

VOGUE

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True West

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THE NEW FERTILITY MECCA; LIFE AFTER THE FIRES

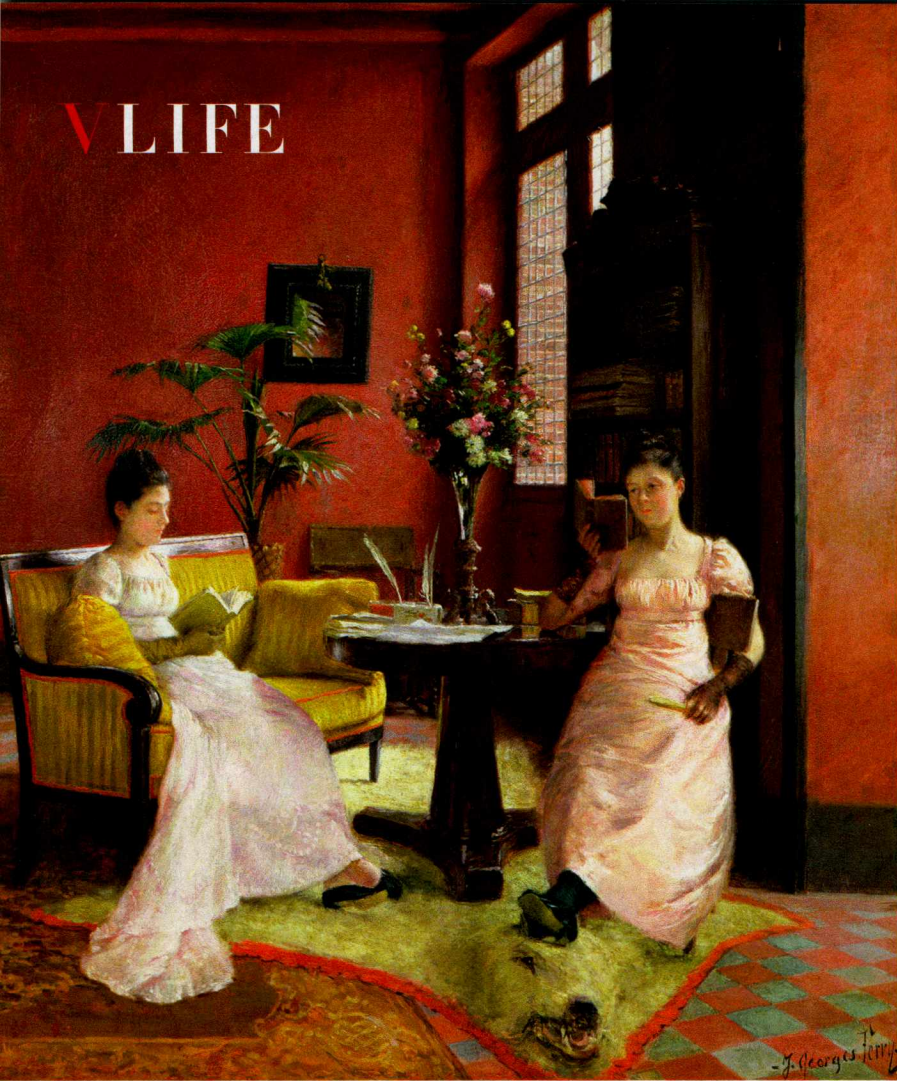
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skim lattes; a daily allotment of wine roughly the size of a shot glass. But inspired by *Persuasion's* claim that “fine wind” can lead to the “the freshness of youth restored,” I’m all but obliged to give it a go for a week.

More commonly known for her puckish characters and satisfying romances, Austen was something of a health-and-happiness guru (notwithstanding her own untimely death at age 41, when she succumbed to a mysterious illness). She spun worlds populated by characters who are “lovely, blooming, healthful,” constantly bustling, gathering information, and putting their charms to use en plein air. Even when trapped indoors, they make a point to move around. “Let me persuade you to follow my example, and take a turn about the room. I assure you it is very refreshing,” Caroline Bingley says in *Pride and Prejudice*. These exercises are “low impact” by today’s HIIT workout standards, but the steps add up.

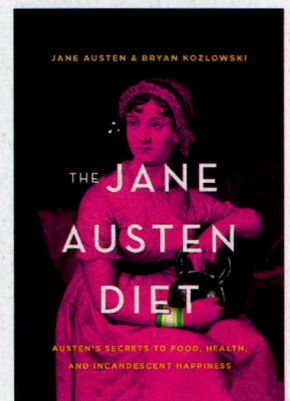
The key to living Janeously, insists Kozlowski—who is not a registered dietitian or nutritionist, just a health nut and card-carrying member of JASNA—is to stick to her daily rhythms. This means popping outside for a walk first thing in the morning, and holding off a couple of hours before sitting down to a simple breakfast of tea and thinly sliced toast (the most carbs I’ll have all day).

I soon find myself staring longingly at my Moccamaster as I fix yet another pot of Earl Grey. Nevertheless, I resist the roasted beet—and-quinoa salad at brunch with friends, and make do with a sausage and knob of Stilton. I take short, intermittent walks everywhere,

clocking in the four to seven miles a day that Kozlowski calculates was de rigueur among Jane’s more able-bodied heroines. While my gym membership lapses, I pay a visit to the local bathhouse, where, in a thrillingly Janeish twist, I witness a fellow bather faint.

Three days in, I’m shocked by how energized I feel; even my skin looks brighter, likely the result of regular steam combined with increased exposure to morning and late-afternoon sun. (Kozlowski cautions against “positively insufferable” midday rays.) My courage falters, however, when I speak with Nicole Lund, R.D.N., who is a registered dietitian and nutritionist with NYU Langone Sports Performance Center. “I wouldn’t say this plan is moderate at all,” Lund says. “It sounds a lot like going paleo,” she continues, referring to the ultra-restrictive elimination diet that is no stroll in the English meadows. Lund tells me she’d be surprised if I don’t drop some weight.

But to be a waif was no virtue in Jane’s world, and while I do end up losing a pound, I’m more moved by the buoyed spirits and rested glow I continue noticing even after I make a swift return to my avocado sushi rolls and Albariño (a proper glass). That’s the thing about self-care founded not on what you’re cutting out but on cutting yourself some slack. It’s just like Jane says: “Nothing ever fatigues me but doing what I do not like.” □



See Jane Walk Leisurely

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the secret to health and happiness is hidden in Jane Austen. Lauren Mechling steps back in time.

HEALTH *Four rounds filet mignon; 1 lb. pork sausage, in casing; loaf of sourdough, unsliced; 1 lb. butter, pasture-fed, 84% butterfat.* As I gather the items on my shopping list, I try not to meet the eyes of the virtuous women in spandex shopping around me. Whatever prejudices one may hold against the food prescribed by a wellness regimen tweely called the Jane Austen Diet—the title of author Bryan Kozlowski’s clever new manifesto (Turner)—no other plan so well suits those of us who can’t abide deprivation.

“It’s really fun,” Kozlowski assures me of the protocol he’s devised by reading between the lines of Austen’s six timeless novels and personal letters, throwing it way back to the early 1800s in search of a simpler, more sensible approach to feeling and looking one’s best. Instead of counting calories while pounding away on a treadmill, the idea is to be present as you move through the world. There are the pros of Kozlowski’s plan—a Regency-era “meat-priority diet” eaten mindfully and communally, peppered with brisk walks (so many walks); and then there are the cons—limited snacks; no Starbucks

NOVEL APPROACH
TOP LEFT: TWO WOMEN READING IN AN INTERIOR, BY JEAN GEORGES FERRIS, C. 19TH CENTURY. ABOVE RIGHT: THE NEW BOOK.