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SINCERE FUN

a clickbait protein shake:
a nourishing multi-domain recipe by common
accounts

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Madrid Smartclub Immersive Cycling Studio. Pedro Pegenaute for Foodscapes.

Protein powder: A nutrition technology—with *manifold applications*—to actualize one’s own desires. Self-design aspires to an image: an idea to materialize. It requires a means, too, and for many, protein has become a principal agent toward the realization of the self. Studies indicate that 60 percent of North Americans actively seek to consume more protein today. The consumption of whey protein powder is increasingly driven by an awareness of the online and the dissemination of one’s own image in both virtual and IRL fora as projections of selfhood. Invoking notions of health and nutrition, the whey protein industry has stepped in largely to streamline our metabolic absorption of the nutrient environment for these and other ends. Protein deficiencies in the west, where growth in consumption has been steep, are extremely rare. Industry expansion has been made possible through the deliberate cultivation of appetite not for protein powder itself, but for its perceived physiological benefits. Muscle has become a site of intensification for the proteins that landscapes, factories, and desires yield, and in turn, they become synthetic as well. The agricultural landscapes that the dairy industry structures to yield herd feed, raise cows, and extract milk exhibit symmetries with the human bodies that they transform. Each site—the territorial and the anatomical—has its constitutive regimens and diets, their built-up stores of nutrient rations, their furrowed channels, and sculptural topographies, and demonstrates an intensification driven by the notion of becoming and self-fulfilment. Soil, stomachs, farms, and fitness studios are stations for the bio-amplification of proteins in an atomized, multi-domain supply chain driven by self-design.

To be consumed

i) a protein shake, ii) protein YouTube content

Instruments Required

A blender, athletic-coded sealable vessels, metal straws if the vessel does not have an incorporated spout or mouthpiece, and a television or laptop with WIFI connection and browser loaded to YouTube.

Recipe for protein shake

Go to a store that sells protein powder and identify a 100% whey-based powder in a canister of heroic proportions. The brand name should convey a sense of imminence, like Surge, or Drive, or Swell. The typeface must transmit ENERGY. The flavour should be vanilla or vanilla adjacent (like birthday cake, or vanilla-ice-cream coffee). Without prior experience with a particular powder, it is impossible to correlate flavour quality to the canister’s external presentation. A number of other ingredients in the shake will hedge against unfortunate tasting powders.

For each shake: In a blender, add one scoop (approx. 1/3 cup) of protein powder to 150mL of water and 100mL of unsweetened oat, pea, or coconut milk. Add ½ cup of frozen blueberries, and a small handful of raspberries.

Add 1/3 cup of frozen pineapple for its anti-inflammatory properties. Add half a banana and a tablespoon of WOW Butter peanut butter substitute. Blend until the shake’s constituents have homogenized in colour and appearance. Decant into a re-sealable vessel and keep cool until consumed.

Recipe for protein YouTube content

In the search bar on the YouTube homepage, enter text as follows: “Protein Powder” + “[An adjective or expression denoting deliciousness]” + “[An everyday location or space]”

For instance, “Protein Powder Yummy Bedroom” or “Protein Powder Tasty Gym.” Ignore the sponsored results at the top and scroll down to select a video that catches your eye. Your selection may be a ranking of sports nutrition brands, an informational video on natural proteins, or a recipe for protein-rich foods. Play one with the volume muted and consume your shake within viewing range of the video. Allow the video to transition automatically to the next, and the next, until your shake is consumed, at which point you may pause the video and close the browser window.

Opposite image: Miles Gertler, “a clickbait protein shake”, images presented at “Brown Bags” exhibition and event at Architecture 2 Gallery in Winnipeg, Canada, on March 18, 2024.

