

100 DAYS

By Lisa Leake

Refining & Redefining Food

ONE LOCAL FAMILY IS
PLEDGING TO FOREGO
ALL PROCESSED FOODS
FOR 100 DAYS.

Earlier this year, our family ate just like most other Charlotte-area families. We tried to stockpile big grocery store coupons, we bought lots of pre-packaged convenience foods (think cereal, crackers, and fruit snacks), and we ate fast food on occasion. Then came an Oprah show that changed our lives. Guest and author Michael Pollan talked about where your food comes from and I was intrigued, to say the least. Not exactly sure of what I was getting myself into, I decided to read Pollan's book, *In Defense of Food*. As it turns out, Pollan doesn't even think that a lot of the so-called processed "foods" we buy from the grocery store even deserve to be called "food." He calls them "food-like substances" and dedicates his entire book to explaining why we should think again before eating them.

After finishing the book, we started making a lot of changes. Our initial transition to cut out 80% to 90% of processed foods was very difficult but got much easier over time. I started blogging about what my family was doing and also included tips on how others could join us. After a few months of blogging, I decided it was time to do something big, something bold, and something that would get as many people as possible to not only read about eating real foods, but to also make a first-hand commitment to this important change. We launched our website, 100daysofrealfood.com, and made an oath to do just that.

Our thought was that if our family of four (we do not live on a farm and we have two young children and a husband who travels frequently) can go 100 days without a single ounce of highly processed food, then maybe we could convince others to do the same for only 10 days. We aren't suggesting that people never eat a single processed food ever again (moderation is always key), but our hope is that if people go without these foods for 10 days then they will have an eye-opening experience that will lead to some positive long-term changes.

