

BY DEVIN ALEXANDER

FOOD INGRID HOFFMANN

Ingrid Hoffmann wants people to eat healthier—and she thinks they can do it without throwing away their favorite foods. She's already published several cookbooks and hosts cooking shows in English and Spanish, focusing on healthful Latin-inspired dishes. Now she wants to help people with diabetes, especially people of Latin American heritage, who are more than 50 percent more likely than whites to have the condition.

Ingrid's upcoming cookbook, *Latin Comfort Foods Made Easy* (releasing in 2018 from the American Diabetes Association), adapts traditional Latin American cuisine to meet the American Diabetes Association's dietary guidelines. The dietary guidelines for diabetes aren't just a way to manage chronic illness—they're "how we should all be eating," she says, "no matter what disease we have or don't have."

When I got a chance to talk with Ingrid, I was thrilled to meet someone who shared some of my own opinions on healthy eating. I know from experience that the best diet is one that you actually enjoy—it's how I was able to lose weight and help many of the contestants on *The Biggest Loser* do the same. That's why Ingrid and I both focus on helping people make healthier versions of the foods they already enjoy. "A lot of the foods that you think people with diabetes can't eat ... we've got to make a few small changes, but you can," Ingrid says.

Ingrid shared with me some of her favorite tricks for making recipes more healthy: "I like adding a lot of zucchini to recipes because they help build bulk," she says. "Their flavor will melt into anything: soups, stews, guacamole." To

reduce the amount of sodium in her recipes, Ingrid reaches for herbs, spices, and garlic before adding salt to a dish.

At a time when diabetes is epidemic, and the Latin American community is particularly hard hit, Ingrid's work is more important than ever. I'm glad to have found another dedicated chef who is showing people with diabetes how to eat healthier without giving up the foods they love.

THE AUTHOR

DEVIN ALEXANDER is the chef for NBC's *The Biggest Loser* and a New York Times bestselling cookbook author. You Can Have It: Decadent, Diabetes-Friendly Recipes Too Good to Believe, her forthcoming cookbook with the American Diabetes Association, will hit bookstores in 2018. She's coached thousands of pounds off others and has maintained her own 70-pound weight loss for close to 30 years. She lives (and eats) her message: You don't have to deprive yourself to be fit and healthy.



Andrew Mead (Hoffmann), Michelle Pederson (Alexander)

Dennis Bateman (Ingrid), Robert MacNeil (Gardner)

NATALIE IRISH



ART

BY SUZANNE GARDNER

As an artist with diabetes myself, I was intrigued by the idea of talking to another artist with type 1. The real thrill came when I discovered what Natalie Irish does. On enormous canvases, she creates portraits of well-known icons, such as Audrey Hepburn, Marilyn Monroe, and David Bowie, using nothing but lipstick and her pucker.

Natalie began her art career using a variety of mediums—charcoal, clay, and paint—but really gained a following when she swapped paint for lipstick and her hands for her lips. Inspired by artists such as Chuck Close, Natalie, 34, has worked hard to create a successful career as an artist while managing the daily ups and downs of living with diabetes for the past 16 years. Her paintings have been sold all over the world, and she was commissioned by Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum to create a lipstick portrait of Kate Middleton on her wedding day.

When we spoke, she explained that, as an artist, she continually aims to provide the community with inspiration as well as awareness. "Type 1 is a very misunderstood disease," she says. "And we will never find a cure if people don't realize how much we need funding for more research.

Insulin is not a cure."

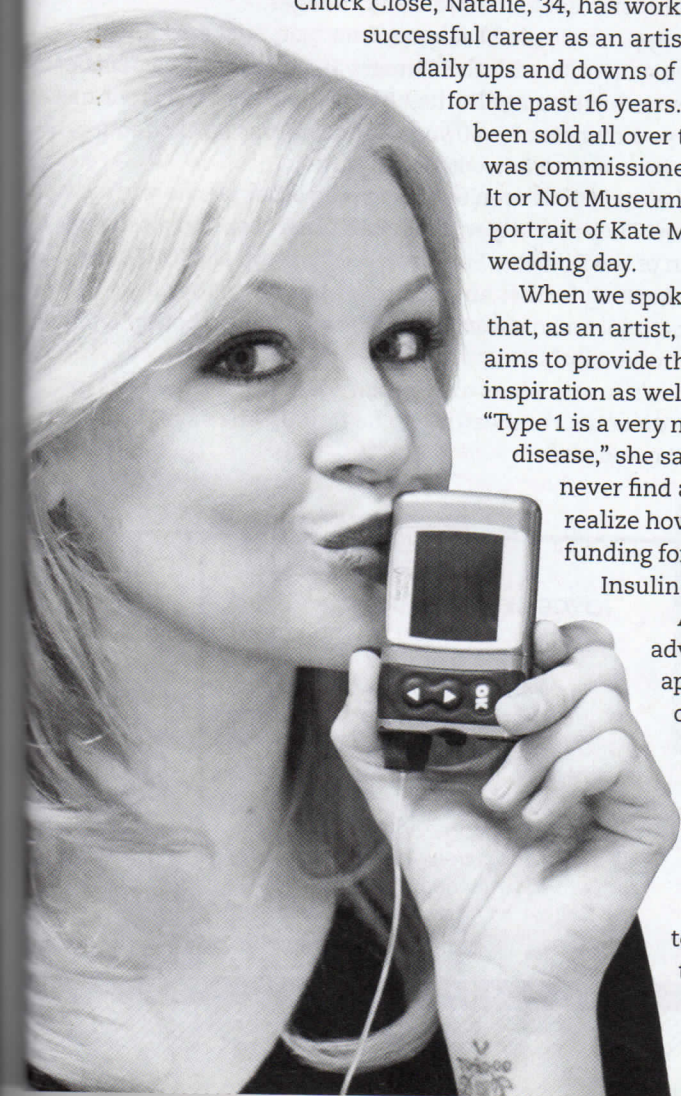
As part of that advocacy effort, Natalie appeared as a guest on *Conan*, where she chatted about her type 1 and why she helps raise money for research through her art. Her goal was to let people know that diabetes doesn't define them. "It

doesn't have to hold you back," she says. "You can do anything, and it's true: I made up my own job!"

After talking to Natalie, I am awed by her incredible creativity. But just as important, I am in awe of her as a person. She is using her art to start a dialogue about type 1 diabetes among those living with it, those who influence the lives of people with diabetes, and the community at large. I want to thank Natalie for being an inspiration to us all, and also for advocating, informing, and educating the public about type 1.

THE AUTHOR

SUZANNE GARDNER is an impressionistic-style painter with type 1 diabetes who is legally blind due to diabetic retinopathy. She uses bold, contrasting colors, which are easier for her to see, and credits her vision loss for helping her to discover a passion for art. For more on Suzanne go to suzannegardner.com.



merican
abetes
ssociation.
OBER 2017