

Hight shares ways to eat like an Olympian

By Lisa Costantini, TeamUSA

October was Breast Cancer Awareness month, but every month snowboarder Elena Hight promotes awareness for the disease that one in eight women will be diagnosed with.

Last year, the two-time winter Olympian and halfpipe specialist became an ambassador for Boarding For Breast Cancer, a youth-focused breast cancer education and prevention foundation.

“I haven’t personally been affected by breast cancer but I know a lot of friends who have been, and in the sports world in general. B4BC really focuses on how a healthy lifestyle can help prevent cancer and breast cancer, and I’m really connected with that portion of the message,” the South Lake Tahoe resident who rides for Northstar said.



Elena Hight hopes to represent Lake Tahoe in the 2014 Winter Olympics.

The last Tuesday of every month the food lover is the featured guest chef in a segment called “Tasty Tuesday” on B4BC’s blog. It is where the foundation gives readers recipes and ideas for

healthy eating. Hight has shared her personal recipes for everything from stuffed peppers to vegan cookies, and said she got involved because “I am a huge fan of cooking, and cooking with local organic healthy ingredients.”

It was thanks to the 24-year-old’s busy travel schedule – which has had her circling the globe on the professional snowboard circuit since she was 14 – that she was able to see so much of the world, causing her to become “inspired by the different cultures and how food is a part of every culture. “Now,” she said, “cooking is a huge part of my life.”

She recalled being around 16 years old when she first started experimenting in the kitchen – trying to recreate some of the things that she found on the road that she couldn’t find when she got home. Cooking, she said, is “one of the best things that I have on the road to make me feel like I’m at home, no matter where I am. And I definitely use it kind of meditative. It takes me out of snowboarding and gives me something else to focus on during the season.”

But don’t think that means that snowboarding is not her number one priority. “My main goal moving forward is to win a medal from Sochi.”

To prove it she spent the summer on snow – including a month in New Zealand – preparing to get her snowboarding to a place she was happy with. And now that fall has arrived, she plans to spend a lot of time in the gym: strength training, conditioning, doing a lot of yoga – and just trying to be as strong as she can before the season starts. But for Hight, building strength doesn’t always equal time in the gym.

“I try to mix things up. Because even though the gym can be a great tool, it can also be very stale.”

She admitted that working out has not always been in her wheelhouse. “When I first got into snowboarding, there wasn’t a dry land training side of it.” Instead, she said, they spent

their time snowboarding and playing other sports.

“But over the last five years, the progression has gotten so much higher – and the tricks that we’re doing have so much more risk that we really have to be at the top of our game,” Hight said. “So, now, getting into the gym and really making the most of that side of it has become a huge part of my snowboarding.”

And even though she has come to like the gym, she said she enjoys finding new and exciting things to do.

“I obviously do a lot of strength training, but I love doing classes, spin classes. I’m a huge yoga fan. I’ve gotten into mountain biking this year. Surfing. Just trying to make a workout out of everything and anything,” she said.

All of that, she said is helping her feel more prepared for her third Winter Games. “I learned a lot at both Torino and Vancouver, and I feel like it’s going to benefit me going into this season; just knowing how the qualifying works and what to expect once I get to the Olympics.”

Having been twice before she knows “there is no other stage like the Olympic venue. So there’s no way to prepare for it unless you’ve been there. And I definitely think that’s going to be an advantage for me.”

In the past, one of her advantages has been her ability to be the first when it comes to her sports progression. She was the first female to land a 900 in competition (and she did it at only 13 years old). And earlier this year, she made history by becoming the first to land a double backside alley-oop rodeo in competition – something she said she continues to work on so she can land it every time at contests.

“As far as tricks right now, I’m just working on getting bigger amplitude and being very consistent going into the season – cleaning up the runs that I already have,” she said.

Another first she could see adding to her resume: the first snowboarder with a cookbook? “That would be amazing!”

But she said there is one thing you won’t see in it. “I am a pretty experimental eater, but the only food that I absolutely cannot handle are oysters.”

We asked Hight to share one of her favorite – oyster-free – recipes with us, a kale lentil salad. She said salads are a great go-to on the road because they keep you from reaching for heavier foods.

“Airport eating is tough, so I always carry snacks with me: a fresh piece of fruit, a good granola bar or even protein powder.”

Here is what you’ll need to make your own Hight approved meal.

Elena Hight’s Kale Lentil Salad

Everyone has his or her diet staples – their go-to recipe that is simple and easy to throw together because you have made it so many times that you don’t even need to think about it. This salad is one of my staple lunches. It is chock-full of goodness from super food ingredients that fill me up and keep me going through the day. It is very quick to throw together and delicious, so there is no reason to not enjoy a healthy lunch no matter how many things I am trying to fit into my day.

Salad:

A handful of kale (I like curly red kale but any kale will work)

$\frac{1}{2}$ inch slice red onion

$\frac{1}{2}$ red bell pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ avocado

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sprouted lentils

4-6 walnuts chopped

Apple Cider Dressing:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sesame oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup apple cider vinegar

1 T mustard

$1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp honey

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon

1 tsp cumin

A pinch cayenne pepper

Boil $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sprouted lentils in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water. I like to use sprouted lentils for a few reasons, but please note: they cook extremely fast! Just 4-6 minutes and they will be done. While the lentils are cooking, chop your vegetables and walnuts and plate. Strain lentils and add to your salad plate.

To make the dressing, thoroughly mix all ingredients in a jar. Drizzle desired amount over salad and save the remainder.