

# Gwyneth's diet diary

Training manager Gwyneth Watson waves goodbye to her excess pounds – and [www.rosmaryconley.com](http://www.rosmaryconley.com) – as she writes her last diary entry

## Winter 2010

Oh ye of little faith! Go on. Admit it. You thought that I would have piled on the weight that I lost by eating Solo Slim® foods, didn't you? I haven't. I haven't lost much more either, but it is amazing how much better you feel even if you have lost only a few pounds. I never have been a person that runs off to buy a belt after 3 days of dieting – fat seems to slide off me gradually, in peculiar places, and then all of a sudden I look much thinner.

## Working that body

With regards to exercise, I am working on toning my body between my bust and waist (otherwise known as my midriff) and then I shall move on to the bit between waist and hips (otherwise known as my fat). I have never been able to master sit-ups without achieving serious neck ache – but better to be a Slim Gwyn than a pain in the neck I say, so I am persevering. This shows serious commitment on my part, as I am relying on the fact that it is the end of massive spider season, during which the floor is strictly a no-go area. "Strictly" is also now firmly back on the telly, and is also good to jig about to.

If I don't manage enough aerobics, I am trying to supplement my exercise regime by wrapping up warm and having a good walk in the fresh air. The dog is getting old now and it's a toss-up who can be bothered the most.

Through kindness to my back and neck, and due to the number of cobbled streets, I am trading in high heels for flats. These are trendy, but I hate cross straps, elastics, Velcro and chunky footwear – give me some nice pointy court shoes any day. I shall follow the advice of "the young ones" experiment, and think young, behave young and dress young – with the proviso that I don't look like mutton dressed as lamb.

## Food is everywhere

I have to report that my work colleagues are behaving atrociously! Now the temperature has dropped, the range of lunch choices has grown to include 12in hot "subs", chips with melted cheese, cream cakes and chocolate. I have had to be very restrained, and my role as team manager does not allow me to dictate what people can stuff in their faces.

Team meetings are a popular choice for cream cakes (can they be that boring?). Fortunately, Dumfries has gained a "smoothie shop", and if I buy one of those and a banana, I feel virtuous and healthy. At least we are now into baked potato weather, but I have seen them served with macaroni cheese, too.

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A European market appeared in the High Street, and I gave myself big congratulations for running the gamut of sweetie stalls to emerge triumphant from Boots with a Caesar salad. I even stopped to photograph the "treats I am not going to eat", and made sure everyone in the office knew how good I had been. Those who do not have a weight problem must think me totally pathetic. A director brought me up to date on marketing via web-blog and pages on Facebook and Twitter. No, I don't want anyone following me about, though a tweet on the hour every hour saying, "Don't eat", would probably work.

## A little trip to Wales

I had five lovely relaxing days with Graham and friends in Cardiff. They had shopped and cooked a variety of sumptuous goodies – Moroccan tagine, home-made ice cream, salmon, cod and haddock fish pie, pear and almond flan ... it made the provision of WeightWatchers cream quite superfluous!

We decided, on the spur of the moment, that we were too young to be in for the night at 6pm, and took ourselves off for a walk on the headland at Barry Island. Fresh air, sea and beach, good company and exercise. Unfortunately this was before we had eaten, and we strayed into Big Dave's chippy (which is frequented by TV's Gavin and Stacey, apparently). Chips were cooked "the old-fashioned way" – eg hand cut and deep fried – and were delicious eaten in the open air, straight out of the newspaper. At least I hijacked Graham's portion and didn't get my own. This was "topped up" by a bowl of soup later on.

I spent 4 hours alone in a shopping extravaganza, and only sat down long enough to eat a baked potato with salad (see, I do eat sensibly sometimes), so I must have burnt off several hundred calories walking about. We also walked around Cardiff Bay and the Welsh Heritage Village.

En route to Scotland we stopped at Sainsbury's for refreshment and food shopping. Sainsbury's is another shop not represented in our neck of the woods, and a chance to have different food choices. While in the restaurant, a lady, bearing a tray laden with cake slices, offered us free cake. I said "No" of course. That has never happened to me in my life, and was a bittersweet experience, as I was already working my way through a (bought) slice of Victoria sponge and cappuccino, as I knew I had to revert back to "good" mode as soon as I walked through the front door!

For once, Graham had caught the bug, and was tucking into a wedge of lemon meringue, too. Serves me right. Apparently, the shop was closing for a week for refurbishment, and they were literally clearing the shelves.

I put on 1.5lb over 5 days, but felt confident and motivated enough to snap back into my newly discovered joy of chocolate Weetabix with hot, skimmed milk, soup for lunches and sensible teas.

We are currently working our way through an abundance of produce from the garden, so there's no excuse for not eating healthily.

Today we enjoyed a baked bean cottage pie (recipe featured in the last magazine), and had to quickly put half in the freezer before we were tempted back for seconds. I was going to stuff mince into a marrow from the

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polytunnel, but apparently the mice had a banquet while we were away, and trying to stuff a courgette is nowhere near as satisfying.

## The way ahead

The nights are drawing in, and I am back to travelling home from work viewing the road through headlights, and closing the curtains since we have no street lights and only the sound of mooing from the fields tells us where the animals are.

I am adamant that I am not reverting to a winter of being slumped in front of the television. Even if I am not actively following formal exercise, I am going to do something every evening that does not warrant sitting on my backside from 7pm-10pm.

Normally, by now, I have a Christmas cupboard full of treats (ie nothing remotely healthy). There's usually a Christmas pudding, cake(s), half of Lidl's European chocolate and gingerbread range and token packets of nuts and crisps, which often end up slung in the bin. As I fly out to Thailand on Boxing Day, I find that I couldn't care less!

I shall make Rosemary's low-fat Christmas pudding (which was a huge success in our house last year) and buy a small slab of cake. Son James will have chocolate in his stocking and Graham seemingly survives on Marmite. I am sure that neither of them will starve while I am away.

So, that has removed the agony of Christmas food shopping. The presents have already been bought, as we had a November trip to Northampton for Mother's 80th birthday and I refused to travel up and down the M6 any more this year. That was another weekend of indulgence.

I was chief waitress at a tea party for friends. I ordered vintage floral cake boxes on the basis that guests could take away some birthday cake. I'm useless at millimetres, and when said boxes arrived, they were pushing portion control to "having a laugh" limits. I handed them over to big sister, who had the task of cutting impossibly dainty slices.

Following the afternoon function, we had a family DIY bangers and sparklers food celebration, and Sunday roast lunch after church. I'm still here, and while still not thin (what a surprise), I am not piling weight back on either. I feel in control.

## Festive minefield

Now, I have only to negotiate the minefield of "thank-you" tins of chocolates from students, birthday cakes, team-meeting cakes, fat-Friday cakes, and food presents from being away on the run-up to Christmas.

A new member of staff loves baking, and promises us home-made truffles and mince pies. Even the bank had dishes of Quality Street at each till to promote Customer Care Week. I would care a sight more if they gave me some interest on my account and not fat on my stomach!

I am going to lay out my holiday clothes on the spare bed, and when temptation looms, I shall run in and try on my linen trousers.

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If I'm really desperate I shall make myself wear my swimsuit. I have had my vaccinations, bought flashy costume jewellery, refreshed my make-up with glow-dust and bright pink lipstick and bought blingy flip-flops. I DO NOT intend to take excess baggage in the form of FAT.

I now weigh 12st 5lb. I am sure my future daughter-in-law will be only 8st at most, but I don't pretend to compare with the young and beautiful. Wouldn't it be nice to be 11st something (anything) before jetting away? "Don't procrastinate – lose some weight."

As I move into the joys of becoming a mother-in-Law and grandmother to twins (different son), I know that I am not body perfect, but I am healthy, and, thanks to Rosemary, I do have the tools to improve. I may not be the best role model for a diet and fitness organisation, but I am a huge fan, and tell everyone else what to do!

I have loved writing to you all, but it is time to move on to other ventures. Who knows, I may be brave enough to join you for chats in the rosemaryconleyonline coffee shop.

Sincere thanks to those who have believed in me, and especially, always to Rosemary.

## Weight lost to date : 2st 2lb

## Gwyneth now weighs 12st 5lb

### High points

- My diabetes is still diet-controlled after 16 years, so I can't be all bad.
- I'm 53 and still not wrinkly.
- I feel in control of food, not controlled by it.

### Low points

- Squatting for the bottom drawer of the filing cabinet and willing my knees to get me back up.
- Knowing that, however many stone I may lose, half the Thai population will be thinner, and I shall look huge in the wedding photos.

### What I have learned this month

- Rosemary's regime is my "stabiliser" – it stops me from going totally off the rails.
- Just because food is everywhere, I don't have to eat it.

### The last word from Rosemary

I am sad to see Gwyneth go. So many readers over the years have related to, laughed and cried with Gwyneth, as she epitomised the challenges and temptations dieters face every day.

Thank you, Gwyneth, for making us laugh. We will miss you!