stress. Another key ingredient is ashwagandha, an adaptogenic herb to relieve stress, increase energy levels, and improve concentration.

GRAIN AND VEGGIE STUFFED PEPPERS

The following recipe and photography was provided by Chef Billy Parisi.

Prep time: 14 minutes; Cook time: 28 minutes; Servings: 6



Stuffed peppers are commonly known as a cold weather, belly-warming meal making them perfect for cozy winter weeknight dinners or holiday celebrations! Filled with a light grain and veggie mixture, these stuffed red bell peppers are a fresh and vibrant family-friendly meal that comes together without any hassle.

Ingredients

- 1 package Heinen's cooked brown rice
- 1/2 yellow squash, medium diced
- 1/2 green zucchini, medium diced
- 1/2 cup baby Bella mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 yellow onion, peeled and small diced
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese, plus more for sprinkling
- 2 Tbsp. chopped, fresh basil, plus more for sprinkling
- 2 Tbsp. Heinen's extra virgin olive oil
- 3 red bell peppers, seeded, stemmed and cut in half
- 1 24 oz. jar of Heinen's marinara sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a medium-size bowl, gently mix together the rice, squash, zucchini, mushrooms, onion, 1/2 cup of feta cheese, 2 tablespoons of chopped basil, olive oil, salt, and pepper until completely combined.
3. Evenly stuff each of the halved peppers with the grain and veggie stuffing until full and all of the stuffing has been used. Set aside.
4. Pour the marinara sauce in a 13×9 casserole dish or a large 12" cast iron skillet.
5. Place the peppers evenly in the dish or skillet and sprinkle with additional feta cheese.
6. Bake in the oven at 350°F for 30-35 minutes or until lightly browned and cooked through.
7. Sprinkle with more chopped, fresh basil and serve.

