



Coconut, the Soul Food of the Tropics

Coconut at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipes

The coconut palm rates higher than the family cow to one third of the world's population. You can probably guess these people live in the tropical countries where the coconut tree is intertwined with life itself, from the food they eat to the beverages they drink. Household utensils, baskets, cooking oil, furniture, and cosmetics all come from the coconut tree. On the other hand, the uses of the family cow pale by comparison.

Like a message in a bottle floating across vast oceans, the coconut, drifting along like a buoyant little ship, was a great traveler riding the waves that carried it ashore in Southeast Asia, Polynesia, India, the Pacific Islands, Hawaii, South America, and Florida. Self-contained hardy souls, many coconuts actually began to sprout during their long ocean voyage. When they found fertile soil in the tropical countries where they washed ashore, they took root and began to grow.

History

Some historians surmise that many of the tropical regions where coconuts presently grow received their first coconut trees via the sea. Others believe the coconuts were brought to the different regions of the tropics by explorers and sea travelers. Today coconut cultivation encircles the globe between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.

Exactly where coconuts originated is not known for sure, but many historians believe Malaysia and Indonesia grew the world's first coconuts. Conjecture is that early sea travelers of the East Indies carried coconuts with them for nourishment as well as to trade for other commodities.



Early Sanskrit writings reveal that the people of India were using coconuts as a staple for food and various everyday needs. In India the coconut palm was known as *kalpa vriksha*, which translates as "tree that gives all that is necessary for living."

Historians of Zanzibar question whether coconuts are indigenous to East Africa. Based on the fact that similar varieties grow in Southeast Africa and Madagascar, they speculate the coconut did indeed originate in East Africa. An alternative theory is that either seamen from Malaysia brought the coconuts to East Africa during the early centuries CE or Arabian sea travelers who traded crops brought the coconuts from India about 3,000 years ago.

Coconuts made a strong impression on Venetian explorer Marco Polo, 1254 to 1324 CE, when he encountered them in Sumatra, India, and the Nicobar Islands, calling them "Pharoah's nut." The reference to the Egyptian ruler indicated Polo was aware that during the 6th century Arab merchants brought coconuts back to Egypt probably from East Africa where the nuts were flourishing.

Zanzibar historians note that Arab traders carried coconut shells, known as *Nux Indica*, to England before Portuguese sailors reached East Africa. Arab sea travelers discovered profitable goods like cowrie shells and coconut products in the Maldives, islands just southeast of Sri Lanka. There, possibly during the 14th century, they also engaged the Maldives, who were highly regarded for their shipbuilding skills, to build vessels which they did entirely out of products of the coconut tree including the hulls, masts, ropes, caulking, bailers, and even sails.

Had it not been for the curiosity of Antonio Pigafetta, a nobleman from Venice who decided to explore the world as a tourist, Ferdinand Magellan's voyage from Spain in 1519 might have gone unrecorded. Pigafetta boarded one of Magellan's five ships and kept a daily journal of his captain's effort to find a western route to the Spice Islands.

Magellan encountered a host of troubles, mainly scurvy and starvation. A last resort decision to go ashore when they spotted the island of Guam brought them more troubles. Unfriendly natives wearing coconut shell masks and shaking coconut shell rattles with human bone handles greeted them on the shore. Magellan was able to negotiate and came away with provisions and a good supply of coconuts.

Pigafetta wrote, "Coconuts are the fruit of the palm trees. And as we have bread, wine, oil, and vinegar, so they get all these things from the said trees. . . With two of these palm trees a whole family of ten can sustain itself. . . They last for a hundred years."

Not long after Magellan's voyage, Sir Francis Drake journeyed from England to the Cape Verde Islands off Africa's West Coast in 1577. He, too, was impressed with coconuts and wrote, "Amongst other things we found here a kind of fruit called Cocos, which because it is not commonly known with us in England, I thought good to make some description of it."

Though the accounts of many explorers mention coconuts, the nuts remained unknown outside their tropical habitats until 1831 when J.W. Bennett, an Englishman, wrote *A Treatise on the*

Coco-nut Tree and the Many Valuable Properties Possessed by the Splendid Palm. Revelations such as applying charcoal from the shell as a tooth cleanser, removing wrinkles with coconut water, and using the root for medicinal purposes spurred European interest in the nut.

Since sugar was becoming plentiful on the continent, the candy and pastry business blossomed. All sorts of fruits and nuts were incorporated into confections, making coconut meat a desirable product. Soon tea and spice traders were shipping whole coconuts to London, an operation that proved impractical and expensive.

A French company, J.H. Vavasour and Company, set up operations in Ceylon with a unique solution for shipping coconuts to Europe. They shredded the coconut meat and dried it thoroughly, making it easier to pack without spoilage. By the early 1890's they were shipping six thousand tons of desiccated coconut, a figure that multiplied by ten in 1900.

While Europeans were going nuts over coconuts, interest in the United States hardly produced a nod until 1895 when Franklin Baker, a Philadelphia flour miller, received a shipload of coconuts in payment of a debt from a Cuban businessman. After a few unsuccessful attempts to sell the enormous cargo before the nuts spoiled, he made a decision that put coconuts into the hands of home cooks, commercial confectioners, and pastry chefs alike. He set up a factory for shredding and drying the coconut meat.

By the early 1900's, coconut cream pie and coconut custard were the rage. Coconut frosting topped all sorts of cakes, while grated coconut added its distinct aroma and flavor to cookies and confections.

Today, coconut plantations in Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines provide export income to these regions. The United States has imported its coconuts mainly from the Philippines since 1898 when the islands became a U.S. possession at the end of the Spanish-American War.

Zanzibar, an island off the East coast of Africa, depended on coconuts for food and as a cash crop for centuries. Natives used twisted cord made from the coconut husk to stitch together the hulls of boats that sailed the Indian Ocean.

From past centuries to the present, the nuts are considered survival food, sustaining communities after major tropical storms destroy the rice paddies or cornfields. Before 1950, about 60 percent of the coconuts were shipped to the United States to be shredded and dried. After that time the coconut producing countries shipped the coconut meat already grated and dried.

Coconuts come to market in two major stages of maturity. Young coconuts are prized for their sweet, revitalizing juice. The meat of the young coconut, which is very thin, soft, and delicately sweet, is gaining interest among innovative raw foodists who turn it into imitation noodles and other delicacies.

The mature coconut is valued for its thick, firm meat used world wide in shredded or grated form, often for baked goods. Coconut in its mature stage has a rich,



nutty flavor and chewy texture with a higher oil content than young coconut. Coconut milk, coconut cream, and coconut oil all come from mature coconuts.

The Coconut Gets its Name

Spanish and Portuguese explorers were taken by the three little eyes at the base of the coconut's inner shell that reminded them of a goblin or grinning face, and named them *coco*, the word for goblin. Some have translated the word *coco* to mean monkey face.

Published in 1755, Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* spelled the fruit cocoanut. Many people thought Johnson had confused the nuts with the cacao beans, later called cocoa, when chocolate was introduced into England. Eventually, the "a" was left out. Sometimes it was spelled with a hyphen--coco-nut.

Coconuts' Many Uses

Considered the most useful tree in the world, the coconut palm provides food, drink, clothing, shelter, heirloom history, and financial security. Hardly an inch of the coconut palm goes to waste in countries such as the Philippines where families rely on the coconut palm for survival and refer to it as the "tree of life." The Indonesians say, "There are as many uses for the coconut as there are days in the year."

The coconut meat, the white portion of the nut, offers more than just sustenance. The coconut is considered a highly nutritious food. The white meat also contains coconut oil the tropical natives use for cooking.

The shell, husk, roots of the tree, fronds, flowers, and wood of the trunk also become useful products. Charcoal filters used in gas masks and cigarettes are made from coconut shells that are burned, leaving pure carbon behind. Charcoal has the ability to trap microscopic particles and impurities and prevent absorption. Charcoal made from coconut shells produces filters of exceptional high performance.

One third of the coconut's make-up is the hairy husk that is soaked in salt water until it is soft enough to spin into rope or twine that is known for its durability. The rope, called *coir* but pronounced coil, is highly resistant to salt water and does not break down like other fibers including hemp.

The coconut husk has household practicality in tropical countries where coconuts are part of almost everyday cuisine. The husk provides fuel for cooking as well as fiber for making clothing.

Coir is also used to make mats. Another byproduct of the coconut husk is coir dust used in making fertilizer and plastic-board insulating material.

Travelers to tropical countries find a host of native crafts woven from the fronds of the coconut palm into hats, baskets, fans, brooms, little animals, belts, and chairs. In the past natives even wove the roof thatch of their homes from coconut palm leaves. Coconut tree roots were also put to practical use by boiling them down to create a dye.

In Zanzibar, coconut oil provides diesel fuel and is also used for lighting and candle making. Coconut shells are made into buttons, form a base for decorative carvings, and are burned for fuel.

Indonesian women use coconut oil as hairdressing and as a lotion for the body. They also cook

with coconut oil.

Coconut oil has proved itself useful in many household products. Soap made from coconut oil lathers exceptionally well. Soapmaking produces byproducts that are used by processors to make fatty acids and glycerine.

Coconut oil is often included in shampoo recipes as well as shaving creams for its excellent moisturizing ability as well as its ability to produce abundant lather. The cosmetic industry incorporates coconut oil in the manufacture of lipstick, suntan lotion, and moisture creams.

The coconut shell serves as a bowl or cup and can be carved into other household items such as spoons, forks, combs, needles, and handles for tools.

Finally, when the tree is no longer producing coconuts, it can be cut down and its attractive wood, called "porcupine wood" can be used to make furniture.

Folklore and Oddities

From fertility taboos to unseen magical forces, fascinating folklore practices revolving around the coconut have evolved throughout the tropical regions .

Until the early 1900's, a whole coconut was the accepted form of currency in the Nicobar Islands, just north of Sumatra in the Indian Ocean. In the South Pacific, pieces of coconut shell carved into coin-like spheres served as currency.



In Northern India, coconuts were valued as fertility symbols. When a woman wanted to conceive, she would go to a priest to receive her special coconut.

Samoans believe that a coconut lying on the ground is not free for the taking but that it belongs to someone who knows it is there. If you should claim the taboo coconut when no one is looking, the tapui, a magical spirit, will taunt you. This unseen force may strike you by lightening or punish you with a painful, incurable illness.

The first solid food eaten by a Thai baby is three spoonfuls of the custard-like flesh of young coconut fed to him or her

by a Buddhist priest.

Natives of New Guinea have their own version of the coconut's origins. They believed that when the first man died on the island, a coconut palm sprouted from his head.

In Bali, women are forbidden to even touch the coconut tree. Because females and coconut trees both share the ability to reproduce, men fear that a woman's touch may drain the fertility of the coconut tree into her own fertility.

Health Benefits

Indigenous people of tropical countries relied on natural plants for their medicine. Young coconut juice is literally a well-supplied medicine chest that comes in its own container and is used in folk healing for a number of ailments: relieving fevers, headaches, stomach upsets, diarrhea and

dysentery. The juice is also given to strengthen the heart and restore energy to the ill. Pregnant women in the tropics eagerly drink large quantities of young coconut juice because they believe it will give their babies strength and vitality

Water from a young coconut not only provided a refreshing drink in the steamy equatorial countries, but in times of medical emergency it was used as a substitute for glucose. During World War II young coconut water became the emergency room glucose supply when there was no other sterile glucose available. Within a clean self-contained vessel, the coconut water is free of impurities and contains about two tablespoons of sugar.

Jon J. Kabara, Ph.D, Professor Emeritus from Michigan State University, writes, "Never before in the history of man is it so important to emphasize the value of lauric oils. The medium-chain fats in coconut oil are similar to fats in mother's milk and have similar nutraceutical effects."

Coconuts and their edible products, such as coconut oil and coconut milk, have suffered from the repeated misinformation because of a study conducted in the 1950's that used hydrogenated coconut oil. Though coconut oil is very high in saturated fat, namely 87 percent saturated, in its unrefined, virgin state, it is actually beneficial, largely because of its high content of lauric acid, almost 50 percent.

Because lauric acid has potent anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties, recent studies have considered coconut oil as a possible method of lowering viral levels in HIV-AIDS patients. The lauric acid may also be effective in fighting yeast, fungi, and other viruses such as measles, Herpes simplex, influenza and cytomegalovirus.

Because the short-and medium-chain fatty acids of extra virgin coconut oil and coconut milk are easily and quickly assimilated by the body, they are not stored as fat in the body like the long chain triglycerides of animal products. Studies have shown that populations in Polynesia and Sri Lanka, where coconuts are a diet staple, do not suffer from high serum cholesterol or high rates of heart disease.

Extra virgin coconut oil used in a study conducted in the Yucatan showed that those who used the coconut oil on a daily basis had a higher metabolic rate. Though they regularly consumed considerable quantities of the saturated fat, the participants retained a lean body mass. Another facet of the Yucatan study noted that the women participants did not suffer the typical symptoms of menopause.

Coconut Processing

After harvesting the nuts and removing the coconut water, workers shell the nuts by hand. The inner skin, a thin brown layer, is cut away leaving pure white balls of coconut meat. The coconut ball is cut open, then washed and pasteurized.

Next it enters a shredding machine that has adjustments for creating different size shreds for different customer needs. A confectioner may prefer a finer or shorter shred than a baker.

Hot-air ovens or kilns dry the shredded coconut meat that is then packaged into large sacks. When the coconut is finally packaged for retail sale, some moisture is added along with sugar and propylene glycol, a mold retardant.

Coconut Cuisine

Ambrosia, a Christmas dinner dessert made by layering sliced oranges, sugar, and grated coconut in a glass bowl, was a Southern dish with origins during the plantation era. Hawaiian-style Ambrosia combines pineapple, honey, and coconut layered in a glass bowl.

Coconut palm sap, known as "toddy," is fermented to make a clear, white, sweet wine called *tuba*, pronounced tu-BAH in the Philippines. To collect the sap, workers climb the tree morning and evening and bruise the coconut flowering stalk that starts to ooze sap. The liquid actually begins to ferment while still on the tree, but the alcohol content increases considerably with longer fermentation of the toddy.

Arrack, a strong coconut liquor, is the result of further fermentation and distillation of the toddy. By double distilling toddy, farmers can create even stronger spirits like gin and rum. Coconut vinegar is another product made by distilling the toddy. By boiling the sap down to evaporate the liquid, the farmer creates two more valued products: coconut syrup and coconut palm sugar. Products of the coconut tree, such as tuba, arrack, vinegar, syrup, and sugar, provide a living for local farmers. Sadly, though, few of the items reach world markets.

Hearts of palm, cylindrical stalks from new, unopened leaf shoots at the top of the coconut tree, are eaten fresh in tropical countries. Added to salads, they are sliced to provide a crunchy snap and contrasting creamy white color to the bowl of greens. Hearts of palm are also marinated in lemony brine, canned, and sold at supermarkets, Asian markets, and gourmet groceries in many countries. In Zanzibar the heart of the palm is used in a salad called "millionaire's salad."

Sweetened coconut milk is a featured ingredient in the refreshing tropical cocktail Pina Colada that also contains pineapple juice and rum. Throughout the Pacific islands, beverages made from coconut milk and pineapple, or other fruits such as mango and papaya, are combined in numerous ways to cool and refresh.

Spicy coconut chutneys are a favorite meal accompaniment to a South Indian dinner.

In the Philippines *buko*, a pie made from young coconut, or *makapuno*, the pie using mature coconut, is a special dessert treat. The *buko* has a smooth, creamy texture, while *makapuno* pie, made from grated coconut, has a chewy texture and rich flavor.

Coconut milk lends its richness to many curries served throughout Southeast Asia. Thai cooks prepare green, red, and yellow curries that each contain a hearty base of coconut milk.

Coconut Oil

Coconut oil, one of the oldest recorded sources of vegetable oil, is still used for cooking in many of the tropical regions where coconuts grow. Once a highly valued, worldwide commodity for cooking, coconut oil was replaced by soybean, peanut, and cottonseed oils. More recently the oil is gaining recognition in the U.S. and Europe for its health benefits.

The production of pure virgin coconut oil and refined coconut oil are two distinctly different processes.

Refined Coconut Oil: Production of coconut oil begins with copra, pronounced KOP-ruh, made by kiln drying or sun drying of the coconut meat to a moisture level of 3.5 percent from its original 50

percent. After crushing and grinding the coconut meat, the producers make a coconut milk by pouring boiling water over the coconut and kneading the grated coconut to extract as much liquid as possible from the meat.

Next, the milk is strained off and boiled gently for a long time to evaporate the liquid, leaving only the oil behind. Copra has an oil content that ranges from 50 to 70 percent. Always with their eye on the bottom line, producers develop ways to get the most from the raw material. Some boil the copra first to extract more oil, and some use solvents. Even the copra left behind, called coco meal or coco cake, becomes useful as high-protein animal food.

Filtering is the next step to remove impurities and particles, followed by several hours of boiling to eliminate an unsavory odor. A second filtering process, and sometimes an added bleaching agent, creates a coconut oil that is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. However, fearing the colorless oil will not appeal to customers, many processors add food coloring.

Pure Virgin Coconut Oil: Extracting virgin coconut oil is an unmechanized, labor-intensive operation where most of the work is done by hand. In wet milling, the process of grating the fresh coconut begins by holding the nut over a rotating grater that somewhat resembles an orange juice reamer. The mechanized grater, operating at very high speed, requires skill to hold the coconut in place during the grating process.

The wet gratings are then put into a special dryer furnace to remove the moisture. The dryer uses cleaned coconut shells for fuel added continuously during the entire drying process.

The dried gratings are then fed into a screw press to extract the oil. The machine is not motorized but is belt driven to keep the temperature low during the 45-minute process of extracting the oil. The coconut gratings are passed through the press three times to squeeze out all possible oil.

The raw oil is then carefully purified by a slow process called racking, a three-step process that allows the oil to settle for 18 hours during the first step. Impurities fall to the bottom and the oil is decanted off the top. With the second settling, the oil rests for a week before it is siphoned off. The third and last decanting takes three weeks. Finally the pure oil is bottled for the consumer. The end product has a definitive pleasant coconut aroma and flavor and has an indefinite shelf life.



Growing

If you plan to grow coconuts, better have patience, seven years of patience before you can expect to see any coconuts. The coconut palm, *Cocos nucifera*, is considered a "three generation tree," supporting a farmer, his children, and his grandchildren. Some trees, which can grow to a height of 60 to 100 feet, even survive all three generations. *Cocos nucifera*, *nucifera* meaning nut-bearing, has only one species that includes both the tall and the dwarf coconut tree, but many varieties exist within the species.

Though the coconut is commonly considered a nut, botanically it is classified as a *drupe* and is the largest of all fruit seeds. The coconut consists of the thin, strong outer layer or skin called the epicarp, the thick fibrous layer called mesocarp, and the dark brown hard shell called the endocarp

that encases the coconut flesh. Just beneath the endocarp is the testa, the thin deep brown layer that clings to the white coconut meat.

The coconut palm is a striking tree with a tall slender trunk that keeps its same diameter from the base to the top. Beautiful, lacy fronds, about 25 to 35 of them, form an umbrella-like structure at the tree's zenith. The tree grows taller by forming new fronds that sprout from the top of the tree as the lower fronds die off.

Coconuts grow from the center of the fronds, close to the trunk. Unique to the coconut palm, each tree blooms thirteen times a year and produces all stages of growth at the same time, from tiny new green nuts to fully ripened brown nuts that are ready to fall from the tree.

Coconuts are persnickity about where they live. They cannot survive cold climates, and do poorly in temperate zones. Coconuts require the hot, humid weather of the tropical regions that stretch 25 degrees north to 25 degrees south of the equator all around the globe. There the sun shines steadily with plenty of rainfall to nurture the slow-growing coconut palm.

To begin the growing process, purchase a coconut with its husk completely intact. Just like sprouting any seeds and legumes, the coconut must be soaked in water, only longer, two or three days.

Next, prepare a pot that is large enough and deep enough for the coconut by putting big pieces of gravel or stones in the bottom to allow for good drainage. Add about two inches of sandy soil, then set the coconut on the soil with the pointed or bud end up. Add more soil until it covers about half the coconut. Then set the pot in a warm place such as a sunny window, near a warm oven, or on a radiator.

The next step requires patience and diligence. Pour warm water over the coconut husk every day, making sure it does not dry out. The sprouting process is very slow, sometimes taking six months or longer. Until the sprout appears, the coconut is receiving its nourishment from the white meat inside. The coconut water within provides the nut with all of its moisture requirements.

For a sprout to appear it must first pierce through one of the soft spots, often called eyes, of the coconut's hard inner shell and finally emerge from the large fibrous outer shell. When white roots begin to grow out, in about a year, the coconut can be planted in a large tub.

Coconuts planted at home are unlikely to thrive or produce a coconut. Today the nuts are a highly cultivated crop, where once they were a source of survival for natives of the tropics, providing the family's support with only a few trees.

Since commercially planted coconut palms are grown for maximum yield, some farmers use commercial fertilizer while others use a different method. With intercropping, an effective method of fertilization and land use, the farmer plants banana trees or other large crops among the coconut trees. After producing its crop, the banana trees are left to disintegrate, producing ideal compost to fertilize the soil.

Coconuts come in many varieties. Some are grown for their higher oil content, while others are favored for their higher sugar content. Many growers prefer the dwarf varieties. Though they lack the dramatic appearance of the tall trees, they are far easier to harvest. The dwarfs, which have a

shorter lifespan, about 40 to 60 years, are also less vulnerable to a yellowing disease that kills many of the tall trees.

In agriculture, nothing is without its challenges. With all its advantages, the dwarf coconut palm also faces destruction from rodents. The creatures climb up the tree trunks and form communities under the protection of the feathery fronds, often putting a considerable dent in a farmer's crop. The farmers have tried to outwit the rats by putting metal bands around the tree trunks, but these have no effect on the rats that are already colonized in the trees.

How a farmer harvests the coconuts is a matter of choice. On the average, trees produce about 60 mature coconuts a year, though some will produce two or three times as many. The easiest method of harvesting and one that assures fully ripened coconuts, is to simply allow the ripe nuts to fall to the ground.

Alternatively, the farmer employs nimble skilled men to literally climb up to the top of the tree with a machete and cut the ripe nuts down. Still another method, one that requires considerable skill, is to attach a machete to a long bamboo pole and reach for the ripe nuts while standing on the ground. This last method often fails to provide accuracy and frequently brings down unripe nuts as well. In some countries, farmers have been able to train monkeys to gather the ripe coconuts.

Before the farmer sends his coconuts to market, he removes the thick, fibrous outer husks, making the coconuts easier for the consumer to open. The exception is young coconuts, which reach market with their outer husk partly cut away. To remove the husk, the farmer pounds the coconut against a spiked wooden post that is firmly secured in the ground.

Nutritional Benefits

Young coconuts are considered highly nutritious. One whole coconut has only 140 calories and provides 17% of the RDA for calcium. The total fat content is 3 grams, all saturated. With a zero content of cholesterol, the young coconut has 50 mg sodium, 28 grams of carbohydrate, 2 grams of fiber, 15 grams of sugar, and 2 grams of protein.

Mature Coconut: The raw grated meat of a mature coconut has 283 calories and 2.7 grams of protein for 1 cup. For the carb counters, that 1 cup contains 12.2 grams of carbohydrates. The sodium content is low at 16 mg. Coconut is a high fiber food that delivers 7.2 grams for 1 cup of freshly grated meat.

The sticky point of coconut consumption is the fat. That 1 cup of grated coconut packs 26.8 grams of total fat with 23.8 grams saturated which means that it is 80% fat.

Our 1 cup of grated fresh coconut contains a good range of B vitamins except B12, with 21.1 mcg of folic acid and 2.6 mg of vitamin C. Coconut is a good source of minerals with 11.2 mg of calcium, 1.9 mg. of iron, 15.6 mg of magnesium, 285 mg. of potassium, and 0.9 mg. of zinc.

Canned Coconut Cream: A 1-cup measure contains 568 calories, 8 grams protein, and 25 grams of carbohydrate. The fiber content totals 7 grams, while the total fat is 52.5 grams, the saturated fat 46.5 grams. The numbers for fresh coconut cream are a little higher in calories, protein, and fat, but lower in carbs, sodium, and fiber.

Canned coconut cream has a good range of B vitamins except B12, with 42.3 mcg of folic acid and

5.3 mg of vitamin C. A full range of minerals produce 3 mg of calcium, 1.5 mg. of iron, 50.3 mg of magnesium, 299 mg potassium, and 1.8 mg. of zinc. Figures for fresh coconut cream are higher with an exceptional 2.1 mg of niacin, 55.2 mcg of folic acid, 26.4 mg of calcium, and 2.3 mg. of zinc.

Coconut Milk: For the same measure, canned coconut milk contains 445 calories, 5 grams protein, and 6 grams of carbohydrate. Total fat is 48.2 grams, with 42.7 grams saturated.

Canned coconut milk lacks vitamin B2 and B12 but has a good range of other B vitamins including 30 mcg of folic acid. Vitamin C content is 2.3 mg. For the minerals our coconut milk contains 40.7 mg of calcium, 7.5 mg. of iron, 104.0 mg. of magnesium, 497 mg. of potassium, and 1.3 mg. of zinc.

Fresh coconut milk is slightly higher in the B vitamins, zinc, and potassium, but slightly lower in calcium, iron, and magnesium.

Coconut Oil: Coconut oil has 120 calories for 1 tablespoon and 14 grams of total fat. These figures are the same for almost any kind of oil from extra virgin olive oil to soybean oil. The difference is that coconut oil contains 11 to 12 grams saturated fat. Coconut oil, like other oils, does not contain significant vitamins and minerals.

Coconut Water: On the average 1 cup contains about 46 calories and 2 grams of protein. The sodium content is surprisingly high with 252 mg. and so is the fiber at 3 grams. The total fat is exceptionally low at 0.5 grams with 0.4 grams saturated.

Coconut water contains a full range of B vitamins with the exception of vitamin B6 and B12. There are 6.00 mcg of folic acid and 5.8 mg of vitamin C. Rating the minerals that 1 cup contains 57.6 mg of calcium, 0.7 mg. of iron, 60 mg of magnesium, 600 mg of potassium, and 0.2 mg of zinc.

Purchasing and Storing

MATURE COCONUT: Most coconuts reach market with the outer fibrous husk removed, a practice that shortens their shelf life but makes them easier to open. Start the selection process by lifting and shaking the coconut to make sure it is heavy with plenty of water inside.

Carefully inspect the outer shell and the eyes to make sure there are no cracks or punctures. A damaged coconut will rot quickly once air reaches the inside of the nut. Examine the three eyes to be sure there is no mold forming there.

If the coconut seems too light and you cannot hear water inside when you shake it, the nut may have a thin crack, has lost a great deal of its water, and may have begun to mold. The ideal coconut has plenty of liquid. You can feel its weight and hear it swoosh when you give the coconut a good shake.

A fully mature coconut will be dark brown in color. Those with a lighter brown have not yet reached their full ripeness but will still taste quite good. Coconut milk pressed from the lighter colored coconuts will not be as thick and creamy as the darker coconuts, but can lend itself to tasty soups and curries.



A mature coconut, unopened, can be stored at room temperature for about three or four months. Once opened, fresh coconut can be stored in the refrigerator in a plastic bag for only a few days. Freeze the coconut for longer storage.

A medium-sized coconut will contain about 1 cup of coconut juice. When grated, the coconut will yield about 3 to 4 cups of nutmeat .

YOUNG COCONUT: Young coconuts are sold still in the husk. You can recognize a young coconut by its pale, almost ivory color and by its conical shape at the top. Look for these in the refrigerated section or produce section of some

health food and Asian markets. If you're surprised at how heavy they are, try pouring the coconut juice into a measuring cup--just make sure it's a large measuring cup.

Young coconuts are valued for their juice, but the coconut meat inside, which is often sweeter than that of the mature coconut, is completely edible and has a softer, more delicate consistency than a mature coconut. The very young coconut meat is almost jelly-like and can be eaten with a spoon.

Store young coconuts in the refrigerator.

DRIED COCONUT: Coconut comes in dried forms as well as fresh. Most chain supermarkets have the sweetened variety only. Look for the unsweetened grated or shredded coconut meat in a health food market or Asian market. Both forms may also be found in the freezer in Asian groceries. Dried coconut can keep at room temperature for several months if sealed in plastic bags.

COCONUT MILK: Canned coconut milk is available in most grocery stores; however, Asian markets offer several brands from which to choose. Notice that the total fat content can vary considerably from 2 grams to 17 grams. The cans with 2 grams of fat will be quite watery and taste diluted. For good flavor, choose a coconut milk with 8 to 9 grams of fat for its excellent consistency and richness in taste. Those with the highest fat are actually coconut cream from the first pressing that offers a thicker and creamier liquid. Once opened, canned coconut milk must be stored in the refrigerator and will keep only a few days.

COCONUT OIL: Purchase only extra virgin coconut oil available in health food markets. Though it may be more expensive than the refined oil, its health benefits far outweigh the extra expense. The refined coconut oil is hydrogenated during processing, while the extra virgin coconut oil contains no trans-fatty acids.

Cracking the Coconut

In the tropical countries where coconuts are eaten almost everyday they are cracked open with one strong blow from a thick, heavy-bladed knife. One Thai chef suggests holding the mid-portion of the coconut in the palm of one hand with the eyes facing the same direction as your fingertips.

With a heavy cleaver in the other hand, turn the blade so the blunt end is aimed at the coconut. Then strike the coconut with several heavy blows to the center, turning the coconut as you strike it

so it can crack almost evenly into two halves. Have a large bowl ready to catch the juice that begins to ooze out when the coconut begins to crack.

In the temperate zones, other methods have emerged. First, use a tool with a sharp point such as an ice pick, a hammer and nail, or even a corkscrew to poke through the two softest of the three "eyes" at one end the coconut. Drain the coconut juice into a glass or cup. If it is sweet, it's enjoyable to drink, and you'll know you have a tasty coconut.

Next heat the oven to 350 F (Gas Mark 4), put the coconut on a baking pan, and bake it for about 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the coconut and put it into a large paper or plastic bag. Hold the open end closed while giving the coconut inside a strong blow with a hammer. The bag simply prevents the shell from breaking off and flying all over the kitchen.

NOTE: Do not attempt to heat the coconut before removing the juice. An exploding coconut can cause damage to your oven.

Once the coconut shell is in several pieces, use a small firm paring knife to remove the coconut meat from the shell. If you prefer not to eat the brown skin, use a vegetable peeler to remove it. Be aware, however, that you'll be tossing away a good source of fiber.

Shredding

If you want pure white shreds of coconut, peel off the brown skin. Use a coarse hand grater or the grater blade of a food processor to shred the coconut into a bowl. If you want really fine shreds, use a zester or a special hand tool available in some Asian markets.

In Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries special wooden stools with a sharp-toothed grater attached were designed so one can perform the grating task quickly while sitting down. Antique models can be found in Thai museums, while bazaars sell newer ones to the tourists.

Toasting Coconut

Put freshly grated, dried grated, or shredded coconut into a dry skillet over medium heat. Standing by to stir frequently, heat and stir the coconut until it reaches an even, golden brown color. Remove from the skillet immediately to prevent burning the coconut.

Coconut Milk

To make coconut milk, it is not necessary to peel off the brown skin that clings to the coconut flesh. Put the meat of a freshly grated coconut into a bowl and pour 2 cups of boiling water over it to cover. Set it aside for 10 to 15 minutes, then strain off the coconut milk through a mesh strainer or damp muslin cloth into another bowl, pressing to remove all the liquid. Using your hands, squeeze through the fingers any remaining coconut milk from the grated pieces. You now have a thick, richly flavored coconut cream for making creamy coconut desserts.

A second pressing of the grated pulp with another 2 cups of boiling water will produce a thinner but tasty coconut milk excellent for soups. Southeast Asian cooks often do a third pressing used for soups and as a broth for cooking their meats.

Some people toss away the coconut pulp after making coconut milk, but the coconut still has nutritional value and can be sprinkled over salads or rice dishes.

An alternate method for preparing coconut milk combines the coconut cut into 1-inch pieces and

equal amounts of hot, but not boiling, water in the blender. Blend at high speed, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides, until you have an almost smooth puree. Strain if desired.

Cooking with Coconut Milk: Because the exceptional flavor of fresh coconut milk breaks down easily, add it at the very end of the cooking process.

Young Coconut

The liquid inside a young coconut is plentiful, sweet, and nourishing. Use a strong, sharp knife to whack off the top of the coconut, poke a hole in the top, and insert a straw. You'll be surprised at just how much thirst-quenching, delightfully sweet liquid is inside, though some varieties of coconut palm do not produce a sweet-tasting juice.

Enjoy the delicate, sweet meat inside the young coconut by scooping it out with a spoon. In the Philippines, young coconut meat often serves as a nourishing breakfast food as well as a delightfully light dessert.

Coconut Oil

Because of its high content of healthful saturated fat, extra virgin coconut oil makes a very stable cooking oil, able to withstand the heat of stir frying, light frying, and baking. Another advantage of the unrefined coconut oil is its amazing shelf life. Stored for a year, unrefrigerated, the oil showed no signs of rancidity. Store at room temperature. When refrigerated, the oil becomes completely solid.

COCONUT AND FRUIT AMBROSIA

- 1 large ripe mango, chopped
- 1 fresh nectarine, chopped
- 1 fresh apricot, chopped
- Juice of one orange
- Grated flesh of 1/2 coconut

Combine ingredients in a bowl and stir well. Serves 4 as a side dish.

KONA COCONUT STIR FRY

- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 to 2 T. water

- 1 large carrot, cut into thin julienne, about 2-inches (5 cm) long
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) slices
- 1/2 red bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) slices
- 1 zucchini, cut into thick julienne, about 2-inches (5 cm) long
- 5 oz. (140 g) portabella mushrooms, sliced thick

- 1 C. (240 ml) fresh shredded coconut *
- 1 oz. (28 g) dried diced apple, mango, or papaya
- 1 T. mushroom vegetarian oyster sauce, or 1/2 T. soy sauce
- 3 dashes Tabasco Sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

1 t. toasted sesame seeds

1. Heat olive oil and water in a large, deep skillet for 1 minute. Add vegetables and sauté over high heat until softened, about 7 to 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add more water if needed to keep mixture from drying out.
2. Turn heat down slightly and add coconut, apple, vegetarian oyster sauce, and Tabasco Sauce. Stir well and season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Transfer to a serving dish, and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Serve over brown rice. Makes 2 servings.

* Use dried coconut if you are unable to find a fresh coconut.

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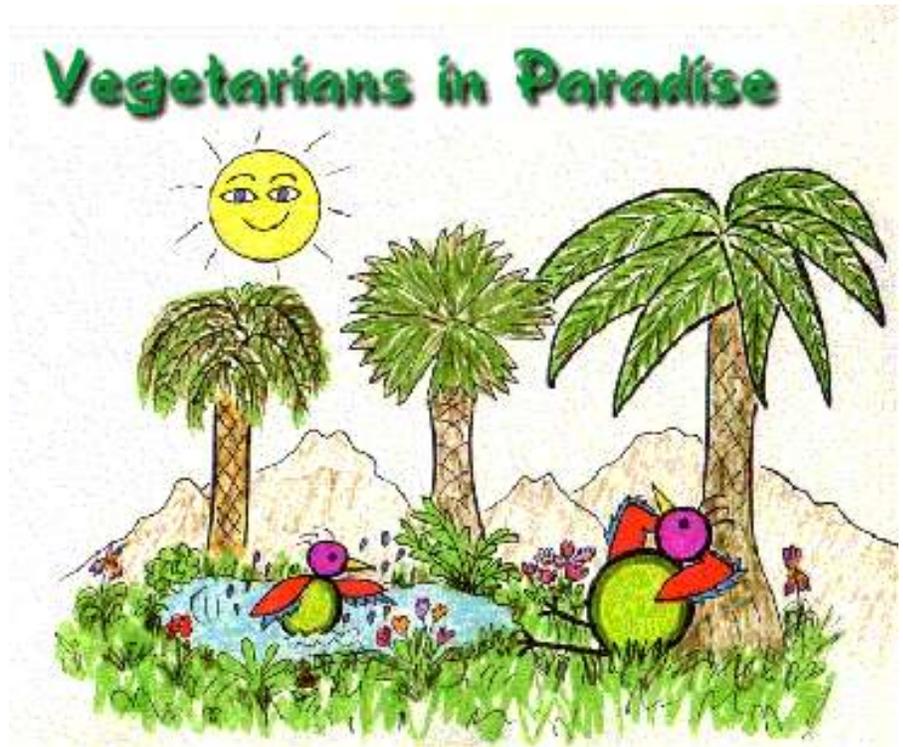


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A Los Angeles Vegetarian Web Magazine

A Nonprofit Vegetarian Public Service Publication

Reaching over 80,000 visitors monthly

By Zel and Reuben Allen

August/September 2004 Vol. 6 No.8

Welcome to Vegetarians in Paradise. With each new issue we at vegparadise.com hope to provide you with all kinds of vegetarian information pertinent to our vegetarian community. For those who visit us from other areas of the country or from distant lands, we offer great diversity and invaluable vegetarian resources for vegetarians anywhere in the world.

New in Paradise

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- [See for yourself why Atkins flunks the long-term weight loss test.](#)
- [Go coast to coast in a quest for magnificent vegetarian victuals.](#)
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- [Indulge your palate with a gustatorial splash of traditional Spanish cuisine.](#)
- [Remember Bob as you view his porcine adventure.](#)
- [Listen to Aunt Nettie squeezing pecans until they yell, "Milk!"](#)
- [Tune in to hear VIP editors being interviewed on a June 10 radio broadcast.](#)
- [Cannellini receives an encore. Share VOW's delicious recipe.](#)
- [Taste some Old World Lentil Soup as you shop for All Blue Pee-Wee potatoes.](#)
- [Read the amazing saga of the Mad Apple whose relatives are a dangerous lot.](#)
- [Savor Vegetarian Holiday Meals for some delectable menus to serve on those special occasions.](#)

Try one of Zel's delicious recipes from our categorized [Recipe Index](#), review our [Vegetarian Airline Meals](#), find a good [vegetarian book to read](#), check our [archives](#) or [links to great vegetarian web pages](#), peruse our [Los Angeles Vegetarian Restaurants page](#), or just cruise the other pages on our website for more information resources.



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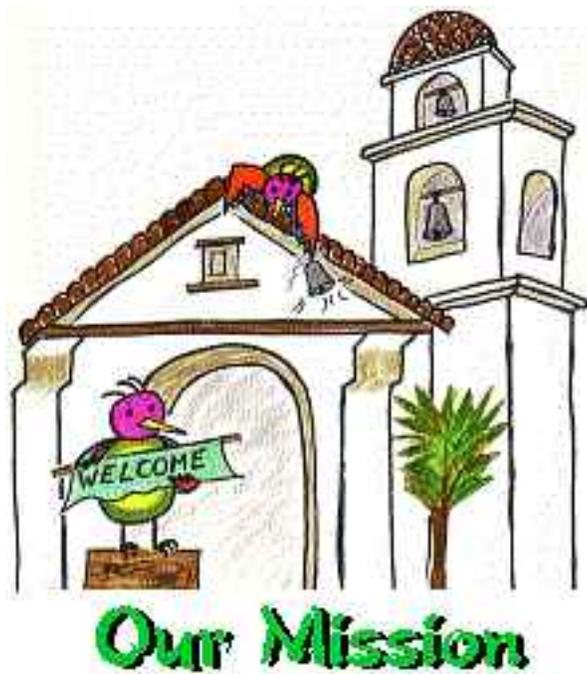
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Our Mission is to offer our friends in the vegetarian community a nesting place to roost awhile and share information about a lifestyle that may keep us flying around a few years longer than our non-vegetarian friends.

At this nest we plan to offer some great places to eat wholesome vegetarian food, to shop for the best organic, fresh produce and prepared foods, to discover tasty recipes, cooking tips, and informative book suggestions. In other words, a gathering place for us fine-feathered birds who enjoy being just what we are--vegetarians.

To those who are non-vegetarians, we welcome you to check out our perch. You'll notice we soar a little higher in the sky, and we peck a little closer to the earth than the

rest of the flock. Also, you don't have to be vegetarian to enjoy flavorful food and explore the array of healthful ideas and suggestions we delight in presenting.

We've learned much and have attempted to share what we've learned about the diverse resources available to vegetarians in this community. In a few instances we've discovered our information has even traveled beyond our community to places across the United States and overseas to Finland and South Africa. We are truly blessed with this marvelous communication device that is bringing the entire world closer.

During this year we hope to continue adding new features and to encourage your participation in submitting feedback and ideas. Our goal is to make **Vegetarians in Paradise** a valuable resource for vegetarians not only in the Los Angeles area, but also in other areas brought closer to us by the worldwide web.

We're just a couple of adventurous pigeons named Zel and Reuben Allen who live in Los Angeles. With many fun explorations in our own city and cruising the world on the web we've discovered that paradise is just about anywhere we can touch the fruits of the earth.

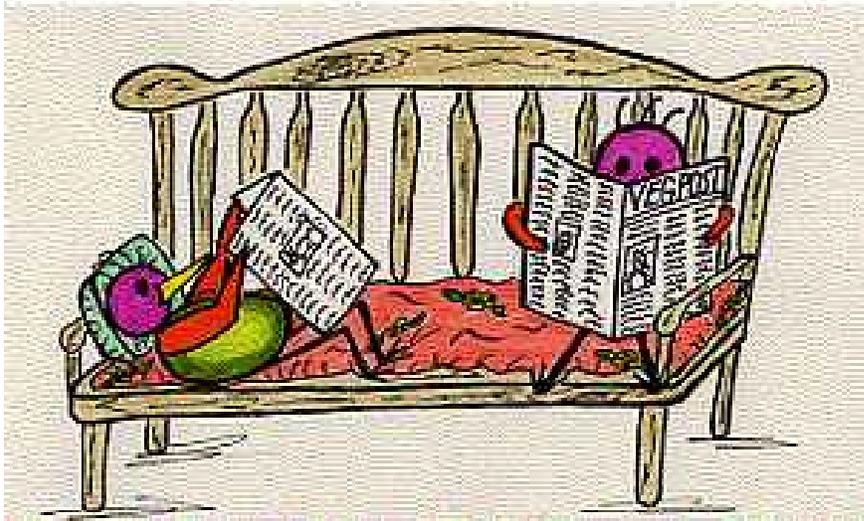
We invite you to hit on us each month as we take a flying look at our world to discover what it means to be **Vegetarians in Paradise**.



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News from the Nest



The VIP birds continually soar through the skies, swoop down into the valleys, and regularly search for relevant information to bring to the vegetarian community.

[Beans Blast Blueberries To Gain Antioxidant Crown. \(August 1, 2004\)](#)

[Research Reveals Vegetarians Live Longer, Are Less Prone to Disease. \(July 1, 2004\)](#)

[Filmmaker Almost Eats Himself to Death in 30-Day McDonald's Binge. \(June 1, 2004\)](#)

[Foie-Gras-Loving *Los Angeles Times* Columnist Quacks Up in Attack on Animal Rights Activists. \(June 1, 2004\)](#)

[Americans Face Constipation Threat from South Beach and Atkins Dietary Terrorists. \(May 1, 2004\)](#)

[USDA Turns Food Pyramid Upside Down. \(April 1, 2004\)](#)

[Is Gelatin Hiding in Your Food? Bone up on Some Hidden Sources. \(March 1, 2004\)](#)

[Vegan Marshmallows Reappear after Long Absence. \(January 1, 2004\)](#)

[Nuke It, Boil It, Bake It, or Just Eat It Raw? \(December 1, 2003\)](#)

[VIP Links to Atkins Diet? \(November 1, 2003\)](#)

[Research Finds Diabetes and Heart Disease in That Glass of Milk. \(November 1, 2003\)](#)

[Begin a New Portfolio Instead of Popping Pills. \(September 1, 2003\)](#)

[Go to Jail but Don't Expect Vegan Food. \(August 1, 2003\)](#)

[Kill a Calf, Make a Cheese. \(July 1, 2003\)](#)

[VIP Goes to War; Troops Revile Meals Ready-to-Eat. \(June 1, 2003\)](#)

[McDonald's Grills McVeggie Burgers in Beef, Chicken, Fish Fat. \(May 1, 2003\)](#)

[Check Out a Burger at Your Local Library. \(April 2, 2003\)](#)

[Say No to IN-N-OUT Burger! Join VIP in ending the Food for Thought Program. \(March 1, 2003\)](#)

[Cattlemen Gored by Their Own Bull. \(March 1, 2003\)](#)

[Vegetarians Pay Tribute to Hans Siegenthaler. \(February 2, 2003\)](#)

[Leonor's Lays an Egg -- with Casein in it! \(February 1, 2003\)](#)

[Non-dairy Creamers Are Not What They're Quacked Up To Be. \(January 1, 2003\)](#)

[Non-pill Poppers Achieve Remarkable Cholesterol, Blood Pressure Results. \(December 1, 2002\)](#)

[Is Cancer Lurking in That Yogurt Carton?. \(November 1, 2002\)](#)

[ConAgra Dominates Entire Food Chain. \(October 1, 2002\)](#)

[Dairy Giant Swallows White Wave. \(July 23, 2002\)](#)

[Lanolin-laced Soymilk Hits the Supermarkets: the Vitamin D3 Story. \(July 17, 2002\)](#)

[Vegetarian Food Goes to Jail. \(June 1, 2002\)](#)

[Hey, *Consumer Reports*, What about a Vegetarian Diet? \(May 26, 2002\)](#)

[Quorn, a Laboratory Mold Creation, Invades the U.S. \(May 21, 2002\)](#)

[Burger King Introduces the Veggie Burger That Ain't \(April 5, 2002\)](#)

[5 a Day--Power Play! Hits L.A. \(March 1, 2002\)](#)

[Tropicana Is Bugging Your Juice \(March 1, 2002\)](#)

[Frito-Lay Reveals Animal Ingredients \(February 1, 2002\)](#)

[Follow Your Heart Wraps Up UCLA Campus \(January 11, 2002\)](#)

[Vegetarians Mourn Loss of Three Restaurants \(January 1, 2002\)](#)

[Five a Day Helps Keep a Heart Attack at Bay \(January 1, 2002\)](#)

[Couple Celebrates 50th Anniversary in an Onion \(December 22, 2001\)](#)

[VIP Slams Author and Publisher of Book Mocking Vegetarians. \(December 1, 2001\)](#)

[Professor Exposes Osteoporosis Hoax \(December 1, 2001\)](#)

[Vegetarians Blow Out 100 Candles \(November 1, 2001\)](#)

[Naked Garden Closes \(August 31, 2001\)](#)

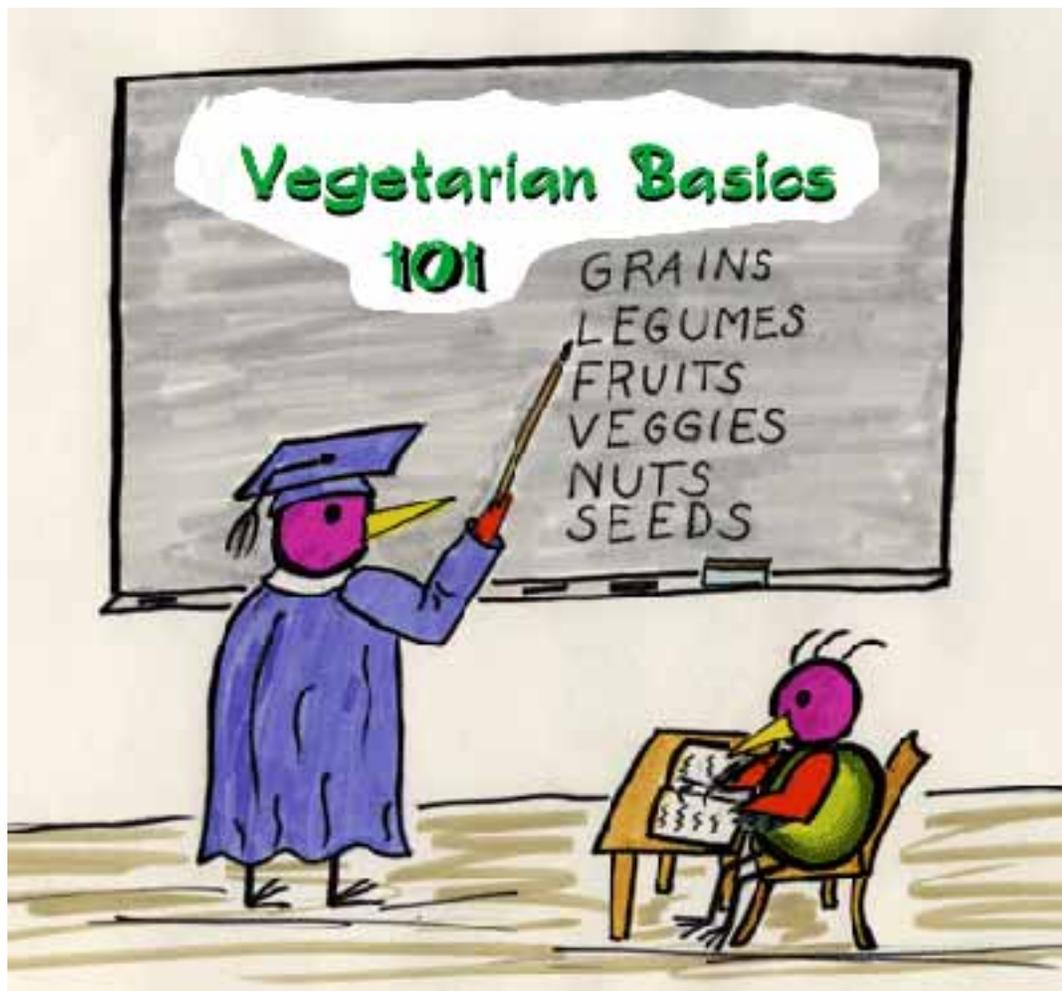
[McDonald's Has More Than 31 Flavors. \(August 13, 2001\)](#)

[Couple Ties Knot in First Ethical Vegan Wedding in Massachusetts. \(July 8, 2001\)](#)

[Vegan Gives Kaiser Permanente the Mumps. \(May 15, 2001\)](#)



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In response to the many e-mails we receive asking how to become a vegetarian, or how to begin a vegetarian regimen, we've prepared some basics to get you started. Far from complete, and not clinical in nature, this guide may help to answer the many questions that plague those new to the veggie world.

If you choose not to read through the entire feature of Vegetarian Basics 101, simply click on the subjects that interest you.

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SEEDS

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR PROTEIN?

VITAMIN AND MINERAL CONCERNS

BENEFITS OF A VEGAN DIET

COMFORT FOODS

TYPES OF VEGETARIAN DIETS

First, let's define the many categories that encompass the term vegetarian. Often we hear people express that they no longer eat red meat, just chicken and fish, so they consider themselves vegetarians. These are not vegetarians, but we hope that someday their diet will evolve into becoming vegetarian. True vegetarians follow a diet that avoids animal flesh and emphasizes plant-based foods that consist of whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds.

LACTO-OVO VEGETARIAN: Eats no meat, poultry, or fish, but includes dairy products and eggs in the diet along with plant-based foods.

LACTO VEGETARIAN: Excludes all animal products except dairy products. Includes all plant-based foods in the diet.

OVO VEGETARIAN: Excludes all animal products except eggs. Includes all plant-based foods in the diet.

VEGAN OR PURE VEGETARIAN: Vegan is pronounced "vee gun." Some people distinguish between vegan and pure vegetarian, considering the pure vegetarian one who eats no animal flesh, no dairy products, or no eggs, and follows a strict plant-based diet for dietary reasons only. While vegans follow a diet consisting of plant-based foods only, they are further committed to a philosophy that respects animal life and the ecology of the planet.

As a result, vegans also do not eat honey because many bees are killed in the process of forced procreation to maintain the beehive and the continued production of honey.

Vegans do not eat refined cane sugar, because it is clarified over animal bone char in the final steps of the process that makes the sugar white. Instead, vegans choose unrefined sweeteners such as evaporated cane juice, maple sugar, maple syrup, date sugar, Sucanat, and agave nectar.

Vegans also avoid gelatin which is made from the bones, skin, and connective tissue of animals.

Because vegans consider the ecology of the planet a priority along with concern for animal rights, they shun the use of leather, wool, silk, goose down, and any foods or goods that have been processed using animal products. Their concern is that the planet's future resources have been harmed and animals have suffered in order for these products to come to market.

FRUITARIAN: The fruitarian has a simpler diet consisting only of fresh fruits and some vining foods that are technically considered fruits, but have been used as vegetables. These vegetable/fruits include cucumbers, tomatoes, squashes. Avocados, technically a tree fruit eaten as a vegetable, are also included.

RAW FOODIST: Those who follow the raw food diet include all fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and soaked and sprouted grains and legumes. Further, the raw foodist does not cook or heat the foods, but eats them only in their natural, raw state in order to preserve their valuable enzymes.

RAW LIVING FOODS DIET: Those who follow the living foods diet include a broad variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, soaked and sprouted grains and legumes. In addition, they will warm some of their foods in a dehydrator with a temperature regulator. In order to preserve the valuable enzymes that raw foods contain, some foods can be warmed to temperatures no higher than 105 degrees, while others will tolerate a little higher heat up to 115 degrees.

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BASICS TO GET YOU STARTED

The plant-based diet, at first thought, may seem rather limiting. Surprisingly though, this regimen offers much more variety than most people are aware of. There are many new products on the market that make the transition from a meat-based diet an enjoyable change. Change, however, can be challenging. The question that many face is whether to make the transition to a plant-based diet a gradual one or plunge in dramatically. Our own experience of the gradual transition leads us to believe the slower pace would be more likely to help people stay on the vegetarian path.

Instead of planning your meal around meat, chicken, or fish as the centerpiece, think of whole grains or legumes as the centerpiece. Enhance the grains or legumes with your favorite seasonings, vegetables, nuts, or seeds. Take a little extra time to make it special. Surround your special dish with steamed vegetables. Include a salad or even two every day made with dark leafy greens and a variety of chopped, diced, or shredded vegetables. Those who regard salads as "rabbit food" don't realize how many enriching nutrients and valuable enzymes they're missing.

Some of you many not be aware of the many different grains available. You can enjoy a different grain every day of the week and still look forward to those yet untried. Following is a list of whole grains to incorporate into your new diet: **brown rice, wild rice, corn and cornmeal, whole wheat, cracked wheat, bulghur wheat, pearl barley, barley flakes, hulled barley, whole rye berries, rye flakes, oat groats, oatmeal, millet, quinoa, spelt, triticale, amaranth, teff, and kamut.**

Legumes consist of all varieties of beans and include lentils and split yellow and green peas. Each variety of bean sparks the taste buds with a very different flavor and texture. Since the digestive system may require a little time to adjust to the added fiber contained in legumes, begin with small amounts and increase slowly. Your own body will be your guide on how much and how quickly to

increase quantities.

If you are one who has always thought of nuts as simply a snack, and one to be avoided because "they're too high in fat," reconsider them as an excellent source of protein. A handful or two a day are a good protein replacement. Though nuts are high in fats, they offer essential fatty acids so necessary to the body's many processes. Nuts are also delicious and add delightful crunch to a dish.

Each kind of nut possesses different nutrients. You may have learned that one Brazil nut a day contains your daily requirement of selenium. Include seeds as well for their taste and health benefits. Following is a list of nut and seed varieties: walnuts, almonds, pecans, pistachios, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, chestnuts, pine nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, flax seeds.

Tofu, tempeh, and seitan are excellent ways to dress up a meal. Vegetarian cookbooks are a good source of information on how to prepare these foods and offer a myriad of creative soyfoods recipes. Tofu and tempeh are made from soybeans. Seitan, which may be less familiar to you, is made from wheat gluten. Check the [cooking@homew/zel](#) feature in this web site for some helpful, easy recipes that use tofu.

There's no need to be concerned about getting enough protein on a vegetarian diet. High protein foods such as tofu, tempeh, seitan, legumes, grains, nuts and seeds are all easily obtainable and offer enough diversity to make vegetarian cooking fun and adventurous. Though they provide much smaller quantities, fruits and vegetables also contain protein.

Begin by serving one plant-based meal a week. Plant-based foods exclude animal products entirely. If this feels too drastic, begin by eliminating meat, chicken, and fish at that meal, but include eggs or dairy products. Refer to the list of **Comfort Foods** below for ways to incorporate vegetarian foods without feeling that you are depriving yourself of the foods you enjoy. Serve your vegetarian meal with one or more cooked vegetables. Include a salad with a variety of fresh vegetables every day. Browse through our feature called [Vegetarian Food Companies](#) for many helpful resources.

Then, progress to one full day of eating vegetarian. Begin your day with a whole grain cereal, either cooked or dry. When shopping for your cereal, read ingredient labels faithfully. Know what you are buying. Look for cereals that list "whole wheat flour, whole rye flour, whole barley flour, etc." rather than "wheat flour, rye flour, etc." Refined cereals are lacking vitamins and minerals that whole grains contain naturally. Look at the nutritional label. A truly healthy cereal should have at least 5 grams of fiber per serving. Include several pieces of fresh fruit throughout the day every day.

Drink plenty of water. Doctors recommend at least eight glasses per day. Eliminate non-nutritional beverages, such as carbonated beverages and heavily sweetened juice drinks, and replace them with water, preferably purified or distilled.

When you've succeeded with a whole vegetarian day, see if you can eliminate the animal based foods at one meal every day. We, ourselves, began with a vegan dinner every day. As you gain more confidence in your food preparation, establish new shopping directions, and realize the

physical and emotional benefits, you will be encouraged to continue your new path.

For a truly healthy focus, one that will boost your energy and improve your mental skills, include a wide variety of foods every day. A plant-based diet consists of whole foods, foods that have their vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and enzymes intact, rather than extracted, refined, reformed, and rolled off the food factory lines in neat little packages that cheat you out of nutrition. If you choose to include eggs and dairy products in your vegetarian diet, you can consider these your source of protein. If you follow a vegan plan, include some items from each of the following categories each day to be assured of complete nutrition: **Fruits, Vegetables, Grains, Legumes, Nuts and Seeds**

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FRUITS

- Enjoy several pieces of fruit each day.
- Include many different fruits rather than concentrating on only one favorite fruit. One kind of fruit may not contain all the vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and enzymes the body needs.



- Think variety by including fruits of all colors. Each color contains different carotenes and different nutrients.
- Consider purchasing organic fruits for the increased vitamins and minerals they contain. Many fruits have skins that are completely edible and highly nutritious. Don't miss out on the opportunity to eat all the nutritious portions of a whole food.

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VEGETABLES

- Eat your veggies with abandon. You simply can't over-consume vegetables. In fact, most people don't get enough.
- Visit farmers' markets to get the best and freshest of the local vegetables that are in season. Most farmers pick their vegetables the day before and bring them to market early the

following morning.

- Experiment with vegetables that are new to you. Include some raw veggies each day. These contain enzymes that help the body's digestion, absorption, and elimination processes.
- Your plate should include a mosaic of vegetable colors. Each color contains different phytochemicals in varying quantities. Phytochemicals are plant-based nutrients that benefit the body by strengthening the immune system to ward off diseases such as cancer and heart disease.
- We all have favorite foods, but rather than eating just broccoli or asparagus, try expanding your variety little by little to include some red vegetables, such as beets and tomatoes.
- Include yellow vegetables, such as sweet potatoes and winter or summer squashes, and yellow bell peppers.
- White vegetables include onions, turnips, cauliflower, parsnips, and potatoes. Orange vegetables include carrots and rutabagas.
- Green veggies are the largest group and include string beans, Brussels sprouts, artichokes, broccoli, asparagus, avocados, Swiss chard, cabbage, lettuces, green bell peppers.



- Include a fresh salad every day made with dark green lettuces along with lots of crunchy veggies. If you're only used to iceberg lettuce, it's time to graduate to the romaine, red leaf, green leaf, escarole, oak leaf, and batavia varieties. These are higher in fiber and contain many more times the beta carotene as iceberg lettuce.
- Add a dressing that departs from those containing cheeses that overwhelm the flavor of the vegetables. Allow your taste buds to really enjoy the flavors of fresh veggies with a light oil and vinegar, or oil and lemon juice dressing. Better still, use an oil-free dressing.
- Add some cooked veggies to your every day meals, and introduce yourself to those that may be unfamiliar. Cook them only briefly to preserve their vitamins and minerals. Most veggies can be steamed, stir fried, and even roasted. Don't drown them in seasonings that cover up their wonderful flavor. Enjoy them in their natural state or with just a touch of seasoning.

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GRAINS

- Introduce whole grains into your diet. They contain bran that offers fiber and B vitamins, germ that provides essential fatty acids and vitamin E, and the endosperm that contains considerable protein.
- Make your breakfast with whole grain cereals, such as oatmeal, Cream of Rye, Quinoa

Flakes, Barley Flakes, Cornmeal mush, Zoom, or Malt-O-Meal.

- Sprinkle your cereal with raisins, date nuggets, currants, nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, maple syrup, or date sugar, and try using a soymilk to top your "breakfast sundae." The variety is limitless. Whole grain dry cereals are in abundance. Your local supermarket has some of these, but a health food market has the widest variety.
- Read ingredient labels carefully so you can make informed decisions. Look for cereals that contain at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, preferably higher. Many whole wheat cereals contain 5 or 6 grams of fiber per serving.
- Buy whole grain breads rather than refined white breads. The whole grain breads are higher in fiber and contain most of the B vitamins that have been processed out of the breads made with white flour.
- Cook brown rice rather than white rice. Yes, it does take a bit longer to cook, but you're health is worth much more than the extra 20 or 30 minutes it takes to cook whole grains.



- Wild rice has wonderful flavor, great texture, and 3 grams of fiber per serving compared to 1 gram of fiber for white rice.
- Try some barley for a change.
- How about making polenta from whole grain cornmeal?
- The health food markets often have bulk grains such as quinoa, millet, spelt berries, rye berries, oat groats, whole wheat berries, and buckwheat. If these are not available in bulk, they are certain to be sold in packages.
- Enjoy some whole grain pastas instead of the usual refined pastas made of durum wheat. Health food markets sell pastas made from quinoa, spelt, rice, barley, buckwheat, and whole wheat. The textures will be noticeably different, but these offer a higher fiber content than durum wheat pasta.
- Soak organic grains overnight and start them sprouting the next day. They should be ready to eat within a day or two and can be added to a salad or sprinkled over almost any of your favorite foods.

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LEGUMES

- This category consists of all varieties of beans including lentils and green and yellow split peas. Each type of bean has its own unique texture and flavor to lend variety in the vegetarian diet.
- Beans can easily be incorporated into soups and salads, but don't stop there. Put cooked beans into the food processor with seasonings and make a dip. Mash beans with your favorite flavor enhancers and make a sandwich spread or even a sandwich filling. Try some

new recipes that use beans as the centerpiece of your meal; a vegetarian chili is one example. Beans are very high in protein as well as vitamins and calcium.

- Beans can be soaked overnight and put into a sprouting jar or bag the next day. Within a day or two they should be ready to enjoy. Sprinkle them over a salad or add them to soups or casseroles. Sprouted beans vastly increase their vitamin and mineral content during the sprouting process.
- Tofu, made from soybeans, provides almost unlimited creativity to the vegetarian diet. Tofu comes in water-packed cartons and can be found in most supermarkets. For organic varieties, shop at a health food market.
- Tofu is available in a number of different consistencies from regular, which is quite soft, to firm, and extra firm varieties. The regular tofu makes excellent sauces when prepared in the blender or food processor with seasonings. Firm and extra firm tofu work well in salads, stir fries, or marinated and baked in the oven.
- Delicious spreads that take the place of dairy products can be made in the food processor by combining firm or extra firm tofu with seasonings and by processing to a smooth consistency.
- Silken tofu comes in soft, firm, or extra firm and makes an excellent base for savory sauces, fruity parfaits, or fruit smoothies. Many vegetarian cookbooks include recipes for using tofu, while other cookbooks are devoted completely to soy products.
- Soy products abound these days and can be found in the form of veggie hot dogs, lunchmeats, patties, ground "meat" style, veggie ham, veggie fish, veggie chicken. Many supermarkets sell these items in the deli section. Health food markets offer a wider variety than most supermarkets. Asian markets will have some of the veggie meats in their freezer section. Be sure to read labels for ingredients. Some of these products may have ingredients you do not want to include in your diet.
- Tempeh is a soy product that developed in Indonesia and is made by fermenting soybeans in flat cakes. These offer further variety in the bean category and can be marinated, chopped, shredded, stir-fried, baked, or barbecued. Tempeh, an excellent source of protein, is available in health food markets in the deli section or in Asian markets in the frozen food case.



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NUTS

- Nuts are a wonderful source of protein as well as essential fatty acids, fiber, and minerals. Nuts provide us with omega 3 and omega 6 essential fatty acids that are important in the

functioning of all the body's processes.

- Keep a variety of nuts on hand and store them in the refrigerator to avoid rancidity. Include walnuts, pecans, almonds, cashews, pistachios, hazelnuts, and Brazil nuts.
- Eat them in their raw state rather than roasted. The roasted nuts are roasted in oil, adding extra fats which you may consider undesirable. In their raw state nuts contain valuable essential fatty acids which are lost when roasted or heated.



- Nuts add wonderful texture to a salad and can turn a pasta sauce into a special treat when added at the end of cooking.
- Nut butters from organic sources are delightful spread on apples and pears and enjoyed as a snack.
- Nuts can be ground into a powder in a small electric coffee grinder. Add ground nuts to a sauce or a soup that needs a little thickening and boost the nutrition as well.

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SEEDS

- Seeds are a storehouse of protein, calcium, fiber, and essential fatty acids. Include pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and flax seeds.
- Since seeds are very subject to rancidity, purchase them from a store that sells them in large quantities and turns them over quickly. Store seeds in the refrigerator to avoid rancidity. It's easy to incorporate seeds of all varieties into the diet.
- Sesame seeds are delicious sprinkled on salads and over cereals. Sesame seed paste, also called tahini, makes a delicious tahini sauce when mixed with lemon juice, garlic, water, salt, and a dash of cumin. This sauce enhances grain dishes, bean dishes, baked potatoes, and even pita sandwiches. Tahini can also be made into a salad dressing.
- Sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds add crunch to salads, cereals, and cooked grain dishes.
- Flax seeds can be ground in a small electric coffee grinder and sprinkled over cereals and salads for added fiber.
- For sprouting, purchase organic seeds that are especially for sprouting use. These have not been sterilized and still contain a living germ. Try making your own alfalfa, red clover, radish, and onion seed sprouts. In their whole organic form sunflower seeds are fun to sprout. It's a delight to see tiny sprouts emerging from their dark, tough, outer hulls.

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WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR PROTEIN?

It's easier than you might imagine to get plenty of protein from vegetarian foods. If you include dairy products and eggs in your regimen, look no further. These are a rich source of protein. Seek out low-fat or non-fat dairy products to avoid excessive saturated fats.

In a diet consisting solely of plant-based foods, protein abounds in whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. In the legume family, the soybean ranks highest in its protein content.

Products made from soy are usually high in protein, with the exception of soy sauce. Read labels on packages of tofu and veggie meats for the surprising amount of protein these contain. Try some tempeh, made from fermented soy beans. Even fruits and vegetables contain some protein.

Be sure to include a wide variety of foods throughout the day with the assurance that these will provide you with more than adequate protein.

When you sprinkle a few nuts or some garbanzo beans over a salad, you are adding protein.

Complete protein containing all eight essential amino acids can be found in soy foods like tofu, tempeh, and meat and chicken substitutes made from soy protein. Veggie burgers and veggie hot dogs fall into this category. In addition, sprouted legumes offer complete protein.

In many ethnic cultures complete protein comes with natural combinations like pita bread and hummus, lentils and rice, beans and corn tortillas, and soybeans and rice. Remember, too, that the all-American peanut butter sandwich provides complete protein and is even more nutritious when made with whole-grain bread.

For more information on protein for vegetarians see [Protein Basics](#)

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VITAMIN AND MINERAL CONCERNS

The term "vegan diet" may sound like a food regimen one might try temporarily as a weight loss plan or a regimen to regain one's health after an illness or trauma. While it brings success when applied for these purposes, a vegan diet is a lifestyle diet that, along with regular exercise, keeps one healthy and fit almost effortlessly.

To benefit fully from a vegan diet of plant-based foods, we suggest you familiarize yourself with a few concerns expressed by those unfamiliar with a well-planned program. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of including a wide variety of foods and consuming, on a daily basis, foods from each of the following groups: legumes, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds.

Vitamin B12. The U.S. RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) is 6 mcg. Since Vitamin B12 as cyanocobalamin is not readily available in a plant-based diet, it is important that you take a supplement to fulfill the body's needs. Though the requirement seems small, this vitamin is essential to maintaining a healthy nervous system, important in preventing pernicious anemia, helpful in cell and blood formation, beneficial to proper digestion, fertility, and growth, and necessary in the synthesis of genetic material (DNA).

This vitamin is also an aid to people with menstrual difficulties, nervousness, insomnia, memory loss, depression, fatigue, skin problems, asthma, schizophrenia, and heart palpitations.

If the label on the supplement says it contains Vitamin B12, make sure it includes the word cyanocobalamin or cobalamin. In this form the vitamin will be more readily absorbed.

Many foods are now fortified with Vitamin B12. Look for it on soymilk labels, cereal packages, and meat and chicken substitutes made from soy protein.

The Red Star company makes nutritional yeast in two varieties. Their Vegetarian Support Formula contains Vitamin B12 as cyanocobalamin. Look for it in health food markets. Two heaping tablespoons a day will supply the needed RDA. Many new mothers find it increases their milk production during lactation.

Calcium. The U.S. RDA is 1,000 mg. Calcium is an important mineral for maintaining firm bone structure and strong healthy teeth. This mineral helps us in other ways as well. It is essential for blood clotting, needed for muscle relaxation, permits regulation of cell metabolism, and helps nerve cell message transmission.

Maintaining healthy levels of calcium is rarely a problem on a well-planned vegan diet. You can find calcium in a multitude of plant foods. Vegetables that contain the highest calcium content include collards, kale, mustard greens, watercress, broccoli, okra, and dandelion greens. Sea vegetables such as wakame, arame, hiziki, and dulse are also excellent sources of calcium.

Many other foods in the plant kingdom contain rich stores of this vital mineral.

Impressive calcium content can be found in all legumes. Enjoy them daily for their exceptional calcium benefits. Within the bean family soybeans rank highest in calcium, with navy beans and black beans following closely. Foods made from soybeans, such as soymilk, tofu processed with calcium, tempeh, and meat and chicken substitutes made from soy protein will provide plenty of calcium.

Nuts and seeds are good sources of this mineral with almonds, hazelnuts, and sesame seeds rating highest. Sesame tahini added to salad dressings and sauces is a good way to bring calcium into the diet.

Among the fruits, figs are tops for their calcium content. Oranges and fortified orange juice will deliver this mineral in ample quantities as well.

Vitamin D. The U.S. RDA is 400 IU. Vitamin D is technically a hormone that is manufactured in the skin when the skin is exposed to natural sunlight. Essential to our health, Vitamin D helps the body to absorb calcium in order to maintain strong bones and teeth. Just 10 or 15 minutes a day of

natural sun exposure will provide the body with enough Vitamin D to function optimally. If you are unable to get direct sun exposure, look for foods that are fortified with this vitamin or take a supplement.

When reading labels on fortified foods or supplements, vegans will want to choose those items labeled Vitamin D2 rather than Vitamin D3. Vitamin D2, or ergocalciferol, is synthesized from plant sources, mostly from yeasts through the process of irradiation.

Animal sources, such as, fish, sheep wool, hides, or cattle brains, provide the base for the manufacture of Vitamin D3 or cholecalciferol.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids. Called essential fatty acids, these important fats perform many functions including enhancing the immune system, lowering cholesterol and triglycerides, preventing heart attacks, and reducing blood viscosity.

Though Omega 3's are available from animal sources such as fatty fish and fish oil capsules, vegans can find sufficient quantities from many plant sources. Following are foods that contain ample quantities of Omega 3's: dark green leafy vegetables like kale and collards, broccoli, flax seed meal, flax seed oil, hemp seeds, hemp seed oil, soy beans, soy bean oil, firm tofu, organic canola oil, walnuts, and walnut oil. Recommended daily servings of some items are as follows:

Flax seed oil, 1 teaspoon

Flax seed meal, 1 tablespoon

Canola oil, 4 teaspoons

Walnuts, 1/4 cup

Hemp seed oil, 1 tablespoon

Soybeans, 1 cup

Firm tofu, 12 ounces

Iron. The U.S. RDA is 18 mg. An important mineral, iron supplies oxygen to the cells throughout the body and carries away carbon dioxide as waste. It also helps immune system function and assists our mental processing.

Good sources of iron are found in all types of legumes but are especially high in soybeans, and products made of soybeans, such as firm tofu. Grains are high in iron with quinoa ranking highest. Raw kale, raw spinach, mushrooms, and baked potatoes are also healthy sources.

Nuts and seeds are excellent sources of iron with pumpkin seeds, pine nuts, sesame seeds, and pistachios leading in quantities. Meat substitutes made from soy are outstanding sources for iron.

The iron content of blackstrap molasses is exceptionally high, making it an important source for this mineral.

Iron is best absorbed when eaten along with foods containing Vitamin C. Most vegetables qualify, as do citrus fruits. A little squeeze of lemon juice will easily enhance iron absorption.

Zinc. The U.S. RDA is 15 mg. A facilitator to many functions in the body, zinc wears many hats. A few of its many tasks include eliminating carbon dioxide, assisting wound healing, and helping the immune system.

Legumes are a good source of zinc, especially garbanzo beans and lentils. Products made from soy protein, such as the meat and chicken substitutes provide plenty of zinc. Wheat germ, millet, and quinoa are highest among the grains, with all grains supplying healthy quantities.

Nuts and seeds offer ample zinc stores, with sesame tahini at the top of the list, followed by pumpkin seeds, cashews, and almonds.

For more information on zinc see <http://www.vegparadise.com/otherbirds29.html>

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BENEFITS OF A VEGAN DIET

If you were to prepare a health-oriented shopping list with specific goals you could aim for, your list might possibly look like this:

- normal blood pressure
- normal cholesterol
- clear, unclogged arteries,
- a trim figure,
- plenty of energy,
- sexual vitality,
- pain-free days and nights,
- a good night's sleep,
- good digestion,
- a sharp memory,
- good concentration
- a happy outlook.

Do these goals seem like a fantasy or just plain wishful thinking? Actually, many nutrition-oriented doctors have learned through studies that lifestyle changes such as eating a plant-based diet, exercising, and eliminating smoking can help you to attain these goals over time.

Because whole grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables are so high in complex carbohydrates, the body is supplied with plenty of energizing fuel. You won't have to drag yourself out for a walk - you'll be bursting out the door willingly. Exercise tones the muscles, helps to maintain bone mass, and increases your levels of endorphins, hormones that heighten your sense of pleasure.

Whole grains contain many of the B vitamins that directly serve the nervous system. You may find yourself thinking more clearly, concentrating with more ease, maintaining a sharper memory, managing stress better, sleeping more soundly, and enjoying an overall feeling of well being.

Certain foods have been beneficial in their ability to lower blood pressure. Some grains, such as oats and barley, and many varieties of beans are noted for their soluble fiber that has helped to bring high blood pressure down to normal levels. The allium family that includes onions and garlic is also said to lower blood pressure.

All plant foods contain valuable phytochemicals that are known to protect the body from free-radical damage. Free radicals are unstable oxygen molecules that damage our cells and are linked to a number of debilitating diseases, such as cancer, coronary artery disease, cataracts, and even aging.

Dean Ornish, M.D. and John McDougall, M.D. have seen evidence in their medical practices that a strict vegan diet reverses heart disease, lowers blood pressure, lowers cholesterol, and brings weight down naturally.

The overall benefits you'll derive from a vegan diet come from the increased intake of vitamins and minerals that help to strengthen the immune system, keep the bones strong, aid the digestion, and bring excess weight down to normal.

The bonus benefit of a vegan diet is the ease of kitchen clean-up after preparing a hearty meal. Unless you are using an excess of cooking oils, plant-based foods are not naturally greasy, the pots and pans will not be greasy, and the kitchen sink will not be greasy.

Are these attainable goals? Absolutely, but don't take our word for it. Try it and see for yourself. You have everything to gain!

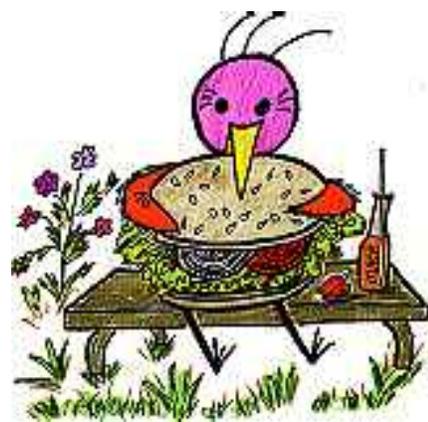
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COMFORT FOODS

The frozen food cases of most health food markets are filled with delicious comfort foods and tasty entrees that are vegetarian, with many vegan offerings as well. Savvy supermarkets now offer a limited selection of frozen vegetarian and vegan foods, too. Check these markets often to find new items as they become available.

Hamburgers: If you enjoy eating hamburgers, you can still enjoy burgers, but with a little tweaking of the ingredients. Use a whole grain bun rather than one made of refined white flour. It's much more nutritious and offers more fiber as well as richer flavor.

Fill your whole grain bun with one of a variety of meatless burgers that are now available in many nationwide supermarkets in the frozen food case. Boca Burger makes a few different kinds including one that is vegan. Gardenburgers come in different flavors including a vegan type. MorningStar Farms produces Hard Rock Cafe All Natural Veggie Burgers that are vegan patties.



Worthington makes a fat-free vegan burger. There are many more, but it's important to read the ingredient labels to orient yourself to their contents.

Add some fresh tomatoes, onions, and lettuce to your burger, and seek out a veggie mayonnaise such as Nayoise by Nasoya or Vegenaïse by Follow Your Heart for the finishing touch on a delightful burger that won't clog up the arteries.

Check the frozen food case of your local supermarkets as well as health food markets for new products that appear with regularity. Recently some of the major food companies such as General Mills, Kellogg's, and Kraft have purchased companies that manufacture health foods. Vegetarian and vegan foods are easier to find than ever.

Pot Pies, Burritos, and Enchiladas: The brand called Amy's can be found in many supermarkets in the frozen food case. If the supermarket in your area does not carry this brand, check with your health food market. Try requesting your local supermarket manager to order some vegetarian items. The markets want your business and will often honor requests.

Lunchmeats, Canadian Bacon, Pepperoni: Yves Veggie Cuisine makes all of these and more. Veggie lunch meats by Yves are made from soy products and wheat gluten and make for tasty sandwich fillings as well as great flavor additions to pasta sauces and casseroles. Find them in your health food market and some savvy supermarkets. Request these excellent products if your supermarket does not yet carry them.

Hot Dogs, Italian Links, Sausages: Yves Veggie Cuisine and Lightlife make their products from soy and wheat gluten with flavors that are difficult to distinguish from the real thing. These products are cooked and ready to heat and eat. Lightlife makes Gimme Lean sausage, hot dogs, fake bacon, and more. MorningStar makes Veggie Dogs as well as Burgers.

Chili: Fantastic Foods makes instant meals in a cup and is famous for their Cha-Cha Chili. They also make Chili Ole'.

For a more complete list of vegetarian offerings, see our [Vegetarian Food Companies](#) page.

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In order to assist our readers in gaining information about vegetarian foods available, Vegetarians in Paradise presents this listing of companies processing and marketing natural and vegetarian foods. By presenting this database, we hope you will be able to access information about items you see on the shelves of health food stores and markets. For those living in areas where there are no convenient health food markets, this list will offer you an opportunity to contact companies directly. Links are provided to the manufacturers web pages. We invite your input on omissions, corrections, and additions.

Alle Processing Corp.

Under the brand name **Mon Cuisine** this company manufactures vegetarian and vegan complete entrees such as Salisbury Steak, Stuffed Cabbage, Stuffed Shell Pasta, Spaghetti and Meatballs, Chicken Patties and Nuggets. Uses no artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives. All items certified kosher.

56-20 59th Street

Maspeth, NY 11378

Phone: 800-245-5620 or 718-894-2000

FAX: 718-326-4642

Allison's Gourmet [http:// www.allisonsgourmet.com](http://www.allisonsgourmet.com)

Offers scrumptious, vegan cookies and brownies, made with all **organic** ingredients. Flavors delivered fresh to your door include Classic Chocolate Chip Pecan, Cinnamon Snickerdoodle, Mint Chocolate Chip, Lemon Poppyseed, and Heavenly Fudge Brownies. Will gift wrap items. Phone: 800-361-8292

Alternative Baking Company <http://www.planetdistribution.com/alternativebaking/index.cfm>

Dedicated to helping make the dairy and meat industries obsolete by providing gourmet quality vegan alternatives to traditional baked goods. Makes wheat-free line of cookies free of dairy, eggs, animal products, hydrogenated oil, artificial ingredients, and refined sugar. Cookie varieties include Pumpkin Spice, Peanut Butter, Carob Chip, Chocolate Chip, Espresso Chocolate Chip,

Mac the Chip, Oatmeal Raisin with Walnuts, Hula Nut, and Snickerdoodles.

Phone: 888-488-9725

e-mail: customersupport@planetdistribution.com

Alti Plano Gold <http://www.altiplanogold.com>

"Marketing ancient foods to modern palates," this company makes gluten-free instant quinoa hot breakfast cereals. Flavors include Regular, Chai Almond, Orange Date, Lemon Poppyseed, and Spiced Apple Raisin.

50 California St., Suite 25

Phone: 650-823-3196

FAX: 415-358-5564

e-mail: evonne@altiplanogold.com

Alvarado St. Bakery Products <http://www.alvaradostreetbakery.com>

Organic, certified Kosher whole grain breads, bagels, and wheat tortillas made from sprouted grains rather than flour. All products are free of preservatives, additives, dough conditioners, and bromides.

500 Martin Ave.

Rohnert Park, California 94928

Phone: 707-585-3293

FAX: 707-585-8954

e-mail: info@alvaradostreetbakery.com

Amy's Kitchen, Inc. <http://www.amys.com>

This family owned business makes and distributes over 30 different varieties of **organic** vegetarian and vegan frozen products made from fruits, vegetables and grains that are **organically** grown. These include pot pies, entrees, whole meals, burgers, pizzas, skillet meals, toaster pops, pocket sandwiches, burritos, and snacks. Also makes vegetarian and vegan canned soups and chilis as well as bottled pasta sauces.

P.O. Box 449

Petaluma, CA 94953

Phone: 707-578-7188

amy @amyskitchen.net

Angel's Earthkind Kitchen <http://www.imearthkind.com>

Produces vegan Mozzarella, Caraway Jack, and Nacho flavored cheeses that are casein free, low fat and cholesterol free, and they melt. Easy to order online for shipping across the country. Check website for availability at local Southern California locations.

Distributed by Follow Your Heart

P.O.Box 9400

Canoga Park, CA 91309-0400

Phone: 818-348-9946

FAX: 818-348-1509

e-mail: cheese@imEarthKind.com

Annie's Homegrown <http://www.annies.com>

Makes totally natural and **organic** pasta dinners, including macaroni and cheese, pasta meal side

dishes, and canned kids meals.

P.O. Box 554, Wakefield, MA 01880

Phone: 781-224-9639

e-mail: bernie@annies.com

Annie's Naturals <http://www.anniesnaturals.com>

Organic salad dressings and vinaigrettes and **organic** marinades and sauces in a wide variety of unique flavor combinations such as Shiitake & Sesame Dressing. Some products available in large food service sizes. Products for special dietary needs include gluten-free items, some products made without added sweetener, vegan, vinegar-free, and dairy-free.

792 Foster Hill Road

North Calais, Vermont 05650

Phone: 800-434-1234

FAX: 802-456-8865

e-mail: info@anniesnaturals.com

Arora Creations <http://www.aroracreations.com>

Authentic Indian spice blends for vegetarian and vegan cuisine. Spice packets include spice blends for Punjabi Chick Peas, Gobi Cauliflower, Rajmah Kidney Beans, Bhindi Masala.

73 Gates Ave., Suite 7

Brooklyn, NY 11238

Phone: 718-623-5501

Email: info@aroracreations.com

Barbara's Bakery <http://www.barbarasbakery.com>

Makes a wide variety of vegan and vegetarian, kosher whole grain cereals and snack products. Many products are **organic**.

3900 Cypress Drive

Petaluma, CA 94954

Phone: 707-765-2273

e-mail: info@barbarasbakery.com

Blue Diamond Natural Foods <http://www.bluediamond.com>

Vegetarian Nut-Thins crackers in four varieties, Almond, Hazelnut, Pecan, and Smokehouse Almond. Also makes dairy-free soy protein enriched Almond Breeze beverage in original, vanilla, and chocolate flavors.

1802 C Street

Sacramento, California 95814

Phone: 916-442-0771

FAX: 916-446-8461

e-mail: feedback@bdgrowers.com

Blueberry Hill Organics <http://www.blueberryhillorganics.com>

Produces non-dairy cookie mixes made with certified **organic** ingredients with none of them refined. Mixes include Banana Nutbutter and Chocolate Chip Walnut.

North Kingstown, RI

Phone: 888-598-2444

e-mail: blueberryhillorganics@juno.com

Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods <http://www.bobsredmill.com>

Stone grinds a wide variety of whole grains into flours, meals and farinas. Creates bread mixes, pancake and waffle mixes, and breakfast cereals. Sells bulk grains, seeds, and beans. Produces a line of gluten-free products. Over 40 of their items are **organic**.

5209 SE International Way, Milwaukee, OR 97222

Phone: 503-654-3215

FAX: 503-653-1339

e-mail: contact on web site

Boca Burger, Inc. <http://www.bocaburger.com>

Makes a number of meatless products such as burgers (one a Vegan Original), a ground beef substitute, breakfast links and patties, meatless tenders and nuggets, and chicken substitutes. **Now owned by Kraft which is part of Phillip Morris.** 20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1360, Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: 312-201-0300

e-mail: marketing@bocaburger.net

Bumble Bar <http://www.bumblebar.com>

Creates organic vegan energy bars which contain flax seeds, sesame seeds, and peanuts. The bars have no preservatives, chemicals, or genetically modified ingredients.

20211 Vashon Highway SW, Vashon, WA 98070

Phone: 206-463-2088

888-453-3369

e-mail: info@bumblebar.com

Canadian Organic Sprout Company (COSC) <http://www.cosc.ca>

Makes sprouted flax powders that are stable at room temperature for 1 year. Flavors include cranberry, blueberry, and plain.

340 Bell Blvd.

Belleville, ON, Canada K8P 5H7

Phone: 877-456-6088

FAX: 613-969-2277

e-mail: info@cosc.ca

Cascadian Farm <http://www.cfarm.com>.

Produces over 150 **organic** products in eight food categories. Included are frozen vegetables and fruits, juice concentrates, fruit spreads and conserves, frozen desserts, meals and entrees, pickles, relishes, and sauerkraut. **Cascadian Farm is a division of Small Planet Foods which is now owned by General Mills.**

719 Metcalf St., Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Phone: 360-855-0100

e-mail: TalkToUs@smallplanetfoods.com

CeciLuna <http://www.ceciluna.com>

Markets raw vegan **organic** snacks that are free of gluten, refined sugar, artificial flavorings, and

preservatives. Perfect for hiking, camping, and traveling. Offerings include raw energy bars, nut meals, power wraps, and gift packs. Orders must be placed online or by mail.

6366 Commerce Blvd., #200

Rohnert Park, CA 94928

e-mail: questions@ceciluna.com

Cedarlane Natural Foods, Inc. <http://www.cedarlanefoods.com>

Producer of low-fat frozen natural foods including enchiladas, pot pies, Asian Veggie Chik'n dinners, quesadillas, burritos, stuffed focaccia, veggie wraps, and more. Many of the dinners are made with soy protein.

1135 E. Artesia Blvd., Carson, CA 90746

Phone: 800-826-3322

FAX: 310-886-7733

e-mail: feedback@cedarlanefoods.com

Chocolate Decadence <http://www.chocolatedecadence.com>

Creates dairy-free, gluten-free, vegan chocolate products including hand-dipped chocolates, truffles, chocolates especially for children (dinosaurs), bars, brownies, chocolate chip cookies, chocolate gift boxes and baskets, and more. All products are kosher parve.

1050-D Bethel Dr., Eugene, OR 97402

Phone: 541-607-9073 or 800-324-5018

Fax: 541-607-6373

e-mail: chocolate@chocolatedecadence.com

Conrad Rice Mill, Inc. <http://www.conradricemill.com>

Using the brand name **HOL*GRAIN**, they make wheat-free and gluten-free baking mixes such as pancake and waffle mix and brownie mix. Also produce brown rice crackers in 4 flavors and whole wheat crackers in two flavors. Produces packaged rice blends. Products are certified kosher.

307 Ann St.

P.O. Box 10640

New Iberia, LA 70562-0640

Phone: 337-364-7242

FAX: 337-365-5806

Crum Creek Mills, Inc. <http://www.crumcreek.com>

Makes high protein products from non GMO soy protein such as Soy Protein Penne and Spaghetti, Soy Protein Breadsticks, and Soy Protein Powder.

700 Old Marple Road

Springfield Pennsylvania 19064

Phone: 888-607-3500

Decas Cranberry Products, Inc. <http://www.decascranberry.com>

Grows cranberries and sells them dried, sweetened, diced, and dried unsweetened. They also make cranberry puree, cranberry concentrate, sliced cranberries, whole cranberries, and spray-dried cranberry concentrate.

219 Main Street

Wareham, Massachusetts 02571

Phone: 800-649-9811
FAX: 508-291-1417
e-mail: paradise@decascranberries.com

Delicious Choices, Inc. <http://www.deliciouschoices.com>

Makes several varieties of cheesecakes including Pumpkin, Carob Marble, Strawberry Swirl, and New York Style as well as a sampler that includes six different varieties. The eight-inch diameter, three-pound cheesecakes provide 12 servings each. All are certified vegan. Shipped next day or second day air.

4524 Eagle Ridge Road
Lincoln, NE 68516
Phone: 402-420-1320
E-mail: nowhey2000@yahoo.com

Dixie Diners' Club <http://www.dixiediner.com>

Makes DDC Official Soysage Cornbread Dressing, DDC Official Soysage Pattie Mix, and DDC Official Crumblers mixes, all vegan. This company is also an online grocer that stocks a huge variety of items from baking mixes, canned goods, and flaxseeds to lentil soups, pastas, and soy products. Many items are **organic**, many vegan.

Phone: 800-233-3668, Ext 300
e-mail: info@dixieusa.com

Dominex, L.C. <http://www.dominexeggplant.com>

Manufactures vegetarian breaded frozen Italian-style eggplant cutlets and eggplant sticks.

P.O. Box 5069
St. Augustine, FL 32085
Phone: 904-692-1348
FAX: 904-692-2348
e-mail: sales@dominexeggplant.com

Double Rainbow Gourmet Ice Creams, Inc. <http://www.doublerainbow.com>

Makes a number of different flavors of kosher vegan soy cream including White Chocolate Raspberry, Very Cherry Chocolate Chip, Egg Nog, and Butter Pecan. In addition they produce a variety of fruity vegan sorbets.

275 South Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94103
Phone: 415-861-5858
FAX: 415-861-5872

Dowd and Rogers Inc. <http://www.dowdandrogers.com>

Manufactures and markets premium gluten free products including cake mixes made with chestnut flour, Italian chestnut flour, and imported corn pastas. Uses only natural ingredients.

1641 49th Street
Sacramento, CA 95819
916-451-6480
info@dowdandrogers.com

Dr. McDougall's Right Foods <http://www.rightfoods.com>

Sells a variety of vegan instant dehydrated soups such as Chili with Beans & Corn Chips and Split Pea with Barley. Also sells five varieties of vegan instant breakfasts such as Oatmeal & Wheat with Real Apples and Cinnamon. Products available by the case.

Phone: For orders 800-367-3844

Phone: For information 650-583-4993

Earthy Delights <http://www.earthy.com>

A company that supplies the Culinary Institute of America with fresh wild mushrooms, fiddleheads, wild leeks, they also have dried exotic mushrooms, morels, white asparagus, fresh herbs, Thai sauces, vinegars, dressings, fruits & nuts, pasta, grains, legumes, Spanish olive oil, truffle oil.

Specializes in wild mushrooms featuring chanterelles, morels, fiddleheads, and ramps under the **Wild Harvest** label.

1161 E. Clark Road, Suite 260

DeWitt, Michigan 48820

Phone: 800-367-4709 or 517-668-2402

FAX: 517-668-1213

E-mail: ed@earthy.com

EatIntheRaw.com <http://www.eattheraw.com>

Produces Parma, a vegan, sugar-free parmesan cheese alternative made from raw **organic** walnuts, nutritional yeast, and sea salt. Contains no artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives.

P.O. Box 682

Ashland, OR 97520

Phone: 541-665-0348

Eat Raw <http://www.eatraw.com>

Sells all raw products including raw **organic** cashews, goji berries, virgin coconut butter, raw sweets, raw crackers, raw olives and olive oils, organic sun-dried fruit, and raw energy bars.

125 Second St.

Brooklyn, NY 11231

Phone: 866-432-8729

International Phone: 718-210-0048

FAX: 718-802-0116

Eden Foods <http://www.eden-foods.com>

Manufactures and distributes a variety of **organic** foods including pastas (some from kamut, rye, rice and potato, mung bean, buckwheat, kuzu and sweet potato, and quinoa and kamut), non-dairy drinks, canned beans, tomatoes and tomato sauces, malt sweeteners, quinoa, apple and cherry juices and sauces, unrefined oils, vinegars, macrobiotic foods, soy sauces, mirin, ponzu, miso, sea vegetables, Japanese tea, crackers, chips, snacks, food concentrates and supplements, and bulk beans, grains, and flour.

701 Tecumseh Road, Clinton, MI 49236

Phone: 888-424-3336

e-mail: info@edenfoods.com

Edward & Sons Trading Company, Inc. <http://www.edwardandsons.com>

Makes certified **organic** Brown Rice Snaps in several flavors such as Tamari Sesame, Buckwheat Tamari, and Vegetable. Offers a variety of other **organic** products such as Miso-Cup, **Organic** Country Bouillon Cubes, Asian sauces, hot sauces, candies, and waffle cones. Some products vegan, some vegetarian.

4420 Villa Real, Suite C

Carpinteria, California 93013

Phone: 805-684-8500

FAX: 805-684-8220

e-mail: info@edwardandsons.com

El Burrito Mexican Food Products, Inc. <http://www.elburrito.com>

Manufactures vegetarian soy products using non GMO soybeans. Items include Soyrizo (meatless soy chorizo), SoyLoaf (meatless meatloaf), SoySteak, and SoyTaco.

14940 Don Julian Rd.

City of Industry, CA 91745

Phone: 800-933-7828

FAX: 626-369-6972

e-mail: elburrito@elburrito.com or info@elburrito.com

Elena's Food Specialties, Inc.

Under the name **Nate's**, manufactures vegetarian meatballs in three flavors and rolled tacos in three flavors. Uses **organic** flours and non GMO beans

405 Allerton Ave.

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Phone: 800-376-5368

FAX: 650-871-0502

Emes Kosher Products

Manufactures flavored and unflavored kosher, vegan gelatin made from carageenan, locust bean gum, and maltodextrin. Sweeteners include sucrose made from beets and fructose made from corn. They also make vegetarian soup bases in chicken and beef flavors. Products can be located through these distributors:

ABC (Adventist Book Center) All their stores nationwide

Silver Spring, MD, 800-325-8492

Glendale, CA, 888-266-5047

East Coast: Potomac Health Foods, 800-325-8492

East Coast Southern Region: Clark Distributing, 615-826-7631

Rapidan, VA: Hartland Natural Food Store, 800-763-9355

Midwest: Apple Valley Market, 616-471-6873

Michigan: Country Life Natural Foods, 269-236-5011 or 1-800-456-7694

Lincoln, NE: Kuehl's Midwest Distributors, 800-843-7780

West Coast: Angwin, CA: Howell Mountain Distributors, 800-865-2893

Dufur, OR: Azure Standard, 451-467-2230

ENER-G Foods, Inc. <http://www.ener-g.com>

Makes a wide selection of baking products for the health minded including vegan egg-free Egg Replacer, sorghum flour, sweet potato flour. Dairy-free products include SoyQuik Beverage and NutQuik Beverage.

P.O. Box 84487

Seattle, WA 98124-5787

Phone: 800-331-5222

Essential Foods

Makes mostly **organic** burritos, **organic** salsa, and wrap-style sandwiches. Produces vegetarian meals for airlines.

454 N. 34th St.

Seattle, WA 98103

Phone: 206-545-4194

Fabe's Natural Gourmet <http://www.fabesnatural.com>

Produces a wide variety of cakes, cookies, cheesecakes, brownies, pastries, muffins, mousses, and more that offer options such as vegan, wheat-free, egg-free, dairy-free, cholesterol-free, gluten-free, raw, and **organic**. Products are fruit-juice sweetened and are free of artificial flavors or colors. Available nationwide.

18115 Saticoy St.

Reseda, CA 91335

Phone: 818-344-4578 (in California)

Phone: 303-375-9925 (in Colorado)

FAX: 818-344-4879

E-mail: Jennifer@fabesnatural.com

Fairfield Farm Kitchens <http://www.fairfieldfarmkitchens.com/>

Makes authentic Moosewood soups that are **organic** vegetarian and vegan under the brand name Moosewood. The 18-oz. heat and serve varieties include Mediterranean Tomato & Rice, Texas Two Bean Chili, Hearty Mushroom Barley, Tuscan White Bean & Vegetable, Creamy Broccoli & Cheese, and Creamy Potato & Corn.

309 Battles Street,

Brockton, MA 02301

Phone: 508-584-9300

FAX: 508-580-9910

e-mail: MOOSEWOOD@FFKINC.COM

Fall River Wild Rice <http://www.frwr.com>

Produces natural wild rice and wild rice chips.

41577 Osprey Dr.

Fall River Mills, CA 96028

Phone: 800-626-4366 or 530-336-5222

FAX: 530-336-5265

e-mail: info@frwr.com

Fantastic Foods <http://www.fantasticfoods.com>

Offers nearly 80 delicious, all natural, vegetarian meal solutions that are quick and easy to prepare. Vegetarian soups and meals-in-a-cup, simmer soups, entrees and side dishes are available nationwide through natural foods stores, specialty stores and grocery stores. Orders can also be placed via the website.

580 Gateway Drive, Napa, CA 94558

Phone: 707-254-3700

e-mail: askus@fantasticfoods.com

The Field Roast Grain Meat Company <http://www.fieldroast.com>

Manufactures a unique vegetarian grain meat made from grains, vegetables, and legumes that can be sliced, grilled, ground, or minced. Products include Lentil Sage Loaf, Smoked Tomato Loaf, Mushroom Onion Loaf, and Sunflower Country-Style Cutlets.

1225 South Angelo St., Seattle, WA 98108

Phone: 206-762-5961

e-mail: info@fieldroast.com

The Fillo Factory, Inc. <http://www.fillofactory.com>

Produces over 200 natural **organic** kosher products with **The Fillo Factory** and **Aunt Trudy's** labels. Products include fillo dough (spelt, whole wheat, white wheat), kataifi, pastry shells, dairy and non-dairy hors d'oeuvres, appetizers, entrees, and desserts. Most items are ready to bake and are available in both retail and food service.

1-800-653-4556, ext. 14

Follow Your Heart <http://www.followyourheart.com>

Makes vegan mayonnaise under the name Vegenaïse. The four varieties include original, grapeseed oil, expeller pressed, and organic. All are egg free, dairy free, gluten free, and wheat free. They also make a large selection of natural salad dressings. They market Cary Brown's Country Smoked Chicken-free Chicken as well as Angel's Vegan Gourmet Cheese Alternative in Mozzarella, Nacho, and Caraway Jack flavors.

P.O. Box 9400, Canoga Park, CA 91309-0400

Phone: 818-347-9946

FAX: 818-348-1509

e-mail: info@FollowYourHeart.com

Foods Alive <http://www.foodsalive.com>

Makes certified organic vegan raw crackers from flaxseed in four flavors: Regular, Mexican Harvest, Italian Zest, and Maple Cinnamon. Also sells golden flax seeds that are kosher. All crackers are low carb, wheat and gluten free.

4840 CR #4

Waterloo, IN 46793-9770

Phone: 260-488-4497

e-mail: foodsalive@direcway.com

Franklin Farms <http://www.franklinfarms.com>

Sells exotic varieties of fresh organic mushrooms. Select from maitake, shiitake, agaricus, portabella, crimini, oyster, enoki, and dried mushrooms. They also make vegetarian, All Natural

Veggieburgers from their mushroom varieties. Site contains health information about mushrooms.
931 Route 32
North Franklin, Connecticut 06254
e-mail: PR@franklinfarms.com

Frankly Natural Bakers <http://www.franklynatural.com>

Manufacturers over 30 baked products including a variety of cookies and brownies without preservatives, additives, or refined sugar. Also prepares baked goods for other companies under their labels. Specialties include Vegan Date-Nut Squares, Gourmet Blondies, Butter-Free Shortbread, and **Organic** Filled Cookies. Ships nationwide. Most items are vegan, a few vegetarian.

7740 Formula Place
San Diego, CA 92121
Phone: 858-536-5910

French Meadow Bakery <http://www.frenchmeadow.com>

Specializes in yeast-free bakery products made with **organic** whole grain flours. Includes breads, pizza crusts, and bagels. They also make wheat-free, yeast-free breads, pizza crusts, and bagels.

2610 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408
Phone: 612-870-4740 and 1-877-No Yeast
e-mail: info@frenchmeadow.com

FungusAmongUs <http://www.fungusamongus.com>

Grows a large variety of **organic** mushrooms and sells them in dried form. Hard to find varieties like Maitake, Matsutake, Morel, and Lion's Mane available. Also sells gourmet mushrooms and herb blends for seasoning, mushroom teas, and **organic** mushroom gardens for growing your own mushrooms.

P.O. Box 352
Snohomish, Washington 98291
Phone: 360-568-3403
FAX: 800-428-3758
e-mail: shrooms@fungusamongus.com

Galaxy Foods Company <http://www.galaxyfoods.com>

Markets a line of dairy alternative products made from soy. Includes veggie slices, cream cheese, butter, ice cream, yogurt, and milk. Under the name **Soyco Vegan**, they make vegan sliced cheese, grated parmesan, chunk cheese, sour cream and cream cheese.

2441 Viscount Row, Orlando, FL 32809
Phone: 800-808-2325 or 407-855-5500
FAX: 407-855-7485
e-mail: contact on web site

Gardenburger <http://www.gardenburger.com>

Makes a variety of frozen meatless entrees made from vegetables, grains, and seasonings. Now features more than 10 products that are vegan, such as Burgers, Meatless Riblets, Flame Grilled Chink'n, Meatless Breakfast Sausage, and Buffalo Chik'n Wings.

1411 SW Morrison Street, Suite 400, Portland, OR 97205

Phone: 503-205-1500

FAX: 503-205-1650

e-mail: acole@gardenburger.com

Genisoy <http://www.genisoy.com>

Manufactures vegan kosher soy products such as soy snacks, soynuts, soy protein bars, and flavored soy shake mixes and powders. All items use non GMO soybeans.

2351 N. Watney Way, Suite C

Fairfield, CA 94533

Phone: 888-GENISOY(888-436-4769) or 707-399-2510

FAX: 707-399-2518

e-mail: sales@mloproducts.com

Ginny's Vegan Foods <http://www.ginnysveganfoods.com>

Low-fat high-fiber certified Kosher and pareve tomato based stews such as Savory Soy Chili, Classic Ratatouille, Mexican Fiesta Stew, and Roasted Pepper Chili.

143 Mount Prospect Road

Lancaster, New Hampshire 03584-3305

Phone 877-24-VEGAN

FAX: 603-788-4606

e-mail: vegan@ncia.net

Gluten-Free Pantry, Inc. <http://www.glutenfree.com>

Sells frozen gluten-free grain products such as sandwich bread, cinnamon raisin bread, hamburger and sandwich rolls, biscuits, cookies, cereals, waffle cones, wafers, crispbread, and pretzels. Also makes gluten-free baking mixes for breads, muffins, pancakes, and desserts. Ingredients are vegetarian.

182 Oakwood Drive

P.O. Box 840

Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

Phone: 800-291-8386 (orders only)

Phone and FAX: 860-633-3826

e-mail: pantry@glutenfree.com

Gojiberry <http://www.gojiberry.com>

Orcas Island Herbal Apothecary sells fresh dried **organic** wild and cultivated Tibetan goji berries grown by the Goji Berry Farmers' Co-op of Inner Mongolia.

P.O. Box 1886

Eastsound, WA 98245

Phone: 360-376-TARA (8272)

e-mail: drolma@interisland.net

Golspie Mill <http://www.golspiemill.co.uk>

Located in the Scottish Highlands, this mill produces **organic** flours including wholemeal bread, wholemeal plain, rye, and oatmeal. They also offer beremeal (barley flour) and peasemeal (flour made from dried peas). Company ships to the U.S.

Dunrobin, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6SF

Phone/Fax: 01408-633278

e-mail: info@golspiemill.co.uk

Gopal's <http://www.gopalshealthfoods.com>

Raw certified **organic** health foods prepackaged in bars, cookies, and wraps. Contain no soy, gluten, wheat, or added sugar. Products have low glycemic loads and are alkalizing.

29000 Lilac Road

Valley Center, CA 92082

Phone: 866-646-7257 or 760-751-3923

Fax: 760-751-3089

e-mail: admin@gopalshealthfoods.com

Govinda's Bliss Bars <http://www.govindabars.com>

Natural and mostly **organic** snack bars made from nuts, seeds, fruits, and spices. Hemp Bars and Bliss Bars available in a variety of flavors. Raw Power snacks such as Tropical Ambrosia include **organic** nuts, seeds, and dried fruits. Some raw snacks include sprouted seeds.

2651 Ariane Drive

San Diego, California 92117

Phone: 858-270-0691

e-mail: blissbar@earthlink.net

Grainaissance, Inc. <http://www.grainaissance.com>

Creates products from brown rice including Amazake drinks and puddings as well as Mochi, a bake-and-serve snack. Amazake drinks include flavors like Mocha Java, Vanilla Gorilla, Tiger Chai, and Rice Nog.

1580 62nd St.

Emeryville, CA 94608

Phone: 800- 472-4697 or 510-547-7256

FAX: 510-547-0526

e-mail: amazake@grainaissance.com

Hain Food Group <http://www.thehainfoodgroup.com>

A natural food conglomerate that markets under a number of brand labels. **Heinz presently owns 19.5% of the Hain Food Group.**

- **Alba**
Produces dry milk, shake and cocoa mix products
- **Arrowhead Mills**
Markets natural and **organic** whole grain hot and ready-to-eat cereals, flour, baking mixes, chili, and soup
- **Bearitos**
Creates canned chilis, sauce mixes, and snacks
- **Boston's Better Snacks**
Makes kettle-popped corn, reduced fat potato chips, and other snacks.
- **Casbah**

Vegetarian grain-based side dishes and prepared mixes such as tabbouli and falafel.

- **Celestial Seasonings**

Green tea, Organic tea, Black teas, Fruit teas, Herbal teas, Caffeine free teas, Holiday teas, Mountain Chai, and various tea samplers

- **De Boles Nutritional Foods**

A division of Arrowhead Mills, makes all kinds of pastas including some from Jerusalem artichoke flour

- **Earth's Best Baby Food**

Largest **organic** baby food company in the United States.

- **Estee**

Markets sugar-free fructose sweetened, low fat foods and snacks for people with diabetes or on sugar-restrictive diets.

- **Farm Foods**

Creates non-dairy frozen pizza featuring **organic** whole wheat crust sold under the name Pizsoy. Makes frozen chili.

- **Featherweight**

Prepares a line of foods for people on sodium-restricted diets

- **Garden of Eatin'**

Makes natural food snacks including blue corn chips

- **Hain Pure Foods**

Markets rice and popped corn cakes, canned soups, and expeller-pressed oils, condiments, non-dairy beverages, and cookies.

- **Harry's Premium Snacks**

Makes pretzel and chip snacks

- **Health Valley Company**

Manufacturers over 100 natural, preservative-free products including canned soups, crackers, dry cereals, cereal cups, and power bars. No artificial flavors or colors.

- **Hollywood**

Markets safflower, peanut, and canola oils as well as carrot juice, and condiments.

- **Imagine Foods**

Produces Rice Dream and Soy Dream Mon-Dairy Beverages as well as Rice Dream Frozen Desserts and Imagine soups, puddings, and beverages.

- **Kineret**

Produces a variety of kosher frozen foods

- **Little Bear**

Makes **organic** snack products without genetically-engineered organisms

- **Terra Chips**

Produces natural potato and vegetable chips

- **Westbrae Natural**

Produces a line of **organic** canned vegetables, beans, and corn pasta

- **Westsoy**

Creates non-dairy soy and rice beverages

- **Weight Watchers**

Dry, frozen, and refrigerated products for weight loss

- **Yves Veggie Cuisine**

Sells a variety of meatless fat-free products including veggie dogs, burger patties, breakfast links, ground round, and sliced products. Everything they produce is vegan except their new product, **The Good Slice**, a vegetarian soy cheese.

The Hain Food Group

50 Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Uniondale, NY 11553

Phone: 516-237-6200

Fax: 516-237-6240

e-mail: news@thehainfoodgroup.com

Hawai'i Taro Co. <http://www.hawaiitaro.com>

Home of the original Maui Taro Burger, this company located in Maui, Hawaii, makes a vegan burger that features taro plus all fresh, natural ingredients.

Phone: 808-575-5110

FAX: 808-575-5108

e-mail: taro@maui.net

Health is Wealth Foods, Inc. <http://www.healthiswealthfoods.com>

Makes vegetarian chicken-free chicken, beef, and bacon products such as Chicken-Free Nuggets, Patties, and Buffalo Wings. Other products include a variety of Munchies, Egg Rolls, Potstickers, and Dumplings. Some Kosher Products.

1051-A Sykes Lane

Williamstown, NJ 08094

Phone: 856-728-1998

Healthco Canada <http://www.healthcocanada.com>

Under the brand **Re-Bar** they make an **organic**, non-GMO fruit and vegetable snack bar with living enzymes in raspberry, strawberry, blueberry, blackberry, and grape flavors. The products contain no added sugar, no preservatives, and are vegan and celiac friendly.

1190 Lawrence Ave., Suite 208

Kelowna, B.C.

Canada V1Y 6M4

Phone: 877-468-2875

FAX: 250-868-2195

e-mail: kerry@healthcocanada.com

HempNut Inc. <http://www.TheHempNut.com>

Sells 100% **organic** hemp seeds in a special can with a 6-month shelf life. Also makes an all-vegan veggieburger featuring hempseeds, soybeans, and brown rice.

P.O. Box 1368, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-1368

Phone: 877-HEMPNUT or 707-541-1338

FAX: 707-545-7116

e-mail: infoweb@TheHempNut.com

Hempola <http://www.hempola.com>

Sells salad dressings made from cold-pressed hemp oil products like Herbalicious Vinaigrette that contain the essential fatty acids, Omega-3 and Omega-6. Also available are supplements, flour, massage oil, soaps, moisturizing creams, lip balm, and clothing all made from hemp.

Phone: 800-240-9215

e-mail: hempola@hempola.com

House Foods America <http://www.house-foods.com>

Under the names **Hinoichi** and **House Foods** they make tofu to meet every need, including **organic** tofu soft, regular, firm,, and extra firm. They also make tofu desserts, tofu cutlets, tofu fritters, yam cakes, yam noodles, and natto.

7351 Oranewood Ave.

Garden Grove, CA 92841

e-mail: Laura@house-foods.com

Jae's Organic Food <http://www.chutneyfever.com>

Under the brand name **Chutney Fever** the company makes three **100% organic** chutneys that contain no refined sugar. The Apricot Ginger and Curried Banana are vegan, the Date Cranberry is vegetarian.

4021 McIntyre Rd.

Trumansburg, New York 14886

Phone: 607-387-9046

Email: jae@chutneyfever.com

Jaffe Bros. <http://www.organicfruitsandnuts.com>

Sells **organically** grown and untreated natural foods including shelled and unshelled nuts, unsalted nut butters, seeds and sprouting materials, peas and beans, grains and flour, whole-grain pastas, olives, and dried fruits. More products in their extensive catalog.

28560 Lilac Road

Valley Center, CA 92082

Phone: 760-749-1133

e-mail: JB54@worldnet.att.net

Jivan Foods, Inc. <http://www.kissthecook.ca>

Under the brand name **Kiss the Cook (TM)** this Canadian-based company makes a line of heat-and-serve meatless foods with certified non-GMO soy protein. Vegan offerings include Green , Red, and Panang Thai Curries, Pasta Sauces such as Porcini Mushroom & Wine and Puttanesca with Sun Dried Tomatoes. Their Bolognese Pasta Sauce with Artichoke Hearts is vegetarian.

4870 Beaconsfield Avenue

Montreal, QC, Canada

H3X3R6

Phone: 514-751-2584

FAX: 514-369-4567

e-mail: hghosh@kissthecook.ca

Jungle Enterprises, LLC <http://www.jungle-foods.com>

Creators of Flax Crax, living food gourmet crackers made with regular and/or golden flax seeds. Flavors include Jamaican Spice, Naan Style, Tomato Herb, and Smoky Onion. Most ingredients are **organic**.

1750 30th St., #610
Boulder, CO 80301
Phone: 720-565-CRAX

Kashi Company <http://www.kashi.com>

Makes a variety of whole grain cereals, minimally processed and pesticide free. Some have dairy. Kashi GoLEAN, Kashi Go, Kashi Medley, Kashi Baby & Me, Kashi Pilaf, Puffed Kashi, Good Friends, and Kashi Pillows are some of their cereal products.

P.O. Box 8557, La Jolla, CA 92038-8557
e-mail: kashico@kashi.com

Kashi Company is now owned by Kellogg's

Liberty Richter <http://www.libertyrichter.com>

Distributes Wasa, a certified **organic** whole-grain rye crispbread in a variety of flavors including soya. The company also distributes GMO-free Sacla antipasto in 5 varieties and 7 kinds of pesto sauces. Other products they offer are Morga **organic** broth and bouillon, KA-ME sesame cookies, Belsoy soymilk, and Sesmark Sesame Thins and Savory Thins.

400 Lyster Ave.
Saddle Brook, New Jersey 07663
Phone: 201-843-8900
FAX: 201-368-3575
e-mail: info@libertyrichter.com

Liberty Richter is a division of Tree of Life

Lightlife Foods, Inc. <http://lightlife.com>

Manufactures many vegan meat substitutes with no artificial additives, including Gimme Lean Beef and Sausage, Savory Seitan, Fakin Bacon, 4 kinds of tempeh, Smart Ground, Smart Links, Smart Dogs, Smart Cutlets, Smart Deli Slices, Foney Boloney, Pepperoni Sticks, and Marinated Tempeh Grilles. Read labels carefully. Some items may have eggs and dairy.

153 Industrial Blvd., Turner Falls, MA 01376
Phone: 800-SOY-EASY (769-3279)
e-mail: infor@lightlife.com

Now owned by agribusiness conglomerate ConAgra.

Live Foods, Inc. <http://www.bragg.com>

Using the brand name Bragg, this company produces non-GMO liquid aminos, raw **organic**, unfiltered and unpasteurized apple cider vinegar, organic extra virgin olive oil from first cold pressing, and a number of health books.

P.O. Box 7, Santa Barbara, CA 93102
Phone: 800-446-1990 or 805-968-1020
FAX: 805--968-1001

Lumen Foods <http://soybean.com>

Makes meat and dairy replacement products such as **Stonewall's Jerquee** (a vegetable jerky.)

Produces *Whole Earth Vegetarian Catalogue*.

409 Scott Street, Lake Charles, LA 70601

Phone: 800-256-2253

FAX: 337-436-1769

e-mail: support@soybean.com

Lundberg Family Farms <http://www.lundberg.com>

Grows and markets a variety of **organic** brown rice, specialty rices, and brown rice products including rice cakes.

5370 Church Street, P.O. Box 369, Richvale, CA 95974-0369

Phone: 530-882-4551

FAX: 530-882-4500

e-mail: question@lundberg.com

Mark T. Wendell Tea Company <http://www.marktwendell.com>

One of the country's oldest tea companies imports and packages a large selection of **organic**, herbal, black, green, oolong, and specialty teas. Apple & Cinnamon Twist, Blackcurrant Bracer, Peach Paradise, and Strawberry & Vanilla Fool are few of the herbal fruit teas available.

50 Beharrell St.

P.O. Box 1312

West Concord, Massachusetts 01742

Phone: 978-369-3709

FAX: 978-369-7972

Melissa's World Variety Produce <http://www.melissas.com>

Importer and distributor in U.S. of fresh, exotic, **organic** fruits and vegetables from around the world. Other products include tofu, meat alternatives such as Soy Taco, cheese alternative products, legumes, grains, chiles, mushrooms, and dried fruits.

P.O. Box 21127, Los Angeles, CA 90021

Phone: 800-588-0151

e-mail: hotline@melissas.com

Morinaga Nutritional Foods, Inc. <http://www.morinu.com>

Markets Mori-Nu Silken and Lite Tofu, Tofu Hero, Mori-Nu Mates, and Morinu Creamy Soups in quart and single-serve sizes.

2050 West 190th Street, #110, Torrance, CA 90504

Phone: 800-669-8638

e-mail: info@morinu.com

Mother's Natural Foods <http://www.mothersnatural.com>

Makes whole-grain hot cereals including Oat Bran, Instant Oatmeal, Rolled Oats, Whole Wheat, Multigrain, and Barley. Also makes toasted wheat germ. Newer products include sweetened dry cereals including Peanut Butter Bumpers, Groovy Grahams, and Cinnamon Oat Crunch. Products are vegetarian.

Mother's is owned by The Quaker Oats Company which is owned by Pepsico (Pepsi Cola).

Mother's Natural Foods

321 N. Clark St.
Chicago, Illinois 60610
800-234-6281

Mrs. Mudds Vegan Belgian Chocolate <http://www.mrsmudds.com>

Boxed dark chocolates in 8 flavors such as Strawberry Romanoff and Chocolate Decadence are made from certified **organic** chocolate. Also makes four flavors of European-style instant hot chocolate. All products are vegan.

4065-M Oceanside Blvd.
Oceanside, CA 92056
Phone: 866-677-6833
FAX: 760-643-1806
e-mail: sales@mrsmudds.com

Muir Glen Organic Tomato Products <http://www.muirglen.com>

Creator of a variety of **organic** canned tomato products including sauces, salsas, juices, and condiments.

719 Metcalf St.. Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
Phone:360-855-0100
e-mail: TalkToUs@smallplanetfoods.com

Now owned by Small Planet Foods which is owned by General Mills

Nana's Cookies <http://www.healthycrowd.com>

Moist and chewy vegan and wheat-free cookies with ingredients free of GMO's, with no refined sugars, no hydrogenated oils, no eggs, no preservatives, no cholesterol, no sugar cane or beet derivatives and no added salt. Individually wrapped to retain freshness. Kosher. Cookie flavors include Chocolate Chip, Peanut Butter, Coconut Chip, Oatmeal Raisin, Double Chocolate, Sunflower and Cranberry Orange. No Wheat flavors include Brownie Mint, Chocolate Chip, and Oatmeal Raisin.

Phone: (800) 836-7534
Order online on website

Nature's First Law, Inc. <http://www.rawfood.com>

Distributors of **organic**, raw food products ideal for raw foodists. Products include sun-ripened Greek olives, Kalamata-style olives, stone-pressed olive oil, raw cassia pods, whole carob pods, raw almond butter, bulk nuts, sun-dried fruits, organic sea vegetables, Nama Shoyu, and raw aloe vera. They have published four books and distribute over 400 books on vegetarian, vegan, raw foods, and related subjects.

1475 N. Cuyamaca St.
El Cajon, CA 92020
Attention: Stephen Arlin
Phone: 619-596-7979
Phone: 800-205-2350
Phone: 888-RAW-Food
e-mail: nature@rawfood.com

Nature's Path Foods, Inc. <http://www.naturespath.com>

Markets under the **Nature's Path** and **Lifestream Products** labels. Manufactures **organic** cereals, breads and vegan toaster waffles made from whole grains and natural ingredients with no preservatives or artificial flavors. **Nature's Path** is the largest certified **organic** cereal company in North America.

7453 Progress Way Delta, British Columbia, Canada V4G 1E8

Phone: 604-940-0505

e-mail: cereal@naurespath.com

Near East Food Products <http://www.neareast.com>

Creates more than 30 different flavors and varieties of pilafs, couscous, and grain dishes including taboule and falafel mixes. Most items are certified kosher.

P.O. Box 049003

Chicago, Il 60604-9003

800-822-7423

Near East is owned by Quaker Oats which is now owned by Pepsico (Pepsi Cola)

Now and Zen <http://www.nowandzen.net>

Using **organic**, whole grain flours, expeller pressed oils, tofu, and natural juice sweeteners, this company produces a variety of vegan food from entrees to desserts. None of their items contains dairy, eggs, refined sugar, or hydrogenated oils. Entrees include UnTurkey, BBQ Unribs, Breast of UnChicken, Unsteak-Out, and Unkabobs. Desserts feature cakes, cookies, Hip Whip, and Chocolate Mousse Hip Whip.

Now owned by Green Options that also markets products under the Vegi-Deli label.

17 Paul Drive

San Rafael, CA 94903

Phone: 415-695-2805 or 888-473-3667

FAX: 415-695-2843

e-mail: info@nowandzen.net

Nutiva <http://www.nutiva.com>

Sells certified **organic** hemp and flax bars in 4 flavors: Original **Organic** Hempseed, Flax & Raisin, Hemp & Date, and Flax Chocolate. Also sells Hemp Chips in two flavors, Hempseeds, Hemp Oil, Hemp Gel Cap Supplements, and Hemp and Flax Food Sampler Packs.

P.O. Box 1616

Sepastopol, California 95473

Phone: 800-993-HEMP

e-mail: info@nutiva.com

Onai's Fresh Miso Dressings

Makes four Asian flavors of vegan salad dressings using fresh miso made with **organic** soybeans and **organic** evaporated cane juice crystals. Flavors are Wasabi Ginger, Fresh Miso Ginger, Fresh Miso, and Shiitake Sesame.

18350 N.E. 2nd Avenue

North Miami, Florida 33179

Phone: 305-651-2242

Organic Foods, Inc. <http://www.organicfoods-inc.com>

Makes Soy Pops **organic** cereal and snack food, hummus, dips, salsas, and **organic** wraps in many flavors such as Black Bean, Tex Mex, Spicy Thai, and Curried Rice and Lentils. Wraps come in adult as well as Kids Twin Packs sizes. Some items are vegetarian, some vegan.

208 Industrial Blvd.

Waconia, Minnesota 55387

Phone: 952-442-3983

FAX: 952-442-7498

e-mail: organic foods@earthlink.net

The Organic Garden <http://www.theorganicgardenfood.com>

Based in Michigan, this company makes kosher, **certified organic**, non-genetically engineered food products that include SoyNutty Crunchies, a soy snack food and SOY-N-ERGY, a soy cereal.

3990 Varsity Drive

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Phone: 734-677-5570, Ext. 33

e-mail: info@theorganicgardenfood.com

The Organic Gourmet <http://www.organic-gourmet.com>

Produces **organic** vegan and vegetarian soups, soup stock concentrates, sauces, bouillon cubes, nutritional yeast spread, oat miso pastes, tartar sauce, patés, and instant sauce mixes for quick meal preparation.

4092 Deervale Drive

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 800-400-7772

FAX: 818-906-906-7417

e-mail: scenar@earthlink.net

Organic Milling Co.

Manufactures a line of dry high fiber breakfast cereals under the **Back to Nature** label. Includes oat bran flakes, corn flakes, and soy oat flakes, and a number of granola varieties. Some contain dairy.

505 West Allen Ave.

San Dimas, CA 91773-1487

Phone: 800-638-8686 or 909-599-0961

FAX: 909-599-5180

Now owned by Kraft which is part of Phillip Morris.

Organica Foods <http://www.organicafoods.com>

Produces cookies with **organic** ingredients free of genetically modified organisms with no cholesterol, hydrogenated oils, refined sugars, preservatives, and artificial ingredients. Completely animal free. Varieties include Double Chocolate Coffee Toffee, Peanut Butter Almond Chocolate Chip, Gingered Walnut Cherry Chocolate Chip, and Oatmeal Coconut Cranberry Chocolate Chip.

10061 Riverside Dr., Suite 807

Toluca Lake, CA 91602

Phone: 877-647-6986

e-mail: info@organicafoods.com

Pacific Foods <http://www.pacificfoods.com>

Makes a variety of non-dairy beverages from oats, multigrains, soy, rice, almonds, and hazelnuts. Produces **organic** soups and broths as well as **organic** teas, Herbal Chai and Chai Green Tea blends.

19480 SW 97th Avenue, Tualatin, Oregon 97062

Phone: 503-692-9666

e-mail: pfo@pacificfoods.com

Pack Lite Foods <http://www.packlitefoods.com>

Makes vegetarian and vegan compact, lightweight, one pot breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals for camping and backpacking. Also has hot drink mixes. Foods are freeze-dried or dehydrated.

P.O. Box 1106

Grand Marais, MN 55604

Phone: 218-387-9147

FAX: 218-387-2899

e-Mail: clara@packlitefoods.com

Peanut Better, Inc. <http://www.peanutbetter.com>

Makes 12 varieties of vegan **organic** flavored peanut butter. Savory flavors include Onion Parsley, Hickory Smoked, Spicy Southwestern, Rosemary Garlic, Thai Ginger Red Pepper. Sweet flavors are Vanilla Cranberry, Cinnamon Currant, Sweet Molasses, Peanut Praline, and Deep Chocolate. They also make a blend of almonds and peanuts in smooth and crunchy. All are GMO free, kosher, parve and free of all additives.

9410 De Soto Ave., Unit G

Chatsworth, CA 91311

Phone: 818-709-9958 or 866-PEANUT-O

E-mail: customerservice@peanutbetter.com

Peanut Butter & Co. <http://www.ilovepeanutbutter.com>

Produces gourmet peanut butter and peanut-butter related items. All are kosher and vegan and contain no trans-fat or hydrogenated oils. Peanut butter varieties include Smooth Operator, Crunch Time, Cinnamon Raisin Swirl, White Chocolate Wonderful, Dark Chocolate Dreams, and The Heat Is On.

Peanut Butter & Co. Sandwich Shop

240 Sullivan St.

New York, NY 10012

Phone: 1-866-ILOVEPB

e-mail: info@ilovepeanutbutter.com

Pleasant Farms <http://www.soyburgusa.com>

Makes **Soyburg, USA** a complete line of gourmet soy products including soyburgers, soy chicken, and soy drinks.

1010 S. Arroyo Parkway, Suite 7

P.O. Box 50370

Pasadena, CA 91105-0370

Phone: 800-499-9616 or 626-403-5605

FAX: 626-403-5604

Premier Harvest Soyfoods <http://www.premierharvest.com>

Produces a variety of products with non-GMO soy ingredients. Items include vegetarian meatless meal kits, soy-enriched baking mixes, granola cereals with soy nuggets, expeller-pressed soybean oils, soy flour, and soy/rice nuggets.

P.O. Box 3483

Springfield, IL 62708

Phone: 866-372-6879 or 217-391-0091

Fax: 217-391-0096

e-mail: rkirby@spectrum-foods.com

Premier Organics <http://www.premierorganics.org>

Makes and sells raw, **organic** products including nuts, nut butters, seeds, extra virgin olive oil, capers, brown rice, wild rice, herbs and spices, and breakfast muesli and granola. Also available are raw and roasted soy nuts. Gift baskets filled with their raw organic products are a specialty.

2342 Shattuck Ave., #342

Berkeley, CA 94704

Phone: 866-237-8688 U.S. only

Phone: 415-386-2300

Pulmuone U.S.A., Inc. <http://www.pulmuone-usa.com>

Makes non-GMO, certified Kosher tofu, organic tofu, non-dairy soy smoothie base, Korean hot pepper paste, bean paste, and other Korean condiments. Donates part of its profits to various environment preservation organizations. Also markets soy products under the brand name Soga.

4567 Firestone Blvd.

South Gate, CA 90280

Phone: 323-564-3000

FAX: 323-564-2366

e-mail: info@pulmuone-usa.com

Purity Foods <http://www.purityfoods.com>

Makers of **Vita-Spelt**, an alternative to wheat, they produce organic and natural whole grain spelt products including pastas, flour, bread mixes, pancake and muffin mixes, spelt cookies, spelt sesame sticks, spelt pretzels, and snacks.

2871 W. Jolly Road

Okemos, Michigan 48864

Phone: 517-351-9231

FAX: 517-351-9391

E-mail: purityfoods@voyager.net

Quinoa Corporation <http://www.quinoa.net>

Produces pastas made from quinoa, a high-protein grain that dates back to the Incas. Wheat-free pastas include elbows, pagodas, linguine, spaghetti, rotelle, and shells.

P.O. Box 279, Gardena, CA 90248

Phone: 310-217-8125

e-mail: QuinoaCorp@aol.com

Rainforest Delights <http://www.rainforestdelights.com>

Distributes all natural tropical dried fruit medleys. Many combinations such as Monkey's Mingle includes dried pineapple, banana, papaya, mango, and a touch of strawberry. Some fruits available in bits, rings, and slices. Company donates a portion of proceeds to rainforest preservation.

1202 South Monterey St.

Alhambra, CA 91801

FAX: 626-284-8855

e-mail: gilbert@rainforestdelights.com

Rapunzel Organics <http://www.rapunzel.com>

Makes **organic** vegan bouillon and broth free of GMO's and hydrolyzed vegetable protein. Distributes Rapadura whole **organic** cane sugar, cocoa powder, baking chocolate, and other baking ingredients. Markets A. Vogel **Organic** Products that include Herbamare Seasoning, Bambu coffee substitute, and Plantaforce non-organic vegetable bouillon. Also distributes Biotta **organic** vegetable juices and fruit and vegetable juice combinations.

2424 SR-203

Valatie, New York 12186

Phone: 800-207-2814

FAX: 518-392-8630

e-mail: info@rapunzel.com

Red Star Yeast and Products <http://www.redstaryeast.com>

Makes two varieties of nutritional yeast, Vegetarian Support Formula with vitamin B12 and NBC 600 with B vitamins. These products, grown on molasses, are vegan, certified Kosher, and non-GMO.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Phone: 877-677-7000

e-mail: carol.stevens@redstaryeast.com

Red Star Yeast is a division of SAF Consumer Company

468 Northdale Rd., Suite A

Lawrenceville, GA 30045

Rejuvenative Foods <http://www.rejuvenative.com>

Under the brand name **Rejuvenative Foods**, they make raw, mostly **organic**, food products including cultured vegetables, raw nut and seed butters, and new products like raw hemp seed butter and **organic** pumpkin seed butter.

P.O. Box 8464

Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Phone: 800-805-7957

e-mail: mail@rejuvenative.com

Rella Cheese Company <http://www.rella.com>

Makes a line of cheeses, many containing casein derived from milk. The exception is Vegan Rella prepared from **organic** brown rice milk. Vegan Rella comes in cheddar and mozzarella flavors. Distributes Hempeh Burger containing hemp seeds, soy, rice. Made for them by Turtle Island Foods.

P.O. Box 5020, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Phone: 707-576-7050

FAX: 707-545-7116

e-mail: yourfriends@rella.com

Road's End Organics <http://www.chreese.com>

Makes dairy-free **organic** Pastas and ChReese, a non-dairy cheese substitute, as well as dairy-free Nacho Chreese Dips and three varieties of gravy mixes.

120 Pleasant Street, Suite E-1, Morrisville, VT 05661

Phone: 877-CHREESE

e-mail: mkoch@chreese.com

Rocamojo <http://www.rocajomo.com>

Makes caffeine-free Rocamojo, an imitation coffee from roasted **organic** soybeans. Also makes Rocamojo Blend a blend of certified **organic coffee** and **organic** soybeans.

12215 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

Phone: 818-508-8575 or 866-769-6656

FAX: 818-508-8579

Royal Caviar, Inc. <http://www.royalcaviar.com>

Makes Kaviar, a caviar substitute that looks and tastes like the real thing. Kaviar is vegan and comes in Osetra Sturgeon and Beluga flavors. This product is made from vegetables and non-GMO soybeans.

4551 San Fernando Rd., Unit 110

Glendale, California 91204

Phone: 818-546-5858 or 888-727-2284

FAX: 818-546-5856

e-mail: aza@royalcaviar.com

Seapoint Farms <http://www.seapointfarms.com>

Vegetarian Veggie Blends, Pot Pies, Veggie Sides, and Rice Bowls all made from non-GMO Edamame soybeans. Some of their soybeans are certified organic. Edamame soybeans available shelled, in the pods, cooked in the pods salted and ready to eat, organic in the pods, and organic shelled.

Huntington Beach, California 92648

Phone: 888-722-7098

e-mail: info@seapointfarms.com

Seeds of Change <http://store.yahoo.com/seedsofchange>

Mainly an **organic** seed and seedling company that has branched out into foods like soup mixes, pasta sauces, rice and grain blends, and salsa which are all totally **organic**.

P.O. Box 15700, Santa Fe, NM 87506

Phone: 888-762-7333

e-mail: gardener@seedsofchange.com

Seeds of Change is owned by Mars Incorporated, known for snacks like M & M's, Snickers, and Milky Way.

ShariAnn's Organic <http://www.shariannsorganic.com>

Makes creative varieties of **organic** soups. Most are vegan and wheat-free. Also produces canned beans and **organic** canned pumpkin.

3245 Broad St., Dexter, MI 48130

Phone: 734-426-0989

Small Planet Foods <http://www.smallplanetfoods.com>

Markets its products under **Muir Glen Organic Tomato Products** and **Cascadian Farm** labels. See those entries for information about their products. **Small Planet Foods is now owned by General Mills.**

719 Metcalf Street, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Phone: 360-855-0100

e-mail: cfarms@mail.genmills.com

Solana Gold Organics <http://www.solanagold.com>

Produces **organic** apple products without preservatives and artificial ingredients including apple juice, apple cider vinegar, and apple sauces. Apple sauces feature flavored varieties like raspberry, blackberry, boysenberry, strawberry, and apricot.

P.O. Box 1340

Sebastopol, CA 95473

Phone: 800-459-1121

FAX: 707-829-4715

Soofer Co., Inc. <http://www.sadaf.com>

They distribute Sadaf products that include pickled hot Mediterranean peppers, grapeseed oil, hummus, baba ghanouge, Mediterranean salad, and hot crushed red pepper relish. Some items are vegan.

2829 Alameda St.

Los Angeles, California 90058

Phone: 323-852-4050 or 800-852-4050

FAX: 323-234-2447

e-mail: info@sadaf.com

Soy Coffee Roasters <http://www.soycoffee.com>

Markets Soyfee's Choice fresh-roasted coffee alternative from **organically** grown soybeans.

Comes in a half-dozen flavors ground or whole bean including Almond Amaretto, French Vanilla, and Hazelnut

2881 West 12th Street, 11C, Brooklyn, NY 11224

Phone: 718-391-8654

e-mail: sincergy@aol.com

Soy Deli <http://www.quonghop.com>

Produces a wide variety of soy products such as baked tofu, tempeh, seasoned tofu burgers, soy drinks, and soy entrees.

171 Beacon St.

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Phone 650-553-9900

e-mail: sales@quonghop.com

Soyafé <http://www.OrganicsofOZ.com>

Makes a natural blend of USA grown, **certified organic** roasted soybean, 100% caffeine-free coffee alternative with soybeans as the only ingredient. Available in 12-ounce vacuum-sealed, re-sealable packages.

P.O. Box 3071

Costa Mesa, CA 92628-3071

Phone: 866-4SOYAFE

FAX: 714-546-8844

e-mail: soyafe@organicsofoz.com

Spectrum Organic Products, Inc. <http://www.spectrumnaturals.com>

First company in USA to produce **organic** olive oil, they specialize in **organic** expeller pressed oils including corn, safflower, peanut, sesame, canola, olive, sunflower, and soy. Other products include condiments such as mayonnaise, vinegars and salad dressing.

1304 South Point Blvd., Suite 280

Petaluma, CA 94954

Phone: 800-995-2705 or 707-778-8900

Fax: 707-765-8470

e-mail: info@SpectrumOrganic.com

Spice of Life Meatless Meats & Jerky <http://www.Spice-Of-Life.com>

Creates meatless meats and jerky that are wheat-free, gluten free, salt free, cholesterol-free, high in fiber and protein, and have the look, taste and texture of a wide range of meats. Products are made from defatted soy flour, Bragg Liquid Aminos, sunflower oil, and natural spices and are 100% VEGAN. Items are not only for vegetarians but also for celiacs, diabetics, low sodium dieters, and athletes who require additional protein.

Phone: 800-256-2253 or 818-909-0052

StarLite Cuisine <http://www.StarLiteCuisine.com>

Makes vegetarian and vegan frozen foods such as Soy Taquitos, Soy Tenders, Soy Tamales, Barbecued Smoked Patties, and Spicy Cajun Patties. Their newest product is Crispy Soy Rolled Tacos. All items low fat and kosher.

1429 North Virginia, Suite F-G

Baldwin Park, CA 91706

Phone: 626-338-8233

FAX: 626-338-8408

e-mail: info@starlitecuisine.com

Sun Flour Baking Company <http://www.sunflourbaking.com>

Bakes vegan cookies and snacks with no hydrogenated oils, dairy, eggs, or refined sugar. Of the 22 varieties, 9 are wheat and gluten free. Cookies are sold individually, by the pound, or bulk (20 lb. boxes). Shipping is free.

2464 Marconi Ave,

Sacramento, CA 95821

Phone: 916-488-4150 or 888-610-3708

FAX: 916-487-8278

e-mail: mail@sunflourbaking.com

Sunergia Soyfoods <http://www.sunergiasoyfoods.com>

Makes two lines of **organic**, kosher/pareve, ready-to-eat soyfoods. Seasoned More Than Tofu items have a unique, extra-firm and chewier texture with high-quality ingredients mixed throughout. More Than Tofu flavors include Indian Masala, Garlic Shiitake, and Pesto. Their three Soy Sausage flavors are Breakfast Style, Mild Italian, and Chorizo.

PO Box 1186

Charlottesville, VA 22902

Phone: 434-970-2798

e-mail: Info@sunergiasoyfoods.com

SunRidge Farms/Falcon Trading Company <http://www.sunridgefarms.com>

Makes **organic** and natural trail mixes, dried fruits, nuts and seeds, candies/confectioneries, cereals and granolas. Available in bulk and packaged.

1055 17th Avenue

Santa Cruz, Ca. 95062

Phone: 831-462-1280

e-Mail: info@sunridgefarms.com

Sunrise Soya Foods <http://www.sunrise-soya.com> or <http://www.petestofu.com>

Using the brand name **Pete's Tofu**, they make four organic tofu varieties in soft, medium firm, super firm, and super firm with Italian herb. Pete's Tofu2Go offers three ready-to-eat flavored tofus including Lemon Pepper with Mango Chipotle Sauce. They also make two tofu desserts in peach mango and very berry flavors. All Pete's products are certified Kosher.

729 Powell St.

Vancouver, BC, Canada V6A 1H5

Phone: 800-661-2326

e-mail: consumer-info@petestofu.com

Super Soynuts <http://www.877SOY4YOU.com>

Sells roasted soy nuts as a healthy snack food in many flavors including Lightly Salted, Honey Mustard, Onion & Garlic, Ranch, Jalapeno & Cheddar, and Unsalted.

P.O. Box 12278, Scottsdale, AZ 85267

Phone: 877-SOY-4YOU

Tamale Molly <http://www.tamalemolly.com>

Makes 8 different kinds of vegetarian hand-tied tamales, some vegan, with no additives and preservatives. Flavors include Vegan Red Chili with Peppers and Olives, Vegan Chard and Shallots, and Vegan Black Bean with Chipotle Chili. Donates 100% of profits to help fight hunger.

Tamarind Tree, Ltd. <http://www.tamtree.com>

Creates the Taste of India wheat-free, gluten-free meals with no artificial preservatives, chemicals, or MSG. Uses non-irradiated spices and natural sea salt. More than half of the entrees are vegan.

Now owned by Annie's.

P.O. Box 554, Wakefield, MA 01880

Phone: 800-HFC-TREE
FAX: 781-224-9728
e-mail: bernie@annies.com

Tasty Bite <http://www.tastybite.com>

Ready-to-eat-vegetarian and vegan Indian and Thai entrees and ready to cook curry sauces and pastes. Entrees include Bengal Lentils, Bombay Potatoes, Jaipur Vegetables, Jodhpur Lentils, Kashmir Spinach, Punjab Eggplant. Curry Pastes include Chili Ginger, Cilantro Garlic, Tomato Coriander, Patong Yellow Curry and Bangkok Red Curry. Products are manufactured by Tasty Bites Eatables, Ltd, Bhandgaon, Pune, India
1445 East Putnam Avenue, Old Greenwich, CT 06870
e-mail: info@tastybite.com

3 Square Meals <http://www.3-squaremeals.com>

Makes frozen vegan pocket sandwiches with mostly **organic** ingredients. Uses **organic** whole grain flours. Includes Apple Banana Breakfast, Mushroom Barley, Potato Curry, and White Bean and Basil sandwiches.

Distributed by Natural Quick Foods, Inc.

P.O. Box 25774
Seattle, WA 98125-1274
Phone: 206-365-5757
FAX: 206-365-5434
e-mail: nqf@uswest.net

Today's Traditions <http://www.todaystraditions.com>

Manufacturers and co-packers of meat alternatives made from wheat gluten (seitan or wheat meat) and bean flours to simulate the flavor and texture of meat and chicken. Products are produced for companies such as Turtle Island Foods, Inc. and distributors such as Mountain Peoples Warehouse and numerous natural foods markets.

2560 Dominic Drive, Suite A
Chico, CA 95928
Phone: 800-816-6873 or 530-893-2646
FAX: 530-893-9344
E-mail: info@todaystraditions.com

Tofutti Brands, Inc. <http://www.tofutti.com>

Makes non-dairy frozen desserts and food products. Frozen desserts include Cutie Pies, Teddy Fudge Pops, Sorbet Bars, Rock 'n Roll Dessert Cake, and more. Non-dairy food products include Soy Lavash, non-dairy sour cream, cream cheese, and blintzes. All products soy based, lactose free, cholesterol free, and kosher parve.

50 Jackson Drive
Cranford, NJ 07016
Phone: 908-272-2400
FAX: 908-272-9492
e-mail: tofuttibrands@aol.com or tofutti@nac.net

Trader Joe's <http://www.traderjoes.com>

Distributes numerous products that carry their own label such as canned beans, canned tomato products, sauces, instant soups, cereals, peanut butter, dried fruits, nuts, snacks, tofu (some organic), prepared salads and sandwiches, and more. Many retail stores throughout the country.

P.O. Box 3270

South Pasadena, CA 91030

Phone: 626-441-1177

Tree of Life, Inc. <http://www.treeoflife.com>

Distributes Harmony Farms Soy Burgers that are individually wrapped four-to-a-package, GMO-free, certified Kosher, and vegan. Four flavors available: original, garlic, mushroom, and onion.

P.O. Box. 410

St. Augustine, Florida 32085-0410

Phone: 800-260-2424

e-mail: mailbox@treeoflife.com

Tree of Life North America is a division of Wessanen's Natural and Specialty Foods Group.

Tribe of Two Sheiks <http://www.twosheiks.com>

Makes sixteen different varieties of garbanzo bean hummus including Calamata, Jalapeno, and Roasted Eggplant. Their newest product, soybean hummus, includes Cucumber Dill, Horseradish, Roasted Red Pepper, Roasted Garlic, Sundried Tomato and Basil, and Garden Vegetable. All are vegan and kosher.

Rite Foods

500 E Street

Boston, MA 02210

Phone: 800-8HUMMUS

Triple Leaf Tea, Inc. <http://www.tripleleaf-tea.com>

Makes a wide selection of authentic traditional Chinese herbal teas including blends to help you detox, treat colds and flu, lower cholesterol, calm the nerves, balance blood sugar, lower blood pressure. Includes decaf green teas.

434 N. Canal St., Unit 5

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Phone: 800-552-7448

e-mail: triple@tripleleaf-tea.com

Turtle Island Foods, Inc. <http://www.tofurky.com>

Famous for its Tofurky Dinners, this organization produces Original Smoked and Tex Mex SuperBurgers, Original, Peppered, and Hickory Smoked Deli Slices that are low fat and contain no MSG or nitrates, and five types of tempeh: Veggie, Low Fat Millet, Indonesian Style, Soy, and Five Grain. The company also makes Tofurky Jurky and a variety of sausages and superburgers. All of their products are **organic**, natural, and 100% vegan.

P.O. Box 176, Hood River, OR 97031

Phone: 800-508-8100

e-mail: info@tofurky.com

Turtle Mountain, Inc. <http://www.turtlemountain.com>

Produces premium non-dairy food products under **Soy Delicious**, **Sweet Nothings**, and **Sweet Victory** labels.

P.O. Box 21938, OR 97402

Phone: 541-998-6778

FAX: 541-998-6344

e-mail: info@turtlemountain.com

Uncle Eddie's Vegan Cookies <http://www.uncleeddiescookies.com>

For the cookie lovers Uncle Eddie makes chocolate chip, oatmeal raisin, trail mix, peanut butter chocolate chip, and attractive gift boxes containing all four varieties. All are completely vegan.

Not a drop of dairy, eggs, or honey.

743 Milford Street

Glendale, CA 91203

Phone: 818-549-0056

VEAT, Inc. <http://www.veat.com>

Pre-cooked heat and eat soy-based meat alternatives with the ultra-realistic meat-like textures of chicken, turkey, beef, duck, pork, and fish. Products are all natural, no preservatives, MSG, additives, or coloring. All vegetarian.

20318 Gramercy Place

Torrance, CA 90501

Phone: 888-321-VEAT

e-mail: eat@veat.com

Vegan Supreme Marshmallows <http://www.vegansuprememarshmallows.com>

Dedicated to bringing the wonderful world of marshmallows to the lives of all vegans. Currently produces Vegan Marshmallows and Vegan Krispy Rice Treats (regular and peanut butter). Expect more inventive vegan marshmallow treats to come from the Vegan Supreme Team.

Mission Viejo, CA 92692

Phone: 949-235-1099

Fax: 949-348-6928

e-mail: vegansuprememarshmallows@hotmail.com

VegeCyber, Inc. <http://www.vegeCyber.com>

Offers vegetarian, **organic**, vegan international food products including a large selection of frozen gourmet, vegetarian foods, **organic** grains and cereals, tea and herbals, and vegetarian snacks.

210 Centre Street

New York, NY 10013

Phone: 212-625-3980

FAX : 212-625-8893

e-mail: mail@vegecyber.com

VegeUSA LLC. <http://www.vegeusa.com>

Under the brand name **Vegetarian Plus** this company offers ready-to-eat, all-natural, meat-alternative chicken, beef, pork, ham, and fish. The products are all vegetarian with no preservatives, artificial coloring, MSG, or additives.

4257 E. Live Oak Ave.

Arcadia, CA 91006

Phone: 888-772-8343 (VEGE)

e-mail: mail@vegeusa.com

Vegi-Deli <http://www.vegideli.com>

Manufacturers Quick Stix pepperoni snacks, Vegi Jerky, and Vegi-Deli Pepperoni. All products are kosher and vegan.

384 Bel Marin Keys Blvd., #D

Novato, CA 94949

Phone: 888-473-8667

FAX: 415-282-9791

Now owned by Green Options that also markets products under the Now and Zen label.

VegTime, Inc. <http://www.vegtime.com>

Produces frozen savory, hand-held, stuffed Handi-Pies in four gourmet flavors: BBQ, Curry, HotChick, and Thai. All are made with **organic** ingredients. Handi-Pies are sold in stores on the West Coast and will soon be available nationwide.

2133 Beach St.

San Francisco, CA 94123

415-921-8925 (phone)

415-921-8924 (fax)

Vitalicious <http://www.vitalicious.com>

Fat-free high-fiber, low calorie soy and oat bran muffins with no artificial additives or preservatives. Flavors include Cranberry Bran, Blueberry Bran, Multi-Bran, Apple-Berry Bran. Products are vegetarian and Kosher.

303 Greenwich St., Suite 21

New York, New York 10013

Phone: 877-VITA-877

FAX: 212-233-6031

e-mail: visual@infohouse.com

Vitasoy <http://www.vitasoy-usa.com>

Makes soy milks in aseptic and refrigerated packages under the **Vitasoy** label. Manufactures **organic** tofu, pasta, Veg-Dressing, Noyonnaise, Tofu Mate, baked tofu, and tofu desserts with the **Nasoya** label.

One New England Way, Ayer, MA 01432

Phone: 978-537-0713

Wax Orchards <http://www.waxorchards.com>

Produces fruit sweetened and fat-free products for diabetics, dieters, vegetarians, and vegans. Includes concentrated fruit juices, fruit butters, berry spreads, fruit syrups, fruit mince, chutneys and tomato sauce condiments, and fudge.

22744 Wax Orchards Road

Vashon Island, WA 98070

Phone: 800-634-6132 or 206-463-9735

FAX: 206-463-9731

Wessanen USA

Distributes Soyannaise, a soy-based, non-GMO, vegan mayonnaise that is certified Kosher. Made with organic soybean oil. Contains no EDTA. Comes in 2 sizes plus a squeezable container. Also distributes Harvest Moon, frozen **organic** vegetables grown with no GMO's, pesticides or herbicides.

St. Augustine, Florida 32085-0410

Phone: 904-810-2494

e-mail: info@wessanen-hq.com

Wessanen USA is a division of Wessanen's Natural and Specialty Foods Group

White Wave, Inc. <http://www.whitewave.com>

Produces more than 40 soyfood products including Silk Soymilk, Silk Soymilk Creamers, Silk Cultured Soy yogurt, White Wave tofu, baked tofu, and tempeh. All White Wave products are made with certified organic soybeans not produced using biotechnology.

1990 N. 57th Court, Boulder, CO 80301

303-443-3470

e-mail: questions@whitewave.com

White Wave is now owned by Dean Foods, a dairy products conglomerate.

The WholeSoy Company <http://www.wholesoycom.com>

Makes yogurt-style cultured soy drinks from certified **organic** soybeans. Products are creamy, dairy-free, and come in four flavors, strawberry, apricot mango, peach, and raspberry. They also make frozen soy milk, ice-cream like desserts in 4 flavors, and cultured frozen desserts. Products are vegan, gluten-free, and certified Kosher.

49 Stevenson St., #1075

San Francisco, California 94105

Phone: 415-495-2870

FAX: 415-495-3060

e-mail: nordquist@wholesoycom.com

Will-Pak Foods, Inc. <http://www.tasteadventure.com>

Under the brand name Taste Adventure they produce a variety of vegan, preservative-free, almost instant soups, chiles, and refried beans. Their Quick Cuisine items include vegetarian side dishes such as Bombay Curry and Jambalaya.

Harbor City, CA 90710

Phone: 800-874-0883

e-mail: taste-adv@earthlink.net

Wildwood Harvest Foods <http://www.wildwoodnaturalfoods.com>

Makes **organic** tofu, soymilk, probiotic soy smoothies, soy yogurt, baked tofu, tofu cutlets, smoked tofu, vegan slices, wild dogs, tofu veggie burgers (three of the four are vegan).

1560 Mansfield Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Phone: 800-499-TOFU

e-mail: dougporter@wildwoodnaturalfoods.com

Worthington Foods <http://www.morningstarfarms.com>

- **Morningstar Farms**
Makes a variety of burgers, patties, breakfast links, corn and veggie dogs.
- **Worthington**
Includes frozen foods, dry burger alternative, and canned vegetarian meat alternatives
- **Natural Touch**
Makes burgers, tuna substitute, patties, vege franks, entree mixes, Roma coffee substitute. All have no artificial additives, flavors, or colors and are made from all natural ingredients with a minimum of processing.
- **Loma Linda**
Produces canned vegetarian products and entree and gravy mixes

Worthington Foods is now owned by Kellogg's.

900 Proprietors Road, Worthington, OH 43085

e-mail: contact on web site

The Yogi Tea Company <http://www.yogitea.com>

Uses **organic** herbs to prepare blends of tonic teas from ancient formulas used by the Yogis of the Himalayas. Some products include Hazelnut Cream, Mango Passion, Cinnamon Spice, Tahitian Vanilla, and Egyptian Licorice, Green Tea, and many other herbal blends.

2545 Prairie Road, Eugene, OR 97402

Phone: 800-225-3623

Zoe Foods <http://www.zoefoods.com>

Combines non GMO soy and flaxseed to create granolas and energy bars. Products are all natural. All bars are vegan; granolas contain honey. Flax & Soy Granola is available in three delicious flavors: Cranberries Currants, Almond Oats, and Apple Cinnamon. Flax & Soy Bar is available in Chocolate, Apple Crisp, Peanut Butter, and Lemon. All products have one tablespoon of ground flaxseed per serving.

P. O. Box 318

Westwood, MA 02090

Phone: 781-407-9326

FAX: 781-407-9329

e-mail: info@zoefoods.com



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To help our readers access recipes that have appeared in Vegetarians in Paradise, we are providing a categorized index of gourmet vegan recipes that have appeared in the magazine. You may click on the category below for a listing of the gourmet vegetarian recipes. For the complete recipe, click on the recipe title.

*** Denotes original recipe by Zel Allen or Aunt Nettie**

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Vegetarian and Vegetarian-Friendly Restaurants in Los Angeles County AUGUST 2004

Editors' Note:

We felt it our responsibility to call attention to the fact that some restaurants that have labeled themselves vegan may have items on their menus that are not vegan. We, ourselves, have been misled on occasion, and we apologize if we have passed on inaccuracies in our restaurant reviews.

Some of the imitation meat, chicken, and fish dishes featured in Chinese vegetarian restaurants may contain whey, casein, or sugar. Some of these products are made in China and carry no ingredient labels, making it difficult to know about the contents. Many vegetarian restaurants use soy cheeses that are not vegan, though they are vegetarian.

Often vegetarian restaurants hire serving attendants who are not knowledgeable about ingredients in their dishes. The ultimate responsibility lies with with you, the customer, to ask and ask again about ingredients about which you may feel concern. We'll do our best to be as informative as possible.

ALHAMBRA

Vege House Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Chinese food the way you like it--without the meat. Located in an area surrounded by Chinese businesses and a host of Chinese restaurants, this one stands apart for its animal-free menu. The menu offers a host of traditional dishes with meat substitutes that look and taste like the real thing. Some of their unique specialties include Veggie Rib in a Pineapple Sweet and Sour Sauce or Sizzling Veggie Beef with Mushroom in Black Pepper Sauce.

1400 E. Valley Blvd., Alhambra, CA 91801

Phone: 626-293-8169

Hours: Lunch 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily

Dinner 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily

[Click here for full review.](#)

Vegetarian Wok (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Unlike many of the Chinese restaurants in this community, this one is totally vegetarian. The menu offers typical Chinese dishes, but here they are meatless. Their versions of chicken entrees are actually made from soy or mushroom. Other preparations have wheat gluten or yam in place of meat, chicken, or fish. The tastes and textures are so much like the real thing, they just may have you guessing.

529 E. Valley Blvd., #128, Alhambra, CA 91801

Phone: 626-288-6069

Hours: Lunch 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily

Dinner: 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily

ALTADENA

O Happy Days (Vegan)

A natural foods store with a vegan restaurant inside.

2283 N. Lake Avenue, Altadena, CA 91001

Phone 626-797-0383

Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

ARTESIA

Annapurna Cuisine (Vegetarian and Vegan)

An authentic Indian vegetarian restaurant with a warm ambience and a huge menu that offers both North and South Indian dishes. South Indian specialties include an impressive selection of Dosa, stuffed lentil crepes, and Uthappams, rice pancakes with various toppings. Northern Indian dishes include curries, soups, appetizers, tandoori dishes, and Indian breads. Check out unique specials like Bombay Pav Bhaji, a grilled bun served with spicy mixed vegetables bathed in tantalizing gravy.

17631 Pioneer Blvd., Artesia, CA 90701

Phone: 562-403-2200 FAX: 562-403-2201

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Woodlands Indian Cuisine (Vegetarian and Vegan)

In an area that features many Indian restaurants, this eatery stands apart with its all-vegetarian menu of South Indian dishes. Try their traditional delicacies like Uppuma made from cream of wheat, or Masala Dosa, the largest crepe you've ever seen, or Iddly patties made from lentils and rice. The extensive menu also includes curries, soups, and vegetable dishes. The budget-conscious diner may want to take advantage of the combination Thali dinners.

Artesia Center

11833 Artesia Blvd., Artesia, CA 90701

Phone: 562-860-6500

Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Sunday

BEVERLY HILLS

Real Food Daily (Vegan)

Gourmet organic vegan cuisine catering to all diets. Three outstanding appetizers we recommend are the Nori Maki (vegan sushi), Lentil Walnut Pate, and the No-Cheez which is a combo plate of guacamole, a black bean dip, a creative carrot salsa, and tofu sour cream all served with blue and yellow corn chips. The Meatloaf, mashed potatoes and gravy are great! The Reuben Sandwich was a highlight as well.

242 S. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Phone: 310-858-0880

FAX: 310-858-0980

Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily

Weekend Brunch on Saturdays and Sundays 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Web site: <http://www.realfood.com>

BRENTWOOD

A Votre Sante (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

Natural food restaurant with vegan and vegetarian entrees though not a strictly vegetarian restaurant

13016 San Vicente Boulevard, Brentwood, CA 90049

Phone: 310-451-1813

Hours: Monday , Friday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

CANOGA PARK

Follow Your Heart (Vegetarian & Vegan) <http://www.followyourheart.com>

Health store with a cafe that is totally vegetarian with many vegan options and generous portions. Every day their menu features 5 soups, all excellent. Daily specials an excellent choice. We love their Nutburger, the Zorro Burrito, and their creative selection of salad dressings.

21825 Sherman Way, Canoga Park, CA 91303

Phone: 818-348-3240

Hours: Breakfast Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday and Sunday brunch 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Lunch and dinner Monday through Sunday 10:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

Punjab Foods (Formerly Delhi Sweet and Snacks) (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

Indian food with a homemade touch in an informal environment. Formerly all vegetarian but now serves chicken, lamb, and fish in a separate buffet.

7257 Topanga Canyon Blvd.

Canoga Park, CA 91303

Phone: 818-340-7500

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

CERRITOS

Vegi Wokery (Vegan)

A Chinese all vegetarian restaurant that advertises "Pure Chinese Vegetarian Food" without eggs or dairy products. Their offerings include 80 different selections and 9 different soups.

11329 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703

Phone: 562-809-3928

Hours: Monday through Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday

[Click here for full review](#)

CHATSWORTH

Woodlands (Vegetarian & Vegan)

The only restaurant in the San Fernando Valley that specializes in pure vegetarian South Indian cuisine. Dosas, the longest crepes you'll ever encounter, are made from rice and lentils that are stuffed and rolled. Savory Uthappam pancakes studded with various seasonings are a must. Foods are rather spicy, but you can specify mild seasonings.

9840 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Chatsworth, CA 91311

Phone: 818-998-3031

FAX: 818-718-2689

Hours: Tuesday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Buffet lunch

Dinner 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Champagne/Beer Brunch

Dinner 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Closed Monday

[Click here for full review](#)

CULVER CITY

Annapurna Cuisine (Vegetarian and Vegan)

An authentic Indian vegetarian restaurant with a warm ambience and a huge menu that offers both North and South Indian dishes. South Indian specialties include an impressive selection of Dosa, stuffed lentil crepes, and Uthappams, rice pancakes with various toppings. Northern Indian dishes include curries, soups, appetizers, tandoori dishes, and Indian breads. Check out unique specials like Bombay Pav Bhaji, a grilled bun served with spicy mixed vegetables bathed in tantalizing gravy.

10200 Venice Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232

Phone 310-204-5500 FAX: 310-204-3366

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Golden China (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A charming Chinese restaurant with a special vegetarian menu featuring over 50 items, many made with a soybean base. The Hot and Sour Soup is the best we've ever tasted. Also recommended is the Mongolian Beef, an exceptionally tasty dish. The cloth napkins and tablecloths combined with charming Chinese décor create a delightfully pleasant ambience.

9018 Venice Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232

Phone: 310-559-0116/7

FAX: 310-202-9173

Hours: Daily from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

EAGLE ROCK

Fatty's and Company (Vegetarian & Vegan)

A great place to enjoy a soy latte or a cold beverage with your vegetarian soup, salad, sandwich, or pizza. Though most menu items contain dairy, they gladly accommodate vegans. Two soups offered daily, one dairy, one vegan. Because this restaurant does not advertise being vegetarian, 90% of their customers are non-vegetarians--a great way to introduce veggie cuisine.

1627 Colorado Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90041

Phone: 323-254-8804

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Tuesday 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

EL SEGUNDO

Papillon Vegetarian Cuisine & Grill (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

With its impressive vegetarian menu this eatery features the tantalizing flavors of Southeast Asia in their traditional dishes of the Philippines and China. Signature entrees like Vegetarian Pork

Adobo, Vegetarian Homba, and chef recommended Vegetarian Escabeche are unique, as is the Vegetarian Lumpia served as an appetizer. For a "Sweet Escape" enjoy the Halo-Halo Special, an Avocado Smoothie, or the Calamansi Juice.

408 Main St., El Segundo, CA 90245

Phone: 310-640-0408

FAX: 310-640-0308

Hours: Daily: Lunch 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dinner 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday: open until 9:30 p.m.

Web site: <http://www.papillonvgcuisine.com/index.htm>

[Click here for full review.](#)

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

2041 Rosecrans Ave., #120, El Segundo, CA 90245

Phone: 310-607-9062

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

[Click here for full review](#)

GRANADA HILLS

Vegetable Delight (Vegan)

Chinese vegan dining with many pseudo meat, fish and chicken dishes. Those who appreciate fresh basil will enjoy the Eggplant with Basil. The Broccoli Veggie Chicken had slices of deliciolus, tender, homemade seitan.

17823 Chatsworth Street, Granada Hills, CA 91344

Phone: 818-360-3997

Hours: Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m.to 9:30 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday 4:00 p.m.to 9:30 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

HACIENDA HEIGHTS

Garden Fresh Vegetarian Food (Vegetarian and Vegan)

An all-vegetarian Asian restaurant featuring traditional Chinese dishes with meat substitutes. The menu features all the familiar delicious Chinese comfort food, but here they use faux meats made from soy, gluten, mushroom, and yam to emulate the texture and flavor of the real thing.

16034 Gale Ave., Hacienda Heights, CA 91745

Phone: 626-968-2279

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. daily

HERMOSA BEACH

The Spot (Vegetarian & Vegan)

Home-style vegetarian and vegan food featuring delicious homemade bread. For lacto-ovo vegetarians the Mushroom Walnut Loaf is a specialty. Their heaping dinner salads offer an excellent variety of crisp vegetables with a selection of tasty dressings. The Mexarama features their famous Savory Sauce.

110 Second Street, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

Phone: 310-376-2355

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

HOLLYWOOD

California Vegan (Vegan)

An all vegan Thai food restaurant owned by the nephew of Pia of the Vegan Express. Most of their produce is organic and dishes are freshly prepared to order. Similar to Vegan Express, the menu consists of some very tasty traditional Thai dishes that include seitan and veggie meat substitutes.

7300 W. Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90046

Phone: 323-874-9079

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily

[Click here for full review](#)

Paru's (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Vegetarian Indian with many vegan choices. Warm, friendly atmosphere and the tastiest samosas we've ever eaten. We loved the Spicy Eggplant along with the Tanjore Double Dinner that featured cuisine of Southern India. Northern Indian dishes have a tasty, homemade quality. The paratha, a flatbread stuffed with vegetables, was another favorite.

5140 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90027

Phone: 323-661-7600

Hours: Open Daily

Lunch 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dinner 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Web site: [www. parusrestaurant.com](http://www.parusrestaurant.com)

[Click here for full review.](#)

LOMITA

House of Vege (Vegan)

A new vegetarian Chinese restaurant with a full menu that features all you can eat veggie meat

dishes and a multitude of tofu and gluten creations. Meals served with rice or Chinese Bread and Soup. Lovely dining atmosphere. Pleasant service. Their scrumptious brown rice features ten different varieties in one dish. We enjoyed the Eggplant with Basil and loved the Veggie Chicken made with shiitake mushrooms. For dessert, their Red Bean Cakes are a must.

2439 Pacific Coast Highway, Lomita, CA 90717

Phone: 310-530-1180

Hours: Sunday to Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

LOS ANGELES

Chao Krung <http://www.chaokrung.com> (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A charming Thai restaurant with exceptional exotic ambience in its two large dining rooms and an extensive menu where both vegans and non-vegetarians can dine together. Must try vegan dishes are Thai Crepe, Spinach Tofu in Peanut Sauce, Mussaman Curry, and their exceptional Brown Rice Blend. Service is excellent.

111 N. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Phone: 323-932-9482 or 323-939-8361

FAX: 323-938-5381

Hours: Daily 11:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Electric Lotus (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Northern Indian cuisine with exceptional flavor. This restaurant offers plenty of ambience and a more generous selection of vegan offerings than most Indian dining houses. Recommended dishes are the Electric Lotus, a delectable Tandoori style tofu with vegetables, and the Coconut Curry with Tofu, a creamy delight with potatoes, peas, and cauliflower.

4656 Franklin Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90027

Phone: 323-953-0040

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 a.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Gaby's Mediterranean (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Informal Middle Eastern café with outdoor seating in a covered patio as well as indoors. Vegans can make a meal of their Mezza, Middle Eastern appetizers, that include Hummos, Baba Ghannouj, and Grape Leaves, along with Falafel, Fool Mudammas (seasoned fava beans), Moujadara (a lentil, rice, and onion dish), Loubieh (marinated green beans with tomatoes and onions), Moosakka (eggplant, garbanzos, and onion cooked in tomatoes and olive oil), Fatayer (spinach turnover with onions and pine nuts), and Tabbouli. Both their soups, Lentil and Hearty Vegetable, are vegan.

10445 Venice Blvd., West Los Angeles, CA 90034

Phone: 310-559-1808 FAX: 310-559-4848

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Marina del Rey location

20 Washington Blvd., Marina del Rey, CA 90292

Phone: 310-821-9721 FAX: 310-821-6861

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Go Veggie (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A popular tiny café that offers a buffet of mostly vegetarian items. Many dishes are vegan, but items are not labeled, and it may be challenging to ask about ingredients during the busy lunch and dinner rush. Some hot dishes, hot soups, and an array of attractive and tasty salads.

5462 S. Centinella Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90066

Phone: 310-577-0167

Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.,

Saturday and Sunday 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Govinda's (Vegetarian & Vegan)

A vegetarian, vegan friendly cafeteria operated by the Hari Krishna Temple offering an excellent salad bar and wholesome Indian style hot dishes in a very informal setting adjoining their temple.

Inexpensively priced, you can pay by the pound or go for the all-you-can-eat deal.

3764 Watseka Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034

Located off Venice Blvd. between Hughes and Bagley

Phone: 310-836-1269

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday

[Click here for full review.](#)

Indo Cafe (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

Indonesian food with more than two dozen vegetarian items on the menu. Most are vegan. A bustling family restaurant. Tempeh Goreng, an outstanding appetizer with dipping sauce, is a must. We also loved their spicy soup called Sayur Asem. **Be sure to ask for their special vegetarian menu.**

10428 1/2 National Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90064

Phone: 310-815-1290

Hours: Daily 11:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Katmandu Kitchen (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Deliciously unique Himalayan cuisine in an intimate setting with many homemade touches, this charming little restaurant serves exceptional dishes. Much of the décor is handmade in Nepal. Start your meal with steamed vegetable dumplings called Momos along with Bhat-Mas Sadheko, steamed soybeans in Himalayan spices. Outstanding dishes include Bamboo Curry, Mustard Miniac, and Alu Gobi. Encourage the chef to offer vegan versions of their lentil soups and noodle dishes.

10855 1/2 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

Phone: 310-836-9696

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Dinner: Sunday and Tuesday through Thursday 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Closed Monday

Merkato (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

An Ethiopian restaurant that displays a good dose of atmosphere and offers a menu with a vegetarian section of well-seasoned traditional Ethiopian dishes. Though it is a little heavy on the oil, the Sambusa, a delicious dough-covered appetizer filled with spicy lentils was a tasty starter. The Vegetarian combination includes the exceptional Merkato Special Shiro, a creamy puree of ground peas cooked in a red pepper sauce with garlic, tomatoes, and complex spices.

1036 1/2 S. Fairfax Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90019

Phone: 323-935-1775

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily

[Click here for full review](#)

Messob (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

Ethiopian cuisine with many vegetarian and vegan items. The teff injera is outstanding. Be sure to request it. If you order the Vegetarian's Delight, you'll love the Pumpkin Wot, a well-seasoned pumpkin stew, and Yemiser Wot, a wonderful full-flavored lentil stew.

1041 S. Fairfax Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90019

Phone: 323-938-8827

Hours: Daily 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Michelia Nouvelle Vietnamese Bistro (Vegan Friendly)

Tasteful ambience with an Asian flair, this upscale restaurant features a separate vegan menu of fusion dishes that combine Asian style cuisine with French and Italian influences. A truly elegant dining experience with artfully presented dishes. Must order specialties include Vegetable Saigon Rolls, Spicy n' Sour Soup, Garlic Eggplant, and Savory Shrimp.

8738 West Third St., Los Angeles, CA 90048

Phone: 310-276-8288

Hours: Monday through Friday Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Dinner 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday

Moderately expensive

[Click here for full review.](#)

Mr. Wisdom Hari Krishna Restaurant and Specialty Health Food Store (Vegan)

A unique all organic café and health food store in operation since 1988. The menu features a daily special bean dish served with brown rice and steamed vegetables. Specialties include veggie burgers, Sabzi, a vegetable dish with Indian seasonings, mung bean soup, tomato chutney, natural smoothies, nutmilk, and Rejuvelac. They grow their own organic wheat grass and barley grass.

3526 W. Slauson Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90043

Phone: 323-295-1517

Hours: Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

Noura Café (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

This gourmet Mediterranean restaurant offers charming, intimate atmosphere along with their traditional Middle Eastern foods. Though it is not exclusively vegetarian, the vegetarian section of the menu features the Taster's Delight, a combo of hummos, baba ghanooj, tabbouleh, falafel, fried eggplant, fried zucchini, and stuffed grape leaves. Many other vegetarian salads are offered as well.

8649 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069

Phone: 323-651-4581

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight, 7 days a week

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

121 N. La Cienega Blvd., #117 Beverly Center, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Phone: 310-854-6467

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

[Click here for full review](#)

Rosalind's Ethiopian Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Located in a one block area known as Little Ethiopia, this atmospheric restaurant serves some of the best Ethiopian food in Los Angeles. Appetizers such as Sambussa and Yam Balls are exceptionally tasty. We recommend the Vegetarian Combination, a platter of deliciously seasoned stews made from vegetables and legumes.

1044 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036

Phone: 323-936-2486

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. daily

[Click here for full review](#)

Sante La Brea (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

A natural food restaurant offering vegetarian, vegan, and non-vegetarian foods. The new owner, Dean Hamoui, puts a strong emphasis on vegan dishes with three new innovative dishes in addition to their regular menu which features two vegan soups daily. Their patio offers pleasant outdoor dining. We loved their Eggplant Lasagne and their Spinach Enchilada. Vegan cheese is available on request.

345 N. La Brea, Los Angeles, CA 90036

Phone: 323-857-0412

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily

[Click here for full review.](#)

Toi on Sunset (Vegetarian & Vegan Friendly)

Rockin' Tai Food with an extensive menu serving both the vegetarian and non-vegetarian communities. The menu notes that any dish can be made vegetarian. Excellent vegan specialties like Pad Ciw Tofu, and Vegetarian Curry. Their brown rice is exceptional. Prices very reasonable.

Open after hours and busy.

7505 1/2 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046

Phone: 323-874-8062

Hours: Open 7 days 'til 4:00 a.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

Vegan Express (Vegan)

A tiny informal cafe where diners place their order at the blue tile counter. This eatery offers Thai and American all-vegan cuisine and specializes in fast food and catering. Their Shiitake Soup Bowl and Thai Yellow Curry are especially tasty and satisfying. Short on atmosphere but very popular for take-out.

3217 Cahuenga Blvd. West, Los Angeles, CA 90068

Phone: 323-851-8837

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

Vegan Tokyo Teriyaki (Vegan)

Located near USC, this eatery offers Japanese fast food for vegans on the run.

2518 So. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90007

Phone: 213-747-6880

Hours: Open 7 days Noon to 8:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

MAR VISTA

Venus of Venice (Vegan)

Totally vegan food served in new location

12034 Venice Blvd., Mar Vista, CA 90066

Phone: 310-391-7674

Hours: Tuesday through Friday 11:30 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. Lunch

5:00 p.m.to 8:00 p.m. Dinner

Saturday and Sunday 11:00 a.m.to 8:00 p.m.

MONTEREY PARK

Happy Family Restaurant Vegetarian Food (Vegan)

Authentic Chinese food in the grand vegetarian tradition, featuring a huge selection of flavorful dishes with veggie meats at very reasonable prices. Many vegan dishes. Although their menu is not very descriptive, the foods were tasty, creative, and plentiful. We adored the Chop Mustard Green with Bean Curd Sheet and the Smoked Bean Curd Skin which tasted far better than they sounded.

608 N. Atlantic Blvd., Monterey Park, CA 91754

Phone: 626-282-8986

Hours: Monday to Thursday 11:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. lunch

5:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. dinner

Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. lunch

5:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. dinner

Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.

Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 8:45 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

NORTH HOLLYWOOD

Leonor's Vegetarian Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Mostly vegetarian items except for a few entrees for carnivores like chicken and carne asada. Features soy cheese pizzas, a variety of sandwiches, tacos, enchiladas, empanadas, burritos, salads, and "Forever-Young Dinners" with faux chicken and soy meat balls. Some dishes may be vegan, but it is impossible to receive accurate information about ingredients. The soy cheese is not vegan because it contains casein. Some of their faux chicken items are made with egg whites.

11403 Victory Boulevard, North Hollywood, CA 91606

Phone: 818-980-9011

Monday to Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

NORTHRIDGE

Cafe Graikos (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Greek and vegetarian cuisine with 28 different items for vegetarians to enjoy. Not exclusively a vegetarian restaurant, but half the menu is devoted to tasty Greek dishes that happen to be vegetarian. Their Lentil Soup is so tasty it always leaves us craving more. We especially enjoy the Vegetarian Combo Platter that features their Lentil Pilaf, Stuffed Grape Leaves, and Stuffed Eggplant.

19346 Rinaldi St., Northridge, CA 91326

Phone: 818-831-1187

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Saam's A-1 Produce (formerly A-1 Produce & Veggie Lover's Deli) (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Located inside a produce and grocery market, this all-vegetarian buffet serves some of the tastiest Indian foods in Los Angeles. The menu includes both Northern and Southern Indian dishes. Foods are a little on the spicy side, but exceptionally flavorful with a homemade quality. Their combination dinners are an outstanding value. After you finish your meal, you can shop for produce and packaged and canned imported Indian foods.

9043 Reseda Blvd., Northridge, CA 91324

Phone: 998-6900

FAX: 818-727-9300

Hours: Buffet from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

NORWALK

Our Daily Bread (Vegan)

Seventh Day Adventist book store and health food market. Small lunch counter in front of store with rear patio seating for 30 to 40 people.

Vegan food, sugar and oil-free

12201 Firestone Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

Phone: 562-863-6897

Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closed Saturday

PASADENA

Orean, The Health Express (Vegetarian and Vegan)

A vegetarian fast food take-out that holds its own nestled among an array of fast food joints within a two-block area on Lake Avenue. Soy is popular here as a filling for their many tasty burgers, burritos, pizzas, chili dogs, and tacos, and they use crisp and fresh clover sprouts in their sandwiches. There are four tables outdoors for your quick meal that can be topped off with one of their popular shakes. They even serve a breakfast burrito to start your day. Vegans will want to pass on the soy cheese that contains casein.

817 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104

Phone: 626-794-0861

Hours: Open 7 days 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Web site: <http://www.oreanshealthexpress.com>

[Click here for full review.](#)

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

260 E. Colorado Blvd., 201, Pasadena, CA 91101

Phone: 626-356-9760

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

[Click here for full review](#)

Pita! Pita! Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Lebanese Mediterranean cuisine in a colorful, bustling atmosphere. Several vegetarian dishes to choose from including the Royal Vegetarian Feast which includes numerous selections. Vegan friendly.

927 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91105

Phone: 626-356-0106

Hours: Sunday through Thursday, 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

RANCHO PALOS VERDES

Vegan Terra Café (Vegan)

A comfortable, informal all vegan café that specializes in delicious, thick and hearty soups, homemade whole wheat flatbread, homemade muffins, salads, burgers, hearty combo plates, and fruity smoothies.

28901 South Western Ave., #123, Rancho Palos Verdes, 90275

THE TERRACES SHOPPING CENTER located just below Trader Joe's

Phone: 310-833-7977

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday

[Click here for full review.](#)

REDONDO BEACH

The Green Temple, A Veggie Place (Vegetarian and Vegan)

The owners are former employees of the now defunct Greens at the Beach. For those who fondly remember the food at Greens, this menu has many similarities. Very vegan friendly. Funky decor. They boast their herb garden and purified water. Menu includes complete savory meals with lots of veggies, salads, sandwiches, creative burritos, and fresh squeezed juices. Order any dish that features their outstanding Savory Sauce such as the Savory Steamer. The Three Bean Soup is a winner. Finish up with one of their Dragon Shots, herbal tonics uniquely served.

1700 S. Catalina Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Phone: 310-944-4525

Hours: Tuesday to Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m..

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays

[Click here for full review.](#)

RESEDA

Garden Wok (Vegetarian and Vegan)

A new Chinese restaurant with an extensive menu of all veggie foods that include creative uses of veggie meat substitutes such as Lemon Veggie Chicken, Hot Braised Veggie Fish, and Asparagus

with Veggie Ham. Pleasant ambience.

6117 Reseda Blvd., Reseda, CA 91335

Phone: 818-881-8886

Hours: Monday through Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Sunday 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Vinh Loi Tofu (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Along with cooking scrumptious, Vietnamese, mostly vegan dishes, this restaurant with just two tables is home to the valley's only tofu factory. They lovingly make three kinds of tofu plus soymilk from scratch with a labor-intensive traditional Japanese method. Try the hearty bowl of spicy #1 Bun Bo Hue, an exceptional noodle and vegetable soup that requires 18 hours of cooking to create the richly flavored broth. Also recommended is the #5 Bun Bi Cha Thit Nu'ong, a cold medley that included rice noodles, fried tofu, veggie beef, eggless egg roll, and a variety of veggies. Each dish is hearty enough to serve 2.

18625 Sherman Way, Reseda, CA 91335

Phone: 818-996-9779

Hours: Daily 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

ROSEMEAD

New Happy Family Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Chinese food featuring a huge selection of flavorful dishes with veggie meats at very reasonable prices. Many vegan dishes. Includes all-you-can-eat menu Monday through Friday.

8632 E. Valley Blvd., #E

Rosemead, CA 91770

Phone: 626-288-5786

Hours: Monday to Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. lunch

5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. dinner

Saturday and Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 9:20 p.m.

ROWLAND HEIGHTS

Happy Family Restaurant Vegetarian Food (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Authentic Chinese food in the grand vegan tradition, featuring a huge selection of flavorful dishes with veggie meats at very reasonable prices. Many vegan dishes.

18425 E. Colima Rd, 2F, Rowland Heights, CA 91748

Phone: 626-965-9923

Hours: Monday to Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. lunch

5:00 p.m. to 9:20 p.m. dinner

Saturday and Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.

SAN DIMAS

Veggie & Tea House (Vegetarian and Vegan)

A large Chinese all-vegetarian restaurant with attractive décor, attentive service, and a large selection of menu items attractively presented. A glass case displays many of the dishes offered. The beautifully garnished Cashew Vegetables and Kung Pao Vegetables were outstanding. A unique presentation, their rice is served in a balsa wood box. Many of the vegetables served are organically grown on their 400-acre farm in El Centro, California.

641 Arrow Highway, San Dimas, CA 91773

Phone: 909-592-6323

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

SAN GABRIEL

Tea Shaker & Vegetarian Food (Vegan)

An innovative menu of tasty vegan foods with an eclectic Asian influence. Dishes draw from Burmese, Chinese, and Thai cuisine. If you enjoy exotic flavors, a stand-out dish is the Tea Salad made with fermented tea leaves imported from Burma. Fruit flavored iced and hot teas sweetened with fructose are their unique specialty. Friendly staff, eager to please.

7258 North Rosemead Blvd., San Gabriel, CA 91775

Phone: 626-287-5850

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Closed Monday

[Click here for full review.](#)

SANTA MONICA

Chandni (Vegan and Vegetarian)

North Indian vegetarian with many vegan items

1909 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90403

Phone: 310-828-7060

Hours: Daily

Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Dinner 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Juliano's raw (Vegan)

Juliano brings his gourmet, all organic raw offerings to Southern California. Menu includes pizzas, sandwiches, vegan sushi, burritos, sangria, shakes, cookies, puddings, and pies.

609 Broadway, Santa Monica, CA 90403

Phone: 310-587-1552

Hours: Open 7 days from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Lincoln Bay Mediterranean Cuisine (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

This restaurant offers a pleasant dining atmosphere. Not an all vegetarian menu, their offerings include Greek, Middle Eastern and Italian appetizers, salads, soups, and pastas that are vegetarian. Their soups are excellent. Very vegan friendly and inexpensive.

1928 Lincoln Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405

Phone: 310-396-4039

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 5:30 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

Closed Monday.

[Click here for full review.](#)

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

326 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401

Phone: 310-395-1912

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11: 00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

[Click here for full review](#)

Real Food Daily (Vegan)

Gourmet organic vegan cuisine catering to all diets. Three outstanding appetizers we recommend are the Nori Maki (vegan sushi), Lentil Walnut Pate, and the No-Cheez which is a combo plate of guacamole, a black bean dip, a creative carrot salsa, and tofu sour cream all served with blue and yellow corn chips. The Meatloaf, mashed potatoes and gravy are great! The Reuben Sandwich was a highlight as well.

514 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401

Phone: 310-451-7544

Hours: 11:30 a.m.to 10:00 p.m. daily

Web site: <http://www.realfood.com>

[Click here for full review](#)

Toi on Wilshire (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Rockin' Tai Food with an extensive menu serving both the vegetarian and non-vegetarian communities. The menu notes that any dish can be made vegetarian . Excellent vegan specialties like Pad Ciw Tofu, and Vegetarian Curry. Their brown rice is exceptional. Prices very reasonable. Open after hours and busy.

1120 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401

Phone: 310-394-7804 and 310-394-7904

Hours: Open 7 days'til 3:00 a.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

SHERMAN OAKS

Genmai (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Though it's not all vegetarian this health-savvy Japanese restaurant artfully prepares several vegan offerings from veggie sushi to a tempeh Reuben sandwich. Pleasant atmosphere with the simple lines typical of Japanese decor. They offer great service with a smile.

4454 Van Nuys Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 818-986-7060

Hours: Monday through Saturday, Lunch: 12:00 noon to 2:30 p.m.

Dinner: 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Sunday: Dinner 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

Grandma's Thai Kitchen (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Dine in an informal Thai-Chinese caf  that offers 12 entr e dishes plus one soup on their vegetarian menu. Enjoy traditional specialties like Pad Thai Noodles, Pad See-ew, Spicy Green Beans with Tofu, and Yellow, Green, and Red Curries. Soup lovers can spoon up the Coconut Mushroom Soup made with coconut milk, mushrooms, tofu, chili, and lemon. Dishes on their veg menu are free of dairy and fish sauce.

13230 Burbank Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91401

Phone: 818-785-9036

Hours: Daily Monday through Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Kung Pao Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A Chinese restaurant serving exceptional food now has a special all-vegetarian menu consisting of appetizers and entrees that incorporate soy based meat analogues. Entrees include Veggie Tea Smoked Duck, Orange Flavored Chicken, and Kung Pao Beef.

15025 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 818-788-1689

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Langano Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Exotic Ethiopian food with a large vegetarian selection, though not an exclusively vegetarian restaurant. Two vegetarian combination platters feature lentil and yellow split pea dishes along with vegetable stews uniquely seasoned with typical spices from Africa. Tasty stews are served in traditional Ethiopian style atop a large pancake-like bread.

14838 Burbank Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91411

Phone 818-786-2670

Hours: Tuesday through Thursday, 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday through Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Closed Monday

[Click here for full review.](#)

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive

locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

15301 Ventura Blvd., Suite P-22, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 818-784-1694

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

[Click here for full review](#)

SOUTH EL MONTE

Veggie Life Restaurant (Vegan)

Vietnamese vegan food served in an informal cafe-style restaurant in a strip mall on the southwest corner of East Garvey and Rosemead Blvd. Foods are tasty, wholesome, and nicely presented. We particularly enjoyed the Rice Rolls that were filled with minced water chestnuts, mushrooms and veggie ham and tucked inside a Vietnamese rice wrapper. These were served hot and made an excellent starter. The menu is extensive and is updated from time to time. Their foods contain no MSG and are free of all animal products.

9324 E. Garvey Ave, #8, South El Monte, CA 91733

Phone: 626-443-8687

Hours: Open 6 days a week 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Closed Monday

[Click here for full review](#)

SOUTH PASADENA

Grassroots Natural Market and Kitchen (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A small café inside a natural food market with an impressive menu of wholesome foods for breakfast, lunch, and early dinner. Though the cafe is not solely vegetarian, they feature a wide variety of fresh vegetarian and vegan daily specials, salads, soups, tofu and tempeh combo plates, and comfort foods like chili, tacos, veggie burgers, and quesadillas on whole wheat tortillas.

Take-out orders welcome.

1119 Fair Oaks Ave., South Pasadena, CA 91030

Phone: 626-799-0156

Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

STUDIO CITY

Hugo's (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Though not an all-vegetarian restaurant, this eatery offers a California bistro menu that is very

vegetarian and vegan savvy. A tasty morning starter is the Veggie Farmer's Breakfast sans the cheese. For dinner the Farmer's Market Platter is a vegan's delight as is the Tofu Vegetable Grill and the Potent Sweet Potatoes. Vegetarians can enjoy the Lentil Veggie Loaf. Exceptional selection of fresh juices, herbal and regular teas, coffees, and hot chocolate. No white tablecloths but pleasant dining atmosphere.

12851 Riverside Drive, Studio City, CA 90069

Phone: 818-761-8985

Hours: Daily 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. [Click here for full review](#)

Kung Pao Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A Chinese restaurant serving exceptional food now has a special all-vegetarian menu consisting of appetizers and entrees that incorporate soy based meat analogues. Entrees include Veggie Tea Smoked Duck, Orange Flavored Chicken, and Kung Pao Beef.

11838 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

Phone: 818-766-8686

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Leonor's Mexican and Vegetarian Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan)

An all vegetarian menu of fresh, homemade foods offering a wide variety of salads, sandwiches, Mexican specialties, pizza, and complete dinner entrees featuring soy cheese and soy chicken that may not be vegan. Servers will likely give you incorrect information on whether an item is vegan.

12445 Moorpark Street, Studio City, CA 91604

Phone: 818-762-0660

Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily

[Click here for full review.](#)

TARZANA

Darband Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Traditional Persian cuisine with elegant ambience. The menu offers seven entrees that are deliciously vegan. An ideal place to dine with non-veg friends or family where both can enjoy tasty foods like the outstanding Fesenjon, a rice dish with a thick, sweet, walnut and pomegranate sauce. Live music nightly except Wednesday. Belly dancer on Tuesday. Reservations a must.

19337 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana, CA 91356

Phone: 818-654-9918

Hours: Monday through Thursday 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Sunday 12:00 noon to 10 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

WEST HOLLYWOOD

The Flowering Tree (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

This tiny café with a bright, yet simple ambience serves natural foods and sugarless desserts for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Though the menu is not all vegetarian, both vegetarians and vegans will find many wholesome choices such as the Baked Sesame Tofu Plate in addition to vegan daily specials. Most of the 7 daily homemade soup specials are vegan as are the desserts that come from Alaine's and Mani's Bakeries.

8253 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046

Phone: 323-654-4332

Hours: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Kung Pao Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A Chinese restaurant serving exceptional food now has a special all-vegetarian menu consisting of appetizers and entrees that incorporate soy based meat analogues. Entrees include Veggie Tea Smoked Duck, Orange Flavored Chicken, and Kung Pao Beef. 7853 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 91146

Phone: 323-848-9888

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Real Food Daily (Vegan)

Gourmet organic vegan cuisine catering to all diets. Three outstanding appetizers we recommend are the Nori Maki (vegan sushi), Lentil Walnut Pate, and the No-Cheez which is a combo plate of guacamole, a black bean dip, a creative carrot salsa, and tofu sour cream all served with blue and yellow corn chips. The Meatloaf, mashed potatoes and gravy are great! The Reuben Sandwich was a highlight as well.

414 North La Cienega, West Hollywood, CA 90048

Phone: 310-289-9910

Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily

Web site: <http://www.realfood.com>

[Click here for full review](#)

Urth Caffé (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A trendy hot spot with garden ambience that features certified organically grown coffee and fresh squeezed juices. The bustling café with outdoor tables on two levels plus indoor seating serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Though not all vegetarian, many options for vegetarians and vegans are available on the extensive menu. Some veg choices include Sprout Sandwich, The Urth Salad, Tostada, Vegetarian Chili, and Urth Quesadilla. Salads made with organic greens. Some vegan homemade desserts include Vegan Heaven Chocolate Cake, Pumpkin Spice Bread, Banana Chocolate Chip Muffins, and Peanut Butter Cookies.

8565 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood, CA 90048

Phone: 310-659-0628

Hours: Monday through Thursday 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 6:30 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

Sunday 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

WESTWOOD

Dr. J's Healthy and Tasty Restaurant (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Tiny restaurant with limited seating serving Asian style, vegetarian cuisine. Many organic items. Foods contain no sugar, dairy (except for veggie meats), wheat, yeast, alcohol, caffeine, MSG, or chemicals. Most of the veggie meats and veggie fish contain whey or egg whites. The beef with broccoli is vegan. They offer about 11 entree selections each day served cafeteria style. You can choose as much or as little as you like and pay by the pound.

1303 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024

Phone: 310-477-2721

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Closed Sundays

[Click here for full review](#)

Native Foods (Vegan) <http://www.nativefoods.com>

A bustling, all vegan restaurant with the same high quality foods as their Palm Springs, Palm Desert, and Costa Mesa locations. Focused on convenient, healthy take-out and fast food. Many selections, each creative in ingredients, flavor, and presentation. Our favorite appetizer is the Tempeh Chips with an Asian dipping sauce. The Bongo Congo was great and as was the Rockin' Moroccan, both generous entrees.

1110 1/2 Gayley Ave., Westwood, CA 90024

Phone: 310-209-1055

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday

Sundays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

WHITTIER

Veggie Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan)

Comfortable, informal dining, and gracious and caring service are the extras that go along with an exceptional menu that features mostly Chinese style dishes with a Vietnamese touch. Most of the well-seasoned dishes are vegan. Some Western entrees like pastas and lasagne. The Salmon with Mushroom, Kung Pau Chicken, and Eggplant Curry Soup are outstanding selections.

6557 Comstock Avenue, Whittier, CA 90601

Phone: 562-907-7898

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review.](#)

WOODLAND HILLS

Lotus Inn China Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

Authentic Chinese gourmet cuisine attractively presented in an elegant full-service restaurant with an abundance of atmosphere. Their vegetarian specialties are many, some vegan. The succulent Veggie Steam Dumplings served from the bamboo steamer are a must. Specialties include Veggie

Smoked Duck and Veggie Kung Pao Beef along with several veggie faux meat dishes. The service is exceptional.

21733 Ventura Blvd., Woodland Hills, CA 91364

Phone: 818-888-0878

Hours: Open 7 days from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

[Click here for full review](#)

P. F. Chang's China Bistro (Vegetarian and Vegan Friendly)

A national chain of Chinese restaurants with savvy management at the top and four attractive locations in the Los Angeles area. New on their menu are four vegetarian entrees offered as lunch selections in addition to several vegetable dishes in the regular menu. The lunch dishes can also be ordered for dinner. Even more impressive is that their vegetarian foods are prepared in a separate portion of the kitchen from the rest of the menu. Try their Ma Po Tofu, Coconut Curry Vegetables, and Brown Rice for a delightful lunch or dinner treat.

21821 Oxnard St., Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Phone: 818-340-0491

Hours: Sunday through Thursday 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight

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Dining in Paradise



R: Imagine jet-setting to the Himalayan metropolis of Katmandu to dine in an enchanting little restaurant that prepares indulgent homemade Nepalese cuisine. Luckily, we didn't have to travel that far. Located on Venice Boulevard at Midvale just a few blocks west of Culver City, Katmandu Kitchen is in a neighborhood sprinkled with ethnic restaurants that represent nearly the entire globe.

Z: We crossed the threshold into the charming, homelike dining room and were instantly wrapped in captivating aromas gently drifting from the kitchen. A warm welcome from Sabina set a pleasant mood as she escorted us to our table and gave us a few minutes to peruse the menu.

R: Since Nepal is just north of India, we assumed we might encounter familiar Indian style dishes. Instead, we embarked on a refreshingly new culinary adventure. The many curry dishes on the menu differ from those found in typical Indian restaurants because these are meticulously prepared with a special composition of 12 different seasonings imported from Nepal.

Z: Sabina suggested we begin with **Everest Momos** and **Bhat-Mas Sadheko**, and assured us that these appetizers were totally vegan. Then for our entrees we chose **Bamboo Curry**, **Aloo Gobi**, and **Mustard Miniac**, along with **Roti**.

R: While awaiting our appetizers, we noted the soft lighting and the subtle blend of comforting sounds--the distant chopping, the sizzling of the sauté pan, and the soft exotic flute music accompanying the chanting of Tibetan monks. The ambience, while unpretentious, offered many unique touches imported from Katmandu, including the handmade curtains that drape the large window facing the street.

Z: The glass-covered white tablecloths featured attractive black and red Nepalese designs. Sabina told us that the colorful mandala mounted on the wall was hand painted by her mother who teaches mandala art in Katmandu.

R: Our **Everest Momos** were little steamed dumpling arranged on a white oval ramekin and were accompanied with a dipping sauce. One bite revealed a filling of minced carrots, cabbage, spinach, onions, ginger, and soybeans that was well seasoned with a healthy splash of spice. The **Garlic Dipping Sauce** consisted of a tomato base, lots of slivered garlic, lemon, and those fabulous imported spices that include *timmur*, a Himalayan spice that resembles black pepper but tastes exotically different.

Z: The mysterious **Bhat-Mas Sadheko** is a small white ramekin of steamed soybeans seasoned with slivered garlic and a tasty marinade that included their special spice mixture. The flavors were exceptional and seemed to amplify with each successive bite.

R: For me, the highlight is the **Bamboo Curry**, a traditional Nepalese dish made with black-eyed peas and fresh bamboo shoots with their distinctive lemony tang. The defining feature is the exceptional gravy with its unparalleled flavor spectrum: spicy, pungent, and savory.

Z: Our contingent of three (we brought our friend Chuck to share the experience) agreed the **Bamboo Curry** was the highlight of the meal, yet the other items we ordered were perfect complements. Because I'm fond of greens, I particularly appreciated the **Mustard Miniac**, a ramekin of chopped mustard greens that are stir-fried in slivered garlic and delicate spices.

R: While **Alu Gobi**, a curry dish of stir-fried potatoes, green peas, and cauliflower, is a typical Indian entree, Katmandu's knack for seasoning turns the dish into a uniquely different creation. Completing our meal was a bowl of white rice and the **Roti**, a rectangular flatbread similar to the Indian naan in flavor and preparation.



Z: Being a naturally curious pair, we asked Sabina about the chef and learned that he was her talented husband, Premu, who knows his seasonings like an artist knows his palette. The couple opened the restaurant eight months ago and is already gaining a steady clientele. Even the colorful walls hung with handmade Nepalese art offer the diner a visual feast, especially the wall with the huge painting of the dramatic snowcapped Himalayan peaks and the burgundy wall covered with a variety of masks.

R: Other striking works of art are the three hand-carved wooden "windows" that grace the walls. On the lunch buffet counter at the back of the restaurant sits a golden Buddha surrounded by candles. The restaurant offers outdoor dining at small wooden tables that flank both sides of the entrance. A string of Buddhist flags border the patio area.

Z: Katmandu Kitchen is not an all-vegetarian restaurant, but the ample selection of vegan offerings makes this an inviting place where one could return many times. Dishes like **Raajma**, **Alu Bhyanta**, and **Chana Tarkari** may be our choices next time. Our one disappointment was that neither of the two lentil soups nor their special noodle dish was vegan. Perhaps, someday they will be.

R: The restaurant is an excellent place to take non-veg friends who could enjoy the many meatier selections they offer. Prices are exceptionally reasonable with none of the vegetarian offerings over \$5. One could dine well on a limited budget, enjoy the cozy atmosphere, and learn about Nepalese culture from Sabina who takes pride in sharing her country's customs.

Katmandu Kitchen

10855 1/2 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

Phone: 310-836-9696

Hours: Tuesday through Sunday Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Dinner: Sunday and Tuesday through Thursday 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday and Saturday 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Closed Monday

Inexpensive

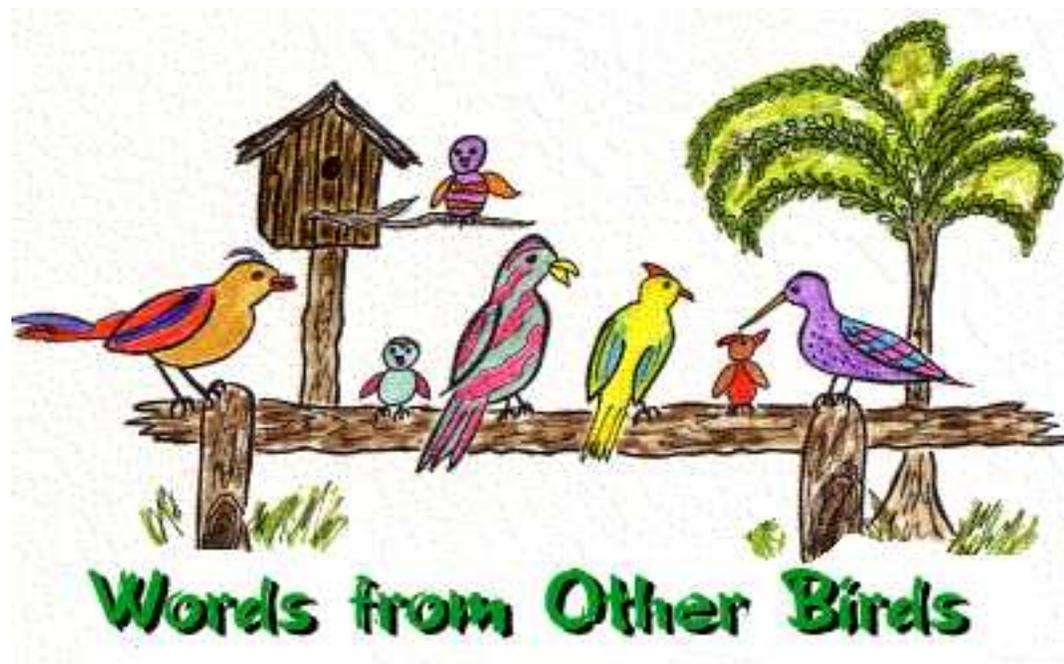
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Thailand Vegetarian Festival

by Michael Commons

This month we introduce Michael Commons who shares his vegetarian experiences in Southeast Asia. Commons currently resides in Thailand where he works as a writer and filmmaker. A native Californian and graduate in Linguistics and Anthropology from UCLA, he has taken the opportunities in his work and studies to travel through much of the world and learn from the peoples and cultures of our planet.

It is the first new moon after the autumnal equinox, which for a vegetarian in Thailand means that life suddenly got much better. This date corresponds to the Chinese lunar calendar as the beginning of what is known in Thailand as the Vegetarian Festival. For those who follow the local Chinese Buddhist teachings, this is a period of ritual and physical cleansing in reverence to Kwan Yin, the goddess of compassion, as well as other deities.



For the rest of us, it is a chance to find vegetarian food in greater abundance and variety than any other period of the year. Thailand is one of the great eating countries of the world with its wonderful fruits, fragrant rice, and bountiful choices of produce, meats, and seafood prepared with stirring, yet not heavy herbs and spices: lemon grass, galanga, kaffir lime leaves, basil, mints, coconut, curry, fiery little red peppers, tamarind, green peppercorns just picked from the vine, palm sugar, shallots, and toasted rice. The country now becomes a paradise for vegetarians and even vegans as the dictates of this festival prohibit use of any animal products as well as much beloved condiments like garlic, onions, and cilantro, somehow not much missed, perhaps, as there is so much else to choose from.

Whereas most of us who would call ourselves vegetarian in the English-speaking world have made a lifestyle choice to forgo eating meat, local Thai-Chinese and others who observe the festival, mostly just do so during this period. Bangkok's Chinatown, known as Yaowarat, is a delight to the nose and the palate any time of year. It can be challenging if not frustrating for a vegetarian gourmet most of the year, as there is little attention to having vegetarian options, and pork is found in many dishes whether as a meat, a seasoning, or as shortening. Now it is vegetarian festival central with 4 out of 5 vendors having replaced their usual dish, be it pork sate, noodles with fishballs, or Chinese crabcakes, with the vegetarian imitation equivalent.

Those of you who feel the primary reason for travel is the culinary experience may wish to spend much time in Yaowarat, Sampeng, or Talad Noi where dozens of vendors provide vegetarian dishes. If food is just a part of your experience, you will be pleased to note that this festival is celebrated in Thai-Chinese communities throughout the country.

I went to Aranya Pratet, a mid-sized town to the east of Bangkok, near the border of Cambodia. Although much smaller and much less of Chinese heritage, the community sports the bright yellow flags with red writing, that mean that this restaurant or vendor is serving vegetarian food for the festival. This flag system is wonderful for the vegetarian tourist who can look for the flags on the street, in the markets, or wherever food is being served and know that they are serving vegetarian. The word for this version of vegetarianism is most simple to learn as well, it is "J," pronounced like Mr. Leno's first name.

Centers of celebration and consequently clusters of vendors preparing vegetarian food, are the "rowng 'J.'" These are halls often associated with Chinese temples where celebrations are held. There are many "rowng 'J'" in the more Chinese districts of Bangkok. Aranya Pratet has a "rowng 'J'" with vendors of vegetarian noodles, Thai food,



Vietnamese food, drinks, and desserts. When I came upon an area near the "rowng 'J" on Maitri Chit Street close to Hualamphong, the main train station of Bangkok, I felt my stomach was not large enough to taste even a third of the delicious vegetarian dishes available there. I found 30 to 40 vendors in this small area with a plethora of choices, and everything was vegetarian.



Talad Noi near the Harbor Department pier and Chareon Panit Street, and Yaowarat Street are two other centers of celebration for this festival. One can tour about almost anywhere in the city and find someone serving some vegetarian food during this festival. I estimate about 15 to 20 percent of the food vendors switch over during the festival. Many larger restaurants also offer vegetarian menus during this period. Attending a book fair at the convention center, I found a whole wing of the cafeteria had been converted. In the market area by Sirirat Hospital near my house, I had some faux duck noodles and could pick up a variety of Thai curries to take home with vege-meats or tofu rather than the usual chicken, pork, or seafood.

The Vegetarian Festival in Thailand has been a tourist attraction for sometime, but the energy has almost always focused on Phuket, the island city in the south that has the biggest celebration. Along with abundant vegetarian food, one can witness amazing acts, such as walking on fire, climbing ladders of swords, or participants who channel spirits into themselves and then while "possessed" commit acts of self-mutilation. Yet, they are returned to a normal uninjured state immediately after the spirit departs. It is a wondrous spectacle to say the least, but for those who are more interested in enjoying good vegetarian Thai food while seeing the historical, natural, and cultural sights of this country, this period is probably the ideal time to make such a journey.

Thailand is a great country to visit anytime of the year. There are vegetarian restaurants and restaurants serving vegetarian food in the larger cities and at many popular tourist destinations. Why not consider planning your trip to coincide with the Vegetarian Festival and enjoy a culinary celebration as you visit the temples, mountains, valleys, beaches, islands, and everything else this wonderful country has to offer?

The festival lasts ten days starting with the 1st new moon after the autumnal equinox, which can be between the end of September and mid-October. You could contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand for precise dates (www.tourismthailand.org). Citizens of most developed countries, such as USA, Canada, EU, Japan, and Australia, may stay 30 days without a visa.

There is competition to keep airfares low; a roundtrip economy class ticket from the US normally ranges between \$500 to \$1000 depending upon airline, date, availability, and departure city. Once there, lodging and other expenses are low; a five-star hotel room is around \$100 a night; a nice guest-house room is around \$10 a night; a tasty vegetarian meal during the festival on Yaowarat Rd. is \$2 to \$3 a person. Many visitors also enjoy Thai massage, facials, and other health spa treatments, as well as shopping for clothing, handicrafts, antiques, and gifts.



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At considerable expense (a truckload of birdseed) we have engaged the services of a preeminent vegetarian food taster. With over 30 years experience developing a discriminating gullet and a keen ability to peck out the best as well as the worst, our Veggie Taster will warble brutal honesty in evaluating vegetarian and vegan food products.

The tastings of this renowned authority are compiled in the VeggieTaster Report, an ongoing feature of Vegetarians in Paradise. Check back frequently to keep up to date on the latest tastings .

VeggieTaster Ratings Scale

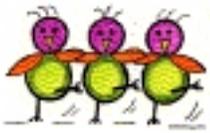
The VeggieTaster rating system is strictly for the birds with five birds for the highest and one for the lowest. Ratings appear at the end of each item.



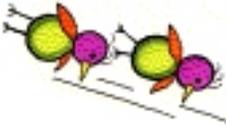
Soaring with the Eagles



Chirping in Close Harmony



Winging It



Cruising at Low Altitude



Fell Out of the Nest

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Beverages

This Smoothie Is From Another Galaxy

Galaxy Nutritional Foods promises "great nutrition anytime" but does not deliver with its new **Ultra Smoothie**. In this yogurt-like container one will find a complete serving of protein, 100% vitamin C, low fat, cholesterol and lactose free. If only it tasted good. Even though it contains Tropicana fruit concentrate, it had a yucky artificial and chemical taste. You can do much better flinging some fruit and soy milk into a home blender.



[Product Categories](#)

Breakfast Foods

Hand-held Breakfast

Doing breakfast on the run? You can't beat **Amy's Tofu Scramble in a Pocket Sandwich!** Two minutes in the microwave plus another two in the toaster oven to crisp up the crust and you're chomping away on Amy's grandma's favorite breakfast. Hold on, now--give it a minute or two to cool slightly, then pick it up and bite into this tasty, tofu-filled, dough-wrapped delicacy. Inside are teeny bits of chopped shiitake mushrooms, onions, red bell pepper, broccoli, and tomatoes to jump the flavor up a bit. It's organic, it's vegan. It's great! On this taster's wish-list is that Amy's had thought to make the dough from organic whole wheat instead of white flour.



Bob Has the Right Stuff

Starting the day with a really healthy hot cereal that's got plenty of fiber was Mom's idea of a good breakfast. This taster discovered that **The Right Stuff** by **Bob's Red Mill** is exactly what Mom ordered. Yes, it means cooking, but it doesn't take a rocket scientist to put some water in a pot, pour in some ground-up grains, and turn the stove on! A bowl of this organically grown combination of whole grain wheat, rye, corn, oats, spelt, kamut, and flaxseeds cooks up in about 5 minutes and keeps me chuggin' all the way to lunch. Of course, I top it off with some raisins, nuts, fruit, and soymilk to make breakfast a fun and yummy meal.

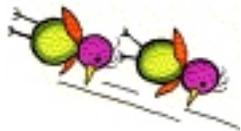
[Product Categories](#)

Burgers

The Veggie Burger That Ain't

Curious about the new **Burger King Veggie Burger** with its 140 calories, 4 grams of total fat, 0.5 grams saturated fat, and 9 grams of protein, this vegan bird ordered it without the bun, and without the mayonnaise, and asked that it be microwaved rather than cooked on the meat-tempered grill. The side salad with French dressing completed the order. First impression--it's rather small with a few shreds of carrots and something green finely minced and embedded into an unappetizing,

unidentifiable mixture of mashed something-or-other with a layer of glistening fat on the top. Second impressionãit tasted OK, but just OK. It had the mouthfeel of its 4 grams of fat and left one unsatisfied. The salad was mostly iceberg lettuce, a few shreds of carrots, a small wedge of tomato, and a floret of broccoli. Save your money and wait for another fast food chain to play one-upsmanship.



Ride the Texas Range for Dinner

Barbecue up an all vegan **Amy's Texas Burger** with yeeee-haw confidence. It's got great barbecue flavor along with a hint of veggies like onions, mushrooms, and bell peppers! Soy protein and wheat gluten-based for a good hit of protein, (12 grams worth) these burgers, packaged 4 to a box, have a chewy meaty texture characteristic of the real thing. For a frozen item, they're quick to fix, too. I heated mine in the oven, and while it was heating, I put together stuff like sliced tomatoes, onions, and lettuce. Even with all the fixin's, that down-home barbecue flavor got a thumbs-up from my taste buds. It was the perfect burger.



Hurray for Hempnut!

The most succulent burger to cross these discerning taste buds is the **Hempnut Hempteh Veggieburger** that comes wrapped with two patties in a package for sharing with a dining buddy. This tasty burger made from soybeans, brown rice, and hempseeds is all organic and all vegan. It rocks with a zesty smoke flavor and even has a nutty, chewy texture that gives your choppers something to gnaw on. Best of all, each patty provides 10 grams of protein and a whopping 765 mg of that hard-to-get Omega 3.



Burger Nouveau Scores a Knockout

Trader Joe's enters the meatless burger ring with their store brand **Trader Joe's Burger Nouveau** and scores a knockout. Wonder how vegans get their protein? Nouveau is a delicious soy protein/wheat gluten patty that packs 21 grams of protein and 5 grams of fiber. Low in fat, 2.5 grams, it tastes so good it will make your omnivore friends take notice when you toss them on the grill (the burgers, that is!)



Thumbs up, Morningstar!

Natural Touch, the shining light of the Morningstar Farms line, makes a **Vegan Burger** that really hits the top of the charts with its earthy, savory flavor, toothy texture, and not too much of the junk additives. By itself, it's a little dry, but that's because it contains zero fat to make it juicy. In a bun with all the fixin's it goes down real easy. Easy to fix, too. All it needs is a little warming in the oven, microwave, or stove-top. If you're foraging for protein, look no further. One "pattie" in this 4-burger package contains 11 grams of protein and 3 grams of dietary fiber.



Thumbs down, Morningstar!

Guess **Morningstar Farms** thinks it takes 30 ingredients, many of them unpronounceable, to make a meatless burger with their **Better 'n Burgers** line. The back of the package carries the 100% vegan seal, and all of those 30 items listed are vegan, but wait! Does your body have a nutritional requirement for flavor enhancers, namely, disodium guanylate, disodium inosinate, aspartic acid, tartaric acid, lactic acid, or succinic acid? Do these patties taste good? Yes, but who needs the chemicals? Pass on this one and choose a burger that's got "real" ingredients.



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Cheese Substitutes

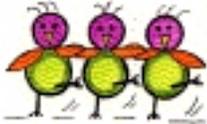
Melt in Your Mouth Pizza Cheese

For vegans, **Follow Your Heart Vegan Gourmet Cheese Alternative** is the best thing to come along since the discovery of the wheel! The four flavors: cheddar, nacho, Jack, and mozzarella are so exceptional they stand in for the real thing. The best part is this cheese really melts under the broiler and oozes like the real stuff. Totally vegan and made from non-GMO soy, this is a power product that even offers 2 grams of dietary fiber for each 1-ounce serving. You can't get that from the real thing! Try it on pizza, open-faced sandwiches, and salads or shred it into soups for a sensational topping.



And It Melts, Too

Soy cheeses without casein (a dairy protein) can be quite dismal. They just don't have that stretchy texture that makes pizza so enticing. Tofutti has some vegan cheeses that are a slice above the others. Their **Tofutti Good and Healthy Soy-Cheese Slices** are dairy-free and melt on a piece of bread rather than slide off when you take a bite. The slices come in Mozzarella and Cheddar flavors, but the Roasted Garlic is the one we like for dressing up a sandwich. They taste great and they're cholesterol free BUT BEWARE! They have partially hydrogenated soybean oil loaded with trans fat. Each 70-calorie slice is 64% calories from fat.



A Cheese That's Rella-tively Great

Finding a vegan (casein-free) cheese that measures up to dairy cheese in taste, texture, and meltability is pretty close to impossible. However, this determined vegan found one that passed the test. It's the only Rella variety without casein. **Vegan Rella**, packaged in an 8-ounce brick, comes in cheddar and mozzarella flavors. Slice off a 1/4-inch strip, lay it on bread, and tuck it under the broiler. Though it doesn't ooze into a melted state like real cheese, it softens to a creamy texture and stays that way until you take the last bite. Flavorwise, it tops the list! Cheddar lovers will say it falls somewhere between mild and medium cheddar, while the mozzarella fans will compare it to a mild mozzarella.



Soymage Oozes Out of Contention

On a vegan cheese tasting binge, this taster found the comparison clear. **Soymage Vegan (A Natural Alternative to Cheese)** falls a little short. Available in 12-ounce bricks in cheddar and mozzarella flavors as well as in an 8-ounce package of individually wrapped singles, this pseudo-cheese doesn't taste bad. Where it misses is in the melting process. Under the broiler, the top "skin" burns while the middle oozes off the bread and makes a messy clean-up, or, with more careful timing, it doesn't ooze, but it doesn't do much of anything else either. The real disappointment is that it doesn't stay soft and melted. Moments after it comes out of the broiler it hardens up to its original state. What a bummer!



[Product Categories](#)

Chicken and Meat Substitutes

You Wouldn't Rib Me, Would Ya?

Most of the time I shun Gardenburger products with their frightfully long lists of ingredients, many undesirable, including cheese. The exception is their incredibly delicious all vegan **Gardenburger Meatless Riblets** made from soy and wheat gluten and doused in a kick-ass smoky barbecue sauce that knocked me over! The amazing thing is that they look like the real thing, yet they are "bone-free" as the label reads. The 10-ounce package makes 2 perfect servings that deliver 17 grams of protein each and only 210 calories. Even the package itself makes interesting reading. But, beware the 720 mg of sodium!



A Steak that Won't Eat Your Heart Out

Lightlife Smart Menu Steak-Style Strips are a really neat way to introduce your non-veg friends and relatives to meatless dining! With 11 grams of protein, 70 calories, and zero fat in each of the two servings, they won't miss the meat, and that touch of smoky flavor with a soy punch is perfect for a quick vegan stir-fry. Easy is the key word here. Without much planning, I invited a friend to dinner of salad, brown rice, and veggie stir-fry with these little steak strips. Not sure I made a vegan convert for life, but it was an impressive start!



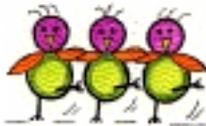
Clucking over Chicken-Free Patties

The folks at Health Is Wealth really know how to capture that chicken flavor. These stone-ground whole-wheat breaded gems have to be the best things since the chicken crossed the road. Why did he anyway? It's not the 14 grams of protein or the 1.5 grams of fat that bring us back to the freezer case for more, it's the over-the-top flavor that makes this the best breaded chicken patty we've ever tasted. These **Health is Wealth Chicken-Free Patties** are a pure vegan delight without MSG, preservatives, artificial additives, colors, or flavors.



True Sicilians Balk at Pepperoni

It may look like pepperoni, but a true Sicilian would definitely say, "That's not pepperoni!" Packed into a chub ready for slicing is this 95% fat-free, non-GMO flavored wheat protein you wouldn't put on a pizza. Although the **Veg-Deli Pepperoni** people claim they're "#1 in Taste" on the label, they have a ways to go. Ten slices off this 1 1/2-inch diameter chub have 18 grams of protein with only 3 grams of fat and make this a good choice for people watching their weight. Unfortunately, this pepperoni tastes like someone tried to create a meat substitute but missed. The name betrays the product.



Now, That's Pepperoni!

Yves Veggie Pizza Pepperoni would make any veg pizza proud. The label says, "Pizza perfect," and they're right on target. No work is involved. It's all sliced for you. These spicy bites are as remarkably close to that pepperoni we used to eat in our foolish old days. Sixteen slices add up to 70 calories and 14 g of protein with no fat at all. Those little round circles combine soy protein, tofu, wheat gluten, and wheat starch and a raft of spices in a preservative-free, non-GMO concoction. They've even fortified it with Vitamin B12.



Faux Bacon That Sizzles

If you follow the package instructions for cooking, **Lightlife's Smart Bacon** comes out crispy and crackly, just like the real stuff. It's salty and smoky, and good enough to eat plain by the strip. Even the skeptical birds munched this one along with their pancakes. You can also crumble it into a spinach salad or layer it in a sandwich.



Cutlets Get Smart

Lightlife's Smart Cutlets sure are dumb. I should have known better! Anything spelled "Chick'n" can't be good. These fake breaded chicken cutlets are just about the most rubbery things I've ever eaten, and they aren't that flavorful, either. I made the mistake of sauteeing them, slicing them into strips, and putting them into a Caesar salad. We didn't even finish them. If you can get beyond the icky texture and lack of taste, they aren't so bad. Nutritionally, they are only 140 calories a piece, with no cholesterol and only half a gram of fat.



Make My Bacon Fakin'

These **Lightlife "Fakin Bacon" Smoky Tempeh Strips** masquerading as bacon won't fool anyone, but they taste great. I sauté them in a tiny amount of olive oil until they crisp up a bit; then I add them to veggie sandwiches or crumble them into a salad. The nice smoky taste adds a barbecue-like flavor to whatever you mingle them with, and they don't have the sourness of some tempeh products. Three slices are only 80 calories, and contain only half a gram of saturated fat.



Hot Hot Wings

Back before we knew better, my brother and I would nibble buffalo wings by the bucketful, usually the tangy spicy **Health Is Wealth Big Red Wings**, conveniently delivered to his West LA nest. Now that we are plant-eating folks, we just have to pop a plateful of vegan buffalo wings into the microwave. The people at Health is Wealth have created mildly spicy buffalo wings that have a truly chewy, yet moist chickenlike texture. As a matter of fact, these are the best fakes I've had yet. The great thing about these is that four of them are only 100 calories, they don't contain any saturated fat or cholesterol, and they reside conveniently in the freezer. The only way these could better would be if they were spicier, but that's what Tabasco is for.



[Product Categories](#)

Condiments

Almost Instant Indian

Impress your friends with a simple Indian dish, Vegetable Biryani, using **Patak's Original Biryani Paste**. The recipe suggestion on the jar explains how to make an excellent rice and vegetable Biryani. It's not too spicy, and unlike a lot of Indian dishes, it can be prepared with fresh vegetables that are cooked until just done. Throw in some tofu and almonds, and it gets even more interesting.



Follow Your Heart Leads the Mayo Pack

No matter how you pronounce it **Follow Your Heart Vegenaïse** tastes pretty much like real mayo without the eggs, additives, and preservatives. This vegan mayonnaise comes in four varieties that add zing to any sandwich: Original, Organic, Expeller Pressed Canola Oil, and Grapeseed Oil. Grapeseed oil is our favorite. Like the others it's GMO and cholesterol free. Although it's 20% lower in fat than regular mayo, don't slosh it on because it still has 9 grams of fat and 90 calories per tablespoon.



Say Nay to Veggie Mayo

Nasoya Fat Free Nayonaïse is just wrong. It's a sad and weird imitation of Miracle Whip, and as a result, this spread/dressing is icky sweet. Even more unappealing though is the texture--it's grainy, as if it was made from regular tofu instead of silken. Nothing about it resembles real mayonnaise, not even the color, which is strangely grey! If you are seeking a tasty substitute for mayo, I vote for Annie's Goddess dressing, which enhances sandwiches and salads.



Garlic Lovers Oil

Consorzio Roasted Garlic Flavored Olive Oil is richly infused with fresh-tasting garlic. The oil is ideal for bread dipping, salad dressings, and cooking. It adds a rich taste when drizzled over fresh tomatoes or cooked tomato sauce. It can also substitute for garlic sauteed in oil, if time is of the essence.



[Product Categories](#)

Cookies, Cake, and Candy

Blondies vs. Brownies

When it came to a choice between the **Macadamia Brownie** or the **Butterscotch Blondie** by **Frankly Natural Bakers**, this taster decided it was almost a dead heat. Both were flat out vegan decadence in the bar cookie category. However, the Butterscotch Blondie with its organic oat flour won out with its exceptional flavor, moistness, and wholesome ingredients. The Macadamia Brownie dished up plenty of real pleasure for the dedicated chocoholic, but it was a tad too dry for my taste. That doesn't mean you should skip it altogether--it's got plenty going for it. Just make sure your mod bod can handle the 400 calories for the Blondies or the 375 calories for the Brownies now and then. Of, course, if you eat half today, and, well,-- you know.



Decadently Awesome

Chocolate Decadence holds the patent on the most intoxicating chocolates a vegan could possibly seek out for serious sinning. The **Chocolate Raspberry**, **Chocolate Espresso**, and **Double Chocolate** buttons were so downright awesome it was hard to believe they were really vegan, but rest assured, they are. Creamy and silky smooth and rich, rich deep chocolate flavor--believe me, they went down easy. Totally dairy-free and casein-free, the chocolates are formed into every possible shape and size and come packed in the nicest little gift packages you could want--lots more flavors, too!



Shared Pleasure Makes Love Bloom

Nana's Cookie Company must have had romance in mind when they created their 10 varieties of moist and chewy quarter-pounder cookies that are intended to serve two. My first thought was that these cookies are so plump they must be on hormones! But no, they're just plain voluptuous! The **Oatmeal Raisin** and the **Peanut Butter** both have that old-fashioned richness you expect from an indulgence, and neither has that overly sweet taste that comes from refined sugar. These are sweetened with natural fruit juices, have no hydrogenated fats, and are totally vegan. I loved them both for their texture and flavor, and the 180 calories went down without a hitch. My partner kept eyeing my half to make sure I ate it all.



Eh, What's Up, Doc?

Fabe's Natural Gourmet Mini Vegan Carrot Cake just knocked me over it was so good! I could actually taste the sweetness of the carrots and the just-right touch of spice. The texture was soft and moist--it was definitely an indulgent dessert without being overly sweet. Just don't splurge too

often. With 140 calories for one fourth of the cake you can quickly escort 60 fat grams to your waistline. The mini cake comes in a cute 9-ounce package that makes the perfect little gift to bring if someone invites you to dinner.



Chocolate Champions

Heavenly Fudge Brownie by **Allison's Gourmet** is definitely the world class brownie champion. Unwrap the package and the rich chocolate aroma heads straight for the internal chocolate radar screen. One bite floated me into chocolate ecstasy with flavor so rich and texture so perfectly moist and chewy. It was a nearly guilt-free experience knowing the brownies are made with all organic and natural ingredients. Chomping on **Allison's Mint Chocolate Chip Cookies** is an experience that closely mimics the brownie tasting. Definitely a cookie and not a brownie, the texture falls between chewy and crunchy, the flavor most definitely chocolate with a robust zap of mint that gives it character. It rocks.



Chocolate Lover's Heaven

The **Double Chocolate Chip** cookie by **Fabe's Natural Gourmet** is the ultimate chocolate heaven for anyone with a passion for chocolate like this veggie taster. Starting with the just-right fudgy, chewy texture down to that to-die-for double chocolate flavor--it's pure vegan ecstasy. Don't get too carried away, though--each cookie packs 260 calories and 11 grams of fat, 8 of them saturated. It's a treat--a once-in-a-while thing!



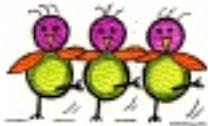
Cookies that Rule

The spicy splash of cinnamon and cloves puts the **Oatmeal Raisin Cookie** by the **Alternative Baking Company, Inc.** on the top of my list. It's soft, chewy, and wonderfully wal-nutty. Better yet, its super size of 4.5 ounces makes it an ideal treat to share. Feels like an old fashioned idea with a hip new style of no dairy, zip hydrogenated oils, no honey, zero refined sugar--it's a vegan cookie lover's dream come true! However, beware the 240 calories and 8 grams of fat, 2 grams saturated per sinful pleasure.



Hold the salt, please!

Allison's Gourmet Chocolate Macadamia, Chocolate Chip Pecan, and Peanut Butter Cookies left this taster a little disappointed, but not completely. The texture of each had a good crunchy and nutty quality, but overall they were a bit dry. What came to the foreground was an unexpected saltiness. Perhaps they were not sweet enough to compensate, but salt is not what I yearn for in a cookie. What I want to taste in a peanut butter cookie is a healthy dose of peanut butter-- **Allison's Peanut Butter Cookie** missed the mark.



[Product Categories](#)

Cultured Soy "Yogurt"

To properly evaluate the cultured soy "yogurts", this taster felt it necessary to rate the berry flavors from different manufacturers and make comparisons. The following entries are included in this tasting.

Faaaabulous Yogurt!

Count on **Trader Joe's Cultured Soy Strawberry** or **Blueberry** flavors to deliver the tastiest, creamiest "yogurt-style" breakfast or snack you've ever tasted. If you crave thick, lavishly rich tasting "yogurt" as much as I do, then look no further. Every spoonful bursts with the fruity sweetness from the real strawberries and blueberries. Both were pure heaven down to the last mouthful. And this might sound strange--it felt good going down--I'm talking great mouthfeel. With 2.5g of fat and 5g of protein in the 6-ounce carton, it runs neck in neck with WholeSoy in ruling the soy culture kingdom.



WholeSoy Rules the Cultured Kingdom

WholeSoy Creamy Cultured Soy Blueberry reigns over the soy culture kingdom with flavor and creaminess I just can't get enough of. Like the Trader Joe's brand, it's divinely thick and goes down sooo smooth. You don't have to guess if there are really blueberries in there, you can really taste them. I couldn't help thinking I was floating on a fluffy blueberry cloud. The 6-ounce serving is made with **organic** ingredients and has 2.5g of fat and 5g of protein.



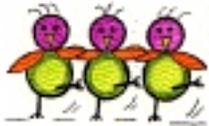
Not Wild about Wildwood

Wildwood Soyogurt Cultured Soymilk Strawberry Patch and **Blue Moon Blueberry** flavors don't quite measure up to the faaaabulous kings because of their looser, runnier textures that seemed more like a beverage. Flavorwise, they're not a bad yogurt-style breakfast, but both flavors leave a mild aftertaste that wrinkles the nose. I did like the little chunks of real fruit that turned up in almost every light, creamy spoonful. Another thing going for this brand is that it is certified **organic**. A bit high in fat with 3.5g, it does offer 6g of protein.



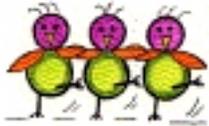
Silk Not So Silky

Silk Cultured Soy Strawberry and **Blueberry** flavors left a pronounced aftertaste that made me think they were totally artificial, yet there's real fruit listed in the ingredients. Comparing the colors of each of the brands, I found this strawberry flavor unappealing with its greyish, brownish tint that fought with what attempted to be a soft pink hue. Both flavors have the runniest consistency of all the yogurts I tasted. They pass for soy yogurt and will do when there is no other choice, but -



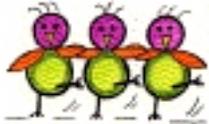
O'Soy is O'Too Sweet

A single 6-ounce carton **Stonyfield Farm All Natural O'Soy Raspberry Cultured Soy** tastes as if it soaked up an entire field of sugar cane. With its 27 g of sugar, this concoction reminds me of overly sweetened pudding that ought to be labeled "dessert yogurt." On the other hand, this cultured soy offers a smooth, fruity taste with no afterbite. Made with **organic** raspberries, soymilk, and sugar, this creamy yogurt boasts 15% of your daily calcium needs while delivering 7 g of protein and a bunch of active cultures.



Culture Minus Taste

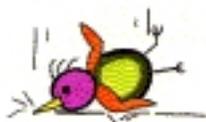
Nancy's Cultured Soy Raspberry has everything a healthy yogurt should sport except a pleasing taste. It's made from all **organic** ingredients like soymilk, amazake, scads of raspberries, and grape juice and even provides more than your daily requirement of vitamins C and E and a generous serving of calcium, but it flunks the taste test. While some cultured soy products are overly sweetened, this one needs a boost in sweetening and a fruitier flavor.



Energy and Food Bars

Xtremely Fake

GeniSoy's Lemon Smash Xtreme Crunch Bar was a good idea with its soy nuts, apples, raisins, cranberries, cherries, almonds, and cashews. If only they had stopped with those fruits and nuts--but no! The ingredient list is long enough for bedtime reading, it's loaded with sweeteners (8 different kinds--no kidding!), and it tastes artificial. Not cool. Confession time: the taste test went down before looking carefully at the label (a really rare occurrence), and guess what? It's a vegan reject with its honey and sugar.



Xtremely Pure

Vegan Date-Nut Energy Square by **Frankly Natural Bakers** is wholesome, pure and natural, wonderfully chewy, loaded with flavor and just the right amount of sweetness from the dates to satisfy the urge for an afternoon snack. For those times when there's a long stretch between lunch and dinner, this is what you reach for. The **Pecan Energy Square** is just so-so--stick with the Date-Nut made with tahini, oats, sesame seeds, dates, sunflower seeds, and walnuts and sweetened with barley malt. Just don't do it too often or you'll add 340 calories by the time you've taken the last bite.



Nutrition Bars for the Chicks

The people at Clif, makers of the **Clif Bar**, make **LUNA Bars**, the "whole nutrition bar for women." These bars are so tasty and satisfying that many guys I know proclaim these as their favorites. Unlike many nutrition/energy/sports bars that taste like metallic chalk and Fig Newton regurgitation, **LUNA Bars** are sweet enough to satisfy a sweet craving, have a chewy and crispy texture, and don't taste like they are good for you. They come in tasty flavors such as Lemonzest, Chocolate Pecan Pie, Chai, Trail Mix, and others. The best part is they are free of wheat and dairy products, are sweetened with brown rice syrup and evaporated cane juice, and weigh in at 180 calories. With 2 grams of fiber, 35% of the RDA of calcium, 100% RDA of folate, and soy as the first ingredient, these bars are a winning snack.



Raw Goodness

Organic Vegan Food Bar is probably the healthiest bar I've come across. The first ingredient is quinoa sprout powder, followed by fava bean sprout powder and soy sprout powder. On the upside, it's cold-processed so it qualifies as a "raw food." It has a total of 15 grams of protein, and -- get this -- it actually tastes pretty good. On the downside each bar is almost \$3 (most bars are under \$1.60). Additional complaint: the outer wrapper is a colorful yellow, and the yellow ink flakes off onto my hands.



Wow, Wha Guru Chew!

These pocket-sized snacks are packed with all kinds of weird stuff (cork tree bark, asian psyllium seed, Chinese goldenthread root, etc.) but they taste great. Sweetened with honey or evaporated cane juice, **Wha Guru Chew** comes in flavors such as Ginger Almond with Dandelion, Sesame Almond, and Vanilla Cashew (this bird's favorite). Their compact size makes them special for traveling, and they are a great energy booster in between meals.



2Wice as Good

Ranking highest in the energy bar category is the **2Wice as Big Gluten-Free Date-Nut Bar** by **Frankly Natural Bakers** with 3.5 ounces of vegan chewy, crunchy, and deliriously delicious flavor. It's so pure it's outrageous. The crunchiness comes from soynuts, sunflower seeds, and walnuts. The chewiness is a combo of dates and sesame, and the vanilla, organic cane juice, and grape juice top it off with that perfect touch of sweetness. Actually, one half of the almost-square bar is just right for an afternoon energy boost, so share it with someone who truly appreciates the good stuff. Be aware that it's a little on the caloric side, so don't do it every day--one half of the bar dishes up a divine 200 calories.



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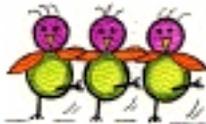
Frozen Non-Dairy Desserts

To properly evaluate the non-dairy ice cream-type desserts, this taster felt it necessary to

purchase the same flavor, Mocha Fudge, from different manufacturers and make a comparison. The following three entries are included in this tasting.

Sweet Nothings Are Really Something

The **Sweet Nothings Mocha Fudge** made by **Turtle Mountain** provides amazing flavor for its zero-fat content and sweetening only from tapioca syrup. Dieters or those following an Ornish/McDougall food plan can wallow with pleasure in the cooling dessert with its definitive mocha flavor sans the almonds while consuming only 110 calories per serving. The texture is reminiscent of what used to be called ice milk. What's missing is the rich mouthfeel that only a heavy dose of fat can provide. With only 13g of sugar, the flavor lacks a little in depth, but only a little. It still delivers well on its no-fat focus. An added bonus, it's kosher.



Somewhere over a Double Rainbow

Coffee Almond Fudge made by **Double Rainbow** offers the most robust mocha flavor, swirls of fudge that really satisfy like fudge, and lots of crunchy roasted almonds throughout. Dieters better side-step this treat with its 240 calories a serving. No claims for low fat on this label--the dessert lacks the creaminess one would naturally expect with a fat content of 13g per serving. Made of kosher ingredients, the exquisitely rich flavor is almost enough to make up for the somewhat grainy texture.



The Great Mocha Masquerade

Soy Delicious by **Turtle Island** makes a **Mocha Almond Fudge** that tastes more like caramel than fudge and falls short on the mocha. Still, I had no trouble downing a healthy portion with its excellent creaminess that's to die for. Lower in fat than Double Rainbow, its 9g of fat delivered the best mouthfeel--a true satiny texture, and a few less calories with 200 per serving. There were roasted almonds with almost every spoonful. I wouldn't have had a bite of disappointment if the manufacturer had labeled it Creamy Caramel instead of Mocha Almond Fudge.



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Marshmallows

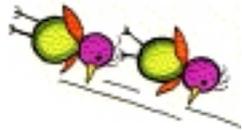
So What if They're Not Round!

Plump puffy pillows, the **Vegan Supreme Marshmallows** are pure ecstasy to a marshmallow lover who has missed these babies like crazy. Welcome back, you little dream puffs! My first impression about their appearance was ----hmmm, they're square---perfectly square 1 1/4-inch cubes---it's odd. But then I popped one in my mouth, and there was that exquisitely light, airy texture and familiar rich vanilla flavor that lingered. In an instant I could feel that old burst of pleasure that comes quickly when I fall madly in love with a food. That sweet, chewy, sticky, old-fashioned marshmallow that melts in s'mores and on top of hot chocolate lives again--this time in brand new vegan clothes. Square, schmare, who cares? They're fabulous! These little love bundles are homemade from non-bone char refined sugar, Emes Kosher Gel, water, light corn syrup, pure vanilla extract, cornstarch, and sea salt.



Imitation Takes a Back Seat

Vegan Sweets Marshmallows by Pangea don't make me roll on the floor in ecstasy. It's not their diminutive size (3/4-inch minis with nice rounded edges) or their gnarly irregular shape. The flavor is off--it's strange--and it dies instantly. And the texture is all wrong! Just plain wrong! Where's that sticky, chewy fluff that's part of the marshmallow's character? Missing! No reminiscing here. Maybe these shouldn't be called marshmallows, because they're not. They ARE totally vegan, though---made from non-bone char processed sugar, corn syrup, agar agar, carrageenan, soy protein, and vanilla. Attractive professional packaging.



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Miscellaneous

Manna from Heaven

When's the last time you ate a slice of bread that was both delicious and healthy? **Nature's Path Manna Bread** is all-organic except for the water that's filtered. Made from sprouted grains, this unleavened bread contains no added oil, sweeteners, flour, salt, yeast preservatives or additives. A bite of the **Manna Fruit and Nut Bread** is like munching on a piece of cake, but cake usually doesn't have this much fiber (6g) or protein (6g). Other flavors, such as the Manna Date Nut Bread

rate equally as high.



Noodles

Instant Thai Dinner for Lazy Birds

The people at Thai Kitchen have made it super easy to make quick Thai dishes without having to stock your pantry with an array of specialty herbs and spices. This bird was skeptical about the "Just 3 minutes" promise on the package of the **Thai Kitchen Garlic & Herb Instant Rice Noodles**, but, the promise was fulfilled. I took an extra 5 minutes to cube some extra firm tofu, slice a handful of mushrooms, and cut asparagus into bite-size pieces, and threw them into the boiling water. One minute later, after stirring in the spice packets and rice noodles, dinner was ready. The noodles were not gummy (a common problem with these instant noodle kits) and the broth was lemony, barely sweet, and a bit spicy. For a really impressive entrée, next time I'll sprinkle it with chopped peanuts and cilantro.



Thai Noodles Are Easy Prep

Fantastic Fast Naturals Ready Meals rules with their vegetarian **Thai Lemon Grass and Rice Noodles**. This is a yummy all-vegan dish that's ready in 5-minutes in the microwave or on the stovetop. Thai-food crazy me loved battling with those slippery rice noodles enveloped in a just-right spicy, tangy, lemony coconut sauce dotted with chunks of baby corn, bamboo shoots, and bits of textured soy protein and minced peanuts. Flavorwise, it's a blast. The portion size was about right for me along with a salad, but it sure won't be for a hearty eater. Watching the fat? Better pass. This single 300-calorie serving has 10 grams of total fat, 3.5 grams saturated.



Noodle-o-Rama

For those of you who think there is nothing more comforting than a steamy bowl of noodles in broth, **Fantastic Foods' Big Soup Noodle Bowls** are likely to satisfy. The noodle bowls are also low fat, averaging about 200 calories a package. At about 2 cups prepared, these bowls are larger than the standard cups of soup, making one package a good-size lunch or light dinner. They are

also more interesting, with flavors such as Sesame-Miso, Hot and Sour, Spring Vegetable, and Spicy Thai. Hot and Sour is my current favorite, and has a much stronger flavor than the others, but Spring Vegetable is a strong second, for its mild and lemony flavor. The only one that didn't wow me was the Spicy Thai, which had a weird manufactured-sweet taste.



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Nut Butter

Couldn't Pick Better Butter

Peanut Better, Inc. designed a really cool line of 12 seasoned peanut butters--some savory, some sweet with a dozen distinctly different personalities. The flavor names were so tempting, I had to try them all. In a nutshell, they're so versatile, they go with everything and don't fight with anything. A big plus, they're certified **organic** (except the mixed nuts), kosher, and contain no hydrogenated fats. Of the savories, the punchiest ones are the Thai Ginger Red Pepper, Spicy Southwestern, and Hickory Smoked. When my sweet tooth was calling, I heaped on the Deep Chocolate, Vanilla Cranberry, or the Peanut Praline. They've even combined peanuts and almonds in the Mixed Nuts that comes in creamy or chunky. Very hip, these designer peanut butters.



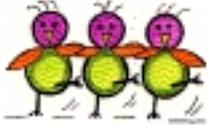
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Sandwiches

High Hopes for 3 Square

This bird was raised on "Hot Pockets," those microwave wonderfoods of dough filled with all kinds of now-forbidden things. When I came across the 3 Square Vegan Pocket Sandwiches, I was pretty excited. If you are willing to consider the pastry wrapper just that, a wrapper, these are quite good. The fillings are tasty--I feasted on a **3 Square White Bean and Basil Pocket**, that was also stuffed with crushed tomatoes, brown rice, and herbs. However, as with some vegan pastry, the

outside dough was pasty, floury, and unsatisfying.



[Product Categories](#)

Snacks

Gotta Have Gojis!

Dried **Goji Berries** from **Orcas Island Herbal Apothecary** could easily become a habit. I knew from their deep reddish orange, leaning toward brownish color these berries had a ton of beta carotene. A lover of dried fruits, I found myself reaching again and again into the bag for more of these wrinkled, elongated little wonders that measure about 5/8-inch in length. Nature has packaged a delightful tangy sweetness and dynamite nutrition in these berries that come all the way from Inner Mongolia where the soil has never seen a chemical fertilizer. They're pure and you can just taste it! What amazed me is that 1/4 cup of these mini gems had 4 grams of fiber and 4 grams of protein. I could live on these!



Crunchy Fruity Snack Rocks

My brother, the king of snacks, gives **Ryvita Fruit Crunch** high praise. He says they are good plain and even better with a healthy skim coat of soy nut butter. These 2-gram of fiber per slice crackers are packed with whole grain rye, oats, whole grain flour, and currants. At 50 calories per slice with only 2 grams of sugar, these crackers rule.

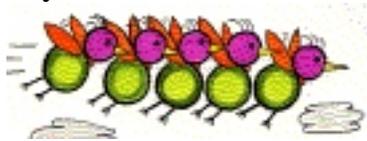


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Soups

Soup for Lazy Birds

For those of us who can't be bothered with food preparations (or dishwashing!), **Fantastic Foods Big Bowl Vegetarian Chicken Noodle Soup** rocks. The bits of soy protein that mimic chicken taste close to the real thing and add a nice chewy texture. The organic noodles have an ideal texture, not too chewy or mushy like some other instant soups can be. At 180 calories (with only 10 calories from fat), this makes a great lunch or light dinner. It's a soothing easy fix for a wintery day.



Soup's on at Amy's Pad

Soup lovers will love **Amy's Organic Lentil Vegetable Soup** --it's hearty, thick, colorful, and all organic. One spoonful and you're into the comfort zone. It's got flavor, it's got vegetables galore, it's got 8 grams of protein per serving, and it smells good while warming on the stovetop. With two small servings in the 14.5-ounce can, this yummy soup makes a perfect light meal or a great starter for a larger meal. For heartier appetites, eat the whole thing--you can't go wrong! A big plus--it's all vegan.



Mori-No-No Soup Sensation

Mori-Nu Creamy Corn Soup is so over-the-top sweet it should be labeled creamy corn dessert. Maybe, throwing the one serving, aseptic package into the freezer might qualify it as a frozen dessert. The food chemists who dreamed up this nightmare with the heavy-handed use of sugar and salt need to figure out a better use for their silken tofu. The result is a nutritionist's nightmare with 7 g of fat, 2g saturated, and the rest trans-fat plus 820 mg of sodium. Soup lovers beware!



Amy Wins Three Bean Salute

Amy's Pasta & 3 Bean Soup is the perfect quick meal and even better on a cold rainy day when nothing but soup will do. It's loaded with beans and veggies and just the right thickness to rate that homemade quality stamp. Smells great while it's warming on the stove and feels soooo good going down, too. It's all organic and vegan but definitely high on the sodium scale with 680 mg for half the can. The can is supposed to serve 2 but that's for baby servings. To really fill up, eat the whole thing, and watch your sodium intake for the rest of the day.



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Tofu and Tofu Products

Tired of Tasteless Tofu?

I happen to like tofu plain, right out of the plastic tray, but for less simple birds, there are a number of tasty tofu options. My two new favorites are from Trader Joes. **Trader Joe-San Asian Tofu** and **Trader Giotto's Italian Herb Tofu** are pleasingly firm and toothsome, flavorful either warm or cold, and quite well seasoned. At \$1.99 for a 6 oz. slab, they are reasonable, too. I like them best cubed in salads, as the main ingredient in a sandwich, as a pizza topping, or chopped and sprinkled in a miso broth. My fellow nestmates enjoy them diced right out of the package.



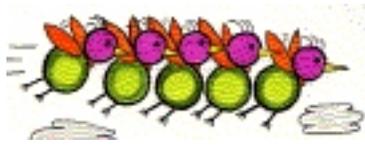
Tried Thai Tofu

Since I was on a flavored tofu binge, I tried **Nasoya's Thai Peanut Baked Tofu**. I like nearly all things Thai or peanut, but I was a bit disappointed in the lack of strong flavor and somewhat bland taste. The texture is nicely chewy al dente, but the sauce didn't penetrate the tofu or have enough taste to adequately flavor the outside of the tofu. My advice to Nasoya: marinate the tofu first, and add more salt. My advice to you: skip this one, unless you prefer more subtle flavors and are trying to avoid salt.



Tofu a Go Go

I found a new quick snack that I just love: **Pete's Tofu2go Lemon Pepper Tofu** with mango chipotle sauce. The tofu triangles are nicely flavored and have that spongy texture that's characteristic of tofu served in Asian restaurants, but they are not greasy. The triangles are tasty at room temperature or slightly heated. The sauce was tangy, sweet, and slightly kicky. A couple of triangles and a hearty salad make a fulfilling and quick dinner.



Vegetarian Entrees

La Enchilada es Poco "Sparso"

The attractive freezer package on **Amy's Black Bean and Vegetable Enchilada** led me to expect two plump servings of beans and vegetables wrapped in corn tortillas. I even had to wait 50 minutes while they heated in my conventional oven, only to unwrap these sunken, unappealing logs. Even had to wrestle these two emaciated enchiladas out of their little tray. Once on the plate I realized my partner and I were going to be foraging in the fridge to put together a real meal. On the positive side, they tasted really great. Forget the 2 servings, eat the whole thing yourself, and add a hearty salad to complete your meal.



This Meal Will Almost Bowl You Over

Amy's Brown Rice & Vegetables Bowl is an easy, quick-to-heat meal in an earth-friendly biodegradable bowl. Five minutes in the microwave was just enough time to put a fork and napkin on the table before retrieving the bowl from the nuke box and digging in. The base is brown rice flavored with itsy bits of minced vegetables topped with broccoli florets, mushrooms, purple onions, and chunks of tofu. It's all organic, all vegan, and all pleasantly tasty with delicate flavors. Wish the airlines would serve meals like this! One downside--the rice was mushy--it had a texture like porridge. The serving size is perfect, but those with big appetites, should consider adding a salad and some whole grain bread to round out the meal.



I Ate My Rubber Ducky!

This veggie taster stoically struggled to finish one of the two portions of the vegan **Jamaican Jerk Tofu** by **Gloria's Kitchen**. I was wracking my brain to come up with a unique use for the other large, thick, rubbery, tasteless triangle of tofu. I followed the directions to the letter, heating them for 30 to 35 minutes in the conventional oven, but they were still ice-cold. Back in the oven two more times, totaling 65 minutes, finally produced a warm dish that wasn't worth the trouble. The base of brown rice had become dry and crunchy. The sparse vegetables were mere shreds, yet the package displays long fingers of zucchini, carrot, and red and yellow pepper. It might have been

more fun tossing the two tofu wedges into the bathtub and pretending they were rubber duckies. The **ONLY** thing going for this dish is its low sodium content.



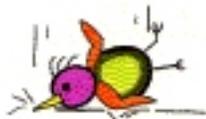
El Burrito Es Muy Delicioso!

The **El Burrito SoyLoaf** offers more versatility than the manufacturer intended. All vegan, low in fat (1.5g), and made from non-GMO soybeans, this ready-made mixture is intended to be baked in the oven for one hour. Because I was in a hurry, I made a great time-saving discovery. This one-pound meatless meatloaf chub also makes excellent patties that can be thickly sliced and quickly sautéed to a golden brown in a touch of canola oil. El Burrito es muy delicioso! Distinctly Mexican in flavor, **SoyLoaf** is a real winner, but if you're watching the sodium, keep your paws off that second helping!



Paella Package Outshines Its Contents

Fantastic Fast Naturals Ready Meals gets a hmmm for their box of vegetarian **Spanish Paella** that's ready-to-eat in 5 minutes. The prep is easy, but that first bite was struggling to get past my taste buds. To give this all-vegan creation a fair chance, I talked myself into taking a second bite. It wasn't any better. White rice with miniscule bits of onions, artichoke hearts, diced tomato, and corn looked great on the package, but I've never tasted anything this bad. It bites! The package lists 4 grams of dietary fiber and 6 grams of protein, but how they arrived at those figures is a mystery.



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Vegetarian Reading

Each issue the VIP birds endeavor to soar to the highest literary peak to peck out the most unique, informative, and accomplished book that contributes to vegetarian enlightenment.

This month we feature four vegetarian guidebooks that take our readers from coast to coast. The books focus on vegetarian restaurants, vegetarian lodgings, and natural food stores as well as information valuable to anyone following a vegetarian lifestyle.

Veg Out Vegetarian Guide to Southern California

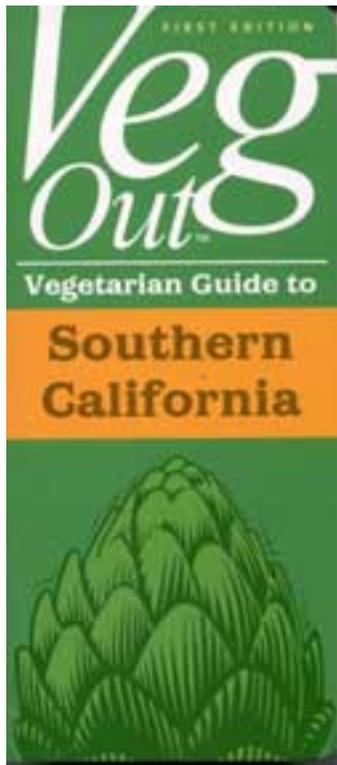
By Kathy Siegel and Carey Ann Strelecki

Gibbs Smith, 2003

Paper, \$12.95

You know vegetarianism is hot when a publisher creates a series of vegetarian guides to major cities in the United States. Beginning with *VegOut Vegetarian Guide to Southern California*, Gibbs Smith has published guides to New York City and San Francisco with subsequent books featuring Seattle and Portland and Washington, DC arriving later this year.

The volumes, almost pocket size except for the length, not only list restaurants by areas, but also include delivery services, juice bars, farmers' markets, green grocers, organizations, and web resources, even acknowledging *Vegetarians in Paradise* in the listings.



Also provided is a glossary including terms like miso, nori, and injera, words one encounters in visiting ethnic restaurants. Unfortunately, the list includes soy cheese with a definition that states, "made from soyfoods (using no dairy products), it resembles cheese." The definition does not recognize that many soy cheeses contain casein, a milk protein.

The guide is well indexed including an Alphabetical Index by restaurant name, an Atmosphere Index that indicates categories like family restaurant, juice bar, fast food, or chain, and a Cuisine Index telling the national origin of the cuisine.

Concluding the book is the Top Ten Index revealing the reviewers choices in Top Ten for Food, Top Ten for Atmosphere, and Top Ten Best Buys.

In the opening the authors present their rating scale with one star for fair, two for good, three for excellent, and four for outstanding. Cost for a meal in the restaurant is indicated by \$ for inexpensive (under \$10), \$\$ for moderate (\$10 to \$20), and \$\$\$ for expensive (\$21 and above). Meal cost includes the average price for the entrée, plus one drink and a tip.

At the beginning of the listings, they are careful to give the following warning to readers: "Note: Vegetarian and vegan can mean many things to many people. The stricter your diet, the more sense it makes to ask before you eat. Even in the most casual vegetarian cafes, the staff is accustomed to a variety of dietary concerns; make yours known. On occasion vegetarian meats contain small amounts of whey. If in doubt, or if language becomes a factor, opt for tofu, seitan, or vegetable substitutes (mushrooms instead of veggie shrimp, for instance); all are reliable whey-free alternatives."

If the authors chose to include restaurants that were totally vegetarian, the book would be significantly smaller. Instead they wisely list restaurants that have a significant number of vegetarian choices, even though they are not totally vegetarian. Each entry concludes with a bold face heading telling the main focus of the restaurant like **VEGETARIAN WITH VEGAN CHOICES** or **VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN OPTIONS; MEAT, FISH, POULTRY AND SEAFOOD ALSO SERVED**.

Inside the back cover is a colorful, handy pullout map showing the locations of the restaurants listed in the book.

Vegetarians living in or traveling to this area will want to have a copy of *VegOut Vegetarian Guide to Southern California* in the glove compartment of the car or tucked into the door pocket. This comprehensive guide will be extremely valuable in finding vegetarian food in communities as far north as the San Fernando Valley and as far south as San Diego. Even non-vegetarians who opt for a healthy lifestyle may be enticed to check this one out.

*Vegetarian New York City:
The Essential Dining, Shopping, and Lodging Guide*

By Suzanne Gerber

Forward by Paul McCartney

The Globe Pequot Press, 2004

Paper, \$14.95

No Fear! If you're a vegetarian in New York City, you don't have to worry about where to eat, shop, or sleep. Suzanne Gerber, former editor of *Vegetarian Times*, with the assistance of more than two dozen contributors, has created *Vegetarian New York City* and it truly is "The Essential Dining, Shopping, and Lodging Guide."

Someone coming from a small town in Nebraska might find it difficult to comprehend that there are between twelve and thirteen thousand restaurants in New York City. If the person were vegetarian, this guide would prove quite handy because it reviews and evaluates restaurants, markets, and lodgings in the city.

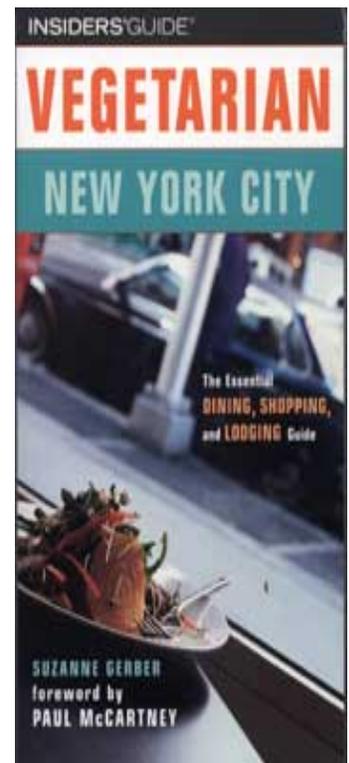
For each restaurant the book features the type of cuisine, address and phone, the hours, website, reservations, the prices, and the number of vegan and ovo-lacto vegetarian choices. It contains information like "vegebility" and "kid friendly" as well as the type of service (e.g. table, takeout, delivery, catering).

In Places to Stay, Gerber provides address, phone, website, and a brief description of the lodging. Places to Shop gives data on health food stores where one could purchase everything from vitamins and supplements to organic produce, veggie snacks and deli items. A rating like good or excellent is part of each entry.

One of many special features in the book is How Green Is My Market offering a roster of farmers' markets in the city's Greenmarket program that takes place at more than 30 locations throughout the city. Twenty of those markets operate year-round. Approximately 175 farmers participate in the Greenmarket.

Don't "Mock" It Till You Try It is a section on faux meat products. After a brief discussion of the origins of the fake meats, chicken, and fish, the author lists the restaurants where diners can do their mocking.

Hidden Ingredients is one section covering an issue that plagues many vegetarian diners, such as animal ingredients lurking in their meals. Gerber points out the "bugbears" in Chinese, Cuban, French, Greek, Middle Eastern, Indian, Italian, Southeast Asian, Mexican, and Spanish restaurants. In each cuisine she zeroes in on broths that may be



animal-based, fish sauces in Asian foods, dairy or egg washes in or on some breads, and the high level of fat and sodium in some ethnic meals.

Sushi aficionados will enjoy *Satisfy Your Yen for Vegetarian Sushi* that lists places around town where vegetarian sushi is available. Those who are content to stay home can flip a few pages to find organic home delivery. *Editor's Picks: Best of the Best in NYC* takes all of the restaurants surveyed and places a number of them in categories like *Places We Rave About*, *Most Romantic*, *Best Bargains*, *Best Places to Blow Your Diet*, *Best Splurges*, and *Most Elegant*. Not to be missed is the *Top Ten Vegan Desserts*.

Special sidebars pay tribute to some of the stars of the New York vegetarian restaurant scene. Singled out are Leslie McEachern of Angelica Kitchen, Joy Pierson and Bart Potenza of Candle Café, Louie Lanza of Josie's, and Chef Matteo Silverman who prepares a weekly four-course vegan meal in his Brooklyn loft.

The book incorporates neighborhood maps showing the locations of the restaurants in each community. It is well indexed with special listings by type of cuisine, vegeability, and price.

Before plunging into the book, the reader should take a few minutes to read the foreword by vegan celebrity Paul McCartney. McCartney urges readers, "So if you haven't given vegetarianism a try, now is the time to do it: while you're on a trip and can look forward to really incredible meals prepared by some of the world's best chefs."

In perusing this 400-page exhaustive research, any reader will acknowledge that a vegan could not go hungry in the Big Apple, unless he or she was penniless. Susan Gerber and her associates have assembled a comprehensive guide that is extremely helpful for any vegetarian trying to navigate the New York scene. Not only is ***Vegetarian New York City*** highly informative, but it's also an enjoyable reading experience.

***Veg-Feasting in the Pacific Northwest:
A Complete Guide for Vegetarians and the Curious***

By Vegetarians of Washington

Book Publishing Company, 2004

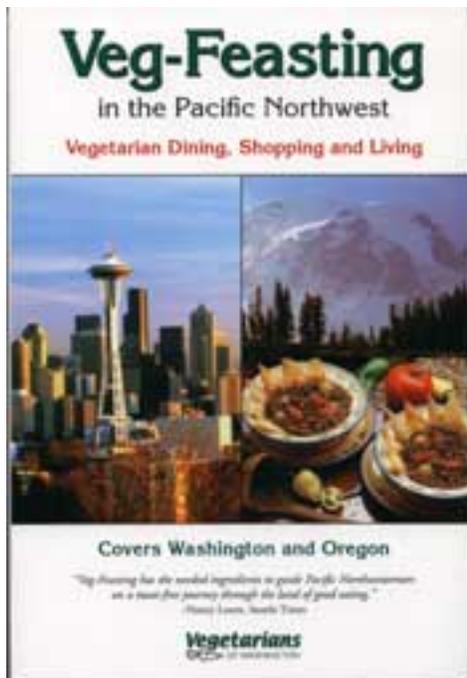
Paperback, \$12.95

Vegetarians of Washington have assembled all of their members and resources to develop ***Veg-Feasting in the Pacific Northwest: A Complete Guide for the Vegetarians and the Curious***. This comprehensive guide, covering Washington and Oregon, focuses on dining, shopping, and living in this region.

In the Dining Out section the editors recognize that finding vegetarian options at Indian, Thai, Chinese, and Vietnamese restaurants is quite simple, but caution about overlooking other ethnic

cuisines. They cite Ethiopian and Middle Eastern restaurants as places offering "good vegetarian choices." Many steak and seafood restaurants are now including selections to satisfy vegetarian customers. When no vegetarian choice exists, the editors' advice is to ask if the chef would prepare a special meal from items on the menu.

The heart of this section consists of restaurant listings by cities in both states. For each restaurant, in addition to address and phone number, there is an indication of the type of food served, whether it is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and the price range of meals. Also included is whether the restaurant is vegan, vegetarian, vegetarian friendly, or very vegetarian friendly. A paragraph describing the restaurant and its offerings is also featured.



For those more interested in preparing food at home, the book spotlights natural food stores, food co-ops, farmers' markets, and even mainstream supermarkets in a section called Shopping for the Vegetarian Kitchen. The advice is to buy organic produce whenever possible because it is grown without pesticides and herbicides. By shopping farmers' markets and buying directly from the people who grow the crops, the consumer will find fresher produce and many items not encountered in supermarkets.

Farmers' markets are presented in a chart showing location, hours, days, and months of operation. With a quick scan, readers can easily locate the nearest farmers' market.

Half of the volume is devoted to Living, a section divided into four parts: Getting Started, Staying Healthy, A Diet for All Ages, and Four Good Reasons Why. Each of these sections features essays by doctors, nutritionists, dieticians, and

members of the group who have expertise on various subjects.

Anyone just becoming vegetarian and not sure about what to eat will find hints and clues in essays on vegetarian nutrition, what a vegetarian kitchen should stock, and an annotated list of cookbooks and other resources.

Staying Healthy emphasizes Food for a Healthy Heart, Avoiding Cancer, Diet and Diabetes, Nutrition for Healthy Bones, and Small Changes Make a Big Difference.

In Four Good Reasons Why contributors discuss non-health related reasons for being vegetarian. By taking this course, people are not only saving animals and the environment but also sparing themselves from animal and dairy products that have been contaminated with pathogens, hormones, antibiotics, and industrial chemicals. The concluding essay Food and Faith presents the spiritual case espoused by many religious groups in support of a vegetarian diet.

The book concludes with information about the contributors and the Vegetarians of Washington as well as a membership application for the organization and a feedback page for readers to make suggestions for entries for the next edition of the book. Maps of both states showing the locations of restaurants and natural food stores are included as well as Famous People, Famous Quotes.

The Vegetarians of Washington should be commended for producing this vegetarian compendium for citizens in the Northwest. Armed with this book, people in their community or visitors from other places have a ready-made guide to local resources to assist them in maintaining a healthy vegetarian lifestyle. The vegetarian community owes a debt of gratitude to the restaurant reviewers, the essay contributors, and the editors for a mammoth task that has been so capably executed. Hopefully, works like *Veg-Feasting in the Pacific Northwest will be emulated in other areas of the country.*

***Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores:
A Comprehensive Guide
to over 2,500 Vegetarian Eateries***

By John Howley

Torchlight Publishing, 2002

Paperback, \$19.95

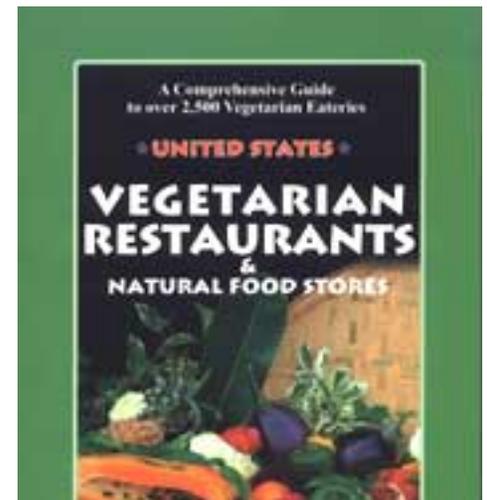
Traveling around the United States, John Howley quickly recognized the need to find vegetarian restaurants and natural food stores in cities that he visited. Howley, a follower of Hare Krishna and a devoted vegetarian for more than 20 years, decided he would assist others in this same task by assembling a vegetarian restaurant and natural food store guide for the entire country.

After three years of diligent research, he produced *Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores*, an almost 700-page work that truly is a comprehensive guide on the subject. He personally verified the information for each entry in his list.

The book is subdivided by states with each chapter opening with a map of the state showing the location of the principal cities covered in the section. For each restaurant the author provides the address, phone number, the type of restaurant and menu, comments about the restaurant, price classification, credit cards accepted, and directions to the facility.

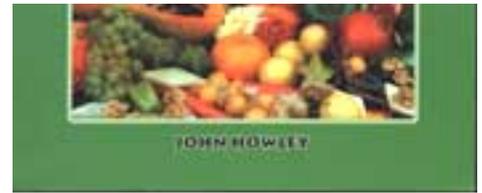
For people who frequent fast food restaurants, Howley has assembled information on vegetarian options available at national chains. If a fast food outlet has nothing for vegans or vegetarians or if it has very little, he candidly indicates those facts. Even donuts are not above scrutiny. For Krispy Kreme he says, "Because of the chemicals in the dough, it is not possible to ascertain if any of the dough used in the doughnuts does not contain meat products."

In describing Olive Garden, he says, "If you don't eat eggs there is not much reason to come here, as almost all the dishes contain meat and eggs. The pastas are made with eggs and the



breeding for Eggplant Parmigiana contains eggs."

"There is not much of a reason to come here as all they have is corn-on-the-cob and apple pie (vegan)," he writes about Popeye's. He does indicate vegan and vegetarian offerings at McDonald's, Subway, Taco Bell and other restaurant chains.



In the section General Vegetarian Information, Howley discusses the health benefits of vegetarianism, types of vegetarian diets, vegetarian nutritional considerations, contaminants present in animal products, and apparent vegetarian foods that may contain meat.

Quite useful to vegetarians is his chart of Ingredients and Chemicals That May Contain Meat, Egg, or Dairy. Calcium stearate, used to keep dry ingredients from caking, is usually derived from cows or hogs, while enzymes like rennet, lipase, pepsin, and trypsin often come from various animal sources.

In an effort to make the book a comprehensive resource, Howley presents a list of Vegetarian and Alternative Web Sites, information on Organic Produce, Famous Vegetarians, Vegetarian and Vegan Organizations, Natural Food Store Major Chains, Orlando Area Parks, and even Hare Krishna Temples where Sunday vegetarian feasts are served.

The book concludes with a discussion of various ethnic cuisines and their vegetarian offerings as well as items that may not be vegetarian or vegan. This section also discusses information on airline and train vegetarian offerings. A glossary including items from foreign cuisines and a limited index complete the work.

Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores is an essential guidebook for anyone doing extensive traveling around the country. What makes this project especially valuable is that Howley keeps the database current by updating the information on his website at <http://www.vegetarian-restaurants.net> Because of the supplementary information, the book is good resource for new vegetarians and provides facts that even well-seasoned vegetarians may not know.

Reviewed August 2004

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about vegetarian food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

My 5-year-old daughter is allergic to cow's milk and hates soymilk. She eats hot cereal with us for breakfast, but I don't know what to give her instead of those. Any suggestions? Help!

Sarah, a desperate Mom

Howdy there Sarah,

Now, darlin' don't you fret none, 'cause there's always somthin' good jes 'round the corner. What I have fer yer l'il darlin' is some mighty delicious pecan milk. I know, I know, that don't sound one bit familiar to ya, but there's lots o' nourishment in them pecans. Fer one thing, they's packed full o' antioxidants and that milk is mighty fine tastin' too.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

PECAN MILK

1/2 C. raw pecans
2 C. water
Pinch of salt
2 pitted dates

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and begin blending on low speed for a few seconds. Increase speed and blend on high for a full minute.
2. Pour pecan milk into a pitcher a little at a time through a fine mesh strainer, stirring continuously with a spoon. Press extra liquid from pulp remaining in the strainer. Discard pulp or save it to thicken a sauce.
3. Store pecan milk in the refrigerator. Use within 3 days. Makes a scant 2 cups.



If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

[Click here for past Ask Aunt Nettie Columns](#)



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24 Carrot Award



In each issue Vegetarians in Paradise presents the 24 Carrot Award to an outstanding person or organization that endeavors to practice or promote education, natural health, wholesome nutrition, and ecology techniques for the mutual benefit of humans, animals, and the earth.

Vegetarians in Paradise proudly presents its 24 Carrot Award to Ruth Heidrich, renowned ironman athlete, author, radio personality, and breast cancer survivor who has been an inspiration to vegetarians around the world. Ruth clearly exemplifies the positive aspects of a vegan lifestyle.

What follows are the questions asked by Vegetarians in Paradise (VIP) and the answers by Ruth Heidrich (RH).

VIP: What events in your life led you to vegetarianism? How long have you been on a vegan

diet?

RH: There was one event that changed my life forever -- the diagnosis of breast cancer. In two hours I went directly from the Standard American Diet (SAD) to a low-fat, whole food vegan diet in July, 1982, 22 years ago. This happened within days of the diagnosis, because, luckily, I'd read about a research study on the role of diet and cancer being conducted by John McDougall, MD.

I decided I'd rather change my diet than undergo chemotherapy and radiation. With that "medical gun" to my head, it was an easy choice. I never went through a transition of vegetarianism on the way to vegan because the research protocol required the immediate elimination of **all** animal products.

VIP: What role has your diet played in your battle with cancer?

RH: I'm convinced that a vegan diet saved my life. By the time the breast cancer was diagnosed, it had become advanced and spread to my bones and left lung.. I'd had the surgery to remove the primary tumor, so I was depending on my immune system to handle the remaining cancer. My diet of 100% whole plant foods allowed my immune system to function more efficiently.

VIP: You have encountered many doctors in your lifetime.



What are some of their reactions to your diet and exercise programs?

RH: First, my oncologist stated that diet had nothing to do with cancer. All the other physicians I saw, including radiologists, gastroenterologists, and other oncologists, all claimed that my SAD diet had nothing to do with my getting breast cancer. The gastroenterologist claimed I couldn't possibly get all the required nutrients on this vegan diet. Most of these doctors also thought that running was too hard on the joints, doing marathons and triathlons was excessive, and that I should be "taking it easy, and getting lots of rest." At that point I'd been a daily runner for 14 years and was already a marathoner. I didn't even tell them that I had already started training for the Ironman Triathlon, determined to be the first cancer patient to complete the Ironman.

VIP: We understand that you are also a raw food devotee? How much of your diet is raw? What were the primary influences that led you in that direction?

RH: After 18 years as a cooked vegan, I decided to see if there were additional benefits to being a raw vegan. I'd heard lectures that cooking food denatured protein and destroyed vitamins, so I gave it a 30-day trial but forgot and didn't notice when the 30 days were up. I've never been tempted to go back to cooking.

I found two major advantages. First, it made meal preparation so much easier, saving me time, electricity, and pot-scrubbing. Second, I found that fresh fruits and vegetables tasted so good that I didn't miss the taste of cooked food. My diet is all raw except for condiments such as salsa and mustard, popcorn for the "munchies," and occasionally as a special occasion when I'm invited over to a friend's home or a restaurant..

VIP: What motivated you originally to enter the Ironman Triathlon? Could you describe the three events involved in the Triathlon?

RH: When I was discharged from the hospital after my surgery and before going back to work, I just happened to turn on the TV and saw the broadcast of the February 1982 running of the Ironman. I was immediately totally transfixed. I watched all these young, fit athletes coming out of the ocean after a 2.4 mile swim, jump on their bicycles for a 112-mile bike race, and then take off running to then complete a marathon, 26.2 miles. Because I'd done several marathons, I thought that I had the hardest part handled and could easily add swimming and cycling.

I found, however, that those long distances involved in the swimming and cycling were a major challenge and were going to take a lot of hard work. When I found that then no woman as old as I (47, at the time) had ever done the Ironman, and certainly no cancer patient, that was all it took! With the added cycling and swimming to my daily running, I discovered that I felt even fitter and stronger than I did before the cancer diagnosis.

VIP: Could you give our readers a summary of your principal athletic accomplishments?

RH: Because I was a marathoner before the cancer, I decided that I'd do whatever it took to maintain that level of fitness throughout the cancer crisis. My last run with an intact body was the morning of my surgery, and my next run was two mornings later. I had already entered a 15 kilometer race before the diagnosis, so four days later, I won my first post-cancer gold medal with my slightly less "intact" body. With my new diet and a decision to re-invent the stereotypical image of a "cancer patient," I was on a roll. I entered every race I could find. I once did two races

back-to-back, a 5 K run at 7 am, and a triathlon at 8 am, and got gold in both races. I did races both Saturday and Sunday, despite the admonitions from coaches that I couldn't possibly recover in that short a time. I did three marathons in three weeks, one of which was an ultramarathon of 50 kilometers (31 miles).

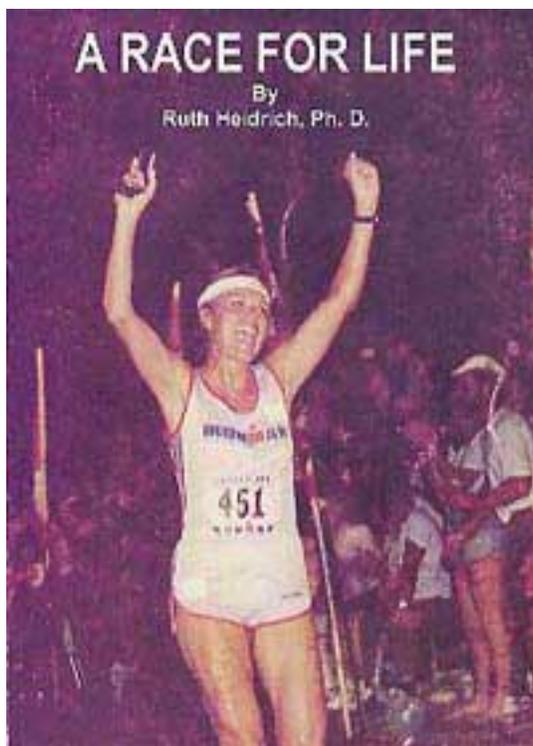
Another gold was won in the Run To The Sun when I raced the 37 miles from sea level to the top of Haleakala on the island of Maui, 10,200 feet altitude. I did three Ironman Triathlons (Kona, Hawaii, New Zealand, and Japan) all in the same year, another feat thought at that time to be impossible. It was actually four in 12 months because I'd done Kona both before, in late October, and after the New Zealand and Japan Ironmans in early October.

My record so far is 62 races in one year, a total of six Ironman Triathlons, and more than 67 marathons. I'm getting close to 1,000 first place medals in all the years since the dietary change and the cancer diagnosis. I've also been named "One of the Ten Fittest Women in North America" and set three age-group fitness records at the famed Cooper Clinic/Aerobics Center in Dallas, Texas.

VIP: What athletic events are on your current schedule?

RH: Aside from all the regular 5 K and 10 K races, I'm working on a book, *Running 'Round the World*, which will have photos of running in some of the most exciting spots in the world. I already have running on the Great Wall of China, Stonehenge, the Royal Mile in front of the Edinburgh Castle in Scotland, under the gigantic faces of Jefferson, Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt at Mt. Rushmore, the lowest point, 282 ft below sea level in Death Valley, in front of the Hubbard Glacier, and runs in more than 30 different countries.

This year I plan on running in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland and hope to get some great running photos in front of fjords and more castles. I've also been invited back to the Cooper Clinic to try to set a new record for the 65-69 age group.



VIP: What dietary and exercise regimen do you follow in a typical day?

RH: A typical day starts with an hour on the bike, an hour's run, and alternating between either a mile swim or a weight training session. Then breakfast consists of a large bowl filled with greens, a carrot, celery, a banana, a mango, nutritional yeast with B-12, and a little blackstrap molasses. Midday snacks consist of carrots, apples, and other fruit in season. Supper is more greens, carrot, tomato, bell pepper, cabbage, other vegetables in season, and salsa/mustard/ground flaxseed dressing. Dessert consists of blueberries, strawberries, and walnuts for my omega 3 fatty acids.

VIP: We have heard that osteoporosis runs in your family. Since you have not been drinking milk for years, aren't you also in danger of developing this dread disease?



RH: Because there was osteoporosis on both sides of my family, I started tracking my bone density at the time I went vegan, which, of course, meant no dairy products. What I found out was that my bone density back then was already way above peak bone density for women. This was

obviously because of all my running. What I needed to track was the bone density after stopping dairy products and through the menopausal years with no hormone replacement and no supplements, and found to everyone's amazement, that my bone density actually increased through my fifties and sixties. I was obviously getting all the calcium that my bones needed.

VIP: What reactions do your family and friends have to your diet and exercise lifestyle?

RH: Most of them think I'm absolutely crazy, and some can't even comprehend what is entailed in living the vegan triathlete lifestyle. Among my running friends, my diet is considered way too extreme. Among my vegan friends, my exercise program is way too extreme. Those who are neither have trouble understanding either.

VIP: You have also developed another career as an author. Can you tell us about your books? What additional books are you planning?

RH: As Dr. McDougall watched my progress, he strongly encouraged me to write a book. *A Race For Life* was the result of that first effort. People were always asking me for recipes, so I wrote *The Race For Life Cookbook* which has just been updated and is entitled, *The Vegan Cook/Raw Book* and is now available as an e-book. My third book, *Senior Fitness: Empowering Your Golden Years*, is in the final stages of editing. I've already mentioned working on *Running 'Round The World*. I've also written chapters in two relatively new books, *Chicken Soup for the Fit Soul* and *Raw Power II*.

VIP: What are a few of the most memorable speaking engagements that have taken you all around the world?

RH: The most exciting were the three International Vegetarian Union Conferences, in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2002, in Toronto, Canada in 2000, and in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 1998. I've also given talks on cruises in the Greek Isles and the Caribbean, and talks in Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. In a way, the most memorable was the one that never happened. I had been invited to speak at the European Vegetarian Union Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, and got as far as London when it was canceled because of 9/11.

VIP: What is your response when people realize your age and ask when you are planning to give up your exercise program?

RH: Because we race by age groups, the race results always publish my age and I know most people are surprised. Because I "come alive" when I race and am so enthusiastic about racing, most people just know I plan on setting age group records as long as I am able, hoping for the 100-year-old record.

VIP: What can visitors expect to find when they access your website at <http://www.ruthheidrich.com>?

RH: First, there's the "Ask Dr. Ruth" section where I answer questions people ask about diet, exercise, and even a few confuse me with the other Dr. Ruth. Then there are a number of articles I've written on the most frequently asked questions such as the protein issue, running and knees, hormone replacement, and athletes on a vegan diet. There are photos from some of my recent trips such as Machu Picchu, the Galapagos Islands, the Hubbard Glacier, and the Florida Everglades holding a 3-year-old alligator. There is also a place to order my products such as books and videos.

VIP: Radio listeners in Hawaii hear your voice quite often. Could you tell us about your career as a radio personality?

RH: Back in 1988, Terry Shintani, MD, and I were asked to co-host "Nutrition and You," a radio talk-show started by Dr. McDougall in 1981. We're on every Sunday night and frequently have guests such as Howard Lyman, Peter Singer, Kenneth Cooper, MD, and speakers invited for the monthly meetings of our Vegetarian Society of Hawaii. I've also been interviewed on a number of other local and national talk shows.

VIP: We understand you were in a serious accident that almost ended your athletic career? Can you give us the details?

RH: It almost ended my life! I was doing a training ride on my bike when an oncoming truck with a load of kitchen cabinets almost passed this street and made a sudden left turn. Unfortunately for me, I was in the middle of that intersection. His bumper hit my left leg, shattering it in the process with the impact throwing me into the air. I landed on my right hip which broke my pelvis in three places. So there I was, lying in the middle of the street with multiple fractures on both sides of my body.

While I was worrying about how I was going to do my next triathlon in three weeks, the doctors in the ER where I was taken by ambulance were marveling that I hadn't been killed and told me that I was very lucky to be alive. (Their ideas of "lucky" and mine didn't quite coincide, I'm afraid.) They called in an orthopedic surgeon who put my leg together the best he could with the help of titanium and steel. He said that since there was no displacement in the bones of the pelvis, it would heal on its own as long as I didn't put any weight on it for six to eight weeks!

I could not imagine being flat on my back for that long. As it turned out, the pelvis healed in an amazing three weeks, but at the time, this was devastating news! But then it got even worse; he told me that my running and racing days were over. When I was discharged from the hospital three weeks later, I got a new orthopedist who prescribed physical therapy twice a week, and who I hoped could give me a more optimistic prognosis. When I still couldn't run, he told me I needed to find another sport, so I responded by doubling my physical therapy to four times a week and completed my first race four months later. Because I was the only one in the 60-64 age group, I got another gold medal!

VIP: What are some of the highlights of your education and career? How has your education helped you in your career?

RH: My formal education has been invaluable. My B.A. at UCLA taught me critical thinking, my master's degree how to both read and understand medical and scientific journals and research design, and my doctorate, about nutrition and exercise physiology. All of this training gave me the understanding of what was happening in our bodies as we eat and exercise. Before the cancer

struck, I was a logistics engineer in the Air Force, involved in a variety of exciting projects and was being given training preparatory for the highest levels of logistics management. That all changed with that devastating diagnosis. I took a medical leave of absence and decided on a new career, that of vegan triathlete.

VIP: What are some of the significant awards and honors you have received?

RH: I think the "24 Carrot" Award is the neatest one of all. Being named "One of the Ten Fittest Women of North America" was also quite exciting. *Runner's World* magazine gave me the "Golden Shoe" award for athletic achievements in the face of breast cancer. I'm also grateful for the scholarships I received that helped me through college plus a Phi Beta Kappa award. I've also been honored by my story being written up in dozens of books, magazines, and newspapers all over the world. There's the front page large photo of me finishing the Ironman in the *New Zealand Herald* with the blazing headline, "Ruth, A Woman of Iron" and Japan's Asahi Shimbun, "American Woman Conquers Cancer, Conquers Ironman."

VIP: Of all of your personal accomplishments, which ones give you the most pride and satisfaction?

RH: Probably the completion of the Ironman. It represented a challenge that at first seemed an impossibility. Then I discovered that a fire had been ignited in me that I had no idea existed. During the final hours of an Ironman, I had to dig very deeply and decide that pain and fatigue could be overcome by sheer will. Crossing that finish line was an emotional high that has never been equaled.

VIP: You have been active in a number of vegetarian organizations. Can you tell us about some of the positions you have held?

RH: I was one of the seven founding members of the Vegetarian Society of Hawaii in 1990 which is one of the, if not the, largest in North America at 1600 members. I have served as president, vice-president, and director. I've also been a councilor in the Vegetarian Union of North America (VUNA) since 1995. I also belong to People For The Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Physicians Committee For Responsible Medicine (PCRM), Humane Society of the U.S., (HSUS), Compassion Over Killing, (COK), on the board of directors for Dr. Michael Klaper's Vegan Study, the Fitness Advisor for VegNews, and am a columnist with <http://www.vegsource.com>.



VIP: What personal goals have you set for yourself in the coming years?

RH: I plan to continue competing in races to keep me motivated to put out my best performance and maintain my fitness, and speaking and writing to try to motivate others to live the healthiest, fittest life possible.

VIP: What leisure activities and hobbies do you enjoy?

RH: I love antiques and collect Chinese snuff bottles, old clocks, and jade carvings. I also enjoy traveling to foreign countries, learning through enrolling in all kinds of classes and seminars, and reading all sorts of non-fiction.

VIP: What person or persons have had the most influence on your life?

RH: I would have to say John McDougall for my diet and Kenneth Cooper for my running.

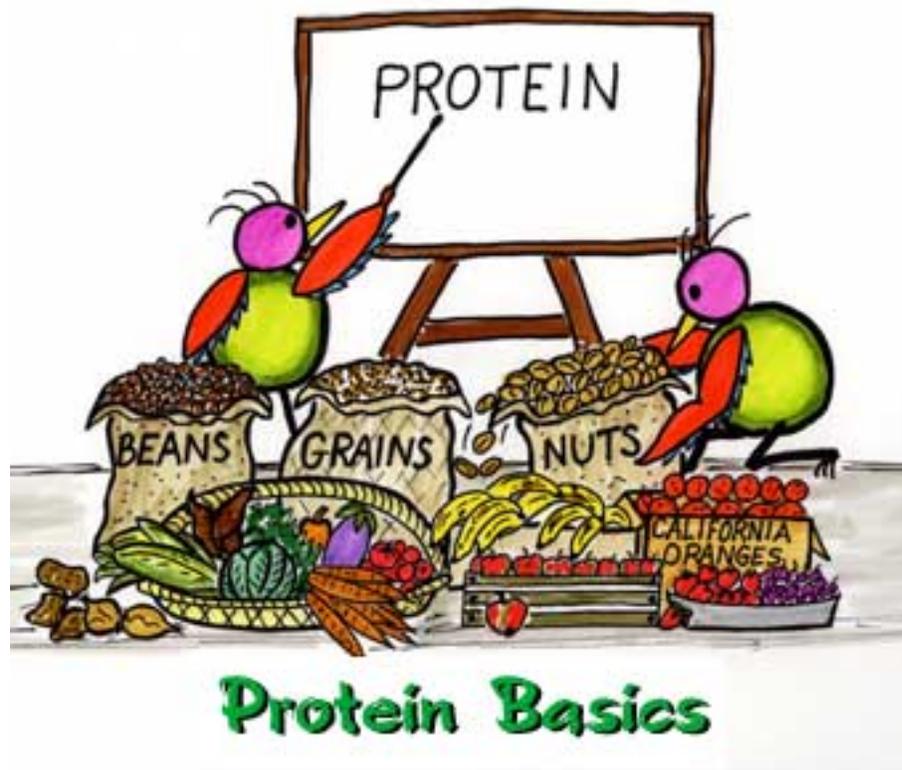
VIP: Have we overlooked anything that you would like to share with our readers?

RH: Although being a vegan triathlete is what I love doing, what I've discovered is that there is much more to life and that includes the lives of all animals and the lack of respect for their rights and the damage we are doing to our environment. We are seeing the payback of eating animals with all the chronic, degenerative diseases this causes, and now we are seeing new diseases such as Mad Cow Disease and Avian (bird) flu. The desecration of our natural resources from the grazing of animals and the waste produced in factory farms is staggering. If we could get everyone to be vegan triathletes, we would do the best for ourselves, our fellow earth inhabitants, and the planet.

[Click here for past 24 Carrot Awards](#)



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PROTEIN BASICS:

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR PROTEIN?

[Click here for protein charts](#)

"If you don't eat meat, chicken, or fish, where do you get your protein?"

"You don't eat dairy products or eggs either? How can you live without protein?"

"You can't get enough protein on a vegan diet."

"My doctor told me I could not stay healthy on a vegan diet"

"I tried a vegetarian diet, but I got sick."

"I was on a vegetarian diet but I always felt tired. I needed more protein."

Vegetarians and vegans have heard these statements over and over. Myths such as these simply will not go away without the solid facts to prove otherwise. We've attempted to reassure friends and family who shake their heads and click their tongues in utter amazement that we've survived many years on a vegan diet and still haven't keeled over from lack of proper nutrition. Our only doctor visits consist of the annual check-up and accompanying lab tests that continue to affirm our excellent health. But simply telling people apparently isn't enough.

The hard fact that constantly comes to the foreground is that the focus on protein borders on obsession in countries of the Western Hemisphere. One glance at restaurant menus and the plates that come to the table is proof that the centerpiece of the meal is the large serving of meat, chicken or fish frequently smothered in creamy sauces or melted cheese. The portions served at one meal

alone come close to fulfilling a day's worth of protein needs.

The meat and dairy industries spend billions of dollars to project their message right into your shopping cart through television commercials, magazine ads, and grocery store ads. These powerful industries even recognized it was important to teach young children "good nutrition" at a very early age. Since the end of World War II they spread their protein message to our nation's youth by providing schools across the U.S. with colorful charts of the "important food groups" that emphasized meat, dairy products, and eggs. For the decades following World War II, one simply could not ignore the emphasis on protein.

Could we fail to ignore the large billboards flaunting larger than life-size images of cheese, eggs, and milk? And who can forget the successful ad campaigns for "Where's the beef?" and "Milk does a body good" ? The protein message comes at us from all directions, even on bus benches.

Don't misunderstand, we fully recognize that protein is a necessity to a healthy body, and that it is important to replenish our store of protein every day. Because the body doesn't store protein as it does other nutrients, we're aware it must be replaced each day as a source of nourishment for building and repairing new cells, hormones, antibodies, enzymes and muscle tissue. But, just how much protein do we really need?

Calculating Protein Requirements

Recently, studies on nitrogen balance provided more accurate ways to measure the body's protein requirements. Joel Fuhrman, M.D. in his book *Eat to Live* writes that an easy way to calculate your own daily protein requirement according to the U.S. RDA is to multiply 0.36 (grams) by your body weight. That translates to about 44 grams for a 120-pound woman and 54 grams for a 150-pound male. In metric terminology the RDA is 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight.

Brenda Davis, R.D., and Vesanto Melina, M.S., R.D., in their book *Becoming Vegan* consider 0.9 grams per kilogram of body weight to be more ideal for vegans eating whole plant foods such as legumes, whole grains, and vegetables. Multiplying 0.45 grams by your body weight in pounds will give you the approximate protein need for your body. These figures are a little higher than actual RDA requirements but were considered necessary as a safety factor to account for reduced digestibility of whole plant foods versus more refined foods such as tofu, textured soy protein, and meat substitutes.

With this slightly higher figure a 120-pound person would need 54 grams of protein daily and a 150-pound person needs 67.5 grams. Another way to calculate your RDA for protein is to take your weight in pounds and divide by 2.3 kg to determine your weight in kilograms. Then figure 1 gram of protein for every kg of body weight. Those who include tofu, textured soy protein, meat substitutes, and refined grains will find 0.8 grams per kilogram of protein daily quite adequate.

Protein Needs During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Reed Mangels, PhD, R.D. says, "The newest RDA has looked at all the places where additional protein is needed in pregnancy (fetus, placenta, amniotic fluid, uterus, breasts, blood, etc.) and has recommended that protein intake in pregnancy should be 1.1 grams per kilogram per day or 25 grams more of protein than the RDA for non-pregnant women.

"The same recommendation is made for lactation to account for the protein content of milk."

During pregnancy and breastfeeding, protein needs can easily be met by adding a little extra of the foods higher in protein, such as enriched soymilk, beans, tofu, tempeh, nuts, and nut butters in addition to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

While the focus on protein is important, the leafy green vegetables such as collards, kale, mustard greens, turnip greens, and spinach are also necessary for their high content of folate known to prevent neural tube defects such as spina bifida.

Protein for Recuperating Patients

Patients recuperating from surgery or serious bodily injuries, such as burns, require extra protein to help rebuild tissue. Their protein intake should be at a level of about 20 % of their calorie intake.

Protein for Athletes

If you're an athlete or one who works at serious bodybuilding, one or more of your trainers may have suggested using protein powders or amino acid powders on a regular basis. Sports nutrition has focused heavily on protein.

In relating the position of the newest RDA information, Dr. Reed Mangels says, "Professional athletes may need more protein than those who are not in serious training, but how much more and even whether or not their protein needs are higher is a matter of differing opinion. I think the research supports slightly higher protein needs for athletes, but not everyone goes along with this."

Recent studies suggest that strength athletes (weight lifters) and body builders need to consume up to 2.0 grams per kilogram of body weight to maintain sufficient amino acid balance. Some trainers recommend higher levels of protein intake, even exceeding 3.0 grams per kilogram. Endurance athletes require 1.2 to 1.4 grams per kilogram of body weight to provide for repair of muscle cell damage.

A diet that consists of 12 to 15% protein is considered ideal for both strength and endurance athletes who follow a vegan diet. For vegan athletes who want to keep their body weight low, 15 to 20% of calories should be protein. About 10 to 12% of calories as protein may be all that is required of those on very high calorie diets such as ironman athletes.

Dr. Ruth Heidrich, vegan ironman athlete, expresses the protein needs of athletes very simply. She says, " With greater calorie burning, comes greater calorie consumption with its automatic increase in the absolute amount of protein." For people who want to build more muscle, Dr. Heidrich discourages the use of protein supplements and stresses that ". . . if you want to develop a muscle, you have to overload it by putting more stress on it than it can handle. This is the ONLY way a muscle will get bigger and stronger."

Vegan Protein Sources

Where do vegans get their protein? It's simple. The plant-based diet includes a wide variety of whole foods consisting of beans, whole-grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds, along with products made from these natural foods, such as tofu, tempeh, and meat analogs. Those who believe plant protein is inferior to animal protein may be surprised to learn that plant proteins contain the same 23 amino acids as animal proteins.

If a person is eating a broad selection of plant-based foods and consuming adequate calories, it is unlikely he or she will be protein deficient. Physicians in the United States rarely encounter

patients who are deficient in protein. Deficiency is uncommon and is seen mostly in countries where serious shortages of food exist, and malnutrition is prevalent.

Problems Caused by Too Much Protein

More common are the problems resulting from eating too much protein. In contrast to the U.S. RDA calculations, the average person in America consumes foods containing 100 to 120 grams of protein daily, mostly from animal products. Americans are also noted for their sedentary lifestyles. Excess protein especially of animal nature puts a great deal of stress on the kidneys. Some people, unaware that their kidneys are not operating optimally, could suffer premature aging of this important organ. A diet too high in protein could cause deterioration of the nephrons, which are the kidney's filtering system. That same diet places people at risk for developing kidney stones.

Other health conditions that may result from an overabundance of protein include excessive calcium leaching from the bones and causing osteoporosis, acid reflux, obesity, plaque build-up in the arteries, high blood pressure, pain from arthritis, high cholesterol, bad breath from sulfur-containing amino acids, and increased risk of cancer, especially colon cancer.

Protein in Plant Foods

The charts below, using figures from the USDA Nutrient Database, list the protein content of the plant-based foods that comprise the vegetarian and vegan diets. People are often surprised to learn that all plant foods contain protein. In fact, it is protein that gives all plants their structure. Whether plants grow upright or sprawl on a vine, protein is a basic component of their cell structure.

Protein in Raw Nuts and Seeds (shelled)

Nut/Seed (1/4 cup)	Protein Grams
Almond	7
Brazil nut	5
Cashew	4
Chestnut	1
Coconut (shredded)	2
Filbert/Hazelnut	5
Flax seed	5
Macadamia	2
Peanut	8
Pecan	2

Pine nut	4
Pistachio	6
Pumpkin seed	7
Sesame seed	7
Soynut	10
Sunflower seed	8
Walnut	5

Protein in Beans (cooked)

Bean 1 cup	Protein Grams
Adzuki (Aduki)	17
Anasazi	15
Black Beans	15
Black-eyed Peas	14
Cannellini (White Beans)	17
Cranberry Bean	17
Fava Beans	13
Garbanzos (Chick Peas)	15
Great Northern Beans	15
Green Peas, whole	9
Kidney Beans	15
Lentils	18
Lima Beans	15
Mung Beans	14
Navy Beans	16
Pink Beans	15

Pinto Beans	14
Soybeans	29
Split Peas	16

Protein in Grains (cooked)

Grain 1/4 cup	Protein Grams
Amaranth	7
Barley, pearled	4 to 5
Barley, flakes	4
Buckwheat groats	5 to 6
Cornmeal (fine grind)	3
Cornmeal (polenta, coarse)	3
Millet, hulled	8.4
Oat Groats	6
Oat, bran	7
Quinoa	5
Rice, brown	3 to 5
Rice, white	4
Rice, wild	7
Rye, berries	7
Rye, flakes	6
Spelt, berries	5
Teff	6
Triticale	25
Wheat, whole berries	6 to 9
Couscous, whole wheat	6
Wheat, bulgur	5 to 6

Protein in Meat, Chicken, Fish Substitutes*

Product	Serving Size	Protein Grams
Boca Burger Original Vegan	2.5 oz	13
GardenVegan Verggie Patties	2.5 oz	9
Health is Wealth Chicken-Free Patties	3 oz.	14
Health is Wealth Yummie Burger	2.5 oz.	12
Lightlife Gimme Lean	2oz.	8
Lightlife Smart Cutlets Seasoned Chicken	3 oz.	26
Lightlife Smart Deli Combos	2.7 oz.	17
Lightlife Smart Dogs	1.5 oz.	9
Mon Cuisine Breaded Chicken Patties	3 oz.	7
Morningstar Farms Original Grillers	2.3 oz	15
Nate's Meatless Meatballs (3)	1.5 oz	10
Natural Touch Vegan Burger	2.7 oz	11
Natural Touch Veggie Medley	2.3 oz	11
SoyBoy Vegan Okara Burger	3 oz.	13
SoyBoy Vegetarian Franks	1.5 oz.	11
Starlite Cuisine Soy Taquitos	2 oz.	7
White Wave Seitan	3 oz.	31
Whole Foods 365 Meat Free Vegan Burger	2.5 oz.	13
Yves Canadian Veggie Bacon (3 slices)	2 oz.	17
Yves Veggie Burger	3 oz.	16
Yves Veggie Chick'n Burgers	3 oz.	17

Yves Veggie Dogs

1.6 oz.

11

***All items vegan**

Protein in Hot Cereals (cooked)

Cereal	Cup	Protein Grams
Arrowhead Mills Corn Grits	1/4	3
Arrowhead Mills 7 Grain	1/4	4
Bob's 8 Grain	1/4	4
Bob's 10 Grain	1/4	6
Bob's Kamut	1/4	5
Bob's Triticale	1/4	4
Bob's Whole Grain Cracked Wheat	1/4	5
Cream of Rye	1/3	5
Kashi	1/2	6
Mother's Multigrain	1/2	5
Quaker Old Fashioned Oats	1/2	5
Quinoa Flakes	1/3	3
Roman Meal Hot Cereal	1/3	5
Wheatena	1/3	5

Protein in Fresh Vegetables (cooked)

Vegetable	Serving	Protein Grams
Artichoke	medium	4
Asparagus	5 spears	2
Beans, string	1 cup	2
Beets	1/2 cup	1
Broccoli	1/2 cup	2
Brussels Sprouts	1/2 cup	2
Cabbage	1/2 cup	1
Carrot	1/2 cup	1
Cauliflower	1/2 cup	1
Celeriac	1 cup	1
Celery	1 cup	1
Chard, Swiss	1 cup	3
Chayote	1 cup	1
Chives	1 oz.	8
Collards	1 cup	4
Corn, Sweet	1 large cob	5
Cucumber	1 cup	1
Eggplant	1 cup	1
Fennel	1 medium bulb	3
Jerusalem Artichoke	1 cup	3
Kale	1 cup	2.5
Kohlrabi	1 cup	3
Leeks	1 cup	1
Lettuce	1 cup	1
Okra	1/2 cup	1
Onion	1/2 cup	1
Parsnip	1/2 cup	1
Peas	1/2 cup	4

Peppers, bell	1/2 cup	1
Potato, baked with skin	2 1/3 x 4 3/4"	5
Potato, boiled with skin	1/2 cup	1
Radish	1 cup	1
Rhubarb	1 cup	1
Rutabaga	1 cup	2
Spinach	1 cup	1
Squash, Summer	1 cup	2
Squash, Winter	1 cup	2
Sweet Potato	1 cup	3
Tomato	1 medium	1
Turnip	1 cup	1

Protein in Fruits (raw)

Fruit	Serving	Protein Grams
Apple	2 per lb.	0
Apricot	med.	0
Avocado	med.	4
Banana	1	1 to 2
Blackberry	cup	2
Blueberry	cup	1
Boysenberry	cup	1
Cantaloupe	cup	1
Casaba Melon	cup	2
Cherimoya	1	7
Cherry	cup	1
Cranberry	cup	0

Currant	cup	2
Date(pitted)	1/4 cup	1
Durian	1 cup	4
Feijoa	med.	1
Fig	1	0
Gooseberry	cup	1
Grape	cup	1
Grapefruit	1/2	1
Guava	med.	1
Honeydew	cup	1
Jackfruit	cup	2
Jujube, dried	1 oz.	1
Kiwi	large	1
Kumquat	med.	0
Lemon	1	1
Lime	1	0
Loganberry	cup	1.4
Loquat	1	0
Mango	1	1
Mulberry	cup	2
Nectarine	1	1
Orange	1	1
Papaya	cup	1
Passionfruit	1	0
Peach	1	1
Pear	1	1
Persimmon	1	0
Pineapple	cup	1
Plum	1	1
Pomegranate	1	1.5

Pomelo	1/2	2.3
Prickly Pear	med.	1
Quince	med.	.4
Raspberry	cup	1
Rhubarb	cup	1
Sapote	med.	5
Star Fruit	cup	1
Strawberry	cup	1
Tangerine	med.	1
Watermelon	cup	1

Protein in Nut Butters

Nut/Seed (2 Tablespoons)	Protein Grams
Almond	5 to 8
Cashew	4 to 5
Peanut	7 to 9
Sesame Tahini	6
Soy Nut	6 to 7

Protein in Milk Substitutes

Beverage 1 cup	Protein Grams
Soy Regular	6 to 9
Soy Low/Nonfat	4
Rice	1

Rice and Soy	7
Almond	1 to 2
Oat	4
Multigrain	5

Protein in Soy Products

Product	Serving Size	Protein Grams
Tofu Medium to Extra Firm	3 oz.	7 to 12
Tofu Soft or Silken	3 oz.	4 to 6
Tempeh	4 oz.	12 to 20
Textured Vegetable Protein TVP	1/4 cup	10 to 12

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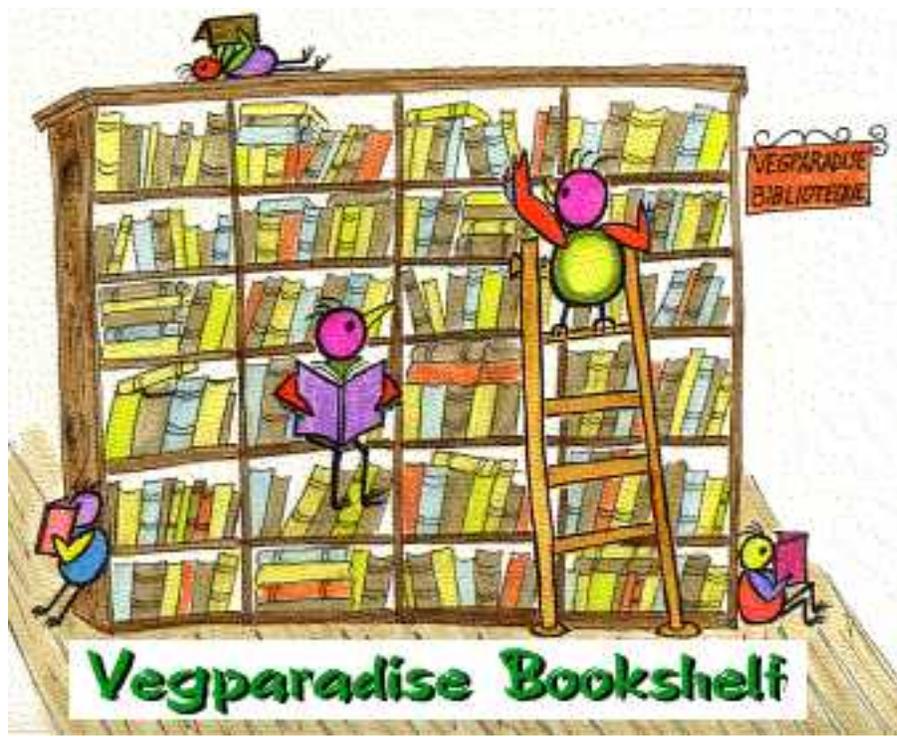
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To offer you, our readers, vegetarian information in a broad range of categories, Vegetarians in Paradise has compiled this annotated list of books we can highly recommend. We are aware that the listing is far from complete but will continue to grow as we discover new resources and evaluate them. We've categorized the listings as follows:

If you choose not to read through the entire Vegparadise Bookshelf, simply click on the subjects that interest you.

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Children and Teens

Bass, Jules, *Cooking With Herb, The Vegetarian Dragon*, Barefoot Books, 1999

A vegetarian cookbook for children ages four through eight years old. With parents' supervision, kids can learn to prepare meatless meals with its easy format and recipes that are child-oriented. The colorful illustrations on every page are likely to appeal to children and adults as well.

Bass, Jules, *Herb the Vegetarian Dragon*, Barefoot Books, 1999

Herb is not your ordinary fire-breathing dragon who devours brave knights. Herb is different. He's a vegetarian who grows his own vegetables and brings peace between the knights of the castle and the carnivorous dragons of the kingdom. An engaging story with exceptional illustrations for preschoolers and kindergartners.

Bates, Dorothy R., Bobbie Hinman, Robert Oser, *Munchie Madness*, The Book Publishing Company, 2001

One of the handiest, friendliest, and most endearing cookbooks for teens featuring easy recipes that appeal to teen tastes with snacks and smoothies, burritos, tacos, pizzas, pastas, and desserts. Includes a complete index, resources, and bios of authors and contributors.

Brownlie, Ali, *Why Are People Vegetarian?* Steck-Vaughn, 2002

Presents an overview of vegetarianism including its history, religious practitioners, and disciples today. Includes arguments for and against meat eating as well as the health, economic, and environmental issues involved.

Duden, Jane, *Vegetarianism for Teens*, Capstone Press, 2001

Discusses vegetarianism and reasons why some teens choose it. Includes information on building a healthy vegetarian diet and planning for vegetarian meals and snacks on the go.

Katzen, Mollie, and Ann Henderson, *Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes*, Tricycle Press, 1994

A vegetarian cookbook for pre-schoolers and up, this book is well designed for minimal guidance from parents while the little "chef" in the family takes the lead. Step by step illustrations easily direct the children to the next step in the cooking project. The book offers a plethora of recipes that appeal to kids, everything from French Toast to Pizza.

Klaven, Ellen, *Vegetarian Factfinder*, Illustrations by Adrienne Hartman, The Little Bookroom, 1996

Basic information about vegetarianism is presented in five chapters, each of which answers a question: What Does a Vegetarian Eat? Why do people become Vegetarians? Where do Vegetarians Live? Who are Vegetarians? How do Vegetarians Stay Healthy? Illustrated with numerous photos and drawings, the book packs much information into 48 pages. It is an excellent

introduction to vegetarianism for pre-teens and teenagers.

Krizmanic, Judy, *The Teen's Vegetarian Cookbook*, Puffin Books, 1999

An excellent vegetarian cookbook featuring mostly vegan recipes geared to the individual tastes and time limitations of teens. The book is easy to use and visually appealing with sidebars, charts, lists of substitutions, and recipe variations for the experimental teen. Included is a chapter on College Cuisine, an excellent glossary, and even a brief tofu primer.

Ortega, Rey and Amanda Moeckel, *The Organic Adventures of Tucker the Tomato*, Sun King Publishing, 2003

Written for very young children, this picture book combines creative artwork with a simple story of a tomato that falls off an organic tomato truck and finally wends its way to a natural foods market after overcoming a number of obstacles.

Parr, Jan, *The Young Vegetarian's Companion*, Franklin Watts, 1996

Written for teens, this book counters the myths about vegetarianism being risky to one's health. Included are issues about the environment, animal rights, ethical and religious bases of vegetarianism, and health of the planet. Helpful information gives teens the education they need on nutritional requirements and guides them in dealing with social situations involving food. An extensive resource section concludes the book.

Pierson, Stephanie, *Vegetables Rock*, Bantam Books, 1999

An excellent guide with a touch of humor for teenagers and families of young people who have made the decision to become vegetarian. Includes nutritional information and tips for everything from how to handle negative comments to dealing with college cafeteria food. An ideal gift book for young vegetarians and their families.

Poneman, Debra Halperin and Emily Anderson Greene, *What No Meat?! What to Do When Your Kid Becomes a Vegetarian*, ECW Press, 2003

The authors present ways to simply and effortlessly accommodate a child's transition to a vegetarian diet. They share facts about the nutritional aspects of vegetarianism, suggestions for grocery shopping for a vegetarian, fun and easy recipes that include tofu and other meat alternatives, and tips on managing holidays and family gatherings where meat is often a staple.

Schwartz, Ellen, *I'm a Vegetarian: Amazing Facts and Ideas for Healthy Vegetarians*, Tundra Books, 2001

Riddles, jokes, and illustrations make the vegetarian information in this book quite accessible to teens. Includes nutritional information on how to be a sensible vegetarian as well as a brief history of vegetarianism. Section called "Vegetarian Dude" gives practical advice to teens on handling sticky situations. Recipes are both vegetarian and vegan with information on how to "veganize" the non-vegan ones.

Stewart, Debra, *What is a Vegetarian*, Debbie-Lou Productions, 1999

A first introduction to vegetarianism for pre-schoolers written in easy-to-understand language and aided by engaging illustrations of animals, foods, and children. For preschool and early primary grades.

Vegetarian Cooking Around the World, Lerner Publications Co, 1992

A collection of meatless recipes from around the world, including Welsh rarebit from the United

Kingdom, lentil soup from Spain, and curries from India. One book in the publisher's Easy Menu Ethnic Cookbooks series for young people.

Vignola, Radha, *Victor's Picnic with the Vegetarian Animals*, Illustrated by Michelle N. Ary, Aviva, 1996

Victor joins the vegetarian animals for a picnic where he shares their food. Besides learning the difference between carnivorous and herbivorous animals, he discovers the wide variety of foods vegetarians eat. Sepia illustrations accompany the text. For preschool and early primary grades.

Weiss, Stephanie Iris, *Everything You Need to Know About Being a Vegan*, The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc., 2000

A well-written, concise introduction to veganism geared to teens and pre-teens. Includes a few recipes, glossary, a suggested reading list, and a listing of resources for further exploration.

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Environmental Concerns

Lappe, Frances Moore, *Diet for a Small Planet: Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, Ballantine, 1991
A revised and updated edition of a book that awakened environmental awareness and encouraged vegetarianism for the health of the body, the earth, and the animals that share the planet. Includes the full array of recipes from the original publication.

Lappe, Frances Moore and Joseph Collins with Cary Fowler, *Food First, Beyond the Myth of Scarcity*, Houghton Mifflin, 1977

A well researched work that examines the policies and politics that maintain the status quo of hunger in the U.S. and in foreign countries. Looks at the many aspects of starving populations and discusses ways our country could end hunger here and abroad.

Lappe, Frances Moore and Anna Lappe, *Hope's Edge*, Jeremy Tarcher/Putnam, 2002

Instead of revising *Diet for a Small Planet* for a thirtieth anniversary edition, the author and her daughter embarked on an odyssey taking them to nine countries on five continents. Their mission was to gather material for a book "that takes off where the original stops." They would try to answer a new question, "Why have we, as societies, created that which as individuals we abhor?" They discovered that there is still scarcity and hunger amid abundance as society devotes unlimited resources to put meat on the table.

Lyman, Howard with Glen Merzer, *Mad Cowboy, Plain Truth from the Cattle Rancher Who Won't Eat Meat*, Scribner, 1998

Agribusiness practices of the cattle and dairy industry from the inside view of a man who turned

away from an unhealthy lifestyle and gave up his lifelong career that tortured animals and threatened his health. He became a vegan and now reveals the inside story.

Nestle, Marion, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, University of California Press, 2002

In this expose the author shows how the food industry competes for our food dollars and persuades us to eat more, thus creating an obesity epidemic. She reveals how the industry plays politics by lobbying legislators, marketing to children, distorting nutritional information, and promoting supplements that may have no value.

Null, Gary, *The Vegetarian Handbook*, St. Martin's Press, 1987

A detailed and informative guide to vegetarianism that includes history, nutrition that focuses on protein, ecology, religious beliefs and vegetarianism, concern for animals, a look at the macrobiotic approach, and natural food recipes. An extensive appendix that lists food combinations that comprise a complete protein.

Patterson, Charles, *Eternal Treblinka*, Lantern Books, 2002

The author draws a striking parallel between the extermination of the Jews and man's mass killing of animals ostensibly used for food. Once society accepts this exploitation of animals, the next step is to treat other human beings like animals. Human slavery and the subjugation of women are both modeled after the domestication of animals. Patterson shows how the eugenics movement that flourished in the United States and Germany prior to World War II began with the breeding of animals and then was utilized to deal with humans. The last two chapters of the book related personal stories of Jews and Germans whose animal advocacy was influenced by the Holocaust.

Robbins, John, *Diet for a New America*, Stillpoint Publishing, 1987

A first-hand account of the author's observations when visiting several slaughterhouses and factory farms and explicit descriptions of the cruel, unhealthy, and unsanitary conditions in which food animals are raised. Encourages a vegan diet and includes recipes.

Robbins, John, *The Food Revolution*, Conari Press, 2001

This well researched major work brings to the attention of all humans the precarious nature of our environment from all aspects of our food supply to the air and water we need to survive. Not just for vegetarians, this book informs, awakens, and educates about the dangers of many foods on supermarket shelves and offers suggestions for healthier alternate choices.

Robbins, John, *May All Be Fed: Diet for a New World*, Morrow, 1992

An inspiring book that rocks one out of complacency and brings awareness that we can improve our health and benefit the planet by eating ecologically. Included are many vegan recipes that guide those on the path to healing the planet.

Schlosser, Eric, *Fast Food Nation: the Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, Houghton Mifflin, 2001

Focuses on negative effects the fast food industry has on our society. Supports this view by showing how the industry's influence encourages cheap labor, government subsidies to the meat industry, factory farming, and standardization of products. Reveals poor working conditions in the meat industry and how the production of meat products causes deadly diseases.

Schwartz, Richard H., Ph.D., *Judaism and Global Survival*, Lantern Books, 2002

A revised edition originally published in 1984, this work emphasizes how Jewish values can help address current global problems such as climate change, water shortages, pollution, world hunger, and potential energy shortages. The author encourages a return to Jewish teachings that promote the pursuit of peace, justice, and vegetarianism to create a sustainable society and to fulfill the Torah mandates.

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Guidebooks

Gerber, Suzanne, *Vegetarian New York City: the Essential Dining, Shopping and Lodging Guide*, Globe Pequot Press, 2004

In this 400-page exhaustive volume Gerber and her associates have assembled a comprehensive guide that is extremely helpful for any vegetarian trying to navigate the New York scene. For each restaurant the book features the type of cuisine, address and phone, the hours, website, reservations, the prices, and the number of vegan and ovo-lacto vegetarian choices. In Places to Stay, Gerber provides address, phone, website, and a brief description of the lodging. Places to Shop gives data on health food stores where one could purchase everything from vitamins and supplements to organic produce, veggie snacks and deli items.

Howley, John, *Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores*, Torchlight Publishing, 2002
Travelers will welcome this comprehensive guide to over 2500 restaurants and health food stores across the United States. Also included is information on fast food restaurants and their vegetarian offerings, listings of vegetarian organizations and websites, information about famous vegetarians, vegetarian health benefits, and a vegetarian glossary.

Siegel, Kathy and Carey Ann Strelecki, *Veg Out Vegetarian Guide to Southern California*, Gibbs Smith, 2003

Almost pocket size except for the length, this guide not only list restaurants by areas, but also include delivery services, juice bars, farmers' markets, green grocers, organizations, and web resources. The book is well indexed including an alphabetical index by restaurant name, an atmosphere index that indicates categories like family restaurant, juice bar, fast food, or chain, and a cuisine index telling the national origin of the cuisine.

Vegetarians of Washington, *Veg-Feasting in the Pacific Northwest*, Book Publishing Company, 2004

Vegetarians of Washington have assembled this comprehensive guide for vegetarians dining, shopping, and living in Washington and Oregon. For each restaurant, in addition to address and phone number, there is an indication of the type of food served, whether it is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and the price range of meals. Also included is whether the restaurant is vegan,

vegetarian, vegetarian friendly, or very vegetarian friendly. Half of the volume is devoted to Living, a section divided into four parts: Getting Started, Staying Healthy, A Diet for All Ages, and Four Good Reasons Why. Each section features essays by doctors, nutritionists, dieticians, and members of the group who have expertise on various subjects.

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Health, Diet, and Nutrition

Barnard, Neal, M.D., *Eat Right, Live Longer*, Crown Trade Paperbacks, 1997

Shows how a vegetarian diet can contribute to longevity, a youthful appearance, strength, and vitality. Includes recipes to get you started.

Barnard, Neal, M.D., *Foods That Fight Pain*, Harmony Books, 1998

The author relies on research to show that many natural foods have medicinal benefits. Help for pain due to poor circulation, food sensitivities, inflammation, carpal tunnel syndrome and more can be achieved through good nutrition and dietary changes. The book includes menus, recipes, glossary, resources to locate ingredients, recommended reading, and an extensive section of bibliographical notes.

Barnard, Neal, M.D., *Turn Off the Fat Genes*, Harmony Books, 2001

This nutrition savvy doctor shares cutting-edge research to help people lose weight by working with their genes rather than against them. He explains the dynamics of nutrition and its impact on the genes. Complete with menus and recipes, the book presents a program that can bring results with weight loss while building positive health.

Barnard, Neal, M.D., *Power of Your Plate*, Book Publishing Company, 1995

Up-to-date information from a leading medical authority showing that food choices can improve your health.

Cousens, Gabriel, M.D., *Conscious Eating*, Vision Books International, 1992

A vegetarian bible for beginners as well as long-standing vegetarians, this book gives guidelines to bring body, mind, and spirit into alignment. Author explains how food affects our physical, emotional, and spiritual being.

Davis, Brenda and Tom Barnard, *Defeating Diabetes with 50 Recipes by Barb Bloomfield*, Healthy Living Publications, 2003

A registered dietician, a doctor, and a cookbook writer combine forces to create a sensible program for diabetics that emphasizes a plant-based diet plus exercise.

Erasmus, Udo, *Fats that Heal, Fats that Kill*, Alive Books 1993

With a Ph.D. in Nutrition and post-graduate studies in genetics and biochemistry, this author is

able to bring definitive facts about oils and their benefits and dangers to his readers. For anyone wanting to learn the chemistry of fats, this is the definitive work. Information includes the manufacturing process of oils, effects on the human body, history, research on fats used in everyday foods, and much more.

Fuhrman, Joel, M.D., *Eat to Live*, Little, Brown, and Co., 2003

Citing extensive scientific research, the author advocates a revolutionary diet that emphasizes green vegetables as part of a nutrient-dense, low-calorie diet that is the foundation of his weight-loss program. By touting nutrient-dense foods instead of high calorie foods, he shows how anyone can lose weight and improve health. The book includes a six-week, nutrient-dense, low-calorie diet that eliminates dairy products, animal products, between meal-snacks, fruit juices, and dried fruit.

Fuhrman, Joel, M.D., *Fasting and Eating for Health*, St. Martin's Press, 1995

An outstanding work extolling the benefits of a plant based diet in tandem with fasting to heal the body without drugs or surgery. The book is easy to read with clear explanations of chronic illnesses written in layman's terms. The author stresses the importance of a medically supervised fast, explains preparation for fasting, and details the post-fasting process. Extensive bibliography and detailed index.

Heidrich, Ruth, Ph.D., *A Race For Life*, Heidrich Weisbrod Associates, 1990

The author tells her fascinating story of recovery from breast cancer, an experience that changed her life and led to her becoming an Ironman Triathlon champion in competition that includes a back-to-back 2.4 mile ocean swim, a 112 mile bike race, and a 26.2 mile marathon. A genuinely inspirational read.

Klaper, Michael, M.D., *Vegan Nutrition: Pure and Simple*, Gentle World, 1995

A brief, easy-to-read guide to the world of plant based foods. This book is considered a classic and will be most helpful to those making the transition to purely plant based foods. References and recipes to help along the new path.

Lavine, Jay B., *Eye Care Sourcebook*, Contemporary Books, 2001

A vegetarian ophthalmologist discusses eye problems and provides information showing how diet and lifestyle effects vision. He discusses how many eye diseases could be prevented by a plant-based diet. Much of the book is devoted to the anatomy of the eye with specific information on the eye muscles, the eyelids and lacrimal system, the cornea and conjunctiva, the retina, and the optic nerve. Not only does he explain how they work, but he details what can go wrong and the treatments available.

Lidle, Agi, *Triumph Over Cancer*, A Better Life Publications, 2001

This book tells of a woman's personal journey that begins with a life threatening illness and concludes with her triumphant healing. The author describes the natural remedies she used and her healing vegan diet and daily regimen. The last third of the book contains the vegan recipes that helped the author through her illness.

Lisle, Douglas J. and Alan Goldhamer, *The Pleasure Trap: Mastering the Hidden Force That Undermines Health and Happiness*, Healthy Living Publications, 2003

Offers unique insights into the motivational factors that make people susceptible to dietary and lifestyle excesses, and presents ways to restore the biological processes designed by nature to keep

humans running at maximum efficiency and vitality.

McDougall, John, M.D., *The McDougall Plan*, New Win Publishing, Inc., 1983

The author, who created the program at St. Helena Hospital and Health Center, offers in-depth nutritional information focused on diet and health. Learn how to live successfully with a health-supporting diet, how to shop, plan meals, and how to eat out.

Oski, Frank, M.D., *Don't Drink Your Milk*, Tech Services, 1992

A pediatrician who reveals the evils of milk and the damage it does to the human body. Author was Director of Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins.

Stepaniak, Joanne and Vesanto Melina, *Raising Vegetarian Children, A Guide to Good Health and Family Harmony*, Contemporary Books, 2003

An outstanding guide for all families faced with raising vegetarian children. The book offers realistic, sensible suggestions for handling delicate issues facing vegetarian children at home and in a variety of social situations. Melina, a registered dietician, covers the nuts and bolts of vegetarian nutrition, while both authors provide a host of ideas for healthful feeding of the vegetarian child from infancy through the teens.

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Raw Cookbooks/ Lifestyle

Arlin, Stephen, Fouad Dini, and David Wolfe, *Nature's First Law: The Raw-Food Diet*, Maul Brothers Publishing, 1996

A passionate discourse on raw foodism, offering numerous reasons to adopt a raw food diet and the many benefits derived from following this path. Several appendices enumerate hard facts about the meat, dairy, and egg industries regarding ecological, nutritional and disease concerns.

Avery, Phyllis, *The Garden of Eden Raw Fruit and Vegetable Recipes*, Hygeia Publishing Co., 1992

An excellent beginning book for those new to raw food preparation. Ingredients are familiar and directions easy to follow. Contains a helpful resource guide for raw foodists, a food combining chart, and an informative, brief section that explains food combining, a glossary, and tips on shopping and selecting fresh fruits and vegetables.

Baird, Lori, ed., *Complete Book of Raw Food*, Hatherleigh Press, 2003

An impressive volume of 350 raw recipes that provides the opportunity to peer into the kitchens of 50 renowned, innovative raw food chefs from around the globe. A unique feature of the book is the enlightening Meet the Chefs section that offers a brief bio of each of the chefs.

Brotman, Juliano with Erika Lenkert, *RAW, the Uncook Book*, Regan Books, 1999

An innovative raw food cookbook that offers recipes with creative flair, appealing color photos,

food styling, and exceptional graphic design. Recipes from appetizers to desserts with outstanding flavor.

Graham, Douglas N., D.C., *Nutrition and Athletic Performance*, Self Published, 1999

A chiropractor and athletic coach to Olympian sports figures for 35 years, the author presents his unique approach to recovering from vigorous athletic endeavors with raw foods. Discusses a high-performance diet that includes focus on fruits, nuts, seeds, and vegetables.

Halfmoon, Hygeia, Ph.D., *Primal Mothering in a Modern World*, Maul Bros. Publishing, 1998

Since becoming a fruitarian, the author has raised three children and shares valuable information on raw food/fruitarian mothering. This invaluable book covers pregnancy through birth, bonding, breastfeeding, natural hygiene, and homeschooling.

Jubb, Annie Padden and David Jubb, *Life Food Recipe Book: Living on Life Force*, North Atlantic Books, 2003 A treasure of healthful living information and original recipes reflects the natural living philosophy of the authors. For proponents of the raw food regimen as well as those just learning, there is much to appreciate in this volume which is an exceptional guide and reference tool. The numerous tidbits of wisdom that flow through the book as "Secret Teachings" are invaluable.

Markowitz, Elysa, *Living with Green Power*, Alive Books, 1997

Recipes that focus on using the Green Power juicer for everything raw from appetizers, beverages, sorbets, and salads, to hearty entrees, soups, and even desserts. Attractive graphic design and color photos throughout.

Markowitz, Elysa, *Warming Up to Living Foods*, Book Publishing Co., 1998

Creative raw recipes that give many options for employing common kitchen devices to gently warm foods while still keeping valuable enzymes intact. Author is host of Elysa's Raw and Wild Foods Show on cable.

Montgomery, Beth, *Introducing Living Foods to Your Child: Guidebook for Babies through Two Years*, Maul Bros. Publishing, 2000

A thoughtful, informative booklet on living foods and children. Strategies for successfully introducing living foods to babies and young children. Though concise, it's packed with information that will answer common questions and concerns. Recipes are easy for parents to prepare.

Romano, Rita, *Dining in the Raw*, Kensington Books, 1992

An extensive resource, this cookbook includes vegetarian recipes that focus on four disciplines: Raw Foods, Macrobiotic Cooking, Vegan Recipes, and Allergy-Free Cooking. An experienced cooking instructor, the author was a restaurateur and executive chef at the Hippocrates Health Institute in Florida.

Shannon, Nomi, *The Raw Gourmet*, Alive Books, 1999

An exceptional cookbook for gourmet raw food preparations that are easy to prepare, tasty and visually appealing. Published by Alive Books, it's truly alive with beautiful full-page photos that beckon one to the kitchen.

Stoycoff, Cheryl, *Raw Kids*, Living Spirit Publishing, 2000

Whether your goal is to transition your child to a 100% raw food vegetarian diet, or simply incorporate more fresh fruits and vegetables into their diet, you will find this a valuable resource. It helps parents understand the process and implement the changes necessary for a successful transition to raw foods.

Trotter, Charlie and Roxanne Klein, *Raw*, Ten Speed Press, 2003

When two internationally renowned chefs combine their unique talents and experience in one outstanding volume, the result is a stunning coffee-table size book with breathtaking full color food photographs and recipes that raise the bar of raw food cuisine into the domain of haute cuisine. Pro-chefs and home chefs alike will encounter a sumptuous feast from cover to cover.

Wolfe, David, *The Sunfood Diet Success System*, Maul Brothers Publishing, 1999

Contains 36 informative lessons that aid a non vegetarian to understand and transition into a raw food diet. Complete with historical quotations, poetry, references to evolution, and medical anecdotes. Contains many helpful charts and resources.

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Reference

Davis, Gail, *The Complete Guide to Vegetarian Convenience Foods*, NewSage Press, 1999

When new vegetarians lament that they don't know what to eat, they will find a ready-made guide in this book. The resources cover the whole range of convenience foods from dairy products, burgers, and frozen foods, to traveling fare, party foods, and desserts. Great information on sweeteners. Excellent resources section, glossary, and networking resources.

Davis, Gail, *Vegetarian Food for Thought*, NewSage Press, 1999

A well researched book of quotations and inspirational thoughts from famous people whose vegetarian focus expresses their convictions and offers encouragement and comfort in today's world. Quotations span the centuries with thoughts from people like Brigitte Bardot, William Penn, and Herodotus.

Parachin, Victor, *365 Good Reasons to be a Vegetarian*, Avery, 1998

An impressive collection of reasons to be vegetarian from health benefits, to ecology of the planet, to preventing the suffering of animals. Included are quotations from famous figures in history to present day celebrities with touches of humor interspersed throughout the book. A great gift book or one for personal pleasure.

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Sprouts and Sprouting

Meyerowitz, Steve, *Sprouts, the Miracle Food: the Complete Guide to Sprouting*, Sproutman Publications, 1998

Everything you've wanted to know about sprouting, including equipment from simple homemade to electric. Complete details from germination to mature sprouts, nutrition, vitamin and mineral content, to harvesting and storing the sprouts. Sprouting charts and detailed resource section.

Wigmore, Ann, *The Sprouting Book*, Avery Publishing Group, 1986

An excellent guide to learning about the benefits and techniques of sprouting. Includes recipes for Rejuvelac and how to include it in your diet.

Wigmore, Ann, *The Wheatgrass Book*, Avery Publishing Group, Inc., 1985

Extensively researched, this book presents complete information about how wheatgrass develops its many nutrients and how the body benefits from its consumption. Included is a section on growing wheatgrass, a few recipes for green drinks, and how to use wheatgrass as medicine.

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Veganism

Davis, Brenda, R.D. & Vesanto Melina, M.S., R.D. *Becoming Vegan*, Book Publishing Company, 2000

Written by vegetarian dieticians, the book contains complete up-to-date nutritional information on adopting a plant-based diet. Covers vegan health issues, myths, nutrition, important vitamins and minerals, vegan food guide, phytochemicals, and overweight as well as underweight issues. Includes sections on vegan athletics and vegan diplomacy, a wide-ranging resource section, vegan substitutes for traditional foods, and a basic shopping list.

Dickinson, Lynda, *Why Vegetarian?*, Gordon Soules Book Publishers Ltd., 1994

The book begins with vegan recipe contributions from all around the globe. The following chapters concisely present the case for an animal-free diet from the health benefits to healing the environment to examining the miserable life of animals raised for food. Includes extensive listing of vegetarian and animal welfare organizations in Canada, the U.S., and the U.K. The author encourages activism through letter writing and Proposals for Action. Extensive chapter notes.

Fox, Michael Allen, *Deep Vegetarianism*, Temple University Press, 1999

A scholarly examination of vegetarianism from ancient historic times to the present with focus on vegan ethics, philosophical issues, arguments for and against vegetarianism, and future insights on the effects of a vegan society. Extensive footnotes, bibliography, and detailed index.

Gentle World, Inc., *Incredibly Delicious, The Vegan Paradigm Cookbook*, Gentle World, 2000

At first glance one sees an extensive vegan cookbook that also contains a substantial section on preparing raw foods. Look closer and discover the vegan philosophy that comes through the numerous quotations by famous people. The Vegan Paradigm section, though not lengthy, offers much to those seeking guidance and resources on living vegan with numerous substitute suggestions from foods to supplements to cruelty-free personal care, pet care, and home care products. Contains mail order resources, recommended books list, videos, and kitchen appliances in addition to a user-friendly index.

Marcus, Erik, *Vegan: the New Ethics of Eating*, rev. ed., McBooks, 2001

By presenting experiences of how real people have taken positive steps to help mankind, this important work helps humanity develop awareness in three important areas: health, the treatment of animals, and concerns for the planet.

Reinhardt, Mark Warren, *The Perfectly Contented Meat-Eater's Guide to Vegetarianism*, The Continuum Publishing Company, 1999

Flip, hip, and well researched, this volume expresses the vegan message with a light humorous approach. Straightforward information is neatly sandwiched between chuckles with flip asides to entertain while presenting solid nutritional information, vegan ethics and philosophy, and helpful hints on dealing with everyday situations new vegetarians face. Because of its comical approach, it makes an excellent book to share with those reluctant to learn about vegetarianism. Numerous resources appear at the end of the book.

Schwartz, Richard, Ph.D., *Judaism and Vegetarianism*, Lantern Books, 2001

Though the title uses the word vegetarianism, the author clearly makes the case for veganism with extensive references to the Torah and quotes from historic rabbinical scholars. Well researched and written with sincere conviction, the book shows the strong connection between Judaism and vegetarianism through the many Torah references to compassion for animals. Argues that a shift to vegetarianism will be beneficial to humans, animals, and the environment. Extensive footnotes and an exceptional appendix covering a multitude of subjects.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *Being Vegan, Living with Conscience, Conviction, and Compassion*, Lowell House, NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group, 2000

A multitude of questions from readers of Stepaniak's web site offers a forum for her detailed answers to dilemmas often faced by those following the vegan path. Everything from philosophical issues, religion, and health to global concerns, relationships, diet, and family issues are included. An excellent handbook with an informal format.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *The Vegan Sourcebook*, Lowell House, 1998

The ultimate guidebook for vegan ethics that addresses lifestyle, environmental, nutritional, social and psychological concerns. Some recipes included along with many excellent resources. Presents the history of the vegan movement that began in England.

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Vegan Cookbooks

Abraham, Ellen, *Simple Treats*, Book Publishing Company, 2003

The owner of the bakery by the same name offers hints and recipes for creating vegan desserts like cakes, cookies, muffins, and breads at home.

Barnard, Tanya and Sarah Kramer, *The Garden of Vegan*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2003

The authors of How It All Vegan are back with a new collection of recipes in a cookbook featuring their irreverent, inimitable style with anecdotes, kitchen hints, and tips.

Barnard, Tanya, and Sarah Kramer, *How it all Vegan!, Irresistible Recipes for an Animal-Free Diet*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 1999

A unique book that deals with the vegan lifestyle in the form of a recipe for everything from great breakfast foods through desserts to foods and fun crafts for kids such as papier mache. Recipes also include three versions of tofu jerky. The book finishes with a plethora of vegan recipes for household cleaners to weed killers to toothpaste, and even includes recipes for natural cosmetics such as Oatmeal Almond Facial Scrub.

Bloomfield, Barb, Judy Brown, and Siegfried Gursche, *Flax: The Super Food!*, Book Publishing Company, 2000

An exceptional, inexpensive cookbook that incorporates flax seeds into each of the 80 plus flavorful recipes. Introduction cites health studies that tout flax as a healing food for many of today's ills. Recipes have nutritional analysis.

Brill, Steve, *The Wild Vegetarian Cookbook*, Harvard Common Press, 2002

Creatively presents over 500 vegan recipes that feature wild foraged plants in the ingredients. "Wildman" Brill guides the reader in the culinary use of approximately 150 unrecognized wild gourmet plants that can be found in open spaces around the country. The book organizes the recipes by plants found during different seasons of the year.

Chelf, Vickie Rae and Dominique Biscotti, *The Sensuous Vegetarian Barbecue*, Avery Publishing Group, 1994

This book is a must for the summer season to enjoy the pleasure of grilled foods with provocative flavors and innovative combinations. Complete with tips on grilling equipment, an excellent glossary, and even a recipe for grilled pizza.

Cole, Candia Lee, *Not Milk: NUTMILKS!, 40 of the Most Original Dairy-Free Milk Recipes Ever!*, Woodbridge Press, 1990

Innovative recipes for non-dairy milks that put nuts and seeds at center stage. Informative with tips for storing, sweetening and fortifying the nutmilks and a resource section to help locate

ingredients.

Diamond, Marilyn, *The American Vegetarian Cookbook from the Fit for Life Kitchen*, Warner Books, 1990

Informative from beginning to end, this book is a jewel for anyone but especially beneficial for those new to the vegan or vegetarian scene. From kitchen basics to cantaloupe milk, from hip pastas to Holiday Pumpkin Pie, this practical cookbook would be a welcome addition to everyone's cookbook library.

Donaldson, Sue, *Foods That Don't Fight Back*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2003

While cooking and animal rights may seem totally unrelated, author Sue Donaldson combines the two subjects to bring animal suffering awareness directly onto the dinner plate. Donaldson clearly describes the misery animals raised for food experience before they reach the stockpot or skillet. The major focus of the book, however, is a banquet of vegan recipes with an uncluttered presentation.

Erhart, Shep, and Leslie Cerier, *Sea Vegetable Celebration*, The Book Publishing Company, 2001

This is a specialty book that takes one on a sea vegetable gathering journey and strives to educate readers on the nutritional benefits of this ocean harvest. The authors introduce other uses for sea vegetables such as shampooing, bathing, and fertilizing plants. Offered are unique sea vegetable recipes like Dulse Vegetarian Pizza. Offers a helpful chart with nutritional information, a resource page, bibliography, and index.

Freed, Hermine, *The Vegan Epicure: 135 Delicious Recipes for Healthy Eating*, Sterling Publishing Co., 1998

A discussion of foods that heal and foods that harm precedes a collection of recipes that includes everything from soups to desserts. Especially useful is the reference section that presents a chart of nutrients and the foods that contain them and another chart of nutritional values of foods. Includes a bibliography.

Greenberg, Patricia, with Helen Newton Hartung, *The Whole Soy Cookbook*, Three Rivers Press, 1998

Nutritionist and graduate of the Scottsdale Culinary Institute, the author covers the vegan table with delightfully annotated recipes from appetizers to desserts that include nutritional data. This innovative recipe volume also includes sources for soy products, an excellent index, and a metric conversion chart

Grogan, Bryanna Clark, and Joanne Stepaniak, *Dairy-Free and Delicious*, The Book Publishing Company, 2001

Readers will benefit from the excellent section focused on dairy-free nutrition by Brenda Davis, R.D. The recipes by two seasoned cookbook pros cover a full range of dishes that imitate the taste and mouthfeel of dairy products while treating the reader to delectables like Sour-Cream Streusel Cake, Lasagne, and Cream of Mushroom Soup, all without dairy products. Well indexed.

Grogan, Bryanna Clark, *The Fiber for Life Cookbook*, Book Publishing Company, 2002

Stresses the importance of fiber in the diet in preventing many lifestyle diseases and offers numerous gourmet international vegan recipes that are high in this essential nutrient.

Grogan, Bryanna Clark, *Nonna's Italian Kitchen: Delicious Home-Style Vegan Cuisine*, Book

Publishing Company, 1998

Italian cooking in the vegan style with innovative recipes along with many old favorites. Author shares family traditions and memories while informing about regional Italian cuisine.

Hagler, Louise, *Miso Cookery*, The Book Publishing Company, 2000

This author of several vegan cookbooks offers a first-hand account in detail of the making of miso in the U.S. The recipes are wholesome, easy to prepare, and demonstrate the ease of incorporating miso into everyday as well as special dishes to heighten flavor and provide excellent nutrition. Convenient index.

Hagler, Louise, *Soyfoods Cookery: Your Road to Better Health*, Book Publishing Co., 1996

Presents familiar dishes using soyfoods of all kinds. Recipes are flavorful, easy to prepare and include nutritional analysis. Brief chapter on soyfoods and their role in health issues such as cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, menopause, and osteoporosis.

Hutchins, Imar and Dawn Marie Daniels, *Vegetarian Soul Food Cookbook*, Epiphany Books, 2001

Those who believe soul food has to be fatty and meaty will be pleasantly surprised by this collection of soul food recipes that are vegan and even raw. Chef Hutchins includes over 150 recipes, one-third of them raw, with that classic Southern flavor but without health negatives. Black Eyed Pea Croquettes, Cheezy Grits, Cajun Dirty Rice, Po' Boy Chopped Barbecue, and Potato Pone are a few of the unique recipes.

Jack, Alex and Gale, *Amber Waves of Grain: Traditional Whole Foods Cooking and Contemporary Vegetarian Vegan and Macrobiotic Cuisine*, One Peaceful World Press, 2000

An excellent look into the background, practice, and philosophy of macrobiotic cooking, this book includes recommendations on cooking utensils, methods, fire, water, and the importance of cooking with love. Included is an extensive selection of recipes, medicinal formulas, some unique ideas on travel foods, and a glossary of typical terms used in macrobiotic cooking. Two indexes, one for recipes, the other a general index for the text.

Jacobs, Barbara and Leonard Jacobs, *Cooking with Seitan*, Avery, 1994

A complete how-to book of recipes using gluten to create delicious from-scratch delectable appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, breads, and desserts. Brief history of seitan and complete instructions for making your own homemade wheatmeat. Helpful resource section.

Jaffrey, Madhur, *World Vegetarian*, Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 1999

Ten years in the making, this book with its over 700 pages is a treasury of recipes that reflect the world travels of the author as she collected, gathered, and adapted global techniques and food styles. More than 200 recipes for legumes, nuts, vegetables, and dairy. Do you know how to cook celery cabbage? Did you even know celery cabbage existed? There's a Chinese recipe for it in the book.

Lawson, Gloria and Debbi Puffer, *Tasty Vegan Delights*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001

Seventh Day Adventist philosophy focused on healthy lifestyle and diet separate the sections of this graphically attractive cookbook packed with easy wholesome recipes contained in a spiral bound edition. Beautiful photos, index by food category, and glossary included. Some recipes

contain honey. Nutritional data included.

McDougall, John, M.D., *The New McDougall Cookbook*, Dutton, 1993

Contains three hundred meatless, dairy-less, high-carbohydrate and almost fat-free recipes. Includes tips for adapting your own recipes. Explains the McDougall program used at St. Helena Hospital and Health Center.

Messina, Virginia and Kate Schumann, *The Convenient Vegetarian*, Macmillan, 1999

This handy book lives up to its title with a multitude of ideas to make vegetarian food preparation truly convenient. Even has recipes for preparing your own mixes to make quick homemade meals and a section that treats leftovers with creativity. A treasure for both the experienced vegetarian cook and the beginner.

Nowakowski, John B., *Vegetarian Magic at the Regency House Spa*, Book Publishing Company, 2000

Chef John shares the recipes he developed at the Regency House Spa, a Florida vegetarian spa emphasizing holistic health. The emphasis is on heart-healthy, cholesterol-free low sodium recipes. Includes four weeks of sample dinner menus and a schedule for a three-day juice fast.

Oser, Marie, *The Enlightened Kitchen: Eat Your Way to Better Health*, Wiley, 2002

A collection of 175 plant-based recipes based on her newspaper column of the same name. Shows cooks how to create tasty vegan versions of traditional dishes. Includes valuable nutritional information.

Oser, Marie, *More Soy Cooking*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2000

Contains good information to support the benefits of soy, helpful charts listing plant-based protein and calcium sources, glossary of uncommon ingredients, a panoply of recipes that feature soy foods ending with a recipe for Vegetarian Dog Treats. Recipes all have nutritional analysis. Resource guide and recommended reading list.

Oser, Marie, *Soy of Cooking*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996

Each of the tasty 170 recipes include a soy product incorporated into savory home-style dishes that are easy to prepare. Brief section on kitchen techniques, suggestions for incorporating herbs and spices, glossary, and suggestions for stocking the pantry. Includes nutritional analysis for each recipe and a helpful resource section.

Pickarski, Ron, *Friendly Foods*, Ten Speed Press, 1991

A cookbook of elegant vegan cuisine offering creative foods with exceptional flavor. An innovative cookbook from a knowledgeable chef. The author became a Franciscan monk who completed his culinary schooling while in training for his Order.

Robertson, Robin, *Vegan Planet*, Harvard Common Press, 2003

Anyone wondering what vegans eat might want to sample this jumbo volume of 400 recipes plus some healthy tips on nutrition and health. Includes many recipes from the author's inspired vegan repertoire.

Rodgers, Vimala, *Vegetarian Meals for People-on-the-Go*, Hay House, 2002

The author, a handwriting expert and motivational speaker, offers 101 simple vegan recipes with easy-to-locate ingredients for the busy home chef. The author's goal is to offer delicious family

meals with an abundance of fruits and vegetables without spending too much time in the kitchen.

Rogers, Jeff, *Vice Cream: Over 70 Sinfully Delicious Dairy-Free Delights*, Celestial Arts, 2004
Vegans will appreciate the dairy-free recipes. Raw food enthusiasts will revel in the tasty recipes created only with raw ingredients. Non-vegetarians, especially those who are lactose intolerant, will be able to enjoy tasty frozen desserts they will be able to produce in their own homes. What makes the book so engaging is the simplicity of the recipes. Most have between four and seven ingredients with some containing only three. The directions are clear and easy to follow, while assembling them takes just minutes. The longest aspect is waiting 40 to 60 minutes for the ice cream mixture to freeze.

Schinner, Miyoko Nishimoto, *The New Now and Zen Epicure*, The Book Publishing Company, 2001

The author, a food writer and former owner of Now and Zen Bistro in San Francisco, has created a vegan cookbook of exquisite quality that includes color photos and excellent food styling. Good explanations of ingredients and their uses preface the exceptional recipes. Miyoko is known for her outstanding desserts.

Shurtleff, William and Akiko Aoyagi, *The Book of Tempeh*, Harper & Row, 1979

The two authors present an outstanding, well researched book on the history and origins of tempeh. Recipes offer many ways to serve this exceptional soyfood, while the last third of the book gives complete instructions for preparing tempeh from scratch at home.

Solomon, Jay, *150 Vegan Favorites*, Prima Health, 1998

A professional chef, the author's innovative flair comes through in these tasty recipes that cover everything from appetizers to desserts. Chef reveals secrets for seasoning soups that stand out.

Soria, Cherie, *Angel Foods*, Heartstar Productions, 1996

The author's deep connection to celestial spirits has inspired this vegan cookbook that features about 50% raw foods. Promotes sprouting, cultured foods recipes and the use of fresh organic fruits and vegetables to create delectable dishes all prepared with loving energy.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook*, Book Publishing Company, 2003

Jo Stepaniak's well-loved *The Uncheese Cookbook* has now morphed into a larger, more graphically appealing, gastronomic 10th anniversary classic of first-rate faux cheese delights. There's hardly a soul who doesn't gravitate to the heady flavors of a dish featuring cheese. For vegans, who have kissed their cheese goodbye and opted for a compassionate lifestyle, Stepaniak's "uncheese" dishes are a welcome return with a dairy-free blessing.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *The Uncheese Cookbook*, Book Publishing Company, 1994

Truly exceptional recipes for everything a cheese lover adores, but without the cheese. Not a drop of dairy in the book, yet recipes for cheesecakes, brie, lasagne and more taste almost like the real thing.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *Vegan Deli*, Book Publishing Company, 2001

A delightful collection of original, easy-to-prepare recipes that emulate traditional New York ethnic delicatessen foods of yesteryear. Even includes Pickled Eggplant "Herring" that tastes just like old fashioned pickled herring. A nostalgic treasure with healthy ingredients.

Stepaniak, Joanne, *Vegan Vittles*, Book Publishing Company, 1996

Here's a book you can count on for reliable and delicious recipes. It opens with vegan philosophy, nutritional information, and an outstanding section on vegan substitutions for things like sugar, dairy products, and eggs. Offers a resource section. The book features a unique double index; one is a general index, the other is indexed by main ingredient, making it easy to locate a recipe.

Stevenson, Patricia, Michael Cook, and Patricia Bertron, *The Whole Foods Diabetic Cookbook*, Book Publishing Company, 2002

Discusses the types and complications of diabetes. Shows how a vegan diet combined with exercise can be used to manage this dreaded disease. Presents high fiber, whole foods recipes incorporating whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables to help control diabetes naturally.

Tucker, Eric with Bruce Enloe, *The Artful Vegan*, Ten Speed Press, 2003

The well-known chef of Millennium Restaurant in San Francisco has compiled another collection of cutting-edge, gourmet vegan recipes. Stunning photos make this a truly artful volume.

Tucker, Eric and John Westerdahl, *The Millennium Cookbook*, Ten Speed Press, 1998

A beautiful cutting-edge vegan cookbook with attractive color and sepia photography. Eye-appealing gourmet recipes from the famous Millennium Restaurant in San Francisco. A fabulous gift book for anyone who enjoys cooking.

Wagner, Lindsay and Ariane Spade, *The High Road to Health, a Vegetarian Cookbook*, Prentice Hall Press, 1990

For anyone making the transition into a vegetarian diet, this cookbook offers many helpful suggestions and basic information to guide one along the path. The recipes offer appealing dishes that have familiar ingredients used innovatively. The last chapter takes a look at our eroding ecology and how vegetarianism can be a benefit.

Wakeman, Alan and Gordon Baskerville, *The Vegan Cookbook*, Faber and Faber, 1986

Published in London and still in print this old standby features great basics including how to make your own vegan yogurt, ice cream, sour cream, and an old English favorite, double cream. Includes recipes for Cashew Loaf and Mushroom Pie for special occasions. Offers seven reasons to be vegan, vegan nutrition, resources, and a glossary.

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Vegetarianism

Akers, Keith, *A Vegetarian Sourcebook*, Vegetarian Press, 1993

The author answers the question, "Why should I become a vegetarian?" by creating a well researched handbook that explores the nutrition, ecology, and ethics of a natural food diet. This is

not a soapbox argument but a book that supports its theses with extensive research. The appendix begins with a section on how to become a vegetarian. It features a bibliography, a list of publications and contact information on vegetarian organizations. There is even a 15-page section of vegan recipes.

Bowlby, Rex, *Plant Roots: 101 Reasons Why the Human Diet Is Rooted Exclusively in Plants*, Outside the Box, 2003

Presents extensive research to show how the WELL (Wholly Eating Leaves to Live) Diet is superior to the SICK (Self-Induced Carnivorous Killer) diet. In 101 brief chapters the author discusses how a plant-based diet is beneficial to human health and the environment. The author presents his facts using novel devices like multiple choice quizzes, dialogs, and playlets. His sense of humor is apparent throughout the work.

Havala, Suzanne, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Being Vegetarian*, Alpha Books, 1999

This outstanding book is truly a guide that helps the new vegetarian journey into unfamiliar territory with valuable information. Many practical suggestions from dining out to travelling, to networking with other vegetarians. Graphically interesting with sidebars offering humor, helpful hints, and advice.

Maurer, Donna, *Vegetarianism: Movement or Moment?* Temple University Press, 2002

Researcher Maurer examines the vegetarianism to discover whether it is a fad or a trend. The movement has focused on the health benefits that have been borne out by research and has lobbied for more vegetarian options. Readers will find the history of vegetarianism, the attitudes of health professionals toward the diet, and the activities of vegetarian organizations. They will also be introduced to the strategies of its leaders, the role of the food industry in promoting vegetarian diets, and the ideology of the movement.

Melina, Vesanto, Brenda Davis, and Victoria Harrison, *Becoming Vegetarian: the Complete Guide to Adopting a Healthy Vegetarian Diet*, Book Publishing Company, 1995

Anyone wanting to learn about the clinical nutritional details of vegetarianism can find this book highly informative. Includes recipes, snack ideas, glossary, and a very readable guide to make the transition to a vegetarian or vegan regimen. The three authors are registered dieticians who pool their expertise to educate the public.

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Vegetarian Cookbooks

Atlas, Nava, *Great American Vegetarian; Traditional and Regional Recipes for the Enlightened Cook*, 3rd. edition, M. Evans and Company, Inc., 1998

Illustrated by the author, this unique cookbook has an old-fashioned flair with historical and

informative sidebars and quotations. From Colonial delicacies to those of New England, Pennsylvania Dutch, the South, Creole and Cajun, to the Southwest, the annotated vegetarian recipes include representative foods from all across the United States with dishes like Virginia Peanut Soup and California Omelet. Seasonal menus and resources included.

Atlas, Nava, *The Vegetarian 5-Ingredient Gourmet*, Broadway Books, 2001

This is a full cornucopia of 250 recipes that ingeniously combine five ingredients to create tasty, tempting dishes that cover the gamut from soups, salads, and pastas, down to wraps, grains, beans, veggies, and fruits. Many recipes feature side bars with menu suggestions. Contains a list of pantry staples, suggestions for planning weekly menus, and an excellent cross-referenced index.

Atlas, Nava *Vegetariana; a Rich Harvest of Wit, Lore, and Recipes*, Amberwood Press, Inc., 1999

Originally published in 1984, this revised and updated edition offers 230 vegetarian and vegan recipes with appealing quotations in the side bars of most pages. Almost every page contains the author's original black and white drawings that enhance the book's overall presentation. Contains an excellent glossary of herbs and spices, brief cooking tips, resource section in bibliographic form. Well indexed.

Bess, Patti A., *Vegetarian Barbecue*, Lowell House, 1998

The author puts the grill to work full time with recipes for appetizers, through desserts that are made on the barbie. A no-frills book with wholesome vegetarian recipes that are easy to prepare and provide healthy foods for entertaining or family get-togethers.

Brown, Sarah, *The Vegetarian Bible*, Reader's Digest, 2002

Lavishly illustrated, this compendium is an essential handbook for vegetarian cooking. In addition to 250 recipes (many photographed), the volume contains nutritional information, cooking advice, and an extensive glossary of ingredients including illustrations of fruits, vegetables, legumes, herbs, oils, sweeteners, and other ingredients.

Caldicott, Chris and Carolyn, *World Food Cafe*, Soma Books, 1999

Exotic, intoxicating, intriguing, and riveting are expressions to begin describing this unique cookbook. The authors have traveled throughout the world collecting and adapting recipes that appeal to those with a palate for the complex flavors of African, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern, and South American cuisine. Beautiful color photography throughout beckons the reader to step into the culture and taste the delights.

Cottrell, Edyth Young, *The Oats, Peas, Beans & Barley Cookbook*, Woodbridge Press, 1994

Vegetarian recipes focusing on legumes and grains from breads and entrees to desserts and soyfoods. Author is a research nutritionist at Loma Linda University and presents her dietary philosophy in layman's terms.

Drennan, Matthew and Annie Nichols, *Vegetarian Entertaining*, Lorenz Books, 1997

An exceptional cookbook enhanced by beautiful color photography on every page. Each recipe has step-by-step illustrated directions from beginning to end to guide one in turning out perfect dishes. Many gourmet touches.

Edrissi, Fred, *Chef's Healthy Pasta: Vegetarian Recipes to Boost Your Vitality and Health*, Alive Books, 1999

Pasta recipes with exceptional flair are the focus of this book that contains many stand-out dishes. Directions for making homemade pasta, ravioli and some innovative pestos. Brief historical information about pasta and alternative grains. Beautiful color photography throughout.

Emmons, Didi, *Entertaining for a Veggie Planet*, Houghton Mifflin, 2003

The owner/chef of Veggie Planet Restaurant shares "250 down-to-earth recipes" guaranteed to take the fuss out of entertaining. While a good portion of the author's recipes are vegetarian and heavy on the dairy products, substituting tofu or soy cheese, soy cream cheese, and soy yogurt can easily veganize the majority of offerings.

The Essential Vegetarian Cookbook, Murdoch Books, 1996

Every page is artistry in color photography and food styling with wholesome recipes that are as hearty and nutritious as they are visually appealing. Includes many recipes for dishes with an international flair. Page 13 presents an impressive, colorful full-page natural food vegetarian pyramid.

Farrey, Seppo Ed and Myochi Nancy O'Hara, *3 Bowls, Vegetarian Recipes from an American Zen Buddhist Monastery*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000

Much more than an exceptional cookbook awaits the reader who embraces this book. Interspersed throughout are numerous pages that describe the zen monastery and its beautiful surroundings, zen rituals, and a touch of zen buddhist philosophy. Japanese calligraphy introduces the beginning of each chapter. Recipes are ideal for home cooking.

Ginsberg, Beth and Mike Milken, *The Taste for Living Cookbook*, Cap CURE Book, 1998

Michael Milken's bout with prostate cancer inspired him to take the vegetarian path. The book offers an enjoyable, gustatorial experience with recipes for tasty foods, attractive color photography and food styling, and information on antioxidant foods that may prevent cancer. On the downside, many of the recipes list ingredients that include refined breads and flours which a savvy cook can substitute with whole grains.

Gwynn, Mary, *Vegetarian Barbecue Cookbook*, Whitecap Books, 1998

This creative author demonstrates that a vegetarian barbecue can be enticing, delicious, and visually appealing with her original recipes that reflect a flair for unique combinations. Includes grilling tips, menu suggestions, and a host of tantalizing recipes that range from appetizers and kabobs to sauces, relishes, and desserts. Well indexed.

Hom, Ken, *Asian Vegetarian Feast*, Morrow, 1988

From appetizers to desserts, this imaginative author knows how to combine seasonings and ingredients in the Asian tradition to tempt the palate. Helpful glossary of typical ingredients used in oriental cooking, as well as equipment and techniques employed. Author is a chef who has written several cookbooks.

Katzen, Mollie, *Vegetable Heaven*, Hyperion, 1997

An exceptional cookbook from a well-seasoned author whose other works include The Moosewood Cookbook, The Enchanted Broccoli Forest, and Still Life with Menu. You can prepare her innovative, international style dishes and enjoy the talented author's artistry with the brush as well.

Kurma dasa, *Great Vegetarian Dishes: over 240 Recipes from Around the World*, The

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1990

Recipes with an international flair from an author whose work as a chef in the Hare Krishna tradition afforded him many years honing his skill and developing exceptional dishes. An impressive glossary, a fascinating introduction, and some helpful basics add the extras to make this book special.

Laden, Alice and R. J. Minney, *The George Bernard Shaw Vegetarian Cookbook in Six Acts*, Revised New Edition by Dorothy R. Bates, Book Publishing Company, 1987

Playwright George Bernard Shaw's favorite vegetarian dishes written down by his housekeeper. A lover of animals, the playwright said, "Animals are my friends, and I don't eat my friends." Contains a brief, but interesting background of his shift from carnivore to vegetarian, his life with his mother, his marriage of 45 years, and a good number of recipes.

Madison, Deborah, *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*, Broadway Books, 1997

The definitive vegetarian cookbook of the millennium, the book is a literal encyclopedia of kitchen basics from choosing tools to selecting wines. Included are 1400 vegetarian recipes for every occasion, many appealing color photos, and an excellent index.

Migliaccio, Janice Cook, *Follow Your Heart's Vegetarian Soup Cookbook*, Woodbridge Press, 1983

Turn to any page in the book and you'll find a soup recipe that offers savory flavors within its hearty ingredients. Plenty of tips on the art of soup making including the use of herbs and spices. Recipes were developed at the popular cafe inside Follow Your Heart health foods market.

Mills, Dorothy Jane, *Meatless Meat*, Patrician Publications, 2001

Vegetarian for 30 years, this well-traveled author whips up a host of familiar international dishes with a vegetarian twist. Focused on hearty, meatless entrees that satisfy even the life-long meat aficionados, this TVP specialist also recreates a plethora of American comfort foods along with a wide range of global specialties in a unique recipe format.

Nyerges, Christopher, *Wild Greens and Salads*, Stackpole Books, 1982

The author developed these recipes from his many years of experience in leading wild foods outings and instructing participants on the benefits of wild foods.

Ornish, Dr. Dean, *Eat More, Weigh Less*, Harper Perennial, 1993

A cardiologist, the author has seen dramatic weight loss results in patients who follow his heart-healthy vegetarian diet. Nutritional information and techniques on healing emotional pain, loneliness, and isolation to help toward a healthier path. Suggested menus, low-fat pantry and cooking techniques. Book is packed with 250 gourmet recipes.

Robertson, Robin, *366 Healthful Ways to Cook Tofu*, Penguin, 1996

Imagine a different recipe for each day of the year plus one more for good measure featuring meat alternatives like tofu, tempeh, and seitan. A no-frills cookbook with a brief explanation of the main ingredients and a total focus on recipes and more recipes for hearty dishes that include legumes and whole grains as well.

Rosenast, Eleanor S., *Soup Alive*, Woodbridge Press, 1995

Recipes for 150 soups that contain a combination of cooked and raw ingredients from vegetable soups to hearty bean soups. A brief introductory section to inform about enzymes, thickeners,

seasonings, and soup bases, this book's focus is simply on soups incorporating a wide variety of veggies.

Rosensweig, Linda and the Food Editors of Prevention Magazine, *The New Vegetarian Cuisine: 250 Low-Fat Recipes for Superior Health*, Rodale Press, 1994

Loaded with practical, easy to prepare recipes, this book is an outstanding collection of dishes anyone can make at home with basic ingredients very likely to be on the pantry shelf. The book opens with helpful suggestions for new vegetarians and ends with a month's worth of menus to get one started.

Shurtleff, William and Akiko Aoyagi, *The Book of Tofu: the Protein Source of the Future - Now!*, Ten Speed Press, 1983

The co-authors' research of tofu's origins, techniques, and recipes lead them to Japan where they explored the multitude of tofu companies and the various products derived from tofu. Many excellent recipes and an interesting account of their cultural experiences.

Spitler, Sue, *1,001 Low-Fat Vegetarian Recipes*, Surrey Books, 2000

An encyclopedic paperpack compendium of recipes that meet American Heart Association guidelines. Contains nutritional analysis, diabetic exchanges, and keyed vegan, lacto, ovo, or lacto-ovo. Offers cultural diversity and even includes meals that can be served in 20 to 30 minutes.

von Cramm, Dagmar, *The Vegetarian Gourmet*, Alive Books, 1998

A treasury of tempting, truly gourmet recipes that are accompanied by full color photos on every page. Complete section on kitchen fundamentals and a helpful chart listing season availability of fruits and vegetables. Nutritional information and a unique page of which foods help build hair, nails, skin, teeth, muscles, immune system, memory, and energy.

Warren, Jennifer, *Vegetarian Comfort Foods*, Whitecap Books, Ltd., 2001

From the kitchen of a young cookbook author who became vegetarian at age 17, comes this excellent collection of vegetarian comfort foods recipes, some of which have fallen out of favor for the trendier dishes. An excellent basics section that includes cooking terms precedes the recipes that range from breakfasts to desserts. Includes a glossary and an excellent index.

Wells, Troth, *The World in Your Kitchen*, The Crossing Press, 1993

A treasury of exotic vegetarian recipes collected from Africa, Asia, and Latin America written for Western kitchens. Includes interesting tidbits and historical notes about each country and some of its foods. Many color and black and white photos appear throughout along with appealing graphic design. Recipe ingredients are listed in metrics along with American measurements. Contains a glossary, index, and bibliography.

Wood, Rebecca, *Quinoa, the Supergrain: Ancient Food for Today*, Japan Publications, 1988

Though the book contains one small chapter of recipes that incorporate animal products such as fish or chicken into its few recipes, this outstanding book has lots to offer from a well researched extensive history of quinoa to its role in spirituality, medicine, and ecology. Over 100 recipes from breakfast foods, soup, salads, and entrees, down to the ultimate desserts. The Appendixes even contains information on growing, harvesting and winnowing quinoa. Soyfoods could easily be substituted for the animal foods.

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Heirlooms, the Garden Treasury

Vegetarians who treasure the moments spent in the vegetable garden can find even greater treasures with heirloom seeds that may be as old as their grandfathers. Anyone who has lovingly tended the plants for that specially awaited day to pluck a ripe tomato or a squash off the vine can agree that homegrown heirloom vegetables have unmatched richness of flavor, sweetness, and juiciness, but wait--it can get even better.

When you discover the many unique features of heirloom varieties, you'll surely be hooked. You'll find seeds that have a long history, a pedigree, so to speak. You may be growing purple string beans, tomatoes of unusual shapes and colors, little round white eggplants, and beans for drying and soup-making that your great grandmother might have grown in her garden.

Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, placed such high value on his garden, he sought out fruits and vegetables brought to America by explorers from all parts of Europe. Today, visitors to Jefferson's home in Monticello can see varieties of vegetable and flowers that Jefferson himself once grew. Some of the seeds planted at Monticello may be almost 200 years old, an awesome concept and a perfect example of treasured heirlooms.



Each year, in December and January, commercial seed companies sell attractive, relatively inexpensive seed packets to home gardeners through seed catalogs and garden shops. Anything from root vegetables and beans to eggplant, tomatoes, and okra are available. Though these catalogs are filled with appealing color photographs of your favorite vegetables, what they're selling are hybrid seeds, seeds that have actually been bred for the commercial grower.

Hybridized plants are the result of a cross between two varieties. For instance, two varieties of tomatoes are chosen because each has particular traits the grower wants to cultivate. When seeds

are taken from the cross-pollinated tomato, these seeds will not be able to reproduce this crossed variety, but will revert back to one of the parents. Heirlooms, which are open-pollinated plants, on the other hand, reproduce themselves generation after generation.

Commercial growers who grow only hybridized crops risk the danger of a fungus or plant disease destroying their entire crop. It happened in the famous Irish potato famine in the 1840s where farmers were growing only one variety of potatoes. Disease destroyed their entire crop and millions of people died. Their variety of potato had no resistance to that particular disease, one of the pitfalls of hybridized vegetable crops. With the diversity of plant varieties offered by preserving heirlooms, many plants develop resistance to certain pests, preventing the total crop loss experienced in Ireland.

The commercial grower wants to breed fruits and vegetables that are uniform in size, ripen all at once, have the same color and shape, and that can be transported to market without spoilage. Invariably, it's the flavor that's lost. We've all purchased fruits and vegetables from the supermarket that tempted us with their bright colors and plump appearance but have too often given us that flavor let-down. The home gardener, too, may not always have success with these hybrid seeds and may feel discouraged.

Flavor is not the only feature lost with breeding hybrids. Thousands of varieties of unique vegetables and fruits have been lost to us. In the early 1900s nearly 7,000 varieties of apples existed in this country. Today, that number has shrunk to less than 1,000. Unfortunately, a similar pattern exists for most of our fruit and vegetable varieties.

Consider, instead, ferreting out companies that specialize in heirloom seeds. Many of these seeds are of varieties that are more than 150 years old, such as lettuces with exotic names like Rouge d'Hiver and Little Gem. Some heirloom seeds come from other parts of the world and have enriched our table with such treats as exotic peppers from South America, Mache, a delicate variety of lettuce from Europe, or Pintong Long, bright purple, long thin eggplant from Taiwan.

Preserving heirloom seeds gives people a sense of history and cultural heritage. By growing heirloom plants and saving the seeds, we can all participate in saving many varieties from extinction and preserving plants with special genetic traits. In becoming a seed saver of heirlooms, we can pass on the rich history with which many plants are endowed. If you can learn the origins of your seeds, pass this heritage on to your family members and share these seeds with other growers of heirlooms. In this way it is possible to save special varieties not commonly grown.



Today, many of us are concerned about the widespread practice of genetic engineering and the unknown consequences of genetically modified foods. Taking up heirloom gardening reassures us that we can enjoy vegetables and fruits that are pure, natural, unchanged, and in complete harmony with nature.

Heirloom seeds have special features that distinguish them from hybrid seeds:

- The variety of seed should be able to reproduce itself. For example, one variety of tomato that has been saved for generation after generation of plantings will produce that same

variety of tomato.

- Antique seeds are always self-pollinated or open-pollinated and will produce plants with the same traits planting after planting, generation after generation. Hybrid seeds will not be able to reproduce plants with exactly the same traits.
- The variety of seed must have been introduced at least 50 years ago, though some heirloom gardeners say they must be at least 100 years old. In recent years, however, varieties with shorter histories are considered heirloom because of their uniqueness.
- The particular cultivar, or variety, must have a special history. Perhaps one can trace the plant's origins to a particular region of the country. Or, perhaps seeds have been saved by farming families who can recall that their great grandparents brought them from Europe.

Today there is a growing interest in preserving heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables along with their histories. Among the groups that have made special efforts to collect and save heirloom seeds are the Amish, the Mennonites, and Native Americans. There are seed companies devoted exclusively to saving and selling heirloom seeds and plants. Many universities are developing ecology departments that take a special interest in the preservation of heirloom seeds.



Many of us don't have the time or opportunity to grow our own heirloom vegetables, but we can make an effort to support those who do. In recent years, there are many small farmers who grow heirloom tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, and eggplants and bring them to the shoppers who frequent farmers' markets.

What a delight to introduce the family to varieties of tomatoes with unique shapes and colors never seen in the supermarket! Unmatchable sweetness, fragrance, and juiciness are the outstanding features that beckon us to choose historical tomatoes over the hybrids. By seeking out these farmers and enjoying their treasures, you're helping to preserve old time varieties and encouraging farmers to sustain the tradition of the heirloom garden.

Heirloom Websites

There are a number of web sites devoted to heirloom gardening that may be useful in helping you get started. Here are a few:

"Heirloom Vegetables," *Backyard Gardener*

<http://www.backyardgardener.com/article/heirloom.html>

"A Delicious Inheritance," *Healthwell Exchange*

http://www.healthwellexchange.com/nfm-online/nfm_backs/Mar_00/heirlooms.cfm?

"Heirloom Vegetables," *The Wisconsin Gardener* (Wisconsin Public Television)

<http://www.wpt.org/garden/about/transcripts/701a.html>

"The Heritage Garden: Heirloom Vegetables," *Le Bep's Garden Magazine*

http://www.lebepsgarden.zipworld.com.au/archive_index.html

"Nostalgia You Can Eat," *Dave's Garden* <http://davesgarden.com/showthread/heirloom/1988.html>

"Green Bay's Heirloom Vegetable Archive," Cofrin Arboretum Center for Biodiversity
<http://www.uwgb.edu/biodiversity/Heirloom/index.htm>

"Heirloom Vegetables," The Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service,
<http://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheets/HGIC1255.htm>

Shepherds Garden Seeds <http://www.shepherdseeds.com>

Heirloom Seeds <http://www.heirloomseeds.com>

Renee's Garden <http://www.reneesgarden.com>

Salt Spring Seeds <http://www.saltspringseeds.com/>

Southern Exposure Seed Exchange <http://www.southernexposure.com>

Synergy Seeds <http://www.synergyseeds.com>

Rich Farm Garden Supply <http://www.richfarmgarden.com>

Victory Seed Company <http://www.victoryseeds.com>

Garden Web <http://www.gardenweb.com>

The Good Earth Greenhouse & Gardens <http://www.goodearthheirlooms.com>

Heirloom Books

Books on heirloom gardening are invaluable guides. Your local library may be a great resource to get you started. Here are just a few we can recommend:

Heirloom Vegetable Gardening by William Woys Weaver, Holt, 1999

Taylor's Guide to Heirloom Vegetables by Benjamin Watson, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996

The Edible Heirloom Garden by Rosalind Creasy, Periplus Editions, 1999

100 Heirloom Tomatoes for the American Garden by Carolyn J. Male, Workman, 1999

Seed to Seed by Suzanne Ashworth and Ken Whealy, Seed Savers Exchange, 2002

The New Seed Starters Handbook by Nancy Bubel, Rodale Press, 1988

Heirloom Organizations

Below is a list of organizations that are devoted to saving heirloom seeds. Some are seed banks only and focus on preserving seeds for their historical value. Others sell heirloom seeds to encourage gardeners to join in their efforts and offer opportunities for seed

exchanges between members.

Abundant Life Seed Foundation <http://www.abundantlifeseed.com>

P.O. Box 772

Port Townsend, WA 98368

A nonprofit seed company that operates the World Seed Fund, a project devoted to sending seeds worldwide to community groups working to reduce hunger. They sell heirloom vegetable seeds, and carry seeds for herbs, flowers, trees, and shrubs. Catalog available for a nominal fee.

Membership fee is about \$30 and includes the catalog and periodic newsletters.

CORNS

c/o Carl L. & Karen D. Barnes

Rt. 1, Box 32

Turpin, OK 73950

Saves and sells corn varieties including popcorn. Send a SASE for information and price list.

Eastern Native Seed Conservancy <http://www.berkshire.net/ensc/seedmain.html>

CRESS Heirloom Seed Conservation Project

P.O. Box 451

Great Barrington, MA 01230

CRESS (Conservation and Regional exchange by Seed Savers) is a regional heirloom seed exchange for varieties acclimated to the Berkshire bioregion (western New England and eastern New York state). Some of their varieties are also adaptable to the Northeast. This is a membership organization with a fee of about \$18 a year. Members can order seeds to grow at home and must return a portion of the saved seeds to CRESS.

KUSA Research Foundation

P.O. Box 761

Ojai, CA 93023

KUSA is a nonprofit organization devoted to saving rare and endangered cereal crops. For a catalog send a SASE plus \$2.

Landis Valley Museum Heirloom Seed Project <http://www.landisvalleymuseum.org/seeds.htm>

2451 Kissel Hill Road

Lancaster, PA 17601

A historical site that operates an heirloom seed program listing more than 100 heirloom varieties and their histories. For information send SASE plus \$2.50.

Native Seeds/SEARCH <http://www.nativeseeds.org>

526 N. 4th Ave.

Tucson, AZ 85705

A nonprofit organization devoted to saving traditional crops of the U.S. Southwest and northern Mexico. Specializing in native beans, corn, melons, chilies, and vegetables. Annual membership is about \$18. Seed catalogs available for a small fee. Write for information.

Old Sturbridge Village Museum Gift Shop <http://www.osv.org/Gifts/Index.html>

One Old Sturbridge Village Road

Sturbridge, MA 01566

A living museum featuring planted kitchen gardens overflowing with heirloom varieties grown in the mid-19th century. Send about \$1 for a seed list.

Seed and Plant Sanctuary for Canada <http://www.seedsanctuary.com/>

PO Box 444 Ganges, Salt

Spring Island, BC, V8K 2W1

A charitable organization dedicated to the health and vitality of the earth through the preservation and promotion of heritage seeds.

Seed Savers Exchange <http://www.seedsavers.org>

3076 North Winn Road

Decorah, IA 52101

The largest organization worldwide devoted to saving heirloom varieties of vegetables and fruits from extinction. Members return seeds and offer them to other members through their annual yearbook. Founded in 1975 this organization is an international clearinghouse for information on rare and heirloom vegetables. They publish *Garden Seed Inventory*, a catalog of catalogs, listing all open pollinated varieties available in U.S. and Canadian seed companies. They sell a limited number of heirloom seed packets to help support their work. Membership is about \$20 annually in the U.S., slightly higher in Canada and overseas. One of their interesting projects has been to establish a plant collectors' network in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Seed Shares

P.O. Box 226

Earlsville, VA 22936

A gardener's seed bank that helps preserve rare, heirloom and unusual seed varieties, this organization is affiliated with the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange. Send SASE and about \$1 for seed list.

Seeds of Diversity formerly Heritage Seed Program <http://www.seeds.ca>

P.O. Box 36, Station Q

Toronto, Ontario M4T 2L7 Canada

A living gene bank. A grassroots seed exchange dedicated to preserving heirloom and endangered varieties of vegetables, fruits, grains, herbs, and flowers. The program was started by the Canadian Organic Growers in 1984. An annual membership fee of about \$18 allows members to receive the organization's seed listing magazine three times a year.

The Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants <http://www.monticello.org/chp>

P.O. Box 316

Charlottesville, VA 22902-0316

Many people may not be aware that Thomas Jefferson was an avid gardener who devoted hours to collecting unique food plants from other parts of the world. At Monticello, his now historic home, visitors can appreciate the abundant gardens and can view many of the varieties he collected. For a small fee one can purchase a Jefferson Sampler that includes 10 varieties of flowers and vegetables that Thomas Jefferson grew himself. Seed lists available for a nominal fee.



[Homepage](#) ● [Our Mission](#) ● [News from the Nest](#)
[Vegetarian Basics 101](#) ● [Vegetarian Food Companies](#)
[Recipe Index](#) ● [Los Angeles Vegetarian Restaurants](#)
[Dining in Paradise](#) ● [Words from Other Birds](#)
[VeggieTaster Report](#) ● [Vegetarian Reading](#)
[Ask Aunt Nettie](#) ● [24 Carrot Award](#) ● [Protein Basics](#)
[VegParadise Bookshelf](#) ● [Heirloom Gardening](#)
[Vegetarian Associations Directory](#) ● [cookingwithzel@](#)
[Cooking Beans & Grains](#) ● [On the Highest Perch](#)
[The Road to Vegetaria](#) ● [VegParadise Media Reviews](#)
[Great Produce Hunt](#) ● [Using Your Bean](#)
[Airline Vegetarian Meals](#) ● [Vegetarian Holiday Meals](#)
[Archive Index](#) ● [VegParadise Yellow Pages](#)
[Links We Love](#) ● [Send us e-mail](#)



In an effort to assist our readers in contacting local, regional, and national vegetarian associations, organizations, societies, and clubs in the United States, Vegetarians in Paradise has organized this directory. With groups that have a web site there is a link to the site. We hope by receiving input from our readers, we will be able to keep this directory current. Let us know what information needs to be revised or added, and, especially what groups need to be added.

Last Updated August 17, 2004

United States National Organizations

All4vegan.net <http://www.all4vegan.net>

30877 Lee Frank Lane
Madison Heights, MI 48071
Phone: 248-616-9676
e-mail: webmaster@all4vegan.net

American Vegan Society <http://www.americanvegan.org>

P.O. Box 369
Malaga, NJ 08328
Phone: 856-694-2887
e-mail: info@americanvegan.org

Animal Place <http://www.animalplace.org>

3448 Laguna Creek Trail
Vacaville, CA 95688
Phone: 707-449-4814
Fax: 707-449-8775
e-mail: info@animalplace.org

Animals Voice Online <http://www.animalsvoice.com>

1354 East Avenue, #252
Chico, CA 95926
Phone: 800-828-6423
e-mail: info@animalsvoice.com

Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights <http://www.aavar.org>

P.O. Box 208
Davis, CA 95617
Phone: 530-759-8106
e-mail: info@avar.org

Christian Vegetarian Association <http://www.christianveg.com>

P.O. Box 201791
Cleveland, OH 44120
Phone: 216-283-6702
e-mail: CVA@christianveg.com

EarthSave International <http://www.earthsave.org>

1509 Seabright Ave., Suite B-1
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
Phone: 800-362-3648
e-mail: information@earthsave.org

FARM (Farm Animal Reform Movement) <http://www.farmusa.org>

P.O. Box 30654
Bethesda, MD 20824
Phone: 800-FARM-USA
e-mail: farm@farmusa.org

Humane USA PAC <http://www.humaneusa.org>

P.O. Box 19224
Washington, DC 20036
e-mail: humaneusa@humaneusa.org

Jewish Vegetarians of North America <http://www.jewishveg.com>

6938 Reliance Rd.
Federalsburg, MD 21632
Phone: 410-754-5550
e-mail: mail@jewishveg.com

Jews for Animal Rights <http://www.micahbooks.com>

255 Humphrey St.
Marblehead, MA 01945
Phone; 781-631-7601
Fax: 781-639-0772
e-mail: micah@micahbooks.com

North American Vegetarian Society <http://navs-online.org>

P.O. Box 72
Dolgeville, NY 13329
Phone: 518-568-7970
e-mail: navs@telenet.net

PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) <http://www.peta-online.org>

501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
Phone: 757-622-PETA
e-mail: info@peta-online.org

PCRM (Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine) <http://www.pcrm.org>

5100 Wisconsin Ave. NW,
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20016
Phone: 202-686-2210
e-mail: pcrm@pcrm.org

Vegan Action <http://www.vegan.org>

P.O. Box 4353
Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 510-548-7377
e-mail: info@vegan.org

Vegan Outreach <http://www.veganoutreach.org>

211 Indian Dr.
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
Phone: 412-968-0268
e-mail: vegan@veganoutreach.org

Vegan Visions <http://www.blackvegetarians.com>

2120 Flagler Place, NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-265-5068
e-mail: mmcquirer@hotmail.com

Vegetarian Awareness Network (VEGANET)

Communications Center
P.O. Box 321
Knoxville, TN 37901-0321

Phone: 888-VEGLINE, 800-EATVEGE or 865-558-VEGE

Vegetarian Resource Group <http://www.vrg.org>

Box 1463

Baltimore, MD 21203

Phone: 410-366-VEGE

e-mail: vrg@vrg.org

Local and Regional Groups by States



Alaska

EarthSave Alaska

APU Box 11

4101 University Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone: 907-566-3622

alaska@earthsave.org



Arizona

Animal Commandos <http://www.animalcommandos.org>

e-mail: shaynie_aero@yahoo.com

Animal Defense League of Arizona <http://www.adlaz.org>

P.O. Box 43026

Tucson, AZ 85733

Phone: 520-623-3101

e-mail: adla@adlaz.org

Arizona Direct Action Coalition <http://move.to/adac>

P.O. Box 533

Waddell, AZ85355

AZVegan.com <http://www.azvegan.com>

e-mail: website@azvegan.com

Feminists for Animal Rights <http://www.farinc.org>

P.O. Box 41355
Tucson, AZ 85717-1355
Phone: 520-825-6852
e-mail: farinc@hotmail.com

In Defense of Animals at ASU

Phone: 480-394-0578
e-mail: pathaight@yahoo.com

Last Chance for Animals -Arizona <http://www.LCA-Arizona.org>

7525 East Cactus Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85260
Phone: 480-844-7877
e-mail: btida@earthlink.net or or shaynie_aero@yahoo.com

Raw for Life <http://www.rawforlife.com>

P.O. Box 51083
Phoenix, AZ 85076
Phone: 480-496-5959
e-mail: info@rawforlife.com

Vegetarian Resource Group of Tucson <http://www.vrgt.org>

P.O. Box 91464
Tucson, AZ 85752
Phone: 520-682-0075
e-mail: info@vrgt.org

Vegetarian Society of Phoenix

P.O. Box 143
Tempe, AZ 85280
Phone: 602599-VEGE



California

Bay Area Jewish Vegetarians <http://www.ivu.org.bajv>

e-mail: bajv@ivu.org

Bay Area Vegetarians <http://www.BayAreaVeg.org>

e-mail: <http://www.BayAreaVeg.org/contact.htm>

Conscious Eating of Claremont College

Conscious Eating c/o Pomona College
170 E. Bonita Ave.

Claremont, CA 91711
e-mail: jbuhle@pomona.edu

EarthSave Bay Area <http://bayarea.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 865
Cupertino, CA 95015
Voice Mail: 408-380-1214
e-mail: bayarea@earthsave.org

EarthSave Inland Empire <http://inlandempire.earthsave.org>

3243 Spring Garden St.
Riverside, CA 92501
Phone: 909-682-1196
e-mail: inlandempire@earthsave.org

EarthSave Marin County

12 Rally Court
Fairfax, CA 94930
Phone: 415-459-1666
e-mail: marin@earthsave.org

EarthSave San Diego <http://sandiego.earthsave.org>

e-mail: sandiego@earthsave.org

East Bay Vegetarians

P.O. Box 5450
Oakland, CA 94605
Phone: 510-562-9934
e-mail: howarddy2@usa.net

Farm Sanctuary - West <http://www.farmsanctuary.org>

P.O. Box 1065
Orland, CA 95963
Phone: 530-865-4617

Fruitarian Worldwide Network <http://www.livingnutrition.com>

P.O. Box 256
Sebastopol, CA 95473
Phone: 707-829-0462
e-mail: dave@livingnutrition.com

Jewish Vegetarians of Los Angeles at Valley Beth Shalom

Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue
15739 Ventura Blvd.
Encino, CA 91436
Phone: 818-349-2581

North Bay Living Foods Community <http://www.beraw.com>

P.O. Box 7443
Cotati, CA 94931
Phone: 707-793-2365

Redding Vegetarian Society

14907 Marin Dr.
Redding, CA 96003
Phone: 530-275-6012

Sacramento Vegetarian Society <http://home.earthlink.net/~sacveggie>

P.O. Box 163583
Sacramento, CA 95816-9583
Phone: 916-554-7090
e-mail: info@sacvegsociety.org

San Francisco Living Foods Enthusiasts <http://www.living-foods.com/sflife/index.html>

662 29th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94121
Phone: 415-751-2806
e-mail: sflife@living-foods.com

San Francisco Vegetarian Society <http://www.sfvs.org>

Box 2510
San Francisco, CA 94126-2510
Phone: 415-273-5481
e-mail: contact@sfvs.org

Southern California Vegetarians <http://SoCalVeg.org>

Los Angeles, CA
Phone: 310-289-5777
e-mail: info@SoCalVeg.org

UCLA Students for Animal Liberation

Phone: 310-599-0009
E-mail: UCLA4animals@hotmail.com

Vegetarian Inclined People

383 Walnut Street
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420
Phone: 805-489-5481

Vegetarian Network

9240 Carmel Road
Atascadero, CA 93422
Phone: 805-461-1212

VegLA (Gay and Lesbian Vegetarian Club) <http://www.veggiela.com>

Phone: 818-999-0852 (press 2 after the greeting)

e-mail: VeggieLA@aol.com



Colorado

EarthSave Boulder <http://boulder.earthsave.org>

e-mail: boulder@earthsave.org

Vegetarian Society of Colorado <http://www.vsc.org>

P.O. Box 6773

Denver, CO 80206-6773

Phone: 303-777-4828

e-mail: info@vsc.org



Connecticut

Northern Connecticut Vegetarian Society <http://www.northctveg.org>

P.O. Box 628

Suffield, CT 06078

Phone: 860-668-2755 or 860-763-3747

e-mail: info@northctveg.org

Southern Connecticut Vegetarian Society

<http://hometown.aol.com/soctvegetarians/myhomepage/profile.html>

Phone: 860 668-2755 or 860-763-3747

Vegan Way <http://join.VeganWay.cjb.net>

P.O. Box 2332

Bristol, CT 06011-2332

e-mail: VeganWay@yahoo.com



District of Columbia

Vegetarian Society of the District of Columbia <http://www.vsdc.org>

P.O. Box 4921

Washington, DC 20008-4921

Phone: 202-362-8349
e-mail: vsdc@vsdc.org



Florida

EarthSave Miami <http://miami.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 160191
Miami, FL 33116-0191
Phone: 305-228-1116
e-mail: miami@earthsave.org

EarthSave Southwest Florida

swflorida@earthsave.org

EarthSave Space Coast <http://spacecoast.earthsave.org>

14-J Cape Shores Dr.
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920
Phone: 321-799-9421
e-mail: spacecoast@earthsave.org

Florida East Coast Vegetarian Society

21 Blackwell Pl.
Palm Coast, FL 32137
Phone: 904-439-5401

Florida Voices for Animals, Inc. <http://www.fvaonline.org>

P.O. Box 17523
Tampa, FL 33682
Phone: 813-969-3755
flvoices@aol.com

Gulf Coast Vegetarian Society

P.O. Box 20646
Sarasota, FL 34276
Phone: 941-923-5637
e-mail: summerbernat@hotmail.com

Hawthorne Vegetarian Club

c/o Marilyn Fivash
112 Pyracantha Lane
Leesburg, FL 34748
Phone: 352-314-1685

Indian River Vegetarian Society

2435 Tecca Dr.
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168
Phone: 904-427-8343

Tampa Bay Vegetarians <http://www.tampabayvegetarians.org>

P.O Box 7943
St. Petersburg, FL 33734-7943
Phone: 727-898-9035 or 727-392-0628
e-mail: info@tampabayvegetarians.org

Vegetarian Events

P.O. Box 1057
Alachua, FL 32616
Phone: 386-454-4341
e-mail: chasmo@netcommander.com

Vegetarian Singles Club

18710 NE 18th Ave., #210
Miami, FL 33179
Phone: 305-949-0950
e-mail: bennettcjoseph@webtv.net

Vegetarian Nutrition Club of CVW

Wolverton B-3031
Boca Raton, Fl 33434
Phone: 561-487-4281
e-mail: hermjulip@earthlink.net

< **Vibrant Vegetarian Society**

P.O. Box 142
Ocala, FL 34478
Phone: 352-875-6849
e-mail: ocalaveggie@aol.com



Georgia

Black Vegetarian Society of Georgia <http://www.bvsga.org>

P.O. Box 14803
Atlanta, GA 30324-1803
Phone: 770-621-5056
e-mail: BVSGA@yahoo.com

EarthSave Atlanta

e-mail: atlanta@earthsave.org

Vegetarian Society of Georgia <http://www.vegsocietyofga.org>

P.O. Box 2164
Norcross, GA 30091
Phone: 770-662-4019
vsg@vegsocietyofga.org

Vegetarian Solutions <http://www.vegetariansolutions.org>

1189 Ashborough Drive, Suite B
Marietta, GA 30067
Phone: 770-427-7832
e-mail: info@vegetariansolutions.org



Hawaii

Gentle World <http://planet-hawaii.com/gentleworld>

P.O. Box 238
Kapa'au, HI 96755
Phone: 808-884-5551
e-mail: gentle@aloha.net

Vegetarian Society of Hawaii <http://vsh.org>

P.O. Box 23208
Honolulu, HI 96823-3208
Phone: 808-944-8344
e-mail: info@vsh.org



Illinois

Chicago Vegetarian Society <http://www.chicagovegetariansoc.org>

P.O. Box 223
Highwood, IL 60040
Phone: 312-420-VEGI
e-mail: naturalneeds@attbi.com

EarthSave Chicago <http://chicago.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 477898
Chicago, IL 60647
Phone: 708-531-8910
e-mail: chicago@earthsave.org

Go Veggie! <http://www.go-veggie.org>

P.O. box 577997
Chicago, IL 60657
Phone: 773-871-7000
e-mail: kstepkin@earthlink.net

Springfield Vegetarian Association

325 S. Illinois St.
Springfield, IL 62704
Phone: 217-787-0014

Vegetarian Education Group <http://www.sa.niu.edu/veg/home.htm>

Student Association Campus Life Building 180
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
e-mail: veg@niu.edu

Vegetarians in Motion

P.O. Box 6943
Rockford, IL 61125
Phone: 815-397-5579
e-mail: burmeister@inwave.com



Indiana

EarthSave Bloomington <http://bloomington.earthsave.org>

P.O.Box 1764
Bloomington, IN 47402-1764
Phone: 812-333-2784
e-mail: bloomington@earthsave.org

Indianapolis Vegetarian Society <http://www.indyveg.org>

2615 Greyfriar Ct., #2B
Indianapolis, IN 46220
Phone: 317-475-1174
e-mail: indyvegsociety@wildmail.com

Purdue Animal Rights & Diet Information Service (PARADISE)

4216 Tod Ave.
East Chicago, IN 46312

Vegetarian Society of Southwest Indiana

714 Jefferson Ave.

Evansville, IN 47713-2219

Phone: 812-423-6330



Iowa

Cedar Prairie Vegetarians

1710 Walnut St.

Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Phone: 319-266-9727

Vegetarian Society of Central Iowa

P.O. Box 761 RR#2

Ames, IA 50010

Phone: 515-255-0213

Vegetarians Establishing Greatest Good for Iowa's Environment (VEGGIE)

1535 29th St.

Des Moines, IA 50311

Phone: 515-255-0213



Kansas

Animal Outreach of Kansas <http://www.animaloutreach-ks.org>

P.O. Box 442454

Lawrence, KS 66044

e-mail: aok@animaloutreach-ks.org



Kentucky

EarthSave Lexington <http://lexington.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 54405

Lexington, KY 40555

Phone: 859-255-9891

e-mail: lexington@earthsave.org

EarthSave Louisville <http://louisville.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 4397

Louisville, KY 40202
Phone: 502-569-1876
e-mail: louisville@earthsave.org



Louisiana

Baton Rouge Vegetarians

P.O. Box 62
Port Allen, LA 70767
Phone: 225-925-6849 or 225-379-8609



Maine

Listen ...Unlimited "How On Earth"

P.O. Box 540
Blue Hill, ME 04614
Phone: 207-667-1025
e-mail: HowOnEarth@aol.com

Maine Animal Coalition <http://www.maineanimalcoalition.org>

P.O. Box 6683
Portland, ME 04104
Phone: 207-829-3822
e-mail: mac@maineanimalcoalition.org

Maine Vegetarian Resource Network

RR2 Box 2153
Belfast, Me 04915
Phone: 207 338-1861

Southern Maine Vegetarians

P.O. Box 7766
Portland, ME 04112
Phone: 207-773-6132



Maryland

EarthSave Baltimore

517 Talbott Ave.
Lutherville, MD 21093-4947
Phone: 410-252-3043
e-mail: baltimore@earthsave.org

EarthSave Cumberland

e-mail: cumberland@earthsave.org

Vegan Dinner Group

4110 Windridge Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21208
Phone: 410-922-0527
e-mail: sidbrav@aol.com



Massachusetts

Berkshire Vegetarian Network

123 Beach Hill Rd.
New Ashford, MA 01237
Phone: 413-458-3290
e-mail: mkbrodie@vgernet.net

Boston Vegetarian Food Festival <http://www.BostonVeg.org/foodfest>

Phone: 617-424-8846
BVS@ivu.org

Boston Vegetarian Society <http://www.BostonVeg.org/>

P.O. Box 38-1071
Cambridge, MA 02238-1071
Phone: 617-424-8846
e-mail: bvs@ivu.org

Cape Cod Vegetarians <http://www.capecodvegetarians.org>

P.O. Box 88
Harwich, MA 02645-0088
Phone: 508896-1560
ccv@capecodvegetarians.org

Citizens to End Animal Suffering & Exploitation (CEASE) <http://www.ceaseboston.org>

Box 44-0456
West Somerville, MA 02144
Phone: 617-628-9030

EarthSave Berkshire Hills

e-mail: berkshire@earthsave.org

EarthSave Boston <http://boston.earthsave.org>

Phone: 617-824-4225

e-mail: boston@earthsave.org

North Shore Vegetarians <http://www.nsvegetarian.homestead.com>

P.O. Box 3313

Beverly, MA 01915

Phone: 978-992-1260

Valley Vegetarian Society <http://www.geocities.com/valleyveg>

P.O. Box 348

Easthampton, MA 01027

Phone: 413-527-8787

e-mail: valleyveg@yahoo.com

Vegetarian Resource Center

P.O. Box 38-1068

Cambridge, MA 02238-1068

e-mail: VRC@IVU.org



Michigan

Health Force Center

2222 Hempstead Dr.

Troy, MI 48083

Lansing Area Vegetarian Society

Leslie, MI 49251

Phone: 517-589-6951

e-mail: neuteryourpets@mail.com

Vegans in Motion <http://www.all4vegan.net/vim>

30877 Lee Frank Lane

Madison Heights, MI 48071

Phone: 248-616-9676

e-mail: vim@all4vegan.net

Vegetarian Society of West Michigan

P.O. Box 485

Grand Haven, MI 49417





Minnesota

EarthSave Twin Cities <http://twincities.earthsave.org>

5025 Morgan Avenue S.
Minneapolis, MN 55419
Phone: 952-930-1205
e-mail: twincities@earthsave.org



Missouri

People for Animal Rights <http://www.parkc.org>

P.O. Box 8707
Kansas City, MO 64114
Phone: 816-767-1199

St. Louis Vegetarian Society http://www.geocities.com/STL_vegetarian

4734 Sunnyview Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63128
Phone: 314-534-2766 or 314-995-2699
e-mail: rieke@q4solutions.com

Vegetarian Club of the Ozarks

HC5 P.O. Box 587-1
Reeds Springs, MO 65737
Phone: 417-739-5718 or 417-581-9779
e-mail: vegman@hotmail.com



Montana

EarthSave Montana

1444 S. 4th St. W.
Missoula, MT 59801
Phone: 408-549-1143
missoula@earthsave.org





Nebraska

Nebraska Vegetarian Society, Omaha Chapter

P.O. Box 8604

Omaha, NE 68108

Phone: 402-422-1404 or 402-332-5806



New Jersey

Animals Need Your Kindness Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 65

West New York, NJ 07093

Central Jersey Vegetarian Group <http://cjvg.org>

P.O. Box 952

Manville, NJ 08835

Phone: 908-281-9563

Coalition for Animals, Inc.

P.O. Box 611

Somerville, NJ 08876

Phone: 908-281-0086

e-mail: njcfa@worldnet.att.net

Shore Vegetarians

Phone: 908-899-9000

Vegetarian Neighbors

P.O. Box 385

Malaga, NJ 08328

Phone: 609-694-3025

The Vegetarian Society of South Jersey <http://www.vssj.com>

P.O. Box 272

Marlton, NJ 08053

Phone: 877-999-8775

e-mail: information@VSSJ.com



New Mexico

Ruidoso Vegetarian Club

P.O Box 7907
Ruidoso, NM 88355
Phone: 505- 257-2172

Vegetarian Society of New Mexico <http://www.vsnm.org>

P.O. Box 94495
Albuquerque, NM 87199-4495
e-mail: info@vsnm.org



New York

Afro-American Vegetarian Society

P.O. Box 46 Colonial Park Station
New York, NY 10039

Association of Vegetarian Dietitians and Nutrition Educators (VEGEDINE)

3674 Cronk Road
Montour Falls, NY 14865
Phone: 607-535-6089

Big Apple Vegetarians

145 Hicks St., A-58
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Phone: 212-715-8642

Brooklyn Raw Food Group

335 78th St., D3
Brooklyn, NY 11209
Phone: 718-833-9712

Club Veg: Long Island

P.O. Box 397
Bellport, NY 11713
Phone: 631-286-1343
e-mail: longisland@clubveg.org

Club Veg: Triple Cities <http://www.clubveg.org/triplecities>

P.O. Box 625 Westview Station
Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 607-655-2993

e-mail: triplecities@clubveg.org

Corning Area Vegetarian Society

2649 Old Orchard Rd.
Corning, NY 14830-9402

EarthSave Long Island <http://li.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 292
Huntington, NY 11743
Phone: 631-421-3791
e-mail: longisland@earthsave.org

EarthSave New York City <http://nyc.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 96
New York, NY 10108
Phone: 212-696-7986
e-mail: nyc@earthsave.org

EarthSave Suffolk

e-mail: centralsuffolk@earthsave.org

Farm Sanctuary - East <http://www.farmsanctuary.org>

P.O. Box 150
Watkins Glen, NY 14891
Phone: 607-583-2225

Genesis Society <http://www.genessociety.org>

102-19 Metropolitan Ave.
Forest Hills, NY 11375
Phone: 718-544-5997
genesis.society@verizon.net

Iron Vegans Raw Food Connection (IVRFC)

150-39 75 Ave., #2A
Flushing, NY 11367
Phone: 718-263-7160

Jewish Vegetarian Society

P.O. Box 144
Hurleyville, NY 12747
Phone: 914-434-6335

KuekaVegetarian and Vegan Society

7741 Bean Station Rd.
Hammonsport, NY 14840
Phone: 607-522-3825

Mid-Hudson Vegetarian Society <http://www.mhvs.org>

47 South St.

Rhinebeck, NY 12572
Phone: 845-876-2626
e-mail: info@MHVS.org

People for Animal Rights, Inc.

P.O. Box 15358
Syracuse, NY 13215-0358
Phone: 315-488-7877

Rochester Area Vegetarian Society <http://www.enviroweb.org/ravs>

P.O. Box 20185
Rochester, NY 14602
Phone: 716-234-8750
e-mail: drveggie@aol.com

Skidmore Vegetarian Club <http://www.skidmore.edu/studentorgs/svc/svc.htm>

Skidmore College
Sarasota Springs, NY 12866
Phone: 518-580-7400 ext. 3117
e-mail: svc@skidmore.edu

Society for Vegetarian Education, Central NY

140 S. Broad St.
Norwich, NY 13815
Phone: 607-334-7848

Vegetarian Society of Chautauqua-Allegheny

701 West 8th Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
Phone: 716-664-5141

Vegetarians of the Capital Region

P.O. Box 454
New Baltimore, NY 12124-0454
Phone: 518-482-9332

VivaVeggie Society <http://www.vivavegie.org>

P.O. Box 294 Prince Street Station
New York, NY 10012
Phone: 646-424-9595 or 212-871-9304
e-mail: pamela@vivavegie.org

Women & Animals-Activist Archive/Vegetarian Activist Collective

184 Seeley St.
Brooklyn, NY 11218
Phone: 718-435-3998





North Carolina

Ashville Vegetarian Society <http://ashevillevegsociety.homestead.com>

3 Northwood Rd.

Asheville, NC 28804

Phone: 828-350-0769 or 828-254-3615

e-mail: avegsoc@aol.com **Cape Fear Vegetarian Society** <http://www.capefearveg.org>

310 N. Front St., Suite 4, #261

Wilmington, NC 28401-3909

Phone: 910-251-9261

e-mail: veg@capefearveg.org

Carolina Animal Action

P.O. Box 19242

Asheville, NC 28815

EarthSave North Carolina

nc@earthsave.org

Mecklenberg Vegetarian Association

6515 Woodland Circle Ext.

Charlotte, NC 28216

Phone: 704-399-3018

Triangle Vegetarian Society <http://www.trianglevegsociety.org>

P.O. Box 3364

Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3364

Phone: 919-254-0246

e-mail: info@trianglevegsociety.org

Vegetarians in Pitt County

5990 Beaman Old Creek Rd.

Walstonburg, NC 27888

e-mail: ncfom@aol.com

Very Vegetarian Society of Winston-Salem

620 Bellview St.

Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Phone: 336-765-2614

e-mail: barman@cs.unc.edu

Western Carolinas Vegetarian Support Group

Deer Haven Hills, Box 1460

Columbus, NC 28722

Phone: 828-863-4660

e-mail: office@g-jo.com

Western North Carolina Vegetarian Society

P.O. Box 368
Cullowhee, NC 28723



Ohio

Animals Deserve Absolute Protection Today and Tomorrow (ADAPTT)

P.O. Box 352782
Toledo, OH 43635-2782
ADAPTTToledo@yahoo.com

Central Ohio Vegetarian Society <http://www.covs.net>

Phone: 614-202-4291
e-mail: delsbread@hotmail.com

Cincinnati Vegetarian Resource Group

P.O. Box 31455
Cincinnati, OH 45231
Phone: 513-542-3808
e-mail: swimchessveg@juno.com

EarthSave Cincinnati <http://cincinnati.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 3125
Cincinnati, OH 45201-3125
Phone: 513-929-2500
e-mail: cincinnati@earthsave.org

Mercy For Animals <http://www.mercyforanimals.org>

P.O. Box 363
Columbus, OH 43216
Phone: 937-652-8258
e-mail: info@MercyForAnimals.org

Northern Ohio Wellness Connection <http://www.nowc.homestead.com>

Cleveland, Ohio
Phone: 440-232-0442
e-mail: nowc@adelphia.net

Protect Our Earth's Treasures (P.O.E.T.) <http://home.att.net/~PoetWill>

P.O. Box 10156
Columbus, OH 43201
Phone: 614-224-4598
Fax: 614-486-3768

poetwill@worldnet.att.net

Toledo Area People for Animal Rights

P.O. Box 351472

Toledo, OH 43635-1472

Phone: 419-323-9639

e-mail: par@toledopar.org

Vegetarian Advocates

P.O. Box 201791

Cleveland, OH 44120

Phone: 216-283-6702

e-mail: vegetarianadvocates@yahoo.com

Vegetarian Club of Canton <http://www.pipestone.org/vcc/index.htm>

Box 9002

Canton, OH 44711

Phone: 330-823-2158

e-mail: veggieclub@pipestone.org

Vegetarian Society of Greater Dayton Area <http://www.VegetarianSociety.org>

P.O. Box 750742

Dayton, OH 45475

e-mail: vsgda@yahoo.com

Vegetarian Society of Northern Ohio

40 E. Main St.

Norwalk, OH 44857

Phone: 419-668-1010

e-mail: mossman1@accnorwalk.com

Vegetarians of the Greater Youngstown Area

1631 Price Rd.

Youngstown, OH 44509

Phone: 330-799-7237

e-mail: naturehaven44509@hotmail.com

VegOhio.com <http://www.vegohio.com>

P.O. Box 363

Columbus, OH 43216

Phone: 937-652-8258

e-mail: info@MercyForAnimals.org



Oklahoma

Natural Foods Potluck Group

7724 Northwest 20th St.
Bethany, OK 73008
Phone: 405-789-3506

Tulsa Vegetarian Society <http://www.tulsavegetariansociety.com>

802 Kilby Dr.
Broken Arrow, OK 74014
Phone: 918-355-1258
e-mail: info@tulsavegetariansociety.com

Vegetarians of OKC

P.O. Box 720295
Norman, OK 73070-4219
Phone: 405-447-0322



Oregon

Ashland Raw Food Potlucks

801 Forest Street
Ashland, OR 97520
Phone: 541-552-0108

Corvallis Vegetarians <http://www.orst.edu/groups/osuvrn/veggies.htm>

5068 SW Technology Loop, #115
Corvallis, OR 97333
Phone: 541-753-2265

EarthSave Portland, OR/ Vancouver, WA <http://www.portland.or.earthsave.org>

13376 SW Chelsea Loop
Tigard, OR 97223
Phone: 503-968-5838
e-mail: portland@earthsave.org

Go Veg <http://www.efn.org/~goveg>

820 E. 36th Ave.
Eugene, OR 97405
Phone: 541-484-5683
e-mail: goveg@efn.org

Oregon State University Vegetarian Resource Network

<http://www.oregonstate.edu/groups/osuvrn/veggies.htm>

OSU Vegetarian Resource Network

MU East
Student Activities Center
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
Phone: 541-753-2265 or 541-737-7279

Umpqua Valley Vegetarian Society
953 Roberts Creek Rd.
Roseburg, OR 97470
Phone: 541-679-7223



Pennsylvania

Animal Advocates, Inc. <http://www.animaladvocates.net>
P.O. Box 8480
Pittsburgh, PA 15220
Phone: 412-928-9777
e-mail: webmaster@animaladvocates.net

C.A.R.E. (Compassion for Animals, Respect for the Environment)
<http://www.libertynet.org/care>
P.O. Box 847
West Chester, PA 19381
Phone: 215-836-1513
e-mail: care@libertynet.org

Club Veg <http://www.clubveg.org/philly>
Philly Chapter
P.O. Box 81
Fort Washington, PA 19034-0081
Phone: 267-481-0487
e-mail: philly@clubveg.org

EarthSave Southeast Pennsylvania
P.O. Box 5059
New Britain, PA 18901
Phone: 215-470-2709
e-mail: sepa@earthsave.org

Gettysburg Vegetarian Support Group
500 Camp Gettysburg Rd.
Gettysburg, PA 17325
Phone: 717-642-6364

GreenStreet Vegetarian Club

P.O. Box 5120
Harrisburg, PA 17110-0120
Phone: 717-233-2986
e-mail: maryhope@ezonline.net

Juanita Valley Vegetarian Society

12196 Ferguson Valley Rd.
Lewiston, PA 17044
Phone: 717-242-9566
e-mail: garygill@pa.net

Lehigh Valley Animal Rights Coalition (LV - ARK) <http://www.lvark.org>

P.O. Box 3224
Allentown, PA 18106
Phone: 610-821-9552
e-mail: pstacks@enter.net

Lehigh Vegetarians

2509 Stones Throw Rd.
Bethlehem, PA 18015
Phone: 610-709-8984
e-mail: frenkel@voicenet.com

Main Line Vegetarian Society <http://www.plantbased.org>

333 Bryn Mawr Ave.
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
Phone: 610-667-6876
e-mail: jmoswald@bellatlantic.net

Pittsburgh Vegetarian Society <http://pittsburghvegetariansociety.org>

P.O. Box 44276
Pittsburgh, PA 15205-2004
Phone: 412-734-5554
e-mail: info@pittsburghvegetariansociety.org

Vegetarian Society of Central Pennsylvania

142 Kimport Ave.
Boalsburg, PA 16827
Phone: 814-466-7440 or 814-234-3479

Vegetarians of Philadelphia

P.O. Box 24353
Philadelphia, PA 19120
Phone: 215-276-3198
e-mail: veggienews@aol.com





South Carolina

EarthSave Beaufort/Hilton Head (Lowcountry)

33 Bermuda Downs
St. Helena Island, SC 29920
Phone: 843-838-9828
e-mail: lowcountry@earthsave.org



Tennessee

EarthSave Nashville <http://nashville.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 3469
Brentwood, TN 37024-3469
Phone: 615-366-3323
e-mail: nashville@earthsave.org

Tennessee Vegetarian Society

P.O. Box 854
Knoxville, TN 37901-0854
Phone: 865-588-8343
In Chattanooga 423-267-8343
In Nashville 615-242-8343
In Memphis 901-683-8343

Vegetarian Society of East Tennessee <http://www.kornet.org/etvs>

P.O. Box 1974
Knoxville, TN 37901
Phone: 423-546-5643
e-mail: etvs@kornet.org



Texas

Black Vegetarian Society of Texas <http://www.fortworthvegetariansociety.com>

P.O. Box 833604
Richardson, TX 78083-3604
Phone: 972-988-8687 ext. 3104

Dallas Gay/Lesbian Vegetarian Society

3921 Rawlins St., Apt. H
Dallas, TX 75219
Phone: 214-521-9095
e-mail: london1558@yahoo.com

Dallas Vegetarians

19 Willow Creek Pl.
Richardson, TX 75080
Phone: 214-235-5665

Fort Worth Vegetarian Society <http://www.fortworthvegetariansociety.com>

P.O. Box 1983
Fort Worth, TX 76101
Phone: 817-656-5980 or 817-654-0424 or 817-492-4929
e-mail: steve.j.hader@gte.net

Lone Star Vegetarian Network <http://www.LSVN.org>

254 Edgewater Dr.
West Columbia, TX 77486
Phone: 409-345-5453 or 800-864-3501
e-mail: liz@lsvn.org

Lubbock Vegetarian Society

7110 W. 34th St.
Lubbock, TX 79407
Phone: 806-785-7110
e-mail: rdgage001@aol.com

San Antonio Vegetarian Society <http://home.satx.rr.com/savstx/index.html>

P.O. Box 791222
San Antonio, TX 78279-1222
Phone: 210-979-2700
e-mail: SAVS@satx.rr.com

Texas Vegetarian Society

5416 Gurley Ave.
Dallas, TX 75223
Phone: 214-823-3078
dinoffer@aol.com

Vegetarian Education Network (VegNet) <http://www.dfwnetmall.com/veg>

P.O. Box 601314
Dallas Fort Worth Airport, TX75261

Vegetarian Network of Austin <http://www.vegnetaustrin.org>

P.O. Box 49833
Austin, TX 78765

Phone: 512-896-5018 or 512-462-1430

e-mail: lizharte@yahoo.com

Vegetarian Society of Dallas Fort Worth <http://www.dfwnetmall.com/veg/vsod.htm>

2202 Proctor Dr.

Carrollton, TX 75007

Phone: 972-933-4835

e-mail: vsod@dfwnetmall.com

Vegetarian Society of El Paso <http://utminers.utep.edu/vsep>

6757 Gato Rd.

El Paso, TX 79932

Phone: 915-877-3030

e-mail: VSoEP@aol.com

The Vegetarian Society of Houston <http://www.VSHouston.org>

P.O. Box 980093

Houston, TX 77098

Phone: 713-880-1055

e-mail: vshouston@bigfoot.com



Utah

EarthSave Salt Lake City

170 St. Moritz Strasse

Park City, UT 84098

Phone: 435-647-0961

e-mail: slc@earthsave.org

LDS Vegetarians <http://www.ldsveg.org>

P.O. Box 304

Bountiful, UT 84011-0304

Phone: 801-298-9095

e-mail: LDSVeg@aol.com

LifeSave Biological Research and Education <http://www.LifeSave.org>

P.O. Box 304

Bountiful Utah 84011-0304

Phone: 801-298-9095,

Fax: 801- 294-2970

e-mail: LifeSaveIn@aol.com

Utah Vegetarian/Vegan Society Vegetarians/Vegans West <http://www.VegWest.org>

P.O. Box 304

Bountiful, UT 84011-0304
Phone: 801-298-9095
e-mail: LifeSaveIn@aol.com



Vermont

Vermont Vegetarian Society <http://www.ivu.org/vvs>

562 Pond Rd.
North Ferrisburg, VT 05473
Phone: 802-453-3945
e-mail: vvs@ivu.org



Virginia

Alive and Raw <http://www.aliveandraw.com>

867 Nance Dr.
Petersburg, VA 23803
Phone: 804-863-0635

Hampton Roads Vegetarian and Living Foods Community <http://www.ivu.org/hrv>

60 Maxwell Lane
Newport News, VA 23454-3905
Phone: 757-930-1189
e-mail: hrv@ivu.org

Vegetarian Information Group

1404 Baker St.
Charlottesville, VA 22903
Phone: 804-963-2559

Vegetarian Society of Richmond <http://www.ivu.org/vsr/index2.htm>

P.O. Box 71342
Richmond, VA 23255
Phone: 804-344-4356
e-mail: vsr@ivu.org



Washington

EarthSave Seattle <http://seattle.earthsave.org>

P.O. Box 9422

Seattle, WA 98109

Phone: 206-443-1615

e-mail: seattle@earthsave.org

The Seattle chapter has satellites in Bellevue, Olympia, Port Townsend, Snohomish County, and Tacoma.

Northwest Animal Rights Network <http://www.narn.org>

902-C NE 65th St.

Seattle, WA 98115

Office Phone: 206-525-2246

Cell Phone: 206-250-7301

e-mail: info@narn.org

Vegetarians of Washington <http://www.vegofwa.org>

P.O. Box 85847

Seattle, WA 98145-1487

Phone: 206-706-2636

e-mail: info@vegofwa.org



Wisconsin

Milwaukee Area Resources for Vegetarians

2201 E. Jarvis St.

Shorewood, WI 53211

Phone: 414-962-2703

e-mail: chuckgyver@aol.com



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Summertime in Spain is synonymous with cool, refreshing Gazpacho, a richly flavored tomato-based soup that takes a brief whirl in the blender before arriving at the table. The soup is an old tradition created by Spanish homemakers as a way to use the season's abundant tomato crop and a few crusts of day-old bread. Accompanied with fresh cucumbers, peppers, sweet onions and a nip of garlic, a bowl of this satisfying enzyme-enhanced soup serves as an invigorating light meal or a first course to a full dinner.

GAZPACHO ESPANA

- 1 1/2 C. chopped peeled cucumbers
- 4 C. chopped tomatoes
- 1 1/2 C. chopped sweet onions
- 1/2 C. chopped green bell peppers
- 2 whole cloves garlic
- 1 1/2 C. cubed whole grain bread
- 2 C. water
- 2 T. red wine vinegar
- 1 t. salt or to taste
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil

- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
- 1 medium sweet onion, chopped
- 4 slices whole wheat bread, cubed and toasted

2 T. chopped fresh parsley

1. In a large bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients. Stir well, and spoon half of the gazpacho mixture into the blender. Blend until smooth and pour into a large bowl. Blend remaining mixture until smooth and add to the bowl. Chill for several hours or serve immediately.
2. Put the remaining chopped bell peppers, cucumbers, onions, and toasted bread cubes into

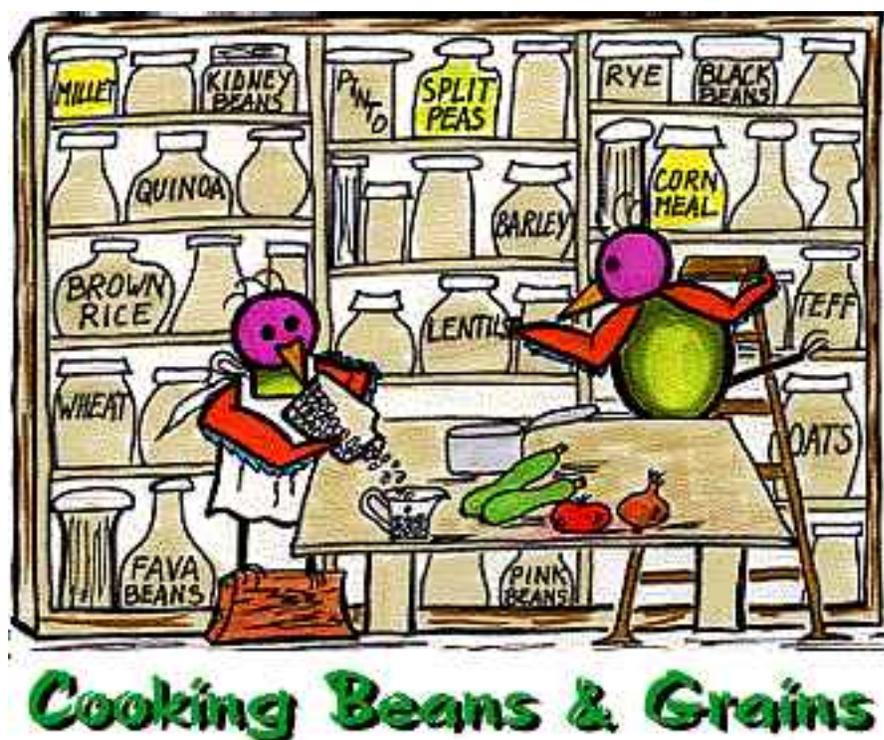
separate bowls.

3. Spoon gazpacho into serving bowls and garnish with a pinch of parsley. Serve the bowls of bell peppers, cucumbers, onions, and bread cubes at the table and allow the guests to add them as they choose. Makes 7 1/2 cups or 4 to 5 servings.

[Click here for past cookingwithzel@home.comeonin recipes](#)



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Cooking Beans & Grains

We wanted to share with you, our readers, one of our favorite cooking aids: two charts for cooking grains and beans that give handy details like proportions of beans to water, length of cooking, and the cooked yield.

Consider the charts a general guide. Some varieties of grains require a few minutes more, or possibly less than we've noted. For example, sometimes millet will cook in 15 minutes. Another variety of millet may require 20 or even 25 minutes to cook through.

Beans, too, will often appear to have a mind of their own and will defy any attempt put them on a time clock. The time variations, however, will only be a matter of a few minutes.

Newcomers to natural foods can discover how easy it is to prepare good, wholesome meals that rely on whole grains and legumes as the centerpiece of their meals. If you're an old hand in the kitchen, the charts will provide a helpful quick reference for you.

We wish to pass on to you the all of the same joys and benefits our kitchen adventures have brought to us.

GRAINS COOKING CHART

GRAIN (1 cup dry)	CUPS WATER	COOK TIME	CUPS YIELD
Amaranth	2 1/2	20 - 25 min.	2 1/2

Barley, pearled	3	50 - 60 min.	3 1/2
Barley, hulled	3	1 hr. 15 min.	3 1/2
Barley, flakes	2	30 - 40 min.	2 1/2
Buckwheat groats *	2	15 min..	2 1/2
Cornmeal (fine grind)	4 - 4 1/2	8 - 10 min.	2 1/2
Cornmeal (polenta, coarse)	4 - 4 1/2	20 - 25 min.	2 1/2
Millet, hulled	3 - 4	20 - 25 min.	3 1/2
Oat Groats	3	30 - 40 min.	3 1/2
Oat, bran	2 1/2	5 min.	2
Quinoa **	2	15 - 20 min.	2 3/4
Rice, brown basmati	2 1/2	35 - 40 min.	3
Rice, brown, long grain	2 1/2	45 - 55 min.	3
Rice, brown, short grain***	2 - 2 1/2	45 - 55 min.	3
Rice, brown, quick	1 1/4	10 min.	2
Rice, wild	3	50 - 60 min.	4
Rye, berries	3 - 4	1 hr.	3
Rye, flakes	2	10 - 15 min.	3
Spelt	3 - 4	40 - 50 min.	2 1/2
Teff ****	3	5 - 20 min.	3 1/2
Triticale	3	1 hr. 45 min.	2 1/2
Wheat, whole berries	3	2 hrs.	2 1/2
Wheat, couscous	1	5 min.	2
Wheat, cracked	2	20 - 25 min.	2 1/4
Wheat, bulgur *****	2	15 min.	2 1/2

* Buckwheat groats are available toasted and untoasted. Cooking times are the same.

** Quinoa should be well rinsed in a fine strainer for 2 - 3 minutes to remove the saponens, (a natural, protective coating which will give a bitter flavor if not rinsed off)

*** Short grain brown rice is sometimes labeled sweet, glutinous, or sticky brown rice.

****Teff can be enjoyed raw as well as cooked. Sprinkle it on salads or over cooked cereals to increase fiber and nutrition.

*****Bulgur wheat can be soaked in warm water to cover by 1" for 1 hour and used in raw salads.

BEANS AND LEGUMES COOKING CHART

BEAN (1 cup dry)	CUPS WATER	COOK TIME	CUPS YIELD
Adzuki (Aduki)	4	45 - 55 min.	3
Anasazi	2 1/2 - 3	45 - 55 min.	2 1/4
Black Beans	4	1 hr. - 1 1/2 hrs.	2 1/4
Black-eyed Peas	3	1 hr.	2
Cannellini (White Kidney Beans)	3	45 min.	2 1/2
Cranberry Bean	3	40 - 45 min.	3
Fava Beans, skins removed	3	40 - 50 min.	1 2/3
Garbanzos (Chick Peas)	4	1 - 3 hrs.	2
Great Northern Beans	3 1/2	1 1/2 hrs.	2 2/3
Green Split Peas	4	45 min.	2
Yellow Split Peas	4	1 - 1 1/2 hrs.	2
Green Peas, whole	6	1 - 2 hrs.	2
Kidney Beans	3	1 hr.	2 1/4
Lentils, brown	2 1/4	45 min. - 1 hr.	2 1/4
Lentils, green	2	30-45 min.	2
Lentils, red	3	20 - 30 min.	2-2 1/2
Lima Beans, large	4	45 - 1 hr.	2
Lima Beans, small	4	50 - 60 min.	3
Lima Beans, Christmas	4	1 hr.	2
Mung Beans	2 1/2	1 hr.	2
Navy Beans	3	45-60 min.	2 2/3
Pink Beans	3	50 - 60 min.	2 3/4
Pinto Beans	3	1 - 1/2 hrs.	2 2/3
Soybeans	4	3 - 4 hrs	3

Begin by washing beans and discarding any which are discolored or badly formed. Check for debris in the package such as small rocks or twigs and discard them. Beans cook more quickly and their digestibility benefits with soaking in water to cover by about 3" for 8 hours or overnight. Discard the soak water and cook the beans in fresh water.

Some bean cookery aficionados feel that salt and seasonings added during the cooking tends to make beans cook more slowly. Since beans require lengthy cooking, we recommend adding salt

and seasonings during the last few minutes and find they absorb flavor quite readily.

There are other factors which contribute to the length of cooking, such as, hard water and beans that have been dried for a long period of time. For some of the longer cooking beans we have found that soaking 24 hours and changing the soak water 2 or 3 times hastens the cooking time.

Many people are concerned with the reputation that beans have for causing flatulence. Starting your bean ventures with small amounts helps to increase your body's enzyme production gradually. Soaking and cooking the beans thoroughly helps to break down the complex sugars (oligosaccharides) which challenge our digestive systems.

Some herbs that help the digestion of beans can be added during the cooking process. These include bay leaf, cumin, and winter or summer savory, fresh epazote (available in Hispanic markets). Many people from India maintain the tradition of chewing on dried fennel seeds or drinking a cup of fennel tea at the end of a legume meal to aid the digestion.

QUICK-SOAK METHOD: When time is limited, you can wash and pick over beans and put them into a stock pot with water to cover by 3". Bring to a boil and boil for 10 minutes to remove toxins. Then cover and allow to soak for 1 hour. Discard soak water, add fresh water, and cook until tender.

As a general rule of thumb, 1 cup of dried beans will yield about 2 1/2 - 3 cups of cooked beans.

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Eggplant -- A Mad Apple with a Dark Liaison

Eggplant (Aubergine) at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits/Concerns
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

The delectable, yet mystical eggplant is known by many names, some quite unflattering. When Europeans first encountered the fruit, it had gained an intimidating reputation with its "mad apple" label. Even after the eggplant developed secure Mediterranean roots, it was still called *mala insana*, meaning "bad egg, mad apple, or apple of madness." Lifting its perplexing veil, the eggplant reveals its family members are to blame.

Eggplant belongs to the nightshade family that encompasses members like the poisonous Jimson weed or Datura as well as Belladonna, also poisonous and sometimes called Deadly Nightshade. The eggplant, itself, during its immature growth stage, contains toxins that can cause illness.

History

Primitive man crudely grew eggplant probably centuries before plant cultivation was developed as a scientific process. Charles B. Heiser, a botanist, surmises that of the original wild varieties some probably had spiny stems and many bitter tasting fruits that were no larger than a baseball. Before man developed the alphabet and written communication, he experimented with cultivating food plants by carefully selecting seeds from those plants that tasted less bitter and grew larger fruits.

Historians believe the eggplant may have its origins in India, but early written accounts from a 5th century Chinese record on agriculture called the *Ts'i Min Yao Shu* indicate its cultivation in China.

Southeast Asia was also considered as a possible place of the eggplant's origin because of the many varieties found there. Some botanists believe that the plant's location of most diversity may be the place of origin, but no definitive proof exists. While eggplant is considered one of Japan's five most important vegetables, the country does not claim it originated there.

Some confusion exists about the date of the Chinese references. Some give the date as 500 BCE, while others claim it was the 5th century CE. Li-Hui-Lin writes in his *Vegetables of Ancient China* that records indicate China was growing eggplant in vegetable gardens from 500 BCE; however, they may not have considered it an edible until the second century BCE. As eggplant migrated throughout Asia, round shapes as well as slender elongated fruits were developed along with a variety of colors. The Koreans, too, were enjoying eggplant since ancient times.



Eggplant arrived on the European scene when the Moors invaded Spain during the 8th century. The Italians encountered the fruit through trading with the Arabs about the 13th century. What the Europeans saw with the first arrivals of eggplant were egg-shaped fruits that were either purple, white, or yellow. Before the fruit was accepted as an edible food, it was grown only for its appealing ornamental qualities.

While the eggplant is not mentioned in classic Greek or Roman records, the fruit became quite familiar by the 15th century. Throughout the 1500's Spanish and Portuguese explorers brought the eggplant to Central and North America during their many voyages. The fruit readily adapted to its new environment and flourished in the warm climates. Along with eggplant, the Spanish introduced onions, garlic, carrots, turnips, lentils, peaches, cherries, oranges, lemons, limes, and grapefruit when they set up colonies in Mexico.

While the 16th century Spanish explorers enjoyed the new foods they encountered in the Caribbean, they also missed their familiar diet. Subsequent ships came to the Islands bringing their favorite foods, including eggplant. The thriving slave trade also brought the fruit to the Islands from Africa. Heat loving plants such as eggplant thrived and became familiar additions to the Caribbean gardens.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, English, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese explorers sailed to distant lands and discovered fruits and vegetables that they had never seen or eaten before. When they returned to their homelands with these new foods, some were readily accepted, many were not. Eggplant's nightshade connections rendered it a food of suspicious nature.

By the middle of the 1500's Southern Europe was introduced to the eggplant, but the meeting was not a friendly one at first. The strange fruits were thought to be dangerous. Eggplant's acceptance as an edible food came about a century later.

Louis XIV, King of France during the 1600s, took great interest in impressing diners at his royal table with new plant foods and was the first in France to introduce eggplant into his garden. Eggplant did not enrapture the King's guests at first. The fruit was actually discouraged at that time with the following description: "fruits as large as pears, but with bad qualities." The urban legend of the time was that eating eggplant caused fever and epilepsy.

When the first eggplants were brought to Northern Europe during the 1600s, they were not the beautiful, purple, plump one-pounders we find in today's supermarket bins. John Gerard, a 16th century horticulturist, saw a different fruit altogether and provides this description: "the fruit . . . [is] great and somewhat long, of the bignesse of a Swans egge, and sometimes much greater, of a white colour, sometimes yellow, and often browne."

The late 1700's brought the French enlightenment and changed attitudes about the fruit. Devouring grilled eggplant became a fad of the rowdy *incroyables* and the elegant *merveilleuses* who partied at France's Palais Royale.

Russia experienced growth and expansion during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. As the Russians moved into the warmer regions of the Ukraine, they were able to grow more fruits and vegetables including eggplants that probably traveled northward from India or China.

John Parkinson, an English 17th century horticulturist, mentions "that in Italy and other hot countries, where they [the fruits] come to their full maturity, and proper relish, they [the people] do eat them with more desire and pleasure than we do Cowcumbers."

Thomas Jefferson, son of a Virginia planter and third president of the United States, was an avid gardener and one who sought every opportunity to introduce new plants into his enormous collection through European seed imports during the 1700s. Eggplant was one of many exotic food plants he welcomed into his impressive, estate garden in Monticello.

Botanists of the 19th century considered the eggplant an ornamental rather than an edible. The fruit may have been introduced into American gardens in the early 1800's where it was grown as an ornamental. Slow to earn acceptance, it was not commonly eaten as a food until the late 1800's or early 1900's.

Though eggplant was little known in the average household of the mid 1800's, it was one of President Andrew Johnson's favorite foods, especially Stuffed Eggplant Spanish Style. Prepared for intimate gatherings, the eggplant was first halved and the flesh chopped. The stuffing was a combination of tomatoes, onions, breadcrumbs, and celery, and seasoned with basil butter, salt, pepper, and a touch of sugar. Before they were served, the eggplants were garnished with overlapping fresh tomato slices and a strip of broiled bacon.

With the arrival of Chinese and Italian immigrants to the U.S. during the late 1800s, new cuisines established permanent residence. Many cities, such as Detroit and New York, offered immigrant gardeners the use of vacant lots to grow their familiar vegetables like eggplants, tomatoes, and peppers.

Eggplant was developing a firm foothold in the U.S. by the early 1900's with recipes appearing in cookbooks. *Modern Cooking*, a 1904 cookbook by Marion Hartland and Christine Herrick, contains a recipe for Eggplant Stuffed with Nuts.

The Harding White House was frequently bustling with guests during large formal gatherings and small intimate parties. President Warren G. Harding, inaugurated March 4, 1921, favored Eggplant Salad West Coast Style consisting of eggplant slices that were first baked, then marinated in a mixture of mayonnaise, vinegar, lemon juice, salt, pepper, Worcestershire and chili sauces. These were presented in a lettuce-lined bowl and garnished with chopped hard-cooked eggs.

Well known for his long-time vegetarian commitment, Dublin born George Bernard Shaw enjoyed a long, healthy life before he died in 1950 at age 94. Savory Eggplant, Eggplant au Gratin, and Stuffed Eggplant were among his favorite dishes created by the playwright's cook and housekeeper, Mrs. Alice Laden.

In the U.S. today's commercial eggplant crops are grown in New Jersey, California, and Mexico. While New Jersey supplies the country with eggplants during the summer months, California and Mexico are able to ship them throughout the winter.

Varieties

The Western or Globe Eggplant, with its plump, elongated pear shape and shiny deep purple color, is the most popular variety in the United States. The flesh is creamy white and turns brownish gray when cooked. When the eggplant is fresh, its flavor is delicately sweet. This variety is ideal for stuffing, sautéing, baking, and grilling.

Japanese eggplant is long and slender, about 6 to 8 inches (15 to 20 cm) in length and about 1 1/2-inches (3.5 cm) in diameter. Its color is usually deep purple but can sometimes be a little lighter purple with greenish patches. This variety is frequently stir-fried, grilled, sautéed, and even pickled.

Chinese eggplant is also long and slender but is distinguished by its brilliant violet color and tender skin. Its flavor is sweet, making it ideal for stir-frying and grilling.

Italian Eggplant is small and round with white flesh and striking violet streaks and markings. This variety is unique because it retains its shape when cooked and is good for baking, sautéing, and grilling.

Another Italian variety, *Listada de Gandia*, is long and oval, and distinguished by its purple and white stripes. The skin may be slightly bitter but the flesh is firm and flavorful. It can be used for grilling, sautéing, baking, and stir-frying.

Thai eggplant is round and slightly larger than a ping pong ball. This variety is lavender with green stripes and has a tough skin, seedy interior, and strong flavor. Asians find this variety ideal for curries. Another variety of Thai eggplant, the Long Green, is light green, thin and long, with white flesh. The distinguishing quality is its almost seedless flesh, with a preponderance of seeds at the base, the blossom end.

The tiny Pea Eggplant, about the size of a grape, dresses in many colors: red, orange, purple or green. This variety grows in Southeast Asia, India, Afghanistan, Iran, and China and is usually made into hot pickles because of its bitter flavor.

Shaped like an egg, the White Egg variety has a mild sweetness, firm white flesh with tough, inedible skin. Because of its size and shape, it is often grilled or stuffed.

Also egg-shaped is the Garden Egg that has African origin and green skin. Another variety is the red-orange African Scarlet with the size and appearance of a tomato. This unique eggplant had an interesting sojourn. Food historian Stephen Facciola speculates that this variety may have traveled with the Jews from their home in Timbuktu, Mali, into Spain. Sometimes called the "tomatoes of the Jews of Constantinople," the African Scarlet might have journeyed to Constantinople when the Ladinos were forced out of Spain during the Inquisition.



Hailing from Puerto Rico is the Rosita, an elongated, oval eggplant with tender, lavender skin and mild white flesh.

Eggplant Cuisine

The eggplant touched many lands along its centuries-long sojourn. Everywhere it traveled, the revered fruit became infused into the cuisines -- China, India, Italy, France, the Middle East, Persia, Russia, the United States, Greece, and Turkey.

Baingan Bharta is a favorite Indian curry made by first roasting the eggplants until very soft. The flesh is scraped from the skin and combined with tomatoes, onions, and garlic, then slowly cooked with fresh and dried coriander, cumin, turmeric, and other spices until thickened and richly flavored.

Europeans like to scoop out the flesh of the eggplant leaving the uncooked rind. They roast it and mash it with salt, pepper, and butter. Then they spoon the mixture back into the rind, and bake it.

In Turkey, eggplant cubes are threaded onto shish kebab skewers along with chunks of lamb. Another beloved dish of this region is Imam Bayildi, an onion and tomato stuffed eggplant seasoned with garlic and olive oil. The country is so enamored with eggplant, the Turks claim to have 40 different ways to prepare it, including "the poor man's caviar," a roasted, mashed eggplant seasoned with onions, tomatoes, lemon juice, and salt.



Italians serve Eggplant Parmigiano as their entrée and often begin their meal with an appetizer of Caponata, a robust mixture of sautéed bite-sized eggplant cubes, capers, chopped green olives, onions, pine nuts, and bell peppers in olive oil and red wine vinegar.

In France eggplant becomes Ratatouille, a delicious vegetable stew that includes zucchini, bell peppers, onions, garlic, tomatoes, and herbal seasonings.

The Chinese cut the long, slender purple wonders into irregular shapes and stir-fry them with basil, or prepare the eggplant in a spicy Szechuan style.

A favorite of Middle Eastern cooks is Baba Ghanoush, an appetizer that combines roasted eggplant with sesame tahini, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, and salt.

Americans like to cut their eggplant into thick slices, dip them into a batter, and fry them in oil.

Slices of eggplant dipped in tempura batter and deep-fried until crisp is a familiar addition to the Japanese Tempura Plate.

Moussaka, a layered casserole featuring sliced eggplant, lamb, and béchamel sauce, is a favorite dish in Greece, Turkey, and Romania.

Many Chinese eggplant dishes originated in the Buddhist monasteries with their focus on a strict vegetarian diet.

The Spanish create *en escabeche*, a pickled eggplant made with small whole fruits that are round, and white.

Naming the Eggplant

While the familiar, large, purple variety of eggplant grown in North America may not seem suited to its name, many early varieties that developed in China, India, and Asia do resemble an egg in size, shape, and color.

Etymologist Ernest Klein in his *English Etymological Dictionary* researched eggplant's ethnic names throughout Asia and Europe to trace its journey. He began with the ancient Indian name *vatin-ganah* and traced a westward path to Persia where it was called *badin-gan*. Traveling across the Middle East, eggplant's name evolved into *al-badinjan*. When the eggplant reached Spain, its Catalan name was *alberginia*, which is very close to its present French name *aubergine*.

Henri Leclerc writes in his 1925 volume *Les Fruits de France*:

The word aubergine is amongst those which must fill with joy the souls of those philologists whose innocent mania is to claim that every term in the language derives from Sanskrit; without in the least being forced into the tortuous acrobatics which such exercises usually entail, they may elegantly and painlessly prove that *vatin gana*, the name of the aubergine in Sanskrit, gave birth to the Persian *badingen*, from which the Arabs derived *albadingen*, which via the Spanish *albadigena* became the aubergine.

Other eggplant-loving countries have given this delicacy their own special names. In India the eggplant is called *brinjal*. The Moors brought the delicious nightshade to Spain where it was called *la berenjena*, a name that evolved into *aubergine* when it reached France.

In Australia the eggplant is called eggfruit, while the West Africans call it garden fruit.

Other interesting names for the eggplant include apple-of-love, Asiatic aubergine, Guinea squash, gully bean, pea apple, pea aubergine, susumber, and terong. Still more names bestowed on the eggplant include the apple of Sodom and Jew's apple. Few foods can claim this many descriptive names.

Carolus Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, (1707-1778) was considered the father of taxonomy, the science of classification. He gave eggplant the species name *Solanum melongena*; however, there is some debate over the origin of the name. Could the name have been derived from an Arabian origin or from the Italian *melazana*? Before Linnaeus the eggplant may have been called *Mala insana*, or mad apple.



Today, the Italians call eggplant *melanzana*. In Greece it is known as *melitzana*. Both are derived from the Latin *mala insana*.

The eggplant belongs to the family of nightshade plants that also include the potato, tomato, pepper, deadly nightshade (also known as belladonna), henbane, Jimson weed, petunia, and tobacco. The genus *Solanum* is derived from the Latin *solamen*, a word translated as quieting and refers to the soporific qualities of some of the nightshade plants. Because a few of the nightshades truly are deadly, the effect of their poisonous narcotic traits may have suggested the term nightshade. The exact origin of the term nightshade is unknown, though some believed the plants to be evil and that they probably flourished at night.

Folklore and Oddities

A very old legend of Middle Eastern or Turkish origin tells about an Imam, a Moslem priest who marries a woman whose wealthy father earned his money as an olive oil merchant. As part of her dowry, she brought with her 12 jars of olive oil. For 12 nights the Imam's wife presented him with a dish of delicious eggplant cooked in olive oil, but on the thirteenth night there was no eggplant on his plate. Curious, he asked why. When she told him she had run out of olive oil, the Imam fainted. From that time on the stuffed eggplant dish made with onions, tomatoes, and olive oil became known as Imam Fainted or Imam Baldi or Imam Bayildi that means The Fainting Priest.

In another version of this story, the Imam was so overcome with the extraordinary flavor of the eggplant, that he fainted.

Because the eggplant is such an integral part of Turkish cooking, the fruit may appear in practically every course. A foreign visitor in Turkey once asked at the end of the meal, "just plain water, if you please, without eggplant . . . "

Eggplant is so integrated into the Middle Eastern cuisine, the fruit is even prominent in a Middle Eastern saying: "To dream of three aubergines is a sign of happiness."

The following quote obviously comes from an eggplant aficionado, "The only thing I like better than an eggplant burger is a chocolate-covered eggplant burger." --Anonymous

Medical Benefits and Concerns

Some plants of the nightshade family contain alkaloids, colorless, bitter organic substances such as caffeine, morphine, quinine, and strychnine that have alkaline properties and contain nitrogen. Some of the nightshade plants can be quite toxic; others contain mild toxins. Eggplant's toxins are contained in the fruit before maturity and in its leaves, and stems.

While some practitioners of Eastern medicine may consider eggplant beneficial in treating uterine tumors, they also recommend that people with loose stools avoid the fruit.



For people with arthritis and related problems of the bones and joints, some physicians suggest patients eliminate foods of the nightshade family. Because this food group contains solanine, a calcium inhibitor, consuming it can further enhance mineral imbalance and add to joint pain and swelling. Doctors suggest eliminating nightshade vegetables from the diet for six weeks, then adding them back one at a time to see if the body is able to tolerate them.

Members of the nightshade family include eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes, and all peppers with the exception of black pepper. These foods contain a toxin called solanine, an alkaloid that may cause diarrhea, heart failure, headache, and vomiting in some sensitive people.

For people who tolerate eggplant well, the medicinal benefits are many. Eating the fruit can reduce swelling, clear stagnant blood, reduce bleeding, comfort bleeding hemorrhoids, and treat

dysentery.

Eggplant's ample bioflavonoids may be beneficial in preventing strokes and hemorrhages. The fruit contains the phytochemical monoterpene, an antioxidant helpful in preventing heart disease and cancer. The National Cancer Institute has been examining vegetables of the nightshade family, especially eggplant, to see if they may inhibit the production of steroidal hormones that encourage tumor growth. Eggplant may also prevent the oxidation of cells that leads to cancer growth.

For scorpion bites, apply raw eggplant directly on the affected area. For frostbite, prepare a tea of eggplant, bring it to room temperature, and apply a compress to affected areas.

Growing

The classification for eggplant was *Solanum melanocerasum* when Linneaus named it but is now officially *Solanum melongena*. Eggplant is often considered a vegetable, but it is actually a fruit, technically a berry with a spiny cap called a calyx.

The eggplant bush, sometimes grown for its appealing ornamental qualities, reaches 2 to 3 feet (60 to 90 cm) in height and spreads out about that same diameter. Its large, purple-tinged leaves are lobed, its violet, star-shaped blossoms very striking. The fruits can be grown in containers as well as raised beds and create an attractive border when planted in a row.

The eggplant embraces so many varieties it might seem they are from different plants altogether. Some grow small and round, about the size of eggs, others grow into skinny foot-long fruits, and some are elongated, plump, and pear shaped. Colors vary as much as do the shapes. Eggplants come in creamy white, white with green or purple stripes, and white with purple blush. The most familiar eggplants in the U.S. are all purple, plump, elongated pear shaped, and weigh about a pound. In Asian countries eggplants come in various shades from deep purple, lavender, and violet to almost pink. One variety of African origin called Turkish Orange nearly resembles a tomato with its small, round shape and bright orange color.

Because eggplant has relatives in the nightshade family, its growing needs are similar to the tomato, requiring plenty of water and hot weather. Since the eggplant is heat-loving and very sensitive to cold, it may prove beneficial to start plants indoors or in a greenhouse. Grow lights may be helpful in areas with limited sunshine. Acclimate the seedlings slowly to the outdoors at about 6 to 8 weeks when the weather warms up.

In the United States where the climate is considered temperate, the eggplant is considered an annual. In tropical countries eggplant grows as a perennial.

Eggplant prefers rich soil that is sandy and moist and does poorly in clay soil that retains water at the root. If soil is not ideal, add well-composted amendments. When applying humus, make sure it is well composted. Mulch is beneficial to help retain moisture in dry climates. Keep the soil well fertilized and thoroughly weeded.

Choose varieties suited to your climate. Plant well-watered seedlings about 3 to 4 feet (.9 to 1.2 meters) apart. A healthy plant will produce about 3 to 8 eggplants, though it may offer more when conditions are ideal. To produce larger fruits, pinch off some of the terminal growth or the blossoms. When fruits appear, make sure the blossom drops off. When growing the larger varieties of eggplant, you may want to support the plant with stakes to prevent damaging the stems.

Eggplants are subject to a fungus disease that kills young plants and damages older plants. The disease may be carried in the seeds. To avoid the problem, soak the seeds in hot water, about 122 degrees F. (50 C.) for about 25 minutes before planting. To avoid wilt disease, do not put the eggplant seedlings in the same spot year after year.

To harvest, use pruning shears or scissors to cut the fruit off the stem. Because the stems are tough and woody, it's nearly impossible to tear or pull the eggplant off its stem. Wear gloves when harvesting to avoid injury from the spiny stems.

To determine when the eggplant is ready for harvesting, press the skin gently with the thumbnail. When it leaves an indentation, the fruit is mature. Eggplants can be taken off the bush when they are one-third grown. Picking the fruits young may also stimulate more eggplants to grow. Make sure the fruit has a firm, glossy appearance. If the eggplant is allowed to stay on the bush too long, the skin becomes dull looking and the flesh will become bitter and seedy.

Nutrition

While eggplant is unable to boast about its vitamin content, it does have some nutritional merits. Low in calories and sodium, eggplant can also be counted on to deliver plenty of minerals. Eggplant also contains the phytochemical monoterpene that may be helpful in preventing the growth of cancer cells.

One Cup (240 ml)

Eggplant is a great addition to a dieter's menu with only 28 calories and 3 grams of sodium for 1 cup (240 ml) of boiled drained cubes. Almost fat-free, that quantity contains 0.2 grams of fat. To keep the calories low in eggplant preparations, cook it without oil. Instead, use broth, wine, lemon juice, or vegetable juice for flavoring.

Not a major source of protein or carbohydrates, eggplant does contain 1 gram of protein and 7 grams of carbohydrates. Keep the skin on the eggplant to receive 2.5 grams of dietary fiber. Eggplant is high in soluble fiber beneficial in lowering cholesterol.

3 1/2 Ounces (100 grams)

Vitamin contents include 64 I.U. of vitamin A, 14.4 mcg of folacin, and 1.3 mg of vitamin C.

A plus on the mineral side, eggplant delivers 21.4 mg of calcium, 13.0 mg of magnesium, 248 mg of potassium, and 22 mg of phosphorous.

To boost the nutritional benefits, pair eggplant with other vegetables such as tomatoes, onions, and peppers.

Purchasing and Storage

The freshest eggplants are available at local farmers' markets. Usually the fruits and vegetables have been picked the day before and offer richer flavors. Local farmers usually plant eggplant in the spring and bring them to market from mid summer to October. Commercial eggplants are available in supermarkets throughout the year.

Look for eggplants that are shiny, plump, firm, and unwrinkled, definitive signs of freshness. The fruit should feel heavy for its size, indicating good moisture content. Eggplants that have scars or bruises on the surface indicate the flesh may be bruised and discolored inside.

One indicator of freshness is the appearance of the stem or calyx. Make sure it is green and bright in color. Beware of eggplants on sale. They may be old, bruised, soft, dull in color, and wrinkled. The older eggplants tend to have a bitter, acidic taste. Press gently with the thumb on the skin of the eggplant. If it is fresh, the eggplant skin will spring back quickly.

Bert Greene in his *Greene on Greens and Grains* quotes his first cooking instructor who said, "that over-the-hill eggplant betrayed its age precisely in the same manner as over-the-hill debutantes: slack skin and slightly puckered posteriors!"

Though some people have claimed that male eggplants have fewer seeds and can be recognized by their roundness at the base or blossom end, the truth is that eggplants have both male and female characteristics and are self-pollinating. To avoid an overly seedy eggplant, select small and medium-size fruits rather than the giant-size.

Eggplant does not have a long shelf life. Store it in a plastic bag in the refrigerator and cook it within 3 or 4 days. Since eggplants bruise easily, they should be handled carefully.

Preparation

Wash the eggplant well. Depending on your preparation, you can peel it with a vegetable peeler or paring knife or leave the peel on. Leaving the peel on increases its fiber content. However, the larger deep purple eggplants sometimes have a bitter skin along with a thin layer of bitter flesh just under the skin. Lengthy cooking, about 20 to 30 minutes, usually tames the bitterness.

When cutting the eggplant, use a steel knife to avoid blackening the delicate flesh. Carbon knives cause discoloration.

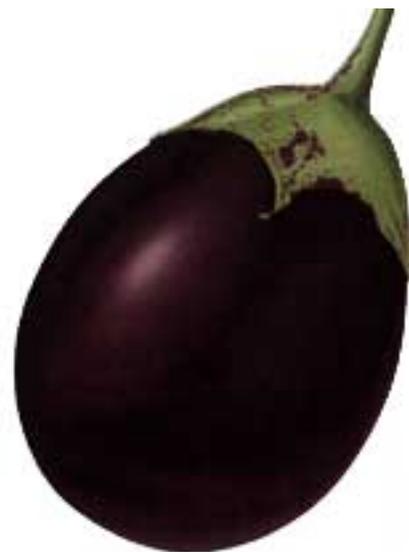
Eggplant's versatility makes it an all-purpose delectable that can be baked, sautéed, fried, grilled, boiled, and braised. Slice it lengthwise, crosswise, or at an angle. Shred it, cube it, dice it, puree it, chop it. Employ your creativity. You can stuff it, puree it and make it into a sauce, use it as a wrapper, include it in a stuffing, or employ it as a soup thickener.

Eggplant is best cut shortly before cooking. Once peeled, eggplant flesh turns brown or oxidizes quickly. Cook it soon after peeling or brush it with lemon juice.

Because the flesh of the eggplant is so porous, it has a tendency to absorb oil quickly. Avoid dipping slices into oil or they will absorb enormous quantities. Instead, brush on a light coating of oil just before cooking. To prevent overuse of oil when sautéing eggplant, add a little water to the pan along with the oil. Salting the eggplant before cooking may also prevent it from absorbing excess oil. An Australian study revealed that when the eggplant was deep-fried, a single serving had absorbed 83 grams of fat in 70 seconds.

Be sure to cook eggplant thoroughly to bring out its sweetness. Raw eggplant, especially a slightly overripe one, does not have a pleasing flavor.

Salting



Salting the eggplant to leach out the bitterness is a long-standing tradition among Middle Eastern and European cooks. This technique usually applies to the large, plump eggplants rather than the long, thin variety. The thin eggplants tend to be drier in general. Some cooks say the salting process may or may not actually release the bitterness but find that salting the eggplant prevents it from absorbing excessive amounts of oil, and releases excessive moisture.

Salting, however, is not essential. Truly fresh eggplants have a deliciously delicate sweetness and would be much better left alone.

If you prefer to salt, the salting process is easy. Slice the eggplant, sprinkle salt on each slice, and layer slices in a colander with a dish underneath to catch the moisture that drains out. Set aside for about 20 to 30 minutes, then wipe slices with a paper towel or rinse off the salt before cooking.

Another method of ridding the eggplant of acidic flavor is to blanch it for no more than one minute before the desired preparation. To blanch: bring a pot of water to boiling and drop in the eggplant. Boil for one minute and remove with a slotted spatula.

Excellent companions to eggplant cookery include olive oil, onions, tomatoes, garlic, lemon, olives, nuts, and spices like pepper, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, chili powder, and ginger.

While the focus is on brief cooking times for most vegetables to help retain their valuable vitamins, eggplant has few vitamins, and lengthy cooking does not destroy its minerals. Undercooked eggplant can taste somewhat astringent and unpleasant.

To prevent discoloring the eggplant, avoid cooking it in aluminum pans which tend to react with acidic vegetables.

RAW

According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, a division of the Center for Disease Control, eggplant should not be eaten raw because of its toxin containing solanine that may cause gastrointestinal upset.

COOKING

Roasted or Grilled: Traditional preparation throughout the Middle East is to roast the whole eggplant over a gas flame or barbecue grill, turning with tongs, until soft and blackened to give it a definitive smoky flavor. This method is a typical beginning for preparing Baba Ghanoush.

Prepare an Eggplant Caviar appetizer by cooking a large whole eggplant over gas flames, turning frequently until soft and well blackened. Cool, scoop out flesh, and season with lots of chopped onions, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and a little olive oil. For more expressive caviar, add garlic, olives, or tomato paste.

Sautéed: Another great starter is Caponata, a traditional Italian appetizer. Chop a whole-unpeeled eggplant into bite-size cubes, and sauté them in olive oil with onions and green bell peppers until soft. Add fresh tomatoes, chopped green olives, capers, and a little wine vinegar. Season to taste with salt and a pinch of sugar.

Sliced eggplant can be dipped in a breading mixture and sautéed in oil, then drained on paper towels to absorb excess oil.

Oven Roasted: Enjoy an Eggplant Sandwich that suits your palate. For a lean meal, slice a plump eggplant crosswise into thick slices, and roast it on a lightly oiled baking sheet at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 25 minutes. Slip it into a whole-wheat pita with sliced tomatoes, sweet onions, romaine lettuce, and your favorite condiments. For a more lavish treat, fry the eggplant slices in olive oil until tender and spread your pita or bread with vegan mayonnaise or an olive tapanade. Add your favorite fixings like lettuce and tomato and enjoy.



Baked: Baked eggplant is an easy cooking method that requires practically no effort. Prior to baking, be sure to pierce the eggplant in several places with a fork to prevent it from exploding in the oven. Bake at 350 F. to 375 F. (Gas Mark 4 to 5) for about an hour. When cool enough to handle, scoop out the flesh and season to taste.

Braised: Prepare a delicious Ratatouille, a well-known French vegetable stew, by sautéing eggplant chunks along with zucchini, tomatoes, onions, and garlic in olive oil. Add

tomato juice and traditional herbs and seasonings, cover the pan, and allow it to simmer about 20 minutes.

Broiling or Grilling: Slice eggplants thickly, brush with oil, and place under the broiler or directly on the barbecue grill. Watch them carefully to avoid burning. Cooking will be brief, probably no more than 5 minutes on each side. Season as desired.

A hearty Mediterranean dish with Greek origins, this entrée is pure heaven to eggplant lovers. Its exceptional flavor comes from the combination of cinnamon, tomato paste, and capers that blend into a mouthwatering specialty. Serve with steamed grains, stir-fried or steamed vegetables, and a tossed salad.

WALNUT STUFFED EGGPLANT

2 medium eggplants, about 1 lb.(450 g) each
Extra virgin olive oil

1/4 lb. (113 g) crimini or button mushrooms, sliced
1/2 lb.(225 g) tomatoes, chopped
1 C. (240 ml) chopped onions
4 large cloves garlic, minced
1 t. salt or to taste
1/2 t. cinnamon
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 t. extra virgin olive oil

2/3 C. (160 ml) walnuts
3 heaping T. capers, drained
1 6-oz. (170 g) can tomato paste

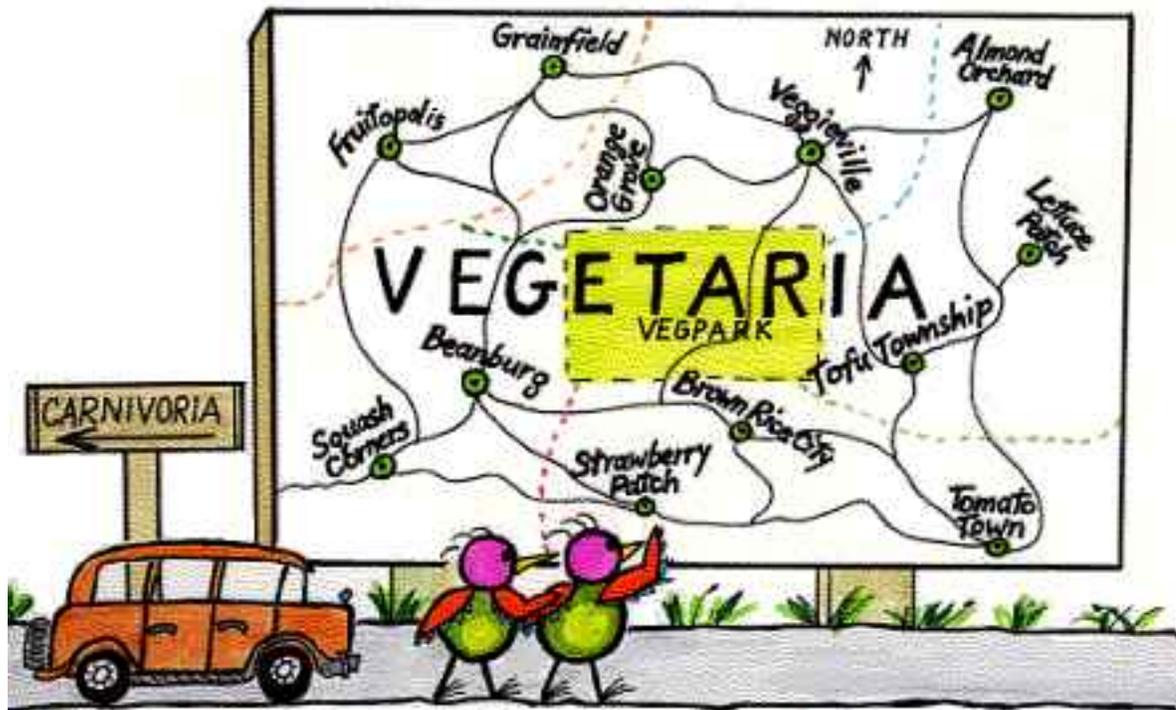
2 to 3 small tomatoes, sliced

1. Cut eggplants in half lengthwise. Leaving a 1/4-inch (.5 cm) rind, scoop out flesh using a curved serrated grapefruit knife and coarsely chop. Put chopped eggplant into a large, deep skillet or flat bottom wok.
2. Rub inside of eggplant shells with a small amount of olive oil and place them on a baking sheet. Set aside.
3. Add mushrooms, tomatoes, onions, garlic, salt, cinnamon, pepper, and olive oil to skillet, and sauté until soft but still chunky, about 5 to 10 minutes.
4. While vegetables are sautéing, place eggplant shells under the broiler, and broil 3-inches (7.5 cm) from heat source for 8 to 12 minutes, until fork tender. Watch carefully to prevent burning. Remove from heat source and set aside.
5. Coarsely grind walnuts and add to skillet along with capers and tomato paste, and mix well.
6. Fill eggplant shells with sautéed mixture and top with tomato slices. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and bake uncovered at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 25 to 35 minutes. Makes 4 hearty servings.

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The Road to Vegetaria

Pack your bags! We're heading for Vegetaria! We'll travel the winding road that brings us into a tiny country of lush green valleys overflowing with gardens of fruits and vegetables, a land where people are happy Vegetarians. Many of the ones who are not already Vegetarians are studying to be Vegetarians. Others come to visit out of curiosity and experience unexpected euphoria. Those who live in Vegetaria are friendly, energetic, and quite healthy. They frequently offer a special welcome to newcomers. Don't be surprised if several invite you to dinner.

They rarely need to visit a doctor. As a matter of fact, the doctors who live there have to moonlight as librarians or shoe repair specialists to earn a living. And since a great many of the Vegetarians enjoy reading and wear out the heels and soles of their shoes with their daily exercise regimen, doctors can do quite well in their moonlighting jobs. While in their offices, the physicians are quite busy and contented applying band-aids to children's skinned knees.

Vegetaria is not a large country but is quite diverse. While in Vegetaria you can visit many interesting villages such as Beanburg, Tofu Township, Veggieville, Fruitopolis, Brown Rice City, and Almond Orchard. There are others, too, like Squash Corners, Orange Grove, and Tomato Town, but these are much smaller, though quite interesting as well. Although each village grows a wide variety of plant-based foods to supply its residents, each has developed its own unique cuisine that has earned the village its unusual name.

You'll find the Vegetarians quite effervescent, stimulating, and creative people with a pleasant outlook on life. You'll no doubt notice they are quite exuberant when you ask about their cuisine or their favorite foods. They adore sharing recipes and will be happy to pass on their Aunt Suzie's special Veggie Patty recipe or tell you in detail how to make their own favorite Butternut Squash Soup. As a matter of fact, cooking is one of their favorite activities along with hiking, swimming, and taking music lessons.

Aside from these seemingly mundane interests, Vegetarians are highly intelligent and enjoy engaging in philosophical discussions, political bantering, and theatrical critique.

Those eager newcomers to Vegetaria are mostly from Carnivoria and want to learn how to live healthier more active lives. Because so many Carnivorians were seeking guidance, the Vegetarian leaders decided to convene and create a helpful guide with small steps that are easy to master.

You, too, can be a student in Vegetaria. Wisely, the elders of Vegetaria devised a process of simple steps to aid newcomers. Just browse through the guide below, and decide where you might like to begin your Vegetarian journey. By traveling this course you will easily learn the ways of Vegetaria in a gradual manner and be able to settle in comfortably.



MEAT ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF MEAT:

Explore the world of **TOFU**. Made from soybeans, **TOFU** is very high in protein; the firmer it is, the higher the protein content. Tofu is one of the most versatile foods on the vegetarian market.

TOFU can be prepared in many ways: sauté, steam, grill, braise, roast, bake, boil, stir-fry, deep fry, mash, blend, or process. You can make an outstanding traditional chili with textured vegetable protein (a defatted soy protein) that tastes just like the real thing. [See recipe below.](#)

Notice other meat alternatives in the deli case of your health food market. **SEITAN**, made from wheat gluten, is high in protein and can lend a meat-like texture to many dishes. **SEITAN** can be sliced, chopped, or diced and will become flavorful when cooked in a well-seasoned stir-fry, a casserole, or in a sauce.

TEMPEH is a fermented soy-bean cake that takes well to marinating and makes a hearty high-protein substitute for meat. It can be baked, broiled, chopped, shredded, sauteed, stir fried, and braised. **TEMPEH** makes an excellent addition to casseroles, pastas, stir-fries, and soups.

NUTS AND SEEDS are an excellent meat replacement, high in protein, essential fatty acids, and vitamin E. A serving of 1 1/2 ounces of nuts daily lowers the risk for heart attack and lowers total and LDL cholesterol. Make sure the **NUTS AND SEEDS** you purchase are raw, not roasted in oil and salted. Keep them refrigerated to prevent rancidity.

INSTEAD OF BEEF BROTH:

Choose a canned or packaged vegetable broth or create your own flavorful broth with a base of water. Add **TAMARI**, **BRAGG LIQUID AMINOS**, or **SOY SAUCE**, a dash of red wine, a clove of garlic, perhaps a squeeze of fresh lemon juice, and season with your favorite herbs, salt and pepper.

To turn the broth into a **GRAVY**, thicken by combining equal parts of cornstarch and water (about

2 tablespoons each for 2 cups broth) and stirring into a smooth, runny paste. Add to bubbling broth a little at a time, stirring constantly, until thickened to desired consistency.

VEGETABLE BOUILLON CUBES in imitation beef flavor are easily dissolved in boiling water to create a quick beef flavored broth. Plant-based **POWDERED BEEF FLAVORING** is also a quick method for making beef broth. Both are available in health food markets.

INSTEAD OF HAMBURGERS:

Awaken to the joy of **BOCA BURGER** in the **VEGAN ORIGINAL** flavor. It won't really fool you into believing it's beef, but it sure is an impressive substitute. Enjoy your **BOCA BURGER** on a whole-grain hamburger bun with all the usual fixings like lettuce, tomato, onion, pickles, ketchup, and mustard, and top it with a slice of vegan cheese. You won't miss the beef! **BOCA BURGERS** are made from soy protein.

Several vegetarian companies are employing **SOY PROTEIN** to create **HAMBURGER-STYLE PATTIES**. Check the frozen food section of your local market or the health food market to discover an array of vegetable patties to slip into your burger bun. Try them all to find your favorites.

INSTEAD OF HOT DOGS:

VEGETARIAN HOT DOGS made from **SOY PROTEIN** are made by several food manufacturers. Many are fat free. Explore the different brands to seek out the one you like best, tuck it into a whole-grain hot dog bun with all your favorite fixings, and enjoy a cholesterol-free meal low in saturated fat. You can even shred some **VEGAN CHEESE** into the bun for an extra special treat.

INSTEAD OF GROUND BEEF:

Choose **TEXTURED VEGETABLE PROTEIN**, often referred to as **TVP**, to make comfort foods like Sloppy Joe's or Chili without the "Carne." Almost anything you do with ground beef can be recreated with **TVP**. Simply pour boiling water or vegetable broth over the dried minced soy protein, and in 5 minutes it will be ready to cook with. Though it has no flavor of its own, **TVP** will eagerly take on any seasonings you choose. Follow package directions for exact quantities.

INSTEAD OF LUNCHMEAT:

Explore the many **SOY BASED LUNCHMEAT ALTERNATIVES**. Some are very low fat, some even fat-free. Many of these alternatives contain wheat gluten, an excellent source of protein. As an added benefit, many of these replacements have fat content as low as .5 grams per serving. You may be delighted to learn that you can find soy and gluten-based alternatives for sliced **PIZZA PEPPERONI, CANADIAN BACON, SMART BACON, FAKIN' BAKON, TURKEY, SALAMI**, and even **HAM**.

INSTEAD OF SAUSAGES:

Venture into the land of **GIMMELEAN**, a one-pound chub that comes in sausage or beef flavor. Made by LightLife, these are fat-free and can be sliced and browned lightly in one tablespoon of oil. Made from soy products and wheat gluten, the flavors and textures are superbly satisfying.

They freeze well and keep for several days in the refrigerator. For a great start to the day, use these **SAUSAGE PATTIES** for breakfast along with some whole-grain bread and fresh fruit. It's quick, delicious, and nutritious.



CHICKEN ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF CHICKEN:

Explore the multitude of frozen chicken substitutes made from **SOY PROTEIN** and **WHEAT GLUTEN**. Tastes and textures are very close to the real thing, and you benefit from a reduced intake of saturated fat and eliminate the cholesterol altogether.

Begin by choosing one night a week to prepare a dish that features **LEGUMES** as the centerpiece of your meal instead of chicken. Build a special dish by combining your beans with vegetables and your favorite seasonings or sauces, and come away from the table feeling comfortably full rather than heavy and overstuffed.

As you become more accustomed to plant-based foods, you may enjoy two or three nights or even whole days of eating completely vegetarian.

The varieties of **BEANS** are numerous and each one has a uniquely different taste and texture. Explore black beans, garbanzo beans, pinto beans, lima beans, fava beans, kidney beans, black-eyed peas, great northern beans, navy beans, yellow and green split peas, and lentils of many colors and sizes. These are only a few--the list contains many more colorful bean varieties. For more information see [Cooking Grains and Beans](#)

INSTEAD OF CHICKEN BROTH:

Purchase a **VEGETARIAN IMITATION CHICKEN BROTH** or create your own beginning with 2 or 3 cups of water. Add a dash of soy sauce, some nutritional yeast, a touch of lemon juice, and season with salt and pepper. For a creamy style broth, add some soy milk.

To turn the broth into **GRAVY**, stir together equal parts cornstarch and water (about 2 tablespoons each for 2 cups liquid) into a smooth runny paste. Add a little at a time to a bubbling broth, stirring constantly until thickened, about 1 minute.



FISH ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF FISH:

Feel like a tuna salad or tuna sandwich? Choose **TUNO**, a soy based tuna substitute that you can use just as you would real tuna. Made by Worthington, this mock tuna may be found in most health food markets, often in the aisle with the real tuna. You can add chopped vegetables and season it just as you would any tuna salad, but you won't have to worry about cholesterol--it hasn't any. [See recipe below](#)

Many Asian markets will have **FISH FLAVORED SOY PROTEIN** in the freezer section. Innovatively created to even look like the real thing, several come in slice form with nori seaweed wrapped around the outer edge to look like the skin of a fish. However, it is important to read the ingredient labels very carefully. Some of the imitation fish may contain whey or casein, a milk protein.



DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF BUTTER:

On your bread or toast

Enjoy the richness of spreading one-fourth of a ripe **AVOCADO** on your bread or toast. Historically, this is known as midshipman's butter, used in England's Royal Navy in the 1800's.

Other bread spread alternatives include **NUT BUTTERS** (peanut, almond, or cashew) or **TAHINI** (sesame seed paste available in Middle Eastern markets or health food stores.) If the **TAHINI** seems a little bland, try a light sprinkle of salt or herbs such ground cumin, just as the ancient Romans did.

Explore some tasty **TOFU SPREADS** on your whole-grain bread or crackers. These are quickly prepared in your food processor. [See recipes below](#)

FRUIT BUTTER makes a delightfully delicious spread and is easy and quick to prepare. [See recipe below](#)

HUMMOS, a tasty Middle Eastern dish made from garbanzo beans, offers yet another healthy alternative to spread over breads, toast, crackers, or even whole-grain pita bread. [See recipes below](#)

FAVA BEANS provide the base for an exceptionally tasty spread that is easily prepared in a food processor with a minimum of ingredients. [See recipe below](#)

On your sandwich

Any of the **TOFU** or **BEAN SPREADS** are ideal to spread on sandwich breads. These spreads also provide nutritious fillings along with lettuce, onions, tomatoes, pickles, or any of your favorite sandwich add-ins.

Cooking and Sautéing

Start sautéing vegetables in water, vegetable broth, wine, or create a tasty broth with a combination of water, a little soy sauce, and a dash of vinegar, lemon, or lime juice. Add your favorite herbs and seasonings and enjoy.

Switch to **EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, COLD PRESSED CANOLA OIL, or UNREFINED PEANUT OIL** in small quantities, such as one or two tablespoons, when sautéing. The less oil used, however, the better. Though these three oils mentioned are monounsaturated fats, they do contain some saturated fat, a concern when preventing heart disease.

INSTEAD OF MILK OR CREAM:

On your cereal

Switch to **SOY MILK** to top your hot or cold cereal. The many varieties of **SOY MILK** offer plenty of options.

You can also enjoy **RICE MILK, OAT MILK, and ALMOND MILK**, or make your own nut milk in just a few seconds in the blender. [See recipe below](#)

For drinking

PURIFIED WATER is nature's top choice for drinking several glasses a day.

With so many brands of **SOY MILK** available, it's easy to choose some favorites.

PURE FRUIT JUICES that are truly 100% juice provide a pleasant change, as does a cup or two of **HERBAL TEA**.

When searching for variety, choose **RICE MILK, OAT MILK, and ALMOND MILK**. Each one is light and pleasing. Be sure to read labels carefully. Some of these alternative milks are rather high in sugar.

COFFEE SUBSTITUTES offer a pleasant change and are caffeine free. Most are made from a base of roasted barley, chicory, and rye. Though they're not quite coffee, you'll find the taste pleasing and will appreciate the fact that they are made from all natural ingredients.

In your hot beverages

Switch to **SOY MILK** in your **HOT CHOCOLATE, HERBAL TEA, COFFEE SUBSTITUTES**, or other hot beverages.

Cooking

Switch to **SOY MILK** for making a tasty cream sauce. For a richer cream sauce use an unsweetened **SOY MILK** with a higher fat content. Even with its richness, it will only have half the saturated fat content as whole milk. Use light **SOY MILK** with a lower fat content for more delicately flavored cream sauces.

To create a cream sauce with a cheese flavor, add a tablespoon or two of **NUTRITIONAL YEAST FLAKES**.

Substitute **SOY MILK** when preparing creamed soups. You'll still enjoy richness in flavor while lowering your intake of saturated fat.

Salad Dressings

Make your favorite creamy salad dressings with unsweetened **SOY MILK**, or for a thicker dressing, put a package of **SOFT SILKEN TOFU** into the blender with your favorite seasonings, some lemon juice, and a touch of balsamic vinegar. [See recipe below](#)

For Baking

In place of buttermilk use 1 cup of **SOY MILK** stirred with 1 tablespoon distilled vinegar or lemon juice.

Desserts

Switch to **SOY-BASED ICE CREAM**. There are many brands offering exceptional flavors. Enjoy the exploration for your favorites. Flavorful ice cream made from rice milk is also available. Prepare your own delicious mousse or parfait with fruits and **SILKEN TOFU** or **SOY MILK**.

Yogurt

SOY BASED YOGURTS come in a myriad of delicious flavor choices. Your local health food market will most likely carry a number of different brands.

INSTEAD OF CREAM CHEESE:

Explore the local health food market for **SOY-BASED VEGAN CREAM CHEESE** alternatives. For some fresh new ideas, you may want to switch to one or more of the **SOY SPREADS** that you can prepare at home. [See recipe below](#)

INSTEAD OF SOUR CREAM:

Purchase a dairy-free, **SOY-BASED SOUR CREAM** or make your own low-fat version in just a few seconds in your food processor. Use your soy sour cream over fruit salad, as a garnish for soups, or as a base for party dips. [See recipe below](#)

INSTEAD OF DAIRY-BASED HIGH-FAT CHEESE:

Switch to a **VEGAN CHEESE** such as VeganRella, Soymage, or Follow Your Heart Cheese Alternatives. Though the textures will be a little different, you will appreciate the lower fat content and the fact that they are healthier plant-based alternatives without cholesterol.



EGG ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF EGG SALAD:

Purchase **MOCK EGG SALAD** made from tofu or make your own version from an easy basic recipe below with regular or firm tofu. Alter the seasonings to make it your original creation. [See recipe below](#)

Cooking -- Imitation Scrambled Eggs:

In place of scrambled eggs, enjoy a **TOFU SCRAMBLE** made from a simple recipe below. By eliminating eggs, you'll be avoiding added cholesterol and cutting down on your intake of saturated fat. As with any recipe, adjust flavors with seasonings that please you. [See recipe below](#)

In Baking:

Replace eggs with several options:

ENER-G EGG REPLACER is a completely vegan powdered leavening you can mix with water to use in pancakes, muffins, cakes, and cookies. Follow direction on the box for proportions.

Substitute 1 egg with any of the following:

2 to 4 tablespoons of **MASHED TOFU**

1/4 cup ripe **MASHED BANANA** or **APPLESAUCE** or **PRUNE PUREE**

1 teaspoon **GROUND FLAXSEED** mixed with 3 tablespoons water

1/8 teaspoon **BAKING POWDER** mixed with the dry ingredients



MAYONNAISE ALTERNATIVE

INSTEAD OF MAYONNAISE:

Jars of **SOY-BASED MAYONNAISE** are available in many grocery stores and definitely available in health food markets. Though they do not contain cholesterol, some may be high in fat. Read the labels and choose wisely, or make your own low-fat soy mayonnaise in just a few seconds in your food processor. [See recipe below](#)



GRAIN ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF WHITE BREAD:

Choose from the multitude of **WHOLE-GRAIN BREADS** found in health food markets. You'll be gaining healthy fiber plus more vitamins and minerals from these natural grains. Look for words like "whole grain wheat flour" and "100% whole wheat flour" rather than enriched wheat

flour. Seek out multigrain breads for their wholesome richness in flavor and benefit from the extra nutrition. When reading the nutritional labels, choose breads that have at least three grams of fiber per slice. The higher the fiber content, the better for your health.

INSTEAD OF REGULAR DURAM WHEAT PASTA:

Experiment with the many **WHOLE-GRAIN PASTAS** that may be new to you. Health food markets are the best place to discover pastas made from whole-wheat, quinoa, spelt, rice, corn, buckwheat, and barley. The whole-grain pastas have a higher fiber content as well as more vitamins and minerals. You can use these **ALTERNATIVE PASTAS** just as you would regular pasta as an entrée, in salads, and in soups such as minestrone, though you will discover that the textures have a little "tooth" to them. When using these pastas as leftovers, in most cases they will need to be rehydrated in boiling water for a minute or two before adding to hot or cold salads or entrees.

INSTEAD OF REFINED GRAIN CEREALS:

Explore the myriad of **CEREALS** made from **WHOLE GRAINS**. You'll notice the fiber content will be higher than those made from refined grains. You will also benefit from a full range of B vitamins lacking in refined grains, especially folic acid, well known for its importance in preventing birth defects such as spina bifida.

Most **HOT CEREALS** take no more than five minutes to prepare. Old-fashioned oatmeal makes a great start to the day, and it's soluble fiber helps to lower cholesterol. Health food markets have many tasty varieties of whole-grain cereals to offer such as oats, wheat, buckwheat, barley, rice, and rye. Look for the words "**100% WHOLE WHEAT**" or other grains mentioned in the ingredient list. When you read the words, "enriched wheat flour," you'll know it's not made from whole grain.

Discover an amazing variety of nutritious **WHOLE GRAIN COLD CEREALS**. Grains that may be new to you might include kamut, quinoa, amaranth, spelt, and millet. These are often combined with wheat, corn, or oats to bring you an array of tasty breakfast cereals.

INSTEAD OF WHITE RICE:

Discover the mosaic of grain varieties with a visit to a health food market. Many **WHOLE GRAINS** take no longer to cook than white rice, while some may require up to one hour.

The quick cooking ones, those that cook in 15 to 20 minutes, include **BUCKWHEAT** (or kasha), **BULGHUR**, **BARLEY FLAKES**, **TEFF**, **AMARANTH** and **QUINOA**.

BROWN RICE varieties, from long grain Basmati to the short grain glutinous rice to the unique Japonica type require about 35 to 45 minutes, as do oat groats and cracked wheat.

Long-cooking grains that require 50 to 60 minutes of cooking include **PEARL BARLEY**, **WILD RICE**, **WHEAT BERRIES**, **SPELT BERRIES**, and **RYE BERRIES**.

Comparing the nutritional data of brown rice compared to white rice, brown rice is the clear winner. Brown rice contains:

- 12% more protein
- 33% more calcium
- 67% more vitamin B2 (riboflavin)

- 5 times more vitamin B1 (thiamine)
- 3 times more vitamin B3 (niacin)
- 2 times more potassium and iron
- vitamin E (not present at all in white rice)



SNACK ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF UNHEALTHY SNACKS:

Often when we think of a snack, something very sweet or very salty comes to mind. Turn on your mind to a multitude of other possibilities.

Treat yourself to a piece **FRESH FRUIT** in season instead of unhealthy fat and calorie-loaded potato or corn chips.

RAW NUTS OR SEEDS in small quantities such as 1 1/2 ounces make a nutritious and satisfying snack. Avoid nuts that are roasted in oil--these may contain artery clogging trans fats, a fate worse than saturated fat. Pass on the salted nuts as well. It's easy to consume an excess of salt that the body cannot handle, and it disguises the rich flavor of nuts in their natural state. Dry roasted nuts and seeds are delicious with a pleasant crunchiness and an enhanced flavor that you may also enjoy.

AIR-POPPED POP CORN is an ideal snack. If you're used to heavily seasoned popped corn, this is your opportunity to discover the true taste of popped corn without the cover-ups. Many seasoned popped corn varieties contain partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats that are artery clogging.)

Commercially made cookies, cakes, and candies may contain eggs, dairy products, and partially hydrogenated oils (trans fats).

Commercially processed peanut butter may also contain added oils that have trans fats. Choose a **NATURAL PEANUT BUTTER, ALMOND BUTTER, or CASHEW BUTTER** to spread on whole-grain breads, crackers, celery, or endive leaves.

Discover the rich grain flavor and high fiber of **RYE-CRISP, RYE-VITA, or WASA** instead of commercially made crackers that may contain partially hydrogenated oils. These crackers are made from 100% whole rye.

There are always **CARROT AND CELERY STICKS**, but have you ever tasted the crisp sweetness of a **KOHLRABI** or the pungent flavor of **ANISE** in the spring when they are at their peak of flavor? Serve them sliced for an ideal finger food. Even a homegrown vine-ripened **TOMATO** makes a fabulous snack.



SUGAR ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF SUGAR:

EVAPORATED CANE JUICE is sugar that has not gone through the last step in the refining process. That step involves clarifying the sugar over animal bones to make it white. While evaporated cane juice may have an off-white color, it is totally vegan and has the same sweetness as granulated sugar.

A note of caution: It's best not to use any added sugars to excess. There is no nutritional requirement for added sugar and all are high in calories.

SUCANAT is the perfect light brown sugar alternative. Made from evaporated cane juice with molasses added, it even stays soft longer than brown sugar.

MAPLE SYRUP is an ideal sweetener and adds a delightful flavor to everything from beverages to pies. Once the container is opened, keep it refrigerated.

DEHYDRATED MAPLE SYRUP is in crystal form and makes an excellent alternative. Since it is not as sweet as granulated sugar, you may have to add a little extra.

AGAVE NECTAR is a sweetener extracted from the agave plant, a large succulent with thick fleshy leaves and spiny edges. Because of its thick liquid form, a small amount goes a long way.

BARLEY MALT is a thick honey-like substance made from barley that has gone through a soaking and drying process to extract its sugar. It's an ideal sugar substitute when you need a delicate sweetness.

BROWN RICE SYRUP is similar to barley malt in its degree of sweetness and its thick honey-like texture. Though not as sweet as granulated sugar, it's perfect for sweetening tea or other hot beverages, smoothies, blender juices, and anything to which you might add honey. You'll find this item in the health food market.

MOLASSES makes a good substitute for sugar in baking breads. Because of its pungent, distinctive flavor, it's best used in small amounts. Molasses shines as a beverage called liquid toffee. To make this treat, put 1 teaspoon of molasses into a coffee mug and fill it with boiling water. Stir it well and taste to adjust the quantity of molasses. Drink and enjoy.

DATE SUGAR or **DATE CRYSTALS** add a delicate sweetness to baked goods, in hot beverages, and in cooking.

FLORIDA CRYSTALS is a natural milled, finely ground, unrefined cane sugar that can be used for cooking and baking just like sugar.

WHOLE DATES are the perfect sweetener in smoothies, raw pie crust made from dates and finely ground nuts, breads, fruit salads, mousse desserts, and many baked desserts.



DESSERT ALTERNATIVES

INSTEAD OF COOKIES, CAKES, CANDIES:

Treat yourself to a host of delicious **FRUITS IN SEASON**. The sweetness of fresh fruits will almost always satisfy the craving for that "something sweet" while supplying healthy nutrients as well.

WINTER FRUITS include numerous varieties of crisp apples, juicy pears, and sweet tangerines. Winter is the ideal time to enjoy navel oranges, grapefruits, and pomelos.

SPRING FRUITS that offer a refreshing break include blackberries, strawberries, Valencia oranges, pears, or crisp apples.

YEAR ROUND FRUITS include, kiwis, oranges, pineapples, grapes, and many varieties of bananas such as plantains, burro, manzano, red bananas, and lady fingers.

SUMMER FRUITS include the stone fruits such as peaches, nectarines, plums, and apricots. There are also Bartlett pears, cherries, grapes, honeydews, cantaloupes, watermelon, other melons, mangoes, papayas, and pineapple.

AUTUMN FRUITS offer a delightful selection of persimmons, pomegranates, and navel oranges that come to market by October.

Sweeter still are **DRIED FRUITS**. Practically every kind of fruit has been dried and packaged for sale. Look for those that have not been preserved with sulphur dioxide or added sugar. Because dried fruits are very high in concentrated sugar, enjoy them in small servings.

Fresh or frozen **FRUIT SMOOTHIES** and parfaits sweetened with dates are cooling and refreshing treats, especially in the summer. Blend with soy milk or soft silken tofu for a rich, yet healthful, high-protein dessert. [See recipe below](#)

SOY-BASED ICE CREAM comes in a variety of enjoyable flavors. Be sure to read the labels to avoid any unwanted ingredients.

VEGAN COOKIES are quickly finding a place in health food markets. Look for them in specialty stores and request them from your local supermarket chain.

HONEY For vegan alternatives to honey see **SUGAR ALTERNATIVES**.

Recipe Section



MEAT ALTERNATIVE

OLD-FASHIONED CHILI

For a crowd of 50 you'll need to quadruple this recipe. I make two pots of mild chili for the timid folk and two pots of the spicier variety for the stouthearted souls. This is an easy, hearty, and delicious chili. The flavor is even better when it's made a day ahead. For those who find the crock pot handy, this recipe is portioned for a 6-quart crock pot. For a 4-quart size, cut the recipe by 1/3.

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 large green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 C. TVP (480 ml) (Textured vegetable protein)
- 14 oz. (360 ml + 2 T.) boiling water
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) water
- 2 T. red miso (fermented soy bean paste)
- 1 28-oz. (792 g) can whole tomatoes, chopped
- 1 6-oz. (169 g) can tomato paste
- 3 1-lb. (1.361 kg) cans kidney beans, with juice
- 1 1-lb. (453 g) can chili beans, with juice
- 1 1/2 t. salt or to taste
- 3 T. + 1 t. chili powder
- 1 T. + 2 t. ground cumin
- 2 1/2 t. ground coriander
- 1 T. tamari
- 1/4 - 1/2 t. crushed red pepper*

Toppings

- 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 1 bunch cilantro, finely chopped
 - 1 1-lb. (453 g) can whole kernel corn, drained
 - 1 8-oz. (226 g) can black olives, chopped
1. Add onion, bell pepper, and extra virgin olive oil to a large skillet and sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a 10 or 12-quart (10 to 12 liter) stockpot.
 2. Combine TVP and boiling water in a bowl and set aside for 5 to 10 minutes to soften TVP. Add to stockpot.
 3. Stir miso into water until dissolved and add to stockpot.
 4. Add whole tomatoes, tomato paste, kidney beans, chili beans, salt, chili powder, cumin,

tamari, and crushed red pepper to stockpot and simmer 30 - 40 minutes to blend flavors. (If using a crockpot, follow above directions for the onions, bell pepper, and TVP. Then transfer them to crockpot along with remaining ingredients and cook on low for 6 - 8 hours.)

5. Put each of the toppings into a separate bowl, and serve at the table. Spoon the chili into individual soup bowls, and serve with a hearty soup spoon. Serves 8 chili lovers.

*This makes a mild chili. For a zestier bite, use 1 t. crushed red pepper flakes and add 1 T. chili powder and 1 T. red miso.

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FISH ALTERNATIVE

TUNO SALAD SUPREME

If there's one thing a busy person appreciates it's simplicity, versatility, and great flavor all packed into one dish. Below are some the variations for this recipe. No doubt you'll add your own creations to this list.

- 1 12-oz. (340 g) can Tuno (an imitation tuna made by Worthington Foods)
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) chopped onion (sweet onion preferred)
- 1 small sweet apple, cored and diced
- 1/2 of a 14-oz. (396 g) can water-packed artichoke hearts, diced
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pine nuts
- 4 or 5 coarsely ground hazelnuts
- 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) soy mayonnaise
- Fresh lime juice to taste

Put all ingredients into one bowl and mix until mayonnaise is well incorporated. Makes about 4 servings.

VARIATIONS:

Sandwich filling with sprouts, lettuce, tomato, and avocado. Makes enough for 4 sandwiches.

Stuffing for celery

Stuffing for tomato or roasted bell pepper

Canape -- Heap a small portion on top of scored cucumber slices

Put a dollop into endive leaves

Fill hollowed cherry tomatoes

Centerpiece for a luncheon salad on a base of shredded romaine lettuce and surrounded by a variety of cooked and raw veggies

Whole wheat tortillas lined with curly leaf lettuce, stuffed with tuno filling, and rolled into a wrap
Lettuce wrap -- fill romaine lettuce leaves with tuno salad, chopped tomatoes, sliced green olives, shredded jicama and roll up
Add to a potato salad for a unique flavor and extra nutrition

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DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

CHEEZY TOFU SPREAD

Tofu spreads can be adaptive enough to appear at the breakfast table as a spread on toast or come to the lunch table as a sandwich filling. For a tasty sandwich, apply the spread generously to both pieces of bread and add sliced tomato, onion, cucumber, avocado, lettuce, and sprouts. Herbs such as basil and mint leaves can add a pungent touch to a sandwich.

Tasty tofu spreads also make ideal fillings for lasagne, stuffed pasta shells, and even stuffed eggplant roll-ups.

- 1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu
- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 2 T. + 1 t. nutritional yeast
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) raw pine nuts
- 3 T. unsweetened soy milk
- 2 t. lemon juice
- 1 1/2 t. red mizo

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth.
2. Turn off machine, scrape down sides, and process until all ingredients are well blended.
Makes 2 cups (480 ml.)

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WINTER FRUIT BUTTER

Many people serve raisins and nuts to sprinkle over cooked cereals for breakfast. For a pleasant change try some Winter Fruit Butter as a cereal topping and discover a pleasant addition to your morning starter. Other ways to enjoy the fruit butter are to spread it on toast or use it in place of jam on a peanut butter sandwich.

- 2 C. (480 ml) dried apple slices

12 pitted prunes
18 pitted dates
1 C. (240 ml) water
1/2 C. (120 ml) water

1. Combine apple slices, prunes, dates and the 1 C. (240 ml) water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam for 10 minutes.
2. Transfer the cooked fruits, liquid and all, to a food processor. Add the remaining water a little at a time while pureeing to desired consistency.
3. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator where it will keep for up to 2 weeks. Serves 6 as a cereal topping and many more as a spread.

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CREAMY TOFU DILL SPREAD

Here's a recipe you can always count on for its ability to wear many hats. Because of its versatility you can use it on toast, crackers, as a sandwich spread, as a party spread, or to stuff veggies such as celery or mushrooms. Try it over baked potatoes, or as a topping on polenta.

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu or Chinese extra firm tofu*
2 large garlic cloves, whole
1/2 + 1/8 t. ground coriander
1/2 + 1/8 t. dill weed
1 1/4 + 1/8 t. salt
1/2 t. onion powder
1/4 t. ground black pepper
1 T. lemon juice

1. Drain and rinse tofu. Put tofu into food processor.
2. Add remaining ingredients to processor and process until well blended. Using a firm spatula, turn out into an attractive serving bowl. Refrigerate or serve immediately. Keeps well for 1 week. Makes about 2 cups (480 ml.)
3. Firm tofu works also but will be a much looser consistency.

Below are the measurements for a 14 oz. (396 g) package of tofu.

14 oz. (396 g) extra firm or firm tofu
2 large garlic cloves, whole
1/2 t. ground coriander
1/2 t. dill weed
1 1/4 t. salt
1/4 t. onion powder
1/8 t. ground black pepper
2 t. lemon juice

2 t. rice vinegar

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HUMMOS

1 1-lb. (453 g) can garbanzo beans, drained, liquid reserved

1/4 t. + 1/8 t. salt

3 T. lemon juice

1/4 C. (60 ml) sesame seed paste (tahini),

1 clove garlic, crushed

Paprika

1 t. olive oil (optional)

1. Put beans plus 7 T. reserved garbanzo liquid into food processor.
2. Add remaining ingredients and process to a smooth, thick sauce, adding more garbanzo liquid if a thinner consistency is desired. Makes about 1 3/4 cups (415 ml.)
3. To serve, spoon into a serving bowl and sprinkle with paprika and olive oil. Serve as an appetizer with plenty of whole-wheat pita cut into wedges. If desired, you can crisp the pita wedges in the oven at 200 (Gas Mark 1/4) for about 30 minutes.

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FAVA BEAN DIP

Not only is this recipe a flavorful dip, it's a hearty sandwich filling layered with tomatoes, onions, avocados and sprouts. If you're in the mood for a tasty snack, spread the dip on whole grain crackers and enjoy.

1 1-lb. (453 g) can cooked fava beans, drained, bean liquid reserved

1/2 t. salt

1/4 t. ground cumin

1 large clove garlic, whole, peeled

1/3 C. (80 ml) chopped onions

1 T. reserved bean liquid

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime

2 T. finely chopped raw pistachios

1 T. coarsely chopped raw pistachios

1. Put fava beans, salt, cumin, garlic, onions, bean liquid, olive oil, and lemon juice into a food processor and process until completely pureed and smooth.
2. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl and add finely chopped pistachios. Mix well to distribute the pistachios evenly.

3. Dampen a paper napkin slightly and wipe the edges of the bowl to create a fresh appearance. To garnish, sprinkle the 1 T. chopped pistachios over the top.
4. Serve with raw veggies and toasted pita attractively presented in separate baskets. Makes 1 1/4 cups (300 ml.)

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ALMOND MILK

1/2 C. (80 ml) raw whole almonds
2 1/2 C. (600 ml) water
Pinch salt
2 pitted dates

1. Combine almonds, water, salt, and dates in the blender
2. Start blender on slow speed for a few seconds, then switch to high speed, blending until smooth.
3. Strain milk through a fine mesh strainer to remove almond pulp, and set pulp aside. Makes 2 1/2 (600 ml) cups almond milk.

NOTE: The quantity of water above will create a thick, creamy milk. For other purposes, thin with water to desired consistency. For a sweeter milk, simply add more dates, Sucanat, or maple syrup. To make almond cream, reduce the quantity of water to 1 cup.

USING THE PULP: Combine with 1 t. Florida crystals and 1/4 t. almond extract. Mix well and use as a topping over fruit desserts.

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NEW MOON SILK DRESSING

Homemade salad dressing is easy when you have a few basic pantry items on hand. One standard item to keep on hand is silken tofu.

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pistachios
1 12-oz. (340 g) box soft silken tofu
1/2 C. (120 ml) canola oil
1/4 C. (60 ml) apple cider vinegar
1/4 C. (60 ml) fresh lemon juice (1 fresh lemon)
1/4 C. (60 ml) water
1 medium clove garlic, minced
1 1/4 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper
2 t. Bragg Liquid Aminos

1. Using an electric coffee grinder, grind pistachios to a powder in two batches. Transfer to a blender.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the blender, and blend to a smooth creamy consistency,

beginning on slow speed for a few seconds before switching to high. Makes 3 cups (720 ml.)

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TOFU SOUR CREAM

A dollop of sour cream is the ideal enhancement to entrees, soups, appetizers, and casseroles. This recipe also makes the perfect base for creating a variety of dips.

1 12.3-oz. (340 g) pkg. extra firm silken tofu
1/4 t. salt
4 T. lemon juice
1/2 t. rice vinegar

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth and creamy. Makes 1 1/2 cups (360 ml.)

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EGG ALTERNATIVES

EGG SALAD LOOK-ALIKE

Here's a sandwich filling that closely resembles real egg salad, but without the high fat content and cholesterol. This look-alike filling has pleasing flavor and texture to make a hearty sandwich.

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu
2 large cloves garlic, whole
3/4 t. ground coriander
3/4 t. dried dill weed
1 1/2 t. salt
1/2 t. onion powder
1/4 t. ground black pepper
1/2 t. turmeric
1/4 t. dry mustard
1 T. lemon juice
1 T. rice vinegar
1/2 medium sweet onion, diced, or 2 to 3 green onions including tops, minced
1 T. fresh parsley, minced (optional)

1 stalk celery, diced

1. Cut open the package of tofu, and drain out all liquid. Rinse tofu with cool water and drain. Put tofu into a food processor.
2. Add garlic, coriander, dill weed, salt, onion powder, pepper, turmeric, dry mustard, lemon juice, and rice vinegar to the processor and process until well blended. Transfer to a medium-size bowl.
3. Add onions, parsley, and celery to bowl and mix well. Adjust seasonings to taste.
4. Refrigerate leftovers. Keeps well for 1 week. Makes about 3 cups (720 ml.)

NOTE: This spread should be creamy. If mixture is a little dry add 1 to 2 t. water and process until smooth.

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AUNT NETTIE'S TOFU SCRAMBLE

1/2 small red bell pepper, chopped

1/2 yellow red bell pepper, chopped

1/2 green bell pepper, chopped

2 small tomatoes, chopped

1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced lengthwise

1 small red or white rose potato, coarsely shredded

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 14-oz. (396 g) pkg. firm tofu, crumbled

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pumpkin seeds

1. Combine peppers, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, and olive oil in a large, deep skillet or flat bottom wok. Saute over high heat for 3 to 4 minutes.
2. Drain and rinse tofu. Crumble by squeezing the tofu through the fingers. Add to skillet along with pumpkin seeds and toss to heat through.
3. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with whole grain bread topped with nut butter or fruit spread and some fresh fruit. Makes 4 servings.

VARIATIONS:

Squeeze some lemon juice over the top.

Add 1/2 to 1 teaspoon curry powder.

Add 1 or 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast.

Add 1/2 to 1 teaspoon each ground cumin and chili powder.

Add 1/2 cup (120 ml) shredded vegan cheese, either mozzarella or cheddar flavor.

Add 1/4 cup (60 ml) natural sesame seeds in place of pumpkin seeds

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MAYONNAISE ALTERNATIVE

SUPER SOY MAYONNAISE

An ideal mayonnaise substitute, soy makes it a healthier sandwich spread, dressing for Tuno Salad, and dipping sauce for steamed artichokes.

- 1/2 C. (120 ml) ground cashews*
- 1 medium clove garlic
- 1 12.3-oz. (450 g) pkg. firm silken tofu
- 1 1/4 t. salt
- 1 1/4 t. lemon juice
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Makes 1 1/2 cups (355 ml.)

*Grind in an electric coffee grinder

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DESSERT ALTERNATIVE

BANANA DATE SMOOTHIE

- 1/4 C. (50 ml) raw cashews
- 1 1/4 C. (300 ml) soymilk
- 1 12.3 oz. (450 g) box extra firm lite silken tofu
- 1 ripe banana, cut into chunks
- 10 pitted dates
- 1/4 t. vanilla
- 2 T. maple syrup

Combine all ingredients in a blender and process on high speed until smooth, about 1 to 2 minutes.

Makes about 3 cups (720 ml) or 2 or 3 servings.

Can be made a few hours ahead and chilled for a refreshing year-round treat.

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VegParadise Media Reviews

Vegetarians in Paradise presents our VegParadise Media Reviews with information about documentary films, recordings and other media of interest to vegetarians.

[Remembering Bob, a Film by Maria Brenner \(August 2004\).](#)

[Wild Edible Basics: Foraging with the Wildman Series by Wildman Steve Brill \(June 2004\).](#)

[Wellspring Healthy Cooking: Your Instructional Guide to Restored Health by Lifestyle Center of America \(March 2004\).](#)

[Del 'N' Coluch Cook Meatfree for Family and Friends produced by Del Golden and Linda Colucci \(June 2003\).](#)

[Eating, a documentary film by Mike Anderson \(February 2003\).](#)

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The Great Produce Hunt



On a warm, Sunday morning in June the two birds of paradise, Zel and Reuben, donned their colorful VIP tee shirts and headed west along famous Sunset Boulevard toward the Pacific Ocean. Their investigative mission was to learn about the fresh produce available at the Pacific Palisades Certified Farmers' Market and share their findings with their readers.

R: The question we have often asked is, "What makes a farmers' market successful?" The Pacific Palisades Farmers' Market obviously has the answers. The community shows that it wants this market and will support it.

Z: To that you might add that it has an interesting mix of farmers who can supply a wide assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables with a representative amount of organic selections. Then there's location. It's in the heart of the community's downtown shopping area.

R: They couldn't close down the main street like many small communities because there would be howling protest if they tried to barricade Sunset Boulevard, a main artery to the Pacific Ocean. Instead they blocked off Swarthmore Avenue between Sunset and Monument Street.

Z: Swarthmore is a wide, tree-lined street with retail businesses on both sides. Along the sidewalks, attractive lightposts display colorful hanging baskets filled with seasonal plants. The Sunday brunch crowd was sipping coffee and enjoying a European-style brunch at sidewalk tables facing the local cafes. The setting added a distinct charm to the farmers' market shopping experience.

R: Don't forget publicity. In this case the publicity mission has already been accomplished. Approaching its fourth year of operation, this market is well-known. By noon on that day the aisles were quite crowded with people of all ages who were eager to take home the fresh produce.

Z: And, of course, good management is also important to a market's success. Jennifer McColm, owner/manager has demonstrated her ability to create a thriving Sunday shopping experience for the community. Standing in for her that day was Assistant Manager Fernando Oxa, who has been an employee of Skyline Flowers for the last six years.

R: Skyline Flowers, a fixture at many markets, always offers unique



bouquets of cut flowers. The surprise that morning was to find bunches of peonies in brilliant magenta, shocking pink, and perky white. Peonies don't often make an appearance at farmers' markets because of their short 1 1/2-month growing season.

Z: I was attracted by the uniquely shaped cockscombs, also known as celosia, that resemble the configuration of the human brain. They showed both yellow and crimson ones along with intensely colored orange-pink gerbera daisies, variegated lisianthus, gladiolus, and pale green Bells of Ireland.

R: Adjacent to Skyline was the greenery of Began in the Garden from Idylwild. Cheryl Conover sells fresh organic herbs in pots. Patrons could choose from 6 varieties of thyme, 3 kinds of basil, sweet herbal geraniums, and *frais de bois*, commonly known as mountain strawberries. Her most unusual item was the Garden to Grow, a bench formed from willow. The seat of the bench was transformed into an herb garden containing approximately ten varieties of plants including basil, cosmos, sage, and mint. For \$100 we could have one constructed for our yard.

Z: Two other flower growers offered colorful bouquets. Westland Flowers from Santa Barbara had some gorgeous matsutomias, purple flowers with yellow centers and green petals surrounding each of the blossoms. All Seasons from Nipomo featured large sprays of snapdragons and gladiolus as well as long stalks of white-throated purple delphiniums.

R: But enough of this flowery talk. We need to turn our focus to edible fruits and vegetables, especially since we are in the middle of the prime time stone fruit season. Cherries, plums, peaches, nectarines, pluots, and apriums were available from many vendors.

Z: Sunday shoppers could buy cherries from Rosendahl Farms from Caruthers, Scattaglia Farms from Littlerock, Smith Orchards from Linden, Zuckerman Farms from Stockton, Remick Farms from Reedley, Andres Jones from Orosi, and Winner Circle Farms from Palmdale. Rosendahl, Scattaglia, Andres Jones, and Smith Farms had both Ranier and Bing cherries while Zuckerman Farms and Winner Circle offered only Rainier that day. Remick Farms sold only Bing cherries.

R: Lesley Miller of Winner Circle explained that they grow the purple Lapin cherries "that are often passed off as Bings." Lesley and her husband farm five acres on which they grow 19 varieties of peaches, nectarines, apriums, and pluots. They describe themselves as "high density growers" with their trees planted very close together. At the conclusion of our brief conversation, Lesley extended an invitation to visit their Palmdale farm.



Z: I counted seven farmers offering stone fruits other than cherries. Three of them, Rosendahl, Boujikian Farm from Fresno, and Remick had those cute flattened donut peaches along with

plums, white and yellow peaches, and white and yellow nectarines.

R: The market offered an amazing selection of fresh vegetables that day. One standout for us was Givens Farms, an organic grower from Goleta. Their tables displayed three kinds of beans: wax, French, and string along with yellow and red cherry tomatoes and vine-ripe tomatoes. Other offerings included dinosaur kale, rainbow chard, green and yellow zucchini, red and green cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, sweet onions, leeks, anise, lemons, Seascape and Camarosa strawberries, celery, beets, pickling and regular cucumbers, lemon cucumbers, and both orange and yellow carrots.

Z: I can't forget those yellow carrots. They're the sweetest carrots I have ever tasted. I could kick myself because I only bought one bunch. The beets, cauliflower, and green cabbage all were flavorful additions to our dinners the following week.



R: Another standout for us that day was Suncoast Farms from Lompoc that exhibited some of the largest artichokes we've ever seen. The one we bought measured 5 inches in diameter, weighed 1 1/3 pounds, and had a stem measuring 6 inches in length. They also showed asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower, and stunning purple artichoke blossoms.

Z: Memorable to me was our brief talk with Kris Olsen of Cahuilla Farms from Aguanga. He specializes in organic heirloom vegetables and fruits, including 20 varieties of heirloom tomatoes. We met him at the Malibu Market where he was selling his heirloom tomatoes, garlic, onions, melons, and squash. I still remember the taste of that heirloom pineapple tomato we purchased from him that day. On this Sunday he was offering three varieties of soft-neck garlic: Italian Lars, Italian Sweet, and Polish, a unique garlic with a strong spicy flavor. He had narrowed his garlic types down from the 40 he had grown previously. Other items on his table that day were dinosaur and Russian kale, Blue Hubbard squash, Vidalia sweet onions, scallions, and French lavender.

R: Z Ranch, an organic grower from Santa Barbara, had the melon market all to themselves that day. Their assortment included watermelons, cantaloupes, and the delicious Galia melons. Other items offered were okra, tomatoes, small round Indian eggplant, and both yellow and white corn.

Z: Pudwill Farms from Nipomo did not have the berry business to themselves, but they displayed raspberries in three colors: red, orange, and yellow. They also marketed blueberries, blackberries, and figs.

R: Zuckerman Farms of Stockton and Weiser Farms from Bakersfield dominated the potato scene, both offering great selections. Weiser created attractive signs so that patrons like us would know the names of each of the potatoes. As we walked in front of their tables, we spotted Huckleberry Red, Russian Banana, Red Thumb, French Fingerlings, Rose Finn Apple Fingerlings, Russian Banana Pee-Wees, All Blue Pee-Wees, and Santina (like Yukon Gold). Most people don't realize there are so many varieties of potatoes available for purchase and that farmers' markets are at the



forefront in introducing new varieties. Rounding out Weiser's totally organic offerings were garlic, sweet onions, and 3 types of lettuce: oak leaf, curly green, and red leaf.

R: One great discovery that day was Gourmet Soup Kitchen that prepares 16 varieties of vegetarian soups, 13 of them vegan. Partners Amy Caplan and Daniel Tout have been selling their frozen soups at farmers' markets for the last 3 1/2 years. The soups are packaged in 16-oz. plastic containers and provide two servings. They sample three of their soups at the market each week. We savored the Indian Yellow Curry, Old World Lentil, and Country Vegetable, giving them all a hearty recommendation.

Z: Walking back to our car, we paused to hear the soft, mellow sounds of the Season of Us, a flute and guitar duo. We remembered hearing them at other farmers' markets. We were amazed when we looked at our watches; we had spent over 3 hours exploring the market.

Pacific Palisades Certified Farmers' Market
Swarthmore Ave. between Sunset Blvd. and Monument St.
Sundays 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Phone: 818-591-8161

Reviewed July 2004

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Using Your Bean Articles

For background information on VOW, see <http://www.vegparadise.com/bean1.html>

Articles

[Using Your Bean #9 - VOW and Hubster Visit Future Dream Spot, July 2004](#)

[Using Your Bean #8 - The Dawn Phenomenon and Chile Verde, June 2004](#)

[Using Your Bean #7 - Forbidden Rice Meets the Purple Bean, May 2004](#)

[Using Your Bean #6 - Lowering Cholesterol and Triglycerides on a Vegan Diet, April 2004](#)

[Using Your Bean #5 - Seeking Relief from Pain, March 2004](#)

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Welcome to the revised version of Airline Vegetarian Meals!

Last Updated April 7, 2004

NOTE: Some airlines are offering meals for sale instead of including them in the fare. We will try to keep up with these changes and post the information when we receive it.

In addition to our chart indicating vegetarian choices, we include your comments, positive and negative, about your dining experiences on different airlines. The comments are grouped by airlines below the chart. Sign your comment, even though each report includes only your initials and the date received. Send your comments to vegparadise@vegparadise.com

Traveling by air and ordering a vegetarian meal can be like playing Russian roulette. You simply don't know what will appear on your tray. Vegetarians who are planning to travel by

plane may wonder what vegetarian food choices are available. We hope to provide answers by sharing information we have received from the airlines.

If you are traveling on an airline we have not listed, email us, and we will do our best to obtain the information you need. Our goal is to provide helpful resources that continue to enrich your vegetarian path.

*Indicates reader comments about this airline are provided below the following chart:

AIRLINE	CONTACT	VEGETARIAN MEALS
Aer Lingus	1-800-474-7424 Reservations www.aerlingus.ie Customer Relations 538 Broadhollow Road Melville, NY 11747	To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegan (fresh Fruits & Vegetables) Pure Vegetarian Non-dairy
* Air Canada	1-888-247-2262 Reservations www.aircanada.ca Customer Solutions P.O. Box 6400239 5512 Fourth Street NW Calgary, Alberta T2K6J0 Canada	Vegetarian, Indian Style Cuisine Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Lacto-ovo (Muslim or Hindu)
Air France	1-800-237-2747 Reservations www.airfrance.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 459002 Sunrise, Florida 33345-9002	To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Non-dairy Vegetarian Asian Vegetarian (Indian with Dairy)

<p>* Air New Zealand</p>	<p>1-800-262-1234 Reservations www.airnewzealand.com Customer Relations 1960 E. Grand Ave., Suite 900 El Segundo, CA 90245</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Raw Vegetarian Asian Vegetarian with Dairy Asian Vegetarian without Dairy</p>
<p>* Alaska Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-252-7522 Reservations www.alaska-air.com Consumer Affairs P.O. Box 68900 Seattle, WA 98168-0900</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Strict Vegetarian with Dairy Fruit Plate (may contain Dairy) No vegan</p>
<p>Alitalia</p>	<p>1-800-223-5730 Reservations www.alitalia.com Customer Relations 666 Fifth Avenue, 7th Floor New York, NY 10103</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Vegetarian with Dairy Hindu Vegetarian with Dairy Raw Vegetarian Fruit Plate</p>

<p>* Aloha Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-367-5250 Reservations www.alohaairlines.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 30028 Honolulu, HI 96820</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Meals served only on flights between Hawaii and the mainland. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Non-dairy can be requested Fruit Plate</p>
<p>* American Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-433-7300 Reservations www.aa.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 619612 MD2400 DFW Airport, Texas 75261-9612</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Hindu Non-dairy</p>
<p>America West Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-235-9292 Reservations www.americawest.com Customer Relations 4000 E. Sky Harbor Blvd. Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>	<p>No longer offers meals in coach Vegan meals in first class only</p>
<p>Austrian Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-843-0002 Reservations www.austrianair.com Customer Relations Fax: 718-670-8619 customerrelations@aua.com</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Regular Vegetarian (Vegan) Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Asian Vegetarian (Indian style spices, may contain Dairy) Fruit Plate</p>

<p>British Airways</p>	<p>1-800-247-9297 Reservations www.britishairways.com Customer Relations Bulova Corporate Center 75-20 Astoria Blvd. Jackson Heights, NY 11370</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Asian Vegetarian (Indian with Dairy) Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Fruit Platter Non-dairy</p>
<p>Cathay Pacific</p>	<p>1-800-233-2742 Reservations in Canada 1-800-268-6868 www.cathay-usa.com in Canada www.cathay.ca Customer Relations 300 Continental Blvd., Suite 500 El Segundo, CA 90245</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. <u>Western Vegetarian</u> Strict Vegetarian Non-dairy Regular Vegetarian Lacto-ovo <u>Oriental Vegetarian (may contain Dairy)</u> <u>Indian Vegetarian</u> Strict Vegetarian (Non-dairy) Regular Lacto Vegetarian <u>Fruit Plate</u></p>
<p>China Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-227-5118 Reservations www.china-airlines.com Marketing Department 6053 West Century Blvd., Suite 800 Los Angeles, CA 90045</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Western Vegetarian with Dairy Western Vegetarian without Dairy Fruit Plate Hindu (may contain Dairy)</p>

		Asian (may contain Dairy)
*Continental Airlines	<p>1-800-525-0280 Reservations www.continental.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 4607 Houston, TX 77210</p>	No special meals
Delta Air Lines	<p>1-800-221-1212 Reservations www.delta.com Customer Care P.O. Box 20980 Atlanta, GA 30320</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Pure Vegetarian Non-dairy)</p> <p>Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Fruit Plate</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian (may contain Eggs and Dairy)</p> <p>Hindu Vegetarian (may contain Dairy)</p>
El Al Israel	<p>1-800-223-6700 Reservations www.elal.co.il Public Relations 120 W. 45th St. New York, NY 10031</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>All meals are kosher Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian, Non-dairy</p> <p>Fruit Platter</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy)</p>

<p>Finnair</p>	<p>1-800-950-5000 Reservations www.finnair.com Customer Relations 228 E. 45th St. New York, NY 10017</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian with Dairy Vegetarian Non-dairy Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy but no Eggs or Tofu)</p>
<p>Hawaiian Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-367-5320 Reservations www.hawaiianair.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 30008 Honolulu, HI 96820</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Snack Non-dairy</p>
<p>Horizon Air, Inc.</p>	<p>1-800-547-9308 Reservations www.horizonair.com Consumer Relations P.O. Box 68900 Seattle, WA 98168</p>	<p>Longer flights offer meals Vegetarian Fruit Plate</p>
<p>Iberia Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-772-4642 Reservations www.iberia.com Customer Relations 6100 Blue Lagoon Drive, Suite 200 Miami, FL 33126</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Non-dairy Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy) Fruit Plate</p>

<p>Japan Airlines (JAL)</p>	<p>1-800-525-3663 Reservations www.japanair.com Customer Relations 300 Continental Blvd., Suite 401 El Segundo, CA 90245</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian without Dairy Vegetarian with Dairy and Eggs Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy)</p>
<p>jet Blue Airways</p>	<p>1-800-538-2583 Reservations www.jetblue.com Customer Relations P.O. Box 17435 Salt Lake City, UT 84117</p>	<p>No meals served Serves Beverages and Snacks Bring your own Food</p>
<p>*KLM Royal Dutch Airlines</p>	<p>Offices together with Northwest Airlines 1-800-225-2525 Reservations www.klm.com Northwest Airlines Customer Relations P.O Box 1908 Minot, ND 58702</p>	<p>Some flights may not include meal service, but offer meals for sale. Vegetarian options may or may not be available To order your special meal when available, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Dairy Vegetarian Non-dairy Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy) Fruit Plate (First Class or International Flights only)</p>

<p>Korean Air</p>	<p>1-800-438-5000 Reservations www.koreanair.com Public Relations, 1813 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90057</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Western Vegetarian Lacto-ovo</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian Dairy but no Eggs</p> <p>Strict Vegetarian No Dairy or Root Vegetables</p> <p>Indian/Hindu Vegetarian Dairy but no Eggs</p> <p>Fruit Plate</p>
<p>*Lufthansa</p>	<p>1-800-645-3880 Reservations www.lufthansa.com Customer Relations 1640 Hempstead Turnpike East Meadow, NY 11554</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Western Vegetarian Lacto-ovo</p> <p>Western Vegan</p> <p>Raw Vegetarian (fresh whole foods)</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian, Indian Style seasonings, with Dairy</p> <p>Fruit Plate(raw fresh whole fruit)</p>

<p>Malaysia Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-552-9264 Reservations www.malaysiaairlines.com Marketing Department 100 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Suite 400 El Segundo, CA 90245</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Asian Vegetarian Non-dairy Indian Vegetarian Non-dairy Western Vegetarian Non-dairy Fruit Plate</p>
<p>Mexicana Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-531-7921 Reservations www.mexicana.com Customer Service 6151 W. Century Blvd., Suite 1124 Los Angeles, CA 90045-9990</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian with Dairy Vegetarian Non-dairy</p>
<p>Northwest Airlines</p>	<p>Offices together with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines 1-800-225-2525 Reservations www.nwa.com Customer Relations P.O Box 1908 Minot, ND 58702</p>	<p>Some flights may not include meal service, but offer meals for sale. Vegetarian options may or may not be available To order your special meal when available, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Dairy Vegetarian Non-dairy Asian Vegetarian (may contain Dairy) Fruit Plate (First Class or International Flights only)</p>

<p>Philippine Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-435-9725 Reservations www.philippineairlines.com Customer Service 447 Sutter St. San Francisco, CA 94108</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegetarian Strict (no Dairy or Eggs) Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Vegetarian (spicy, includes Dairy) Vegetarian Raw Fruit Plate</p>
<p>*Qantas Airways</p>	<p>1-800-227-4500 Reservations www.qantas.com Customer Relations 6080 Center Dr., Suite 400 Los Angeles, CA 90045</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Vegan Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Vegetarian (Indian Style with Eggs and Dairy) Strict Indian Vegetarian (Non-dairy with No Root Vegetables) Fruit Platter</p>
<p>SAS Scandinavian Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-221-2350 Reservations www.scandinavian.net Customer Relations P.O. Box 689 Lyndhurst, NJ 07071</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance. Strict Vegetarian Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Vegetarian Raw Vegetarian Asian (Spicy, may have Eggs and Dairy)</p>

<p>*Singapore Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-742-3333 Reservations www.singaporeair.com Customer Relations 5670 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1800 Los Angeles, CA 90036</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 24 hours in advance.</p> <p>Raw Vegetarian Oriental Vegetarian (with or without Dairy) Indian Vegetarian (with or without Dairy) Strict Western Vegetarian Non-Dairy Vegetarian Lacto-Ovo</p>
<p>South African Airways</p>	<p>1-800-722-9675 Reservations www.flysaa.com Customer Relations 515 E.Las Olas Blvd. Sixteenth Floor Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Vegetarian Raw Vegetarian Non-dairy Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Vegetarian, Spicy (may contain Dairy)</p>
<p>*Swiss International</p>	<p>1-877-359-7947 Reservations www.swiss.com Customer Relations 41 Pine Lawn Road Melville, NY 11747</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Pure Vegetarian (Vegan) Asian Indian Vegetarian, Spicy (may contain dairy)</p>

<p>*United Airlines</p>	<p>1-800-241-6522 Reservations www.ual.com Customer Relations P.O.Box 66100 Chicago, IL 60666</p>	<p>To order your special meal, call 48 hours in advance.</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian (includes Dairy and Eggs)</p> <p>Indian Vegetarian (may include Root Vegetables, Dairy, and Eggs)</p> <p>Hindu Vegan with Tofu</p> <p>Vegetarian with Dairy</p> <p>Vegetarian Non-dairy</p> <p>Fruit Plate</p>
<p>*US Airways</p>	<p>1-800-428-4322 Reservations www.usairways.com Corporate Communications 2345 Crystal Drive Arlington, VA 22227</p>	<p>Some flights may not include meal service, but offer meals for sale, cash only.</p> <p>Vegetarian options may or may not be available</p> <p>To order your special meal (if available), call 48hours in advance.</p> <p>Vegetarian, Non-dairy</p> <p>Vegetarian, Lacto-ovo</p> <p>Asian Vegetarian, (Non diary)</p> <p>Fruit plate</p>

Virgin Atlantic	1-800-862-8621 Reservations www.virgin-atlantic.com Customer Relations 747 Belden Ave. Norwalk, CT 06850	Can accommodate any food needs with 48 hours notice Vegan Vegetarian Lacto-ovo Asian Vegetarian Non-Dairy (on flights to Asia) Jain Vegetarian (Vegan with no Root Vegetables)
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Air Canada

Our Air Canada strict vegetarian lunch was absolutely fabulous. The salad had iceberg lettuce with shredded carrots and red cabbage and came with a packet of oil and vinegar dressing on the side. The attractive entrée had rice noodles, a generous portion of sliced seitan, julienne red and green bell peppers, Chinese mushroom slices, diced carrots and whole snap peas in a slightly sweet Asian sauce. Dessert was a fresh fruit salad of honeydew, cantaloupe, and pineapple. The meal came with a white roll and canola margarine that was non-hydrogenated. For airline food it was outstanding!

Z.A. 7-15-03

Hello, I wanted to offer some feedback on my experience flying with Air Canada. I made my reservations on cheaptickets.com and specified my vegan meal preference. When it came time for meal service, the flight attendant came to my seat to make sure she knew where I was and that I had requested the special meal. I actually got served first, rather than the customary last! The meal was palatable but unspectacular, as airline food tends to be. It also came with margarine on the side, which was not vegan but easy enough not to eat. The return leg was just as pleasant. The entrees consisted of vegetables with rice and tofu on the way there and a rice noodle/vegetable/seitan (I think?) dish on the way back. I was very pleased that they were so accommodating.

A.D. 7-1-03

Air New Zealand

My daughters travelled from New Zealand to Europe via LA recently on Air New Zealand, and

their vege meals were just crap. While everybody else was having toast and peaches, they got pasta for breakfast. The next flight, for breakfast they were given Weetabix while the rest of the plane got muesli ! Can you believe that! I know that some airlines provide good vege meals; let's have the facts not the claims.

J.B. 3-18-02

Alaska Airlines

We recently traveled on Alaska Airlines and were pleasantly surprised with the attention given to freshness and attractive presentation of the vegan meal we were served in economy class.

We had a perky salad with baby lettuces, sliced cucumber, and a large wedge of tomato. The savory dressing was Kraft Classics, Golden Italian. The package said non-dairy.

The entrée consisted of white rice on one side with stir-fried, tender crisp broccoli, carrots, onion, sliced celery, squares of red and green bell pepper, and several chunks of extra firm browned tofu. Though the dish was delicately seasoned the vegetables were truly tasty, an obvious sign of freshness.

The fruit salad dessert had chunks of fresh honeydew, watermelon, and pineapple. Not only were they sweet, but they had that freshness that told us they had been prepared shortly before take-off.

The meal was served with an attractive roll. Though not whole grain, it was covered with a variety of seeds including flax, sesame, millet, and sunflower with a few sunflower seeds inside as well. The margarine was cholesterol free and made by Canola Harvest. We were not sure if it was dairy-free and didn't use it.

Z.A. 6-15-02

Aloha Airlines

Flying in the morning, Aloha offered their omnivore patrons a meat lovers' breakfast. The vegetarian option I received consisted of a warm dish of sautéed vegetables (red and yellow peppers, onions, a tiny amount of mushroom and what may have been potato, floating in a copious amount of oil, along side of something that might have been couscous or quinoa, also totally immersed in oil. Accompanying the warm dish was a small bowl of cantaloupe and honeydew melon with a single strawberry. Instead of a roll, there was a Now & Zen vegan cinnamon roll, quite stale and hard as a hockey puck, along with a small container of margarine. The warm meal must have had over 75% of its calories from fat. Unless you plan to go on immediately to the frozen tundra, bring your own food.

N.P. 10-4-02

American Airlines

I just wanted to share my experience with the Airline food. I flew on American Airlines from LAX to BOS on Jan. 16, 2002. I made my reservations on Orbitz. I indicated on the form that I wanted a non-dairy vegetarian meal for both legs. When I checked in, I inquired about my special meal. I was informed that it wasn't entered. However, the counter person entered the information for the return trip. The trip to Boston was early in the morning so they were serving light entrees. I was able to find something I could eat on the tray given to me. In fact, the options they had were a fruit tray or some meat thing. The options for lunch was pleasantly surprising.

The return leg was pleasant as well. When I got my vegan meal, I read the ingredients to double check that it was okay. I was very happy with my entree. It wasn't the best, but at least I know that I wasn't stuck with the heartburn that everyone else was going to get. My neighbor had something that looked interesting. It was interestingly disgusting. I observed how people devoured their food without batting an eye. I don't even think they wanted to taste their food. Anyway, my experience was pleasant.

The airlines still have room for improvement though. When they start serving tempeh, then I will know that they are making a strong effort to accommodate strict vegetarians.

E. S. 5-13-02

Continental Airlines

Continental, SAN to EWR round-trip, 2001. Great meals overall, not bland like most institutional food. Only screw-up was that with breakfast, I got served milk, which was easy enough to overcome by eating it as dry cereal and returning the milk for some juice.

J.H.R. 6-2-02

We ordered "Strict Vegetarian" meals on Continental. The first meal was French toast. I assumed that they had made this without eggs until I realized they had also served cream cheese with the bagel. On the return flight the meal was Amy's shepherds pie, which was great, but the salad dressing was made with buttermilk.

B.M.R. 8-24-02

On a couple of domestic connections, I was served an icy cold amy's burrito. Yikes! The first time I ate it as is... The second time I asked if it could be heated up a bit... The attendant did the best she could --she stuck it on top of the coffee machine for a few minutes. The slight improvement was much appreciated. No big deal, just kind of odd to eat a 1/2-frozen burrito.

I.G. 2-3-03

Delta Airlines

The Delta flight vegan meal from Salt Lake City to Anchorage, Alaska was a joke. Our vegan

meals were served on board while all the other passengers reached into a bin for their blue sack meals as they were boarding. My husband unwrapped his sandwich first and discovered a turkey sandwich, a packet of Hellman's mayonnaise, potato chips, and an apple. Mine was also a sandwich with a white bun filled with 2 thick slices of barely cooked yellow squash and a dried up piece of lettuce. In addition there was a little box of raisins, an apple, and a bag of potato chips. They held the plane to try to get a replacement for my husband's meal but were not able to, so I shared my "fabulous sandwich."

Z.A. 9-7-03

I flew on Delta December 24 and had a marvelous vegan breakfast , a mixed grains cooked cereal (I don't know what it was, except delicious), fruit, and a roll. Dinner on January 10 was also vegan and very good , beyond steamed veggies, only I can't remember what it was.

S.C. 2-3-03

Hawaiian Airlines

Having flown cross country on other airlines and received rye crackers and an apple for dinner (*cough* Northwest *cough*), I felt the need to publicly praise Hawaiian Air for their Vegetarian/Vegan meal. This is one of the few non-veggie places I've **ever** eaten that understands vegetarian does not = bland.

Lunch on the way to the islands from the West Coast was a mildly spicy Thai inspired dish of mixed vegetables and rice, salad, and a roll. The return dinner meal comprised of couscous and sweet potato with mixed veggies, taro roll, salad, and a sweet-and-sour sauce to scatter where desired. Not only were both meals kind to the palate, but they were **hot**. Kudos to Hawaiian! I have no qualms about leaving backup food behind. S.B. 4-29-03

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines

I flew from the US to Bahrain, an 18-hour flight, on KLM, Royal Dutch Airlines. Before leaving I specified vegetarian meals, with no dairy or egg. My first meal was steamed mixed vegetables with rice, not bad, and a dish of fresh mixed fruit (cantaloupe, grapes, honeydew). Following that I had pancakes for breakfast with fried potatoes, and a mixed fresh fruit dish. For lunch I had an Indian style lunch with seasoned rice, a coconut flavored curry with seasoned beans, a side order of a sweetened rice mixed with some type of seeds and raisins, and a strawberry pudding and a dish of fresh fruit for dessert.

The meal was very good. Following that, I was given a vegetable burrito for dinner. It was fresh made with sautéed onions, beans, corn. It was very good. Along the way, the stewardesses were constantly offering me orange juice, water, coffee, etc. All together, the food was great. I wouldn't mind eating it all the time.

D.P. 7-23-02

Lufthansa

I wanted to share my experience when I flew Luftansa from the US to Barcelona: The entrées were marked vegan, and they tasted decent, but the rest of the tray was questionable, even though it was different than everyone else's tray. They could not confirm what was in unlabeled items (like the croissant) and there was a vegetable spread on the tray that had dairy in it, even though I requested a vegan meal. As usual with most veg airline meals, no dessert, but they had nice fresh fruit. My suggestion is to bring snacks--the meals are small and not 100% vegan!

N. L. 5-14-02

Qantas

Since I live in Oz and the flying kangaroo is my airline it has seemed natural for me to travel red and white whenever I move around for business and/or pleasure. Qantas vegan used to consist of a nice platter or hot meal that you could actually tell someone you had enjoyed. However, change has hit our national airline, and it's not been for the better.

Recently I flew to Sydney from Brisbane I was tossed a small cardbox inside which were a piece of honeydew melon, a piece of rockmelon (cantaloupe) a piece of watermelon and a small fruit juice. The sparcity was a disappointment, but all three pieces of food were completely tasteless. I would have preferred a packet of mixed nuts or rice crackers.

Speaking to other vegans, I find they have experienced the same level of poor food on Qantas of late. Vegetarian and omnivore friends also say they have found the lowering in food standards a reason to try other airlines in the future.

W.W. 7-22-02

Singapore Airlines

The vegetarian meals on Singapore Airlines are very nice. They have a multitude of types depending on your needs. I had the "Asian style" meals and really enjoyed them. The breakfast was particularly appealing, although it was rice and so on due to being Asian style. They use a lot of TVP in their meals. I had a pleasant experience with their vegetarian meals; not good enough to order in a restaurant but certainly better than the average airline meal.

K. B. 4-7-04

Swiss International (formerly SwissAir)

I flew Swiss Air to and from Rome, Italy this past two weeks and was pleasantly surprised with my lacto-ovo meal. The entrees were varied: seitan in a creamy caper sauce with quinoa, seasoned

spinach and peppers and fresh grapes, couscous with fresh vegetables. Everything was very flavorful, albeit small portions. I would recommend this food highly.

I requested the lacto-ovo option when I made my seat reservation and never had to double check with the flight staff. I was searched out on the plane and given my meals. On the flight home, I was served my meal before the general population.

N.B. 6-3-02

United Airlines

I noticed the info. you provide on airlines, and wanted to send you some comments. My sister is an employee of United Airlines, so we travel very frequently. The meals we order are the fruit plate or the vegetarian-no dairy. It is very "hit or miss" with the vegetarian-no dairy option; the questionable part of the meal is usually the accompaniments.

The entree tends to always be OK, and it usually has a sticker on it, identifying it as a special meal. Sometimes everything else is fine too - vegan spread, bread with no eggs, and even a Now & Zen vegan cookie.

But other times, they give you the special entree and then serve you the same sides that everyone else on the plane is eating - dressing that isn't cool, a questionable roll, and a dessert with eggs in it.

My husband and I just took a trip to the east coast last week. On the way there, our entire meal was vegan. On the way back, we were served "Milano" cookies from Pepperidge Farms. They contain milk fat, nonfat milk, whole eggs, and egg whites.

The best tip I can offer is to "beware of the sides!"

M. S . 5-1-02

I have to say that the meal I just received from United was useless to say the least: a container of mineral water, applesauce, a "now and zen" vegan cookie (good) and an old banana.

I used to get a better meal with them. I'll always bring my own from now on.

The other airlines I've flown lately do a much better job.

W.T. 8-26-02

About 10 years ago, while traveling on United from NY to Italy my (pre-requested) vegetarian meal arrived with a sticker on the lid that read: " This meal was prepared to meet your special dietary needs" How's that for irony? Thought you might enjoy it! K.C. 4-19-03

US Airways

US Airlines, PHL to SAN round-trip+, 2000. Unlike M.S., who apparently knew this was called the "vegetarian-no dairy" meal, I was led to believe it was full-vegan by all three of their employees with whom I either ordered or confirmed that the meal would be vegan. (Also, I had to call to get this option; perhaps they've updated their site, but this was not a clickable option at their website).

However, like M.S., I noted that several items weren't vegan, and some even contained dairy. I wrote a letter to the company and their reply was a \$50 rebate; I used it for a one-way ticket between the same two cities, figuring it was way more valuable than any meal, so US Air simply wasn't benefitting from that purchase at all, whereupon I received (of course ;-) ANOTHER meal that was half-dairy.

That was, and will be, my last trip ever on US Air. And so my best tip is that if a company misrepresents itself, complain, and if they don't offer a vegan option but are at least honest about it, go with a competitive airline that does cater to vegans.

For most vegans, the whole point of being vegan is that no one should use animals, and therefore taking out the profit-incentive is paramount, and since they profit even more when vegans pay them for the cost of a non-vegan meal, but then ALSO allow them to keep and re-serve those meals, I simply don't do business with those who aren't willing to give me a fair deal (i.e., either the meals that I paid for within their all-inclusive charge or an option to bring my own meals for a reduced price), because they'll never offer vegan meals if we don't give them an incentive to (i.e. going with a vegan-friendly competitor and not letting them profit off vegans by simply counting on us to return the meals to them).

J.H.R. 6-2-02

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Wondering what to prepare for that special holiday meal? Vegetarians in Paradise has assembled all of our past holiday celebrations into one convenient index. Just click on any of the items below for unique menus and recipes for those festive occasions. And there's more to come!

Super Bowl Sunday

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To assist our readers in finding past articles Vegetarians in Paradise presents this index so that visitors to this site can proceed directly to the archives without reading the current articles.

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Let your computer do the walking as we list people, groups, businesses, and organizations that serve the Los Angeles County vegetarian community. To assist you in discovering local resources, we have categorized the entries. If you prefer to go directly to a particular category, click on it below.

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Editors' Note: This list will only prove valuable if it includes your suggestions and input. Let us know what you would like us to include. E-mail us at

vegparadise@vegparadise.com



Catering

Many of our readers have asked us to recommend chefs who will do on-site catering for large and small gatherings. In addition to the caterers listed below, most of the vegetarian restaurants listed in our Los Angeles Restaurants will gladly prepare foods for your special occasions for take-out.

BIAN <http://hometown.aol.com/deskbox/BIAN2.html>

Mark Cleveland, personal chef located in the Laguna Beach area, services clients all over Southern California. He specializes in vegetarian and vegan cuisine as well as state of the art raw dishes. Having lived and worked in Japan, Mark blends distinctly Asian influences into his unique cuisine. He is available for event catering as well as intimate dinner parties.

Phone: 949-360-5952

e-mail: BIANdes@aol.com

Chay Kakoi <http://www.chay-kakoi.com>

Elizabeth Borges specializes in catering ethnic teas from around the world. Choose from British afternoon tea, Congfu Chinese tea, Moroccan tea as well as others. Along with a long list of hot or iced, herbal or caffeinated teas, she serves vegetarian, vegan, and kosher soups, salads, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts.

Phone: 310-314-0946

FAX: 310-314-0917

e-mail: teas@chay-kakoi.com

Food in the Nude

Raw food chef Anna Masteller, offers raw, organic, vegan catering, classes, and personal chef service. She caters at yoga retreats, ecological events, and workshops as well as weddings and family reunions. Beautiful meals made with love and creativity. Un-cooking classes feature a variety of cuisines including Mexican, Mediterranean, Asian, Italian, and holiday feasts. Personal chefs come to your location and set you up with life enhancing, vital foods to feed your body and soul.

Phone: 831-601-8881

foodinthenude@rawfoods.com or Annazac@aol.com

Good Mood Food Deli and Juice Bar <http://www.goodmoodfood.com>

Ursula Horaitis, raw foods chef, specializes in European gourmet style raw foods and prepares meals for lunches, brunches, dinners, snacks, picnics, and parties. Though her cafe is located in Orange County she will gladly cater in Los Angeles. She also prepares meals for take out and home delivery.

5930 Warner Ave.

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Phone: 714-377-2028 or 714-840-8042

Loren Cooper

With 15 years of cooking experience behind him, Loren has found his culinary niche in New Orleans French and Creole cuisine for vegans and vegetarians. However, his versatility is has allowed him to create a host of international veg dishes like Southwest Tamale, Ratatouille, and pasta-less Veggie Lasagne.

Phone: 626-398-1811

Cell Phone: 213-840-0376

Messob

An Ethiopian restaurant that prepares tasty and wholesome vegetarian platters to dining-in customers also provides complete catering for on-site parties of any size. Specializes in legume and vegetable ragouts and a unique bread made from teff, a grain indigenous to Ethiopia.

Phone: 323-938-8827

One Love Vegan Catering

Chef Rasheed specializes in catering complete meals of tasty vegan and raw foods for all occasions, large or small. For two consecutive years he catered the thanksgiving dinner for 500 guests at the Gentle Barn when it was still located in the Valley.

Phone: 818-262-7033

e-mail: Rasheed@aol.com

RAWvolution <http://www.rawvolution.com>

Raw food chef Matt Amsden creates an amazing six-course meal for all special events and can customize for special needs. His services are available throughout Los Angeles, Orange County, and the San Fernando Valley. Matt studied raw food cuisine with Chef Juliano. Matt also operates a home delivery service of freshly prepared raw foods.

Phone: 310-721-4222

Seed Live Cuisine <http://www.seedcuisine.com>

Devin Whatley and Executive Chef Lesa Carlson prepare state of the art raw cuisine with original recipes for an exceptional variety foods for all occasions. Home delivered meals with no-waste packaging is their specialty. Some of their gourmet preparations are offered at more than 10 farmers' markets in the Los Angeles Area and available in Whole Foods Markets. Their latest in eco-friendly packaging is a plastic made from completely biodegradable corn

Phone: 310-454-0547

e-mail: catering@seedcuisine.com

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Cooking Classes & Personal Chefs

LOS ANGELES AND ORANGE COUNTIES

Abbie Jaye

Teaches raw food preparation classes in the Los Angeles area. Abbie is a graduate of the Living Light Culinary Arts Institute. She has a special place in her repertoire for desserts.

Phone: 818-430-3436

Eatvegan@aol.com

Alicia Ojeda

An experienced chef and cooking instructor, Alicia studied raw food preparation at the Living Light Culinary Arts Institute where she is a staff member. Now residing in the Los Angeles area, she teaches classes in raw food preparation with tips and techniques that students can apply to whole foods meals in their own kitchen. Formerly Executive Chef at Dreamworks Studios for Bon Appetit Management Company, Alicia is available for teaching, catering, and restaurant consultations.

Phone: 323-935-4281

Cell Phone: 323-356-0688

e-mail: transformativécuisine@hotmail.com

Del 'N Coluch Cook Meatfree <http://www.del-n-coluch.com>

Two great cooks of different ethnic backgrounds paired up to create a video on cooking hearty, meatfree meals that are mouth-watering and great tasting. They provide recipes on the site and offer convenient cooking classes as well.

P.O. Box 4636, West Hills, CA 91308-4636

Phone/FAX: 818-988-5482

e-mail: coluch@ix.netcom.com

Elysa Markowitz <http://www.galaxymall.com/health/living food>

Elysa presents a lively, gourmet raw food preparation show on Opening New Doors, an online radio show at <http://www.healthylife.net> Elysa has thrived on raw foods for many years and has authored three cookbooks, Living With Green Power, Warming Up to Living Foods, and Smoothies and Other Scrumptious Delights. She also offers private classes in gourmet raw food preparation. Tapes and DVDs are available by contacting Elysa.

Phone: 760-251-7488

e-mail: elysaTV@earthlink.net

Good Mood Food Deli and Juice Bar <http://www.goodmoodfood.com>

Cooking classes held at the cafe. Learn about sprouting, soaking, and dehydrating in raw gourmet food preparation classes taught by chef/owner Ursula Horaitis. Features specialties like Pumpkin Seed Flat Bread and Strawberry Pie. Discover how to eliminate addictions to foods like chocolate, sweets, and coffee. Call Ursula to enroll.

5930 Warner Ave.

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Phone: 714-840-8042 or 714-377-2028

e-mail: rentachef@goodmoodfood.com

Johnny Lynch, N.D. (naturopathic doctor) teaches raw food cleansing and cooking classes to reverse the aging process, balance weight, and open doors to the enjoyment of well-seasoned healthy food that's quick and easy to prepare. Call to schedule classes.

Phone: 818-259-0262 or 805-522-4811

e-mail: cyberlightwave@yahoo.com

Kanzeonji Buddhist Temple <http://www.zenyoga.org> Offers vegan cooking classes with Japanese, Chinese, and Indian influences. Learn how to make your own soy milk and tofu from organic soy beans in addition to preparing tasty Asian dishes.

Class offered each Saturday from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.

Complimentary Hatha and Zen Yoga class at 10:30 a.m. before cooking class.

Kanzeonji Buddhist Temple and Shiva Ashram Yoga Center

961 Terrace 49

Los Angeles, CA 90042

Phone: Racquel Furbeyre at 323-255-5345

e-mail: kanzeonji@aol.com

Kimia <http://www.alohasanctuary.com>

Kimia shares her passion for food with her vegan cooking classes that feature fresh herbs, fruits, and vegetables, many that she grows in her own garden. Both her raw foods and cooked dishes reflect her extensive travels that inspire her to blend the flavors of many cuisines.

Phone: 310-401-1260

Malibu Raw <http://www.maliburaw.com>

Dennis Knicely, raw food chef features gourmet 5 and 6 course vegan all raw meals for small dinner parties. He specializes in exceptional soups, sprouted crackers, bean patties, and flavorful soups. Dennis is also a nutrition educator and teaches the art of preparing raw foods and proper food combining.

Phone: 310-457-7055

Marilyn McDonald <http://www.veganbitebybite.com>

Cooking instructor, educator and chef has 30 years of experience in assisting people to transition into a vegan diet. She has prepared meals for well-known personalities such as James Cromwell and Howard Lyman and was Co-Chef at Woody Harrelson's restaurant O-2. Marilyn was featured in the September/October 2001 issue of *Spa Magazine*. She consults and coaches over the Internet and presently offers private and group classes in vegan cooking and gourmet raw foods preparation.

Phone: 818-503-2043

e-mail: McVeganusa@aol.com

Mark Cleveland, BIAN Personal Chef, <http://hometown.aol.com/deskbox/BIAN2.html>

Teaches vegan and vegetarian culinary classes at Laguna Culinary Arts. His 12 years living and working in Japan have taught him how to incorporate Asian ingredients and a variety of cooking techniques that he brings into his work with personal clients. In addition to personal chef services, he is available for event catering and intimate dinner parties. He also serves as consultant to several restaurants including Savoury's in Laguna Beach.

Phone: 949-360-5952

e-mail: BIANdes@aol.com

Matt Amsden's RAWvolution <http://www.rawvolution.com>

Chef Matt teaches raw food preparation classes and offers complete consultation to students converting to a raw foods diet. His classes include a wide variety of preparation techniques including tips for staying raw while traveling or restaurant dining. Matt also operates a home delivery service of freshly prepared raw foods.

1233 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404

Phone: 310-721-4222

The Natural Pharmacy, a macrobiotic service for people who want to make a difference in their lives. Giorgio Bosso is a macrobiotic cooking instructor and health counselor who guides people interested in healing with food through his services as a personal chef and as a teacher of private cooking classes.

Phone: 323-936-1354

e-mail: healingfoods@comcast.net

Sylvia Green, nutritional consultant and former restaurateur, teaches raw foods cooking techniques for preparing nutritious dishes such as, nut loaves, grain crisps, pizza, and sushi.

Evening classes or weekend workshops.

Phone Sylvia Green at 310-399-5612

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Ecological Concerns

Harmony Works

Ecologically oriented gifts and handmade art objects from recycled materials. Sells books, handmade soaps, candles, greetings cards, handwoven baskets, jewelry, and unique one-of-a-kind creations.

1705 S. Catalina Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
Phone: Royce and Mike Morales at 310-791-7104
e-mail: lvsreal@msn.com

Simply Worms

Raises worms and sells worm castings, an organic fertilizer. Sells product at farmers' markets.
P. O. Box 5212, Playa del Rey, CA 90296
Phone: Chris Wilson at 310-398-1214

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Educational Organizations

CaPCURE

Michael Milken's organization for prostate cancer research
1250 4th St., Suite 360, Santa Monica, CA 91401
Phone: 310-458-2873 or 800-757-2873
Web site: <http://www.capcure.org>
e-mail: capcure@capcure.org

Common Ground Garden Program

Educational volunteer organization focused on creating community gardens in disadvantaged areas to teach community people how to grow their own food, maintain their gardens, and prepare the food they've grown. Sponsored by the University of California, Division of Agricultural Sciences. To volunteer for training contact Yvonne Savio, Program Manager.
2 Coral Circle, Monterey Park, CA 91755
Phone: 323-838-4532
Web site: <http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/>

The Gentle Barn Foundation <http://www.gentlebarn.org>

Ellie Callahan is the founder and guiding force of Gentle Barn, a humanitarian organization that rescues farm animals from abuse, neglect, and slaughter and cares for them. The group, located in Valencia, provides a series of weekly school visits to teach children kindness to animals, to each other, and to the planet. Each week they bring a different farm animal to school so children learn, touch, and connect to the animal world.
Phone: 818-705-5477

Natural Hygiene Society of Los Angeles

System that helps people live in harmony with the human body with the basic requirements of

nature: natural unadulterated food, unpolluted air, pure water, mental and emotional poise, wholesome environment, and productive activity. Monthly meetings held on Sundays at 1:30 p.m. at Howard Johnson-Wilshire Royale Hotel, 2619 Wilshire Blvd. Conference Room, Santa Monica
Fee \$4 per person

Phone: Sophie Holzgreen at 213-388-4332 or Art Baker at 310-479-4847

School of Self-Reliance <http://www.self-reliance.net>

Offers one-day and half-day weekend Wild Food Outings, Wild Food Cooking Workshops, Survival Skills Intensives and Workshops, and Mountain Survival Services

P.O.Box 41834, Eagle Rock, CA 90041

Phone: 323-255-9502

E-mail: contact@self-reliance.net

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Health Practitioners

Jay Gordon, M.D.

A vegetarian pediatrician dedicated to teaching his patients and their parents how to achieve good health with a compassionate lifestyle.

901 Montana Ave., Suite C

Santa Monica, CA 90403

Phone: 310-393-9784

e-mail: JNGMD@aol.com

Dr. Chuck Greenwood

Chiropractor who uses a profound approach to healing he refers to as Network Spinal Analysis or Network Chiropractic. No bone crunching techniques, just light touches to awaken your own life force and well-being

Yerman Chiropractic Group

6360 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 103, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Phone: 323-653-9530

Douglas Husbands, D.C., C.C.N., A.B.A.A.H.P.

Dr. Husbands is a board Certified Clinical Nutritionist, a board certified Anti Aging Health Practitioner, and Doctor of Chiropractic. In his practice he has helped many patients overcome life-long problems by teaching them how to live healthier, more productive lives with a holistic approach to healing. Dr. Husbands responds to all queries by phone or e-mail.

Balfour Chiropractic Health Center

9900 Balboa Blvd., Suite B

Northridge, CA 91325

Phone: 818-701-6221

e-mail: DrH@ComprehensiveWellness.net

Khalsa Chiropractic <http://www.drmhaatma.com>

Dr. Mha Atma S. Khalsa attended the University of California at Berkeley majoring in biology and environmental studies. Interested in healing, he graduated from the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic and now has a full practice. Concerned about our troubled environment, he founded <http://www.earthactionnetwork.org> to promote environmental healing and social justice.

5880 San Vicente Blvd., Suite 101

Los Angeles, CA 90035

Phone: 323-857-1277

e-mail: drmhaatma@sbcglobal.net

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Holistic Pet Services

Information courtesy of Marr Nealon. For more pet resources read her helpful article at <http://www.vegparadise.com/otherbirds.html>

Non-Anesthesia Teeth Cleaning

Letisha Boyle, a vegan and experienced technician of 15 years, will schedule an appointment to come to your home to clean your dog's or cat's teeth. Uses gentle massage and music to relax your pet and eliminates the need for anesthesia to remove tartar and plaque. Methods and quality of service similar to human oral hygiene.

Phone: 800-329-5495

Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/holisticpets>

e-mail: catdrinkwater@yahoo.com

The following veterinarians are not vegan, thus some of the remedies they recommend may contain animal ingredients. If that is important to you, inform them. They do not necessarily recommend a vegan pet diet, but will respect the human companion's choices.

Megan Bamford, DVM

Holistic veterinarian, homeopath, and certified animal chiropractor. Her partner does acupuncture and will show you key points to massage at home to continue daily treatment to relieve symptoms. Their service is caring, attentive and very thorough.

10180 Stonehurst, Sun Valley, CA 91352

Phone: 818-768-0954

Nancy Scanlan, DVM

Excellent acupuncture, chiropractic and herbal treatments. Appointments on Tuesday through Thursday only. Ask to be put on the cancellation list if she is booked up.

Sherman Oaks Veterinary Group

13624 Moorpark St., Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

Phone: 818-784-9977

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Home Delivery

ABC Book and Health Food Center <http://www.vegefood.com>

Health food store with two Southern California locations that feature a wide variety of vegetarian foods and health oriented books. The organization now offers on-line home delivery.

1501 East Chevy Chase Drive, Glendale, CA 91206

Phone: 1-800-765-6955

e-mail: manager@vegefood.com

12201 East Firestone Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

Phone: 562-868-5344

Gourmet Soup Kitchen

Amy Caplan and partner Daniel Tout offer 16 innovative varieties of vegetarian soups available frozen in 16-ounce cartons for home delivery. Of the 16 varieties, 13 of the soups are vegan. Some of the vegan choices include Cuban Black Bean, Mushroom Barley, French Onion, Old World Lentil, Thai Coconut Curry.

Phone: 310-393-6902

FAX: 310-399-7783

Los Angeles Organic Vegetable Express (LOVE) <http://www.lovedelivery.com>

Provides a user and earth friendly service for discriminating people who have chosen to live a healthier, greener lifestyle. Delivers fresh organic produce to homes and offices.

P.O. Box 1315 Venice, CA 90294

Phone: 310-821-LOVE

e-mail: info@lovedelivery.com

Organic Express <http://www.organicexpress.com>

Certified organic boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables delivered to your home. Includes 12 to 16 types of produce with several servings of each. Option to choose an all vegetable or all fruit box.

Grocery items also available. Choose delivery weekly or bi-weekly.

P.O. Box 11328

Carson, CA 90749

Phone: 310-ORGANIC

PAX Organica , Organic Trading Eco. <http://www.PAXORGANICA.COM>

Home delivery of fresh, certified organic produce, coffees, teas, cocoas. Also available for delivery are certified organic cotton and hemp clothing and tree-free recycled paper products.

Write to: P.O. Box 2423, Hollywood, CA 90078-2423

Phone: 1-877-TOGO PAX (1-877-864-6729)

RAWvolution <http://www.rawvolution.com>

Chef Matt Amsden prepares all organic, vegan raw foods delivered to your door. He offers the perfect raw foods for lunches to carry to work or dinners that will be waiting for you when you come home. Meals include soups, salads, gourmet entrées, side dishes, and desserts.

Phone: 310-721-4222

Vegin' Out <http://www.veginout.com>

All natural meals home delivery service offering weekly bulk meals that are cholesterol free, low fat, high energy, low sodium, and made with love.

Phone: 310-574-9405

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Los Angeles Youth Activities

START (Students Taking Action and Responsibility Today) <http://www.kidsLA.org>

START brings together wonderfully caring children from across the broader Los Angeles area with other such children to have a great time making a difference together. **START** offers these hands-on community service programs in which elementary and middle-school age children may participate on weekends and school vacations: hiking and maintaining trails, surveying and cleaning beaches, visiting and caring at retirement homes, gleaning farms, feeding the homeless, removing graffiti, caring for animals at refuges and sanctuaries, helping the handicapped, recycling projects, etc. **START** teaches and helps children to reach out and make a difference in the world around them. **START** shows children that what they do matters and that they can make a difference.

Phone: 310/262-4248

E-mail: kidsLA@yahoo.com

Kind News (Kids in Nature's Defense) <http://www.kindnews.org>

An easy-to-read monthly publication that educates primary graders about respecting animals and the environment and encourages literacy, violence prevention, good citizenship, and peaceful conflict resolution. This classroom newspaper, published by the National Association for Humane and Environmental Education, is the youth education division of The Humane Society of the United States. The organization encourages all people to "adopt a teacher" who will then receive a classroom subscription to the publication.

Phone: Sue Bernstein 310-656-2016

e-mail: KindNewsLA@aol.com

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Natural Health

Products & Services

Aloha Sanctuary Spa <http://www.alohasanctuary.com>

Kimia offers a refuge for those seeking relaxing and healing treatments of massage, energy medicine, reiki, hot stone massage, infrared sauna, and jacuzzi. Included are foods from a light vegan menu.

656 San Juan Ave., Venice, CA 90291

Phone: 310-401-1260

Busy Bee Hardware

Don Kidson, owner of The Living Light House, operates this old fashioned hardware store that sells juicers, food grinders, health books, and dehydrators in addition to all the hardware anyone needs.

1521 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 91404

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Closed Sunday

Phone: 310-395-1158

Beautiful Soap & Company <http://www.beautifulsoap.net>

Margaret and Hugo Saavedra are proud of their handmade, all natural soaps made from gentle vegetable oils such as olive, palm, coconut, and jojoba and scented with organic herbs they grown on their own farm. No animal products are used in their attractively gift packaged soaps which come in a wide selection of fragrances.

Phone: 805-306-0823

E-mail: beautifulsoap@email.com

Clean Living of Santa Monica

Makes natural soaps and bath products without the use of animal fat. No artificial colorants, petroleum products, or artificial preservatives. Uses avocado oil, jojoba and shea butter, essential oils, beeswax and cocoa butter. Sells at farmers markets.

James Derner, Owner

1122 18th St., Box 201, Santa Monica, CA 90403

e-mail: ClnLvgOfSM@aol.com

Creative Ceed Company <http://www.creativeceed.com>

Makes and sells body care products free of sodium laureth sulfates, f, d, and c colors, preservatives, and hard chemicals. Cruelty free products are hypo-allergenic.

10401 Washington Blvd.

Culver City, CA 90232

Phone: 310-838-5001

e-mail: Sales@creativeceed.com

Hair Tattoo

Susan Doyle is a progressive hair dresser with 15 years experience. Works in the Woodland Hills area and uses exclusively vegan and cruelty free hair products. Susan is a graduate of Vidal Sassoon and has worked for Channel 7 and Teen Magazine. Animal rights activist.

Phone: 818-594-7611 or 818-594-5854

e-mail: hairtattoo@hotmail.com

Our Daily Bread

Seventh Day Adventist book store and health food market. Small lunch counter in front of store with rear patio seating for 30 to 40 people.

Vegan food

12201 E. Firestone Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

Phone: 562-863-6897

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Publications

Just Eat an Apple Magazine <http://www.justeatanapple.com>

Quarterly raw food publication with an organic focus. It includes recipes and raw food articles.

Natural Resource Directory <http://www.nrd.com>

Publication of environmentally and socially responsible resources, holistic health, fitness and bodywork, natural remedies, markets and restaurants, counseling, education and spiritual resources; covers Los Angeles and Orange County including Riverside, San Bernardino, and

Ventura County.
Phone: 310-305-8521
e-mail: nrd@nrd.com

VEG-LA Digest

The ideal web center to post important announcements of upcoming local and national events or meetings of interest to vegetarians in the Los Angeles area. Though not a chat room, it offers a great medium for sharing good resources and to warn about problem ones.

e-mail: waste@waste.org for free subscription

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Raw Food Activities

Alicia Ojeda

An experienced chef and cooking instructor, Alicia studied raw food preparation at the Living Light Culinary Arts Institute where she is a staff member. Now residing in the Los Angeles area, she teaches classes in raw food preparation with tips and techniques that students can apply to whole foods meals in their own kitchen. Formerly Executive Chef at Dreamworks Studios for Bon Appetit Management Company, Alicia is available for teaching, catering, and restaurant consultations.

Phone: 323-935-4281

Cell Phone: 323-356-0688

e-mail: transformativocuisine@hotmail.com

Good Mood Food Deli and Juice Bar <http://www.goodmoodfood.com>

Ursula Horaitis, raw foods chef, specializes in European gourmet style raw foods and prepares meals for lunches, brunches, dinners, snacks, picnics, and parties. Though her cafe is located in Orange County she will gladly cater in Los Angeles. She also prepares meals for take out and home delivery.

5930 Warner Ave.

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Phone: 714-377-2028 or 714-840-8042

Johnny Lynch, N.D. (naturopathic doctor) teaches raw food cleansing and cooking classes to reverse the aging process, balance weight, and open doors to the enjoyment of well-seasoned healthy food that's quick and easy to prepare. Call to schedule classes.

Phone: 818-259-0262 or 805-522-4811

e-mail: cyberlightwave@yahoo.com

Malibu Raw <http://www.maliburaw.com>

Dennis Knicely, raw food chef features gourmet 5 and 6 course vegan all raw meals for small dinner parties. He specializes in exceptional soups, sprouted crackers, bean patties, and flavorful soups. Dennis is also a nutrition educator and teaches the art of preparing raw foods and proper food combining.

Phone: 310-457-7055

Matt Amsden's RAWvolution <http://www.rawvolution.com>

Chef Matt teaches raw food preparation classes and offers complete consultation to students converting to a raw foods diet. His classes include a wide variety of preparation techniques including tips for staying raw while traveling or restaurant dining. Matt also operates a home delivery service of freshly prepared raw foods.

1233 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404

Phone: 310-721-4222

Chef Rawsheed

Vegan chef Rawsheed, the ultimate raw food synergist, welcomes diners to a night of feasting on raw living foods every Thursday with two seatings 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the Club Divinity Room. Musical entertainment 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Seating is limited. Doors close 10:30 p.m. Upsidedown Club

1600 North Argyle, corner Argyle and Selma

1 block east of Vine, between Sunset and Hollywood Blvds.

Hollywood, CA

Phone: 323-960-7900 RSVP required

Orange/LA County Living Foods <http://www.ocraw.com>

For the latest updates on raw dinners, pot lucks, special events, and gatherings in Los Angeles and Orange County check Karen Sussman's extensive calendar or call for information.

Phone: 949-651-6309

Cell: 818-419-5350

e-mail: simplyraw@ocraw.com

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Restaurants

(Vegetarian and Vegetarian-Friendly)

Restaurant listings are now found at <http://www.vegparadise.com/restaurants.html>

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Social Action Groups

The Ark Trust, Inc. now Humane Society of the United States Hollywood Office

<http://www.arktrust.org>

National non-profit animal protection organization devoted to raising public awareness of animal issues. Site includes pages about the group's proactive media projects to promote positive coverage of animal topics. Maintains a library of videotapes covering animal use and abuse as a resource for the media. Links to other animal friendly sites.

Phone: 818-501-2275

e-mail: winikoff@envirolink.org

Green People <http://www.greenpeople.org>

Provides an online searchable directory of products and services provided by eco-friendly people and organizations.

420 Raymond Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90405

Phone: 310-399-9355

San Fernando Valley Greens

A non-profit organization that focuses on Ecological Wisdom, Social Justice, Grass Roots Democracy, Non-Violence, Decentralization, Community-Based Economics, Feminism, Respect for Diversity, Personal and Global Responsibility, and Future Focus. Meets every second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Faye and Norm Gottlieb, 9743 Noble Ave., North Hills, CA 91343

For information contact Jen Holle at 818-764-7354

Southern California Vegetarians <http://SoCalVeg.org>

A Los Angeles based organization that aims to educate on the benefits of a plant-based diet and to demonstrate concern for the environment, human health, the treatment of animals, and world health. The site features educational events, current events, pot lucks, restaurant outings, lists of local vegetarian restaurants, and vegetarian links.

Phone: 310-289-5777

e-mail: info@SoCalVeg.org

Students for Animal Liberation (UCLA)

A lively group of young activists who organize and participate in demonstrations and events to bring awareness to the public about cruelty to animals.

Phone: 310-599-0009

E-mail: UCLA4animals@hotmail.com

Vegan Toastmasters <http://members.aol.com/veganTM/main>

Open to all, this group offers helpful techniques to sharpen your speaking skills for addressing groups on vegan topics.

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 1st and 3rd Saturdays

Ken Edwards Center
1527 4th St., Room 100,
Santa Monica, CA 90401
Contact Dave Rutan at 310-939-1116 or 310-480-2039
e-mail: Davesmail7777@mail.com

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Social Clubs

Jewish Vegetarian Society of Los Angeles

Group meets at 2:00 p.m. the first Sunday of each month at Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue to hear educational speakers, plan social events and pot lucks, and network with other vegetarians.

Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue
15739 Ventura Boulevard, Encino, CA 91316
Phone: Irv Kett at 818-349-2581

VegLA <http://www.veggiela.com>

Gay and lesbian vegetarian club that holds potlucks usually on the 3rd weekend of each month. They offer a free emailing every month.

Phone: Phone Gordon Morris at 818-999-0852 (press 2 after the greeting)
e-mail: VeggieLA@aol.com

Vegan Potlucks

San Fernando Valley , 4th Saturday of each month, 6 p.m. at Coby Seigenthaler's home
8843 Penfield Ave, Northridge, CA 91324
Phone: 818-341-6153

Close to the intersection of Nordhoff and Oakdale. Free. Sometimes there is a speaker or a video. Bring your own recyclable utensils.

Los Angeles , monthly potlucks-free. Bring your own recyclable utensils.

Phone Aouie at 310-289-5777
e-mail: veg@aouie.net

Vegetarian Dating Club <http://www.veggiedate.com>

Those looking for that ideal person who shares their vegetarian views can sign up with this vegetarian dating and networking service.

Vegetarian Dining Club

Features two to four vegan dinners per month at Los Angeles and Orange County restaurants. Dinners are usually held on Sundays at 5:00 p.m. at a cost of approximately \$25 per person. The

evening includes a speaker. Membership fee includes discount coupons, a holistic directory of vegetarian restaurants and related services, and a special card for ongoing discounts at vegetarian restaurants.

Phone Randy Ellis at 323-953-0543 or Ken Ziff at 360-396-2826.

Vegetarian Supper Club <http://www.veggiesupperclub.com>

Share evenings of fun, good food, and lively conversation with other health-minded people and experience tasty, vegan, multi-course, full-service, sit-down dinners at a variety of vegetarian restaurants. No membership fee.

Phone: Mike at 818-902-9922

E-mail: veggiesupperclub@aol.com

Web site: <http://www.veggiesupperclub.com>

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Vegetarian Food Products

Alaine's Bakery

Prepares baked goods with no fat added, no refined sugar, no eggs or dairy products, wheat free, salt free. They are able to accommodate many dietary restrictions. Alaine's retail store is closed, but items are readily available for pick up or by mail order. Call to request order list.

Phone: 323-851-6995

Angel's EarthKind Kitchen <http://www.imearthkind.com>

Prepares vegan cheese in nacho cheese flavor, cheddar, and mozzarella. Available in 12 oz. bricks. New on Angel's list are cheeses that melt! Easy to order online for shipping across the country.

Available at Follow Your Heart and Whole Foods Markets.

P.O. Box 9400

Canoga Park, CA 91309-0400

Phone Angel McNall at 818-347-9946

e-mail: cheese@imearthkind.com

Bezian's Bakery

Bakes a wide variety of breads, many wheat free, dairy free, and all yeast-free. Breads are sold at five farmers' markets and at their store.

4725 Santa Monica Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90029

Phone: 323-663-8608

Café de Soya

Makes a coffee-like beverage from organic soybeans that can be prepared just like coffee. Uses no other ingredients.

4924 Kester Ave, #15

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 818-386-1394

FAX: 310-456-0388

E-mail: cafedesoya@hotmail.com

Cary Brown's Vegan Foods

Manufacturer of soy based mock tuna, chunky chili, Texas barbecue, chicken-free chicken, duck-free duck dinner, and calamata olive sauce and topping, and adding new items regularly. Products available at Healthy Discount, Erewhon, Follow Your Heart, Wild Oats, Co-opportunity, and in delicatessen cases around the Southland.

Phone: 818-606-3595

Cedarlane Natural Foods, Inc. <http://www.cedarlanefoods.com>

Producer of low-fat natural foods including frozen dinners and entrees, salads, and specialty breads. Many of the dinners are made with soy protein.

1135 E. Artesia Blvd., Carson, CA 90746

Phone: 800-826-3322

Fax: 310-886-7733

e-mail: feedback@cedarlanefoods.com

Corn Maiden Foods <http://www.cornmaidenfoods.com>

Maker of 26 varieties of tamales including 8 vegetarian and 6 vegan selections. No lard or preservatives in any of their products. Sells their products at a number of farmers' markets.

8635 Kittyhawk Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90045

Phone: 310-338-3383

e-mail: cornmaiden@earthlink.net

Culinary Farms <http://www.livinglettuce.com>

Culinary Farms grows and sells a wide variety of hydroponically grown lettuces, herbs, edible flowers, and baby lettuce mixes at many farmers' markets as well as restaurants and caterers in the Los Angeles area. bettergroHYDRO is a retail store in Pasadena that offers instruction and sells equipment to anyone interested in growing vegetables hydroponically. The store has a small café that prepares salads and sandwiches made from vegetables grown on the farm.

Culinary Farms 818-700-1071

bettergrowHYDRO

1271 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91106

Phone: 626-449-6677 or 877-640-GROW

FAX: 626-449-6688

Web site: <http://www.bghydro.com>

Debbie & Sandy's Homemade

Makes a vegetarian, Kosher granola using matzoh farfel as the base. Soon to be adding a variety of homemade, baked products.

22425 Ventura Blvd., #19

Woodland Hills, CA 91364
Phone: 818-224-2967
FAX: 818-712-9955
e-mail: DebbieSandy@aol.com

Delices de Provence, Inc. <http://www.delicesdeprovence.info>

Offers imported extra virgin and virgin cold pressed olive oils, green and black olive tapenades, a variety of green and black olives with herbs de provence, and attractive gift baskets.

171 Pier Ave., Suite 468
Santa Monica, CA 90405
Phone: 310-452-5512
FAX: 310-452-5534
e-mail: admin@delicedeprovence.info

El Burrito Mexican Food Products, Inc. <http://www.elburrito.com>

Manufactures vegetarian soy products using non GMO soybeans. Items include Soyrizo (meatless soy chorizo), SoyLoaf (meatless meatloaf), SoySteak, and SoyTaco.

14940 Don Julian Rd.
City of Industry, CA 91745
Phone: 800-933-7828
FAX: 626-369-6972
e-mail: elburitto@elburrito.com or info@elburrito.com

Follow Your Heart <http://www.followyourheart.com>

Packages their Vegenaize (mock mayonnaise) and vegetarian and vegan salad dressings which contain no preservatives. Available at health food stores.

21825 Sherman Way, Canoga Park, CA 91303
Phone: 818-348-3240

Harvest Hills

Bakes dairy-free and sugar-free breads and buns, including Light Oat Bran, Sesame Sunflower, Multigrain Rye.

P.O. Box 661468, Los Angeles, CA 90066
Phone: 310-390-1997

Health Valley Company

Produces organic sugar-free breakfast cereals without artificial colors, flavors or preservatives. Cereals are made from a variety of grains including amaranth, spelt, and kamut. Also has a line of soups, cookies, and power bars.

16100 Foothill Boulevard, Irwindale, CA 91702
Phone: 800-423-4846

Jamae Natural Foods

Produces a variety of vegan cookies that are sugar free and vegan wheat free cakes.

5958 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90035
Phone: 323-937-3670

Melissa's World Variety Produce, Inc. <http://www.melissas.com>

Packages soy nuts, meat alternatives, and tofu products along with unique varieties of fresh and dried produce from around the world.

P.O. Box 21127, Los Angeles, CA 90021

Phone: 800-588-0151

e-mail: hotline@melissas.com

Mighty Soy, Inc.

Makes soy milk drinks and tofu.

1227 South Eastern Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90022

Phone: 323-266-6969

Miyako Oriental Foods, Inc. <http://www.coldmountainmiso.com>

Manufactures miso and soy bean paste and prepares edamame (fresh soy beans) under the Cold Mountain and Yamajirushi labels.

4287 Puente Avenue, Baldwin Park, CA 91706

Phone: 626-962-9663

e-mail: joearai@coldmountainmiso.com

Morinaga Nutritional Foods, Inc. <http://www.morinu.com>

Makes silken tofu varieties under the brand name Mori-Nu.

2050 West 190th Street, Suite 110, Torrance, CA 90504

Phone: 310-787-0200

e-mail: info@morinu.com

Naked Juices and Ferraro's Juices <http://www.techiii.com/nakedjuice/njhome.html>

Prepares 60 varieties that are 100% fresh, natural juice. Their products include smoothies, vegetable juices, fruit juices, nectars, fortified juices, and frozen juices.

California Day-Fresh Foods, Inc.

533 W. Foothill Boulevard, Glendora, CA 91741

Phone: 800-800-0986

e-mail: consumeraffairs@nakedjuice.com

The Organic Gourmet <http://www.organic-gourmet.com>

Produces **organic** vegan and vegetarian soups, soup stock concentrates, sauces, bouillon cubes, nutritional yeast spread, oat miso pastes, tartar sauce, patés, and instant sauce mixes for quick meal preparation.

4092 Deervale Drive

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Phone: 800-400-7772

FAX: 818-906-906-7417

e-mail: scenar@earthlink.net

Organica Foods <http://www.organicafoods.com>

Produces cookies with **organic** ingredients free of genetically modified organisms with no cholesterol, hydrogenated oils, refined sugars, preservatives, and artificial ingredients. Completely animal free. Varieties include Double Chocolate Coffee Toffee, Peanut Butter Almond Chocolate Chip, Gingered Walnut Cherry Chocolate Chip, and Oatmeal Coconut Cranberry Chocolate Chip.
10061 Riverside Dr., Suite 807

Toluca Lake, CA 91602

Phone: 877-647-6986

e-mail: info@organicafoods.com

Pleasant Farms <http://www.soyburgusa.com>

Makes Soyburg, USA soyburgers, soy chicken, soy loaf, and soy drinks. Most items are vegan.

1010 S. Arroyo Parkway, Suite 7

P.O. Box 50370

Pasadena, CA 91105-0370

Phone: 800-499-9616 or 626-403-5605

Fax: 626-403-5604

Pulmuone U.S.A., Inc. <http://www.pulmuone-usa.com>

Makes non-GMO, certified kosher tofu, organic tofu, non-dairy soy smoothie base, Korean hot pepper paste, bean paste, and other Korean condiments, Donates part of its profits to various environment preservation organizations.

4567 Firestone Blvd.

South Gate, CA 90280

Phone: 323-564-3000

FAX: 323-564-2366

e-mail: info@pulmuone-usa.com

Quinoa Corporation <http://www.quinoa.net>

Produces pastas made from quinoa, a high-protein grain that dates back to the Incas. Wheat-free types include elbows, pagodas, linguine, spaghetti, rotelle, and shells.

P.O. Box 279, Gardena, CA. 90248

Phone: (310) 217-8125

e-mail: QuinoaCorp@aol.com

Rainforest Delights <http://www.rainforestdelights.com>

Distributes all natural tropical dried fruit medleys. Many combinations such as Monkey's Mingle includes dried pineapple, banana, papaya, mango, and a touch of strawberry. Some fruits available in bits, rings, and slices. Company donates a portion of proceeds to rainforest preservation.

1202 South Monterey St.

Alhambra, CA 91801

FAX: 626-284-8855

e-mail: gilbert@rainforestdelights.com

Royal Caviar, Inc. <http://www.royalcaviar.com>

Makes Kaviar, a caviar substitute that looks and tastes like the real thing. Kaviar is vegan and comes in Osetra Sturgeon and Beluga flavors. This product is made from vegetables and non-GMO soybeans.

4551 San Fernando Rd., Unit 110

Glendale, California 91204

Phone: 818-546-5858 or 888-727-2284

FAX: 818-546-5856

e-mail: aza@royalcaviar.com

e-mail: robert@royalcaviar.com

San Moritz Bakery and Deli

Bakes organic high-fiber dairy-free breads without preservatives. Included are 9 Grain, Savory Italian Tomato, Potato Toasted Onion, and High Fiber Carrot.

6949 La Tijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045

Phone: 213-670-7570

Smokin' Garlic <http://www.smokingarlic.com>

Susan Elmasian smokes whole garlic bulbs to enhance your favorite recipes, salads and cooked dishes. Available at the Santa Clarita Farmers' Market on Sundays. Be sure to check out the tasty recipes on her web site for more ideas on using her product.

Phone: 805-496-2500

e-mail: info@smokingarlic.com

Soofer Co., Inc. <http://www.sadaf.com>

They distribute **Sadaf** products that include pickled hot Mediterranean peppers, grapeseed oil, hummus, baba ghannouge, Mediterranean salad, and hot crushed red pepper relish. Some items are vegan.

2829 Alameda St.

Los Angeles, California 90058

Phone: 323-852-4050 or 800-852-4050

FAX: 323-234-2447

e-mail: info@sadaf.com

e-mail:

Spice of Life Meatless Meats & Jerky <http://www.Spice-Of-Life.com>

Creates meatless meats and jerky that are wheat-free, gluten free, salt free, cholesterol-free, high in fiber and protein, and have the look, taste and texture of a wide range of meats. Products are made from defatted soy flour, Bragg Liquid Aminos, sunflower oil, and natural spices and are 100% VEGAN. Items are not only for vegetarians but also for celiacs, diabetics, low sodium dieters, and athletes who require additional protein.

Phone: 800-256-2253 or 818-909-0052

Sproutime Living Foods

All kinds of sprouted products featuring different varieties of hummos including red pepper and black bean, sprout pate, veggie delight mini wraps, and baked sprout nuggets.

21217 Chase Street, Canoga Park, CA 91304

Phone: 818-882-7505

StarLite Cuisine <http://www.StarLiteCuisine.com>

Makes vegetarian and vegan frozen foods such as Soy Taquitos, Soy Tenders, Soy Tamales, Barbecued Smoked Patties, and Spicy Cajun Patties. All items low fat and kosher.

1429 North Virginia, Suite F-G

Baldwin Park, CA 91706

Phone: 626-338-8233

FAX: 626-338-8408

e-mail: info@starlitecuisine.com

VEAT, Inc. <http://www.veat.com>

Pre-cooked heat and eat soy-based meat alternatives with the ultra-realistic meat-like textures of chicken, turkey, beef, duck, pork, and fish. Products are all natural, no preservatives, MSG, additives, or coloring. All vegetarian.

20318 Gramercy Place
Torrance, CA 90501
Phone: 888-321-VEAT
e-mail: eat@veat.com

VEGEKING CORP. <http://www.vegeking.com>

Makes meat substitutes under the brand name **Veggie Master**. Soy based vegetarian items include pepper steak, chicken chunks, ham steak, tuna filet, and hot dogs that contain eggs and dairy products.

877 Azusa Ave.
City of Industry, CA 91746
Phone: 877-2-Vegeking or 626-581-0889
FAX: 626-965-8780
e-mail: info@vegeking.com

Visoy Corporation

Manufactures baked tofu, pressed tofu, fried tofu, and tofu strips.
111 West Elmyra Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: 323-221-4079

Westbrae Natural Foods <http://www.westbrae.com>

Markets a number of soy products including miso, soy sauce, tamari, and soy drinks.
P.O. Box 48006, Gardena, CA 90248
Phone: 310-886-8200

Will-Pak Foods, Inc. <http://www.tasteadventure.com>

Under the brand name Taste Adventure they produce a variety of vegan, preservative-free, almost instant soups, chiles, and refried beans. Their Quick Cuisine items include vegetarian side dishes such as Bombay Curry and Jambalaya.

Harbor City, CA 90710
Phone: 800-874-0883
e-mail: taste-adv@earthlink.net

Zen Bakery

Bakes a variety of rolls without sugar or honey. Fruit juice sweetened rolls include Whole Wheat Sesame and Cinnamon Raisin.

10988 Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90064
Phone: 310-475-6727

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When we wing our way around the world wide web, we like to land in certain spots which are vegan and vegetarian friendly. Not only are they friendly, but they provide all kinds of useful information for anyone following a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle. We have categorized the links under the following categories. If you want to go to a particular category, click on it below.

[ANIMAL CONCERNS](#)

[ATHLETES AND ATHLETICS](#)

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Animal Concerns

American Anti-Vivisection Society <http://www.aavs.org>

AAVS, founded in 1883, is the first organization focused on ending the use of animals in science. The web site provides education on their non-animal techniques for research and their program of eliminating vivisection and dissection in the classroom by offering alternatives. Their outreach program offers opportunities for interested activists to become involved.

Animal Activism Queensland <http://www.AnimalActivism.org>

Australian grassroots network of activists dedicated to the exposure of practices that cause cruelty to animals.

Animal Concerns Community <http://www.AnimalConcerns.org>

Describing itself as "The online community for people concerned about the welfare and rights of animals," this web location presents the latest in animal news, in-depth articles on related topics, information about organizations, educational and government resources, career information, suggested activist activities, links to other publications, and much more.

Animal Legal Defense Fund <http://www.aldf.org>

Visit this web site to learn how ALDF created the first animal's Bill of Rights to grant animal legal rights and save animals wherever they are in peril—in laboratories, on factory farms, and in the wild. They aim to stop the many cruel practices that cause animals to suffer needlessly. Discover the details and how to become involved.

Animal News <http://www.animalnews.com>

A great starting place for animal lovers, this colorful site is loaded with all kinds of information including animal events, support resources, animal heroes, celebrities discussing animals, and discussion boards for lovers of cats, dogs, birds, wildlife, and those interested in animal issues. Links to other animal sites.

Animal Protection Institute <http://www.api4animals.org>

This organization focuses on ending the use and abuse of animals in circuses, in agriculture, science, education, marine life and wild life. The web presence sites the numerous abuses experienced by caged animals that nature intended to live in the wild. They work to focus national attention on animal abuse.

Animal Rescue Foundation <http://www.tlr-arf.org>

ARF founded by St. Louis Cardinals' manager Tony La Russa and his wife Elaine aims to find homes for abandoned and homeless animals with their Adoption and Rescue Program that begins with volunteers providing foster care until permanent homes can be found. At this site you can learn about their educational programs, Teaching Loving Care and ARF All-Stars as well as their National Outreach Program. You can also volunteer to participate.

Animal Rights Cafe <http://animalrightscafe.com/animalrights/>

Animal Rights forum for people who want to share ideas with like-minded individuals. This cyber cafe features general animal rights discussion boards and lifestyle forums as well as resources including links and announcements of events.

Animal Rights in America <http://www.animal-rights-in-america.com/>

A website dedicated to educating visitors about animal rights issues in the United States. Animal Rights in America offers visitors the chance to participate in an online chat, register for forums, and view articles written by website staff. Articles may include recipes, information about current conditions for animals on farms, and more. A slowly expanding glossary on this website also sheds light on the different types of lifestyles adapted by those who are concerned about animal rights.

Animals Voice Online <http://www.animalsvoice.com>

At this comprehensive web site you can find numerous features to learn about the various facets of animal activism. There are extensive resources, listings of boycotts, essays, animal rights philosophy, action alerts, legislation, and animals as food, science, and entertainment. You can find cruelty-free products, read breaking news, and learn how you can become involved.

ARFriends <http://www.arfriends.com>

Free personal ad service for animal rights activists to help find other animal right activists in their area for networking, friendship, dates, and/or relationships. It also features a chat, exclusive member events, and ARAlerts

Carrot Juice <http://carrotjuice.org/>

Resource for vegans and animal rights activists that includes forums, news, protests, recipe trading and personals.

Center on Animal Liberation Affairs <http://www.cala-online.org>

Scholarly center dedicated to philosophical discussion on animal liberation. Focuses on the research and dialogue of principles and practices of animal rights and animal liberation. Organization has online journal, research databases, speakers' bureau, and conferences on animal liberation issues.

Farm Animal Reform Movement <http://www.farmusa.org>

Since its inception in 1981, FARM has advocated a plant-based diet and rights for animals. Their motto is, "Promoting plant-based solutions for the future of the planet." The group's grass-roots

campaigns include National Veal Ban Action, World Farm Animals Day, Great American Meatout, Industry Watch, CHOICE, and Letters from FARM.

Farm Sanctuary <http://www.farmsanctuary.org>

The largest farm animal rescue organization in the United States, **Farm Sanctuary** operates farm animal rescue sites in New York and California as well as waging campaigns to stop exploitation of animals raised for food. The website provides information about the organization's campaigns to end animal cruelty, resources to educate people about animal abuse, opportunities to visit the farms, and data on how to become involved. The group promotes a vegan lifestyle.

The Fund for Animals <http://www.fund.org>

The Fund, started in 1967 by prominent author and animal advocate Cleveland Amory, has spearheaded some of the most historic and significant events in the history of the animal protection movement. The organization works to stop "canned hunts" through focused campaigns to reach legislators who will pass laws that end trophy hunting presently legal in most states. Visit the web site to learn how you can participate in helping pass The Captive Exotic Animal Protection Act as well as other movements that protect animals from needless killing.

The Gentle Barn Foundation <http://www.gentlebarn.org>

Rescuing farm animals from abuse, neglect, and slaughter and caring for them are the principal goals of this humanitarian organization located in Valencia. Using the animals as their classroom, the foundation teaches children kindness and compassion to animals, each other, and our planet with a series of weekly school visits. Each week a different farm animal is brought to school, giving children an opportunity to learn, touch, and connect to the animal world.

The Humane Society of the United States Hollywood Office <http://www.hsusHollywood.org>

Formerly Ark Trust, Inc. this national non-profit animal protection organization is devoted to raising public awareness of animal issues. Site includes pages about the group's proactive media projects including their annual celebrity event Genesis Awards to promote positive coverage of animal topics. Maintains a library of videotapes covering animal use and abuse as a resource for the media. Links to other animal friendly sites.

In Defense of Animals <http://www.idausa.org>

Founded by a veterinarian determined to put an end to animal exploitation, this vociferous organization works through effective campaigns to stop needless animal research in laboratories, loss of endangered animals, and slaughter of defenseless animals. Their efforts include educational events, cruelty investigations, boycotts, grassroots activism, and hands-on rescue. Visit the web site to learn how effective ad campaigns, law suits, and demonstrations have liberated animals from suffering.

International Animal Rights Forum <http://www.animalsuffering.com/forum>

Minoesj: An Animal Voice: An international animal rights community that supports cruelty-free diets and includes forums for vegetarians, vegans, and fruitarians. Offers a discussion board and live chatroom.

Last Chance for Animals <http://www.lcanimal.org>

LCA takes action to fight against pet theft and animal exploitation. With state-of-the-art video and

photographic equipment they document acts of illegal pet stealing for the purpose of selling those pets to research laboratories. The web site offers activists opportunities to become involved in putting an end to an unlawful practice. They also have a kids and teens section.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals <http://www.peta.org>

PETA, the largest animal rights organization in the world, maintains an extensive web presence with more than two dozen sites linked together. The organization currently focuses on cruelty to animals in four areas: on factory farms, in laboratories, in the fur trade, and in the entertainment industry. The main site details news events involving the organization as well as action alerts. Also included are a PETA Poll, Frequently Ask Questions, links to other PETA sites and links to vegetarian web resources.

Peta2.com <http://www.PETA2.com>

An ultra hip web site for PETA minded teens offering opportunities to chat as well as participate in animal rights activism. At this site young people may participate in showing the video Meet your Meat, initiate PETA2-style class projects that enlighten classmates, discover products that are eco-friendly and cruelty free, and read articles and news features that are teen oriented.

Pets-Haven Animal Rescue <http://www.pets-haven.com>

Permanent homes for all stray cats and dogs is the mission of this no-kill pet rescue organization. Provides shelter, foster care, and medical care to those that are waiting to be adopted. Works with ferals to slowly bring them in, whenever possible.

Tower Hill Stables Animal Sanctuary <http://www.towerhillstables.com>

Established in the UK by marathon runner Fiona Oaks (a vegan), this privately operated sanctuary cares for over 200 animals including horses, cows, chickens, cats, dogs, goats and sheep, small furry creatures, and pigs. All contributions go directly to purchase of foods for the animals. Be sure to click on Please Read for her fascinating story.

VeggiePets.com <http://www.veggiepets.com>

Located in the UK, this online pet food shop provides 24-hr., year-round service to pet owners in that country. They offer dog, food, dog biscuits, dog chews, and cat food, all free of animal ingredients.

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Athletes and Athletics

BrendanBrazier.com <http://www.brendanbrazier.com>

A professional Ironman triathlete who follows a vegan diet, Brendan Brazier provides a reason and a solution for the most common problems active people experience when adopting a plant-based diet. Covered are common concerns of the vegetarian athlete, frequently asked questions, recipes, equipment, and seminar information.

Hawaii's Dr. Ruth: Live Healthier Longer <http://www.ruthheidrich.com>

Ironman athlete and cancer survivor Ruth Heidrich has her own website where she answers questions about diet and exercise. Includes articles she has written on the most frequently asked questions such as the protein issue, running and knees, hormone replacement, and athletes on a vegan diet. Photos from some of her trips to Machu Picchu, the Galapagos Islands, the Hubbard Glacier, and the Florida Everglades are also presented. Her books and tapes can be ordered from the site.

Organic Athlete <http://www.organicathlete.org>

This nonprofit organization is dedicated to educating, connecting, and fostering athletes of all ages and abilities to promote healthful, plant-based living in communities, sports, and schools. The group provides members extensive information about benefits of plant-based lifestyles and a place to connect to vegetarian athletes. Included in the offerings is a free monthly newsletter.

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Cooking Schools/Chef Training

Institute for Culinary Awakening <http://www.ica-plantchefs.com> or <http://www.chefal.org>

Master Chef Al Chase, graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and Living Light Culinary Arts Institute, offers many schedule options including 1/2-day, 2 or 3-day, 5-day, and 12-day vegan culinary arts classes in Eugene, Oregon. Chef Al also conducts on-site Chef-to-Chef training and consulting for food professionals interested in gourmet vegan cuisine. His cookbook, *The Layers of Flavors* featuring gourmet plant-based cuisine, is also available for order on the web site.

Living Light Culinary Arts Institute <http://www.rawfoodchef.com>

Cherie Soria, author of vegan recipe book *Angel Foods, Healthy Recipes for Heavenly Bodies* and director of Living Light Culinary Arts Institute located in Fort Bragg, California, offers certification training for chefs, teachers, and individuals in the art of creating gourmet living foods. Her site includes information about raw food courses and schedules. Graduates of the course

include Roxanne Klein of Roxanne's Restaurant, Chad Sarno of Vital Creations, Elaina Love author of *Elaina's Pure Joy Kitchen*, and Renee Loux-Underkoffler of The Raw Truth.

Natural Gourmet Cookery School <http://www.naturalgourmetschool.com>

Founded by Annemarie Colbin, author of *Food and Healing*, the New York City school has a 25-year history in culinary arts education. While the focus is on vegetarian cuisine, the classes include instruction using fruits and vegetables, whole grains and beans, soy foods, nuts and seeds, sea vegetables, seafood, organic poultry and eggs, and natural sweeteners. Courses include full-time and part-time instruction for chef's training and numerous evening and weekend classes for the public.

The School of Natural Cookery <http://www.naturalcookery.com>

Students learn vegan, vegetarian, and living foods preparation with a focus on improvisational cooking without a recipe. Professional chef instruction is also available. Some classes held in locations around the country.

P.O. Box 19466

Boulder, CO 80308-2466

Phone: 303-444-8068

Tree of Life Rejuvenation Center <http://www.treeoflife.nu/café.html>

Students can earn a master's degree in Vegan Live-Food Nutrition at the Tree of Life Foundation's College of Living Arts, a two-year program taught under the guidance of Gabriel Cousens, M.D. Three-month apprenticeship program available. Apprenticeship program also available in vegan organic nature farming.

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Culinary Arts

Abbey's Vegetarian Recipes <http://www.abbeysveterianrecipes.com>

Here's a web site that attracts readers by offering to email them a vegan recipe each week, recipes that just happen to be terrific. However, there's much more diversity once you begin exploring Alternatives to Eggs and Dairy, Organic Foods, Animal Rights, Recipe Books, Health and Fitness, Local Resources, and Links. There's even a discussion board.

Ashy's Vegetarian Recipes <http://ashycook.topcities.com>

A world traveler who loves to cook vegetarian shares a plethora of adapted recipes from around the world. Visitors to this site can enjoy a humorous slant on vegetarian philosophy, jokes, photos, cartoons, and short stories along with learning about vegetarian nutrition, cooking tips, home freezing tips, kitchen equipment, herbs and spices, and British/American terms glossary.

In a Vegetarian Kitchen <http://www.vegkitchen.com>

Cookbook author, Nava Atlas, invites everyone to join her in her kitchen for recipes galore, a recipe exchange, and links to other web sites.

Institute for Culinary Awakening <http://www.ica-plantchefs.com>

Chef Al Chase, graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and Living Light Culinary Arts Institute, offers information on Educational Programs, Chef-to-Chef Consulting, and Gourmet Vegan Catering for small and large events at this web site. His cookbook of gourmet plant-based cuisine is also available for order.

Robin Robertson's Vegetarian Cookbooks <http://www.robinrobertson.com>

In addition to information about her many cookbooks, Chef-Cookbook Author-Cooking Instructor Robin Robertson includes vegetarian cooking tips, sample recipes, famous vegetarians, links to other vegetarian resources, and a schedule of her classes, workshops, and books signings

Smoothie Research.Org <http://www.smoothieresearch.org>

With a unique and witty approach the site boasts the first full-scale exploration into the internet's potential to promote activities that encourage peaceful enjoyment and global collaboration through smoothies. Readers will discover projects involving smoothies, articles, ingredients, and reviews along with a featured smoothie recipe on the home page.

The Vegan Chef <http://www.veganchef.com> Chef Beverly Lynn Bennett's home on the web encourages everyone to "Take the VegPledge!" She includes her message board, prize-winning recipes, her biography, information on her electronic cookbook, and links to other sites.

The V.I.P Manual (Vegetarian Implementation Program)

<http://www.thevegetariankitchen.com>

A professionally created and practical restaurant guide to help get a vegetarian program up and running. A comprehensive manual with 20 expandable daily soup recipes (indexed), 4- week salad cycle of 5 recipes plus 16 daily salads and condiments. Also includes a 6- week-hot-food cycle of 12 recipes plus 3 daily hot-food recipes, with ordering lists and more. This manual provides Health Conscious Choices For All Food Service Providers.

Welcome to Veggiechef.com!! <http://www.veggiechef.com>

Marie Oser, author of *Soy of Cooking*, has created an outstanding resource for every kitchen. The book begins with well researched information about the health aspects of soy and features her original recipes from appetizers to desserts. She refers to herself as a soy specialist, and indeed she is. Her books and magazine articles focus on health and nutrition.

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Dating

Aubergine Vegetarian Introductions <http://www.aubergineintroductions.com>

Visitors to this site won't find eggplant information, but will discover a way to meet like-minded vegetarians. Features of this UK service include a message board, private chat room, members' online profiles, classified ads, a calendar, and information about regular social events.

Green Singles <http://www.greensingles.com>

Posts free personal ads for singles interested networking with others who are interested in environmental, vegetarian, and animal rights issues. Includes literary contributions from participants, classified ads, and links to other sites.

Living and Raw Foods Personals <http://www.living-foods.com/personals>

Vegetarians and vegans who eat a minimum of 50% living and raw foods and believe in living and raw foods concepts can take advantage of this free service to meet others with similar beliefs.

Vegan Singles Club <http://www.all4vegan.net/vsc/index.htm>

Singles who desire to meet, date, socialize and develop relationships with like-minded vegans have the opportunity to place ads and respond to ads. There is no fee for this service.

Vegetarian Personals <http://vegetarian.particularpersonals.com>

The Particular Personals network strives to create online communities of people with common interests who can meet and interact. Vegetarian Personals offers a free service to all types of vegetarians who want to search for like-minded others.

Veggie Dating Club <http://www.veggiedate.com>

Those looking for that ideal person who shares their vegetarian views can sign up with this vegetarian dating and networking service. Modest fee for six month or annual membership.

Veggie Romance <http://www.veggieromance.com>

Based in the UK, this free online dating service offers vegetarians and vegans a place to meet. Their motto is: "Bring back free love." The site offers a unique blind-date feature and the Daisychain with boards discussing dating tips, dating stories, and coping with break-ups.

VMM (Vegetarian Matchmakers) <http://www.veggiematchmakers.com>

Established in the UK in 1980 VMM is a worldwide dating service for vegans and vegetarians. Vicky Bazgier and Alan Wrigley, who now operate the service, were originally brought together by VMM. Subscribers can contact each other by e-mail, instant messaging, or snail mail. Details

for membership are provided on the website.

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Eco-Friendly Vegan Products

All Vegan

San Diego, California, shoppers looking for cruelty-free products can find their needs met at a new store that features women's and men's leather-free shoes, belts and handbags, animal rights T-shirts, pins, bumperstickers, and tote bags. Other products include vegan candles and lip balm, vegan cookbooks, gourmet vegan chocolates, meat-free jerky and many more sweet treats and surprises. Visit in person or shop by email.

lca_sandiego@bigfoot.com

Dank Forest <http://www.dankforest.com>

Dank Forest calls itself "the world's leading online source for Hemp, Homebrew, and hydroponics for all lifestyles." The company offers hemp products including headwear, wallets, footwear, men's and women's apparel, belts, and ropes and twines. Their Learning Center offers information about hemp, home brewing, and hydroponics.

A Different Daisy <http://www.differentdaisy.com>

The compassionate shopper can choose from 700 different products at this online vegan store to find everything in cruelty-free items from books and videos to food, body care and cosmetics, gift baskets, first aid products, home décor, vitamins and minerals, candles, toys, household, and herbal products.

Food Without a Face CD <http://www.heidihowe.com>

Ear X-tacy recording artist and Louisville, Kentucky native Heidi Howe has released a CD titled "Food Without a Face" in order to raise awareness of how the food choices we make affect our planet. The CD (\$4.99) includes the title song, 2 other songs, vegetarian recipes and earth-friendly coupons. All profits benefit EarthSave International. She is touring nationally to promote the project. For information on how to buy a CD and/or help the project, log onto her website.

Green Leafy.org <http://www.greenleafy.org>

This site offers two unique and colorfully illustrated posters, one for yoga enthusiasts, and one to help learn about vitamins and minerals. The Vitamin and Mineral poster presents nutrition positively by listing all the important nutrients in multicolor, accented with brightly colored fruit

and vegetable designs. Ideal for yoga practitioners, the Yoga poster illustrates 12 basic postures in cheerful colors with a name and description for each posture.

KidBean.com <http://www.kidbean.com>

Family owned and operated online children's store offering products that are vegan and/or organic. Sells wooden toys, natural cleaning supplies, cloth diapers, baby slings, organic and hemp clothing, bath soaps, linens, herbal and homeopathic remedies, and other related items.

Kidscapes, Inc. <http://www.kidscapes.com>

An interactive experience for kids, parents and teachers, Kidscapes offers packets of untreated seeds for organic gardening to help children learn about their environment and to develop an appreciation for growing vegetables, flowers and indoor/outdoor plants. Also available on this site are gardening tools, accessories, clothing, totes, magazines, and books to help children develop social and environmental responsibilities

MooShoes <http://www.mooshoes.com>

A "stylish and high quality yet leather-free pair of shoes" can be ordered from this New York store. In addition to shoes they carry vegan belts, purses, wallets, jackets, t-shirts, buttons, magnets, patches, and stickers.

Pangea Vegan Products <http://www.veganstore.com>

For those who follow a vegan lifestyle, this site is a haven, a place to shop online for vegan products that are hard to locate in ordinary market places. They offer vegan products like leather-free shoes, belts, wallets, and luggage for travel. Food items, books, household products, and body care items that are cruelty-free can be found here. Along with announcing that their shoes are not made in sweatshops, they donate to animal rights causes.

Rawganique.com <http://www.rawganique.com>

"Raw, Organic, Unique" is the motto of Touch, Klaus, Nok., and Chao, a group of raw vegans who are 100% committed to the environment. They created an online store that sells hemp and organic cotton clothing for men and women, footwear, bed & bath items, organic raw foods, hemp foods, blenders, juicers, eco books and gifts. Featured is their RawForLife e-zine as well as many raw recipes.

Seventh Generation <http://www.seventhgen.com>

This site educates people into thinking more ecologically about using non-toxic household cleaners, laundry and dish products, and recycled paper goods and offers these products for purchase. Featured are articles about environmentally conscious products, animal testing, chlorine, and petroleum. Read their latest newsletter to find out what's in the milk and what's in the water.

SociallyResponsible.Org <http://www.SociallyResponsible.Org>

A green website for socially responsible people who want to do business and learn about others who share similar concerns. At this site you will find an extensive directory of links for Eco-Shopping, Vegetarian Resources, Renewable Energy, Investing, Organic Farming, Health and Beauty, Hearth and Home, Food and Beverages, and much more.

THINKIN' FOLKS BOOKS <http://www.ahimsaworks.com>

At this site you can order from a gigantic selection of books and tapes on all aspects of the vegetarian lifestyle from Humane Education, Compassion, and Environment to Vegan Lifestyles, Anti-Milk, GMO's, and Spirituality. They offer free shipping and handling, making their prices very affordable.

Tree of Life Rejuvenation Center <http://ec-securehost.com/TreeofLifeRejuvenationCenter/>

Their Awakened Living Shoppe offers a host of products to support the living foods lifestyle including raw foods, body and hair care products, household cleaners, EM (Effective Microorganism products), kitchen tools, supplements, blenders, dehydrators, ionizers, juicers, rebounders, sprout systems, and wheatgrass juicers.

Vegan Essentials <http://www.veganessentials.com>

On-line shopping company offering vegan products certified by Vegan Action. Offerings include body care items, household products, hemp home goods, body wear and jewelry, shoes, clothing,, sweets, and more.

Vegetarian Image <http://www.vegetarianimage.com>

Wear your commitment to vegetarianism with T-shirts, necklaces and pins that stir up curiosity and present an opportunity to share your views with non-vegetarians.

e-mail: janet@vegetarianimage.com

TheVegetarianSite <http://www.thevegetariansite.com>

Shoppers who want to avoid animal products may want to check this online store offering men's and women's leather-free footwear, hemp clothing, hemp wallets and purses, vegan personal care products, and vegan books and videos.

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Edible Wild Plants

Foraging With the Wildman <http://www.bigfoot.com/~wildmansteve>

Naturalist, author, and environmental educator "Wildman" Steve Brill has created a unique site with information on finding and using wild plants for food and medicine. Steve lives in New York and teaches classes about nature and how to forage for edible plants without harming the environment. He encourages students to explore their neighborhoods, backyards, parks and forests for delicious wild vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and herbs that serve as home remedies as well as

food.

School of Self-Reliance <http://www.self-reliance.net/time.html>

Resourceful Christopher Nyerges teaches others how to survive on nature's offerings by holding classes in wild food foraging, orienteering, primitive fire-making, water finding and purification, shelter building, making soap from plants, and cooking wild foods, along with indoor skills like recycling and gardening.

P.O. Box 41834

Los Angeles, CA 90041

Phone: 323-255-9502

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Farmers and Farmers Markets

California Farmers' Markets <http://www.farmernet.com>

Produced by the folks who operate the Hollywood Farmers' Market, this site provides information on where to go to buy fresh produce in Southern California. Attractive photographs accompany basic information on markets in Hollywood, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Venice, Westwood, and Encino as well as brief listings of other locations. A list of coming events at the Hollywood market is included. A link is provided to Fountainhead's Los Angeles Superstation which provides "useful information for Angelenos, visitors and friends."

Culinary Farms <http://www.livinglettuce.com>

BettergrowHYDRO <http://www.bghydro.com>

Culinary Farms grows and sells a wide variety of hydroponically grown lettuces, herbs, edible flowers, and baby lettuce mixes at many farmers' markets as well as restaurants and caterers in the Los Angeles area. bettergroHYDRO is a retail store in Pasadena that offers instruction and sells equipment to anyone interested in growing vegetables hydroponically. The store has a small café that prepares salads and sandwiches made from vegetables grown on the farm.

Harbor Area Farmers' Markets <http://www.harborareafarmersmarkets.org>

Harbor Area Farmers' Markets of Long Beach, California have created a colorful site to encourage people to attend the five weekly, year-round markets they sponsor in the area. Included are monthly updates on each market, a map of market locations, featured farmers, and links to related

web sites.

Ronniger's Potato Farm <http://www.ronnigers.com>

Certified organic small family operated seed potato and vegetable farm in Northern Idaho that uses natural fertilizers and indigenous soil microbes. Specializes in seed potatoes with about 20 different varieties including Russian Blue, Irish Cobbler, Red Norland, Russet, Warba Pink-Eye. Other seed crops include garlic, onions, and three varieties of Jerusalem artichokes. Free catalog and growers guide available.

Seasonal Produce and Farmers Markets <http://www.seasonalchef.com> Mark Thompson of Culver City assembles all of this in-season news from down on the local farm. He presents a chart showing when the various crops are in season. His Food Page provides recipes and tips on how to choose and use fruits and vegetables. He profiles farmers on the cutting edge of the small farm renaissance. To assist people in finding fresh produce, he provides lists of the largest farmers markets in both Northern and Southern California as well as the rest of the United States.

Z-Ranch <http://www.zranch.com>

Abu Zubair and his wife, Zeba, are farmers who specialize in growing and bringing their produce to local farmers' markets in addition to shipping worldwide. In early spring the ranch features potatoes and asparagus. Late spring through summer harvest includes corn and organic melons. In 2001 their asparagus will also be organic. Abu informs his web site visitors with recipes that include his in-season crops and alerts them to his upcoming produce as well.

260 N. Tustin, Unit D

Orange, CA 92867

Phone: 714-538-7775

Email: azubair@aol.com

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Food Shopping Online

ABC Vegetarian On-Line Store <http://www.vegefood.com>

Vegetarian on-line food store has developed a web site which includes vegetarian recipes, health news reports, and discussion boards. Shoppers can purchase vegetarian foods on-line and have them shipped to their homes.

Diamond Organics <http://www.diamondorganics.com>

They call themselves "the freshest site on line," promising home delivery of organic foods overnight. This attractive web location features recipes and photo gallery with exceptional pictures of fruits and vegetables. Visitors can browse the online catalog or order a paper catalog to place orders.

Door to Door Organics <http://www.doortodoororganics.com>

Organic produce delivered right to your door can be ordered at this site for residents in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Connecticut, and New York City. In addition, vegetarian staples and organic tofu as well as bulk produce are available.

Lori's Earth Friendly Products <http://www.earth-friendly.com>

Lori and her husband, Mason, have sought out healthy and tasty, kosher vegetarian food products and want to pass the word on to others. Some products are vegan. Organic cotton clothing is also a focus. One section discusses the importance of fiber in the diet and how to encourage adults and children to increase their fiber intake.

The Mail Order Catalog for Healthy Eating <http://www.healthy-eating.com>

Sister company of Book Publishing Company offers products to "help people eat better and live longer." Along with an extensive selection of vegetarian and vegan cookbooks and health titles, they also sell soy food products, hemp products, ethnic foods, vegetarian pet food, personal care and household supplies, baking mixes, sauces, salad dressings and egg, cheese, and dairy substitutes.

Melissa's World Variety Produce, Inc. <http://www.melissas.com>

Here's a company that scours the globe to offer an amazing array of unique fresh and dried fruits and vegetables that are available on-line. Also available are assortments of fresh fruit by the basket, fresh herbs, extraordinary mushrooms, a plethora of chiles, heirloom tomatoes, and dried and jarred international vegetarian staples.

P.O. Box 21127, Los Angeles, CA 90021

Phone: 800-588-0151

e-mail: nancye@melissas.com

Nature's First Law Online Superstore <http://www.rawfood.com>

Guarantees the lowest prices on raw and living food products anywhere. Store bills itself as "Resources for Massive Health Abundance" and includes items such as crackers, dried fruit, nut and seed butters, raw nuts, and sea vegetables. A good source of living-foods books.

Urban Organic <http://www.urbanorganic.com>

From offices in New York City and Portland Oregon, Urban Organic, the largest organic produce home delivery company in the United States, is offering a 16 to 20 lb. box of 15 to 18 different fruits and vegetables for \$39.99 to locations with 1 to 2 days shipping. The group also provides arrangements to market produce to regional and national buying clubs.

VegeCyber Inc. <http://www.vegecyber.com>

This non-profit web site is an online vegetarian food store devoted to promoting healthy people and a healthy planet. They offer mostly vegan, some vegetarian, food products that include frozen

seafood and meat substitutes such as shrimp, ham, steak, lamb, chicken breast and nuggets, hot dogs. They also offer sea vegetables, agar agar, sea salt, grains, noodles, curry powder, seasonings, ginseng tea, organic espresso coffee, books, music.

Vegetarian Store <http://www.vegetarianstore.com>

Sells soy-based meat alternatives, dairy alternatives, butters and spreads from Worthington, Loma Linda, Natural Touch, and Cedar Lake. Meat alternatives include items such as Savory Dinner Loaf by Loma Linda and Veja-Links by Worthington.

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Great Information Sources

All are Welcome at VegSource--Your Friendly Vegetarian Resource!

<http://www.vegsource.com>

This is the most colorful, information-packed site you can imagine. It boasts, "Friendly support 25 hours a day, 8 days a week for your healthy, vegetarian lifestyle." Founded by Jeff and Sabrina Nelson of Chatsworth, California, this site is the starting point for new vegetarians as well as a meeting place for old timers. The Veg-Source On-Line Magazine is loaded with articles by some of the biggest names in vegetarianism and medicine. It hosts a number of Veg Source Discussion Boards, provides lists of interesting reading, offers 5,000 vegetarian recipes, presents book reviews as well as nutritional data and health/diet facts, and links to numerous web sites. Their mission statement is "to offer the most up-to-date health and diet information possible and to encourage the many good reasons for a plant-based diet."

EatVeg <http://www.eatveg.com>

A web site dedicated to providing resources and educating all people about the benefits of eating an organic, plant-based diet with emphasis on organic raw foods. Book and juicer recommendations are offered along with many links to other web sites of vegetarian interest.

Famous Veggie <http://www.famousveggie.com>

Famous vegetarian personalities, past and present, are listed on this site along with their vegetarian or vegan preferences. Need a vegetarian quote? You'll find it here along with nutrition information, stories of vegetarian interest, FAQs, a chat room, recipes, and links.
e-mail: webmaster@famousveggie.com

ForVegetarian.com <http://www.forvegetarian.com>

Visitors have an opportunity to participate in a valuable vegetarian survey compiled by a registered nurse who has turned to vegetarianism to achieve her health goals. Read one insider's view about a healthcare system that fails to address the pathway to health. Benefits of vegetarianism, links, and a reading list are also part of this web site.

Grass Roots Veganism with Jo Stepaniak <http://www.vegsource.com/joanne>

Jo Stepaniak, renowned cookbook author and spokesperson for veganism, has her own web presence that provides information about all aspects of vegan living and answers questions about vegan lifestyle. The site features essays on vegan living, quips and quotes, sample recipes, a brief biography, and "Ask Joanne!" Information on her books and her public appearances is also provided.

Healing Heart Foundation <http://heart.kumu.org>

Dr. Neal Pinckney introduces his web site with a personal story of how he has reversed his own heart disease. He has established the Healing Heart Foundation to show others how they can prevent as well as reverse heart disease. Included is information on what to eat, how to exercise, and how to manage stress, all part of his Healthy Heart Handbook. FAQ, recipes, and a discussion group are all part of the package.

International Vegetarian Union - Historical Vegetarians & Advocates of Vegetarianism

<http://www.ivu.org/history>

History buffs will love delving into this site which includes people in history who have made statements about vegetarianism. Links are provided to articles about people going all the way back to 8th Century BC.

Loma Linda University Vegetarian Food Guide <http://www.llu.edu/llu/nutrition/vegguide.html>

Extensive experimental research at this Seventh Day Adventist University Hospital was the basis for establishing a vegetarian food guide to attain optimal health and prevent diet related diseases and as well as recovery from diet related health problems. Study the helpful food pyramid, learn about the benefits of plant foods, and adopt the health regimen recommended by doctors involved in many years of health studies.

e-mail: webmaster@univ.llu.edu

New World Vision <http://www.newworldvision.org>

This organization is dedicated to transforming the world through Humane Education in public schools. They plan events and offer humane education, training, consulting, workshops, school programs, and educational resources in California and beyond.

PCRM Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine <http://www.pcrm.org>

Founded in 1985, PCRM is a non-profit organization supported by nearly 5,000 physicians and 100,000 laypersons. This group promotes preventive medicine through innovative programs, encourages higher standards for ethics and effectiveness in research, and advocates broader access to medical services. They promote a plant based diet, challenge the government's dietary guidelines, engage in research projects, and discourage animal experimentation. PCRM publishes a quarterly magazine.

Planet Veggie UK <http://www.planetveggie.co.uk>

At this British website you can find a plethora of information to support your vegetarian or vegan lifestyle including advice on planning a vegan wedding from invitations to menu suggestions. Discover books, vegan products, jewelry, vegan food shopping in London, vegan cat and dog food, links, and employment opportunities in the UK, the US, and Europe.

Questions and Answers on Vegetarian Nutrition

<http://members.aol.com/sauromalus/vegnutr.htm>

You don't have to be Jewish to recognize that Dr. Jay B. Lavine is presenting sound information about vegetarian nutrition. In a question and answer format the doctor presents many questions asked of vegetarians by the unenlightened and the wannabees. Dr. Lavine's focus on the importance of diet in disease prevention is to be commended.

Soyafood.info <http://www.soya.be>

At this web site readers learn about the many aspects of soy from its health benefits to individual foods made from soy such as tofu, tempeh, miso, soy milk. Featured are studies showing positive benefits of soy, recipes, and ratings of European soy products. The Soya Health section presents The Cows vs. Soya Milk comparison.

SoyStache <http://www.soystache.com>

The team of Bill Amey and Jeff Rogers has developed "a unique project to promote a plant-based diet." The principle feature of the site is their information about famous vegetarians. Also included are recipes, an extensive link list, physicians advocating a vegan diet, and environmental, health, and animal rights facts.

Tempeh.info <http://www.tempeh.info/index.html>

Discover a highly informative web site that reveals everything there is to know about tempeh. Learn how to make it from start to finish in your own home, how to vary recipes, and how to create your own incubator and to control the temperature. Information on inoculants, storage, and troubleshooting are also covered. Visitors can purchase tempeh starter at this site.

Veg For Life <http://www.vegforlife.org>

Sponsored by Farm Sanctuary, this website is intended "to help guide you through the world of cruelty-free eating and living." Includes information about how to transition to a vegetarian diet, sources of cruelty-free clothing, links to information about vegetarian food and restaurants, vegetarian children issues, caring for dogs and cats, suggestions for vegan activism, and more.

Veg World <http://www.veg-world.com/>

A combined effort of vegetarians and vegans in Britain and the U.S. provides information and support to the vegetarian community and to those considering vegetarianism. At this site are numerous recipes, vegetarian articles, suggested books, tips to get one started on the veg path, a list of famous vegetarians, and links to vegetarian web sites.

Vegan-L's Most Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.michael.traub.id.au/faqvegan.html>

This site presents Michael Traub's mini internet encyclopedia of veganism. It answers just about anything you would want to ask about vegan lifestyle. We downloaded the information and ended up with 20 pages of printed text. If you don't find the answer here, you can contact him by e-mail

at michael@traub.id.au

Vegan Peace <http://www.veganpeace.com>

A compassionate web site where visitors can learn about veganism, choose original e-cards with vegan messages, submit cookbook reviews, learn about sweatshops and child labor, read about the many benefits of peaceful parenting, discover that being gay is okay, and select books to purchase from the annotated book list. They can learn about healthy vegan eating, read about environmental concerns, and explore the extensive links by category.

Vegan Street <http://www.veganstreet.com>

Committed to "commerce with a conscience," this vegan activist group has created a dynamic web presence with a publication presenting an assorted mix of provocative features. Included are news stories, interviews, editorials, a community directory, recipes, kitchen tips, chapters from an activists handbook, etiquette advice from Gwendolyn Good-deed, and items to buy at the Vegan Street Market.

vegan.com: Disparaging Meat Since 1997 <http://www.vegan.com>

Erik Marcus, author of *Vegan, the New Ethics of Eating*, is the guiding spirit of this Vegan Foundation web site which provides vegan news, resources, and recipes. A typical issue will have a feature article of interest to vegans, nutrition advice, a featured cookbook, product of the month, recipe of the month, upcoming events, and items on sale in their bookstore.

Vegetarian Diet Info <http://www.vegetarian-diet.info> Assembled by Dr. A. Johnson of the United Kingdom, this site presents a mass of information for vegetarians or those contemplating vegetarianism. Included are vegetarian nutrition, weight loss methods, vegetarianism and health, vegan nutrition, vegetarian soy foods, and links to other vegetarian weight loss sites. Visitors are "urged to pursue a healthy approach to weight loss and dieting which should include a realistic combination of balanced diet and exercise."

Vegetarian Links <http://hippy.com/veggie.htm>

We enter Hippyland to find nine categories of links for anyone interested in vegetarian stuff. Beginning with "Activities for Vegetarians," this site is a gateway to information on organic farming, vegetarian cooking, vegetarian restaurants and products, and answers to frequently asked questions about vegetarianism. Featured are lists of vegetarian organizations and groups interested in "Our Animal Friends."

Vegetarian Nutrition Resource List <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs/bibs/gen/vegetarian.htm>

Compiled by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, LD, FADA, and produced by the Food and Nutrition Center of the National Agricultural Library of the USDA, this extensive compilation of materials is an outstanding resource for vegetarians. Included are General Information on Vegetarian Nutrition, Vegetarian Diets and Disease Prevention and Treatment, Vegetarian Diets for Special Populations, Soyfoods, Vegetarian Cooking and Foods, and Resource Centers.

VegFamily <http://www.vegfamily.com>

Subtitled Vegan Parenting Online, this web location created by Erin and Steve Pavlina, is a resource for vegan parents. Includes shopping information, articles of interest to vegetarians, a discussion board, experts who answer queries about topics such as pregnancy, cooking, exercise,

book reviews, product reviews, and more.

The Veggie Place <http://www.veggieplace.com>

This site has a strong focus on preservation of the earth's resources through vegetarianism. Here you will find information on animal rights and the environment. Check out the Articles, Vegetarian Recipes, Resources, and numerous Links to enhance your vegetarian knowledge.

Veggies Unite <http://www.vegweb.com>

On-line vegetarian/vegan resource guide with over 4,000 recipes, Free newsletter, Free recipes via email, Chat, Recipe Exchange, Menu maker, Grocery list maker, Thousands of links to other veggie sites and information, Reader Poetry, Reader Testimonies and Bios, Shopping page, Periodic free drawings. Net surfers may join Veggies Unite by paying the \$15 annual dues; however, those who cannot afford the money, may join free.

Vegigirl's Guide to Ethical Protein <http://www.vegigirl.com>

Vegigirl Jessica Goeller, "Designer, Developer, and all-around Righteous Babe," has developed a web presence that focuses on ethical protein. Her site includes information on meat and poultry analogs; FAQ about vegetarianism, nutrition, and vegetarian foods; a list of foods showing ones that contain animal products; a link to her online vegetarian nutrition community; and a tribute to her grandmother, her vegetarian mentor.

Veg-it.com <http://www.veg-it.com>

This site encourages people who want to become vegetarians by offering helpful hints, a suggested store cupboard, a two-week menu plan, quick and easy meals, recipes, and links to other sites.

The World Carrot Museum <http://www.carrotmuseum.com>

This amazing web site displays extensive research on all aspects of carrots from growing, to detailed history, nutritional benefits, carrot trivia, unique recipes, medicinal benefits, anecdotal stories, carrot varieties, cultivation of carrots, and a fun page. Visitors will enjoy the personal touch and attractive drawings that are an integral part of this site.

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Holistic Health

The Chari Center of Health, Inc. <http://www.charicenter.com>

A unique San Diego health treatment center family owned and operated. Dr. Roopa Chari, Board

Certified in Internal Medicine, includes alternative therapies such as herbal remedies, hypnosis, thought field therapy, and interactive guided imagery along with conventional medicine to help her patients. Vegetarian cooking is an important part of the healing regimen and is taught by Mrs. Chari, a family member who was an instructor at the University of Toledo in Ohio.

Hippocrates Alternative Medicine Co. Inc. <http://www.curesallergy.com>

A licensed holistic medical center where Dr. Rad, M.D.S. Italy, C.A.F.C., C.M.A..S., N.A.E.T., ERT, TCM practitioner helps people overcome life-long allergies using the NAET method. In addition, Mind-Body Release Work developed over a 9-year period is also applied. Other practices at the center include homeopathy, naturopathy, aromatherapy, therapeutic touch, reiki, massage, and mercury free dentistry.

Spiritual Medicine and Holistic Health <http://www.spiritualmedicine.net>

Laurie Levine, author of a new book, *Spiritual Medicine*, offers many articles on healing on this site that includes help for those who suffer from pain, anger, confusion, or any of life's challenges. Laurie even presents an opportunity to talk "live" to her by downloading Firetalk, a free internet service, and attending her on-line discussions and workshops.

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International Web Sites

Indonesian Vegan Society <http://www.i-v-s.org>

An organization dedicated to promoting a vegan lifestyle, the Indonesian Vegan Society endeavors to make life better for animals, improve the environment, and educate people about the benefits of a vegan way of life. They offer a personals section that promotes pen pals and activity partners, discussion boards, invaluable links, readers' commentaries on vegan household products, recipes, and an outstanding FAQ section. The site can be viewed in English and Indonesian.

Mundo Vegetariano <http://www.mundovegetariano.com>

Webmaster Ana Moreno from Madrid has created a Spanish language, all-encompassing vegetarian web site that includes an impressive variety of articles on subjects that range from Animal Rights, Nutrition, and Ecology to Famous Vegetarians, Recipes, and Vegetarianism for Children, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers. In addition she includes a "yellow pages" of vegetarian organizations and a lengthy, categorized listing of links to other vegetarian web sites.

Vegan Family House <http://www.veganfamily.co.uk>

Assembled by a family in Northeastern Scotland, the Family House is arranged in different rooms, each providing information and links to other sources. Included are celebrity quotations, parenting information, recipes, books, holiday facts, and more.

Vegan Village <http://www.veganvillage.co.uk>

Vegans in the United Kingdom can access the resources of this group that has promoted veganism since 1997. The web site presents information on shopping, food and drink, social activities, travel, health, and vegan businesses. Includes a "Noticeboard" (bulletin board.)

Vegetarian/Vegan Society of Queensland <http://cwpp.slq.qld.gov.au/vvsq/default.asp>

Located in Brisbane, Australia, this organization encourages vegetarianism as a humane and responsible lifestyle and provides numerous features that educate people about vegetarianism. The site has information about cooking classes, newsletters, a lending library of books and videos, and items for sale such as books and T-shirts. Their resources include recipes, restaurant reviews, vegetarian resources, and links.

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Organic Gardening

Center for Vegan Organic Education <http://www.veganorganiced.org>

A non-profit organization focused on education and research to teach about healthy, sustainable vegan organic gardening techniques without the use of animal products. The organization is the first in the U.S. to educate farmers and home gardeners about growing vegetables with compassionate methods. Learn about classes, internship and volunteer opportunities, farm tours, product research and development, and their special soil conditioner.

Compost Guide <http://www.compostguide.com>

A comprehensive website that offers a complete guide to composting including the process of making compost, decomposition, compost materials, bins and tools, using the compost, and troubleshooting composting chart.

Garden Medicinals <http://www.gardenmedicinals.com>

Gardeners, herbalists, and herb growers may browse the on-line catalog of this company that offers

175 varieties of herbs, vegetables, and flowers. All seeds are untreated and grown organically, ecologically, or conventionally and are open-pollinated, non-gmo varieties. Includes information on using herbs wisely and an extensive links list to other herb sites.

P.O. Box 320

Earlsville, VA 22936

Phone: 434-964-9113

FAX: 434-973-8717

Gardens Alive <http://www.gardens-alive.com>

Sells environmentally responsible products for the gardener from **organic** fertilizers to beneficial insects. They have an **organic** solution for every garden challenge.

5100 Schenley Place

Lawrenceburg, IN 47025

Phone: 812-537-8650

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works <http://www.smartgardening.com>

This ecology-focused agency began The Countywide Yard Waste Program in 1990 to help people learn about backyard composting, grass recycling and water-wise gardening to reduce disposal of solid waste in landfills. Learn the facts and the techniques to create your own natural fertilizer for healthy soil and healthy plants and vegetable gardens.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

Environmental Programs Division

Countywide Yard Waste Program

P.O. Box 1460

Alhambra, CA 91802-1460

Phone: 888-253-2652

FAX: 626-458-3593

Master Composter <http://www.mastercomposter.com>

For those who enjoy growing and harvesting their own **organic** vegetables and flowers, learning the art of composting is a valuable aid to creating the healthiest, vitamin and mineral-rich soil. You don't have to be a green thumb. This site tells all and offers a number of composting methods, step-by-step instructions in building a compost pile, and offers helpful information on overcoming composting problems.

Native Seed Search <http://www.nativeseeds.org>

An Arizona-based nonprofit conservation organization that works to conserve, distribute and document the adapted and diverse varieties of agricultural seed, their wild relatives, and the role these seeds play in cultures of the American Southwestern and northwest Mexico. The site posts the history of the organization and retail seed offerings.

Salt Spring Seeds <http://www.saltspringseeds.com/>

Offers Heritage and Heirloom Seed Catalog for **Organic** Gardeners. Dedicated to a safe and sustainable **organic** agriculture, and to all of the organic gardeners out there.

Seed Savers Exchange <http://seedsavers.org>

Specializes in preserving heirloom vegetable and flower seeds from extinction. Their focus is on

heirloom varieties that people brought to North America when their families immigrated as well as traditional varieties grown by Native Americans, Mennonites, and the Amish. A delight for gardeners who want to grow exceptional varieties of vegetables and flowers. Phone or write for catalog.

3076 North Winn Road
Decorah, IA 52101
Phone: 319-382-5990

Seed Search <http://www.seedsearch.demon.co.uk>

British author of horticulture books offers visitors to her web site an opportunity to locate **organic** and heirloom seeds for over 7,500 vegetables. Flowering plant seed resources are also available. One can identify plants by their botanical names, locate unique species, find distributors, gardening books, links, and special offers.

Seeds of Change <http://store.yahoo.com/seedschange/ourorfoodpro.html>

Sells certified **organic** vegetable seeds, seedlings, and **organic** foods from beans, miso, onions, bell peppers, quinoa, and amaranth, to bunches of basil.

P.O. Box 15700
Santa Fe, NM 87506
Phone: 888-762-7333
e-mail: gardener@seedschange.com

Victory Seed Company <http://www.victoryseeds.com>

Relies on the sale of seeds to accomplish their primary mission: to protect seeds. Sells hundreds of open-pollinated and heirloom seeds packaged in inner resealable bags. All seeds are grown by them or purchased from a network of other heirloom seed growers.

P.O. Box 192
Molalla, OR 97038
Phone: 503-829-3126
e-mail: inquiries@VictorySeeds.com

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Organizations

BioDemocracy/Organic Consumers Association <http://OrganicConsumers.org>

This group is "dedicated to building a healthy, safe and sustainable system of food production and consumption." The organization is a clearinghouse for information on organic standards, genetically engineered foods, food irradiation, bovine growth hormones, toxic foods, and mad cow disease.

Chicago Vegetarian Society <http://www.chicagovegetariansoc.org>

Chicago vegetarians have their spot on the net to "help serve Chicagoland's growing vegetarian population." Includes information about their veggie events (especially their Chili Cook Off), recipes, and links to other sites.

EarthSave <http://www.earthsave.org>

Founded by John Robbins, EarthSave is a global movement that "promotes food choices that are healthy for people and the environment." The group's mission is to "educate, inspire and empower people to shift toward a plant-based diet and to take compassionate action for all life on earth." Their web site includes a FAQ page, a discussion board, essays on significant topics, links to other relevant web locations, and information about the organization, its programs, and how to join.

Food for Life Global <http://www.ffl.org>

Billed as the World's Largest Vegan/Vegetarian Food Relief, this Hare Krishna organization distributes 30,000 "karma-free vegetarian meals" daily to needy people around the world. The site provides information and photos of the group's humanitarian efforts.

Going Vegetarian <http://www.vegsoc.org/newveg>

Maintained by the UK Vegetarian Society, this site presents information on why people should be vegetarians, answers common questions about vegetarianism, gives useful tips on going and staying vegetarian, and tells what a person should eat every day on a vegetarian diet.

Mothers for Natural Law <http://www.safe-food.org>

Founded in 1996, this organization's focus is on genetic engineering. Their site offers information on genetically engineered crops, what to eat and how to shop to avoid genetically engineered foods, and their campaign to label GE foods and for certification of foods which would receive a non GE label.

North American Vegetarian Society <http://www.navs-online.org>

Founded in 1974, NAVS is "dedicated to promoting the vegetarian way of life." The organization publishes *Vegetarian Voice*, a quarterly magazine and sponsors regional and national conferences. World Vegetarian Day and Summerfest are two major activities of the group. Their web site contains sample articles from the magazine, campaign information, a list of affiliate groups, details about their annual events, and links.

Southern California Vegetarians <http://SoCalVeg.org>

A Los Angeles based organization that aims to educate on the benefits of a plant-based diet and to demonstrate concern for the environment, human health, the treatment of animals, and world health. The site features educational events, current events, pot lucks, restaurant outings, lists of local vegetarian restaurants, and vegetarian links.

SoyHappy.org <http://www.soyhappy.org>

Johanna McCloy has organized a national campaign to encourage all major league baseball parks to have veggie dogs available for fans. The site contains a Ballpark Reference Guide to assist those who want to write letters, send e-mails, or make phone calls urging the baseball clubs to provide food for vegetarians.

Vegetarian Pages <http://www.veg.org/veg/>

This is a good starting point for anyone who wants to know what it means to be a vegetarian. The site contains FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), news, vegetarian events around the world, recipes, books and software, and an extensive list of famous vegetarians. There is a mega index for vegetarians and a World Guide which includes organizations, news groups, and web links.

Vegetarian Resource Group <http://www.vrg.org>

The Vegetarian Resource Group is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public on vegetarianism and interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, ethics, and world hunger. In a graphically attractive site, the group, which publishes the *Vegetarian Journal*, includes vegetarian and vegan recipes, nutrition information, recipes, excerpts from *Vegetarian Journal*, vegetarian travel information, and a vegetarian game. Membership in the organization includes a subscription to the magazine which is published six times a year

Vegetarian Society of Colorado <http://www.vsc.org>

This internet site is the voice of an organization that has been in existence since 1975 and has over 500 members in 5 branch groups around the state. Visitors will find "Topics of Interest to Vegetarians" that are reprinted from ones produced and distributed by the group. They will also be able to access information in the following areas: "Why I Should Become a Vegetarian ", a "Vegetarian Dining Guide" for Colorado, and "Links to Other Sites of Interest."

Voice for a Viable Future <http://www.vegsource.com/lyman>

Founded by Howard Lyman, the ex-cattlerancher who won't eat meat, the web site features biographical information, his speaking engagements, the Oprah broadcast and subsequent trial, the veggie libel laws, and the latest facts about Mad Cow Disease. Also presented are recommended reading for beginning vegetarians and a trial discussion board. Lyman has turned vegan and encourages education on the health, environmental and ethical benefits of an organic, plant based diet. His book, Mad Cowboy is featured at <http://www.madcowboy.com>

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Publications

Just Eat an Apple <http://www.justeatanapple.com>

The official publication of Nature's First Law, an organization which promotes the benefits of a raw food diet. The web version contains articles from the the publication with information on how to subscribe to the magazine.

Health Science Magazine <http://www.healthscience.org>

A quarterly journal published by the National Health Association, a non-profit organization that promotes the benefits of a plant based diet. The publication features articles on vegetarian nutrition and reports on the latest studies involving vegetarian health. The magazine helps to educate and empower individuals to understand that health results from healthful living.

Living Nutrition <http://www.livingnutrition.com>

Leading the raw health revolution, this magazine is the world's premier health periodical, dedicated to teaching health seekers how to eat their natural diet of alive raw foods. Nutrition education, raw food recipes, dietary transition help, natural hygiene history, and organic gardening are only a few of the many offerings in this magazine that is published twice yearly.

Natural Resource Directory <http://www.nrd.com>

An invaluable directory of services and resources for those who focus on conscious living. It is divided into the following categories: Environmentally and Socially Responsible Resources; Health, Fitness and Bodywork; Natural Remedies and Products, Natural Food Markets and Restaurants; and Counseling, Education and Spiritual Resources.

Raw Foods News <http://www.rawfoodsnews.com>

An online news magazine featuring breaking news, articles, surveys, and interactive features that promote the raw foods lifestyle.

Veg News <http://www.vegnews.com>

North America's premier vegetarian newspaper with over 100,000 readers includes interviews, travel information, recipes, book reviews, vegetarian products and resources, as well as informative news and special features for vegetarians. Now includes *Vegetarian Baby and Child*, formerly a separate publication. For a free sample copy send an e-mail from their website.

Vegetarian Baby and Child <http://www.vegetarianbaby.com> is a bi-monthly newsletter for parents of children up through the age of three. The site features information from the newsletter, recipes, a calendar of vegetarian events, books, T-shirts, and other items that may be purchased. One of the highlights is the Healthy Baby Feature Story.

Vegetarian Journal <http://www.vrg.org/journal>

Published by the Vegetarian Resource Group, this bi-monthly magazine is directed to people interested in health, ecology, and ethics. Included are articles of interest to vegetarians, notices of vegetarian events, recipes, book reviews, product evaluations, and information about products and services. The on-line version contains excerpts from the magazine. Anyone becoming a contributing member of VRG for \$30 will receive the magazine plus a copy of *Vegan Handbook*.

Vegetarian Times' The Virtual Vegetarian <http://www.vegetariantimes.com>

The premiere vegetarian magazine displays a premiere web publication. Beginning with a an attractive graphically appealing home page, the editors have grouped a number of informative articles under headings like:

- Low Fat and Fast--tasty recipes that can be produced rapidly
- Essential Vegetarian--includes the healthy traditional diet pyramid
- Natural Remedies--taken from the section which appears in their publication. A recent issue featured Healthy Winter Skin.
- Virtual Voices --a place to ask questions and exchange information with other vegetarians. Includes health and diet, raising vegetarian children, animal rights, environmental issues, vegetarian etiquette, and a recipe exchange.
- Links-- an extensive annotated list of sites and links categorized under headings such as vegetarian and vegan organizations, vegetarian and vegan information, food, governmental, environmental, related information, and health.

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Radio and Television

Delicious TV <http://www.delicioustv.com>

A vegetarian cooking show created by Toni Avtges, Betsy Carson, and Kate Kaminsky that airs weekly throughout the state of Maine. The website offers a host of Tony's casual Mediterranean style recipes. See website for up-to-date information on air times.

GO VEGAN! With BOB LINDEN <http://www.goveganradio.com>

The first vegan radio show in the United States is heard Sunday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. (Pacific time) on KTYM radio 1460 AM in the Los Angeles area The program is available on the net at <http://www.goveganradio.com>

The show is also heard on CRN Cable Radio Network on cable TV channels around the country.

Linden interviews celebrities and presents current information to his listeners about events, lifestyles, and philosophy related to veganism and animal concerns. The web site features a schedule of fascinating guests appearing on future shows.

Go Vegan Texas! <http://www.kpft.org>

Now a regular feature on Pacifica Radio's KPFT, this program hosted by Shirley Wilkes-Johnson and Janice Blue is heard every other Monday at 90.1 on the FM dial and live at <http://www.kpft.org> 11:00 a.m. Central time and 1:00 p.m. Pacific time. Go Vegan Texas interviews prominent vegans and animal rights activists and presents information on upcoming events in an effort to promote a healthy and peaceful plant-based diet.

Living Healthy with Agi <http://www.achieveradio.com/showpages/agi.htm>

Two-time cancer survivor Agi Lidle features special guests on her interview-talk show broadcast on internet radio. The emphasis is on healthy lifestyle hints with listeners invited to call the toll-free number, 1-888-305-2424. Past shows are archived on the website.

VegTv.Com <http://www.vegtv.com>

America's first interactive vegan TV series is broadcast on the Healthy Living Channel Wednesday mornings at 8:00 a.m. Pacific time. The program can be seen on Echostar's Dish Network Channel 223 and cable systems around the country.

News journalist Jane Velez-Mitchell and cookbook author Marie Oser join forces to create shows that emphasize low-fat vegan recipes as well as provide informational interviews of celebrities who have gone vegan.

On the website they present a variety of "veggie videos" on nutrition, exercise, weight loss, disease prevention, sex, and lifestyle with the goal of turning the planet on to veggie living.

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Raw and Living Foods

The Ann Wigmore Natural Health Institute, Inc. <http://www.annwigmore.org>

Teaches self-healing through the living foods lifestyle that was created by Dr. Ann Wigmore. This health retreat, located in Puerto Rico, features uncooked natural organic foods along with many activities. Choose a certification program or personal healing program. Teaches planting, composting, sprouting, harvesting, food preparation, detoxing the body, and more.

The Garden Diet <http://www.thegardendiet.com>

A directory and portal to the raw food lifestyle and living food information with a plethora of resources for shopping, stores, food, equipment, and farmers markets. The site provides a

networking opportunity for raw food chefs, nutritionists, trainers, coaches, teachers, speakers, and home delivery services.

Garden of Health <http://www.gardenofhealth.com>

Karen Fierro has organized this site to promote **Natural Hygiene** and the **Living Food Lifestyle**. Featured are articles on living food, hygienic fasting, organic foods, the role of protein, and more. Also included is an extensive list of resources and links.

Healthful Living International <http://www.healthfullivingintl.org>

Founded in 1999, this group of international doctors, counselors, and educators provides information on the philosophy, science, and lifestyle practices of Natural Hygiene. They advocate a living-raw foods plant-based diet and promote garden culture for human nourishment and beautification. They work toward continuing education to benefit humans and to heal the planet.

Living and Raw Foods <http://www.living-foods.com>

Raw food devotees will find recipes, articles, information, testimonials, and support on this graphically attractive site. By joining the "living and raw food community," you can have free web based email at rawfoods.com.

Living Light Culinary Arts Institute <http://www.rawfoodchef.com>

Author of vegan recipe book *Angel Foods*, Cherie Soria is the director of Living Light Culinary Arts Institute which certifies chefs, teachers, and individuals in the art of creating gourmet living foods. Her site includes articles and information about certified chefs, workshops, retreats, and her book.

Pure Joy Living Foods <http://www.purejoylivingfoods.com>

A one-stop shop for living foods aficionados, this site offers products for raw food preparation, books, raw food classes, recipes, a calendar of upcoming events, catering and personal consultations by Elaina Love, the chef/catering manager of Living Light Culinary Arts Institute.

Raw Food Chat <http://www.rawfoodchat.com>

Raw food advocate Alex Malinsky has created this site for people who are interested in exchanging their raw lifestyle ideas. The heart of the site is the variety of message boards plus an extensive list of raw links. The message categories include Sprouting and Foraging, Raw Food Equipment and Resources, Exercise and Fitness, and more.

Raw For Life <http://www.rawforlife.com>

Raw aficionados and seekers of information about the raw lifestyle will find inspiration, training, personal chef and catering services, recipes, local potlucks and support groups, events, and resources. A complete service for raw foodists.

The Raw Vegan Network <http://www.TheRawVeganNetwork.com>

Provides online raw food certification for those wishing to expand their portfolios of expertise enabling them to serve others in their locale who would like to experience the health benefits of living a raw food lifestyle. Also offers free contact services for people desiring help in raw food services.

Tree of Life Rejuvenation Center <http://www.treeoflife.nu>

An oasis for awakening, they provide guests organic, vegan, live-food, kosher cuisine at the Tree of Life Café. Guests may participate in daily live-food preparation. Much of their food is grown on their organic farm nurtured with ocean minerals and EM (Effective Microorganism products). Participants can earn an M.A. in Vegan Live-Food Nutrition under the professorship of Gabriel Cousens, M.D., M.D.(H), Diplomat in Ayurveda.

Vital Creations <http://www.rawchef.org>

On this web site you will find Chef Chad Sarno's extensive list of vegan live-food resources, his delicious recipes, raw food menus, a raw food booklist, links, and his summer workshop schedule. To learn more about Chad, check out his biographical information.

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Restaurant Guides

Happy Cow's Global Guide to Vegetarian Restaurants <http://www.happycow.net>

Happy Cow is a compendium of vegetarian restaurants and health food stores across the nation as well as around the globe. People who travel have contributed resources to assist other travelers in locating places to eat and shop for vegetarian food. Visitors to the site are encouraged to contribute information to help keep the site current. Included are numerous links to other vegetarian web sites.

Regional Vegetarian Guide <http://www.regveg.org>

Created by Compassionate Action for Animals, this site is a nonprofit, community- maintained resource that provides a comprehensive listing of vegetarian,/vegan-friendly restaurants, markets, coffee shops, and more.

VegDining.com <http://www.veg dining.com>

VegDining.com is one of the longest-running online international vegetarian restaurant directories. Begun in 1999, it lists well over 1000 fully vegetarian restaurants and over 2000 reviews as well as hosting the annual VegDining Vegetarian Restaurants of the Year Awards. From Adelaide to Zurich, this is truly a global resource!

VegEats! <http://www.VegEats.com>

VegEats is slang for vegetarian and vegan foods and restaurants. This site is an extensive directory

of links to vegetarian and vegan restaurant listings from around the world. Also presented are links to vegan and vegetarian recipe collections on the net. The unique feature is that the site is presented in six languages: English, German, Spanish, French, Italian, and Portuguese.

Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores <http://www.vegetarian-restaurants.net>

John Howley, author of *Vegetarian Restaurants and Natural Food Stores* published in 2002, is keeping his book current by posting additions and corrections on this web site. The book lists over 2500 restaurants and natural food stores by city and state. Both the book and the site include additional information such as vegetarian types, nutritional benefits, famous vegetarians, vegetarian items at fast food restaurants, and a vegetarian glossary.

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Vegetarian Travel

Azienda Agrituristica Montali <http://www.montalionline.com>

Perched on a hill in romantic, historic Italy is Country House Montali, a charming hotel that features scenic views of Lower Tuscany, Trasimonto Lake, and the valley of Perugia. The hotel, located between Rome and Florence, beckons the visitor to enjoy one of its 10 rooms in the restored old stone farmhouse, delight in the panoramic views of both sunrise and sunset, take a swim in the outdoor pool, go trekking in the surrounding countryside, and dine on fine vegetarian cuisine made from foods grown right on the farm.

Azienda Agrituristica Montali, Via Montali 23

06068 Tavernelle di Panicale (PG) Italy

Phone: **39/075/8350680

FAX: **39/075/8350144

E-mailto:montali@montalionline.com

Bicycle Beano Vegetarian Cycle Tours <http://www.bicycle-beano.co.uk>

Cycling holidays on the idyllic lanes of Wales and the Welsh borders of England, with delicious vegetarian cuisine, mostly organic. Friendly non-macho groups, relaxed atmosphere.

Chez Philippe Bed and Breakfast <http://www.chezphilippe.info>

Located less than a 10-minute walk away from Papineau Metro station, and from there just a few stops away from Downtown Montreal. Offers four newly decorated rooms, two shared bathrooms,

a large terrace to relax in the summer and full home-cooked vegan breakfast. Pays particular attention to use only cruelty-free products in the room amenities and in the bathroom toiletries.

Chez Philippe

2457 rue Sainte Catherine Est
Montreal, Quebec, H2K 2J9 Canada
Phone: 514-890-1666
Toll free from US and Canada 1-877-890-1666
e-mail: ChezPhilippeBB@aol.com

Cinnamon Creek Ranch <http://www.cinnamoncreek.com>

Bed and breakfast in Three Rivers, California on the edge of Kings Canyon, Sequoia National Park, and the Sequoia National Forest offers continental vegan breakfasts in rustic rooms with a river view. Features romantic weekend packages. Amenities include king and queen beds, private entrances, river swimming, in room TV/VCR, coffeemaker and microwave. Offers day spa services including full massage, aromatherapy, and relaxation therapy in a private outdoor waterfall sanctuary. Three hours drive from Los Angeles.

P.O Box 54
Three Rivers, CA 93271
Phone: 559-561-1107
e-mail: Cinnamon@theworks.com

Earth Song House

Vegan and vegetarian Bed and Breakfast in Ashland, Oregon, USA
472 Walker Avenue
Ashland, Oregon 97520
Phone: 541-482-5330
E-mail: heartfelt@mind.net

Green Earth Travel <http://www.vegtravel.com>

Experienced travelers Donna Zeigfinger and Stephen Abelsohn team up to offer travel options that cater to vegan and vegetarian dietary needs. Some options available for those on a living foods diet also. From country inns to archeological digs this pair can send you cruising or flying on a memorable vacation.

7 Froude Circle
Cabin John, Maryland 20818
Phone: 301-571-4603 or 888-246-8343
E-mail: Greeneatvl@aol.com

Pukaki Homestay <http://www.pukakihomestay.co.nz>

Relaxing, comfortable accommodations in a nature setting on Lake Pukaki, a glacial-feed lake in New Zealand. Activities available include hiking, biking, nature walks, canoeing, sailing, swimming in pool or lake, yoga, and massage. Horseback riding nearby. Winter skiing nearby. Hosts Allan and Robyn, vegetarian for 25 years, serve vegetarian, vegan, and raw food and can accommodate those with wheat, gluten, and dairy intolerances.

Mt. Cook Highway
P.O. Box 59
Twizel, New Zealand

Phone: (03) 435-3240 or Cell Phone (027) 271-5330

e-mail: info@pukakihomestay.co.nz

Rio Caliente <http://www.riocaliente.com>

Translated as hot river, Rio Caliente is a resort located at the foothills of the Sierra la Primavera, a magnificent belt of pine forested extinct volcanic mountains about a 45-minute drive from the cultural, historic city of Guadalajara, Mexico. On its 25 acres, this restorative retreat offers hot mineral baths, a eucalyptus-scented steam room, mud wraps, private rooms with baths, yoga, horseback riding, swimming, massage, and hiking. Their organic, vegetarian buffets include fresh fruit juices, fruits and vegetables, many grown in their own organic gardens, whole grain dishes, and optional dairy products.

Rio Caliente Travel Agent

P.O. Box 897

Millbrae, CA 94030

Phone: 650-615-9543

FAX: 650-615-0601

Rockport Schooner Cruises <http://www.wanderbirdcruises.com>

Explore the scenic coasts of Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Labrador with Captains Rick and Karen on the renovated 90-ft. Dutch shipping vessel, the Wanderbird. The vegetarian-friendly cruise provides 6 "cozy" double cabins for 12 passengers. Co-captain Karen says, "I enjoy accommodating the vegetarian palate. Please let us know your needs when booking your cruise."

Vegetarian Cooking Tours in Italy <http://www.vegtour.com>

Vegans and vegetarians who enjoy cooking, food tastings, cooking classes, and artisan market visits can browse this site to discover the pleasure of cooking and traveling. The site provides tour descriptions for full programs with complete itinerary and contact information.

American Office: Lorenzo Hyland

2792 Morgan Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah 84124

Phone: 888-474-9170

E-mail: lorenzohyland@yahoo.com Italian Office: Marcello and Raffaella Tori

Via Parigi, 11, 40121 Bologna, Italy

Phone: +39-051-263546

FAX: +39-051-267774

The Vegetarian Travel Guide <http://www.vegetarianusa.com>

Do you follow a vegetarian, vegan, or live foods lifestyle? Peter Firk has created the web site to consult for links to give you information about everything from good books to read, to vegetarian organizations throughout the U.S., restaurants, animal rights and activist rallies, potlucks, recipes, activities, and national vegetarian events.

e-mail: peter@naturalusa.com

Vegetarian Vacations - The Veggie Tours Directory

<http://www.vegetarian-vacations.com/index.html>

Directory of tours, holidays and courses with vegetarian or vegan food.

Vegi Ventures <http://www.vegiventures.com>

Nigel and Jacky Walker offer amazing natural health holidays in Britain, Turkey, and Peru with great vegetarian and vegan food cooked especially for the tour group. Experience relaxing holidays, hill walking, activity holidays, creativity weekends at low cost with special discounts for helping out.

Welcome to Budaveg <http://www.budaveg.com>

Vegans and vegetarians traveling to Hungary will want to check with Budaveg for information about "self-catering" accommodations and tour guiding services in Budapest. The website provides information about vegetarian restaurants, cafes, and health food shops as well as local events, sightseeing attractions and apartment rentals.

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Vegetarian Web Searching

Amazing Environmental Organization Web Directory <http://www.webdirectory.com>

Everything from agriculture to wildlife can be found on this directory which includes vegetarianism as one of its thirty major categories. A good place for a socially conscious person to begin any internet search. Includes an environment bulletin board, letters, and other places to search.

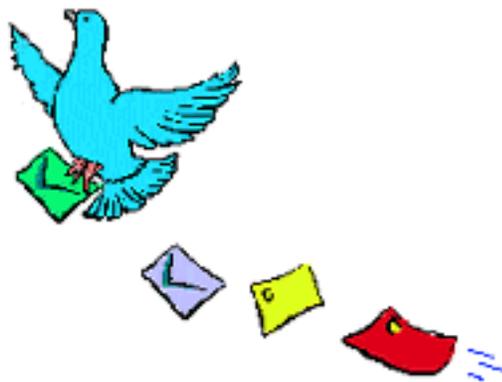
Vegetarian Cuisine <http://vegetarian.about.com>

about.com has a number of directory-type sites on the web. This one, compiled by Tiffany Refior, is devoted to vegetarian cuisine and is loaded with informative articles, recipes, cooking advice, restaurant reviews, links to other sites, a chat room, and shopping for books, videos, and other goods and services.

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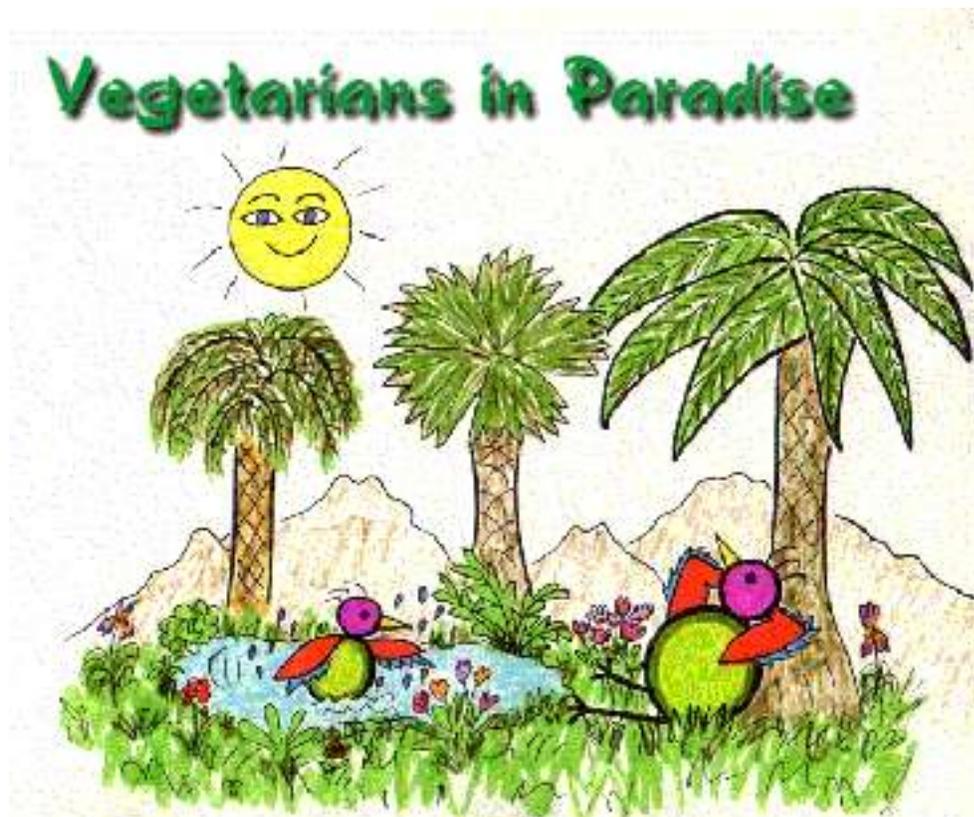
We'd love to hear from you. Since the convenience of e-mail has taken the work out of sending messages that we used to post with carrier pigeons, it's easy for you and for us, too. To send your questions and comments to our monthly magazine, click on this address:

vegparadise@vegparadise.com



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A Los Angeles Vegetarian Web Magazine

A Nonprofit Vegetarian Public Service Publication

Reaching over 80,000 visitors monthly

By Zel and Reuben Allen

August/September 2004 Vol. 6 No.8

Welcome to Vegetarians in Paradise. With each new issue we at vegparadise.com hope to provide you with all kinds of vegetarian information pertinent to our vegetarian community. For those who visit us from other areas of the country or from distant lands, we offer great diversity and invaluable vegetarian resources for vegetarians anywhere in the world.

New in Paradise





- [Take the antioxidant quiz. Which packs more punch -- berries or beans?](#)
- [See for yourself why Atkins flunks the long-term weight loss test.](#)
- [Go coast to coast in a quest for magnificent vegetarian victuals.](#)
- [Just say "J" for a great vegetarian meal.](#)
- [Climb the Himalayas for some Everest Momos and Bhat-Mas Sadheko .](#)
- [Share our 24 Carrot tribute to Ruth Heidrich who demonstrates that vegans can be great athletes, no matter how old they are.](#)
- [Indulge your palate with a gustatorial splash of traditional Spanish cuisine.](#)
- [Remember Bob as you view his porcine adventure.](#)
- [Listen to Aunt Nettie squeezing pecans until they yell, "Milk!"](#)
- [Tune in to hear VIP editors being interviewed on a June 10 radio broadcast.](#)
- [Cannellini receives an encore. Share VOW's delicious recipe.](#)
- [Taste some Old World Lentil Soup as you shop for All Blue Pee-Wee potatoes.](#)
- [Read the amazing saga of the Mad Apple whose relatives are a dangerous lot.](#)
- [Savor Vegetarian Holiday Meals for some delectable menus to serve on those special occasions.](#)

Try one of Zel's delicious recipes from our categorized [Recipe Index](#), review our [Vegetarian Airline Meals](#), find a good [vegetarian book to read](#), check our [archives](#) or [links to great vegetarian web pages](#), peruse our [Los Angeles Vegetarian Restaurants page](#), or just cruise the other pages on our website for more information resources.



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BASHFUL BLUSHING BEETS

Includes Recipe Below

Beets are so bashful they keep their heads in the ground. You don't hear much about them. People rarely serve them. As a matter of fact, in the world of vegetables, beets are seldom even mentioned. However, we revere them so much that we've taken them from their home in the ground to place them "On the Highest Perch" for special recognition.

We feature beets this issue because they would never boast of their many health benefits without a little coaxing. Beets, also known as beetroot, are high in potassium, folacin, and fiber, yet low in calories. Their edible leaves offer protein, calcium, fiber, beta carotene, vitamins A and C, and some B vitamins. They're known in the arena of natural healing for their ability to purify the blood and the liver.

Beets make lasting friends almost instantly. Once you've tasted fresh beets in the peak of their season from June through October, you'll delight in their sweetness and versatility. We should mention that they have the highest sugar content of all in the vegetable kingdom. They can be



eaten raw, boiled, steamed, roasted, and sauteed. If you visit farmer's markets on a regular basis, you might be able to take home some of the specialty varieties that are harvested early in the season, such as baby beets and golden beets. While beets are at their best in season, they are available throughout the year because they store well. Avoid the exceptionally large ones, though, or you'll be chewing on woody cores with little sweetness.

Helpful Hint: A little kitchen savvy for beets goes a long way. Beets are famous for blushing or, more commonly, bleeding. To reduce bleeding and preserve more of the flavor as well as the nutrients, cut beet tops off, leaving at least 1" of stems intact. Wash them thoroughly, and boil them whole and unpeeled, leaving the root on as well. Cooking time will vary with size, with the larger beets requiring up to one hour to soften. Cool them enough to handle, cut off the root and the stem ends, and rub off the skins. You can then

slice, chop, dice, or grate the beets for your recipe.

Roasting: To roast the beets, its best to peel them and cut off the root and the stem ends. Slice them, toss them in a tablespoon or two of canola oil, and spread them out on a roasting pan. Roast at 400 for about 25 - 30 minutes. To add a little pizzazz, sprinkle with salt and some dried thyme, dill, marjoram, or oregano when tossing them in the oil prior to roasting.

Steaming: One of the easiest ways to cook beets is oven steaming. Wash the beets thoroughly and cut off the greens, leaving a 1" stem attached. Put them whole into a deep baking dish. Cover with water. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil with the dull side out. Bake at 350 for 1 hour or until fork tender. When cool enough to handle, cut off the root and stem ends and simply rub off the skins. The beets are now ready to eat. If your cooking time is limited, steam the whole beets on top of the stove in a steamer basket. Keep the burner on high and check the water level in the bottom of the steamer--you don't want to run out of water and burn those blushing babies!

Boiling: By now you are probably aware that cooking the beets whole is the best way to retain more of their exceptional flavor and nutritive value. Put the beets into a deep saucepan and cover them with water. Cover the pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium, and cook 20 - 60 minutes until fork tender. Cooking time will depend on the size of the beets.

Raw: Preparing raw beets requires some advance ritual. First, put on an apron and roll up your sleeves. Next, tell yourself that for that entire day you will be the proud owner of a pair of red hands that look like participants in a Vaseline Intensive Care commercial. Then, get to work on the beets. For salads, cut off the root and stem ends, peel and coarsely grate the beets. Place them on the top of an individual salad as a garnish or serve them in a separate bowl to be passed at the table. If you toss the beets into the salad, the entire salad will blush. Sometimes this may be a desired effect when you want to give your veggies a rosy glow.

SautÈing: For this method, you will have to endure the red hand initiation after cutting into the raw beets. First, wash the beets thoroughly, slice off the stem and root ends, and peel the beets. Using a firm chef's knife, cut the beets into 1/4" slices, stack the slices two or three high, and dice. SautÈ in a large skillet or wok with a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and a little water. Stir frequently and add more water as needed to cook beets through. Salt, pepper, and some herbs of your choice can be added during the sautÈing. To help the beets retain their color, add a small amount of lemon juice or vinegar to the skillet at the start of sautÈing.

The Greens: When purchasing fresh beets, remember that the greens and the stems are not only edible, but tasty and good for you, too. Prepare the greens as close to the purchase time as possible to retain all those health benefits. Wash them thoroughly, and coarsely chop. Pack them into a smaller saucepan than you might think you need--one bunch of beet greens cooks down to practically nothing! Add enough water to cover the bottom of the saucepan by 1/2". Squeeze in the juice of one half lemon and add a little salt. Cook uncovered over high heat, which allows some of the oxalic acid in the greens to escape, a desirable process, since oxalic acid inhibits the absorption of calcium contained in the greens.

Now for a tasty recipe that features beets as the centerpiece of a cold-weather luncheon or a heartwarming starter on a chilly evening.

HOT BEET BORSCHT

from Zel's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*

Borscht is an old-world favorite. It can be served hot or cold. Since we've officially entered the winter season with its crisp temperatures, we prefer the borscht nice and hot. However, this is an equally refreshing cold soup for summer.

4 large beets with tops
1 medium onion, thinly sliced, slices quartered
1 t. salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
Juice of 1 lemon, rinds reserved
3 quarts (3 liters) water
1 lb.(453 gr) unpeeled potatoes, cut into bite-size pieces
1 T. light vinegar (rice, apple cider)
Salt to taste
Date sugar, dehydrated maple sugar or maple syrup to taste, starting with 1 or 2 t.
Lemon juice to taste

1. Cut off beet greens. Wash, chop, and set aside. Peel beets, coarsely shred in food processor or with hand grater, and put them into a stock pot.
2. Add onion, salt, garlic, lemon, and water to stock pot including reserved lemon rinds. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium, and simmer gently for about 20 - 25 minutes.
3. Add potatoes and vinegar to stock pot along with reserved beet greens. Cook 8 - 10 minutes on medium-high heat or until potatoes are soft.
4. Adjust seasonings with salt, date sugar, and lemon juice. Borscht should have a sweet and sour flavor. Since everyone's palate is just a little different, it may take a some playing with the salt, date sugar, and lemon juice to reach that perfect balance of flavor. Your palate will be your guide. Serves 6 - 8.

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BOASTING ABOUT BUCKWHEAT

Includes Recipe Below

Unfortunately buckwheat, also known as kasha and groats, has been shelved in obscure places at the grocery store, if available at all. Healthy, delicious, and easy to cook, buckwheat ought to be a frequent flyer out of everyone's pantry and onto the table. Instead, it is often used as animal feed or tilled into the soil as "green manure." You'll certainly find it in health food markets as well as international groceries.

Originally cultivated in the cooler countries of Central Asia, buckwheat traveled to Europe and was incorporated into the cuisines of Finland, Austria, northern Italy, France, Russia, and eastern Europe. Buckwheat arrived in the U.S. with Dutch immigrants as early as the 1620s and with the Germans in the late 1600s and early 1700s. These immigrants cultivated many more fields of this grain in New Amsterdam and surrounding regions than we do today.



Nutritionally, buckwheat is close to wheat in its components, though it is not a wheat at all. Rather it is a cereal grain and contains no gluten. For people who struggle with wheat allergies and gluten intolerance, buckwheat is ideal. This grain has plenty of protein and B vitamins and is rich in phosphorus, potassium, iron, and calcium.

Buckwheat is as versatile as rice. Measure it just as you would rice, with 1 cup dry groats to 2 cups water. A soft, quick cooking grain with a pleasing, earthy flavor, buckwheat is available in many forms:

Raw groats - light tan in color with very mild flavor

Toasted groats - rich dark brown color with nutty flavor and aroma

Toasted grits - harder to find, used as cereals

Flour - used for pancakes and added to breads and muffins

STEAMING: First measure, then rinse buckwheat in a fine mesh strainer, but rinse only briefly. Buckwheat tends to absorb water easily because it's so porous. Bring 2 C. water and 1 t. salt to a boil. Add 1 C. rinsed buckwheat. Turn heat down to low, and cook 12 , 15 minutes. Check the buckwheat halfway through. These grains absorb water so quickly, you want to make sure there is enough liquid to avoid burning the bottom of the pan.

Many recipes call for toasting the groats in a dry skillet with a beaten egg. This dries and separates the grains. I eliminate this step, finding it unnecessary.

Following is a favorite buckwheat recipe from Zel Allen's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*

KASHA AND VARNISHKES A LA BEVERLY HILLS

This dish involves four separate, but easy, components, and you'll have all four burners going at once. When put together the kasha is so eye appealing, flavorful, and aromatic you'll want to make it often. It's a wonderful centerpiece around which to build a meal and is certain to become a requested favorite.

4 quarts (3.8 liters) water
2 t. salt
1/4 lb. (340 gr) Westbrae corn twists pasta or Ancient Harvest quinoa pasta*
1 medium onion, chopped
4 medium carrots, peeled and coarsely shredded
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 T. extra virgin olive oil
2 to 3 T. water
1 C. (237 ml) raw, untoasted buckwheat groats
1 t. salt
2 C. (480 ml) water
3 T. raw pumpkin seeds 4 T. raw walnut pieces

1. Start water heating in a large stock pot while preparing other ingredients.
2. Add pasta to boiling water, and cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Drain in a colander.
3. Combine onion, carrots, garlic, olive oil, and water in a large skillet or wok, and cook over high heat until soft and almost browned, about 10 to 12 minutes, adding more water as needed. Set aside.
4. Combine buckwheat groats, salt and water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for 15 to 20 minutes, checking halfway through to make sure there is sufficient liquid. Set aside.
5. Combine pumpkin seeds and walnuts in a dry non-stick skillet and toast over high heat, stirring constantly, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Immediately remove to a bowl or dish to prevent burning.

6. When all the components are cooked, combine them in the large skillet with the carrots and onions. Toss well and adjust seasonings with salt and pepper. Serves 6.

* I prefer these brands of pasta because they cook up tender and moist, whereas many whole-grain pastas tend to have a drier, grainier texture.

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THE CURIOUS CASHEW

Includes Recipe Below

The cashew tree is a curious plant with multiple uses, yet we are only familiar with one of its fruits, the cashew nut. The cashew tree also produces an edible, pear-shaped fruit called the cashew apple. The cashew apple, extremely rich in vitamin C, is eaten raw, as well as made into jam, marmalade, candy, and juices. In Brazil, one of the areas where the cashew tree grows indigenously, cashew apple juice has become one of the most popular beverages. The juice can also be fermented to make an alcoholic beverage. Because the cashew apple spoils quickly, it cannot be exported; we can only enjoy it on a visit to Brazil.

The cashew tree is native to South America where it flourishes in Brazil and Peru. In the sixteenth century, Portuguese traders introduced the tree to India where it has more recently become an important export crop equal to that of Brazil. Other countries that grow and export cashews include Sri Lanka, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Colombia, Guatemala, Venezuela, the West Indies, Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Kenya. The United States is the largest importer of cashew nuts.

In addition to being an excellent food source, the nut yields an oil used in flavoring and cooking foods. The tree produces a sap or gum sometimes used in bookbinding and often incorporated into a varnish used to protect woodwork from insect damage. The cashew nut shell produces an oil used in the manufacture of brake linings and is sometimes applied to metals as an anti-corrosive agent. The shell oil is also used for waterproofing and as an adhesive. Natives in South America used cashew nut shell oil in the treatment of scurvy, sores, warts, ringworm and psoriasis. The oil is found to have potent antibacterial properties. Not many plants can claim to provide so many benefits.



Many people avoid cashews because of their high fat content, though they are lower in total fat than almonds, peanuts, pecans, and walnuts. Cashews provide essential fatty acids, B vitamins, fiber, protein, carbohydrate potassium, iron, and zinc. Like other nuts, cashews are high in saturated fat; however, eaten in small quantities cashews are a highly nutritious food.

Cashews can be enjoyed raw or roasted. Sprinkle them into salads and grains, use them on top of breakfast cereals, and enjoy cashew butter on your favorite whole grain breads.

Following is one of our favorite ways to incorporate cashews into a tasty meal:

CASHEW TOMATO PASTA SAUCE

3 1/2 lbs. (2 kg) Roma tomatoes (Italian plum tomatoes)
1 medium onion, peeled

Wash and dice tomatoes and onions and put them into a large skillet or wok. If you have a food processor, simply quarter the tomatoes and onions and let the processor do the dicing.

Add the following to the skillet:

4 to 6 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 t. dried marjoram leaves
1/2 t. dried oregano leaves
1/2 t. each fennel seeds and dried rosemary, crushed in a mortar and pestle
1 1/2 t. salt

Cook on high heat, stirring frequently, until cooked through, about 12 to 15 minutes. While tomatoes are cooking, prepare cashews as follows:

Use an electric coffee grinder to grind raw cashew pieces into a fine meal. Pour into a measuring cup until you have a full cup (237 ml).

Add ground cashews to cooked, bubbling sauce, stirring until well incorporated and smooth. The sauce is now ready to enjoy over your choice of whole grain pasta, such as whole wheat, spelt, corn, or quinoa pasta. Makes enough sauce for 1 pound (453 g) of pasta.

For other cashew recipes click on [Recipe Index](#).

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RUTABAGAS--AN UNCOMMON TREAT

Includes Recipe Below

Rutabagas are often thought of as yellow turnips but actually bear the botanical name *Brassica napus* and belong to the highly prized family of cruciferous vegetables. The rutabaga, a relatively newcomer in the world of vegetables, is thought to have evolved from a cross between a wild cabbage and a turnip. The earliest records of rutabaga's existence are from the seventeenth century in Southern Europe where they were first eaten as well as used for animal fodder. It's curious that throughout history animals were often fed the healthiest foods, foods thought to be inappropriate for human consumption.

Because rutabagas thrive best in colder climates, they became popular in Scandinavia, but especially in Sweden, the country that earned them the name "swedes." In Europe, rutabagas are still called swedes. In America, rutabagas were first cultivated in the northern parts of the country in the early 1800s. Canada and the northern states are today's greatest producers of the rutabaga.

The rutabaga is a root vegetable that looks very much like a turnip with yellow-orange flesh and ridges at its neck. Although this beta carotene-rich vegetable has been grown and marketed in our



country for nearly 200 years, it remains an uncommon food in American dining. It's actually a great tasting vegetable with a delicate sweetness and flavor that hints of the light freshness of cabbage and turnip. With its easy preparation and versatility, great nutrition, and excellent flavor, the rutabaga can easily become an endearing family favorite.

Because rutabagas store so well, up to one month in the refrigerator and up to four months in commercial storage at 32 degrees, they are available year round. Planted in May and June, they're harvested in late summer and early fall when their flavor is at its peak. Ideally, it's best to shop for fresh rutabagas at farmer's markets in early autumn.

In addition to being a rich source of beta carotene as well as potassium, rutabagas are high in vitamin C, the B vitamins, calcium, and fiber.

There are at least 100 ways to enjoy rutabagas. Here are a just few suggestions to introduce this wonderful vegetable:

RAW: First, peel them with a vegetable peeler. Slice and enjoy as a snack. Chop, dice, or grate them and add to salads. Create a unique salad with diced rutabagas and other vegetables of your choice. Grate them and add to cole slaw. Grate and combine with carrot salad.

COOKED: Rutabagas can be roasted, boiled, steamed, stir-fried, mashed, or stewed. Cook them with potatoes and mash together. Quarter them and roast along with potatoes. Enhance the flavor of stews with chopped or quartered rutabagas. Dice them and add to soups. Stir-fry with onions.

Today's busy lifestyle often makes us seek out healthy recipes that fall into that easy-to-prepare category. Here's a rutabaga winner from Zel Allen's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*

RUTABAGAS IN THE ROUGH

4 large rutabagas
1/4 t. salt
Water
1 T. extra-virgin olive oil
Dash of nutmeg
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Peel rutabagas with a vegetable peeler, and cut into chunks. Put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan, add the salt and about 2" (5 cm) of water to cover. Cover saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Turn heat down to medium and cook about 12 - 15 minutes, or until fork tender. Drain, reserving cooking liquid. Using a potato masher, coarsely mash rutabagas in the saucepan, adding cooking liquid as needed for moisture.

3. Add olive oil and nutmeg. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle with a dash of nutmeg, and garnish with a sprig of fresh sage or herb of your choice. Serves 6.

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IT'S A PEACH OF AN IDEA!

Includes Recipes Below

It's not often enough that we step forward to raise the common peach to the highest perch where it can be recognized and praised for its many nutritional attributes. A surprising fact to note is that a medium peach packs a powerful 465 IU of vitamin A to combat the effects of aging. Further benefits of a medium peach include B vitamins, 3 mcg of folic acid, 5.7 mg of vitamin C, 4.35 mg of calcium, 1.4 grams of fiber, 171 mg of potassium, and a little zinc. Their beta carotene also helps build a strong immune system to prevent damage from free radicals, and to avert many skin diseases. Beta carotene is a provitamin that the body converts into vitamin A.

This month you can hold those wrinkles at bay because peach season is upon us. The first crop of peaches are available now at farmers' markets throughout Los Angeles County. When you approach a farmstand selling peaches and you're offered a taste, you'll notice instantly that their fragrance and flavor are irresistible

Cultivation of peaches began in China as early as 2000 BCE, where the ancient Chinese thought of the peach as a symbol of the female genitalia and recognized its yin qualities. A Chinese bride was referred to as a peach. Around 300 BCE the Greeks and Persians were enjoying these juicy treats. In the first century AD the Romans were captivated by the peach and began cultivation. From Italy, the cultivation of peaches spread throughout Europe and to the Americas, where the early settlers planted them all throughout the eastern coast. By the mid-1700s, peaches were so plentiful in our country that botanists thought of them as native fruits.

Here are a few tips to help you select the best peaches in town: The tastiest fruits are at local farmstands and farmers' markets and are often organic. Those in supermarkets are rarely organic and often travel across state lines. They may or may not be tasty and are often picked too soon. Local peaches are picked at the peak of their sweetness and don't become sweeter as they



soften. Look for the fruits that have a yellow or creamy color. These will be the sweetest. Avoid those with a tinge of green. They've been picked too early and will most likely not be sweet. Sweet peaches will have a wonderfully sweet fragrance, so don't hesitate to give them the aroma test. Avoid peaches that are too soft. These are overripe and will spoil very quickly.



Although peaches are cooked, canned, dried, pureed, boiled, roasted, and made into jam, the best flavor and nutritional benefits are derived from enjoying them fresh and whole, fuzz and all. In their natural state, no nutrients have been extracted and nothing harmful has been added.

Today's busy lifestyle often makes us seek out healthy recipes that fall into that easy-to-prepare category. Here's a winner from Zel's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*.

PEACH AND BASIL SALAD PLATTER

5 to 6 large, sweet, ripe peaches, sliced into 1/2" (1 cm) wedges
1 small, sweet red or white onion, thinly sliced, slices quartered
1/4 small jicama, peeled, cut into thin julienne, about 2" (5 cm) in length
1 1/4 C. (296 ml) lightly packed fresh basil leaves, snipped off their stems
1/2 C.(118 ml) pine nuts, toasted

Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Toss with Poppy Seed Dressing (recipe below), and spoon out onto an attractive serving platter as a first course. Serves 6.

Poppy Seed Dressing

2 T. dry mustard
2 T. poppy seeds
1/2 t. salt
1/4 t. ground black pepper
1/4 t. paprika
2 T. + 1 t. Sucanat (dehydrated sugar cane crystals with molasses added)
1/2 C.(118 ml) organic canola oil
1/3 C. (79 ml) apple cider vinegar
1/4 C. (59 ml) lemon juice
1/4 C. (59 ml) water

Combine all ingredients in a jar and shake well. Refrigerate. Keeps well for 2 weeks. Makes 1 1/2 cups (355 ml) dressing.

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ZUCCHINI-- SUMMER'S ABUNDANT DELIGHT

Includes Recipe Below

Zucchini squash is the favored jewel of the summer squashes. Its flavor is light and sweet with flesh as delicate as a flower and texture that makes it almost melt in the mouth. Zucchini's many varieties offer the cook countless opportunities to prepare a varied menu of colorful summer dishes. Farmers' markets are the best source of the freshest squashes and frequently offer unique varieties as well as those organically grown.

Summer squashes, as well as winter squashes, are native to the Americas and belong to the family of curcubita. Archaeologists have traced their origins to Mexico, dating back from 7,000 to 5,500 BCE, when they were an integral part of the ancient diet of maize, beans, and squashes. That pre-Columbian food trio is still the mainstay of the Mexican cuisine and is known today as the "three sisters."

Many explorers who came to the Americas brought back what they considered strange foods. The zucchini eventually found its way to Italy where it was named zucchini. Many names have been given to this squash. The French call it courgette, a name that has been adopted by the English. The English also refer to a variety that is slightly larger and plumper as marrow.



The colonists of New England adopted the name squash, a word derived from several Native American words for the vegetable which meant "something eaten raw." George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were squash enthusiasts who even enjoyed growing them.

Zucchini is considered the tender, sweet, immature fruit of the curcubita pepo which is eaten in its entirety. If left on the vine or bush longer, the fruit becomes enormous, the seeds larger, tougher, and sometimes inedible, and the flavor less sweet. Cocozelle, a variety of zucchini that originated in Italy, is shorter, plumper, and striped. Today's farmers are developing hybrids that are a visual delight. Some are round,

some are yellow, some a combination of green and yellow, and some are a cross between zucchini and the fluted patty pan squash.

With their high water content (more than 95 percent), zucchini squashes are very low in calories. There are only 13 calories in a half-cup of raw zucchini, with a slight increase to 18 calories in the same quantity cooked. Nutritionally, zucchinis offer valuable antioxidants. They also provide some beta-carotene, trace quantities of the B vitamins, folic acid, small amounts of vitamin C and calcium, and a healthy content of potassium.

PREPARATION

Raw:

- Cut zucchinis into strips and include them in a platter of crudites.
- Shred them into salads.
- Prepare a salad from shredded zucchini and shredded carrots; add a dressing and enjoy.
- Dice them and add to a chopped salad.
- Puree them in the blender with a little water, and add seasoning to create a sauce
- Mix squashes of various colors for an attractive presentation of bright yellow paired with light and dark green.

Cooked:

Zucchinis can be steamed, boiled, baked, fried, and stuffed.

- **Steamed:** With their high water content they can be cooked without water in a pot with a tight fitting lid. Otherwise, steam them in a small amount of water, about 1/4" in the bottom of the pot, for 3 to 5 minutes.
- **Baked:** Slice zucchini, chop onions, shred carrots, chop peppers, chop tomatoes. Layer the vegetables in a casserole with seasonings and herbs. Cover bake at 350 for about 45 minutes.
- **Stuffed:** Core out the centers of each squash (Middle Eastern delis have a special tool for this or use an apple corer). Chop onions, mushrooms, peppers, tofu, tomatoes. Add seasonings and stuff. Bake covered in a casserole with tomato sauce at 350 for about 45 to 60 minutes.

Below are two versions of a chilled zucchini soup, one cooked, the other raw. Both are from the cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise* by Zel Allen.

ZESTY CHILLED ZUCCHINI SOUP

1 head of roasted garlic

4 medium zucchinis, sliced 1/4" thick

1 large onion, coarsely chopped

3 C. (717 ml) water

1/2 t. salt

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 t. salt

4 - 5 T. lemon juice

1/2 t. vegan Worcestershire sauce or to taste

1/4 ripe avocado, diced

1 - 2 T. chopped cilantro or parsley

1. To roast garlic: Peel off outer layers of excess skin leaving only the cloves covered and still attached to the root. Cover with aluminum foil, shiny side inside, and place on a baking dish. Roast at 375 (gas mark 5) for 1 hour. While the garlic is roasting, prepare remaining ingredients. When the garlic is finished roasting, remove from oven, unwrap carefully, and cool slightly. Set aside.
2. Put zucchinis, onion, water and salt into a 4 - 6-quart (4 to 6 liter) saucepan and cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium and cook until soft, about 7 - 8 minutes.
3. Cool slightly and pour into a blender, and blend until smooth.
4. Add pepper, lemon juice, salt, and Worcestershire sauce to blender. Break off individual cloves of roasted garlic, and squeeze out each one into the blender. Blend until smooth, and adjust seasonings to taste. Pour into a refrigerator container or serving bowl. Chill thoroughly.
5. Before serving, garnish each bowl with a few pieces of diced avocado and a pinch or two of chopped cilantro or parsley. Makes about 6 servings.

ZUCCHINI SUMMER SOUP

(Raw)

1-2 cloves garlic

4 medium zucchinis, cut in half lengthwise, then into 1/2 inch slices

1 large onion coarsely cut into chunks

3 cups (717 ml) water

1 1/2 t. salt or to taste

5 T. lemon juice or half lemon and half lime juice

1/2 t. vegan Worcestershire sauce

1/4 ripe avocado, diced

1-2 T. chopped cilantro

1. Put half the garlic, zucchini, onion, and water into blender and puree completely. Pour into tureen or large bowl.

2. Add remaining ingredients to blender and puree completely. Pour into tureen and adjust seasoning if needed.
3. Chill or enjoy immediately with garnish of avocado and cilantro. Serves 6.

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TOMATOES HAD THEIR DAY IN COURT

Includes Recipe Below

Today tomatoes are on our highest perch, but in 1887 they had their day in the highest court of the land. Are tomatoes a fruit or a vegetable? Ponder that--and that's exactly what the Supreme Court did on February 4, 1887 when tomatoes were elevated to the highest perch in the land, the United States Supreme Court. It's hard to imagine that tomatoes were the subject of a Supreme Court decision that officially labeled them a vegetable.

Under the Schedule G.-Provisions of the Tariff Act of March 3, 1883, there were tariffs placed on tomatoes imported from the West Indies because they were considered a fruit, and imported fruits were subject to tariffs.

Webster's Dictionary was consulted, along with *Worcester's Dictionary* and the *Imperial Dictionary* for the definitions of "fruit" and "vegetable." The passages from the dictionaries defined "fruit" as the seed of plants, or that part of plants which contains the seed, and especially the juicy, pulpy products of certain plants, covering and containing the seed. According to the court, "These definitions have no tendency to show that tomatoes are 'fruit' as distinguished from 'vegetables,' in common speech, or within the meaning of the tariff act."

The court decision stated, "Botanically, tomatoes are considered a fruit of the vine, just as are cucumbers, squashes, beans, and peas. But in common language of people, whether sellers or consumers of provisions, all these are vegetables which are grown in kitchen gardens, and which, eaten cooked or raw, are, like potatoes, carrots, parsnips, turnips, beets, cauliflower, cabbage, celery, and lettuce, usually served at dinner in, with, or after the soup, fish, or meats which constitute the principal part of the repast, and not like fruits generally, as dessert."



Native to Mexico and Central America, tomatoes were cultivated by the Aztecs and Incas dating back to 700 AD. It was the 16th century conquistadors who introduced them to Spain, where their popularity spread



quickly to Portugal and Italy. The French loved them and referred to them as "love apples." In Germany they were revered as "apples of paradise."

On the other hand, the British did not place tomatoes on the highest perch but instead rejected tomatoes because they believed them to be poisonous.

The early New England colonists also carried this belief until 1812 when the Creoles of New Orleans happily showed them how tomatoes enhanced their gumbos and jambalayas. By the mid 1800's tomatoes became a popular kitchen garden cultivar in the colonies. Tomatoes were in such demand that when the cold weather of the northern states halted their production, Florida became a burgeoning center for their growth.

This month tomatoes are bursting with flavor fresh from the vines. The very best tasting tomatoes are those that are grown at home in soil rich with compost. Farmers' markets are also an outstanding source for organically grown tomatoes with superb flavor.

Healthwise, tomatoes are on the "highest perch" because they contain the antioxidant lycopene, noted for its ability to reduce the risk of prostate cancer in men who consume 10 servings a week. Tomatoes also contain vitamin C and carotenoids, beta carotene being one of the most familiar, which are antioxidants. These offer protection from free radicals that cause premature aging, cancer, heart disease, and cataracts. Loaded with antioxidants and high in potassium, tomatoes are one of the healthiest "vegetables" around. Another benefit--they're low in calories, about 35 for a medium tomato.

STORAGE: To refrigerate or not to refrigerate is the question. Tomatoes purchased from the supermarkets have been refrigerated, and will not keep well unrefrigerated. However, tomatoes fresh from the garden will keep quite well at room temperature for about a week, as will those organically grown from farmers' markets.

Here's an easy side dish with zesty flavors that features fresh tomatoes. It's from the cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise* by Zel Allen.

SMOKEY TOMATO SALAD

4 medium tomatoes, diced
3 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 4-oz. (396 g) can diced green chiles
1/4 t. + 1/8 t. Wright's Hickory Smoke Seasoning (liquid smoke flavoring)
Salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
Chopped fresh herbs for garnish (oregano, marjoram, parsley)

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and season to taste.

Garnish top with fresh herbs, and serve as a side dish. Serves 6.

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CORN, THE A-MAIZE-ING GRAIN

Includes Recipe Below

Corn-husk masks covered their faces while they danced. Waving green stalks over their heads, they sang the praises of corn, this miracle that was brought to them. These were Native American people who thought of corn as a gift of the gods and included it in their religious ceremonies. They called corn, squash, and beans the three sisters as they planted them together to form the nucleus of their diet.

Scientists believe that corn was first grown on the Mexican plateau or the highlands of Guatemala. Kernels dating back to 6600 BCE have been found in caves in Mexico. Fossil grains were discovered in lake sediment in Mexico City. These sediments could be 80, 000 years old.

Early corn was believed to be similar to oats and barley with each individual kernel covered in a husk. Many scientists believe that the ancestor of corn is a Mexican grass called teosinte. The husks and cobs we know today were developed over the century by early peoples of the Americas. By the time Columbus reached the new world corn fields were evident in both North and South America.

Today corn is the second most plentiful grain in the world behind rice and ahead of wheat. It is the only plant which cannot reproduce itself without the help of man who must plant the kernel. Beginning with early peoples, man has developed the five major varieties we presently use. Most



of us know the white, yellow, or bicolor sweet corn we purchase at the market. We are also aware of popping corn. The types that may not be familiar are flint, flour, and dent corn. Flint corn has a larger grain with little flour tissue in the endosperm. Flour corn is soft and floury and tends to break apart easily. Dent corn is a cross between flint and flour corn. Shrinkage of the floury part and non shrinkage of the corneous part creates the dent. This corn is used to make hominy and bread. Because of its high yield, dent corn is the dominant variety in world production.

When corn was brought to Europe explorers of the Americas, many Europeans looked down on it as "a more convenient food for swine than for men." Today corn is still fed to animals, but much of the crop finds its way into the human food chain as breakfast cereals, flour, corn meal, starches, sweeteners, and cooking and salad oils. Non-cooking uses have proliferated in recent years with dyes, paints, chemicals, and automobile fuel as just a few.

The sweet corn we know today was discovered in 1779 in an Iroquois village along the Susquehanna River in central New York, but corn did not catch on as a food until the 1840's. After 1870 horticulturists developed sweeter varieties.

Nutritionally, corn (cooked or raw) is low in fat and calories and provides almost three grams of dietary fiber as well as protein per ear. White corn is deficient in vitamin A, while yellow corn is plentiful. Both offer moderate amounts of folacin and vitamin C, with magnesium and potassium in abundant quantity. Corn, however, is notoriously deficient in lysine and tryptophan, two essential amino acids. Its molecular structure makes at least half of its niacin useless to humans. Sharecroppers in the 1930's who relied on corn for the staple in their diets found themselves the victims of pellagra, a disease that results from a niacin deficiency. Pellagra victims suffer from skin eruptions, digestive and nervous disturbances, and mental deterioration.

RAW: Because fresh picked corn is so flavorful in its raw state, we offer this tasty recipe as an accompaniment to any summer meal.

FRESH CORN SALSA

- 1 ear fresh white or yellow corn
- 1/2 bunch cilantro, finely chopped
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 2 small tomatoes, diced
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) lemon juice
- 1/4 t. sea salt or to taste
- 1/4 t. ground cumin

1/8 t. chili powder

Cut kernels off the cob and put them into a medium-size bowl.

Add remaining ingredients and mix well.

Adjust seasonings to taste, and serve chilled or at room temperature. Serves 6.

ROASTED: Native Americans never boiled their corn; they usually roasted the corn over an open fire. If you usually boil your corn, you might want to try this technique instead. With corn so plentiful this month, here is a recipe for preparing fresh corn on the cob on the barbecue.

GRILLED CORN ON THE COB

The special benefit of cooking corn on the grill in the husk is that none of the flavor or nutrients are lost in the water as with the boiling method. The season for fresh, sweet, white corn begins about early to mid May. Yellow corn becomes available at the end of June.

1. Start by soaking whole ears of corn in their husks in a large bowl of water for 15 minutes to 1 hour. Soaking makes the ears easier to shuck and helps to retain the moisture in the kernels.
2. Prepare the barbecue for grilling. When coals are hot, place whole, unshucked corn directly on the grill. Cover grill, and cook 5 minutes.
3. Lift cover and using tongs, turn corn about 1/4 turn. Cover and cook another 5 minutes.
4. Turn corn again about 1/4 turn, and cook 5 minutes longer. The husks should be quite blackened. If the corn is young to medium, 15 minutes is just about right. For medium to large kernel corn, 20 minutes is perfect.
5. Allow 5 minutes for corn to cool. Shuck and enjoy the juiciest corn you've ever had.

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THE SWEET LIFE OF KABOCHA

Includes Recipe Below

Called Japanese pumpkin, kabocha began its history in Japan where it was favored for its sweetness and pleasing texture. Researching its arrival in this country proved to be a challenge, but, fortunately, a very kind, determined research librarian provided us with some of the information for this article.

About fourteen years ago, the Sakata Seed Company, an enterprising California grower, planted this unique squash to provide Japan with a steady supply. Japan, with its limited agricultural land, bought the entire crop. Sakata continued to plant the squash and even expanded its pastures into Mexico. Since the Japanese prefer big squashes, the smaller ones were left to be sold in the Los Angeles market. Sakata produces approximately 110 tons of kabocha annually, making about 10 to 15% available for savvy American consumers to enjoy.

Kabocha's hard, deep green skin, boasts exceptional flavor to those who have had the pleasure of tasting its succulent, naturally sweet flesh. Kabocha, pronounced kah-bow-cha, is even sweeter than butternut squash, though we've encountered the occasional one that forgot to be sweet. The flavor and texture of the Japanese pumpkin is likened to that of a sweet potato crossed with a pumpkin. We had the pleasure of first tasting kabocha when we traveled to New Zealand several years ago. There we enjoyed it simply as "pumpkin" in many soups as well as side dishes.

Kabocha squashes are available all year round, but we found that the best flavored ones are harvested in the late summer and early fall. Like many winter squashes, kabocha can vary in size with the average weighing two to three pounds, but we've encountered larger ones as well. You can easily recognize a kabocha by its dark green color with some celadon colored stripes and a dull surface. Similar in shape to a pumpkin, kabocha is a bit more squat, has a very short grey stem, and is more dense than a pumpkin because of its smaller cavity. The firm flesh inside is an intense yellow-orange color.



The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service from the North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina, suggests that kabocha squashes can be kept at room temperature for up to a month without refrigeration. Sakata recommends not refrigerating the uncooked pumpkin. After cooking, however, the leftovers must be refrigerated.

An abundance of beta carotene, the precursor to vitamin A, is kabocha's prime nutrient, along with vitamin C, iron and potassium. Also present are folic acid, calcium, and trace B vitamins.

TO BAKE: Simply wash the squash and place, whole on a baking dish. Bake at 400 for 50 to 60 minutes. To shorten the baking time, cut the squash in half with a very firm knife. Sakata recommends placing the knife or cleaver on the squash, slightly off center to avoid the stem. Then, with a hammer or mallet, pound the knife where the blade joins the handle until the squash splits in half. Scoop out the seeds, brush cut areas with a little canola oil and place cut side down on a lightly oiled baking dish. The squash bakes in about 40 to 50 minutes at 400 (375 for pyrex.) The flesh can then be scooped out with a large spoon. The cooked kabocha is so deliciously sweet that it needs none of the usual fats and sweeteners traditionally added to bland squashes. If you wrap the squash in aluminum foil, shiny side inside, the skin, which is completely edible and highly nutritious, will remain soft enough to enjoy along with the delicious flesh.

TO STEAM: Use a very firm chef's knife to cut squash in half, scoop out seeds, and lay cut side down on cutting board. Japanese and Southeast Asian cooks prefer to leave the skin on the squash. However, if you choose to remove the skin, here's what to do: Using both hands with the knife in a horizontal position, peel off the skin by holding the blade away from the body and using a pushing motion to cut. Cut squash into cubes and place in a steamer with sufficient water. Turn heat to high and steam for 7 to 10 minutes.

TO BRAISE: Cut into cubes as above and add to stews or soups the last 10 minutes of cooking.

The following soup recipe taken from Zel Allen's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise* is a seasonal favorite that combines sweet and savory flavors to make the perfect duo to quell hunger pangs. This creation instantly satisfies and comforts, but more than that, leaves one with thoughts of a second bowl later on.

KABOCHA SUN-DRIED TOMATO SOUP

2 oz. (56 gr) sun-dried tomatoes
1 1/2 C. (355 ml) boiling water

1 2 1/2 lb. (6 kg) (approximately) kabocha squash, peeled and cut into bite-size pieces
1/2 lb. (226 gr) red or white rose potatoes, unpeeled, cut into bite-size pieces
1 stalk celery, diced
1/2 C. (118 ml) chopped celery leaves (optional)
1 large tomato (about 3/4 lb. or 340 gr) chopped
1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
1 3/4 t. salt
Freshly ground black pepper
6 C. water

1 stalk celery, diced
1 large onion (about 1 lb.) chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1/4 C. (59 ml) water

1. Put sun-dried tomatoes in a small bowl. Pour boiling water over to soften for 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Remove the tomatoes and set aside. Reserve the soak water for a future use or allow it to cool and drink it. It's quite delicious.
3. Combine second group of ingredients in a large stock pot, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to simmer, and cook for 10 minutes. Fork test squash for tenderness. There should be no resistance. Turn off heat.
4. While soup is simmering combine the last group of ingredients in a large skillet or wok and sautÈ until tender, about 5 or 6 minutes, adding more water if needed.
5. Add the softened sun-dried tomatoes and sautÈed onions and celery to stock pot and warm through.
6. Adjust seasonings to taste, and serve with some hearty multi-grain bread. Serves 6.

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The Sweet Potato Myth

Includes Recipe Below

Most Americans will tell you the sweet potato is that long yellow potato with the points at each end. When asked about the difference between a yam and a sweet potato, they will usually answer, "The yam is that orange or deep red potato we bake or roast for Thanksgiving." Unfortunately, they have eaten both kinds of sweet potatoes while swallowing the myth. There are no yams on the American dinner table. What we call yams are really just a variety of sweet potato.

Sweet potatoes in their many varieties are a highly nutritious food, easy to prepare, heavenly tasting, and extremely versatile on any menu. Yet, they are undervalued, ignored, and underappreciated. Some people enjoy the wonderful flavor and health benefits of sweet potatoes year round, but for many families sweet potatoes appear on the table at Thanksgiving and only then. We know of some folks who have never even eaten a sweet potato.

Sweet potatoes were actually born in Mexico, Central, and South America, as well as the West Indies. Their botanical name, *Ipomoea batata*, was derived from the American Indians of Louisiana who were growing them in native gardens as early as 1540. The Indians referred to sweet potatoes as *batatas*.

In his first voyage to the West Indies Columbus discovered many new foods which he brought back to Spain. Sweet potatoes were among his ship's treasures. The Spanish relished them and began cultivating them immediately. Soon they were profitably exporting them to England where they were included in spice pies to be devoured at the court of Henry VIII.

The French, not to be outdone, planted them at the request of Louis XV. They were favored in France only until his death and then lost popularity for thirty years until the Empress Josephine, who was from Martinique, craved them. It was then that sweet potatoes again became trendy in Paris restaurants for a time, but once more fell into obscurity. It was the Portuguese who carried sweet potatoes to Asia and Africa where they have become an important staple of the diet even

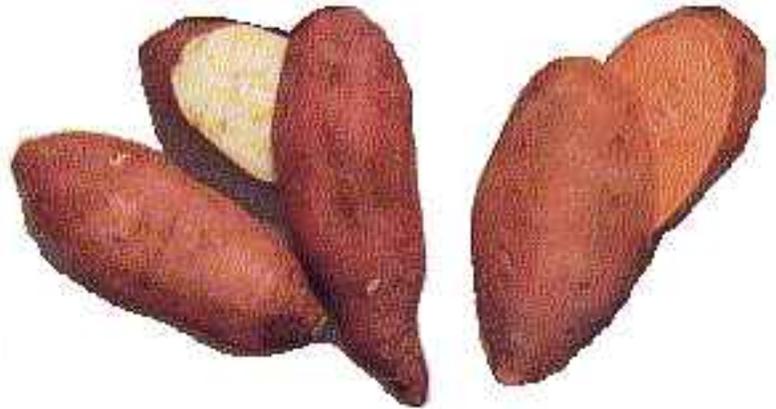
today.

There are two major varieties of sweet potatoes, the yellow, drier, more mealy kind with lighter beige colored skins, and the orange, more moist, sweeter ones with reddish skins that are usually called "yams." True yams, however, are nothing like the sweet potato, but are a tuber native to Africa, very starchy, not very sweet, and grow as large as 100 pounds.

It was the Southerners, mainly from North Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana, who adopted the name yams for the darker-skinned orange variety and made them an important part of their cuisine. "Yams" were so important in the South that during the American Revolution and the Civil War, they were said to have sustained the fighting soldiers.

The sweet potato deserves to be on the highest perch because it is a nutritional powerhouse with 4 ounces of cooked pulp supplying 2 grams of protein, 3.4 grams of fiber, 24.6 mg of vitamin C, 28 mg of calcium, 22.6 mcg of folic acid, 20 mg of magnesium, 348 mg of potassium, and a whopping 21822 I.U. of vitamin A. That's mighty impressive for only a half cup serving. The skins, which are completely edible, add even more fiber.

To Bake: Simply scrub the skins clean, place the sweet potatoes on a baking pan, and put them in a 425 oven for 50 to 60 minutes. Large ones may take a bit longer. Test for doneness by squeezing the skins. They should give easily and feel soft. Sweet potatoes are so delicious just as they are, they really don't need any extra toppings. The edible skins can be a little dry and tough after baking. If you want them to be softer, bake the sweet potatoes in aluminum foil with the shiny side of the foil inside.



Another way to bake sweet potatoes is to peel them and slice them about 1/4" thick. Brush them with a little canola oil and put them on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Bake at 400 for about 30 to 35 minutes. Test for doneness with a fork. They should pierce easily.

To Steam: You can choose to peel them or not. Slice the sweet potatoes about 1/2" thick and put them into a steamer basket (either metal or bamboo) over a pot of water. Cover, and turn heat to high, bringing the water below to a boil. Keep the water boiling for about 7 to 10 minutes and fork test for doneness. They should pierce easily, and the skins will be very tender. You can also cube the sweet potatoes before steaming if you plan to use them in a casserole.

To Saute: Peel the sweet potatoes, and shred them on the coarse grater or in the food processor. Saute them in a combination of canola oil and little water over high heat, tossing frequently until tender, about 10 to 12 minutes.

Raw: Sweet potatoes, both the yellow and the orange varieties, can be shredded and added to salads for an additional boost of beta carotene. They can also be juiced or added to raw soups. Bright yellow or orange shredded sweet potatoes make the perfect garnish to a raw soup or salad topping.

Since sweet potatoes are the featured food this month, we've chosen a soup recipe from Zel's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise* to share this month.

SWEET POTATO SOUP

2 1/2 lbs. (1 kg + 226 gr) yellow sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
1 large onion, cut into large chunks
4 C. (1 liter) water

1 to 3 C. (237 to 717 ml) water or more as desired
1/2 t. salt or to taste
2 dashes ground cinnamon or to taste
2 dashes ground nutmeg or to taste
Freshly ground black pepper

1/4 C. (59 ml) black raisins
1/4 C. (59 ml) toasted chopped pecans

1. Combine sweet potatoes, onion and the 4 C. (1 liter) water in a large stock pot. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and simmer for about 10 to 12 minutes, or until sweet potatoes are soft when pierced with a fork. Cool for a few minutes.
2. Pour cooked potatoes, onions, and the liquid into a food processor in batches and puree. Return to stock pot.
3. Add additional water, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and black pepper. Heat to serving temperature.
4. Pour soup into serving bowls and garnish with raisins and chopped pecans. Makes 6 servings.

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Bogged Down with Cranberries

Includes Recipes Below

"Pass the ibimi, please." "Let's go pick some sassamanesh." "We need some atoqua for dinner." Native peoples had many names and many uses for the red berries we know as cranberries long before the first European settlers came to the North American Continent. The Pequots of Massachusetts and the Lenin-Lanape tribe of New Jersey called them ibimi, bitter berry. The Algonquins in Wisconsin referred to them as atoqua. Some of the eastern tribes used the word sassamanesh. The name cranberry came from the German and Dutch pioneers who referred to the berries as "crane berry" because they frequently noticed cranes feasting on the tart berries. The early settlers also noted that the blossoms on the vine resembled the bill, head, and neck of a crane.

Resourceful tribes found cranberries not only useful for food, but could be utilized as medicine and for preparation of household items. Many tribes mashed the cranberries and mixed them with dried meat to create pemmican that could be kept for a long period of time without spoiling. Medicine men used the berries to create a poultice for treating arrow wounds. Women used them to create natural fabric dyes for clothes, blankets, and rugs. At tribal feasts Chief Pakimintzen of the Lenni-Lappes distributed cranberries as a symbol of peace.

No one is certain whether the first Thanksgiving dinner included cranberries, but what is certain is that cranberries were in wide use before the new settlers arrived. Cranberries originally grew wild in the northern part of the country, and were harvested from September to December. It's possible that the early Americans found them reminiscent of the larger species native to Europe. The cultivated varieties we grow today are much larger than those harvested by the natives.

One of the early settlers in New Jersey wrote to his brother in England in 1680 telling him how cranberries could be made into a sauce and how they were even better than cherries or gooseberries for making tarts.

In the late 1700's before cranberries were cultivated, families would pick the wild berries for their dinner tables. Anyone who picked the berries before they were ripe was penalized. In 1789 the New Jersey legislature passed a law fining anyone 10 shillings for picking cranberries before October 10.



For many years folk medicine practitioners prescribed cranberry juice for urinary tract infections. The theory was that the juice made the urine so acidic bacteria would not grow. This practice was treated as folklore by many in the medical profession who have called it unreliable as a preventative and not a treatment. Today, many women who use natural remedies rely on the juice of the unsweetened cranberry or a powdered cranberry extract formed into a caplet for treatment of urinary tract infections

Cranberries are one of the few crops that can survive in acidic peat soil. They need plenty of water. Once a vine is planted it will continue to produce for many years. Some vines between 75 and 100 years old are still producing a crop.

Nutritionally, one cup of cranberries provides 14 mg of Vitamin C, 71 mg of Potassium, and only 49 calories. Calories can be kept low by cooking the berries with sweeter fruits and fruit juice concentrates.

STORING: Cranberries have excellent storing abilities. They stay fresh about 3 to 4 weeks in the refrigerator and up to one year in the freezer.

COOKING: Cranberries have great versatility. Here are a few ideas to incorporate into your repertoire: Prepare a spiced punch by first cooking the berries into a juice by combining 1 pound of cranberries with 4 cups of water in a stock pot. Cook covered over high heat until cranberries are soft, about 5 to 7 minutes. Cool and either strain for a clear liquid or put them into the blender in batches to retain the whole fruit. Blend until pureed. Return to the pot and add 1 stick of cinnamon, 5 allspice berries, 5 or 6 whole cloves and sweetener of your choice. Simmer gently for about 5 minutes and serve hot in punch cups.

Incorporate chopped fresh cranberries into a quick bread.

Cranberries can be baked in the oven. Put a 12-oz. package of cranberries into a baking dish. Add 1 cup water and sweetener of your choice. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350 for 1 hour.

Bake cranberries into an apple pie using 4 large tart apples, 1 cup cranberries, and 1/2 cup raisins. Proceed as for any apple pie.

Prepare a sorbet by cooking a 12-oz. package of cranberries in 1 cup of water until soft, about 5 to 7 minutes. Cool. Add to blender in batches along with sweetener of your choice. Pour into a metal loaf pan and freeze. Allow to sit out at room temperature for about 15 minutes before serving, or put through the blender or food processor to soften before serving.

RAW: Chopped fresh cranberries add a refreshing touch to a bowl of salad greens. Add your favorite dressing and enjoy.

Cranberry relish takes on new life by using a tangerine in place of an orange and adding some chopped nuts. Start by putting a 12-oz. package of cranberries and 1 chopped tangerine into the food processor. Pulse chop until finely minced. Turn out into a bowl and add sweetener of your choice and some chopped walnuts.

Following are two unique cranberry recipes from Zel's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*

CHESTNUT AND CRANBERRY FANFARE

Celebrate the season with a festive, flavorful, and color-laden fruit salad to complement any meal.

3 C. (717 ml) cooked chestnut pieces (about 1 1/4 lbs. or 566 g fresh chestnuts in the shell)

2 large Fuyu persimmons, diced

2 medium bananas, cut in half lengthwise and sliced crosswise

3/4 C. (177 ml) raisins

2/3 C. (158 ml) fresh cranberries, chopped in food processor

1 strip of lemon or orange zest

1. Combine the first five ingredients in a bowl and toss to distribute all fruits evenly. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl.
2. Using a zester, remove a strip of lemon or orange rind about 5" to 7" (12.5 to 17.5 cm) long. Curl a portion of it and arrange artfully on top of the fruit salad. Serves 6.

CRANBERRY SALAD DRESSING

Please your family and friends with a salad dressing that takes advantage of the season's colorful offerings. This is especially good on a spinach salad or any mixed greens.

1 1/4 C. (296 ml) fresh cranberries

1 1/2 t. salt or to taste

1/4 t. dry mustard

5 whole cloves garlic

1 C. (237 ml) + 2 T. water

1 C. (237 ml) canola oil

1. Wash cranberries in a strainer and transfer them to a blender.
2. Add the next five ingredients to the blender. Start blender on low speed for 5 seconds, then blend on high until cranberries are pureed, about 1 minute.
3. With machine still running, slowly add oil. Mixture will thicken and turn a beautiful, intense pink color. Makes about 3 cups (717 ml) to enjoy.

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Parsnip--An Undiscovered Star

Includes Recipe Below

Still an ingenue waiting to be discovered in this country, the parsnip is a deliciously impressive performer in the fall, winter, and spring kitchens of Europe. Famous chefs reveal that "she's" easily prepared for diverse roles when brought to the table as an appetizer, soup, salad, or side dish. Sweet and delicate best describes the parsnip's outstanding flavors, while starchy, smooth, and light characterize its texture. Because of its starchy nature, the parsnip can easily stand-in for potatoes in meal planning.

A root vegetable, the parsnip is a member of the umbelliferae family whose other members include carrots, chervil, parsley, fennel, celery, and celeriac. The parsnip may be unfamiliar to you, yet its long history recites that it was cultivated during Roman times. During the Middle Ages tastier and fleshier varieties were developed. A variety of wild parsnip grew over much of Central and Southern Europe and has been introduced into the British Isles and Northern Europe, but the cultivated varieties are sweeter and appear more plump.

Because they store so well above ground as well as underground, parsnips are available year round. However, to enjoy the best of their flavors, the optimal season is fall through spring. Farmers plant the tiny seeds in the spring. Then the crop requires a patient three or four months to mature. Past experience taught the farmers that leaving the parsnips in the ground until late fall allowed their starches to turn to sugars. Some farmers even leave the parsnips in the ground all winter with the belief that these produce the sweetest crop.

Commercial farmers use the refrigerator to bring about the conversion of starch to sugar by harvesting the parsnips in the late fall and keeping them at 32 to 34 degrees for about two weeks.

A bit of folklore centers around the parsnip's ideal harvesting times. One myth says parsnips left in the ground over winter are poisonous. Another says that harvesting parsnips before the first frost

causes them to be poisonous. Neither is true, of course, but folklore makes good conversation.



However, for those of you who plan to stalk the wild parsnip, **beware!** The water hemlock, also a member of the same botanical family, looks very much like the wild parsnip, and it is **poisonous**.

Nutritionally, parsnips are low in calories, about 130 for a whole one 9" in length, and contain no saturated fat or cholesterol. That same 9" parsnip can boast a 6.4 grams of fiber, 93.1 mcg of folic acid (that's nothing to sneeze at), 59.2 mg of calcium, and 46.4 mg of potassium, and lesser amounts of vitamins B1, B2, B3, vitamin C, iron, and zinc.

When shopping for parsnips use the same criteria as for carrots. Select only firm parsnips. Those that are limp are not fresh. Choose them small, medium, or large, but avoid those that are overly large as they sometimes have a woody core.

Store raw parsnips in the refrigerator, preferably in a perforated plastic bag. They will keep well up to three weeks. After cooking, refrigerate only a day or two.

Parsnips are easy to prepare, and you'll be well rewarded by their superb flavors. Following are some preparation suggestions:

RAW:

Peel a parsnip, shred it, and add it to a salad. Its flavor is very mild and won't intrude on your greens, but you'll be adding nutritional benefits to your salad.

STEAMED, BOILED, BRAISED:

Peel and thickly slice parsnips for adding to long-cooking bean or grain stews.

Peel parsnips. Then slice and add to soups early in the cooking stage for a delicately sweet flavor surprise.

Peel parsnips. Then slice and steam in a small amount of water for 10 to 12 minutes to use as a side dish.

SAUTEED:

Peel and shred parsnips. Saute in a wok or skillet with a small amount of extra virgin olive oil and a little water until tender, about 7 to 10 minutes.

Dice peeled parsnips and carrots, and saute in a skillet with a little olive oil and water. Add a little lemon juice, wine, and seasonings and enjoy a tasty side dish.

ROASTED:

Peel parsnips and slice in half lengthwise. Toss in a little extra virgin olive oil and spread out on a lightly oiled baking pan. Roast in a 400 oven for 25 to 35 minutes, turning frequently to avoid sticking and burning. Season if desired.

Following is a recipe from Zel's cookbook, *Vegetarians in Paradise*.

PARSNIPS TO PONDER

When you begin with a vegetable rich in flavor like the parsnip, it's best to keep the preparation simple and allow its flavors to be fully appreciated.

2 lbs. (1 kg) fresh parsnips, peeled
Water

1 to 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Sprinkle of ground nutmeg
Garnish with a sprig of carrot tops

1. Cut parsnips into 1/2" (1 cm) chunks and put into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan with 1/2" (1 cm) of water.
2. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat.
3. Turn heat down to low and steam 8 to 12 minutes or until fork tender.
4. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a food processor or blender, reserving cooking water.
5. Add olive oil and process until pureed, adding some of the cooking water if needed to make a smooth puree. Season to taste. Turn out into a serving bowl.
6. Sprinkle very lightly with nutmeg and garnish with carrot tops. Serves 6 as a side dish.

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Lentils Need More Respect

Includes Recipe Below

Lentils are the Rodney Dangerfield of vegetables. They don't get much respect now and haven't for centuries. Lentils, one of the first crops cultivated by man, have been a food source for over 8000 years. Through much of that time they have been considered the food of the poor people.

In ancient Greece the wealthy would never think of serving lentils to their guests or themselves. One exception was Hippocrates, the father of medicine, who prescribed lentils for his patients with liver ailments.

Lentils gained more respect in Eighteenth Century France under the reign of Louis XV, whose wife Marie made them fashionable at the king's court. They were named "lentils of the queen."

Even into the Nineteenth Century they were called "the poor man's meat." The only time of year they found acceptance was during Lent as a substitute for those people who could not afford fish.

Unfortunately, lentils are not very popular in the United States. Lentils are most important to the diets of people in the Middle East and in India.

Many Indian dishes emphasize the more than 50 varieties grown in that country. The three varieties seen most often here are green, brown, and red.



Nutritionists consider lentils a great substitute for meat because they are high in protein and loaded with minerals. One hundred grams of lentils has as much protein as 134 grams of beef. Of the dried vegetables the lentil is second only to the soybean in protein content. One cup of boiled brown lentils provides 38 mg. calcium, 356 mg. phosphorus, 72 mg. magnesium, 360 mcg folacin,

6.6 mg. iron, 731 mg. potassium, and 10 grams dietary fiber. Lentils sold as dhal have their outer skins removed and are lower in fiber than other varieties.

Following are some suggestions for incorporating lentils into your meals:

RAW: Lentils can be sprouted and added to salads for a great boost in nutrition. They can also be ground into a meal in the food processor, seasoned, and made into lentil patties in a dehydrator.

TO SPROUT LENTILS: Measure about 6 to 8 tablespoons and soak them in plenty of water to cover overnight. Next morning, drain and rinse, and put them into a wide mouth jar covered with cheesecloth and secured with a rubber band. Lay the jar on its side and cover with a towel. Set aside on the kitchen counter to sprout for the day, rinsing them once or twice and draining them thoroughly. If the weather is cold, they may take a little longer to sprout. Rinse them and leave them until next morning when you'll notice each lentil has sprouted a little tail. They will now be ready to enjoy.

COOKED: Lentils cook quickly. Cooking about 20 to 25 minutes will give you the perfect firm, but tender, legume to use in salads. Start by combining 1 or 2 cups of lentils and 3 or 4 cups of water for each cup of lentils. Bring water to a boil, and turn heat down to simmer until tender. Season with salt and pepper in the last few minutes of cooking. Drain off water and reserve. (Reserved water can be used to serve over baked potatoes or rice.) To finish your salad, simply add chopped vegetables of your choice, lemon juice, a little olive oil, garlic, and seasonings for nutritious entree salad.



Lentils can be added to vegetable soups or even potato soups to add body and thickening. For this purpose you'll need to cook the lentils about 45 minutes so they will be completely broken down.

Lentil soup with a pungent lemon tang is a favorite of Middle Eastern households, while those of India add aromatic spices. Bring whatever seasonings please your palate to your creativity to enjoy a hearty lentil soup this winter or spring. There's nothing quite so pleasing as a hot soup to bring comfort when the weather turns damp and chilly. Below is a lentil soup recipe from Zel's book *Vegetarians in Paradise*

LENTIL VEGETABLE SOUP

Try not to allow the long list of ingredients intimidate you. The process is really quite simple, and cutting the veggies will take only a few minutes. Don't worry if you don't have all the ingredients on hand. Substitute or omit and the flavor will still be wonderful. If you have an affinity for really thick soups, reduce the lentil cooking water to 6 cups and the vegetable cooking water to 1 1/2 cups.

- 1 C. (237 ml) dried lentils
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 7 C. (1677 ml) water

2 whole cloves
1 stick cinnamon
2 pinches fennel seeds
3 pods cardamom seeds, cracked

1 small onion, chopped
2 medium carrots, sliced
2 stalks celery, diced
1 large zucchini, cut into bite-size pieces
1 yellow crookneck squash, cut into bite-size pieces
1 small turnip, diced
2 C. (480 ml) water

Juice of 1 lemon
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Combine lentils, bay leaf, onion, and 7 C. (1677 ml) water in a large stock pot.
2. Tie together the cloves, cinnamon stick, fennel seeds, and cardamom seeds in a piece of cheesecloth and add to stock pot.
3. Bring to a boil, uncovered. Turn heat down to medium and simmer 45 minutes.
4. Combine onion, carrots, celery, squashes, turnip, and water in a large wok or skillet, and cook over high heat just until tender, stirring frequently, about 6 to 8 minutes.
5. Add vegetables to cooked lentils and stir to distribute evenly.
6. Season to taste with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Serves 6.

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Can You Pass the Asparagus Test?

Includes Recipes Below

This month **On the Highest Perch** is presenting Vegetarians in Paradise's version of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." The category for questions is about Asparagus. If you answer the questions correctly and eat lots of asparagus, we can't give you a million dollars, but we can assure you that you'll be much healthier.

-
1. Where was asparagus first grown?
 2. What do asparagus, onions, garlic, leeks, shallots, chives, and yucca have in common?
 3. What famous king had gardeners grow asparagus in greenhouses so he could eat asparagus year round?
 4. What state grows most of the asparagus in the United States?
 5. Ancient Greeks and Romans believed asparagus had what medicinal qualities?
 6. What kind of climate is best for asparagus?
 7. What are the two main varieties of asparagus?
 8. What civilization cultivated asparagus as an offering to the gods?
 9. In what section of this country was asparagus first grown?
 10. The word "asparagus" is derived from what language? What does it mean in that language?
 11. Does asparagus have aphrodisiac qualities?
-

Answers

1. No one knows for sure. We do know it existed in the Mediterranean area in ancient times.

2. They are all in the lily family.
3. Louis XIV of France
4. California.
5. Helped to prevent bee stings and relieve toothaches.
6. One where the ground freezes in winter to a depth of two inches or more.
7. Green and white.
8. Egyptian.
9. New England
10. Greek word meaning "sprout" or "shoot."
11. All through history asparagus has been trumpeted as an aphrodisiac. A 16th century Arabian love manual gave an asparagus recipe to create a stimulant for amorous desires. In 18th Century France Madame Pompadour had her asparagus concoction for sexual vigor. In his book Food, contemporary writer Waverley Root devotes a section to the sex life of the asparagus.

What are the nutritional attributes of asparagus?

You can enjoy asparagus to the max and not have to worry about excessive calorie intake. For example, 1/2 cup (120 ml) of raw asparagus has only 15 calories, while the same quantity cooked contains 22 calories. That same 1/2 cup (120 ml) of raw asparagus provides 2.1 grams of protein, cooked offers 2.9 grams, slightly higher. Fiber is not asparagus's high point, offering only 1.41 grams of dietary fiber for that 1/2 cup (120 ml) of raw spears and tips; however, vitamin A, folacin, and potassium are its main attributes, along with trace amounts of B vitamins, copper, and zinc.

SHOPPING

From February through June farmers' markets frequently offer asparagus in a selection of thin, medium, and thick spears, while supermarkets sell whatever they get the best buy on. Select spears that are full, green and smooth looking. Avoid those that have a dry, shriveled appearance as these will have lost flavor and nutrients. Serve asparagus soon after purchase to get the best flavor and health benefits.

RAW

Enjoy the sweetness of the fresh spears with a minimum of preparation. Simply wash them, and snap off the tough white portion, retaining as much of the green spear as possible.

Chop, dice, julienne, or shred the asparagus and add to a salad.

Angle cut the spears and create a special salad adding chopped red bell pepper, diced red onion, and dress with a light vinaigrette of olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and a touch of sea salt.

Create a raw blender soup with fresh asparagus, avocado, cucumber, lemon juice, garlic, and white miso.



Cut asparagus into 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces and put into a bowl. Add some thinly sliced onion, and marinate in the refrigerator using apple cider vinegar, canola oil, garlic, salt and pepper.

STEAMED

In Europe it is traditional to peel the asparagus. Valuable nutrients are lost when the peel is discarded. Simply wash, break off the tips, and lay the whole spears in a saucepan. Add about 1/2-inch (1 cm) of water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Immediately turn heat down to low, and steam 4 to 6 minutes.

STIR FRY

Stir frying is an Oriental style of cooking that makes for a quick and easy way to serve asparagus. Angle cut the spears and stir fry in a little olive oil and chopped garlic.

ROASTING

Heat the oven to 375 F (Gas Mark 5). Wash asparagus and snap off the tough white portion. Dry the spears and toss in a little olive oil to coat them. Lay the spears out on a baking pan, and roast in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes, turning several times.

BARBECUEING

When you get the urge to fire up the barbecue, prepare the asparagus as for roasting and put them right on the grill, turning very frequently. They will cook in about 6 to 12 minutes depending on your preference for a crunchy or soft texture.

Enjoy this easy asparagus recipe that provides a quick lunch dish or a light dinner treat.

ASPARAGUS ON TOAST

1 1/2 lbs. (680 g) fresh asparagus, thick or thin spears
1 recipe Lemon Dill Silken Sauce
3 pieces whole grain toast
2 tomatoes, sliced

1. Wash asparagus and break off tough white portion, retaining as much of the green spears as possible.
2. Lay the asparagus in a saucepan or stand them up in an asparagus steamer (if you have one), cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Immediately turn heat down and steam about 5 to 6 minutes.
3. Prepare Lemon Dill Silken Sauce.
4. Place 1 slice of toast on each of 3 plates, and spread with 2 T. of the sauce. Top with tomato slices, and arrange steamed asparagus over the tomatoes. Top with 2 T. Lemon Dill Silken Sauce, and serve the remainder of the sauce at the table. Serve with knives. Serves 3.

LEMON DILL SILKEN SAUCE

6 oz. (170 g) soft silken tofu
3/4 t. salt
1/8 t. freshly ground pepper
1 t. minced fresh dill
1 to 5 T. lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor, and process until smooth, about 1 minute. Makes about 3/4 cup (180 ml). Leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator and will keep for about 5 days.

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Kohlrabi Strives for Comeback

Includes Recipe Below

Kohlrabi, once the favored vegetable of European nobles and peasants alike, has fallen off the veggie pop charts. Oh, yes, you can find kohlrabi in the produce department of many supermarkets, but when the checker lifts the bunch out of the grocery cart, notice the look of puzzlement on his or her face. What follows is a flurry of activity at the cash register. First, the checker holds up the innocent vegetable and shouts to the closest checker, "What is this stuff?" Next, follows a rifling through the little book that lists the code numbers. Then as the checker pushes the poor kohlrabi toward the bagger, there's an exchange of puzzled expressions.

Vegetarians in Paradise predicts a hearty comeback for this neglected member of the Brassica oleracea family, more commonly called the cabbage family. Some people have mistakenly labeled kohlrabi a cross between a cabbage and a turnip. This is understandable since both are members of the brassica family, but they are not of the same species.

We can only guess that other more pungently flavored vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, and asparagus have simply upstaged the kohlrabi whose flavor is mild and delicately sweet, its texture, crisp and moist. Though the flavor of kohlrabi is unassertive, delicate hints of cabbage and broccoli come to the foreground

For those unfamiliar with this jewel of a vegetable, its appearance somewhat resembles a hot air balloon. Picture the turnip-shaped globe as the passenger section; its multiple stems that sprout from all parts of its globular form resemble the many vertical ropes, and the deep green leaves at the top represent the parachute. Kohlrabi is often mistakenly referred to as a root vegetable, but in fact it grows just above ground, forming a unique, turnip-shaped swelling at the base of the stem.



Kohlrabi possesses many attributes worth notice:

- Low in calories, only 19 for a half cup raw, sliced
- High in dietary fiber, 2.5 grams for one-half cup
- Potassium content peaks at 245 grams for one-half cup
- Vitamin content for that same one-half cup includes 25 I.U. vitamin A, 43.4 mg. vitamin C, 11.3 mcg folic acid, and 16.8 mg. calcium.



Of kohlrabi's two varieties the purple globe is sweeter and tastier than the apple-green. Both have a pale green, almost ivory colored, flesh inside. While the entire vegetable is edible raw or cooked, the small, young kohlrabi, about 1 1/2" to 2" in diameter, is ideal for its flavor and texture.

Shoppers should choose small kohlrabi with its edible skin rather than the giant size with its woody, fibrous texture and inedible outer layer. The larger globes definitely need to be peeled. Kohlrabi is available year round with its peak season and sweetest flavor in spring through early summer.

If airplanes were the common mode of travel from the Roman era up to the present, kohlrabi would have collected enough frequent flyer miles to travel the world several times over. Kohlrabi's beginnings are a little uncertain, but it existed in the 1st century AD since Pliny the Elder briefly mentions a Corinthian turnip, a vegetable that closely resembles kohlrabi's growing habits. Apicius, who wrote the oldest known cookbook on cooking and dining in imperial Rome, mentions the kohlrabi in his preparations.

Charlemagne, who was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 800 AD, ordered kohlrabi to be grown in the lands under his reign. We connect Charlemagne with the French empire, but actually his home was in Aix-la-Chapelle which is now Aachen located in the Western portion of Germany. This fact accounts for kohlrabi's German name which means cabbage turnip.

Kohlrabi found its way into Northern India in the 1600's where the Hindus considered it an important staple of their diet along with rice and greens. More recently, this unassuming vegetable is found in the cuisines of Israel, China and Africa.

While kohlrabi was in common use throughout Italy, France and Germany from Charlemagne's era up to the present, Americans have never given it much notice. Here, people in the South were the only ones to enjoy kohlrabi along with their greens.

SHOPPING TIPS

Select small kohlrabi no larger than 2 1/2" in diameter, with the greens still attached. The greens should be deep green all over with no yellowing. Although kohlrabi stores well, up to one month refrigerated, yellow leaves indicate that the vegetable is not fresh.

RAW

Remove stems by pulling or cutting them off the kohlrabi globe. Stems and leaves can be chopped and included in a tossed salad. Their flavor is mild and takes well to salad dressing. If the kohlrabi is small, there is no need to peel it, however you may want to cut off the tough base end. If you've purchased large kohlrabi, peel it and slice off the tough woody base before slicing or dicing.

Slice or cut into julienne and include on a relish tray with dips.

Coarsely grate kohlrabi into a tossed salad. Because it is mild, succulent and porous, it absorbs the flavor of a mild or pungent salad dressing quite well.

Dice kohlrabi and combine with your favorite vegetables and dressing for a chopped salad with delightful crispness.

Slice kohlrabi, wrap in plastic, and pack in your brown bag lunch for a crunchy snack.

Chop and include as one of the ingredients in a raw soup.

STEAMED

Slice kohlrabi or cut into bite-sized pieces and put into a saucepan with 1/2" of water. Add a dash of salt, cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for 5 to 7 minutes. Leaves can be steamed lightly just as you would do spinach.

BARBECUED

Slice or chop kohlrabi and toss in a bowl with a little extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle with a dash of salt, and wrap in aluminum foil (shiny side inside). Place on the grill and cook for about 10 to 12 minutes.

STIR FRIED Dice or chop into bite-size pieces and stir fry 5 to 7 minutes in a little extra virgin olive oil with a clove or two of minced garlic and a dash of salt.

KOHLRABI SIAM CHOPPED SALAD

4 kohlrabis, about 2 to 2 1/2" in diameter
3 green onions, chopped
1/4 lb.(113 gr) snow peas, chopped
1 1/2 C.(355 ml) Napa cabbage, chopped
1/2 red bell pepper, cut into fine julienne about 1" (2.5 cm) in length
1/2 to 1 fresh pasilla pepper, diced or 1/8 t. crushed pepper flakes
1 or 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1/2" (1 cm) piece ginger, peeled and grated
2 T. toasted sesame seeds
3 T. organic canola oil
2 t. sesame oil
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Dash of rice vinegar
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Black sesame seeds
2 T. minced green onions

1. Combine all ingredients except black sesame seeds and green onions in a large bowl and toss well to distribute flavors.

2. Garnish top with black sesame seeds and minced green onions.
3. Best if made several hours ahead to allow dressing to penetrate vegetables.
4. Serve as a salad course or a side dish. Serves 4.

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TOMATILLO PLAYS HIDE AND SEEK IN A PAPER LANTERN

Includes Recipe Below

A well-established South of the border immigrant, the tomatillo, with its roots deeply planted in the ancient Aztec culture, needs no visa today. It's even possible that the tomatillo, which means little tomato in Spanish, came from Central and South America and was cultivated in Mexico by the Aztecs before the tomato arrived. Some people call it a jamberry, while others refer to it as a husk tomato.

The Spanish conquistadors, intrigued by many of the foods the Aztecs typically enjoyed, might have brought these treasures back with them to Spain. The name they introduced into Spain for these wonderful fruits of the vine was actually a corruption of the Aztec word for tomatoes. The Aztecs referred to a plump fruit as tomatl. The tomato, in their language, was xitomatl and tomatillos were called miltomatl. However, the Spaniards brought back "tomatoes." Historians are not sure if tomatoes or tomatillos or both were offloaded from the explorers' ships.

Tomatillos earn their diminutive name by their petite size that varies from that of a cherry tomato to one of a small tomato. What makes them unique in appearance is their paperlike cellulose husk covering that resembles the shape of a small green lantern that hangs downward from the bushy, annual plant on



which it grows. Inside the protective husk is a smooth, plump, firm variety of tomato that is usually picked green. When fully ripened, they are actually yellow, but these are rarely brought to market. The husks turn a greenish brown when the fruit is losing its freshness.

With their dense, highly seeded interior, tomatillos burst with a distinctive tart, lemony flavor that makes them the perfect ingredient in Mexican dishes such as **Salsa Cruda**, a fresh salsa dish, as well as **Salsa Verde**, a cooked green sauce used in many Mexican dishes. Tomatillos also contain a pectin-like substance that thickens the sauce or salsa upon refrigeration.

The highly nutritional aspects of tomatillos may surprise you. One medium raw tomatillo contains only 11 calories, yet it packs 91 mg. of potassium. That same little fruit contains 4 mg. of vitamin C, 2.4 mg of calcium, 2.38 mg. of folic acid, and 39 IU of vitamin A. Imagine the benefits if you include several in your recipe.

SHOPPING

Tomatillos are available in most large chain grocery stores. Because they are an essential ingredient in Mexican cooking, they can always be found in Latino markets, where they are also available canned. Select tomatillos as you would tomatoes, choosing those that are firm rather than soft. By the time they reach the market, their husks are often partially opened, making it easier to choose tomatillos with good color. Store them in the refrigerator until ready to use. If the tomatillos are fresh, they will store up to two weeks in good condition. However, like any fresh vegetable, they should be used soon after purchase.

PREPARATION

Remove the cellulose husks and wash the tomatillos thoroughly. You'll notice they have a slightly sticky surface. This is normal.

RAW

Tomatillos can be chopped and added to any salads.

Tomatillos make an excellent addition to a raw soup when you want that tangy, lemony touch. Begin with just 1 tomatillo in the blender along with your other soup ingredients, and taste. Add more as needed.

Make your own **Salsa Cruda** with chopped tomatillos, chopped tomatoes, chopped onions, chopped jalapeno, chopped cilantro, lime juice, and a touch of salt.

STIR FRIED

Tomatillos can be briefly stir fried in a little olive oil, vegetable broth, or water. They have a high water content so don't add too much liquid. Cook along with some onions, garlic, and bell peppers for a tasty side dish. Season to taste with a little salt and pepper.

SIMMERED

Salsa Verde is a typical sauce served with enchiladas or burritos. Combine chopped tomatillos, chopped onions, chopped cilantro, chopped garlic, chopped serrano chiles, salt and pepper in a saucepan and cook gently 6 to 8 minutes.

Enjoy tomatillos in this unique sauce that offers delightful tang in a thick, creamy base. Serve this hearty sauce over pasta, baked potatoes, and grains. It can even make a tasty hot dip to serve as an appetizer.

CASHEW TOMATILLO SAUCE



2/3 C. (158 ml) cashew pieces

1 1/2 lbs. (679 g) fresh tomatillos

1 fresh poblano pepper (also called pasilla), diced

2 large cloves garlic, minced

1 small onion, diced

1 1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. ground cumin

Freshly ground black pepper

1 C. (237 ml) unsweetened soy milk

1. Using a small electric coffee grinder, grind cashews into a powder and set aside.
2. Remove and discard outer husks from the tomatillos, wash thoroughly, and chop tomatillos. Put tomatillos into a large skillet or flat bottom wok.
3. Add poblano pepper, garlic, onion, salt, cumin, and pepper to skillet. Cook over high heat about 6 or 7 minutes, stirring to cook evenly.
4. Add soy milk to skillet and stir well. When mixture begins to bubble, add ground cashews a little at a time. Stir until thickened and smooth, about 2 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

NOTE: When serving, you may want to garnish with a sprinkle of turmeric or paprika, 1 tablespoon or two of finely minced red bell pepper, or a tablespoon of finely shredded carrots.

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THE JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE CAPER

Includes Recipe Below

When a favored member of the vegetable family sports a name that has no connection to its origin or genus, it makes one just a little curious. How did the Jerusalem artichoke earn its name? We know it didn't come from Jerusalem, but where did it come from? Was it brought to Jerusalem by some famous explorer? Does this plant have a religious connection to Jerusalem? How is its name connected to the artichoke family? Our private investigators tracked down all of these leads and came up with some fascinating chronicles about the Jerusalem artichoke, also called sunchoke.

The Jerusalem artichoke has no relatives in the artichoke family but is actually a member of the sunflower family. A native of North America, it grew in the wild along the eastern seaboard from Georgia to Nova Scotia. The explorer Samuel de Champlain first encountered sunchoke growing in an American Indian vegetable garden in Cape Cod, Massachusetts in 1605. In his opinion they tasted like artichokes, a name that he carried back to France. The American Indians called them sun roots and introduced these perennial tubers to the pilgrims who adopted them as a staple food.

Our detectives continued their search. Apparently the French began growing these tubers successfully because they were sold by Parisian street vendors who named them topinambours, the French word for tuber. Six Brazillian Indians from the Topinambours tribe were brought back to the curious French in 1613 after an expedition, and the street hawkers adopted this name for their prized tubers from the Americas.

There is a record of Champlain sending some of the tubers to his native France after tasting them a second time in Canada. It's very likely he sent them home from Massachusetts, too, because a book called *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, published in 1609, makes mention of this vegetable before Champlain's exploration in Canada.

Our sleuths have surmised that when Jerusalem artichokes arrived in Italy sometime before 1633, the Italian word for sunflower, "girasole" which means "turning to the sun," was somehow later

corrupted into the word "Jerusalem." This corruption combined with Champlain's likening the taste of the vegetable to an artichoke brings our mystery to a close.

Jerusalem artichokes made their way across Europe, reaching England in 1617 and Germany by 1632. An early edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* mentioned "Artichocks of Jerusalem" in 1620.

As in all trends, there is a rise in popularity, and then a fall into obscurity. France readily accepted the Jerusalem artichoke in the early 1600s, possibly because of the name artichoke. The potato, on the other hand, was regarded with suspicion and rejected. When the potato was finally accepted, the Jerusalem artichoke fell into rejection because people thought it caused leprosy. This belief was attributed to the irregular shape and brown mottled skin that resembled the deformed fingers of those with leprosy.

In times of desperation, the Jerusalem artichoke became sustenance. It was during a famine that occurred throughout Europe in 1772 that the Jerusalem artichoke could be quickly and easily grown to provide nourishment. During World War II the tubers regained some recognition in several countries because they were a food that could be bought without a ration card. The explorers Lewis and Clark were fortified by Jerusalem artichokes during a time when it was difficult to find ample food on their expedition.

The Jerusalem artichoke is a tuber that grows underground like the potato but is harder to harvest because the tubers cling to the roots and become entwined. Cultivated varieties of sunchokes grow in clumps close to the main root or rhizome while wild ones grow at the end of root. Like their family members of sunflowers, they can grow from 3 to 12 feet high with large leaves and flowers that are 1 1/2 to 3 inches in diameter. They grow well in almost all soil with the exception of very heavy clay soil, but do best in alkaline soil.

Sunchokes are easy to grow from tubers that weigh about 2 oz. and have 2 or 3 sprouts emerging. Plant them deep, about 3 to 4 inches underground. They do best when planted in little hills for better water retention and to make harvesting easier. Plant them in the spring through early summer, and harvest them fall through early winter. Be aware that any tubers left in the ground that were not harvested will reseed themselves. Many farmers are reluctant to go into heavy production of the sunchokes because of their ability to take over and become a serious weed problem.

Sunchokes are often called a starchy plant, but the starch is in the form of inulin, a polysaccharide from which fructose can be produced. Because this starch, or inulin, is not easily digestible by everyone, it may be best to introduce the vegetable in small amounts. John Goodyer, one of England's pioneer planters of the early 1600's wrote,

"But in my judgement, which way soever they be drest and eaten they stir up and cause a filthy loathesome stinking winde with the bodie, thereby causing the belly to bee much pained and tormented, and are a meat more fit for swine, than men."

We find their delicate sweetness and nutty flavor so refreshing we include them in our repertoire of vegetables regularly. They have a crispness that resembles water chestnuts and can even stand in for water chestnuts in salads and stir fries.

Nutritionally, the sunchoke's most outstanding benefits lie in the 327 mg. of potassium for a half-cup serving. That same half-cup serving has 57 calories, 1.5. gr. protein, 1.2 gr. fiber, 10.5 mg. calcium, 10 mcg. folacin along with smaller amounts of niacin and thiamine.

SHOPPING: Jerusalem artichokes are usually packaged in plastic and found in the produce department of most supermarkets. Since they are not in great demand, it's important to examine them carefully. Fresh vegetables look plump and vibrant. Inspect carefully to avoid those that have a greenish tinge. Make sure they are not sprouting, or are shriveled or moldy.



STORAGE: Keep the tubers wrapped in plastic and refrigerate. They will keep up to two weeks, but it's always best eat them as fresh as possible for the best flavor and nutrition. Their sweetness is known to increase when refrigerated after harvesting. If you grow your own, refrigerate them for a day or two before consuming.

PREPARATION: Scrub the sunchoke clean with a vegetable brush. Since much of their nutrients are stored just under the skin, it's best not to peel them. Once cut, sunchoke discolor quickly, so it's best to cut them close to serving time, or cut and immerse them in water with lemon or vinegar to prevent oxidation. Cooking them with the skins on may cause a darkening of the skins because of their high iron content.

RAW:

Slice sunchoke and enjoy the crunch they add to your salad.

Slice and serve them along with crudites and dips.

Shred them into a slaw. Dice them into a chopped salad.

Slice, dice, or shred and marinate in a little extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice or rice vinegar

Coarsely chop sunchoke and add to the blender when preparing raw soups.

STIR FRY: Slice, dice, or shred and stir fry along with other fresh vegetables in a little extra virgin olive oil. They will become softened in about 4 to 6 minutes. For a tender crisp texture, stir fry about 2 to 4 minutes.

BAKED: Sunchoke can be baked whole or sliced. Toss them in a bowl with a little extra virgin olive oil and place on a baking sheet. Set the oven temperature at 375 and bake 30 to 45 minutes for whole, and 20 to 25 minutes for sliced, turning them half way through. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

STEAMED: Coarsely chop the Jerusalem artichokes and put them into a steamer basket. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Continue at high heat and steam for 5 to 8 minutes. Test for softness. Remove and season to taste or mash like potatoes.

BOILED: Sunchoke can be boiled whole or cut as desired. Bring a covered saucepan of water to a boil over high heat. Add sunchoke and boil for 10 to 15 minutes for whole, and 5 to 8 minutes for cut up. Season as desired or mash like potatoes.

As you can see, Jerusalem artichokes can be enjoyed with any meal, adding a special taste and texture to the palate. Below is a recipe that is as unique as the plant itself:

SUNCHOKE SANDWICH

2 C. (480 ml) coarsely shredded Jerusalem artichokes (sunchokes)
1/2 C. (118 ml) raw pecans, coarsely chopped or coarsely ground in a nut twister
1/4 of a red bell pepper, finely diced
Vegan mayonnaise
Salt and pepper to taste

6 to 8 slices whole grain bread
12 to 16 large basil leaves
3 tomatoes, sliced
3 to 4 butter lettuce leaves (optional)

1. Combine sunchoke, pecans, and red bell pepper with enough mayonnaise to moisten and hold mixture together. Season as desired.
2. Spread mayonnaise over bread slices. Divide sunchoke mixture and spread over half the bread slices.
3. Top with 4 basil leaves, tomato slices, and lettuce, if desired. Cover with top bread slice and cut in half.
4. Makes 3 to 4 sandwiches. Serve with salad and fruit for a tasty light meal.

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OKRA, AN OUTCAST IN A STICKY BUSINESS

Includes Recipe Below

Shunned by many for its gummy, slimy, mucilaginous qualities, okra has been welcomed in our Southern states where its gumminess is used to advantage to thicken stews and sauces. If you've ever enjoyed a Creole gumbo, most likely you've eaten okra.

Okra, a tropical plant in the mallow family, traces its native roots to Ethiopia and a bit north to the region of the Sudan. As early as the 13th century it was said to be growing along the Nile River. From Africa, okra readily found acceptance in the Middle East where it is enjoyed in a dish called Bamieh, a traditional stew of okra, tomatoes, onions, garlic, lemon juice, and olive oil to which meat is frequently added. In India okra was highly favored and even today it is enjoyed in a popular dish known as Sabzi Bhindi where the okra is fried in oil along with cumin and onions and seasoned with spices.

In the early 1600's the black slave trade brought new delicacies to North America as well as South America and the West Indies. Okra came to our South during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries when slaves from the Gold Coast introduced it as nkrumun. The name never caught on, but okra brought in by slaves from Angola was called ochingombo, later shortened to ngombo. The Indians of Louisiana discovered okra's thickening abilities and used it in place of file' powder to thicken a stew made of vegetables and seafood which they named " gumbo."

Black slaves were also brought to Brazil and Dutch Guiana during the 17th century. As a result, okra became incorporated into their cuisines and grows well in those tropical climates. It's possible that the name ngombo became gombo and finally evolved into gumbo by slaves in the West Indies. No one knows for sure.

Although the word gumbo refers to the African vegetable, okra, it was transferred to the stew where it has survived for centuries. Today, if you encounter an okra dish in England, it may be called Lady's Fingers. In the Caribbean you might enjoy a soup containing okra called Kallaloo.

Okra's characteristic mucilaginous trait comes from acetylated acidic polysaccharide and galaturonic acid contained within. When it is cut, it releases these chemical compounds and makes an ideal, naturally thickened stew of vegetables and legumes. Okra can be dried and ground into a powder to use as a thickening agent for soups and sauces.

Okra has a striking appearance. The fingerlike, slightly curved pods come to a point at one end while the stem end appears to be wearing a conical cap. Some varieties are ribbed on the outside while others are smooth and slightly fuzzy. Its green color can vary from light to dark with some varieties even producing a reddish color. The pods are ribbed inside and are filled with soft, edible seeds that range in color from beige to pinkish beige.



Okra pods grow from two inches in length up to eight inches, with the smaller size offering the tenderest, most pleasing flavor. The larger pods tend to become woody and tough. Some have described the flavor of okra as something between an eggplant and asparagus. Neither

seems fitting. Okra's flavor stands above any comparison. When cooked, the texture is soft and the flavor delicate, with the seeds adding delightful character.

If you plan to grow okra in your garden, plant several seeds or seedlings in the early spring for a good summer harvest. Throughout the summer, check the plants daily, harvesting the pods while they are small, two to four inches in length. Okra is available throughout the year in many markets, especially markets that sell Middle Eastern items, but its peak season is summer.

If you would like to add more fiber to your diet, a mere 1/2 cup of cooked okra supplies 2 grams, while that same quantity raw offers 1.3 grams. It offers 1.5 grams of protein for that same quantity cooked, with raw providing 1 gram. Okra has abundant vitamin A, vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, and folacin. Its other nutritional attributes include impressive potassium content, providing 257 mg. and calcium content supplying 50 mg. for 1/2 cup cooked.

SHOPPING: Select pods that 2 to 3 inches in length for their tenderness. Look for those that are bright green, plump, and unblemished. If they have black spots on them and look dry, they are not fresh.

STORING: Store fresh okra in the refrigerator and use within a day or two. Beyond that they begin to lose their freshness, flavor, and nutrients.

PREPARING: Wash the okra under cold running water. If you plan to cook them whole, no further preparation is necessary. As an alternative, you can slice off the stem end if you prefer or peel the conical portion without breaking the surface of the okra. Keeping the okra whole prevents the mucilage from oozing out. If you plan to use them sliced, slice off the stem end, and simply slice the okra crosswise into desired lengths.

RAW: Wash the okra and pat dry. Thinly slice crosswise and add to a bowl of salad greens with your favorite dressing.

Thinly slice okra and combine with your favorite chopped vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet onions, avocado, and cucumbers, and bathe in a cashew dressing.



Thinly slice okra and marinate for two or three days in a dressing of olive oil, apple cider vinegar, fresh lime juice, finely diced red or green chiles, and seasonings. Use as a condiment.



STEAMING: After washing, place whole okras in a skillet with or without stem ends intact. Add 1/4 to 1/3 cup of water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Immediately turn heat down and steam 3 to 5 minutes. Test for fork tenderness and remove to a serving dish. Sprinkle with a little salt, serve, and enjoy the exotic experience of this unique, delicate vegetable. **SAUTEING:** Slice washed okra and saute until tender in canola oil along with onions, garlic, and ginger. Season to taste.

BRAISING: Okra can be combined in a stew or "gumbo" along with your favorite vegetables, legumes or grains, onions, and tomatoes. Season with spices and cook covered on top of the stove until the legumes or grains are cooked through.

SOUPMAKING: Add okra to your favorite vegetable soup ingredients and enjoy its ability to thicken the soup naturally. Puree if desired or enjoy the soup with texture of bite-sized vegetables.

Here's a recipe from *Zel's Vegetarians in Paradise Cookbook* that will give you a tasty introduction to this vegetable.

N'AWLINS OKRA STEW

This stew is rather tame for a Cajun dish. For those who like their N'awlins cuisine a little spicier, add 1/4 t. or more of the Cajun seasoning, stir well, and cook a few minutes longer to combine the flavors. If you don't have a kitchen scale at home, weigh the tomatoes and okra when you purchase them at the market in order to have the proper quantities. Measuring by weight gives more consistent results in a recipe.

- 1 1/4 lbs. (466 g) fresh tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 1/4 lbs. (466 g) fresh okra, washed, stem ends trimmed off
- 1 large purple onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 t. Cajun seasoning
- 1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 t. dried oregano
- 1/2 t. dried marjoram
- 1/4 t. fennel seeds, crushed in a mortar and pestle
- 1/2 t. salt or to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 C. (480 ml) water

- 2 T. cornstarch
- 2 T. water

1. Combine tomatoes, okra, onion, bell pepper, garlic, seasonings, herbs, and the 2 C. (480 ml) water in a large, deep skillet or wok.
2. Cook over high heat, stirring frequently for 7 - 10 minutes, or until okra feels tender when pierced with a fork.
3. Combine cornstarch and water to make a smooth paste. Add to bubbling okra stew a little at a time, thickening to desired consistency.
4. Serve over Basmati Brown Rice or in an individual bowl as a side dish. Serves 6

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MILLET: THE TIME TRAVELER OF GRAINS

Includes Recipe Below



If you took a spin in H.G. Wells' time machine to trace the historical roots of millet, you would experience a rather lengthy, bumpy trip through many time zones until your vehicle halted at 4500 BCE. Upon landing, you would most likely find yourself in a field in Northern China among the five to fifteen-foot-tall, corn-like stalks of millet. Millet was the basic grain cultivated in this region along with a few experiments in growing wheat and hemp.

Does it surprise you to discover millet in China where rice is king? Until middle of the Nineteenth Century, China discouraged the people from the West from entering the country. Only a few traders saw the southern part of China where there is ample rainfall and rice grew abundantly. Those early traders assumed that all of China feasted on rice.

The drier climate of northern China was ideal for growing millet that thrived well on limited rainfall. The warrior farmers of the north western highlands valued millet so highly that in preparation of the long, severe winters, they brought the grain indoors.

Millet was considered one of the five sacred crops by the ancient Chinese. In one of the earliest recorded writings, Fan Shen Chih Shu in approximately 2800 BCE, gives directions for the growing and storing of the sacred grain. If you lived during the Han period, you would have enjoyed millet wine, which was actually a more popular beverage at that time than China's native cup of tea.

Mention of millet along with rice, broom-corn and wheat was even included in a third century Chinese poem called "The Summons of the Soul."

Renowned traveler Marco Polo wrote that during the reign of the Great Kahn, millet was plentiful and was prepared as a gruel cooked in milk rather than made into bread, which the Chinese had not

yet developed.

During prehistoric times, people of Northern India were also cultivating millet that was used to prepare roti, an Indian flatbread still eaten today in Western India. Millet's travels continued throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa where it became a staple. Typical foods of the well-rounded Sumerian diet of about 2500 BCE included millet along with barley, wheat, chick peas, lentils, beans, onions, garlic, leeks, cucumbers, cress, mustard and lettuce. Millet was even mentioned in the Old Testament. The idyllic Hanging Gardens of Babylon were said to have included millet among their treasured plants.

Herodotus, the Greek historian known as the Father of History, described with reservation the millet plants growing in Assyria, the richest of the grain producing countries of that period. He said their millet grew so tall he was reluctant to give its height because no one would believe him.

Through trading with Eritrea and Somalia circa 3000 BCE, the early Egyptians learned from the Africans how to cultivate millet which would grow well in the dry Sahara, where wheat and barley were unable to thrive. The Moors, too, cultivated millet when they discovered that it would sprout during monsoon season. Millet, a fast-growing grain, could be harvested in about 45 to 65 days.



Egypt is possibly the country where the earliest techniques for raised bread were developed. The Egyptians were skillful at brewing ale which was made in the bakehouse. Between baking and brewing in the same room, wild yeasts were plentiful and added lightness to their millet breads. Soon they substituted ale for the water and their bread doughs were even lighter. The Greeks and the Italians took up the practice with an interesting variation, using wine instead of ale. Their millet breadmaking began by soaking the grains in grape juice. Next they formed a dough which was then kneaded and left to ferment before baking.

Millet was cultivated and cooked into a porridge in many European countries. The French adopted millet porridge long before the Romans arrived. In Northern Italy, in the area that is now Milan, millet was prepared into a porridge called puls. In Rome where millet was a familiar grain in everyday use, pulmentum was their staple porridge. In the fourth and fifth centuries in Rome a polenta-type porridge of millet was the food of the poor. Charlemagne of France had millet stowed to be used as a Lenten food approximately 800 CE.

Because millet stored exceptionally well, in past centuries it was not uncommon to stock the grain in case of famine. A variety known as finger millet, the longest-lasting, was kept as long as five years in the form of unthreshed heads.

With nature on the side of the farmer, birds and the winds allowed millet seed to spread easily. In 1801 a traveler to Botswana, Africa, observed a rather unique style of cultivation. Rather than separating their different grain and legume seeds, the natives combined their abundant millet seeds with other grains and legumes and planted them in a rather helter skelter fashion. When the plants matured, they were harvested all together and stored in a grainery. The combined grains and legumes were then eaten in a porridge which was boiled in milk.

Food writer Waverly Root says that if you have trouble with crab grass on your lawn, forget the lawn, cultivate the crab grass, and when and if it produces seed, eat the little grains which are

actually a variety of pearl millet.

Throughout the world there are 6,000 varieties of millet whose grains vary in color from pale yellow, to gray, white, and red. Teff, the native grain of Ethiopia that is used in making a flatbread called injera, is actually a variety of millet.

Most of the millet grown in this country is fed to animals and packaged for bird seed. Pearl millet is the variety grown for human consumption.

You'll benefit from plenty of protein when you include millet in your diet. Depending on the variety, millet's protein content is very close to that of wheat, with a half-cup serving, cooked, providing 4.2 grams. One-half cup raw millet contains 11 grams of protein.

Millet is rich in B vitamins, especially niacin, B6, and folacin and offers calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium, and zinc. Since millet contains no gluten, it cannot rise to form a light bread. For a raised bread, it's best to combine it with wheat. Used alone, it's ideal for making flatbread.

The only grain that retains its alkaline nature when cooked, millet is ideal for those who are allergic to wheat and gluten

Millet can be used in many dishes in place of buckwheat, rice, or quinoa. It makes a tasty, light breakfast cereal, works well in vegetable loaves, gives extra body to soups or stews, and used raw, adds delightful, crunchy texture to muffins and quickbreads.

STORING: Store millet at room temperature in an air-tight container for up to a month. For longer storage, it should be refrigerated.



PREPARATION: All grains should be washed before cooking. Because millet absorbs water rapidly, wash the grains briefly. Measure the quantity you are planning to cook before washing.

1 cup raw millet yields 3 cups cooked. When measuring, use 3 1/2 parts liquid to 1 part millet. For 1 cup raw millet, add 1 t. salt.

COOKING: Because all pearl millet is not the same, cooking times may vary. Millet cooks up to make a fluffy, delicate-tasting grain that is best enjoyed warm. When cold it tends to become hard, dry, and lumpy.

TIMING:

- **To Bake**, set oven at 350, put millet, salt, and liquid in a covered casserole, and bake for 45 minutes.
- **To Boil**: Bring millet, salt, and liquid to a rolling boil and boil 10 minutes. Some varieties may take longer.
- **To Steam**: Combine millet, salt, and liquid in a saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Immediately turn heat down to low, and steam for 15 minutes without lifting lid. Turn off heat and set aside without peeking for 10 to 15 minutes. Some varieties require longer cooking, about 10 to 15 minutes more.

Enjoy millet often with this easy-to-prepare recipe. Serve with a crisp tossed salad, steamed

vegetables, and whole grain bread.

MILLET WITH SPICY TOMATO SAUCE

1 C. (237 ml) millet grains
1 t. salt
3 1/2 to 4 C. (835 to 960 ml) water

1. Combine millet, salt, and water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan.
2. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for 15 minutes.
3. Remove from heat, and set aside for 15 minutes without lifting lid.

Tomato Sauce

2 lbs. (1 kg) Roma tomatoes, chopped (Italian plum tomatoes)
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 to 3 dashes ground cinnamon
1 or 2 dashes ground cloves
1 t. ground cumin
1/2 t. chili powder
1/2 to 1 t. salt
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 T. extra virgin olive oil

Garnish

- 1 T. chopped fresh chives, basil, or thyme
2 T. toasted pumpkin seeds
1. Combine tomato sauce ingredients in a large skillet. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring frequently, until soft and broken down, about 12 to 15 minutes.
 2. To Serve: Spoon millet into a large bowl or casserole. Ladle some of the tomato sauce over the top.
 3. Garnish with fresh herbs and pumpkin seeds, and serve remainder of the sauce at the table. Serves 4 to 6.

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Persimmon, "Food of the Gods"

Includes Recipe Below

If you bite into a piece of fruit that looks like an orange tomato and your lips pucker because of the bitter taste, you may be chewing on an unripe persimmon. Your reaction would be similar to that of the early settlers of North America.

Those settlers found persimmons inedible until the Native Americans told them the fruit would not be ready to eat until the first frost. The settlers assumed this meant the frost was necessary to improve the taste, but the natives meant the fruit should be left on the tree well into October when it was ripe enough to eat.

The persimmon native to North America is the *diospyros virginiana* that the Algonquin Indians called "putchamin, pasiminan, or pessamin," depending on the dialect of the tribe. This persimmon was small, seedy and had an unpleasant taste when eaten before it was ripe. This astringent quality is caused by tannin present in the fruit when it is not completely ripe. The *diospyros virginiana* was quite different from the persimmons we see in the markets today. It was the size of a grape and had to be left on the tree into the winter.

Growing wild, it varied in quality from tree to tree. Hernando de Soto and his conquistadors found the Native Americans eating bread made from what they called "prunes." The loaves they were fed were formed from dried persimmons.

The settlers of Jamestown described persimmons as "very sweet and pleasant to the taste, and yields on distillation, after fermentation, a quality of spirits." When Captain John Smith was not busy with Pocahontas, he is quoted as saying, "If it be not ripe it will drawe a mans mouth awrie with much torment; but when it is ripe, it is as delicious as an Apricock."

When Commodore Matthew Perry opened Japan to the West in 1855 he changed the persimmon scene forever. One little known sidelight of his journey was the return to the United States with persimmon trees that were planted in Washington, D.C.

Any Greek will tell you that "diaspyros" means "food of the gods." What he may not tell you is that "diospyros" is also the botanical name for persimmon. In Japan, where the persimmon is very popular, the word you will hear for this fruit is "kaki." A botanist in this country will use the phrase "diaspyros kaki" when he is speaking about the Japanese persimmon.



The Japanese persimmon that has become the dominant variety sold in the United States did not originate in Japan. It is a native of China but was introduced to Japan at an early date and has become the national fruit and one of the traditional foods for the Japanese New Year. Sometime in the mid 1800s the first persimmon cultivar arrived in California. A sub-tropical plant, the persimmon grows well in California and the Southeastern United States.

There are hundreds of varieties of persimmon, but two types are commercially available. The Hachiya dominates with about 90% of the market. It is an astringent fruit, bright orange in color, and shaped like a large, slightly elongated tomato that almost comes to a point at the bottom. Hachiyas must be fully ripe to be enjoyed. Fully ripe means a mushy, intense orange, jelly-like texture that is a turnoff for many people. The taste is compared to that of an overly sweet apricot with a smooth, slippery texture.

The Fuyu, also bright orange in color, is a non-astringent variety slowly gaining in popularity. It is eaten when firm, just like an apple, shiny skin and all. You can recognize a Fuyu by its squat shape and flat bottom, close to the appearance of a medium-sized tomato.

Nutritionally, persimmons provide a substantial amount of Vitamin C, with the Hachiya rating slightly higher. Both varieties can boast a high beta carotene content. The Fuyu contains about six times as much Vitamin C as the Hachiya. Both provide a small amount of protein, some trace B vitamins, and moderate calcium. Potassium is their highpoint, boasting 270 milligrams for a medium persimmon.

SHOPPING: Some persimmons will begin to appear in the markets in late September, but November and December are when they're most plentiful. In some areas availability may even stretch into January.

Because the Hachiya variety is so delicate in its ripe state, it is picked and shipped to market while still hard and unripe. A persimmon whose color is bright orange all over will ripen more successfully than those with yellow patches, which indicate they were picked before maturity. Some markets will have ripe ones on hand. We prefer to purchase our persimmons quite firm in order to monitor their ripening carefully. Allow them to ripen at room temperature, a process that may take up to a week to reach a completely soft state. Patience pays off, providing a fruit with unmatched sweetness that some liken to ambrosia.

Fuyu persimmons should be purchased when very firm. Enjoy them as they are, crunchy and sweet, or allow them to soften a bit at room temperature. There are several varieties of Fuyu, some

have sizeable black seeds inside while others are seedless. The especially tasty Gosho variety with its redish orange color and black seeds seems to turn up at farmers' markets.

STORAGE: Once ripe, persimmons don't keep well. They should be eaten right away or refrigerated for no more than a day or two. If you're waiting for several persimmons to ripen at once to make that seasonal favorite, persimmon pudding, you'll discover persimmons have a mind of their own, each one choosing a different time to ripen. Simply spoon out the flesh of each persimmon as it ripens, and store it in the freezer in an airtight container until you have the required amount.

Lengthen the short persimmon season by storing firm Hachiyas up to one month in the refrigerator before setting them out at room temperature to ripen. To enjoy them out of season, freeze them for six months before ripening.

DRYING: Ripe persimmons can be sliced, peeled or unpeeled, and oven-dried or dried in a dehydrator. Unripe, firm Hachiyas can be peeled and dried whole, a process that helps them to lose all their astringency and develop a sweet, softened texture.

RAW: To enjoy the best of flavor, eat both varieties of persimmons fresh as soon as they are ripe. Their flavors are sweet, rich, and satisfying. Cut them into quarters and serve them for breakfast.

The Fuyu variety can be diced and added to fruit or vegetable salads.

Hachiyas do well in the blender with some soy milk or soft silken tofu and a dash of cinnamon to make a delicious smoothie.

BAKED: Ripe Hachiya persimmons add rich flavor and moistness to baked cakes, cookies, muffins, quick breads, and steamed puddings.

Add mashed Hachiyas to pancake or waffle batter.

This unique fruit combination is one of the sugarplums of the autumn season. It's so rich in colors and flavors, you can serve it often as a meal accompaniment throughout the holidays.

PERSIMMON FRUIT CONFETTI

1 lb. (453 gr) Red flame grapes, cut in half
3 large Fuyu persimmons, diced
2 large sweet apples, cored and chopped
2 C. (480 ml) black raisins
30 dates, pitted and chopped
1 C. (237 ml) pecans, toasted and chopped
2/3 C. (177 ml) toasted pine nuts

Combine all ingredients in a large, attractive serving bowl and toss to distribute evenly. This fruit dish can be made several hours ahead. Serves 8 - 10 as a side dish.

Note: Later in the season when cranberries are available, you can add 2 cups (480 ml) of fresh cranberries, pulse chopped in the food processor. Add these shortly before serving to avoid loss of flavor.

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CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE

Includes Recipe Below

Nostalgic memories linger when chestnuts appear each fall. Some of our parents and grandparents still recall past holiday seasons with street vendors selling roasted chestnuts on the sidewalks of New York and Philadelphia as well as in many smaller cities. For just a few pennies people could buy bags of hot chestnuts they ate as a warming snack while they shopped or strolled along the streets.

Well before the Pilgrims arrived on the Eastern shores, the American chestnut tree stood as a mighty monument, many over 100 feet tall, their trunks measuring five feet or more in diameter. Members of the Fagaceae family, chestnut trees formed the forests that grew from Maine in New England all the way south to Florida and spreading westward to Michigan. There's an old saying that the chestnut forests were so thick a squirrel could jump from chestnut tree to chestnut tree from Georgia to New York without ever touching the ground.

Even Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was impressed by the magnificence of the chestnut tree when he wrote his poem, *The Village Blacksmith* in 1842, which begins "Under the spreading chestnut, the village smithy stands."

Chestnut trees are often confused with the horse chestnut, the beech, and chestnut oak, none of which bear fruit. American chestnuts grow three nuts to a burr, an impressive looking fruit about the size of a baseball with a fuzzy lining surrounding the nuts.

American chestnut trees provided sustenance to humans and animals in numerous ways. Chestnuts were a dietary staple of the American Indians who taught the Pilgrims to cook them in stews or grind them into flour for bread.

Chestnuts meant survival to many Appalachian communities. There, small animals like squirrels and birds along with bears and deer feasted on the chestnuts, some storing them for the winter. In

early summer the ridge tops along the Appalachians were covered in white. Those who were familiar with the chestnut trees recognized that the copious white blooms meant a great chestnut harvest ahead. During the autumn harvest season residents of the area stored sacks full of chestnuts in their cellars as provisions for the winter.



Because chestnut trees grew straight, tall, and branchless for nearly 50 feet, loggers found them highly saleable. Like the sturdy redwoods they were also resistant to rot and could be used for nearly everything from telegraph poles, railroad ties, and shingles to musical instruments, fine furniture, and paneling. After the harvest the surplus ripe chestnuts were packed into railroad cars and shipped eastward to the large cities.

Several varieties of European chestnut trees were imported to this country in 1799. Thomas Jefferson brought some cuttings of European variety to Monticello and grafted them onto American trees. Eleuthere Irenee DuPont de Nemours brought several varieties from France which he hybridized.

Later he imported more trees and did more hybridization. He is most famous for establishing a gunpowder factory in Wilmington, Delaware. His heirs built the company into the present DuPont chemical empire. By 1889 there were many hybridized American-European chestnut varieties growing here.

In the late 1880s others were importing and grafting chestnut trees from Japan including Luther Burbank who imported 10,000 nuts for hybridizing. His trees reached many nurseries that sold the hybridized Japanese chestnut trees through catalogs. Trees were popping up all over the East, especially in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Today two of the Japanese chestnut trees imported in 1876 are still growing in Connecticut, one at the Bee and Thistle Inn in Old Lyme and one behind the Congregational Church in Cheshire. Two Chinese varieties imported in 1900 still survive, one in the Durand-Eastman Park in Rochester, New York, and the other at the Bartlett Arboretum in Stamford, Connecticut.

Problems

Hardy though the mighty chestnut was, it fell prey to a deadly fungus from the Asian trees. In 1904 the first infected trees were found in New York City along the avenues of the Bronx Zoo. Spreading quickly, the fungus found no resistance along its path as it destroyed all the chestnut trees of the eastern forests. By 1950, chestnut root sprouts that also became infected with the fungus were all that remained. A plant researcher found that the blight also affected the chestnut trees in Japan and China, but since they seemed resistant to the disease, it didn't destroy them.

In the early 1930s researchers, in their effort to restore the chestnut forests, were offering hybrid species to New England homeowners. So far many of these trees have survived the harsh winters without suffering blight.

The American Chestnut Foundation, founded in 1983, hopes to restore the American chestnut to its original stature in the Eastern forests. After decades of attempting to create a blight-resistant chestnut tree, researchers are just now developing techniques that cross our American chestnut with several Asian species in the hope that new developments in genetics can bring them success.

Beyond our North American border, the chestnut is considered the most revered tree-food crop in

the world, feeding both the poor as well as the rich throughout history. From prehistoric times to the present, people have always looked forward to the chestnut harvest, a delightful task that involved merely gathering them up, since the ripe ones simply fall to the ground.

Chestnuts were growing in China and Japan in ancient times long before the Roman armies brought them into Europe. Many chestnut varieties grew wild throughout Asia, parts of the Middle East, and Europe. By 37 BCE the Romans were actively cultivating robust chestnut trees for the flour they combined with wheat for bread. Greece and Turkey were also fortunate to enjoy the abundance of the harvest from their lusty chestnut forests. The Romans imported the best chestnuts from Kastanum, now the Asian portion of Turkey. The chestnut's genus name of *Castanea* is derived from Kastanum.

It is interesting to note that chestnuts are even mentioned in the Bible, with a tale that tells of Jacob putting peeled chestnut twigs into his water troughs to promote healthy offspring of his livestock. Since the middle of the twentieth century, North America has imported most of its chestnuts from Italy where the trees grow abundantly, with the highest quality from Sicily. The clearest description of the chestnut's hardiness tells of an ancient tree growing at the base of Mt. Etna in Sicily. A mere 2,000 years old, it was destroyed when the volcano erupted.

Throughout history chestnuts have evoked symbolic meanings and diverse practices in different cultures. In Japan, chestnuts symbolize both success and hard times. Always served as part of the New Year menu, chestnuts symbolize mastery and strength.

In Modena, Italy, chestnuts are soaked in wine before roasting and serving as a special preparation on St. Martin's Day.

In France, *marron glace*, a candied chestnut with a typically French cooking style that involves 16 different processes, is always served at Christmas and New Years time. The French claim they originated this treat in the time of Louis XIV, but apparently a candied chestnut confection was served 150 years earlier in Piedmont, a northwestern area of Italy close to the border of Switzerland and France.

To the early Christians chestnuts symbolized chastity.

Nutrition

Most people don't think of nuts as a low-fat food, but chestnuts are the exception. Low in fat--3 cooked chestnuts, or approximately 1 ounce, contain a mere .02 grams of fat compared to a handful of cashews with about 12 to 15 grams of fat. You've probably guessed they're also low in calories with those same three cooked chestnuts containing between 57 and 68 calories depending on the variety.

Protein is not a highpoint for chestnuts that contain only minimal amounts. However, unlike their other nut counterparts, they are very starchy, making them high in carbohydrates. It's their carbohydrates that make chestnuts, once dried and ground, into an excellent, nutritious flour.

Of all the nuts, chestnuts are the only ones that contain vitamin C. One ounce of boiled or steamed chestnuts delivers 7 mg. of vitamin C, while the dried variety has more than double that amount with 16.6 mg. for one ounce.

All three varieties, the Chinese, Japanese, and European, contain B vitamins including folacin. All

have small amounts of calcium, iron, magnesium, and zinc but are a rich source of potassium.

The chestnuts now grown in North America are mostly of the Chinese variety, but they are not readily available in markets. You'll most likely encounter those imported from Europe. The majority are from Southern Italy, but some are from Portugal, and France. The French variety, called marrons, are highly favored. These are found in gourmet shops, and as you might expect, are always a bit pricey. Those from Italy are most plentiful and are sold by the pound in supermarkets across the country. They're large, meaty, and richly flavored.

During the fall season many Asian markets import chestnuts from Korea. These are impressive in size and rich in flavor.

FRESH CHESTNUTS: These begin appearing in the produce section of most supermarkets in October, though they receive little attention until Thanksgiving. Traditionally, they are cooked and added to stuffings. Fresh chestnuts are available through March though supermarkets will usually not carry them after Christmas. Asian markets, however, will have them throughout the winter.

To boil, make a crisscross cut on the flat or domed side of each chestnut with a firm, sharp paring knife. Toss them into a saucepan, cover with water by 2", and cover the pan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly, and boil gently for 20 minutes. Cool slightly and peel with a sharp paring knife, taking care to remove the brown inner skin as well. We've found it's easier to remove the shells when the chestnuts are quite warm and recommend working with only a few chestnuts at a time while the rest stay warm in the cooking water.

To roast, make a crisscross cut on the flat or domed side of the chestnut with a sharp, firm paring knife. Place the nuts on a baking sheet and roast at 400 (Gas Mark 6) for about 20 minutes. You can test for tenderness by piercing through the cut side with a fork. Peel with a firm, sharp paring knife, taking care to remove the dark brown inside skin.

To eat raw, purchase the French variety (marrons) at a specialty shop and simply peel them by making a crisscross cut either on the flat side or the domed and pulling off the shell.

Because of their starchiness, cooked chestnuts can be served as a vegetable and mashed like potatoes. Shortly after they're harvested much of their starch turns to sugar, giving them a satisfying sweetness and adding a pleasant balance to a savory meal.

Chestnuts can be enjoyed whole as a tasty snack. They can also be mashed, pickled, chopped, minced, or sliced. Consider adding them to sauces or soups as a thickener and flavor enhancer.

DRIED CHESTNUTS: These are available on a year round basis in almost any Asian market. They may also be found at Italian markets. In their dried form chestnuts may be stored indefinitely.

To cook, put chestnuts in a saucepan and cover with 2" of water. Cover pan and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly and boil gently for about 45 minutes. To speed cooking time, soak the dried chestnuts in water to cover overnight. Cooking times vary depending on the variety. Fork test for tenderness. We've learned that the dried chestnuts tend to retain their firmness even after lengthy cooking. Their firm texture makes them ideal for adding to cooked vegetables, casseroles, grain dishes, fruit and vegetable salads, rice puddings, and soups. Consider them also as a unique garnish for a sweet or savory dish.

For measuring dried chestnuts, use half the quantity required in a recipe that calls for fresh chestnuts.

CANNED CHESTNUTS: In the fall, canned and jarred whole, cooked chestnuts can be found in gourmet shops, packed in water or syrup for making desserts. Pureed cooked chestnuts, either sweetened or unsweetened, are also available in cans or jars during the holiday season. Shop for these at gourmet stores.

CHESTNUT FLOUR: It may be difficult to find chestnut flour in North America. Consider looking in health food stores and in Italian markets. Since chestnut flour does not contain gluten, it is combined with wheat flour for baking breads. In Southern Italy it is cooked much like a polenta and served with cheese. Another favorite dish of Italian origin begins with chestnut porridge cooked with pine nuts, butter, and raisins and flavored with anise. It is then baked like a pudding and served as a dessert.

STORAGE: It's best to keep whole, unpeeled fresh chestnuts refrigerated until you're ready to cook them. In this form they may be stored for up to one year, keeping in mind it's always best to eat foods when they're at their freshest.

We offer this unique way to enjoy chestnuts during the holiday season. The recipe will be much easier to assemble if you prepare the chestnuts the day before.

CHESTNUT, WILD RICE, AND PECAN STUFFED SQUASHES

1/2 lb. (226 g) fresh chestnuts or 1 1/4 C. (296 ml) cooked peeled chestnut pieces Water

1 C. (237 ml) wild rice

3 C. (717 ml) water

1 t. (5 ml) salt

4 or 5 squashes (sugar pumpkins, acorn, small butternut, delicata, sweet dumpling)

Organic canola oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

3 stalks celery, finely chopped

5 cloves garlic, crushed

3 T. (15 ml) extra virgin olive oil

1/4 C. (59 ml) water

4 slices 100% whole wheat bread

1/2 lb. (226 g) mushrooms, chopped

2/3 C. (158 ml) pecans toasted and broken into pieces

3/4 t. (3 3/4 ml) salt or to taste

1/2 t. (2 1/2 ml) dried thyme leaves

1/2 t. (2 1/2 ml) dried oregano



1/2 t. (2 1/2 ml) poultry seasoning

Freshly ground black pepper

Chopped parsley for garnish

1. If using fresh chestnuts, make a crisscross cut in each chestnut. Boil chestnuts in water to cover for 20 minutes. Peel with a sharp paring knife while still warm, removing the inner brown skin as well. Put chestnut pieces into a large bowl. Set aside.
2. Combine wild rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium-low, and cook for 45 to 55 minutes, or until soft.
3. Cut squashes in half with a firm chef's knife, scoop out seeds, and brush cavities with oil. Arrange on a baking sheet, cut side down, and bake at 400 (Gas Mark 6) for 30 minutes.
4. To prepare stuffing, combine onion, celery, garlic, olive oil, and water in a large skillet, and saute until soft and transparent, about 5 to 6 minutes. Toss into bowl with chestnuts.
5. Toast whole wheat bread in toaster until bread is dry. Cut into small cubes and add to bowl with chestnuts.
6. Add remaining ingredients to bowl and mix well. Adjust seasoning to taste.
7. Remove squashes from oven and generously fill cavities with stuffing. Cover with aluminum foil, dull side up, and bake for 30 minutes more or until squashes are tender. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve. Serves 8 to 10.
8. Extra stuffing can be put into a covered casserole dish and baked at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 30 minutes.

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SQUASHES STAR IN A FAMOUS SISTER ACT

Includes Recipe Below

"The apple of God," an expression of Ancient American Indians, tells us that as far back as 3,000 BCE squash was elevated to the highest status. The belief was that the squash seeds would increase fertility if they were planted close by, and indeed those with large squash fields did produce large families. With such strong faith in the powers of squash, the early Native Americans made this vegetable an important staple in their diet.

The early colonists didn't take to squash with the same reverence as their native neighbors. In fact, it took them a while to acquire a taste for squashes such as pumpkins that they considered a rather bland vegetable. In 1816 a young bride, named Elisabeth Skinner, discovered another use for certain squashes. She would pound the seeds into a meal, rub the mixture into her skin, and sit in the sun. She found that "it taketh away freckles and al spottes."

The name "squash" is an abbreviation of the word "askutasquash" from the Narragansett Indian language, a tongue the Pilgrims found challenging. Other tribes in the area had similar words that all meant "something that is eaten raw." The Iroquois called it "isquoutersquash." The Algonquins' word, taken from the second syllable, was "askoot."

Squashes are true natives of the "New World" and are ubiquitous throughout both North and South America. The turban squash came from Brazil; the Valparaiso was from Chile; the Hubbard originated in the West Indies; and the cushaw was first found in Florida. The Spanish explorer, Francisco Pizarro, discovered winter squashes in Peru and brought seeds back to an unenthusiastic citizenry in his country. Archeologists uncovered stems, skins, and seeds of summer squashes in the caves of the Tamaulipas Mountains of Mexico dating back between 7,000 and 5,000 BCE. During that period the cave dwellers were beginning to cultivate squashes along with beans, chili peppers, and agave.

When the Pilgrims arrived in America, they encountered, among many squashes, the pumpkin that Native Americans had been cultivating for centuries. Some botanists believe squashes were the first cultivated crop of the Indians. To this day the "three sisters" refers to the three foods that appear together consistently in Native American cuisine: squash, corn, and beans. The origin of this expression is traced back to an Iroquois myth with the three vegetables representing three sisters who were inseparable.

Today's inseparable combination of "Thanksgiving and pumpkin" began with the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving when pumpkins were hollowed out, filled with milk, honey and spices, and then baked. In the modern Thanksgiving celebration pumpkin maintains its prominent status as the pumpkin pie at the end the meal.



It's fascinating to note that after the mid-1500s many explorers from Europe who encountered squashes and pumpkins for the first time referred to them as melons. Though many varieties of gourds are native to Europe, squashes did not exist there before Columbus came to the Americas. Yet, historians began claiming that squashes grew in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, that there were recipes for squash in the first Roman cookbook by Apicius, that squashes were mentioned in Pliny's writings, and that Charlemagne ordered squashes be grown in his gardens.

The facts reveal that archeologists never found squash seeds in the tombs of ancient Egypt, though they did find utensils made of gourds. Pumpkins and squashes are not mentioned in the Bible, ancient Chinese writings, or in ancient Asian Indian Sanskrit documents. Squashes are uniquely American. The writings probably referred to gourds that were somewhat edible, though not as tasty as our squashes.

Though the explorers brought seeds back to Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the London Horticultural Society experimented with what they called marrow squashes in their gardens in 1816, squash didn't stir up any interest until the nineteenth century. One Frenchman, after tasting "the new vegetable" for the first time, negatively referred to squash as "Naples' and Spain's revenge."

All squashes are members of the *Curcubitafamily* that produces varieties of every color, texture, shape, size, and range of flavors. There are winter squashes with tough skins that are mostly autumn harvested and soft-skinned summer squashes that are mostly available in summer. However, with today's advanced horticultural practices, squashes of almost all varieties are available year round. Large seed companies and agriculturists worldwide are constantly developing new varieties of squashes, such as *Carnival*, *Stripetti*, and *Eat It All*.

The three main catagories that exist in the *Curcubita* family are:

Curcubita pepo- includes zucchini, summer squashes, acorn, spaghetti, table queen, pumpkin, and colored gourds.

Curcubita maxima- embraces hubbard, banana, buttercup, golden nugget, marblehead, and pumpkin.

Curcubita moschata- includes butternut, ponca, waltham, pumpkin, and calabaza

To this day there seems to be some confusion in distinguishing the word squash from pumpkin. Although there are three distinct botanical species of squashes, categorizing pumpkins seem to be a confusing issue. Some botanists refer to them as *Curcubita pepo*, others *Curcubita maxima*, and still others *Curcubita moschata*.

Squashes are a delight to grow in home gardens. They're easy to plant, don't require a great deal of work, and are rewarding to harvest.

PLANTING: For summer squashes start seeds in early spring. For winter squashes, plant in mid-summer. Plant seeds 1" deep and 24" apart, preferably in soil that is loose and well composted. Most squashes do not do well in heavy clay soil. If your soil is clay based, cultivate well with compost, peat moss, and sand to allow adequate retention of moisture and good drainage. Squash seeds can be started indoors and will transplant well when the ground warms up. Make sure you give squashes plenty of room to grow. Summer squashes tend to be more bushy, but winter squashes with their natural trailing tendency produce vines ten to fifteen feet in length along the ground.

In order for squash plants to yield "fruit," they need bees to pollinate them. Squash plants produce both male and female flowers on one plant. Pollen must be transferred from the male to the female flower by bees in order for fruit to set. Pollination usually requires several bees visiting the female flower within a 24-hr. period. When bees are not present, pollinating can also be hand done by removing the stamen with the pollen from the male flower and rubbing it on the pistil center of the female flower.

HARVESTING: Squashes are mature when the portion lying on the ground has developed the coloring of that squash variety. Leave stems of 3" to 4" on pumpkin and other winter squashes. Those without stems do not store well. Because the stems break easily, it's best not to handle them by the stems. On Hubbard squashes remove the stem completely for longer storage of up to six months.



Spaghetti squash is ready to harvest when the rind is light tan to golden yellow, and weighs 2 , 5 pounds. Another determining factor for testing maturity is that it will be difficult to pierce the skin with the thumbnail.

Harvest before the frost and store between 55 to 60 degrees F. Squashes keep several months but are best eaten within three or four months.

STORAGE: Keep squashes dry. The ideal storage temperature of 50 to 55 degrees F. (10 to 12 degrees C) allows squashes to keep well for two to three months. If stored in the refrigerator, they become too cold and rot quickly when taken out of storage. Once squash is cut, store in the refrigerator for up

to a week.

NUTRITION: All squashes are low in calories and low in carbohydrates. Most winter squashes contain considerable fiber, with a higher fiber content in its raw state.

Most varieties of winter squash are exceptionally high in beta carotene. One-half cup of baked Butternut squash provides 7141 IU. The same quantity of baked Hubbard offers 6156 IU of beta carotene, while baked pumpkin provides 1320 IU. The exception is Spaghetti squash which contains only 86 IU for that same one half cup. Summer squashes are also good sources of beta carotene, averaging 250 to 300 IU for one half cup.

All squashes contain trace amounts of B vitamins including folic acid and offer a healthy dose of iron, calcium, magnesium, and potassium. One half cup of Hubbard squash packs a potassium serving of 365 mg, baked Acorn 320 mg., and baked Butternut 289 mg.

SHOPPING: All squashes, winter and summer, should be purchased as close to harvest as possible and cooked soon after. Although winter squashes can keep for several months, many

varieties lose their sweetness and moisture if kept beyond two or three months. Banana and Hubbard squashes are the exception and will keep up to six months.

VARIETIES:



Acorn Squash is about five or six inches long (12.5 to 15 cm), deep green in color, sometimes with orange streaks, and has deep ribs that taper to a point at one end. The flesh inside is yellow, the flavor very delicate. Table Queen and Golden Delicious are two varieties developed in more recent years and can be recognized by their bright orange skin with green flecks.

Banana Squash is a giant elongated squash that weighs up to 40 pounds (18.14 kg) and is sold in pieces wrapped in plastic. The outer skin color is pale yellow to light beige with bright orange flesh inside. The flavor is moist and delicate.

Butternut Squash is a seasonal favorite for its very sweet orange flesh, although it is often available year round. You can recognize it by its pinkish beige skin color and elongated shape that develops into a bulb at one end. Avoid those with green coloring on the outer skin that indicates it was harvested before maturity.

Delicata, also called Sweet Potato Squash, is elongated, about 5" to 8" (12.5 to 20 cm) in length and weighs about a pound (453 g). The color is creamy with dark green or orange stripes. Choose firm, unwrinkled squashes. The color inside is a deep yellow, the flavor deliciously sweet.

Hubbard Squash is very large, heavy, and looks like it has warts. One squash can weigh up to 40 pounds (18.14 kg). The flesh inside is dense, pale yellow, and very delicate in flavor. The outer color is usually deep green, but varieties of white, blue-gray, and orange are appearing at farm stands.

Kabocha, an intensely sweet squash in the buttercup family, is the generic Japanese word for squash. It's also referred to as Japanese pumpkin. The flesh inside will be an intense yellow-orange color and very dense. A common variety of Kabocha is called Sweet Mama. Choose one that is solid and heavy for its size. Color varies from mottled dark green all over to mostly dark green variegated with areas of orange and yellow. Its shape reminds one of a dark green pumpkin that someone sat on and flattened. [Click here for a full article on kabocha.](#)



Pattypan is a round summer squash that measures about 1" to 2" in height (2.5 to 5 cm), 3" to 4" in diameter (7.5 to 10 cm.), and has fluted edges. The skin is soft and edible. Colors vary from pale green to dark green, all yellow, yellow with green, or all white. The flesh inside is creamy white, the flavor mild.

Pumpkins are categorized by sizes. Miniature pumpkins are 3 to 4 inches in size (7.5 to 10 cm) and weigh less than 1 pound (453 g). Varieties include Sweetie Pie, Jack Be Little, Sugar Pumpkin, Mini Jack Munchkin, and Baby Boo.

Small pumpkins are 1 to 5 pounds (453 g to 2.3 kg).

Small/Medium are 5 to 10 pounds (2.3 kg to 4.5 kg).

Medium/Large 10 to 25 pounds (4.5 kg to 11.4 kg).

Mammoth pumpkins weigh 100 pounds (45.4 kg) or more. These large pumpkins have

encouraged the formation of Giant Pumpkin Clubs that exchange seeds and award prizes for the largest. The Oregon 1993 record was 727 lbs. On Oct 5, 1996 a prize of \$10,000 was awarded for a 1061-pound pumpkin grown in New York.

Sugar Pumpkin or New England Pie Pumpkin is recommended for baking pies. Some varieties have white skins but have orange flesh inside.

Spaghetti Squash is related to the pumpkin. The shape is elongated, about 5" to 14" in length (12.5 to 38 cm) with a diameter of 4" or 5" (7.5 to 10 cm). Those with the brightest yellow color are the most mature and flavorful. The flesh inside is pale yellow and delicate in flavor with a stringy and fibrous texture. Orangetti, a variety of Spaghetti squash, has orange rind and flesh and is higher in Vitamin A than its yellow cousin. Many cooks use this squash like spaghetti and serve it with tomato sauce.

Sweet Dumpling looks like a squat round version of the Delicata squash with similar coloring. The very sweet, moist, yellow-orange flesh makes this squash a seasonal favorite. This variety is popular for stuffing and to use as a creative container for serving soups, dips, and sauces.



Turban Squash is quite edible, but is often used ornamentally for its attractive turban shape and bright orange, green and white colors. This variety is very dense and heavy with a diameter of 10" to 15" or more (25 to 40 cm). The moist yellow-orange flesh can vary from mild to quite sweet.

Yellow Crookneck is an all yellow summer squash with edible skin and a texture and flavor similar to zucchini. The size can vary from 4" to 6" in length (10 to 15 cm). Its distinguishing feature is its graceful curved neck that flows into a wider bulb at the blossom end. Select those that are firm with the least blemishes on the skin.

Zucchini is also known as vegetable marrow. The French refer to zucchini type squashes as "courgette." Zucchini are deep green, are about 4" to 6" in length (10 to 15 cm), and vary in diameter from 1/2" to 1 1/2" (1 to 3.5 cm). In recent years several varieties have come on the market such as yellow zucchini and those that are streaked with yellow and green. A variety called Mexican squash is light green with darker green speckles and has a plump stubby appearance. The Mexican squash is slightly sweeter than zucchini. Zucchini is a summer squash with a soft edible skin, delicate white flesh, and edible seeds inside. Choose firm, unwrinkled squashes and cook them soon after purchase. If kept too long, they become bitter. [Click here for a full article on zucchini.](#)

COOKING:

Raw: Both summer and winter squashes can be enjoyed raw. They can be shredded, diced, or chopped into salads.

Both can be put into the blender with other raw vegetables and fruits, tastefully seasoned, and blended into delicious soups.

Both can be sliced or cut into julienne strips and served as crudites with dips.

Roasted: All varieties of summer squashes can be sliced either lengthwise or crosswise about 1/2" thick (1 cm), brushed lightly with oil, and roasted at 375 to 400 F. (Gas marks 5 to 6) for about 25 minutes.

Baked: The hard-skinned winter squashes lend themselves to baking either whole or cut in half. Place squashes on a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil (shiny side down) and bake at 400 F. (Gas Mark 6) for 40 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes depending on variety. If cut in half, scoop out seeds, and brush with oil. Place cut side down on aluminum foil and bake at 400 F.

Both winter and summer squashes can be cut in half, stuffed, covered with aluminum foil (shiny side down) and baked. As an easy alternative, you place cut side up on baking sheet, brush with oil, and season before baking at 400 F.

After baking, squashes can be mashed and seasoned to a savory blend or sweetened as desired. Baked and mashed squashes can be added to breads, muffins, and pancakes to add flavor and moistness.

Boiled: Winter squashes can be peeled with a vegetable peeler or paring knife and cut into bite-size pieces. Put into a saucepan with about an inch of water, cover pot, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and simmer gently for 6 to 10 minutes. If desired, add salt to the water before cooking.

Summer squashes should not be peeled. They can be sliced about 1/2" (1 cm) thick or cut into bite size pieces and put into a saucepan with 1/2" (1 cm) of water. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 3 to 4 minutes.

Steamed: Winter squashes should be peeled, summer squashes should not. It may be easier to peel the winter squashes after cooking. Cut squashes into slices 1/2" thick (1 cm) or cut into bite-size chunks if desired. Place in a steamer basket over 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7.5 cm) of water and cover. Turn heat to high and steam on high for 4 to 10 minutes depending on variety.

Stir Fried: Both summer and winter squashes can be sliced, diced, shredded, or chopped and added to stir fries along with other vegetables and seasoned with your favorite herbs and spices.

Miscellaneous: Both summer and winter squashes can be cut into bite-size pieces and added to soups, stews, or tarts or pies seasoned savory or sweet.

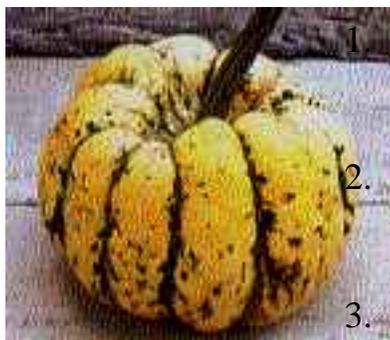
SAVORY STUFFED SWEET DUMPLINGS

Here's a tasty side dish that brings the delightful sweetness of winter squash into the spotlight.

- 2 Sweet Dumpling squashes
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) long-grain brown rice
- 1 1/4 C. (296 ml) water
- 1 t. salt
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 t. dried marjoram
- 1 1/2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1/2 C. (118 ml) raw pine nuts, toasted

Salt to taste



1. Cut squashes in half lengthwise (from stem to blossom end), scoop out seeds, and place cut side down on a baking sheet covered with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake at 400 (gas mark 6) for 40 minutes.
2. While squashes are baking, combine rice, water and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 35 to 45 minutes until tender.
3. Combine tomatoes, onion, bell pepper, black pepper, herbs, and olive oil in a large skillet. Saute over high heat until onions are softened and transparent, about 5 to 7 minutes.
4. When rice is cooked, add to ingredients in skillet along with pine nuts and mix well. Season to taste.
5. Stuff squash cavities. Spread the remainder of the stuffing onto the bottom of a lightly oiled 7" x 9" (17.5 x 23 cm) baking pan. Lay squashes on top of stuffing. Cover baking dish with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake at 350 (gas mark 4) for 25 to 30 minutes. Serves 4.

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THE BITTERSWEET ALMOND SAGA

Includes Recipe Below

Many of us have enjoyed a rendezvous or two with the sweet almond in delicacies like marzipan or have enjoyed the dramatic presentation of whole almonds standing upright and decorating baked Brie. Sweet almond slivers grace the top of many cakes or garnish a platter of steamed green beans. But what is a bitter almond?

Bitter almonds are poisonous and unpalatable and, therefore, not eaten. However, when you add almond extract to your baked treats, the process began with bitter almonds. Bitter almonds are cultivated to extract their highly valued essential oils. The bitterness comes from prussic acid, which is destroyed by heating the almonds, then extracting the oil, which is used for flavoring. The processed bitter almond is also used in making Amaretto, an almond flavored liqueur. Almond oil, an expensive culinary oil, also comes from the bitter almond.

During the industrial revolution in England, German born scientist Fredrick Accum wrote *A Treatise on Adulterations of Food, and Culinary Poisons* in 1820. In his book he revealed many dangerous practices sellers and food manufacturers used to enhance foods, among them was the dubious practice of adding bitter almond to table wines to give them their nutty flavor. Angry businessmen ran him out of the country, but eventually his revelations led to the formation of the first British Food and Drug Act in 1872.



In ancient times oils were highly desirable for cooking, lighting, medicine, and for perfumes. Almond oil from Anatolia, now Turkey, was a sought after commodity in Greece. In the U.S. almond oil has been used as a lubricant for fine watches

Almond milk has also had its place in history. Many times dairy products were introduced and reintroduced into China with little success except for a period of about 300 years during the Tang Dynasty. China was quite fond of creating its own "milks" from nuts and legumes. Until the end of the 18th century almond milk made from blanched, pulverized, and soaked nuts was common in Europe. During Medieval times frumentry, a pudding made from whole wheat and almond milk, was commonly served with meals of venison.

One of the early European uses of almond milk was in the preparation of the French dessert blancmange, a delicate, all white, chilled custard whose British version of the 14th and 15th century, blancmanger, included shredded chicken breast, sugar, rice, and almond milk or ground almonds.

Botanically, the sweet almond, *prunus amygdalus dulcis*, is considered a stone fruit, closely related to the cherry, plum, apricot, and peach. When you break open the seed of the peach or apricot, the inside closely resembles a shelled almond. The almond's botanical name comes from the Greeks who called them "amygdalon." The bitter almond is *prunus amygdalus amara*.

There are three basic parts to the almond's anatomy, the hull, the shell, and the fruit, the almond itself. When the fruit is fully mature, the hull bursts open. The shell can be either thin or of the thick variety. The almond is considered a small tree, only about 30 feet high, and must be cross-pollinated with the help of honeybees. Most almond orchards house a number beehives.

In the springtime almond orchards are a spectacular sight, all abloom with white blossoms that perfume the air with a delicate fragrance. The blossoms on the ground are like a blanket of snow that has fallen the night before.

California is the largest producer of almonds in the world, shipping to over 90 countries, with Germany and Japan the largest importers. The state has 6,000 almond growers who supply the U.S. with 100% of its commercial needs and 80 % of the world's supply. Other countries that grow almonds include Portugal, Iran, Afghanistan, Australia, South Africa, and most Mediterranean countries.

Almonds along with dates, grapes, and olives were among the earliest cultivated foods, probably before 3,000 BCE. Almonds and pistachios are the only nuts mentioned in the bible. Earliest varieties of almonds came from China, carried via the Silk Road to Greece, Turkey and the Middle East. Explorers ate almonds as sustenance as they traveled the Silk Road.

Eventually, almonds became a common crop in Spain and Portugal as well as part of the cuisine in such dishes as Portuguese almond layer cake, fig candies with almonds, and spinach with pine nuts and almonds.

About 763 CE Arab traders ventured from their capital in Baghdad to trade with other countries. They set up regular trade with Spain and Portugal and even settled there to provide a commercial

center for goods that came from the Middle East. Because they missed foods from their homeland such as citrus fruits and almonds, they imported trees. Before long people of the Iberian Peninsula were developing a taste for such treats as marzipan and nougat that were made from almonds.

In the 16th century Persians were emigrating to northern India, bringing their familiar foods and introducing new flavors to the cuisine of that country. This blending of cuisines developed into the Muglai style that introduced, among many other foods, almonds and almond milk.

In the 1700's Franciscan monks brought almond trees from Spain and planted them on the grounds of the missions along El Camino Real, California's first coastal road that connected San Diego in the south to Sonora in Northern California. However, California's damp coastal climate proved to be less than ideal for the almond trees that needed warmer, drier weather. The trees thrived successfully when planted further inland.



Today the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys are the chief almond growing centers in the United States. Although there are almond trees grown in other parts of the country, they don't produce fruit in any great quantity. Almonds don't do well in areas that receive winter frosts or tropical heat.

Almonds were central to many cultural traditions around the world. In classical times Romans presented gifts of sugared almonds to important dignitaries as well as personal friends. At weddings they also tossed almonds at the bride and groom as a symbol of fertility.

An early European tradition of wrapping sugarcoated almonds in sheer netting and presenting them to wedding guests symbolized fertility, happiness, romance, good health and fortune. Today we still carry on this tradition with white sugarcoated almonds as a familiar wedding favor.

Sweden employs the almond as symbol of good fortune at Christmas time, serving rice pudding with an almond hidden in one of the servings. The one who finds it is promised an especially good year.

One superstition holds that eating almonds before drinking reduces the chances of getting drunk and having a hangover.

French novelist, Collette, is quoted, "Eating too many almonds, they add weight to the breasts."

NUTRITION:

In July and August of 1999 four studies, each at different medical centers, tested the DASH diet on lowering elevated blood pressure in participants. The diet includes nuts, whole grains, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits, and low-fat dairy products. Each of the four studies resulted in a positive lowering of blood pressure. These studies presented conclusive evidence that just a few almonds a day can help lower blood pressure.

Almonds are high in protein, containing about 20%. One ounce contains 12% of our daily protein needs. Because almonds are a plant food, they contain no cholesterol.

Vitamin E, considered a powerful antioxidant with cancer-fighting qualities, is plentiful in almonds. They're also high in magnesium, containing even more than spinach.

Almonds are abundant in phosphorus, which is good for bones and teeth. One ounce (28 g) contains 143 mg of phosphorus. They also contain potassium, iron, zinc, copper, manganese, and trace amounts of the B vitamins thiamin and riboflavin.

Almonds are higher in calcium than all other nuts. One ounce (28 g) of raw blanched almonds contains 66 mg calcium. One ounce of almonds, approximately 20 to 25, has as much calcium as 1/4 cup (59 ml) of milk.

Almonds are also higher in fiber than any other nut. One ounce (28 g) of blanched almonds contains 1.5 g fiber. Unblanched almonds are nearly double the fiber as blanched. If you are pregnant, almonds can be a nutritious way of preventing certain birth defects because of their high folic acid content.



Although almonds, like all nuts, are high in fat, they are very low in saturated fat. One ounce (28 g) contains 15 g fat with only 1 g saturated. Most of the fat in almonds is monounsaturated, considered beneficial fat.

SHOPPING: Almond trees blossom in the spring and the fruits are harvested in the fall. Although they're available all year round, they are freshest, sweetest, and moister in the fall season. In autumn almonds in the shell are available in most grocery stores in bulk as well as shelled and packaged.

Throughout the year, shop for almonds at stores that have a quick turnover. Any nuts that sit on the grocery shelf for months at a time can become rancid.

STORING: All nuts keep best in the refrigerator in tightly sealed containers. If you don't have room in your refrigerator, buy the nuts in small quantities and use them up quickly to prevent rancidity.

USING ALMONDS: Enjoy them in the shell. Try serving a heaping nutbowl of almonds to guests and provide them with a few nutcrackers. They'll benefit from great nutrition along with stimulating conversation.

If you purchase almonds already shelled, simply enjoy them without any further preparation.

Almond butter is a delicious source of protein. Enjoy it as a sandwich spread and top it with sliced bananas or apples. Almond butter doubles as a great sauce thickener. You can also grind almonds to a fine meal in the food processor to use as a sauce thickener.

Slivered or sliced almonds make an attractive garnish for almost any main dish, vegetable dish, or dessert. Whole, unblanched, raw almonds also serve as an ideal garnish to a savory or sweet dish.

Coarsely ground almonds (ground in the food processor or nut mill) make an appealing topping on casseroles. Coarsely ground almonds make the perfect base for fruit and nut confections. Add ground almonds to a pie dough for extra nutrition and delightful texture.

Whole almonds can be cooked into any number of foods from sauces and soups to casseroles and

vegetable dishes. They soften with cooking and develop a pleasant chewy quality, losing their familiar crunchy texture.

Almonds can be toasted in a non-stick skillet over high heat. Toss them continuously with a wooden spoon for about 2 minutes to avoid burning. Remove them immediately to a dish to cool. As an alternative, they can be spread on an ungreased pan and roasted in a preheated oven at 350 (gas mark 4) for about 15 minutes.

To blanch almonds, drop them into boiling water for 2 or 3 minutes. Then rinse them under cold water. The brown skins slip off rather easily with a pinching technique. The almonds can then be roasted or simply dried at room temperature.

We thought it would be fun to create a vegan version of a French dessert with a long history dating back to the 13th and 14th centuries, though its origin was much earlier. Blanc Mange, also written as Blancmange and Blanc Manger, literally means white eating or white food. In our version, we used whole almonds rather than blanched, giving the gelled dessert a slight variation in color. Bon Appetite!

BLANC MANGE

2 C. (480 ml) Amazake or homemade Almond Milk**
1 C. (237 ml) cashew cream
1/2 C. (118 ml) organic evaporated white cane juice or Florida Crystals
1/4 t. vanilla extract
1/2 t. almond extract
3 T. agar agar flakes*
Sprigs of mint leaves
1 lb. (453 g) fresh grapes

Cashew Cream

2/3 C. (158 ml) raw cashews
1 C. (237 ml) water
Pinch salt
1 pitted date

1. Make the cashew cream by combining the cashews, water, salt, and date in the blender. Start motor on slow speed for a few seconds, then switch to high speed. Blend for a full minute or two to create a smooth, creamy liquid. Strain the cashew cream, reserving the pulp. Measure 1 C. (237 ml) of the cashew cream and use the remainder for another purpose.
2. Put the 1 C. (237 ml) cashew cream into a 3-quart saucepan. Add Amazake (or Almond Milk), evaporated white cane juice, vanilla and almond extracts, and agar agar flakes.
3. Turn heat to medium high until mixture begins to boil. Turn heat down to medium and simmer gently for 10 minutes, stirring frequently to dissolve agar agar.

4. Pour into a lightly oiled 3-cup (717 ml) mold and chill thoroughly. To serve, loosen edges with a knife, unmold onto an attractive serving platter, decorate with mint leaves, and serve with fresh grapes. Serves 6.

If you have made the almond milk from our link below, combine the strained almond pulp with the cashew pulp. Add 3/4 t. Florida Crystals or Sucanat and 1/4 t. almond extract. Stir well and adjust sweetener and almond extract to your taste. Serve on the side with the Blanc Mange.

*Agar agar flakes can be found in the macrobiotic section of many health food markets; however, macrobiotic products can be a bit pricey. You can buy the agar agar very reasonably at a Japanese market and some Chinese markets. Purchase bars of white agar agar, also called kanten. Break the bars into small pieces and put them into the blender. In a minute or two, you'll have flakes that are perfect for gelling and binding desserts.

**For a homemade Almond Milk recipe, drop in for a visit with our [Aunt Nettie](#).

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CABBAGE TAKES A ROLLER COASTER RIDE THROUGH THE CENTURIES

Includes Recipe Below

When it comes to maintaining a glistening reputation, cabbage has had its ups and downs throughout the centuries. In ancient times it was on a pedestal and revered by the Greeks for its many medicinal properties. On a visit to ancient Egypt, the Greeks, thinking their cabbage was superior, even had seeds brought in from Rhodes. The European aristocracy of the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, on the other hand, turned up their noses at the mere mention of cabbage or coleworts as it was known in medieval times.

Cato, an ancient Roman statesman, circa 200 BCE, advised one to eat plenty of raw cabbage seasoned with vinegar before a banquet at which one plans to "drink deep." Even the ancient Egyptians advised starting the meal with raw cabbage, including cabbage seeds, to keep one sober. It seemed that the standard treatment of the day for a nasty hangover was more cabbage.

During the first millennium A.D. Europeans were devouring stewed cabbage during the cold winter months because it was one of the few staples available when the ground produced little else.

The lowly cabbage played a central role in the Russian peasants' diet that differed considerably from that of the tsar's court. Chefs from Germany, Austria, Netherlands, and Sweden introduced European foods of the upper classes, foods that did not include cabbage. The peasants, however, sustained themselves from the 14th to the 19th centuries on soup made from pickled cabbage, along with rye bread, buckwheat groats, and kvas, a mildly fermented beverage Russians still enjoy today.



From ancient times in China to the present day, cabbage leaves have been dried and stored for winter. Rehydrated in water, they came to life again and offer nourishment when added to soups or stir-fried. The Chinese have also prepared pickled cabbage often served as an accompaniment to their meals.

Nomadic Turks introduced pickled cabbage into Poland and Hungary during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the early 1700's cabbage, pork, sausage, lentils and rye bread were the mainstay of Germany's hearty meals. An English chef of that period described the Northern European diet as "substantial and wholesome plenty."

On the Scandinavian table from the eighteenth century dating back to the time of the Vikings, cabbage played an important role. Because of the harsh winters they prepared their summer harvests with a focus on foods that could be smoked, dried, or salted. Cabbage along with beets, onions, apples, berries and nuts were some of the staples they stored for winter.

In the Middle Ages, vegetables, particularly leafy vegetables, were frowned upon and thought to be responsible for ill health. During this time cabbage, beans, onions, and garlic were the most common vegetables and each of them was attributed with the ability to produce "wind," acceptable in the company of commoners but certainly not in aristocratic circles. Cabbage, however, withstood the disparagement and retained its status as a reliable staple of the poor.

Cabbage in the form of sauerkraut was a familiar essential at the medieval table. Some historians believe that the idea of pickled cabbage was brought to Europe by the Tartars and developed into sauerkraut by the Celts who were cultivating the headed variety of cabbage around 200 BCE.

Sixteenth century writer Richard Burton certainly gave cabbage a very definitive thumbs down when he wrote, "Amongst herbs to be eaten I find gourds, cucumbers, coleworts, melons disallowed, but especially cabbage. It causeth trouble-some dreams and sends up black vapours to the brain . . ."

Despite the many sixteenth and seventeenth century European explorers who brought back unique vegetables from the New World, vegetables in general were not highly regarded in Europe until the eighteenth century. In fact they were even thought to cause plague. The sale of plums, black cherries and cucumbers was actually forbidden during a seventeenth century plague epidemic.

In 1984 the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations listed cabbage as one of the top twenty vegetables considered an important food source sustaining world population. Many countries of the world have incorporated cabbage as part of their national cuisine.

Stuffed cabbage is a favorite throughout Eastern Europe and Turkey as well, while in China and Thailand sliced bok choy or napa cabbage are familiar additions to stir fries and soups. The Ethiopians love their spicy stewed collard greens; the Japanese serve pickled cabbage and cucumbers called *tsukemono* as an appetizer; and Koreans get daily benefits from cabbage in the form of *kim chi*. Germany's national favorite is the long-cooking stew of sweet and sour red cabbage while the French and Belgians prefer their savoy cabbage. In Scandinavia coleslaw is a smorgasbord must. Finely shredded green cabbage is a classic addition to a South Indian

upama; the Irish love their *colcannan*, and the standard of Jewish dishes is corned beef and cabbage.

Today, cabbage, though not revered as broccoli, is most popularly eaten as coleslaw. In this form it's readily available as a side dish at fast food restaurants or served along with sandwiches in cafes and bistros. In case you've ever wondered how coleslaw got its name, it's quite possible it may have been derived from the Dutch whose word for cabbage is **kool**, and salad is **sla**.

The Cabbage family, *brassica oleracea*, includes broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, kohlrabi, kale, collards, and the Oriental leaf vegetables such as *pak choi* or *pe-tsai*, familiar to us as napa cabbage, that are actually more closely related to the turnip family.

Wild cabbage, native of the Mediterranean, Southwestern Europe, and Southern England, thrived along the ocean where it received plenty of moisture. Most likely it was varieties of the wild cabbage family, possibly one of the kales, that the ancient Greeks and Romans held in such high regard. This uncultivated species had little resemblance to the cabbage we purchase in our present day supermarkets. Rather than the familiar round head that distinguishes our familiar cabbage, the wild cabbage had stalks with few leaves and flowers. Though it is difficult to discover exactly when cabbage became a cultivated crop, botanists estimate from a few hundred to a few thousand years BCE.



Medicinal Properties

Cabbage is in the family of vegetables known as cruciferous, a name derived from their cross shaped flowers. All cabbages are cruciferous including broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, kale, and collards.

Researchers have learned that foods in the cabbage family inhibit the growth of breast, stomach, and colon cancer due to phytochemicals called indoles. These indoles tend to burn up the female hormone, estrogen. Indoles also tend to ward off cell changes that lead to colon cancer. Some of the phytochemicals seem to produce anticancer enzymes. A University of Utah School of Medicine study on 600 men revealed that those who ate the most cruciferous vegetables had a much lower risk of colon cancer. On the side of caution, however, consuming excessive amounts of cabbage may contribute to thyroid problems, possibly goiter.

A well-known remedy for healing peptic ulcers is drinking cabbage juice. A medical study at Stanford University's School of Medicine gave thirteen ulcer patients five doses a day of cabbage juice. All were healed within seven to ten days with the vitamin U contained in the cabbage juice.

Growing Heading cabbage varieties, such as green, white, red, and savoy, are cultivated in the cooler regions of northern Europe. These heading varieties are slower growing and do well in temperate climates. Leafy cabbages such as pak choi and other Oriental varieties that are fast growing thrive best in warmer countries.

The ideal soil for growing cabbage has a pH of 6.0 to 7.5. It's best not to plant cabbage in the same location year after year. Wait three years before planting cabbages in their past location to prevent unwanted nematods. Seeds can be started indoors and hardened to the outdoors gradually as the ground warms up. Plant seedlings about one foot apart. To sow seeds directly into the ground,

place them 1/4" deep. Cabbages mature in about three months. To prevent cutworms, place paper cups with the bottoms removed around each plant.

The earliest spring cabbages have a hearty green color, tend to be more pointed in shape, and do not have the dense, solid heads that appear in late spring. Pale green, very round, solid head cabbages are available in the late spring season.

Depending on variety, cabbages can weigh between two and seven pounds, with a diameter of four to eight inches. Although there are approximately 400 varieties of cabbage varying in color, shape, and size, all are similar in nutritional components as well as structural properties.

Three distinguishing cabbage families are grouped as follows:

- Stem cabbage that includes kohlrabi, Chinese cabbage, kale, and collards
- Smooth-leaf and curled-leaf cabbage such as savoy, red, white, and green head cabbages
- Inflorescent cabbages like broccoli and cauliflower.

Red cabbage gets its color from a pigment called anthocyanin as do all red, blue, and purple plants. Red cabbage was even grown in the Middle Ages when botanists learned to encourage its special color feature.

Nutrition

In its raw state, cabbage contains iron, calcium, and potassium. High marks are given for its vitamin C content. Cabbage is also high in vitamins B1, B2, B3, and D. Lengthy cooking tends to lower the nutritional value considerably.

Red cabbage is higher in fiber than green, with 4 ounces of it boiled and drained offering 2.7 grams. It's higher in vitamin C, offering 25.8 grams for 4 ounces cooked. Red cabbage is also higher in calcium, iron, and potassium than its green cousin.

Savoy and napa cabbage can boast they contain 20% of the RDA for vitamin A, while red and green cabbages contain considerably less. Bok choy contains the most vitamin A, supplying 60% of the RDA, although it is equal to red and green cabbage in other nutrients.

Pickling is an excellent way to preserve the vitamin C in cabbage. In fact, Captain Cook attributed his crew's good health to a daily ration of sauerkraut.

Shopping

Fresh cabbage has a shiny, crisp look about it. Lift it up to see if it feels solid and compact. Generally, the heavier a cabbage, the more dense it is. A standard rule when shopping for cabbage or any vegetables is to avoid those that are wilted, shriveled, brownish, or dried-out looking. You can be sure these have lost their flavor and much of their nutrients from sitting around too long. Resist a really tempting sale price if the vegetables don't appear to be fresh.

Storing

Wrapped in a plastic bag and stored in the refrigerator, cabbage will keep up to three weeks. However, for its best flavor and nutrition, serve cabbage at its freshest. If you bring home a cabbage that you've just purchased at a farmers' market, taste it that same day. More than likely, it will have a divine sweetness that old cabbage loses. That sweet cabbage was probably picked the day before market.



Preparing Red Cabbage

Red cabbage is easily prone to discoloration. To prevent this, use a stainless steel knife when cutting it. Add a little vinegar to the red cabbage before tossing it into a salad. To help red cabbage retain its color during cooking, use only a small amount of water to which vinegar or lemon juice has been added.

Raw

Shred red, green, savoy, napa, or bok choy and marinate Japanese style, in a little vinegar, sugar, and

salt.

Cole Slaw has a million variations and is an easy way to get your indoles. Simply shred any variety of cabbages or combine more than one variety for appealing color. Add shredded carrots, raisins, apples, nuts, seeds, and herbs, and dress with oil and vinegar seasoned with a little sea salt.

Include the core of the cabbage. Many people toss it out, but it has healthful nutrients and deserves a place in a healthy diet.

Chop some beautiful salad savoy into your green salad. Enjoy the color, flavor, and textures.

Add chopped cabbage to the blender along with other favorite vegetables and some water or juiced vegetables to make a raw soup.

Add cabbage to your juicer to get those indoles in liquid form.

Boiled

Drop chopped, sliced, or quartered cabbage into an open pot with a large amount of boiling water, and cook as briefly as possible, 4 to 8 minutes. This method helps cabbage retain its color and reduces odor.

Braised

If you begin to smell the volatile sulfur compounds when cooking (that odor associated with cooking cabbage), you've cooked your cabbage too long. Keep the cooking brief to prevent loss of nutrients and avoid that familiar cabbage odor.

Another trick to avoiding the cabbage odor during cooking is to add an English walnut, shell and all, to the cooking water. A stalk of celery added to the cooking water may also help to reduce or eliminate that cabbage smell.

Slice, shred, or chop the cabbage. Cook in a covered saucepan in a small amount of lightly salted liquid until tender, about 6 to 8 minutes.

Red cabbage is a little tougher than the green and takes a bit longer to cook. It's especially tasty in the form of sweet and sour red cabbage, taking about 1 1/2 to 2 hours simmered over low heat.

Save any cooking water and add it to soups or vegetable stock.

Steamed

Cut a small cabbage into quarters, a large one into eighths. Put into a saucepan with about 3/4" of water and cover pan. Bring to a boil over high heat, then turn heat down to low. Steam 6 to 8 minutes and test with a fork for tenderness.

If you are steaming chopped or shredded cabbage, use only about 1/4 " of water in the bottom of the pan, and cook 3 about minutes.

Stir Fried

Shred or slice any variety of cabbage. Heat a small amount of vegetable oil in a large wok or skillet. When hot, toss cabbage in and stir frequently until softened, about 3 or 4 minutes. You can combine other vegetables with the cabbage for a more interesting dish. If adding herbs, such as garlic, parsley or fresh dill, add them at the end of cooking. If you want a spicy dish, with spices such as cumin, coriander, chiles, cinnamon, allspice, or cloves, add them to the hot oil and stir for one minute before adding the cabbage.

Since cabbage rates so high on the nutritional scale, you'll want to eat it often. To avoid the monotony of eating the same old cabbage dish over and over, it helps to have a variety of ways to serve it. We hope you'll enjoy this tasty recipe, and add it to your list of favorites.

BRAZIL NUT AND RAISIN CABBAGE ROLLS WITH SWEET AND SOUR SAUCE

Here's a "wholesome and plenty" main dish to serve a small gathering. It's a delightful meal any time of the year, but particularly welcome as a winter or spring meal for its robust heartiness. Serve with steamed vegetables and a large tossed salad.

We consider this dish rather special and well worth the preparation involved. It's an ideal make-ahead recipe, and any leftovers retain their flavor quite well.

3/4 C. (177 ml) short grain brown rice

2 C. (480 ml) water

3/4 t. salt

1 large green cabbage, about 2 1/2 to 3 lbs. (1 to 1.36 kg)

4 C. water (960 ml)

1/2 t. salt

Filling

2 medium onions, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 red bell pepper, chopped

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 T. water

1 C. (237 ml) Brazil nuts, coarsely chopped

1 14-oz. (397 g) package of Lightlife Gimme Lean* (beef or sausage flavor)

1/2 C. (118 ml) black raisins, plumped in hot water to cover

1/2 C. (118 ml) golden raisins, plumped in hot water to cover

1/2 t. salt

Pepper to taste



Sweet and Sour Sauce

1 15-oz. (420 g) can tomato paste

3 1/2 C. (835 ml) water

1 1/2 t. salt

7 T. Sucanat (unrefined cane sugar with added molasses)

6 T. lemon juice

1/2 C. (118 ml) black raisins

1. Combine brown rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for 35 to 45 minutes until rice is soft but still chewy.
2. Remove outer, coarse leaves of the cabbage. Using a paring knife, remove the center core. Place whole cabbage, core side down, in a large saucepan. Add the 4 C. (960 ml) water and 1/2 t. salt. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for about 10 minutes. Fork test for tenderness, and remove cabbage to a dish when soft and pliable. Set aside.
3. Combine onions, garlic, bell pepper, olive oil, and water in a large skillet or wok. Saute over high heat, stirring frequently, for 3 to 4 minutes, until just tender. Turn off heat.
4. Add Brazil nuts, crumble in Gimme Lean, drain water and add raisins. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Preheat oven to 350 (Gas Mark 4). Add cooked brown rice and toss well to combine flavors and distribute ingredients evenly. Set aside.
6. Combine sauce ingredients in a 2 or 3-quart (2 or 3 liter) saucepan and simmer over medium heat, uncovered, for about 5 minutes to blend flavors. Spoon a small amount of sauce into the bottom of two 9" x 13" (22.5 x 32.5 cm) ovenproof baking pans.
7. To form cabbage rolls, separate cabbage leaves by lifting each one up from the core end. Lay one leaf on a dish, cutting board, or your counter top. Have the core end facing you. Spoon filling into the center of the leaf. The size of the leaf will dictate the amount of filling. Roll up the core end first, then the sides, then roll leaf over to enclose completely. Place cabbage roll in baking pan and repeat process with remaining cabbage leaves.

8. Pour sweet and sour sauce over cabbage rolls, and sprinkle with black raisins.
9. Cover baking pans with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake in preheated oven at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 20 to 25 minutes to heat through. Serves 6 to 8 hungry humans.

* Sausage style soy and gluten meat substitute manufactured by Lightlife Foods

For more cabbage recipes click on [Recipe Index](#).

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THE HUMONGOUS FUNGUS AMONG US

Includes Recipe Below

The humongous fungus among us develops in dark, mysterious ways without a root to grow on. As a matter of fact it doesn't even produce a single leaf, pretty flowers, or seeds but prefers to grow alone in the dark. You've probably guessed we're describing a favorite food that is available in a host of varieties belonging to the mushroom family.

Since mushrooms do not grow in sunlight from plants with leaves that bring nutrients into the plant, mushrooms must receive all their nourishment from the organic matter on which their spores are cultivated. Some of the eclectic growing media include live or dead tree trunks, rotted wood, sawdust, natural or synthetic manure, hummus, decayed rags, compost, rusty metal, and even dirty glass.

The name mushroom is thought to have been derived from the French *mousseron*, a term that included edible mushrooms as well as poisonous varieties. Today, the word mushroom refers only to edible fungi and is generally thought of as having a cap and a stem. Those without the typical stem and cap are identified by their specific names such as morels or truffles.



Though we may hear the term wild mushroom referring to portabella, oyster mushroom, shiitaki, enoki, and crimini mushrooms, most mushrooms are actually grown on farms rather than gathered in the wild. The Mushroom Council tells us that the term "specialty mushroom" is quickly replacing "exotic" mushroom when referring to particular varieties like wood ear, or maitake.

Mushrooms of all varieties have been revered worldwide except by the British who to this day only consume the field mushroom.

Wild mushrooms are thought to be simply toadstools, poisonous and inedible. This negative attitude goes back to the 17th century when Gerard in his *Herbal* said, "Most of them do suffocate and strangle the eater." Venner, another 17th century writer, expressed even stronger contempt when he wrote, "Many phantasticall people doe greatly delight to eat of the earthly excrescences called Mushrums. They are convenient for no season, age or temperament." In 1784 John Farley in his *The London Art of Cookery* referred to mushrooms as "treacherous gratifications." In other parts of Europe, wild mushrooms have been gathered and eaten with great enthusiasm.

History

During the era before 10,000 BCE, when hunting and gathering were a part of every day life, women of the Americas did the gathering. Because they were supposedly blessed with the special ability to see better in dim light, they were successful in foraging for mushrooms and fungi along with young nettles, ferns, birch and willow shoots, and water weeds. The foods that women gathered were not just supplementary to the diet, but when hunting expeditions were unsuccessful, these foods were the staples. One could say that the women were successful in bringing home the mushrooms. During this era before fire was discovered, all foods including mushrooms were eaten in their simplest form, completely raw.

Seneca, a first century Roman philosopher, dramatist, and statesman, said of mushrooms, "(They) are not really food, but are relished to bully the sated stomach into further eating." Diderot, an 18th century French encyclopedist and philosopher was quoted in the *Encyclopedie*, "Whatever dressing one gives to them, to whatever sauce our Apiciuses put them, they are not really good but to be sent back to the dung heap where they are born."

Pliny, the Elder, a naturalist and writer of the first century C.E., was acquainted with truffles as were the Babylonians. Desert truffles were well known and highly revered in medieval Baghdad. These truffles might have come from the Kalahari Desert in Botswana, an area that is even known today for its wealth of truffle mines.

Pierre Francois de la Varenne, a chef of the French court during the mid 17th century, brought some modern touches to traditional French cooking of that era. He created a dish that remains classic in today's French cooking. Named for Marquis d'Uxelles for whom he worked is the French dish, Mushroom Duxelles, a preparation of minced mushrooms cooked in butter and seasonings which is combined with vegetables, rice, or breadcrumbs to make a flavorful stuffing.



Mushrooms were gathered and eaten from the time of early man, yet it wasn't until the 18th century that the details of their cultivation were fully understood. Because mushrooms in the garden often appear to pop up overnight, even the ancient scholar Dioscorides thought them capable of spontaneous generation, a belief that held fast throughout medieval times.

There were early writers who could distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous varieties but didn't include information on mushroom cookery until Paulet's book was published in 1793. More highly praised is a book written in 1841 by Roques whose work is still thought to be the best treatise on mushroom cookery to this day.

Charles Darwin relates his observation of a Patagonian mushroom. He tells us that the women and

children of Tierra del Fuego, an island off the coast of Argentina, gathered fungus in great quantities and ate them uncooked. Other than a variety of berries growing on the island, the natives did not eat any vegetable other than the fungus.

Mushroom cultivation reached the United States in the late 1800's with the use of imported spawn from England. Many problems arose from this imported spawn leading to experiments by USDA scientists to produce a pure culture virgin spawn. In 1903 they achieved success, and production began a year later by the American Spawn Company of St. Paul, Minnesota. Since then, mushroom cultivation has--well--mushroomed.

Folklore

Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphics reveal that mushrooms were thought to bring immortality and that only the pharaohs, who were thought of as godlike, could receive this privilege. Commoners, therefore, were not even allowed to touch mushrooms. Since mushrooms in ancient times were not cultivated but only gathered in the wild, the commoners probably ate their share on the sly.

Many cultures believed that eating mushrooms could endow them with super-human strength. This belief was prevalent in Russia, China, Greece, Mexico, and Latin America. Other beliefs concluded that partaking of mushrooms could lead the soul to reside with the gods.

Mushrooms grow upward with such surprising strength they are said to push up cement stones.

Some cultures believed that eating mushrooms gave them clairvoyance in locating lost objects.

Mushrooms were known to be such a powerful aphrodisiac that they became infused into important rituals and ceremonies. The Normans, during the 11th century C.E., traditionally prepared a wedding dish that contained a pound of mushrooms to be fed to the groom only.

An Ancient Greek artifact from the Etruscan period, 8th century B.C.E., depicts unusual mushrooms, either the poisonous *amanita muscaria* or *panaeolus papilionaceus*, at the feet of Nessus the Centaur. Centaurs earned their reputation of possessing both divine wisdom and rather naughty behavior. Some believe their mischievous antics were enhanced by these potent fungi rather than by the ale and wine they consumed.

Of those who have studied Greek mythology, some believe that the ambrosia consumed during the Mysteries of Orphic and Eleusinian rituals was actually made from mushrooms, possibly the dung mushroom (*panaeolus papilionaceus*.) Some scholars believe that these same mushrooms powered the fierce Norsemen known as *berserkers* who worked themselves into a frenzy before battle.

In France truffles were unknown until the 14th century. As with many foods at that time that were unfamiliar to Europeans, truffles were attributed with powerful aphrodisiac abilities. The colorful legend of the Duke of Clarence tells that he married an Italian woman with a dowry of the hills of Alba, Italy, an area that was rich with truffles. On the night of his wedding he was said to have eaten so many truffles, referred to as "white diamonds," that he died before enjoying their magical abilities.

Medicinal Properties

Mushrooms have been used medicinally by many cultures. Even Hippocrates prescribed them for

healing. While some of their proposed healing abilities are strictly folklore, recent medical studies have been recognizing some genuine healing properties.

Asians have known for many years that shiitake mushrooms have medicinal powers with the ability to lower cholesterol and blood pressure, boost the immune system and inhibit tumor growth. Lentinan derived from the shiitake mushroom is used to treat cancer in Japan. Doctors in the U.S. are just now taking a look at these facts.



For many centuries mushrooms have been characterized as an aphrodisiac. While there have not been medical studies to test this belief, you might conduct your own investigation, and in the process discover they produce a laxative effect, provide a natural antibiotic, offer protection against tumors, lower cholesterol, and rev up the immune system.

In 1960, a scientist at the University of Michigan discovered that shiitake mushrooms contained an antiviral substance that could stimulate the immune system. Most studies on shiitakes have taken place in Japan where their health benefits have been noted for boosting the immune system to produce more interferon, the body's defense against viral and bacterial infections.

Other studies have found that Chinese black mushrooms, known as wood ear, contain an anticoagulant-type substances, acting like blood thinners that may prevent blood clots. The effect was likened to that of aspirin.

The trace mineral germanium, found in mushrooms, is noted for its antiviral and antitumor effects. Germanium also energizes the body. With so many healing abilities and such variety of flavors and textures, mushrooms just may help the body generate energy, offer protection against tumors and virus infection, and bring complete satiety to the mushroom aficionado.

Mushroom Varieties

Button or **white** mushrooms, *agaricus bisporus*, that many historians consider characterless, are the cultivated variety of field mushrooms, *agaricus campestris* and the most common mushroom grown and sold in the United States. They are strictly cultivated in rich compost in special mushroom houses where heat and humidity are carefully controlled. The process that takes about four months begins with the preparation of the compost made from straw, corncobs, cottonseed, cocoa seed hulls, gypsum, and nitrogen supplements. In two or three weeks lacy filaments called mycelium appear in the compost which is then spread with peat moss. Soon, small white, pin-like protrusions form on the mycelium and begin to develop caps. Mature mushrooms are ready to harvest in about two and a half to three weeks after the peat moss is applied.

Enoki mushrooms, or **enokitake**, *flamulina velutipes*, originated in Japan and was gathered in the wild, but in the United States they are strictly cultivated on live or dead tree trunks as well as tree roots and even branches that are covered with soil. Grown in clusters, they develop long thin stems, about four inches, with tiny little caps, the largest being the size of a pencil eraser. With their delicate ivory color and dainty appearance, they're prized for their ability to provide a simple yet dramatic garnish.

Shiitake mushrooms, *lentinus edodus*, also known as Japanese black forest mushrooms, have been commercially cultivated since their original journey from Japan and are widely available

either fresh or dried in supermarkets as well as in Asian markets. Originally harvested from hardwood trees in their native country for at least two thousand years, they are best cultivated on artificial logs. Shiitakes have a medium brown color with a distinctive, thick, umbrella-shaped cap, and offer a rich, distinctly earthy flavor and chewy texture.

Oyster mushrooms, *pleurotus ostreatus*, remind one of little ears with many tiny, closely formed gills. Color can vary slightly depending on variety, from pale gray, to light beige, and sometimes pink or yellow. Oyster mushrooms are cultivated and grow well on rotted wood in clusters. Once purchased they should be used quickly, within a day or two, to avoid becoming soggy.

Morels, *morchella esculenta*, have a unique, conical cap about 1" to 5" in height with a mustard brown colored, honeycomb-like appearance. Their stems are usually white but can also become more yellowed as they grow older. Morels appear in the spring and are gathered in the wild in wooded areas. Scandinavians refer to morels as "truffles of the north."

Criminis or Creminis, *agaricus bisporus*, similar to the white mushrooms, are a brownish color and denser in texture with a pronounced earthy flavor. Another distinguishing feature is their thick, firm stem. Criminis are cultivated just like the white mushrooms. What makes criminis taste so different from white mushrooms is the variety of microscopic spores from which they develop.

Portabellas or Portobellos, *agaricus bisporus*; With a name like portabellas, you might think these spectacular giant mushrooms come from Italy. Actually, they are just criminis that have been allowed to grow six or seven days longer. Originally a mushroom farmer had overlooked a growing area and discovered the large caps by accident. At first he thought they were unmarketable but soon discovered they were highly sought after. Because of their longer growth time, portabellas have a distinctly pungent, earthy flavor and fleshy texture.

In the matter of portabella versus portobello, both spellings are used. However, the Mushroom Council has adopted the two "a" version to establish some consistency.

Chanterelles, *cantharellus cibarius*, grow in the wild in the Pacific Northwest in forests with pine trees and deciduous trees. Their caps are ruffled and shaped somewhat like cups with colors that vary from yellow, pale orange, and brownish gray to pale ivory. They have a unique peppery taste when eaten raw but lose this quality when cooked. Their texture is slightly rubbery. Beware of chanterelles that have become translucent. These are poisonous.

Truffles, *tuber aestivum*, are fungi that grow underground in wooded areas. They have never been successfully cultivated and are even a challenge to forage in the wild. Dogs or pigs are specially trained to recognize the scent of the truffle and are taken on gathering events to sniff them out. The shape of a truffle is an irregular spheroid with a lumpy surface, often described as warty, the texture fleshy. Black truffles from France, known as Perigord, are best known for flavoring pate de foie gras. White truffles gathered in Alba, Italy, are highly valued as well. Both are priced well out of affordability for the average person's budget. If you are fortunate enough to encounter the real thing, enjoy it raw, cooked, and in the form of juice or extract.



Gathering in the Wild

Since many varieties of poisonous mushrooms closely resemble edible ones, it's best to fully acquaint yourself before venturing out to gather. Even the common button mushroom has a poisonous cousin that appears harmless.

Of the many thousands of mushroom species existing today, only a few are known to possess a deadly poison. Many, however, are capable of making one very ill.

Educate yourself by reading books on wild mushrooms. When you're a novice mushroom gatherer, take an experienced teacher along until you become fully confident that you have the ability to positively identify safe, edible varieties.

Cultivation

Mushrooms grow all over the globe with a concentration in the Northern hemisphere and fewer in the Southern hemisphere.

Usually one type of mushroom will grow in a specific area and that area becomes known as a place to harvest that species. Because mushroom spores are so tiny and light, it's easy for them to be carried by winds and birds to locations not necessarily typical for that variety.

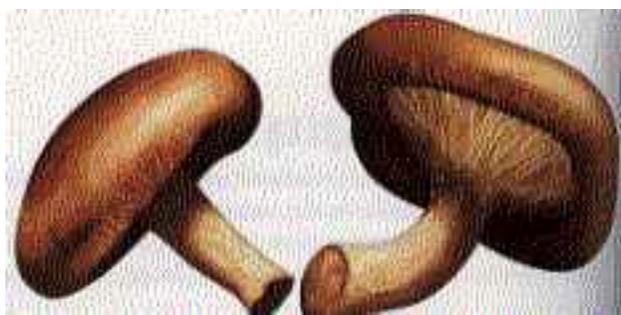
Some mushrooms, such as shiitake, have been grown for as long as two thousand years up to present time on rotting logs. Others need a parasitic environment such as living trees to survive.

In the mid 1600's, Parisian melon farmers discovered that they could cultivate the common mushroom known today as *agaricus* in their melon fields. Two hundred years later they learned that caves were the ideal environment because the climate was stable. Louis XIV may have been France's earliest mushroom grower. Today, mushrooms are grown in mushroom houses where the climate is completely controlled.

PREPARATION:

Mushrooms need not be peeled. They should be washed briefly under cool water and allowed a few minutes to air dry. The true mushroom aficionados, however, merely wipe their mushrooms with a damp cloth or use a mushroom brush with a wiping motion to clean them. Never soak mushrooms to clean them. They are porous and will absorb water.

For some preparations you may want to use just the mushroom caps without the stems. To remove stems, give them a gentle push with the thumb and they will loosen easily. As an alternative, give the stems a twist. When they snap loose, simply lift them off the cap.



Some mushrooms spoil quickly while others have a longer life span. Shiitake mushrooms will keep up to two weeks if well refrigerated.

The Mushroom Council provides some helpful information for planning servings. One pound of portabellas with stems equal about 3 to 4 medium mushrooms about 4" in diameter, or 2 large caps about 6"

in diameter.

Dried: Some mushrooms such as shiitakes are available in dried form. Drying seems to enhance

and intensify their flavor. If they are uncleaned, wash them thoroughly before soaking. Soak clean shiitakes for 30 to 45 minutes in very warm water to cover or pour boiling water over them. Then using a sharp knife or kitchen scissors, snip off and discard the tough stems.

Raw: White button mushrooms, criminis, enoki, portabellas, oyster, and shiitakes can be eaten raw. They can be chopped, sliced, quartered, minced, or pureed. Use a food processor for preparing large quantities or for pureeing.

Prepare mushrooms as a salad with sliced or diced onions, finely minced garlic, diced red bell pepper, extra virgin olive oil, fresh lemon or lime juice, and salt and pepper to taste.

Add sliced mushrooms to a fresh spinach salad along with raw pecans or walnuts, chopped scallions, and finely diced fresh pears. Add balsamic vinaigrette and enjoy.

Combine sliced mushrooms with chopped snap peas, diced jicama, diced red bell pepper, and kernels cut from fresh white corn. Add a pungent dressing and fill scooped out tomato halves. Garnish with fresh herbs and serve as an attractive side dish.

Marinate mushrooms in equal parts of apple cider vinegar, soy sauce or Bragg Liquid Aminos, and water for 2 hours. Drain and fill with seed cheese (a mixture of soaked and sprouted seeds, such as sunflower seeds, combined with minced vegetables and seasonings).

Broiling or Grilling

Portabellas, either whole or sliced, and shiitakes left whole are exceptional when lightly brushed with oil, seasoned with salt and pepper, and broiled or grilled about 3" from the heat source for 3 to 5 minutes on each side. Large portabellas need a full 5 minutes on each side. If desired, marinate in Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce, a little vinegar, minced garlic, minced ginger, and freshly ground black pepper for about 1 hour before broiling.

If you use only the mushroom caps in a special dish, reserve the stems for adding to soups, stir fries, and stuffings.

As a variation to oil basting, try using teriyaki sauce, your favorite pungent salad dressing, hoisin sauce, or peanut sauce.

Grill kabobs by threading whole crimini or white mushrooms on a skewer with vegetables such as zucchini, yellow crookneck squash, chunks of eggplant, colorful bell peppers, and cherry tomatoes. Brush with a tangy dressing and grill, turning skewers frequently, for about 10 to 12 minutes.

Serve the portabella as the centerpiece of the meal and add side dishes such as a grain dish, salad, and steamed or stir-fried vegetables.

White or crimini mushrooms can be sliced and wrapped in aluminum foil (shiny side inside), drizzled with extra virgin olive oil, and seasoned with salt and pepper before grilling on the barbecue for about 7 to 10 minutes.



Sauteing

Using a large skillet or flat bottom wok, combine a half-pound of sliced mushrooms and 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil. Cook over high

heat, stirring frequently, until all released mushroom liquid has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Season to taste and enjoy.

Oyster mushrooms should be very briefly sauteed,, about 1 to 1 minutes to best enjoy their delicate flavor. They accept seasoning well and can make a tasty dish when cooked with onions and chopped cashews. The stems become tough on very large oyster mushrooms and may have to be cut away.

Shiitakes need about 3 to 5 minutes of sauteing to bring out their pungent flavors.

Chanterelles are best started on medium heat with a little extra virgin olive oil to help them release their liquid. The heat can then be turned up to saute them for 3 to 5 minutes.

If you plan to cook enoki mushrooms, drop them into the saute pan at the last minute and cook briefly, a minute or two at most. Enokis become tough if overcooked.

As a low fat method of sauteing, use a seasoned vegetable broth or red or white wine instead of extra virgin olive oil.

Create a side dish with sauteed mushrooms combined with nuts and diced vegetables of your choice. Add a pungent dressing and toss to combine flavors.

Roasting

Slice or leave mushrooms whole. Toss about half-pound of mushrooms in 1 tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil. Spread mushrooms out on a large baking pan, season with salt and pepper, and roast at 400 for about 15 to 20 minutes. Check frequently and baste with oil as needed. Portabellas develop a delectable dense, meaty texture when roasted. Slice portabellas thick for a substantial serving. They tend to lose much of their liquid during cooking.

Braising Morels require special attention. Be sure to wash them thoroughly to remove any insects that may be imbedded in the crevices. It's best to saute them briefly in a little extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice. Then, cover the pan and simmer for as long as 1 hour, checking after 45 minutes for tenderness.

Nutrition

Depending on the variety, mushrooms contain 1 to 3% protein and all the essential amino acids, making the protein complete. For vegetarians, mushrooms make an ideal meat substitute.

They also have many of the B vitamins. Most cultivated mushrooms contain vitamins C and K, and some vitamin E.

Mushrooms are a rich source of potassium and phosphorous. About 5 raw button mushrooms contain 370 mg. of potassium and 104 mg. phosphorous.

Portabellas are an ideal food for those watching their waistlines. They contain no fat or sodium, are high in fiber, and low in calories (40 calories for a medium size). Also noteworthy is that mushrooms are very low in carbohydrates, making them ideal for diabetics

Chanterelles, with their appealing yellow coloring, are the only mushrooms that contain beta carotene and vitamin D.

Here's a mushroom recipe that truly becomes the centerpiece of the meal. Its versatility makes it a perfect filling for a pita sandwich or, if you prefer, use your favorite whole grain bread. We enjoy it simply as a patty with Silken Magic Sauce and plenty of vegetables on the side.

MUSHROOM CASHEW WALNUT PATTIES



- 1/2 C. (118 ml) coarsely ground raw walnuts
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) coarsely ground raw cashews
- 2 C. (480 ml) cooked short grain or sweet brown rice
- 8 1/2 oz. (240 g) portabella mushrooms, finely chopped in the food processor
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 T. EnerG Egg Replacer
- 4 T. water

2 T. organic canola oil

1. Combine all ingredients except the canola oil together in a large mixing bowl. Mix well.
2. Heat canola oil in a large skillet over high heat until just hot enough for a drop of water to sizzle.
3. Form mushroom mixture into patties and saute about 2 minutes on each side or until crisp. Makes about 12 small patties.

NOTE: You can enhance the presentation with a dollop of **Silken Magic Sauce** in the center of each patty just before serving.

SILKEN MAGIC SAUCE

Here's a sauce that's the ultimate in versatility. Need a topping to dress up a savory dish or steamed vegetables, a dip for crudites, a seasoned mayonnaise sandwich spread, or a garnish to swirl into a soup? Make this sauce often and keep it on hand.

- 1 12-oz. (340 g) package of soft or firm silken tofu
- 3/4 t. salt
- 1/2 t. onion powder
- 1/2 t. ground coriander
- 1/2 t. ground cumin
- 1/8 t. garlic powder
- 1 to 4 T. lemon juice to taste.

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Scrape down sides if needed and process until completely blended. Refrigerate. Keeps for 1 week. Makes 1 1/2

cups (360 ml).

NOTE: For a firmer sauce, use the firm silken tofu. When serving this sauce at the table, garnish with a sprinkle of dill weed and a dash of paprika.

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The Sex Life of the Pistachio

Includes Recipe Below

Editors' Note: After receiving a barrage of hits by people wanting to know the nut family that included pistachios, we realized we had neglected to mention that pistachios belonged to the Anacardiaceae or Cashew Family. The other members of the unusual family are cashew, mango, poison oak, poison ivy, and poson sumac. R & Z 8/25/02

What happens when you put a male pistachio tree together with a female pistachio tree? Of course, little baby pistachios. Ain't nature great? It may be surprising to learn that sex does enter into the life of the pistachio--not sex as humans know it, but certainly pistachio style sex.

Pistachios trees are dioecious in nature, meaning that the sex of some trees is male and some female, and that both are needed for complete pollination. The female trees produce the nuts while the male produces the pollen. Hmm, that seems not too unfamiliar from human procreation. One male tree is needed for every six female trees, a fact that could spark some interesting parallels, but, don't worry, we won't. Male and female pistachio trees are often grafted together to bring about pollination. The farmer also relies on the wind to aid in pollination in order for fruit to "set," or begin to develop.

Waverly Root, in his book, *Food*, expounds, almost with adoration, on the distinctive green color of the pistachio being responsible for its popularity throughout the centuries. Referring to food in general, he explains that, "It can please the palate without pleasing the eye, but if it also pleases the eye, it will please the palate even more. Taste is a mysterious phenomenon, to which psychological factors contribute largely; one of those factors is color. It is probably most potent at the beginning of a meal and at its end. Color in hors d'oeuvres stimulates the appetite, color in desserts harmonizes with their gay, festive nature. One light-hearted color is lacking for desserts: green." The pistachio certainly fills the gap and lends its warm green hues to many desserts, especially pistachio ice cream, a long-time American favorite.

If you've never experienced the delightful tastes and textures of pistachios, begin with purchasing the fresh, raw nuts in the shell. Then simply pull apart the half-opened shell and enjoy. A hint of sweetness comes through the rich nutty flavor. The texture, if they're truly fresh, will have a distinct crispness. We, too, have to agree with Waverly Root that the pistachio's rich, slightly yellow-green color presents a pleasing invitation and beckons one to reach for another nut.

The pistachio tree bears a resemblance to an apple tree with its appealing round shape and a trunk that may be singular or multiple. Rather unique among nut bearing trees, pistachios grow in clusters like grapes, each nut enclosed in its own reddish-green hull instead of each nut growing singularly.

The female nut most commonly grown in California and revered for its large size is the Kerman, whose seed originally came from Iran. Its male counterpart, the Peters (pistacia terebinthus) originated in Fresno, California by a grower named A.B. Peters.



History

The original homelands of the pistachio were Asia Minor (now Turkey), Iran, Syria, Lebanon and a bit north to the Caucasus in southern Russia and Afghanistan.

Archeologists have found evidence in a dig site at Jarmo, near northeastern Iraq, that pistachio nuts were a common food as early as 6750 BCE. Then, for unknown reasons, these nuts fell into obscurity until 2000 BCE when the Near East sprouted in population and less common foods such as pistachios were rediscovered and even cultivated. The hanging gardens of Babylon were said to have contained pistachio trees during the reign of King Merodach-baladan about 700 BCE.

Along with almonds, pistachios enjoy a rare mention in the *Old Testament* as the only two nuts found in the bible. "So their father, Jacob, finally said to them, 'If it must be, then do this: put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as gifts--a little balm, a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.'" (Genesis 43:11)

In the rocky hills of Palestine and Lebanon, pistachio trees grew wild, their treasured fruits picked and eaten raw or brought home and fried with salt and pepper. Not much went to waste in ancient times. Even the oil from the pistachio was pressed and used for cooking as well as for flavoring desserts.

The delightful green nutmeats had prominence in tasty, historical desserts such as **Baklava**, **Nougat**, and **Turkish Delight** where they served as a major ingredient. In biblical times chopped pistachios were added to fruit compotes, puddings, and stuffings, while the nuts in their ground-up form added body and flavor to many savory sauces. Today, pistachios are a familiar American snack, while in Iranian cooking, the nuts are often added to rice dishes along with raisins or currants, herbs and saffron.

In the first century AD the pistachio made its debut in Rome via the Emperor Vitellius. Apicius, Rome's Julia Child of the period, mentions pistachios in his classical cook book but denies us any of the recipes in which he includes them. The nuts traveled from Syria to Italy in the first century AD and spread throughout the Mediterranean from there.

The Persians used the pistachio abundantly, not only for desserts, but also in ground-up form to thicken and enhance sauces. The Arabs learned a few culinary secrets from the Persians and included pistachios in their dessert delicacies such as **Baklava**, a rich treat made from buttered filo dough alternately layered with nuts and bathed in a sweet syrup after baking. Pistachios were willing travelers and held up well on distant journeys, trekking from Persia to China via the Silk Route.

When the Arabs settled in the southern part of Spain, known as Andalusia, and in Sicily during medieval times, they introduced many foods from their native lands. Because pistachios were one of the foods the Arabs longed for, they transported either seeds or pistachio trees to these regions. The pistachios grown in Italy took on a very deep green color, were highly prized, and brought the best prices.

By the time pistachios were imported into Europe on a regular basis during the Middle Ages, they were quite expensive and not everyone could afford them. However, in spite of their high cost, merchants of France had an ample supply for anyone willing to splurge on the green wonders. During the 16th century pistachios arrived in England where they were not a raging gastronomic success.

California encountered the pistachio in 1854 when Charles Mason, a seed distributor for experimental plantings, brought the pistachio to this country. Several years later, in 1875, a few small pistachio trees imported from France were planted in Sonoma, California. In the early 1900's Chico, California, became the home of the first experimental Plant Production Station. Funded by the USDA, this station brought in a variety of pistachio trees.

By the late 1970s the San Joaquin Valley in central California became a burgeoning area for the commercial production of pistachios. Today, California produces about 80 million pounds of pistachios a year, a number that is expected to rise with their steadily growing popularity. Other large producers of pistachios today are Iran and Turkey. Syria, India, Greece, and Pakistan also grow pistachios but on a smaller scale.

The pistachio tree contributes more than its nuts to society. The tree oozes a resin, called terebinth, which is collected and used in the making of turpentine. Wood from the tree is an attractive, hard wood, dark red in color and valued in cabinet making.

Growing

Pistachio trees will often grow in poor soil where other trees will not survive. More important to their survival is the proper climate. Pistachio trees thrive in hot dry summer weather and prefer cool winters. They do not do well in humid or damp areas. California's Central Valley, some inland areas of Southern California, and the dry areas of the Southwest are ideal. Considered small trees, pistachio trees typically grow from 16 feet to 32 feet high.

The pistachio tree takes five to eight years to begin producing "fruit," but between the 15th and 20th year they reach maturity and bear fully. Alternate years produce a heavy crop, the off year bearing very little fruit and sometimes no fruit at all. The familiar pistachio nut is actually the seed of the plant. The trees, like many humans, are sensitive to extreme conditions such as drought, or



excessive rain, heat, cold, and high winds. The trees develop a brownish green flower in early summer. When ripe, in late summer or early autumn, pistachios split open along their seams called sutures. Those trees that bear a predominance of pistachios that are closed indicate growth conditions that were less than perfect, such as irregular watering.



The bright green coloring of the pistachio is completely natural. A deep green color is an indicator of the highest quality nut and brings the best prices. Lesser valued are those that range from yellow to light green.

The pistachio is a deciduous tree that can survive for hundreds of years, and even as long as a century in just the right climate. Sometimes introduced into landscapes as ornamentals, pistachio trees stand out with their attractive large, pointed, gray-green foliage that grows two to four inches long.

Harvesting pistachios takes place in the late summer or early autumn when the hulls that cover the shell become loosened from the nut or "seed," indicating a fully mature crop. Large tarps are then spread out under the trees. The trees are shaken while the tarps capture the bulk of the ripe pistachios that fall to the ground.

The outer hulls are then quickly removed by rubbing them with a coarse burlap in order to preserve the clean, white appearance of the shells and prevent staining.

Next, the nut processors soak the shells in a water-based brine followed by sun drying, a process that opens the shells even wider. In Turkey, where the pistachios are a little smaller and the shells are not as wide open as the California varieties, the nuts are placed in a brine, hulls and all. Brining with the hulls on leaves a pinkish coloring on the shells. Some nut authorities believe that the California growers attempted to copy-cat the appearance of the Turkish pistachios by dyeing them with red food coloring. Others claim the red dye is used to distract from imperfections and discoloration on the shells due to poor quality of the nuts. The red dyed pistachios were more available 40 to 60 years ago than they are today. Often, unopened pistachios are cracked open by machine. These, too, are considered lower in quality or from trees that were not properly maintained and irrigated.

In years past, the sorting of cracked nuts and those unopened was all done by hand, which may explain why pistachios were always more expensive than most other nuts.

To salt pistachios, the processor boils them in a salt solution. The nuts are then dried fully and stored in plastic bags. Because of the pistachio's split shell, processors are easily able to roast the nuts without first shelling them.

Folklore

Test this out sometime: Share some pistachios with your loved one and see if the nuts enhance your amorous feelings. In the ancient days people of the Middle East thought of pistachios as a liaison to love.

A picturesque tale that originated in the Middle East describes two lovers in a romantic setting in a beautiful grove of pistachio trees. They meet on a moonlit night, sit under the trees that just happen to have reached perfect maturity, and listen to the sound of the little pistachio shells bursting open.

Blessings of good fortune, happiness, and abundance then befall them.

The Queen of Sheba was convinced that pistachios were a powerful aphrodisiac and ordered the pistachio harvest of the best trees grown in Assyria to be used for her and her royal guests only.

Medicinal Benefits

A Loma Linda University medical study published results that should encourage us all to eat a 3 to 3 1/2-ounce serving of nuts five or more times a week. Those participants who ate nuts five times a week throughout the study showed a decrease in their LDL (the bad cholesterol) levels as well as total cholesterol levels. Those with lower cholesterol readings were at a lower risk for heart attack. It may be interesting to note that in spite of the intake of 35% of calories from primarily monounsaturated fat, participants showed no significant weight increase.

Kathleen E. McMahon, PhD, RD, writes on behalf of the California Pistachio Commission, "Current status of research on monounsaturated fats in nuts demonstrates that eating nuts can play a role in lowering coronary heart disease risk by decreasing both total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol levels."

Pistachios are rich in phytosterols, known for lowering blood cholesterol. Animal studies have shown that phytosterols may have anti-cancer properties. According to the 2000 USDA Dietary Guidelines that recommend a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, pistachios are an ideal food.

In the well-known DASH diet study, eating 4 to 5 servings of nuts per week played an important role in lowering blood pressure in patients with hypertension. Minerals such as potassium, magnesium, and calcium, found in pistachios are important in maintaining normal blood pressure.

Pistachios are a key player in the highly respected Mediterranean diet as well and are considered one of the major components of the diet. Studies revealed that those on the Mediterranean diet had a lower risk for heart disease and hypertension.

In numerous medical studies comparing dietary data of vegetarian and plant based diets to standard American diets, vegetarians and vegans consistently register the lowest rates of chronic diseases and the longest life expectancy. An important staple of the plant-based diet is nuts and seeds.

Nutrition

Just 47 pistachios, a one-ounce serving, contains 13 grams of predominantly monounsaturated fat and no cholesterol. All nuts, including pistachios, contain some saturated fat but are considered low in saturated fat. Fats are a concentrated source of energy and play an important role in assisting the body to absorb fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamins A, E, D, and K.

Pistachios are the richest source of potassium of all the nut family. The potassium content of one ounce of pistachios is equal to that of one orange, a whopping 310 mg. Two ounces of pistachios contain more potassium than one medium banana. More of the pistachio's nutritional attributes for one ounce include 2 mg. vitamin C, 66 IU vitamin A, 44.9 mg magnesium, 16.5 mcg folic acid, 1.9 mg. iron, 38.3 mg. calcium, 5.8 g protein, and 3.1 g dietary fiber.

That single ounce of pistachios carries more than 10% of the Daily Value for dietary fiber, vitamin B6, thiamine, magnesium, phosphorous, and copper.

In comparing raw pistachios to dry roasted, you will find that some nutrients are diminished when the nuts are dry roasted, such as only 19.8 mg vitamin C, .9 mg iron, 36.9 mg. magnesium, and 275 mg. potassium compared to the higher figures noted above.

Storage

If you want to store a large quantity of nuts, it's best to put them in heavy-duty freezer bags and freeze them. Frozen, they will keep for several months. For shorter storage you can refrigerate pistachios for up to 4 to 6 weeks.

If pistachios stored over a long period lose their natural crispness, you can quickly revitalize them. Just place them on a baking sheet and heat them in the oven at 250 to 300 for 6 to 9 minutes.

If you simply enjoy nibbling on a handful or two of pistachios a day, and are using them up quickly, they can spend a few days sitting in a bowl on your kitchen counter without becoming rancid.

Serving

Part of the pistachio's appeal is the ritual of gathering around a bowl of nuts and cracking them open to retrieve the emerald treasure inside. Pistachios make an ideal snack to serve guests or to enjoy as a between-meal nibble.

What more perfect finish to a satisfying meal could there be than an attractive bowl of fresh pistachios. So inviting, they beckon one to reach out, pluck a singular gem, and begin that joyful process of pulling apart the shell, and finally tasting the rich sweetness of the nutmeat itself.

RAW

Pistachios can be enjoyed whole, chopped, coarsely ground, and finely ground.

Add a few shelled, chopped raw, unsalted pistachios to soups and salads as a garnish, or use one or two handfuls as a main ingredient in a salad dish.

Grind raw unsalted pistachios in an electric coffee grinder and add them to fresh vegetable or fruit juices for a protein boost.

Add raw, unsalted pistachios to the blender when making smoothies.

COOKED

Add raw pistachios to stir-fry dishes.

Use them as a garnish in steaming hot soups.

Bake them into casseroles.

Add raw pistachios to grain dishes at the end of cooking. They're especially attractive with the lighter color grains, such as rice, quinoa, millet, and barley.

Include pistachios in any legume pates, such as a lentil pate. When the pate is sliced and arranged on a platter, the pistachios stand out and lend eye appeal.

Grind raw unsalted pistachios in an electric coffee grinder and add as a thickener to soups and sauces. Choose your basic ingredients carefully because ground pistachios will clearly affect the

color of your finished dish.

Here's a gourmet main dish recipe that shows off the pistachio as a sauce that dresses up the top of an exotic, yet delicate combination. It's easy, yet impressive.

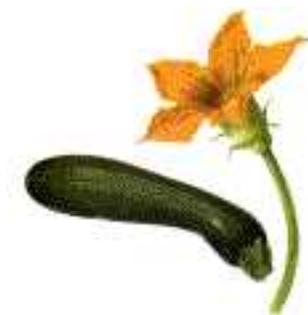
PERSIAN RICE WITH SAVORY PISTACHIO SAUCE

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) Basmati brown rice
3 3/4 C. (894 ml) water
1 1/2 t. salt

1/3 C. (79 ml) currants

Pistachio Sauce

1 C. (237 ml) raw, unsalted pistachios
3 C. (717 ml) unsweetened soy milk
1 1/4 t. salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste*



Vegetables

2 large carrots, coarsely grated
2 large zucchini squashes, coarsely grated
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1/2 t. each oregano, basil, marjoram
3/4 t. salt
Freshly ground black pepper

2 T. extra virgin olive oil
2 T. water

1/4 C. (59ml) raw whole pistachios

Garnish

Chopped pistachios
Currants

1. First start rice cooking by combining the rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam for 35 to 45 minutes, or until tender.
2. Put currants in a small bowl and cover with hot water to plump them while preparing remaining ingredients.
3. Next prepare sauce by grinding the pistachios in an electric coffee grinder in small batches. Pour ground nuts into a small bowl and set aside.



4. Combine soy milk, salt, and pepper in a 2 or 3-quart (2 or 3 liter) saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Watch carefully that it does not boil over. Slowly, add ground pistachios to the bubbling sauce, stirring constantly with a wire whip until sauce thickens, about 1 to 2 minutes. Turn off heat and set aside. Sauce gets thicker as it sits.
5. Combine carrots, zucchinis, onions, herbs, seasonings, olive oil, and water in a deep 12" (30 cm) skillet. Saute over high heat until vegetables are soft, about 5 to 7 minutes.
6. Drain water from currants and add to skillet along with the 1/4 C. (59 ml) raw whole pistachios.

TO ASSEMBLE: Mound rice onto a large serving platter, either round, oval, or square.

Top with sauteed vegetables, leaving a 1" border of rice around the edges.

Then top with some of the pistachio sauce.

Garnish with chopped pistachios and currants.

Serve the remainder of the sauce in a gravy dish and bring to the table.

An alternate serving suggestion is to make up individual plates in the same pattern as described above.

*If you're a purist and want to keep the sauce "clean," use ground white pepper.

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Quinoa, Soul Food of the Andes

Includes Recipe Below

For centuries quinoa has been above it all--and it still is. Grown at 10,000 to 20,000 feet above sea level, quinoa, pronounced **keen-wah**, brought sustenance to the *altiplano* Indians and allowed them to thrive in the harsh living conditions that prevail at such altitudes. To these Indian natives of the Andes Mountains in Peru and Bolivia, quinoa seeds have been more valuable than gold.

Imagine that a sacred bird, known as *kullku*, has sent you quinoa seeds as a gift from the heavens. You know without doubt that consuming these sacred grains will sustain your body with long endurance, heighten your psychic abilities and bring you onto a deeply spiritual plane through meditation. Today, it's called mythology, but is it really? Many of us would scoff at these ideas, but what we might consider folklore is actually reality. Beliefs like these are not uncommon to the natives of the *altiplano*. Such attitudes originated thousands of years ago with the Inca culture and still prevail today.

First cultivated more than 5,000 years ago, quinoa, along with corn and potatoes was one of the three foods considered the centerpiece of the Andean diet. In that diet quinoa was a primary food source while animal foods were secondary. Today, grains and animal foods have reversed roles, with grains declining in popularity as meat consumption has risen.



During the period when the Incas thrived in Bolivia, relay teams of barefoot runners would carry news from one region to another, often covering 150 miles in a 24-hour period. Bolivia's elevation is over 12,000 feet above sea level, an altitude where oxygen is considerably reduced. How did the runners perform this unbelievable feat? A practice still prevalent with today's Bolivian athletes involves combining coca leaves and ash from the quinoa plant and holding it in the cheek. The combination increases the body's oxygen because quinoa ash releases alkaloids in the coca.

Quinoa, native to the Americas and considered the most sacred food by the ancient Incas, was held in such high regard, it was called *la chisiya mama*, which means "the mother grain." Because these *altiplano* natives believed their grain was a gift from the gods containing spiritual enhancing qualities, the ritual first planting of the season was a god-like act performed by the emperor, who was considered a god himself. Since he was responsible for a successful quinoa harvest, he sowed the first seeds of the season with his golden *taquiza*, a planting stick.

As special recognition given to the harvest, the Incas drank *chicha*, a beer made from fermented quinoa, and celebrated by offering sacrifices of animals, children, food, and cloth.

Eight to nine thousand years ago, Bolivian natives living in the Lake Titicaca area began to cultivate quinoa. Archeological evidence indicates morphological differences between wild quinoa plants and those that have been domesticated. The domestic plants have larger seeds or fruit and a thinner shell covering each grain.

Because there is rather little level ground, the Huarpa Indians of Bolivia developed terrace farming as a successful method for cultivating their quinoa, often on land no wider than 12 feet. It was not unusual for the upper terrace to be 2,000 feet higher than the lower terrace. The Incas learned from their neighbors, a method that enabled them to succeed in spite of drought and below freezing temperatures typical of the *altiplano* region.

In 1532, Francisco Pizarro, a Spanish explorer, reached the Andes with a small army of 158 men, and in one year's time destroyed the quinoa fields, killed the god-king, and forced the Inca culture into submission. The daily lives of the Incas had revolved around the growing, harvesting, eating, and honoring of quinoa. Under Pizarro's rule they were forbidden to practice their ceremonial rituals that centered on quinoa. Now Catholicism and potatoes, dominated their world that began to exhibit many cases of malnutrition and high infant mortality.

The Spaniards introduced wheat and barley, but the Incas did not favor these. Fortunately, quinoa still grew wild in the higher altitudes where it could be hidden from the Spaniards. Small amounts were consumed in secret. Still, the culture of the Incas had been changed forever. For centuries quinoa fell into obscurity until the revival of interest in the 1970's.

North America, too, shows archeological evidence of quinoa's existence in the form of goosefoot, lambs quarters, and pigweed, all growing wild in the southern and eastern regions. Evidence shows that Natchez Indians along the lower Mississippi actually cultivated the seeds. Archeologists

exploring a cave in Alabama in 1961 found remnants of a charred basket that contained seeds of the quinoa family. When historians at the Smithsonian examined the basket, they learned that it was indeed quite old, circa 1975 BCE.

An Ozark Bluff Dweller site in Arkansas was excavated and revealed the seedhead of a domesticated goosefoot plant that was 4,000 years old. When corn was introduced into these areas, it became the dominant grain as goosefoot cultivation lost favor.

Today, quinoa is grown in the Canadian prairies and the Colorado Rockies; however, most quinoa sold in the United States is imported from South America,

The spark that created the Quinoa Corporation, whose founders are Stephen Gorad and Don McKinley, began in the 1970s in the *altiplano* of Bolivia. Both were students of Oscar Ichazo, a Bolivian spiritual leader who encouraged his students to consume quinoa in order to develop a deeper spiritual sensitivity during their meditation. Since quinoa was not grown or available in the United States, the pair initiated their company in Boulder, Colorado in 1983.

Cultivation

Quinoa, *Chenopodium quinoa Willd.*, is in the Goosefoot family (*Chenopodiaceae*) which includes beets, chard, and spinach. Quinoa's appearance is similar to millet with grains that are a bit smaller and whiter in color. Throughout the world there are about 250 species, many considered weeds, such as lambs quarters or pigweed.



The quinoa plant resembles spinach but with 3' to 9' stalks that take on a magenta hue. The large seedheads, which make up nearly one half the plant, vary dramatically in color and display a rainbow of reds, purples, greens, roses, lavenders, oranges, wine reds, blacks, yellows, and mustards. Quinoa is considered a leafy grain as is amaranth and buckwheat rather than a grass grain such as barley, millet, oats, rice, teff, and wheat.

A truly remarkable plant, quinoa has a vertical seedhead covered with enough seeds to plant one-fourth acre. One pound of seeds, equal to four cups, is sufficient to reap harvest from one whole acre, enough to feed an Andean family of ten for an entire year.

Thriving at high elevations of 10,000 feet and higher, quinoa finds drought ideal, loves hot sun as well as sub-freezing temperatures, and prefers soil that is sandy, alkaline and considered poor for growing any other food crops. Quinoa is not hybridized nor is it genetically engineered, rather it remains as pure and wholesome as it was when the Incas embraced it in their ceremonial rituals. The natural home of quinoa is the area between Southern Colombia to Northwest Argentina and Northern Chile.

The extremely thin air at the high Andean altitudes allows more of the sun's radiation to affect plants growing in high elevations. Quinoa has adapted perfectly with calcium oxalate crystals contained within its leaves that permit the plant to retain adequate moisture.

The average *altiplano* rainfall of about 10" occurs in the spring. Bolivia experienced two years of severe drought in the early 1980s and lost a large percentage of its crops of potatoes, barley, vegetables, fruits, and wheat. Quinoa not only survived the drought, but actually produced larger

than normal crops during that period with less than 3 1/2" of rain.

At one time the *altiplano* Indians harvested quinoa by hand. Today machinery collects the seedheads, and threshes and winnows them in preparation for the alkaline solution that removes the saponins, the bitter, soapy resin, toxic coating that protects the seeds from birds while growing.

Medicinal Benefits

Historically, cooked and ground quinoa was used as a compress to draw out pain and discoloration from bruises. It was also used as a diuretic and to encourage vomiting. The Indians included quinoa in their treatment of a number of ills, such as urinary tract problems, tuberculosis, appendicitis, liver problems, altitude sickness, and motion sickness.

Today it is commonly used for altitude sickness. Because of its high calcium content, it is considered beneficial in treating bone problems. Natives of the Andes claim it helps strengthen women during pregnancy and postpartum, and promotes healthier milk in nursing mothers.

Andean advice to heal broken bones is to eat plenty of quinoa and apply a plaster made of quinoa flour and water. For infections, they also prescribe the quinoa plaster.

Because quinoa is high in protein and complex carbohydrates, low in fat, and richer in vitamins and minerals than other grains, the Andean people consider it an endurance food and include it as a daily staple

Folklore

In many ancient cultures people were naive about their own origins. Some even believed that people grew from plants.

When Rebecca Wood, author of *Quinoa, the Supergrain*, asked a Calaway Indian herbalist about the medicinal properties of quinoa, he gave her a special variety of quinoa that he scooped up with a tiny sea shell. Then he told her, "Quinoa is medicine for soul calling. When a person's soul is out or has sunk into the ground, give him a massage with quinoa and then bury the grain on the spot where the problem first manifest."

Nutrition

Called a supergrain, quinoa is highly nutritious and can supply us with all of the body's requirements: carbohydrates, fats, protein, vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Quinoa is gluten free and considered an ideal food for those prone to food allergies. Common allergens include grains from the grass family such as corn and wheat. Quinoa, a leafy grain, is not in the grass family, making it beneficial for people who cannot tolerate common grains like wheat, corn, rye, barley, and oats.

Nutritional data on quinoa can vary from one variety to another, from one method of saponin removal to another, and from variations in growing conditions. Therefore, the data offers a wide spread in its figures. For instance, its protein content can range from 7.5% to 22.1%. Compared to common wheat at 14%, rye at 12%, and brown rice at 7.5%, quinoa's figures are impressive. In fact, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization considers quinoa equal to milk in its quality of protein

Most grains are deficient in the amino acid, lysine. Because quinoa has an adequate quantity of

lysine, it is considered to contain all the essential amino acids, making it a complete protein.

Quinoa possesses larger quantities of calcium, fat, iron, phosphorus, and B vitamins than many other grains. One-half cup of dry quinoa contains 51 mg of calcium, compared to 28 mg in the same quantity of whole-wheat grains. The protein content is a whopping 11 g for that one-half cup of quinoa. Potassium is impressively high with 629 mg. as is zinc with 2.8 mg. Other impressive figures include 42 mcg of folic acid, 7.9 mg of iron, and 179 mg. magnesium. In the category of fiber quinoa rates top scores with 5 grams for one-half cup dry grain. One cup of cooked quinoa has a calcium content equal to that of a quart of milk.

Quinoa is high in minerals and B vitamins, especially vitamin B6. Two ounces of cooked quinoa offers 14% of the RDA for B6. Niacin, one of the B vitamins usually measured in trace quantities, totals 2.49 mg, a figure considered impressive when it comes to the B vitamins.

An important component of any grain is the germ, that portion of the grain that is capable of sprouting and becoming a whole plant. The germ of each quinoa grain is larger than that of any other grain and encircles the outer surface, explaining its exceptionally high protein content. "If I had to choose one food to survive on, quinoa would be the best," said Dr. Duane Johnson, New Crops Agronomist at Colorado State University.

Some have thought that because quinoa has adapted to growing in such a difficult environment, one with little cultivation and harsh elements and has developed such an impressive nutritional profile, bringing the grain into our own diets may enable us to better adapt to today's compromised environmental conditions. We may further benefit by adopting quinoa into our family of familiar grains and bringing more diversity to our table.

Buying and Storing

Because quinoa hasn't yet attained the popularity of familiar grains like rice or corn, it's not likely to show up in many supermarkets. The health food market is the best place to shop for quinoa where it may be available in bulk bins as well as packaged.

Quinoa flour is also available in health food markets and can be used as you would rice flour. The flour makes a perfect thickener for soups, sauces, and gravies.

We've found that storing grain products in the refrigerator insures against rancidity and bug infestation. For the whole grain, a clear plastic or glass jar makes it easy to find and easy to measure out. Flour is best kept in its original package, then slipped into a plastic bag for refrigerator storage.

Preparation

Quinoa grains have a unique coating called saponin that serves as a protection from birds and the intense rays of the *altiplano* sun during growth. Unless these saponins are removed, the grain will taste quite bitter and is actually toxic. Before quinoa reaches the marketplace, most of the saponins have already been removed. To fully enjoy your quinoa, simply put the grains into a fine mesh strainer and rinse under cold running water for one to two full minutes. This guarantees a delicately sweet pleasant flavor to the cooked grains.



Raw

The leaves of the quinoa are spinach-like and can be enjoyed raw in salads. It



is unfortunate that because quinoa grows at very high altitudes, most of us do not have the opportunity to purchase these leaves in our local markets.

Cooked

Cooking quinoa couldn't be easier. Measure 1 cup (237 ml) of grain, rinse in a fine mesh strainer, and put the grains into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Add 2 cups (480 ml) water and salt to taste. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam for 15 to 20 minutes. Use quinoa in place of any rice dish and enjoy its unique light, chewy texture and airy flavor.

As quinoa cooks, the germ is released from the exterior of the grain and forms a tiny spiral. You'll recognize it easily by its white coloring and sproutlike appearance. The grain's tender chewiness is attributed to this uncommon life-bearing germ.

For a richer flavor, quinoa can be toasted in a dry skillet for a few minutes before cooking. Stir continuously during the toasting to prevent burning and to toast the grains evenly.

Because quinoa is so quick cooking, it works well as a hearty breakfast cereal for adults as well as infants and children. We've found it ideal for grain and fresh vegetable salads, the perfect grain accompaniment to any dinner dish, and a delightful grain as a replacement for the rice in rice pudding.

The leaves of the plant can also be cooked and enjoyed as you would spinach.

The Peruvians enjoy a hearty soup that features quinoa as the base along with vegetables.

With this easy-to-prepare recipe you can enjoy quinoa as a main dish or a side dish with a unique sauce, a combination that offers "supergrain" nutrition and gourmet flavor.

QUINOA WITH PISTACHIO PEPPER SAUCE

- 1 C. (237 ml) quinoa
- 2 C. (480 ml) water
- 1/2 t. salt
- 4 green bell peppers
- 1/2 t. salt
- Pepper to taste
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) raw pistachios
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 T. water

Garnish

- 1 T. finely diced red bell pepper
 - 1 sprig of cilantro
1. Put quinoa grains into a fine mesh strainer and rinse under cold running water for 1 to 2 minutes to remove the saponin residue. Put rinsed quinoa into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan.

- Add water and salt, cover pot, and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Turn heat down to low and steam for 15 to 20 minutes. Turn off heat and allow cooked quinoa to stand for 10 minutes without lifting the cover.
 3. Wash bell peppers and put them on a baking sheet. Place them under the broiler 3" (7.5 cm) from the heat source. Turn every 5 minutes until blackened on all sides. Plunge peppers into a bowl of cold water in the sink.
 4. When cool enough to handle, rub skins off with the fingers. Cut peppers open and remove core and seeds. Put peppers into a food processor.
 5. Add salt, pepper, pistachios, garlic, olive oil and water and process to a chunky consistency.
 6. To serve, put cooked quinoa into a large, deep platter and spoon some of the pepper sauce over. Garnish with diced red bell pepper and lay the cilantro in the center. Serve the remainder of the sauce at the table. As an alternative, serve quinoa and sauce in separate bowls and garnish each with a sprinkle of finely diced red bell pepper. Serves 4.

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MANGO: ENCHANTMENT UNDER THE SKIN

Includes Recipe Below

Imagine a fruit that tastes like turpentine with a highly fibrous texture that resembles chewing on strands of rope. What you are vicariously experiencing is the wild mango never destined to become a taste sensation like its cultivated cousin.

The earliest mention of mango, *Mangifera indica*, that means "the great fruit bearer," is in the Hindu scripture dating back to 4000 BCE. The wild mango originated in the foothills of the Himalayas of India and Burma, and about 40 to 60 of these trees still grow in India and Southeast Asia. However, with its tiny fruits, fibrous texture, and unpleasant turpentine taste, there is little resemblance to the superlative mango we have come to enjoy today.

So passionate are modern day Asian Indians about their most adored fruit, the cultivated mango, that during mango season in India, families actually argue heatedly about which of the many varieties is best for their favorite mango dishes. For the rest of us, we're just delighted to welcome mango season, enjoy the luscious tangy fruit that dribbles down our chins, and leave the fisticuffs out of it!

As the mango became cultivated, as early as 2000 BCE, its flavor, size, and texture developed into the exotic, richly flavored succulent treat we look forward to each May through September.

The explorers who tasted the mango were enchanted with its aromatic qualities, ambrosial flavor, and creamy, smooth, and silky texture and introduced the fruit to other tropical countries, such as, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines where it has had successful cultivation. As the mango adapted to new locales, new varieties evolved and many names were bestowed upon it such as "apple of the tropics, king of fruits, and fruit of the Gods".



Chinese traveler Hwen T'sang visited India in the first half of the seventh century AD and took the mango back to his home. The Chinese were delighted and began cultivating the magnificent evergreen tree that stands up to 100 feet tall with beautiful, thick, shiny, leathery pointed leaves that grow 8 to 14 inches long. Symmetrical in shape, the mango tree is a beautiful ornamental that is also appreciated for its cooling shade.

Mangoes continued to curry favor everywhere they were cultivated on their journey westward. The seventh century caliphs of Baghdad enjoyed their mangoes in the form of a complex brew that that required six months to a year to fully ferment. The traveling mango then hitched a camel ride from Persia and caravaned to the African continent about the year 1,000.

Mangoes were first recorded in Europe by Friar Jordanus in 1328, but Europeans didn't fall in love with them as did countries with tropical climates. Although mangoes are the world's third largest food crop today, they still remain obscure in Europe.

By the sixteenth century the mango had become so revered in India that royalty hoarded the groves solely for the rajas and nawabs. During this same century Portuguese explorers carried the mango to East and West Africa and Brazil. By the eighteenth century the West Indies had met the engaging mango. Today, India's main fruit crop is still the mango that outnumbers all the country's other fruit crops. In fact, India is the world's largest mango producer. In Tamil, the language of Southeastern India, the mango received its original name "mancay or mangay" that later evolved into manga by the Portuguese.

Hawaii, Florida, and Mexico were next on the nineteenth century travel plans for this tropical wonder. Though Florida was growing mangoes on the East Coast in 1825, it wasn't until 1889 that the USDA introduced a special grafted variety from India called Mulgoa or Mulgoba. The Haden variety, developed from the original Mulgoba, has been described as "rich, sweet and spicy, with flesh of melting texture and free of objectionable fibers."

Mangoes lend their tangy sweet flesh to many inventive dishes, especially in Indian and Southeast Asian cuisine. During times of famine in India, even the mango seed was eaten after lengthy boiling. In India mangoes are dried, ground into a powder, and used in amchur, a condiment similar to chutney. Jamaicans also dry their mangoes to make a spicy condiment similar to chutney.

India may have been the original inventor of sweet and chewy fruit leathers, which, centuries ago, they began making from ripe mangoes. They're also noted for their mango pickle that can be quite fiery hot and spicy. Indian restaurants today typically feature a beverage called Lassi made with mango, yogurt, sugar, ice and a touch of ground cardamom.

Mango chutney, an Indian condiment made from green mango, brown sugar, vinegar, hot peppers, and ginger is probably the most well known dish that employs the mango.

In their unripe form, mangoes are just as appealing as when fully ripe. Throughout Southeast Asia, green mango salads are common and take on a variety of seasonings that incorporate lime juice, chiles, and rice vinegar. In the Philippines unripe mangoes are enjoyed as a between-meal snack sprinkled with salt or dipped into soy sauce.

In Guadalupe, a city in the central region of Mexico, mangoes are chopped, salted and sprinkled with a little oil and served as a refreshing appetizer.

You may be surprised to note that mangoes are in the sumac family, Anacardiaceae, the same family as pistachios cashews, poison oak and poison ivy.



Growing

It was in Moghul India in the sixteenth century that a special technique was developed for propagating mango vegetatively, a method that employs grafting. Mangos do not grow true from seed but revert back to the highly fibrous fruit that tastes like turpentine.

Taylor's Encyclopedia of Gardening says, "Propagation is commonly by veneer grafting and budding, and to some extent by inarching, crown grafting, and by seeds."

The trees begin to produce fruit four to six years after planting and continue bearing fruit for about 40 years. To set fruit and produce a successful crop, the trees require tropical areas with defined seasons and a hot dry period typical of India and Southeast Asia where there are monsoon seasons followed by dry seasons. Before the fruit is formed, the trees blossom with tiny, delicate pinkish white flowers. Clusters of mangoes grow from long stems attached to the main branches with each tree producing an average of 100 fruits each year.

Harvesting takes place when fruits are "mature green" to enable them to travel long distances without spoiling. If you are a regular consumer of mangoes, you've probably encountered a few that never seemed to ripen properly. These were simply picked too soon.

With successful cultivation of mangoes throughout the world today, over 1,000 different varieties have been developed with fruits that vary in size from 2" (5 cm) to 10" (25 cm) in length and weigh from 4 oz. (100 g) to 4.5 lbs. (2 kg). The color of the mango's thin, inedible skin varies considerably, depending on variety, from all yellow, red on one side and green on the other, all green with a touch of color, to others that may be quite colorful with areas of red, green, and yellow. Shapes vary from round to oval to elongated, but most of the mangoes that appear in the supermarkets are generally oval and flat sided.

The seed within the mango is unlike any other in the fruit kingdom. It is long, almost the entire

length of the mango, and wide, almost the entire width of the fruit. The seed is almost flat in depth and offers a plump, fleshy area of fruit on both flat sides. The seed has fibrous matter clinging to it, but the fruit itself has an intense yellow-orange colored flesh that is creamy, smooth and silky with a sweet, yet tangy flavor.

Typical mango season is from May through September when prices are fairly attractive, with the peak during July and August. With the ease of importing and exporting fruits, mangoes are available throughout the year if one doesn't mind spending the extra dollars when they are out of season.

Mangoes sold in the United States are usually imported from Mexico, Haiti, the Caribbean, and South America. About 10% are grown in Florida and are harvested several times throughout the year.

Folklore

India is a country rich with folklore that sometimes becomes woven into cultural rituals as well as religious ceremonies. On holy days, Hindus brush their teeth with mango twigs.

It is said that the Buddha was given the gift of a whole grove of mango trees where he could rest whenever he wished. From that time on the mango tree was held in awe as capable of granting wishes.

So revered is the mango tree in its home country that it has become a symbol of love. Offerings of mango leaves are presented at wedding ceremonies, a ritual that guarantees the couple will bear many children. In the villages there is a powerful belief that the mango trees grow new leaves each time a son is born. To herald the new birth to their neighbors, doorways are decorated with mango leaves.

Old Sanskrit writings reveal a legend of deep love and beauty that sprang from the mango tree. It was the daughter of the sun, Surya Bai, who transformed herself into a golden lotus to evade persecution of an evil sorceress. The sorceress became angry when the King of the land fell in love with the beautiful lotus, and she burnt it to ashes. Good overcame evil when a magnificent mango tree sprang from the ashes and Surya Bai stepped out from a ripe mango that had fallen to the ground. The King instantly recognized her as his long lost wife, and the two rejoiced.

Health Benefits

Revered not only for their exotic sweetness and juicy quality, mangoes are known for their many health blessings. They contain an enzyme similar to papain in papayas, a soothing digestive aid. These proteolytic enzymes that break down proteins are effective meat tenderizers regularly used in tropical countries where mangoes are grown. The enzyme list continues with magneferin, catechol oxidase, and lactase that not only protect the mango from insects, but help humans by stimulating metabolism and purifying the intestinal tract.

Studies have shown that foods containing phenolic compounds have powerful antioxidant, anticancer, and anticardiovascular abilities. Mangoes possess the phenols quercetin, isoquercitfin, astragalín, fisetin, gallic acid, and methylgallat.

In India mangoes are used as blood builders. Because of their high iron content they are suggested for treatment of anemia and are beneficial to women during pregnancy and menstruation. People

who suffer from muscle cramps, stress, and heart problems can benefit from the high potassium and magnesium content that also helps those with acidosis.

One lab test turned up rather startling results that raised mangoes to the "highest perch." Mango juice was poured into a test tube that contained viruses. Shortly, the viruses were destroyed.

Nutritional Benefits

One medium mango, about 10 1/2 oz., is a mighty impressive, self-contained package of vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants that only packs 135 calories. Like most fruits, the mango is low in protein, about 1 gram for a medium size, but you can certainly benefit from its 3.7 grams of fiber.

Being of the plant kingdom, mangoes contain no cholesterol or saturated fat and contain only about .6 grams of total fat. Their sodium content ranks low at 4 mg.

Mango is a shining star in the beta carotene realm, summing up at 8061 IU for that same medium size. If you're looking for a boost in potassium, look no further than a medium mango with its 322.92 mg. It's the perfect fruit to replenish energy after heavy physical exercise like jogging or working out. Magnesium content is 18.63 mg.

Mango scores 57.3 mg of vitamin C and offers impressive numbers for vitamins B1, B2, B3, and B6. There's even a touch of zinc in our featured fruit, with calcium at 20.7 mg. and iron at .27 mg.

Although these figures will vary with the different varieties and different sizes, there is little doubt that the mango is an exceptional fruit, not only for its high-ranking nutrients, but also for its intense, zesty and delightful flavor that just may taste like paradise itself.

Buying and Storing

Mangoes can be purchased when completely hard and stored at room temperature to ripen which can take up to a week. Test them daily with a gentle squeeze. If you plan to use the mangoes right away, apply the gentle squeeze technique to find some that are soft, but solid. If they feel too spongy to the touch, they're definitely overripe and very possibly spoiled.



When fully ripened, mangoes will give easily to gentle pressure and exude appealing perfume-like fragrance. Store ripe mangoes in the refrigerator, but not for long. They keep well for up to three days.

To encourage the ripening, mangoes can be placed in a paper bag at room temperature for a few days. Since this speeds up the process, be sure to test them daily for ripeness.

If fresh mangoes are unavailable, they can be purchased canned in syrup, pickled, or in the form of mango chutney. When mangoes are out of season, you may find them cubed and bagged in clear plastic in the freezer section of your supermarket or health food store. Dried mango slices are available in most supermarkets as well as health food markets.

When you've purchased unripe mangoes and don't plan to ripen and use them immediately, store them for one to two weeks at 55 degrees F. (12 C.) before setting them out at room temperature.

Preparation

Fresh mangoes can be a bit juicy and contain so much pigment they will permanently stain your

clothes. We suggest wearing an apron when cutting or chopping them. Always wash the fruit before cutting.

Stand the mango on its stem end on your cutting board with the flat sides perpendicular to you. Place your knife at the top and slice down to the bottom alongside the seed. Repeat on the other flat side.

The flesh can then be scooped out with a spoon. If you prefer mango cubes, cut crosshatch lines partway through the flesh with the tip of your knife, taking care not to cut through the skin. Then push upward from the skin side to form a convex curve. Carefully cut away the flesh from the skin. In tropical regions people eat the mango cubes right off the skin.

RAW:

There are numerous ways to enjoy your mango. You may simply peel back the skin and eat the entire mango like a banana. It's rather a messy endeavor, so have plenty of napkins on hand.

Mangoes can be sliced, diced, and julienned into fruit salads. They make a delightful, tangy addition to tossed green salads, also.

Pureed in the blender, mangoes add delectable sweetness to smoothies and creamy sauces over a fruit salads.

Enjoy a fresh mango chutney with diced mango, diced onions, a touch of vinegar, salt, and diced chiles.

Raw soups enjoy a boost in nutrition and a lively flavor lift with the addition of fresh mangoes

Try diced mangoes on your cereal and use them as a dramatic garnish over grain or legume dishes.

Sorbets are a refreshing way to incorporate mangoes into your summer menus.

Summer's intense heat sends us in search of cooling foods, those with high water content and a touch of sweetness to boost our energy. We've created this Southeast Asian salad to add a cooling touch to your summer menus. Enjoy it as an appetizer as well as a side dish and delight in its zesty flavors.

GREEN MANGO SALAD

2 unripe mangoes, peeled and cut into 1/4" slivers about 1" long

1/4 red bell pepper, cut into thin julienne about 1" long

1/4 C. sliced purple onions (sliced lengthwise)

1/2 C. diced jicama

3 scallions, greens only, slivered into 1" lengths

1/2 to 1 jalapeno, finely minced or cayenne pepper to taste

2 t. finely minced fresh mint leaves

1/2 C. chopped roasted unsalted peanuts

1/4 C. organic canola oil

1 1/2 T. evaporated cane juice

1/2 t. salt

2 T. rice vinegar

1 T. sesame oil

1 T. lemon juice

Butter lettuce leaves

Chopped cilantro

1. Combine all ingredients except the lettuce and cilantro in a large mixing bowl and toss to distribute ingredients evenly.
2. Chill for several hours or overnight in the refrigerator to fully marinate the mangoes.
3. Place a lettuce leaf on each plate and spoon mango salad into the leaf.
4. Garnish with a sprinkling of chopped cilantro leaves. Serves 5 to 6.

A Mango Pasta Salad can be found at <http://www.vegparadise.com/cookingwith26.html>

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Avocado Receives "R" Rating

Includes Recipe Below

If a motion picture were produced on the history of the avocado, the film might have the dubious distinction of receiving an "R" rating for "mature audiences."

The opening scene might feature a group of actors dressed like Aztecs with one pointing to a tree and exclaiming, "*ahuacuatl!*"

Ahuacuatl is the Aztec word for testicle tree. No doubt, the name arose because of the way the fruit of the tree hung in pairs reminding those ancient people of human male anatomy. The film might also have a scene showing the young Aztec maidens confined indoors while this erotic fruit with aphrodisiac qualities was being harvested.

Over many centuries the avocado has maintained its reputation as an aphrodisiac. During the 1920's a promotional advertising campaign was launched in the United States to deny that the avocado had aphrodisiac powers. The intent of the advertising agency was to convince people of the aphrodisiac quality by denying it. The campaign succeeded.

Fortunately, in today's world the avocado has overcome its controversial past and receives a "G" rating for all ages to enjoy.



The avocado or avocado pear, *Persea Americana*, is native to Mexico, Central America, and South America. The earliest record of its existence was an archaeological dig in Peru that uncovered avocado seeds buried with a mummy and dated back to the 8th Century BCE. One theory was that these early people wanted the seeds buried with them because their aphrodisiac qualities might be useful in the afterlife.

Our currently popular avocado recipe, guacamole, may have originated in the

pre-Columbian era. The Aztec *ahuaca-mulli*, avocado sauce, was prepared by mashing avocados and sometimes adding tomatoes and onions and, perhaps, coriander.

The word avocado appears to resemble the term for lawyer in some languages. The French call their lawyer *avocat* and use the same word for the fruit; the Italians use *avvocato* for the attorney and *avocado* for the fruit; the Spanish say *abogado* for the legal expert and *aguacate* for the fruit. The Spanish word *aguacate* is derived from the Aztec *ahuacatl*.

When Hernando Cortez conquered Mexico in 1519, he found that the avocado was a staple in the native diet. Fernandez de Oviedo, the historian accompanying the conquistadors, wrote this description in 1526: "In the center of the fruit is a seed like a peeled chestnut. And between this and the rind is the part which is eaten, which is abundant, and is a paste similar to butter and of very good taste." Since it reminded him of a dessert pear, he ate it with cheese. Other Spaniards preferred to season it with salt and pepper or to add sugar to it.

The Conquistadors discovered a unique use for the avocado seed. The seed yields a milky liquid that becomes red when exposed to air. The Spaniards found they could use this reddish brown or even blackish indelible liquid as ink to be used on documents. Some of these documents are still in existence today.

Bernabe Cobo, a Spanish padre, was the first to catalog the three major strains of avocados in 1653. The principal types were Mexican, West Indian, and Guatemalan. Included in these major categories are hundreds of varieties with different shapes, colors, and skin textures.

In his visit to Jamaica in 1672 W. Hughes, the royal physician, wrote that the avocado was "one of the most rare and pleasant fruits of the island. It nourisheth and strengtheneth the body." The English living in Jamaica called the avocado an "alligator pear." Some speculate that they were comparing the skin to that of an alligator. Others say alligator was a corruption of *ahuacatl*. In Jamaica today the people call the avocado a pear.

By 1751 travelers to the West Indies were tasting avocados grown there. One visitor, George Washington, described the "agovago pears" that were very popular in Barbados.

In the 1700's English seamen discovered that the avocado could be used as a spread to soften the hardtack they had for meals. The avocado spread soon became known as "midshipman's butter."

Judge Henry Perrine planted the first avocado tree in Florida in 1833, but the avocado was not destined to achieve popularity until the early 1900's. Another judge, R.B. Ord of Santa Barbara, brought the first trees to California in 1871.

In 1911 Carl Schmidt who worked for the West Indian Nursery in Altadena, California, was given the task of searching for a variety of Mexican avocado that would grow in California. His search led him to Puebla, Mexico, eighty miles from Mexico City. He took cuttings from a number of trees, but only one managed to survive the great freeze of 1913 in California. The surviving tree was given the name *Fuerte*, a variety that became the basis for the California avocado industry. *Fuerte* is the Spanish word for vigorous and strong.

California postman Rudolf Hass discovered the avocado that bears his name in 1926. His original tree is still growing in La Habra Heights, California. Little did he know that his name would be

used for the most popular avocado in the world today.

The avocado tree is a member of the laurel family and is the only tree in the family to produce edible fruit. The three main strains are the Mexican, the West Indian and the Guatemalan. All have elliptical leaves that are glossy dark green with pale veins. The leaves remain on the tree for two to three years.

The Mexican variety bears purple or black fruit the size of a plum with a smooth skin and yellow-green flesh. The leaves of the Mexican avocado have an intense anise flavor, and dried, they are used to season black bean dishes. It is the hardiest of the avocado trees with its fruit harvested in the fall.

The Guatemalan avocados are either purple, black, or green with a rough skin and are larger than the Mexican ones. They are harvested in the spring or summer. The leaves have a medicinal use.

The West Indian type bears the largest fruit with some avocados weighing over 2 lbs. The skin is smooth and usually light green. The leaves have no scent.

The Hass and the Fuerte, the two most popular avocados in the market today, are hybrids of the Mexican and Guatemalan. Approximately 75% of the avocados sold in the United States are Hass. Fuerte is the second most popular of the seven varieties that are grown in California. The other California avocados are Bacon, Zutano, Gwen, Pinkerton, and Reed.

Growing

Avocado trees are planted from grafted seedlings and produce a crop in 1 to 3 years. A mature tree will bear between 100 to 400 avocados. Some of the fruit may drop off prematurely. Proper watering, good cross-pollination, and stress elimination can avoid this. Avocado trees will continue to bear fruit for up to 200 years unless they succumb to disease.

An evergreen tree, it sheds many leaves in early spring. It is a fast growing tree that can reach a height of 80 feet. The tree produces panicles or clusters of 200 to 300 small yellow-green blossoms. Each panicle will yield one to three avocados. Type A flowers are receptive to pollination in the morning and shed pollen the next afternoon. Type B flowers are receptive to pollination in the afternoon and shed pollen the following morning. A small percentage of the flowers are defective and sterile. The best crop occurs when there is cross-pollination between Type A and Type B.



Mexican avocados take about 6 to 8 months to reach maturity. Guatemalan varieties require 12 to 18 months. Fruit left on the tree will grow larger and usually will not ripen. Purple types are left on the tree until they reach full purple color. Commercial growers must allow the fruit to remain on the tree until it reaches 8% oil content.

The tiny cocktail avocado, one of many less common varieties, is quite slim, 2 to 2 1/2 inches in length, and is completely seedless. This variety can be found growing in Chile, South Africa, and Israel.

The oil of the avocado is extracted and bottled for use in gourmet cuisine.

Nutritional Benefits

The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000 extols the value of fruits and vegetables in the

diet and reports that avocados contain "good" unsaturated fats that do not raise blood cholesterol. Although the avocado is high in fat, 60% of the fat is monounsaturated, 20% is polyunsaturated, and 20% is saturated. The edible portion of an 8-ounce California avocado yields 30 grams of fat.

Nutritionally the avocado leads all other fruits in beta carotene and even exceeds the banana in potassium. While other fruits gain sugar as they ripen, the avocado's sugar content decreases as it matures. It contains more protein, potassium, magnesium, folic acid, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, biotin, pantothenic acid, vitamin E, and vitamin K per ounce than any other fruit.

Proof of the avocado's wealth of nutrition shows up in the USDA Nutrient Database. Though the avocado is calorie dense, (one-half cup pureed flesh contains 204 calories), the benefits outweigh the concern over its total fat content of 19.9 grams. That same one-half cup of pureed avocado packs a protein content of 2.4 grams with 3.1 grams of fiber. Using that same quantity, the avocado contains only 8 grams of carbohydrates and a surprising 704 IU of vitamin A. It's rich in the B vitamins, especially niacin, scoring 2.20 mg., folic acid registering 75.4 mcg., calcium at 13 mg., iron at 1.36 mg., and a mountain of potassium showing 729 mg. Although it has numerous benefits, the avocado should be eaten in moderation because of its high fat content.

Health Benefits

Recently avocados have been recognized as a good source of two beneficial compounds: beta-sitosterol and glutathione. Beta-sitosterol is a widely prescribed anti-cholesterol drug that interferes with cholesterol absorption, thus promoting lower cholesterol levels. Laboratory analysis has shown that avocados contain 76 mg of beta-sitosterol per 100 g of raw, edible fruit. This is four times the amount found in oranges that had previously been cited as the richest fruit source of beta-sitosterol.

Glutathione is made up of three amino acids, glutamic acid, cysteine, and glycine that function as antioxidants. Studies have revealed that avocados contain 17.7 mg of glutathione per 100 g of raw edible fruit. This is more than three times the amount in any other fruit. Studies have revealed a strong correlation between increased glutathione intake and decreased risk of oral and pharyngeal cancer. The decreased risk only occurred when the glutathione came from raw fruits and vegetables.

An article in the January 2001 issue of *Prevention* discusses the benefits of avocados for both skin and hair. Mashing an avocado and rubbing it into your hair for five minutes after washing will add luster to your hair. Avocado oil can be applied to the skin to relieve itchy, red, or irritated areas caused by eczema or dermatitis.

In South Africa, an avocado mask made of mashed avocados, honey, and lime juice is applied to the face as a moisturizing treatment to counteract the drying effects of the hot sun.

Medicinal Uses

Those inclined to home medication may want to investigate medicinal uses before self-medicating. Unripe avocados are said to be toxic. The leaves of some avocado varieties are also considered toxic. The skin of the avocado has been used as an antibiotic, as a way of ridding the intestinal tract of parasites, and as a remedy for dysentery.

The leaves have a variety of uses. They have been chewed as a treatment for pyorrhea. They have been applied as poultices to wounds. Heated, they are placed on the forehead to relieve neuralgia.

Leaf juices and concoctions have been employed as antibiotics, treatments for hypertension, diarrhea, sore throat, and to regulate menstruation. Juice concoctions have been used as digestive tonics, cough remedies, and abortifacients.

Seeds have been roasted and pulverized to create treatments for diarrhea and dysentery. Powdered, they have been utilized as a dandruff treatment. Pieces of seed have been placed in tooth cavities as a toothache palliative. An ointment made from the mashed seed has been used for women's makeup to redden their cheeks. Oil from the seed has been applied to skin eruptions.

Buying and Storing

Florida avocados are usually less expensive and generally larger than California varieties and offer less fat and fewer calories. However, they don't equal the West Coast types when it comes to rich and creamy tasting. The Florida avocados are also more perishable.

Although the avocado matures on the tree, it does not begin to ripen until it is picked. The leaves of the tree supply a hormone to the fruit that inhibits the production of ethylene, the chemical responsible for ripening fruit. Avocados found in the markets will often be firm and unripe. They will require a few days at room temperature to ripen. Ripening can be hastened by placing the fruit in a brown paper bag with an apple and stored at room temperature.

In selecting the fruit, pick a heavy one with an unblemished, unbroken skin. Bring home a firm avocado and allow it to ripen naturally at room temperature, about three to five days. If you're looking for a ripe fruit to use immediately, squeeze gently. The fruit should respond to a gentle pressure, somewhat like a ripe peach. If you leave a dent, it is overripe and will have blackened flesh that is unusable.

Ripe avocados can be kept in the refrigerator for 4 or 5 days, but will begin to discolor and lose their flavor if kept longer. Unripe avocados should not be refrigerated because they will never ripen properly.

Avocado oil should be purchased in small quantities and not kept too long because it turns rancid quickly. However, stored in the refrigerator, it will keep for several months. Like other oils, it is high in fat and calories.

Preparation

To cut the avocado in half, score with a knife lengthwise around the fruit and then twist the two halves to separate. Hit the pit with the side of a kitchen knife blade and twist it out. You can also pry the pit out with a teaspoon. Then you can simply scoop the flesh out with a spoon or peel off the skin. If you opt for peeling, the task is easier if you first cut the avocado lengthwise into quarters.

Avocados are very susceptible to oxidation, that is a tendency to turn brown when they come in contact with oxygen. After cutting or peeling, avocados will discolor if not used right away. Lemon or lime juice sprinkled on the fruit will slow the darkening process.

Avocado oil is richly flavored with nutty and fruity undertones. Use it raw only on salads when you want to add a special gourmet touch.

RAW:

Avocados are usually eaten raw because the tannins they contain result in a bitter flavor when cooked over high heat.

In the United States most avocados find their way into raw salads or guacamole. Frequently they are sliced and inserted into sandwiches. Mashed avocados are also used as spreads or dips.

Enjoy fresh avocado as a spread. It's superior to other spreads by providing fewer calories, saturated and total fat, cholesterol and sodium. One ounce of avocado offers 50 calories, 4.9 g of fat (including .7 g saturated), 0 cholesterol, and 3 mg of sodium. In calorie numbers, cream cheese and diet margarine have twice the calories as avocado with both registering approximately 100. Both also have more than twice as much fat, with cream cheese at 9.9 g and diet margarine 12.2 g. Diet margarine has no cholesterol but cream cheese totals 31 mg.



The differences are dramatic when avocado is compared to butter, mayonnaise, and regular margarine. These foods have four times the calories of avocado and clock in at over 200 for that same one ounce. They all have four times the fat with numbers ranging from 22 to 23 g. The avocado has only 3 mg. of sodium, but the others have quantities between 84 and 306 mg. Margarine tops the list with 306 while butter has 234 mg and diet margarine 223 mg.

Diced avocados make a beautiful garnish on practically everything from salads and soups to main dishes and sauces.

In some countries avocados become an ingredient in desserts. Brazilians put them into ice cream. Filipinos puree them with sugar and milk to make a dessert drink. The Taiwanese also eat them with milk and sugar.

Around the world people have found diverse uses for this fruit. Jamaicans create cold avocado soup. Nigerians stuff them with cheese, throw them into a batter, and bake them. Koreans blend them with milk to create a lotion for facial and body massages.

With avocados in abundance and prices reasonable, the season is ideal for a cooling raw soup. It can be prepared in just a few minutes and chilled a few hours ahead.

CREAMY AVOCADO GAZPACHO

- 1 C. (237 ml) water
- Flesh of 1 medium avocado, reserving 1 T. for garnish
- 2 C. (480 ml) chopped cucumber
- 1 1/2 C. (355 ml) chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 to 1 Serrano chile, with seeds, sliced (optional)
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 sprig mint leaves
- Juice of 2 lemons or limes
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 t. maple syrup

- 2 small mint leaves

Paprika (optional)

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender in the order listed. Start blender on low speed for a few seconds, then switch to high. Blend until creamy and smooth, about 1 1/2 minutes.
2. Pour into 2 soup bowls. Dice reserved avocado and gently drop them into the center of the bowl. Add a mint leaf and sprinkle diced avocado with paprika if desired. Serves 2.

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AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY

Apple at a Glance

History	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits	Recipes
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	

One of the most popular quotations of the 19th Century was "An apple a day keeps the doctor away. Before the 20th century there was no food pyramid or someone to announce the importance of five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. People simply recognized the healthy attributes of the apple. Some people were also well aware of the apple's relationship to the history of the world. Author-naturalist Henry David Thoreau wrote, "It is remarkable how closely the history of the apple tree is connected with that of man."

History

In looking at the history of the apple, one must pay tribute to and recognize the role of the inventive horticulturists of the Roman era. Were it not for them, juicy, sweet apples would not be in those brown bag lunches today. There would be no apple pie, no apple cobbler, or apple fritters, apple cider, or even apple butter. Simply expressed, there would be no plump, juicy apples.

The wild apple of ancient Asia, *malus pumila var mitris*, would never have made it to the modern table in its uncultivated form. The wild trees produced hundreds of tiny fruits that were sour and consisted mostly of numerous, small, dark brown seeds and core, hardly a fruit that anyone would anticipate eating. The wild apple of Europe, the main ancestor of the domestic apple, is classified as *malus sylvestris*.

Though some historians are in dispute over exactly who first cultivated the wild apple, many believe it was the Romans who discovered they could cultivate these wild apples into fleshy, sweet, and juicy fruits. Some historians report the apple's origins were rooted in Southwestern Asia, just south of the Caucasus Mountains between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Others

note that apple seeds found in Anatolia were carbon dated 6500 BCE. Archeologists even found a fossilized imprint of an apple seed from the Neolithic period in England.

With the apple's exact origin in question, another dilemma arises. Did Eve really bite into an apple that she plucked off the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden? No specific name is given to the fruit she tasted from that tree, though apples are mentioned later in the Bible. Some historians believe Eve's fruit of temptation might have been a pomegranate or possibly even a quince.

In the 13th century BCE, Ramses II ordered cultivated varieties of apples planted in the Nile delta. In Attica, Greece, apples were being grown in a very limited quantity during the 7th century BCE. Since they were so expensive, it was decreed that a bridal couple would have to share one apple on their wedding night.

Pliny the Elder, a Roman statesman, circa 23 CE, described 37 different varieties of cultivated apples in his *Historia naturalis*. By the first century CE apples were being cultivated in every region throughout the Rhine Valley.

Apple cultivation was gathering momentum. By the year 1640, horticulturist Parkinson noted 60 varieties, by 1669 the count was up to 92 varieties, and by 1866 *Downing's Fruits* notes 643 different cultivars.

When the early explorers returned from their travels and introduced new fruits and vegetables into Europe, the Europeans often didn't know what to call them. To them, the name "apple" symbolized all fruits and was at one time bestowed upon melons, avocados, cashews, cherimoyas, dates, eggplants, lemons, oranges, peaches, pineapples, pine nuts, pomegranates, potatoes, quinces, and tomatoes. Poet Robert Frost found this rather amusing and penned this poem:

The rose is a rose,
And was always a rose.
But the theory now goes
That the apple's a rose.

Naming the Apple

Our present day Lady Apple, whose original name was Api after the Etruscan who developed it, was originally grown in the gardens of Louis XIII. Later, Louis XIV considered it the only apple variety worthy of being served. In France it is still known as *pomme d'Api*. During Colonial days in the United States the Lady Apple was a special Christmas-time treat.

Api's green thumb efforts on behalf of the apple were followed by others such as the monks during the Middle Ages, Louis XIV of France, and New York's first governor Peter Stuyvesant. In 1860 an Iowa apple farmer named Hesse Hiatt came upon a unique apple tree in his orchard, a tree that he hadn't planted. When the fruit was harvested, he marveled at its unusual appearance and superb flavor. It turned out to be the Golden Delicious that Mr. Hiatt then cultivated and introduced to the whole world.

It was the Colonists who brought the apple with them to America in the form of seeds, often called pips. As Henry David Thoreau wrote, ". . . when man migrates, he carries with him not only his birds, quadrupeds, insects, vegetables, and his very sward, but his orchard also." Early in 1629 the



Boston Bay Company placed an order for apple seeds from England. A few years later, in 1635, a record five-hundred hogsheads of apple cider was produced by Mr. Wolcott of Connecticut. That's an impressive lot of apple cider! A hogshead is a barrel or cask that holds between 63 and 140 gallons.

In the United States, Michigan, Washington, and New York have become the commercial centers of apple production, with the Pacific Northwest leading the pack, producing more than 35 million bushels a year. Apples grown in Washington state came to the west from the East Coast, and originally from England.

No apple history would be complete without a mention of America's beloved Johnny Appleseed. As the tale goes, he loved apples so much that he decided to travel the country barefoot in his overalls with his pockets filled with apple seeds and another bag of apple seeds slung over his shoulder. The legend says that as he traveled the countryside, he tossed these seeds randomly to create a country filled with apple trees. Johnny Appleseed truly did exist. His real name was John Chapman, born in Massachusetts in 1774. He did indeed love apples, learned about their cultivation, and started many apple nurseries that stretched from the Allegheny River in the East as far west as Ohio. His dedication to apple cultivation earned him his legendary nickname, Johnny Appleseed.

What makes a truly tasty apple? The flavor is a magical blend of tartness, sweetness, bitterness, and aroma that awakens the senses. The sweetness, 9% to 12% of the fruit, comes from sucrose and fructose, two forms of natural sugar. The acid content consists of 90% malic acid and 10% citric acid. The malic acid content can make up 0.4% to 1% of the fruit. The astringent bite we taste in an apple emanates from tannins averaging 0.2% of the fruit. The familiar aroma is a mysterious blend of 250 trace chemicals contained in the fruit, such as volatile esters, alcohols, and aldehydes.

Apple trees are valued not only for their delicious fruits, but for their wood that is used for making mallet heads and golf clubs. Pieces of apple wood add excellent flavor for smoking foods, and the split wood make ideal fire logs.

Cultivation

The apple derives its name from the Latin *pomum*, meaning fruit in English, and is classified as a pome, a fruit that has many tiny seeds within a core at the center. They belong to the pome group as opposed to the stone group, referring to the type of seeds contained in the fruit.

What the Roman horticulturists accomplished over time was to establish a number of consistent varieties. By the 6th century BCE, they were boasting 7 different kinds of apples. As first described in *De Agricultura* by Cato the Elder, a 2nd century Roman statesman, they began by taking cuttings called "scions" from a tree that had desirable qualities and grafting these onto sturdy rootstocks. Branches then developed that produced these apples of good quality.

The Romans learned that in order to grow consistent varieties of apples, they must be cultivated by this method or they would revert back to one of the original parents, just as any hybrid fruit or vegetable would do. Horticulturist Behr states, "Without the techniques of grafting (or of rooting a branch), each tree in the world would constitute its own variety, distinct from every other."



Our domestic apples, *malus domestica*, are a hybrid combination of *malus*



pumila, *malus sylvestris*, and *malus mitis*.

An orchard of apple trees is a visual delight. The tree trunks and branches have a tendency to become twisted and distorted making them an appealing artistic composition. The leaves can either be smooth or soft and fuzzy. In the spring, when the trees burst into blossom, the clusters of highly fragrant flowers may be pink, pure white, or red-tinged. The flowers of the majority of varieties must be fertilized from the pollen of other apple varieties.

The temperate zones of Europe, Asia, and North America are ideal for apple growing where the trees can rest during a cold, dormant period of about two months to recover from the work of producing an abundant crop. In more recent years, new varieties of apples have been developed that produce well in warmer climates. Commercially grown apples, however, come from the cooler countries like Russia, China, Germany, England, France, and the Northern United States.

Apples are one of the most popular fruits in the world. At present there are at least 7,500 different varieties that vary in shape, color, texture, firmness, crispness, acidity, juiciness, sweetness, nutritional value, and harvesting period.

Folklore

Many foods have been thought to possess magical qualities and even aphrodisiac powers. The apple's projected powers could fill a bushel of folklore. An ancient Greek who wanted to propose to a woman would only have to toss her an apple. If she caught it, he knew she had accepted his offer.

In Germany, during medieval times a man who ate an apple that was steeped in the perspiration of the woman he loved was very likely to succeed in the relationship.

Here's a simple, cost effective, and long-forgotten fertility rite to share with those desirous of conceiving a healthy apple harvest. Villagers of Medieval England would select the largest apple tree in the orchard, and hang cider-soaked pieces of toast on its branches to attract robins. To those villagers, robins were considered the good spirits of the tree. Then, to drive away the evil spirits, the people would gather throughout the orchard and fire many blasts from their shotguns. They followed this ritual by pouring cider over the tree's roots and tipped a few cups themselves. Merriment followed with dancing around the tree with their arms linked as they chanted ancient charms. Even today some highly superstitious people believe this practice is necessary to insure a good crop of apples.

Some unique and curious customs have faded into obscurity. Long ago, in Cumberland, England, people would suspend apples from strings over the hearth. When the apples were fully roasted, they fell into a bowl of spiced, mulled wine that was waiting for them beneath. This practice was actually the precursor to the oven-baked apple of today.

Throughout history apples symbolized luxury, pleasure, love, fertility, and even jealousy. Greek mythology recounts this tale: from the garden of the Hesperides, golden apples were given to Hera as a wedding gift at her marriage to Zeus. Modern Greek scholars believe that the golden apples of the Hesperides were actually oranges or lemons.

It is told that the prophet Mohammed inhaled the fragrance of an apple brought to him by an angel

just before his last breath of life.

Health Benefits

Easy on the digestion, apples contain malic and tartaric acids that inhibit fermentation in the intestines. Their high fiber content adds bulk that aids the digestive process, making elimination natural and comfortable. Apples contain pectin, a soluble fiber that encourages the growth of beneficial bacteria in the digestive tract.

Apples contain flavonoids, antioxidants that improve immune function and prevent heart disease and some cancers.

Green apples act as a liver and gall bladder cleanser and may aid in softening gallstones.

Because of their high water content, apples are cooling and moistening and aid in reducing fever. Simply grate them and serve them to feverish patients. Steamed apples sweetened with honey are beneficial for a dry cough and may help to remove mucous from the lungs.

Hippocrates (circa 400 BCE), the Greek physician considered the father of medicine, was a proponent of nutritional healing. His favorite remedies were apples, dates, and barley mush.

Today medical practitioners are beginning to recognize that the apple's abundant quantity of pectin is an aid in reducing high cholesterol as well as blood sugar, a wonder food for people with coronary artery disease and diabetes.

If these aren't enough reasons to "eat an apple a day," there's more. Eating raw apples gives the gums a healthy massage and cleans the teeth. This popular fruit is said to have properties that are a muscle tonic, diuretic, laxative, antidiarrheal, antirheumatic, and stomachic.

Nutritional Benefits

Unpeeled apples provide their most plentiful nutrients just under the skin. Apples are a good source of potassium, folic acid, and vitamin C.

A medium apple, approximately 5 ounces, has only 81 calories and a whopping 3.7 grams of fiber from pectin, a soluble fiber. A medium apple supplies 159 mg of potassium, 3.9 mcg of folic acid, 7.9 mg of vitamin C, and 9.6 mg of calcium.

Additionally, there are trace amounts of B vitamins, iron, magnesium, and zinc

Purchasing and Storing

Since most fresh apples are harvested July through December, take advantage of the just-picked fruit, and plan menus to wallow in apple heaven. Some late varieties are harvested from January through April, such as Granny Smith.

Seek out those apples that have not been waxed. Farmers' markets are the best place to buy them without paraffin.

Apples keep best and longest when refrigerated. Unrefrigerated, apples can become mushy in just two or three days. Purchase them at farmers' markets where you know they have probably been picked the day before market or at supermarkets where they are kept cool. Apples should be firm and



blemish-free.

If you can purchase organically grown apples in your local grocery store or farmers' market, you will be steps ahead in avoiding pesticides.



Preparation

Always wash apples thoroughly before eating or cutting to reduce intake of pesticide residues or bacterial contaminants that result from handling. When cutting any unwashed fruits or vegetables, it is possible to carry pesticides from the skin into the flesh with one cut of the knife.

It is suggested that you peel the skin off if the fruit is waxed.

To prevent cut apples from turning brown, a result of oxidation, toss them with citrus juice. The juice of oranges, lemons, or limes will work equally as well. If you want to include chopped apples in a fruit salad, allow them to marinate a few minutes in the citrus juice before adding them to the salad bowl.

Freezing Apples

It's best to peel, core, and slice the apples first. Then prepare a bowl with 1 quart (1 liter) of water and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Drop the apples into the prepared water for 10 to 15 minutes. Rinse them off and blanch in boiling water for 1 minute. Cool under running water, drain, and dry the apples on paper towels.

Arrange apple slices in a single layer on trays and put them into the freezer until thoroughly frozen. Remove and store them in heavy-duty plastic freezer bags. With this method you can avoid clumps of frozen fruit sticking together and can easily remove the quantity desired at any time.

RAW

Feel like snacking on an apple? With so many delicious varieties available, you can bite into a fresh, crisp apple and have a joyfully different taste adventure every day of the week.

Pack an apple in your brown bag lunch.

Include a colorful variety of apples on your picnic menu. They have great keeping qualities and will do fine without refrigeration for the day.

Add chopped apples to your tossed salad. It adds little bursts of sweetness and makes salad special.

Slice apples and enjoy them with a nut butter spread.

Add crunch to a fruit salad with diced apples.

Make a vegan Waldorf Salad with diced apples, diced celery, raisins, and vegan mayonnaise.

Apples and a savory creamy vegan dip make great partners at a party.

If you are fortunate enough to have a juicer in your kitchen, you can enjoy fresh apple juice throughout the year.

Start your day with an unbaked apple. In a bowl, combine raisins, nuts, chopped dried pineapple, chopped dates, and sprouted buckwheat. Core the apple, fill the cavity with some of the fruit-nut mixture, and surround the apple with the remainder. Enjoy this breakfast dish with a knife and

fork.

Apple seeds are considered edible, but caution must prevail. Because they contain a small amount of cyanide, apple seeds can only be tolerated in small amounts.

BAKING

To prepare a dessert of traditional baked apples, core apples and fill the cavities with black and golden raisins, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, crushed walnuts, and evaporated cane juice. Put them into a baking pan and add a little unfiltered apple juice in a pool at the bottom of the pan. Bake apples, uncovered, at 350 (gas mark 4) for 1 hour or until very tender when pierced with a fork. Baste often to prevent drying out. Alternatively, you can also cover the pan with aluminum foil (shiny side down) and bake for 30 minutes. Then, remove the foil and bake another 30 minutes. This method assures a soft apple.

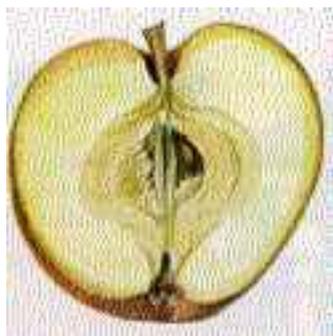
If you enjoy cooking historical dishes, you can even revive an 1849 apple dumpling created by Eliza Acton. She peeled and cored apples, filled the cavities with fruits and spices, and enclosed the apples in pastry dough. Each apple was then wrapped in a knitted cloth and boiled. This method then led to the baked version. Try encasing the prepared apples in a puff pastry and baking them.

COOKING

Enjoy cooked spiced apples on your whole-grain toast for a satisfying breakfast treat. Sauté sliced apples in a little water with cinnamon, a dash of cloves, allspice, and ginger. Sweeten with maple syrup or evaporated cane juice, and pile onto your toast.

Apple pie or apple cobbler can be made vegan fashion with evaporated cane juice for sweetener and whole-grain pastry flour for the crust. A little non-hydrogenated vegetable oil makes an excellent fat substitute if needed.

Applesauce: Peel and core apples. Cut into slices, put them into a saucepan, and add a little water or apple juice to cover the bottom of the pot. Cover pot, start heat on high, and bring to a boil. Turn heat down to medium, and cook gently, about 15 minutes, stirring often and checking liquid to prevent burning. When soft, the apples can be mashed for a textured applesauce or put through a food mill or food processor for a smoother texture. Add any spices, flavoring extracts, and sweeteners to taste and cook for another minute or two to set the flavors. Cool and store in the refrigerator.



Apple Butter: Apple butter begins with the preparation of applesauce, then spices are added and the mixture is cooked longer. After adding the spices, flavorings, and sweetener, remove the pot lid, and continue cooking over medium-low heat until the mixture becomes very thick, stirring frequently. The process may take an hour or two depending on the water content of the apples. Cool thoroughly before refrigerating.

As an alternative, you can bake your pureed, spiced apples in a shallow pan in the oven at 300 (gas mark 2) for 2 hours until thickened. With either method, check for doneness by putting a little dollop of apple butter on a dish and turning the dish upside down. The mixture should stick to the plate.

If you plan to make a large quantity for gift giving, have hot sterilized jars ready and spoon your hot apple butter into the jars, leaving only 1/8-inch at the top. Seal immediately and cool.

APPLE RELISH (Charoset)

The traditional name for this recipe is *Charoset*, a Hebrew word that describes a mixture of fruits, nuts, and wine eaten at the Passover Seder. The fruits almost always include apples that are shredded or finely diced. The European Charoset is a simple combination of apples, nuts, and wine. Here we offer an irresistible recipe that follows the Sephardic tradition. The combination is so tasty and nutritious, it ought to be enjoyed throughout the year, not just at the Passover celebration.

- 1/3 C. (79 ml) chopped dates
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) diced dried peaches or apricots
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) golden raisins
- 2/3 C. (158 ml) kosher or organic grape juice
- 1 large sweet, firm, red apple, unpeeled, cored, and coarsely shredded or finely chopped
- 1 large green apple, unpeeled, cored, and coarsely shredded or finely chopped
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) sliced almonds
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) chopped walnuts
- 1/2 t. almond extract
- 1 1/4 t. ground cinnamon
- Evaporated cane juice to taste

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Refrigerate and allow to marinate for several hours. Serve as an accompaniment to any savory meal. Store leftovers in the refrigerator where it will keep for several days. Makes about 3 1/2 cups (835 ml).

APPLE HAYSTACKS WITH ROSE WATER

Here's an easy raw dessert that takes advantage of newly harvested apples when they're at their peak of freshness, sweetness, and juiciness. Since this dessert requires very little preparation, it can be made shortly before serving to avoid apples turning brown.

- 1 C. (237 ml) whole raw almonds
- 3/4 C. (177 ml) water
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) maple syrup
- 5 T. rose water
- 20 pitted dates
- 5 large, sweet, crisp apples
- 2 kiwis, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 lb. (226 g) red flame grapes

1. Put almonds into a food processor or coffee grinder and grind to a fine meal.
2. Add water, maple syrup, rose water, and dates to ground almonds in processor, and process until dates are broken down finely. Transfer mixture to a large mixing bowl and rinse processor work bowl.
3. Wash apples and core. Leave peel in tact for its excellent fiber. Coarsely shred apples in the food processor or with a hand grater, and add to date mixture, stirring to combine thoroughly.
4. Spoon out in 6 mounds onto a large serving platter.
5. Top each apple haystack with a slice of kiwi and a grape half. Decorate around platter with grapes and additional kiwi slices. Distribute into dessert bowls at the table using a spatula or pie server. Serves 6.

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Wild Rice Belies Its Name

Includes Recipe Below

Contrary to what many people believe, wild rice is not rice at all but a grass. Much of it sold in the world today is not even wild but rather cultivated varieties that do not occur naturally. Wild rice is really an annual aquatic seed *Zizania aquatica* found mostly in the upper freshwater lakes of Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota in North America.

The Algonquin, Ojibwa, Dakota, Winnebago, Sioux, Fox, and Chippewa tribes used wild rice as an important staple in their diets and considered it the centerpiece of their Megwetch Manomin Feast that followed the first harvest. During the long, cold winters when the lakes were frozen and hunting was difficult, their precious stores of wild rice nourished them well. They called it *manomin* or *mahnomen*, after the Menominee tribe and referred to the grains as "good berry." They also had great reverence for "the precious grain sent by the Great Spirit to serve as food." The grain was so valuable to subsistence that tribes sometimes waged wars over wild rice territories. The Chippewa even carried small pouches of wild rice with them whenever they traveled.

Before any explorers set foot on the North American continent, wild rice was gathered by Indians over an expansive area North America from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi Valley. Archeologists found charred remains of wild rice seeds in threshing pits in the northern states that existed long before there was contact with Europeans. By the early part of the 1900s, only clear lakes and rivers of the most northern regions of Minnesota could still support the growth of wild rice and provide the Indians their staple food.

The French term *folles avoines*, translated as crazy oats, was given by the early French explorers. These explorers were greatly impressed with the strength and hardiness of the woodland Indians and attributed their vitality to their ample servings of wild rice.

Jonathan Carver, an Englishman from London, came to explore North America and wrote *Travels*

through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768. He recognized and reported back that wild rice was the most important of all the native wild food plants in the country.



It became known as wild rice because the explorers noticed Indians gathering it in the waters of the Great Lakes region. As they observed it rising 3 or 4 feet above the water, it reminded them of rice paddies.

Cooked wild rice has a rich nutty flavor, sometimes described as a smoky flavor, and a texture that is delightfully chewy. The slender, elongated grains that often come to market are usually about one-half inch in length and almost black in color with some touches of green. Premium grades of truly wild, uncultivated wild rice sold in gourmet markets can be as long as one-inch and the colors can vary from medium brown to nearly pure black.

About 80% of the wild rice grown in the United States today is cultivated in paddies, a practice that began about 1972 and that had a damaging effect on the incomes of Native Americans who depended on selling their wild rice. The state of Minnesota eventually enacted a state law regulating the harvesting of wild rice to protect the tribes from the infringement of agribusiness.

Northern Minnesota, the Upper Mississippi Valley, California, Washington, and Idaho are areas where hybrid varieties of wild rice are being cultivated and processed with mechanical threshers, parchers, and winnowers. Though the growing process is highly mechanized, there are some challenges to cultivating wild rice. The seeds do not grow well in stagnant water, and growers had to develop varieties that adapted well to their new environment.

With cultivated wild rice, hybrid varieties are developed to mature at the same time. The plants are then completely cut down, and the labor of processing the grains is given to machines. In the final stages of processing, rubber rollers remove the hulls and create small cuts in the grain that shortens the cooking process. These cuts give a scratched or scarified appearance.

Though wild rice is mostly associated with the United States and Canada, it is also grown in areas of Africa, Southeast Asia, and Southern China. China grows another species called *Z. latifolia*, sometimes called Manchurian wild rice. The Chinese favor these plants not for their cereal grains, but for their broad leaves and young shoots that they incorporate into their cuisine. The leaves are used to wrap dumplings, while the shoots are cooked and eaten like asparagus.

Traditional Harvesting

In times past, the annual harvesting of wild rice began a month before actually reaping the rice with great ceremony among the many tribes that would gather at their chosen harvesting lakes. The flavor and color of wild rice varied considerably from region to region among the lakes because of varying soil conditions, water organisms, and the changing environment. Since the Indian tribes knew the area well, it could be said they were staking out their favorite spots.

In late August and September of each year, during the period known as "rice moon," their celebrations resembled a lively country fair. When the time "was right," the ricing chief would

declare the proper day for harvesting. Then pairs of Indian women slowly roamed the grassy lakes in their birch bark canoes. One would take her place at the front of the boat and paddle with a long pole, the other used two long cedar or juniper sticks to bend the tall grass-heads and gently shake the seeds of the pale-green stalks into the bottom of the boat. A canoe-full of wild rice was considered a good harvest day.

Some of the grains would fall back into the water and become the seeds for next year's crop. Since the seed kernels do not all ripen at the same time, the women made numerous trips at intervals of four to six days to harvest the seeds that continue to mature. Minus the pre-harvesting ceremony, this three-centuries-old gathering method is still used today, which explains why this wild-crafted grain tends to be a pricey luxury. Some have even referred to truly wild rice as the "caviar of grains." Today, the men of the tribe share the harvesting task.

The seeds were taken to the rice camp or back to the reservation and heaped into large piles to ferment by the heat of the sun for as long as two weeks. The lengthy fermentation process gives the wild rice its familiar black color. If the grains are not fully fermented, their colors range from tan to light green, to varying shades of brown, and to black. The heady aroma of green tea is noticeable with unfermented wild rice, while the aroma of fully fermented grains remind one of black tea. Following the fermentation, grains were cured or parched over smoke fires from two to four hours to dry the hulls. Just harvested wild rice has such a high moisture content, about 25% moisture, that the drying process is essential to prevent mold.

In former times to loosen the hulls of the wild rice, the young children would dance on the grains that were placed in a shallow pit lined with deerskin. The rice would then be strained through blankets to separate the chaff from the kernels. Today, the wild rice is put into bags and hand-pounded with clubs to loosen the hulls. The women then winnow the grains by lifting their filled birch-bark trays and tossing the seeds into the air, allowing the winds to carry off the hulls.

Today, the wild rice is winnowed on the reservations in large 30-gallon drums with paddles inside that loosen the hulls as the drums are turned.

Indians have a special reverence for the spirit that resides within all living things. When they harvest the wild rice they are mindful of the spirit within and respect their right to harvest. It is this respect that allows them to continue harvesting. This cultural spirituality connects them with their ancestors who gathered wild rice in the same fashion centuries before.

Growing

Wild rice can grow in water as shallow as three or four feet along marshes and muddy waters. A tall plant, it grows to a height of eight to ten feet, with a long flower cluster that reminds one of a narrow broom. The grains in their husks on the tall stalk look somewhat like oats.

Truly wild rice is a challenging crop to grow, even today. It's very susceptible to failure due to weather conditions. If a heavy windstorm comes along just before harvesting, the seeds can be blown into the water, ruining an entire crop. Harvesting at just the right time becomes a matter of beating the birds to it, since wild rice is considered a delicacy by many birds living in the area. Other challenges include insects, disease, poor drainage, and high waters. If the grains are too green, they are difficult to thresh or beat out of their husks. If left on the plant too long, even a few days too long, they fall off the plant into the water.

Airboats have brought about recent improvements in commercial harvesting of the wild rice, while newer techniques for parching, winnowing, and hulling have been a help in saving time and labor. Still, it takes about three pounds of grass seed to yield one pound of wild rice.

Nutritional Benefits

Wild rice towers over other grains when it comes to amounts of protein, minerals, B vitamins, folic acid, and carbohydrates. While the protein content of 1/2 cup of cooked wild rice measures 3.3 grams, that same quantity of long grain brown rice contains only 2 grams. The bonus is that the wild rice, though high in carbohydrates at 17.5 grams, has only 83 calories for 1/2 cup cooked.

Using the same 1/2 cup measurement of cooked grains, the folic acid content soars over brown rice with 21.3 mcg for wild rice and 3.9 mcg for brown rice. According to the *University of California Berkeley Wellness Encyclopedia of Food and Nutrition*, 1/2 cup dry wild rice provides 95 mcg or 48% of the RDA (200 mcg) of folacin for men and 53% for women.

The niacin content of wild rice is also a stand-out figure, with 1.06 mg for 1/2 cup cooked. Potassium packs an 83 mg punch, and zinc, which is usually available in trace amounts, registers 1.1 mg.

While 1/2 cup cooked wild rice offers 1.5 grams of fiber, it contains 26 mg of magnesium, a healthy balance of B vitamins and only .3 grams of unsaturated fat. Small amounts of calcium and iron are also part of the wild rice picture.

Purchasing

Buyers should be aware of two types of wild rice: gathered and commercial. Foraged or hand harvested wild rice is gradually being pushed out of the market by hybrid commercial varieties. Hand harvested wild rice makes up less than 20% of the market today. Heirloom varieties of this foraged grain still exist. In fact it is the only heirloom grain sold commercially. However, package labels can be deceiving. Though the label may read, "Indian harvested," or "organic," the product may be hybridized wild rice placed in freshwater lakes and gathered by Indians in airboats. "Hand harvested, organic, and from the Great Lakes region" is the real thing with superior flavor and aroma, but it may be difficult to find.

Before purchasing wild rice, you should be aware of the principal grades available.

Giant or long grain is the top quality with each unbroken grain measuring at least an inch in length. Its earthy flavor makes it a favorite of chefs who are willing to pay top price.

Fancy or medium grain has rice that is unbroken and similarly matched in color and length but not as long as the giant. This grade will cost slightly less than the Giant.

Select or short grain has kernels that are not uniform in size or color, and some of the kernels may be broken. For most purposes such as in soups, casseroles, and in combination with brown and white rice, this grade is ideal.

Storage

If kept in a cool dry place in a covered jar, wild rice will keep indefinitely. Because of its high moisture level, it may develop mold or maggots if left unrefrigerated. We recommend storing it in the refrigerator. The jar should be turned upside down occasionally to prevent mildew.

Cooked, leftover wild rice can keep refrigerated up to one week; however, we recommend using it up within a two or three days. Any cooked foods stored in the refrigerator for a week can develop molds and yeasts that are not visible to the eye but can negatively affect the immune system.

Cooking

Wild rice should be rinsed before cooking to remove any unwanted particles, such as hulls or storage debris. Put the grains into a saucepan with warm water to cover, and stir the rice around to allow any particles to float to the top. Skim off the particles and drain the water. It's best to repeat the rinsing one more time before cooking.

As a general rule established proportions for cultivated wild rice use 1 cup of dry wild rice to 3 cups of water, with salt to taste. We suggest 1 teaspoon of salt. Combine these in a 2 or 3-quart saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium low, and steam for 45 minutes to 1 hour. When fully cooked, the grains open to reveal their purplish-grey inner portion, giving each grain a striking two-tone appearance. This quantity will yield about 3 to 4 cups of cooked grains, depending on variety.



Wild-crafted wild rice proportions use 1 cup of grain to 2 cups of water with a cooking time of 45 minutes.

The principal challenge in preparing wild rice is that there are variations in the cooking times. Rice gathered naturally has part of its bran layer removed during the hull removal stage and so lessens its cooking time. Commercially grown rice that does not have any of the bran layer removed may take an hour or more to cook, while gathered rice may only need 45 minutes. A taste test is your best method. The fully cooked grains should not be mushy nor should they be crunchy. Aim for a texture that is pleasantly chewy.

Though wild rice is one of the most expensive grains, it goes a long way. Some say that one pound of the grain can feed thirty people. To compensate for its high cost, try combining wild rice half-and-half with brown rice. For a truly colorful presentation, try one-third of each; white rice, brown rice, and wild rice.

If you should have the opportunity to harvest your own wild rice, bring it home, and spread it out in a warm place to dry thoroughly. Then spread it out on a baking pan and put it into the oven at about 375 F to 400 F for about an hour. Cool slightly and rub between the hands to remove the husks. Winnow out the husks with a sieve and store the grains in the refrigerator. Before cooking, be sure to rinse the grains thoroughly to remove the strong smoky taste.

BREAKFAST

Splurge and enjoy the treat of wild rice as a breakfast cereal. The easiest way is to cook a little extra for dinner and plan the leftovers for breakfast the next morning. Put those leftover grains into a saucepan with 2 or 3 tablespoons of water to moisten them. Cover the pot, and warm briefly over medium heat. Enjoy them in a bowl with some soy milk or nut milk, a sprinkling of cinnamon, and a touch of maple syrup. Dot the top with raisins and coarsely ground walnuts or diced pecans, and bask in a luxurious morning treat.

LUNCH

Cooked wild rice can form the nutritious base of a delectable salad of chopped, diced, and shredded fresh vegetables including cucumbers, celery, tomatoes, scallions, bell peppers, carrots, and cabbage. Add a few chopped raw nuts of your choice, and season with hint of fresh minced sage and oregano, lemon juice, a little rice, balsamic, or raspberry vinegar, salt and pepper.

Create your own original salad combinations with vegetables that are your own seasonal favorites and seasonings that are especially pleasing to you.

FLOUR

Grind the wild rice into flour in batches in an electric coffee grinder, and use it as approximately 25% of the flour in batters for muffins, pancakes, and breads. You'll enjoy the extraordinary richness of flavor.

SOUP

To give extra body to vegetable soups, add a hearty quantity of cooked wild rice for texture and flavor.

SIDE DISHES

Show off your culinary talents with a rice dish that's dressed for company with some raw or toasted nuts. Gently sauté some chopped onions in broth, white wine, or water and add them to the cooked wild rice along with some finely minced fresh parsley and thyme. Accompany the dish with a delicate sauce as follows:

Wrap a whole head of garlic in aluminum foil (shiny side inside), and roast at 375 for 1 hour. Open the foil and cool slightly. Gently remove each clove and squeeze out the contents into a cereal-size bowl. Mix with a small amount of unsweetened soy milk to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper, and serve on the side for guests to add a dollop on their wild rice dish.

Wild rice pairs especially well with mushrooms. Slice some crimini mushrooms, and briefly sauté them in a little soy sauce, lemon juice, and water. For an attractive presentation, add them as a topping over cooked wild rice. Garnish with some thinly sliced scallions and serve.

ENTREES

A perfect base for a main dish, wild rice soars to new heights when combined with seasoned browned tofu cubes, sauté vegetables, all varieties of nuts, browned chopped, diced, or shredded tempeh. Wild rice is very adaptable to a variety of seasonings, making it easy to create international favorites with a unique taste and texture.

Plan your Thanksgiving menu to include a hearty dish of wild rice. Because of its rich, deep color, wild rice makes a dramatic presentation at the table and is sure to evoke a few "aaahhs." Here's a delectable, savory main dish that leaves plenty of room for all the traditional trimmings like cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and pumpkin pie. The recipe will be easier to assemble if you prepare the chestnuts the day before.

WILD RICE, CHESTNUT, AND PECAN STUFFED SQUASHES

1/2 lb. (226 grams) fresh chestnuts or 1 1/4 C. (296 ml) cooked peeled chestnut pieces

Water

1 C. (237 ml) wild rice

3 C. (717 ml) water

1 t. salt

4 or 5 small squashes (sugar pumpkins, acorn, small butternut, delicata, sweet dumpling)

Organic canola oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

3 stalks celery, finely chopped

5 cloves garlic, crushed

3 T. extra virgin olive oil

1/4 C. (59 ml) water

4 slices 100% whole wheat bread

1/2 lb. (226 grams) mushrooms, chopped

2/3 C. (158 ml) pecans toasted and broken into pieces

3/4 t. salt or to taste

1/2 t. dried thyme leaves

1/2 t. dried oregano

1/2 t. poultry seasoning

Freshly ground black pepper

Chopped parsley for garnish



1. If using fresh chestnuts, make a crisscross cut in each chestnut. Boil chestnuts in water to cover for 20 minutes. Peel with a sharp paring knife while chestnuts are still warm, removing the inner brown skin as well. Put chestnut pieces into a large bowl. Set aside.
2. Combine wild rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium-low, and cook for 45 to 55 minutes, or until soft.
3. Cut squashes in half with a firm chef's knife, scoop out seeds, and brush cavities with oil. Arrange on a baking sheet, cut side down, and bake at 400 (Gas Mark 6) for 30 minutes.
4. To prepare stuffing, combine onion, celery, garlic, olive oil, and water in a large skillet, and sauté until soft and transparent, about 5 to 6 minutes. Toss into bowl with chestnuts.
5. Toast whole wheat bread in toaster until bread is dry. Cut into small cubes and add to bowl with chestnuts.
6. Add remaining ingredients to bowl and mix well. Adjust seasoning to taste.
7. Remove squashes from oven and generously fill cavities with stuffing. Cover with aluminum foil, dull side up, and bake for 30 minutes more or until squashes are tender. Cut each squash in half, sprinkle with chopped parsley, and serve. Makes 8 to 10 servings.
8. Extra stuffing can be put into a covered casserole dish and baked at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 30 minutes.

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ONION AFICIONADOS WEEP

Includes Recipe Below

Onion lovers throughout the world are weeping, and they simply can't help it! What is this phenomenon all about, you wonder? It boils down to a few biting facts recognizing that onions, a mere vegetable, have that certain power to bring us to tears.

Onions contain complex sulphur compounds. When you cut into an onion, two chemical reactions take place. First, when a knife cuts through the cells of an onion, its enzymes release a strong odor. Second, the onion releases allicin, a volatile sulfur gas that irritates the eyes and sends one rushing for a tissue.

Historically, the onion is nothing to cry about. Over many centuries it occupied an exalted position as a work of art as well as a food. Not many people today would burst into tears if they were asked to consider the onion as a work of art, but they might do so if they had to eat one raw.

Eaten and cultivated since prehistoric times, onions were mentioned in first dynasty of ancient Egypt, circa 3200 BCE, and have appeared in tomb paintings, inscriptions and documents from that time on. Some paintings depict onions heaped onto banquet tables, both the robust bulb onions as well as scallions.

Of all foods in the plant kingdom, onions set the record for the most frequent appearance in ancient Egyptian art. It certainly is no wonder since they were the staple food of the poor along with bread and beer. Onions often appeared in Egyptian art as a sacrifice that appeared on their altars.

Strange as it seems today, in ancient Egypt a basket of onions was considered a very respectable funeral offering, rating only second to the highly revered basket of bread.

Archeologists discovered small onions in the eye sockets in the mummy of King Ramses IV who

died in 1160 BCE. To the Egyptians, the onion, with its concentric layers, represented eternal life and was buried with each of their Pharaohs.

The origin of the name "onion" comes from the classical period when it was given the Latin name *unio* that means oneness or unity, or a kind of single onion. The French call it *oignon*. Martin Elcort in his book *The Secret Life of Food* writes, "The word (onion) was created by adding the onion-shaped letter o to the word union, yielding a new spelling *ounion*. The letter u was later dropped to create the modern spelling. A union is something that is indivisible and which, if taken apart, is destroyed in the process, like an onion."

Wild onions presently grow in Central Asia where the whole family of onions is said to have originated, though some say it was in the area of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Those familiar looking, round, mature bulbs are in the *Allium cepa* genus that is part of the lily family. There are 325 species of onions, 70 of which grow in North America. The grand allium family includes onions, shallots, green onions (often called scallions), chives, leeks, and garlic.



Food historians shake their heads regarding the exact origin of the onion. Some varieties of onions have been given popular names like Egyptian onions or Welsh onions with no evidence that they actually grew in those countries. For instance, the Welsh onion, *A. fistulosum*, is considered quite primitive in that it has never developed a bulb, but rather resembles a scallion with a slightly thickened stem. The Welsh were not inclined to cultivate them on any large scale, and they weren't even introduced into the country until 1629.

More confusing is the Egyptian onion, a tree onion that was actually unknown in Egypt. A specimen of this unique onion variety came to the attention of Frenchman Jacques Dalechamp, in his country in 1587. The Egyptian onion, never having developed a substantial bulb, did not become popular because it has difficulty developing seeds to reproduce itself. This variety was officially introduced into Great Britain in 1820 from Canada. Historians have been puzzled to see the tree onion, along with the Welsh onion, growing wild in North America.

In their immature state scallions are called spring onions in Britain, though spring onions and scallions are terms sometimes used interchangeably. This causes some confusion. In the southern United States scallions are called green shallots.

The Sumerians of Mesopotamia, the first to establish a written language, developed cuneiform inscriptions. Archeologists found one of their inscriptions dating back to 2400 BCE that read, "The oxen of the gods plowed the city governor's onion patches. The onion and cucumber patches of the city governor were located in the gods' best fields." The inscription actually referred to the property of the temple as the "gods' best fields" that were being misused as an onion patch by the city governors.

One cannot deny the power of the onion on the olfactory senses. The rich found the odor downright disgusting. In spite of their negative attitudes, though, this "odorous" vegetable was cultivated in the gardens of the ancient kings from 2100 BCE to 716 BCE from Ur to Babylon.

From ancient history up to the 19th century, onions were relegated as the food for the poor. The Code of Hammurabi, known as the ancient law of Mesopotamia, shows great concern for the

needy by providing them a monthly ration of bread and onions, a ration that comprised the mainstay of the peasant diet. As disagreeable as the onion was to the aristocrats, the peasants devoured them completely raw.

Apparently onions took on dual status in the attitudes in the ancient world. In Egypt they were highly revered by the poor and eaten extensively along with bread and beer. A small sect of Egyptian priests, however, were forbidden to eat them. Historians are unsure of the reason for this taboo. On the other hand, onions may have been reviled by those in high positions. In India Brahmins and Jains are also forbidden to eat onions, even today. Presently in France there is a sect with only a few thousand followers who revere the onion for its immortality and consider it divine.

By 500 BCE onions were a common peasant food in Greece. Though the variety of vegetables eaten by the ancient Greeks was limited to onions, garlic, peas, cabbage and lentils because most were expensive, the onion, however, was the exception. Because it grew easily and extensively, the poor could afford onions as a staple.

Onions played a role during the period Alexander the Great was leading his armies in conquest of other lands. It was believed that if one ate strong foods, one would become strong. Alexander fed his men onions believing they would increase their strength and courage.

In ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome the common folk relished their onions and even ate them raw. We're all familiar with onion breath. Perhaps that is why the upper classes, such as the Brahmins of India, turned up their noses. Apicius, Imperial Rome's first cookbook author, never featured onions in his cuisine of the wealthy but only used them as flavorings in sauces or to enhance a mixed dish or a dressing. The common folk frequently started their day with a hearty serving of raw onions on bread, a recurring theme throughout the peasant world, and one abhorred by the upper classes.

In Pompeii those "lowly vendors" who sold onions were rejected from the guild of fruit and vegetable vendors, and had to form their own guild. In the brothels of Pompeii, however, onions were held in high regard. Archeologists discovered a basket of overcooked onions in the ruins of one of the city's best-loved brothels where the elite co-mingled with the onioneaters, and, no doubt, enjoyed a few raw slices themselves.

By the first century, Rome developed a healthy respect for onions, which were suspended from numerous strings that hung from the ceiling of the Trajan market. It was during the Middle Ages, that the onion finally achieved status, where the low-born as well as aristocracy relished them equally. In fact, they were so appreciated that Emperor Charlemagne ordered onions to be planted in his royal garden, they were written into the French feudal deeds, and strings of onions were even accepted as payment for the use of land.

On his second to sailing to Haiti during the period of 1493 to 1494, Columbus brought the varieties of the cultivated onion to the New World. Though there were some native wild onions growing in America, they didn't compare to the intense flavor of the new variety from Europe. The Indians quickly adopted these new onions with great enthusiasm, especially the garlic.

Not so insignificant after all, America's native tree onions and nodding onions provided sustenance to Pere Marquette, a French Jesuit missionary and explorer, in 1624 when starvation threatened during his explorations from Green Bay, Wisconsin, to Lake Michigan's southern shore. The city

of Chicago, a region that grew wild onions in abundance, received its name from the Indian word that described the odor of onions.



Had it not been for onions, the civil war might have turned out differently. General Ulysses S. Grant, who headed the Union forces, sent a note to the War Department that read, "I will not move my troops without onions." He promptly received three cartloads. Grant also employed the juice of onions medicinally as a wound healer.

American cowboys favored another native onion, the prairie onion, that they called skunk egg. No doubt it earned this descriptive name because of its powerful odor. Odor aside, the onion lends exceptional flavor to any raw or cooked dish and was always included in a favorite cowboy plat du jour called son-of-a-bitch stew.

What Famous Writers Have to Say about Onions

Onions certainly have stirred writers, chefs, and gourmets to expound on their good as well as questionable and often challenging qualities. Robert J. Courtine, a French gourmet, says, "The onion is the truffle of the poor."

French writer Raymond Dumay affectionately expresses his thought on the onion in this way, "Garlic is peasant, rustic; the onion is urban. The onion brings to the kitchens of the cities a little of the countryside . . . the onion offers always, and especially in winter, a little of the springtime of the soil, preserved in its bulb."

Juvenal, a Roman satirist, created this poem about the Egyptians:

How Egypt, mad with superstition grown,
Makes gods of monsters but too well is known.
'Tis moral sin an Onion to devour,
Each clove of garlic hath a sacred power,
Religious nation sure, and best abodes,
When every garden is o'errun with gods!

Folklore

The pungent odor and awesome strength of the onion was a mystery to ancient man. An old Turkish legend explains it rather profoundly. It tells that when Satan was thrown out of heaven, garlic sprouted where he first placed his left foot, and onions grew where he placed his right foot.

When plague raged throughout Eastern Europe, people thought it was caused by evil spirits, and they used onions and garlic as good luck charms to chase off those spirits.

People hung strands of onions and garlic from their doorways, their windows, and even around their necks to keep the vampires away.

Some cultures thought of the onion family as having sexual powers. Even today, a Middle Eastern bridegroom wears a clove of garlic in his lapel to assure himself of a successful wedding night.

Medicinal Uses

In sixth century India onions were used as a diuretic. They were also considered beneficial for the

heart, the eyes, and the joints.

During Colonial times in the U.S., a slice or two of wild onions was thought to be a cure for the measles.

In Chinese medicine, globe onions (*allium cepa*) are said to calm the liver, moisten the intestines, and benefit the lungs. Raw onions are prescribed for constipation, for lowering high blood pressure, and for healing wounds or ulcers of the skin. Spring onions, or scallions (*allium fistulosum*), are used to induce sweating. One application for the common cold is to take 20 spring onions and simmer them with rice to make porridge. Add a little vinegar and eat while it is warm. Then wrap yourself up in blankets to induce sweating.

Some health studies have shown raw onions to be effective in lowering overall cholesterol while raising HDLs, the good cholesterol. Additionally, onions kill infectious bacteria, help to control blood sugar, aid in dissolving blood clots, and help to prevent cancer.

At the University of California at Berkeley, researchers found that yellow and red onions, along with shallots, contain quercetin, a powerful antioxidant that acts as an anti-cancer agent to block the formation of cancer cells. One and one-half to three and one-half ounces of raw onions eaten regularly contain enough quercetin to offer cancer protection. White onions lack this antioxidant.

Researcher Terrance Leighton, Ph.D. of the University of California at Berkeley also learned that quercetin deactivates the growth of estrogen-sensitive cells often found to cause breast cancer.

Asthma sufferers may also benefit from a hearty dose of onions. Researchers discovered a sulfur compound contained in onions that can prevent the biochemical chain reaction that leads to asthma attacks.

Selenium, a trace mineral found in onions and garlic, has also demonstrated anti-cancer abilities.

Know Your Onions

"Know your onions" was a term coined in the 1920s to indicate that the many varieties of onions that were cultivated over the years never acquired standardized names from one locale to another. Knowing your onions meant becoming familiar with those varieties that were grown and sold in the area where you live. In later years "knowing your onions" was an idiomatic expression used to describe a thorough knowledge of a subject.



Onions are grown in practically every one of the United States, with varieties developed specifically for each climate. There is hardly a country in the world that doesn't grow multiple varieties of the *allium* family, since wild varieties existed from prehistoric times. Today onions are bred to adapt well to their different climatic conditions.

Some varieties were quite small like pickling onions that were about one-half inch in diameter, while others became giants. One of the largest onions ever grown appeared in Scotland and weighed in at 6 1/2 pounds.

Onions come in a variety of colors--white, brown, yellow, and red (or purple), while flavors range from mild and sweet to strong and biting. Nearly all onions will make you cry when you cut

them--the stronger they are, the more tears you will shed.

Onion breeders closely studied the onion's sulfur compounds, resulting over time in the development of several varieties of sweet onions that were high in water and sugar content. Sweet onions are mostly grown in California and Texas, with Georgia, New Mexico, Washington, and Arizona producing them in smaller quantities.

Mild sweet onions include the following varieties:

Spanish onions: known for their mild and delicately sweet flavor.

Bermuda onions: another category of mild onions that come in red, white, or yellow.

Walla-Walla Sweet onions: originally came from Corsica at the beginning of the 20th century and arrived in Walla-Walla, Washington where they are grown today.

Texas Sweets 1015: available mid spring through early summer.

Among the hybrid sweet varieties are Vidalia which come from Vidalia, Georgia and Maui onions that come from the island of Maui in Hawaii where the volcanic soil contributed to their sweetness.

Uses in Foods

Though the onion has not yet distinguished itself in American cuisine, it certainly has in other countries. The British love their stuffed onions. The French created onion soup, a universal favorite. The gourmet onion tart developed in Alsace, a northeastern region of France. Bhaji, a flavorful onion fritter, comes from India. A soubise an onion sauce or puree, also came from the cuisine of France and frequently accompanied lamb or mutton dishes.

Onion-skins are usually considered the discards of the vegetable, but not always. Some people have discovered their powerful ability to lend a rich golden color to soups and to dye yarn and fabric. The Greeks traditionally use red onion-skins to dye their Easter eggs a bright pinkish red.

Nutritional Benefits

If you're counting calories, you might want to take advantage of the low-calorie content of sweet raw onions. With 1/2-cup of chopped raw onions, you'll tally up a mere 30 calories. If you cook those same onions, you're up to a only 46 calories.

On the protein scene, 1/2-cup of cooked onions touts 1.4 gms, while the raw have .9 gms. The fat content of this quantity barely registers at .2 gm for cooked onions, and .1 gm for raw.

The folic acid content offers a surprising 15.8 mcg for the cooked, and 15.2 mcg for raw.

Both raw and cooked onions have trace amounts of B vitamins, iron, and zinc but stand out with potassium, magnesium, and calcium. While potassium registers 174.3 mg for 1/2-cup cooked onions, raw onions come in at 125.6 mg. Vitamin C, though not record-breaking, delivers 5.5 mg and 5.1 mg respectively.

Scallions pack a powerful punch of vitamin A with 193 IU for 1/2 C. raw with their tops. Folic acid registers 32.0 mcg, and vitamin C offers 9.4 mg.

Be sure to include scallions in your salads frequently for their high calcium, potassium, and magnesium scores.

And don't forget the powerful antioxidants delivered by onions. Quercetin has anti-cancer agents.

Purchasing

In general, white onions are stronger flavored than yellow onions, though depending on where they were grown, their flavor can vary with the season and from region to region.

To avoid a bitter flavor never, never purchase onions that have begun to sprout greens from their stem portion. This indicates they are old. If you see sprouts forming in your onions stored at home, simply snip them off and use them like chives.



Sweet Onions: Plan to eat these raw to take advantage of their superb flavor. Grown in the fall and winter, sweet onions come to market in the spring and summer. Look for the Texas Sweets and Bermudas during this season. Because sweet onions have a high moisture and high sugar content, they don't store for long periods. It's best to purchase them in small quantities and use them quickly, within a week or two at most. Some special sweet varieties, like the Maui onions, are available in the supermarkets almost year round, but you'll notice they are quite pricey.

Storage Onions: Ideal for longer cooking dishes, these onions add depth and flavor to soups, stews, and casseroles. Their assertive flavors become sweeter during cooking. The stronger flavored varieties earned the term "storage onion" because they store well and keep for weeks in the supermarket due to their low moisture content. Grown in the northern areas of the U.S., they are harvested in the late summer and early fall. They go through a curing period during which they dry out before their long storage of several months. These are available as yellow, brown, or white onions from late fall through early spring, with another crop entering the market from March through September.

Pearl Onions: Only one-inch in diameter, these little pearls possess a delicate sweetness and are available year round.

Shallots: This mild onion variety is considered the gourmet of the allium family with a flavor that has qualities of both garlic and onions. Shallots are somewhat elongated, about 1 1/2 to 2-inches in length and about the same in diameter. From its garlic relatives it has developed its unique appearance of two to four individual cloves covered in a golden brown skin with just a hint of garlic flavor.

Storage

Onions should not be store in the refrigerator because of its high moisture atmosphere, Have you noticed that some onions seem to keep for weeks, while others become soft and spoiled rather quickly? The secret is in the moisture content. A firm dry onion will keep considerable longer than the sweet ones that seem soft and moist at the outset.

Onions keep best in a cool, dry place, perhaps a pantry or a low cupboard away from excessive heat or light. Plenty of air circulation is beneficial to prevent spoilage. Avoid storing them under a sink where excessive dampness will hasten their demise. It's common practice to store onions and

potatoes together but not an ideal one. Potatoes have a great deal of moisture and give off a gas that causes onions to spoil more quickly. Stored carefully, onions can keep for several weeks.

Peeling Without Tears

Many a cook has devised a favorite method for avoiding those inevitable tears while peeling onions, everything from holding a match between the teeth, to peeling and chopping the onions under running water. While peeling them under running water actually does wash away the irritating allicin, it may not always be convenient.

A method that does work successfully is to plan ahead and put the onion in the refrigerator until it is quite cold. Seems it has a chilling effect on the volatile sulfur oils. Voila! No tears!

Raw

Like the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, we enjoy the delightful pungence of raw sweet onions, too.

How delightful is the addition of half-moon slices of sweet onions to a salad of crisp mixed greens!

Raw, dehydrated bread would taste even better with a slice of sweet raw onion perched on top.

Add raw onions to a raw blended soup to lend a robust flavor.

Chopped raw onions or sliced scallions make an ideal garnish for raw soups, salads, dips, and pates.

Another easy garnish is to cut off the root end of a scallion, and make several cuts downward, about one and one-half-inches long, through the root end in crisscross fashion to make a scallion flower. You can cut the flower off the green portion. A grouping of these can add flair to any presentation.

Make a chop salad with scallions or onions, peppers, celery, cucumbers, radishes, cabbage, jicama, carrots, and any other favorites you want to include. Squeeze some fresh lime juice over the salad and toss with a little salt and pepper for a delicious and crunchable experience.

Add a bunch of scallions to a raw vegetable appetizer tray.

Why not pickle a few scallions. Wash them thoroughly, cut off the root end, and leave some of the green portion on, about an inch. Pack them into a pint-sized jar along with a tablespoon of pickling spices. Then fill the jar with two parts apple cider vinegar to one part water. Cover the jar with a tight-fitting lid and store them in a dark cupboard for a month and prepare to enjoy a rare treat

Roasting

Slice onions about 1/4-inch thick and spread them out on a lightly oiled a baking pan. Roast them at 375 to 400 for about 25 to 35 minutes until they turn golden brown, turning them with a spatula every 10 to 15 minutes. Season if desired.

An enhanced version of roasted onions includes a light sprinkling of salt, a hint of dry red wine, and a few dashes of balsamic vinegar, taking care not to create too much liquid. Turn them frequently during roasting.

Scallions develop a succulent sweetness during the roasting process and can be served as an appetizer or a side dish. Wash them and discard any discolored areas. Toss them in a little extra virgin olive oil, lay them on a lightly oiled baking pan, and roast at 375 for about 15 to 20 minutes, turning them frequently with a spatula. To avoid drying them out, you can cover them with aluminum foil, dull side up.

Stir Fried

Much like sautéing, stir-frying can be done with a little oil or vegetable broth if one is avoiding the addition of fats. Slice or dice the onions, and add them to a frying pan. Stir them frequently using high heat if you plan to cook them just until softened. If you are browning the onions, lower the heat to medium or medium high, and cook for 25 to 35 minutes, stirring often and adding small amounts of liquid as needed to avoid burning. Your favorite seasonings can be added at the end to brighten the flavors.

Braising

This method is ideal for pearl onions. Prepare the onions by washing them thoroughly but don't peel them. Put them into a saucepan and barely cover them with a small amount of water or vegetable broth. Cover the pot and bring them to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and simmer about 20 to 25 minutes until tender. Cool slightly, then slip off the peels.

Creamed onions can be a rich accompaniment to almost any meal. While the pearl onions are braising, prepare a vegan cream sauce. Into a 2-quart saucepan, add 2 cups of soy milk, 1 or 2 teaspoons of nutritional yeast, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil. Prepare a thin paste of 2 T. each cornstarch and water, and add to the bubbling sauce a little at a time until thickened to desired consistency. Add onions and simmer 5 minutes. Serve and enjoy.

Here's a vegan approach to a classic soup that provides a satisfying warm-up when the weather turns chilly.

FRENCH ONION SOUP

4 lbs. (2 kilos) or 6 medium-large brown onions

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1/2 C. (118 ml) water

4 cloves garlic, crushed

8 C. (1.9 liters) water

1/2 C. (118 ml) tamari

3/4 t. salt

2 1/2 t. Spike seasoning

2 T. dry red wine

3 cloves garlic, cut in half

6 to 8 slices whole grain bread

6 to 8 vegan jack or mozzarella cheese slices or 2 C. (480 ml) shredded

1. Slice onions thinly, then cut slices in half.

2. Combine onions, olive oil, and water in a large deep skillet. Sauté onions over high heat, stirring them frequently, for about 25 minutes. Turn heat down slightly, and continue cooking until well browned, about 20 minutes longer. Stir frequently and watch carefully to avoid burning onions.
3. Transfer onions to a 10 to 12-quart (10 to 12-liter) stockpot, and add garlic and water. Cover pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium and simmer about 20 minutes.
4. Add tamari, salt, Spike, and wine. Simmer about 5 minutes to blend flavors.
5. To serve, rub each bread slice with a half-piece of garlic and toast until bread is firm. Ladle soup into ceramic or glass bowls (not plastic), and float bread on top of each bowl.
6. Lay or sprinkle cheese on top of bread, and place bowls under the broiler until cheese melts. Place each bowl on a serving plate and serve immediately. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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OPEN SESAME!

Sesame Seeds at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Medical Benefits	Recipe
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	

Scheherazade was the first person to give the sesame superhuman powers when she held her Arabian caliph spellbound for one thousand and one nights with her tales of intrigue and adventure. Because sesame pods readily burst open at the slightest touch when they are ripe, Scheherazade provided Ali Baba with the magic words, "Open Sesame" to instantly open the cave, a robber's den, in her exciting story about "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves."

History

Sesame seeds are thought to be one of the oldest condiments, and so appealing that they became an integral part of the varied cuisines throughout the Middle East where they were native. One taste of the sweet, delectable *Halvah*, a sesame and honey confection that originated in Turkey, and you'll easily understand the allure that sesame seeds held to cultures of the ancient Middle East. The Turks were pressing sesame seeds and using sesame oil about 900 BCE.

Before sesame seeds were appreciated for their ability to add rich nutty flavor or to garnish foods, they were used only for oil or wine. The Assyrians claim to hold the earliest records for writing, having left their stone tablets as evidence. One of the tablets describes a legend about the Assyrian gods who drank sesame wine one night, then created the earth the following day.

Archeological excavations throughout the Middle East revealed the use of sesame oil dating back to 3000 BCE, well before the time of Christ. Persia and India were also cultivating this tiny treasure for its oil.

Sesame oil was the ideal base for making exotic perfumes, a practice that dates back to the

Babylonians circa 2100 to 689 BCE. The Babylonians also used the oil for cooking, sesame cakes, and medicine. They, too, made wine from sesame and even perfected a brandy employing sesame seeds. Medicinally, sesame oil played an important role as an antidote to the bite of the spotted lizard.

The Chinese used the oil not only as a light source but also to create soot from which they made their superior stick ink over 5,000 years ago. Ancient Chinese calligraphic works of art using stick ink made from sesame oil may still be in existence in museums.

Palace records of Egypt's King Nebuchadnezzar, 6th century BCE, were carefully kept on clay tablets. One of the entries mentions a purchase of sesame oil. Records show that the Egyptians prescribed the sesame as medicine about 1500 BCE and used the oil as ceremonial purification. Historians such as 4th century Theophrastus, mention that sesame seeds were cultivated in Egypt. During that same period, Africa, too, cultivated the sesame seed in Ethiopia, the Sudan, and what was once Tanganyika.



We often hear the expression "nothing new under the sun," referring to what we tend to recognize as a new idea, only to discover that it's been done long before. Sprinkling sesame seeds on breads before baking them probably feels like a 20th century culinary innovation, but history reveals that it's not. The ancient tombs of important Egyptian nobles were decorated with colorful paintings. One tomb, dating back 4,000 years, contains a scene of a baker sprinkling sesame seeds into his dough. Dioscorides, a 1st century CE historian, tells us the Sicilian bakers were eagerly sprinkling sesame seeds on their breads centuries ago.

The Europeans encountered the sesame seeds when they were imported from India during the 1st century CE. Even the Venetian traveler, Marco Polo, was taken by the outstanding flavor of sesame oil that he tasted in Abyssinia, proclaiming it the best he had ever tasted.

Naming Sesame

Sesame . . . that engaging, mellifluous word evolved from the Arabic simsim, the Coptic semsem, and the Egyptian semsent. A German Egyptologist, named Ebers, discovered a papyrus scroll 65 feet long that contained a listing of ancient herbs and spices, among them was semsent. *Cookery and Dining in Imperial Rome*, by Apicius, cookbook author of the Roman era, refers to semsent in his book. The Romans enjoyed ground sesame seeds that they mixed with cumin to make a tasty spread for their bread

Benniseeds or benne seeds, as sesame seeds were called in the Bantu dialect, arrived in the United States with the West African slaves who brought only a few precious possessions with them. During the 17th and 18th centuries slave traders were running slave ships to the Southern States and the Caribbean. In Charleston, North Carolina and New Orleans, Louisiana, benniseeds were considered good luck and incorporated into many dishes that are still used in Southern cooking.

During the 1930s, the major vegetable oil used by Americans was sesame oil. At that time the United States was importing 58,000,000 pounds of sesame seeds a year mostly for producing oil.

Two events combined to shift the importing of these huge quantities of sesame seeds to a diminished 12 million pounds by the early 1950s: World War II and the development of inexpensive soybean and cottonseed oils.

A 1956 Pillsbury Bake-off contest winner changed the course of the downward spiraling sesame seed. The Washington, D.C. homemaker created an Open Sesame Pie and started a frenzy with commercial bakers sprinkling the tasty little seeds on all sorts of breads and crackers. It was the hamburger bun, however, that put sesame seeds back into the spotlight. Today, it's difficult to find hamburger buns without sesame seeds.

Traditional Uses:

"The butter of the Middle East," *tahini*, a smooth, creamy paste made of toasted, ground hulled sesame seeds, is a centuries-old traditional ingredient in Middle Eastern cooking. *Hummos*, a Middle Eastern appetizer that has become a universal favorite is made of ground chickpeas, garlic, lemon juice, salt, and tahini. *Baba ghanoush*, another favorite appetizer known throughout the Middle East, has a base of roasted eggplant seasoned with tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and salt. These sesame-based dishes have been handed down from generation to generation for centuries.

In the ancient Arab world, preparations for a caravan trip meant preparing provisions that would not only sustain them through the hot, dry desert but would offer nourishment that pleased them as well. Open sesame! They began with a pound of dry breadcrumbs, kneaded them into three-quarters of a pound each of pitted dates, almonds, and pistachios, and added a few spoonful of sesame oil to moisten the mixture. Then they formed the mixture into balls and rolled them in a coating of sesame seeds. This handy old recipe makes ideal present-day backpacking food as well.

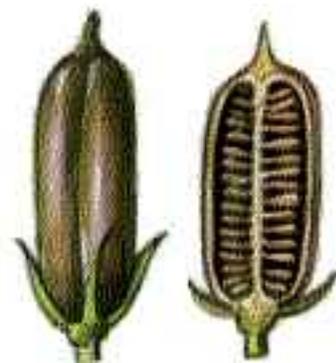
In addition to its popular use as oil for salads or cooking, sesame oil is used in producing margarine, soap making, pharmaceuticals, paints, and lubricants. In the cosmetic field, sesame oil is used as a base in developing perfumes.

After the sesame oil is pressed out of the seed, the resulting residue is referred to as a seed cake that is very high in protein. A portion of this nutritious seed cake is used as animal feed, while the remainder is ground into sesame flour and added to health foods.

Southern Indian cuisine depends on sesame oil for cooking, while in Japan it was the only cooking oil until quite recently. Today sesame oil is often combined with bland, less expensive oils.

The sesame seed plays a most important role in shojin-ryori, vegetarian cooking in the Japanese Buddhist monasteries. There the sesame seeds are almost always toasted before using as a sprinkle over rice dishes.

Gomashio, a seasoning made of crushed sesame seeds and salt, is frequently served at the table in Japanese homes to be added as enhancement to the dishes served. If you are an aficionado of Japanese cuisine, you've probably encountered the delightful sesame flavor in traditional dipping sauces served in their restaurants



Used liberally in Chinese cooking, sesame oil is added to many dishes as a seasoning just before serving to benefit fully from its unique fragrance. Chinese confectioners have long favored the use of sesame seeds as a coating on their deep-fried sweets, still available in Oriental bakeries today. Korean cuisine combines sesame, garlic, and pimiento as a triad in many of their traditional dishes.

Growing

Sesamum indicum, sesame's Latin name, indicum meaning that it comes from India, likes hot climates and is native to Africa, Indonesia, India, and Afghanistan. The sesame plant is an annual herb of the *Pedaliaceae* family. Its exact origins are unknown, though some claim it was the East Indies where it is also native. Now it is found growing in most tropical, subtropical, and southern temperate areas of the world.

Sesame seeds grow on a plant that has a hairy single stalk, though some do have branches. The average plant grows two to four feet high, some even up to 9 feet in height. The plant blossoms with white, pink or purplish flowers that develop into elongated pods containing numerous seeds stacked horizontally, one on top of the other, within the pod. The pear-shaped seed itself is encased in a fibrous hull that offers a range of color from light tan to red, brown, and even black. Hulled seeds, those with the hulls removed, are an ivory white.

Those unfamiliar with sesame seeds are surprised that such a tiny, flat seed, only 1/8 inch in length and 1/20th of an inch thick, can be endowed with such depth of flavor. In its raw form, it is frequently described as delicately sweet and nutty. When toasted it takes on the flavor of roasted peanuts with unique overtones.

In harvesting the sesame seeds, first the plant stalks are cut and stacked vertically. Each stalk is then shaken over a cloth to catch the seeds that fly out from the mature pods.

Harvesting was a laborious task that was mostly done by hand. Since the mature seedpods are quite fragile and will burst open easily, scattering the seeds to the ground, harvesting could not be done by machine until recently. In the middle of the 20th century, horticulturists developed a hybrid variety of sesame that does not scatter, and now some of the harvesting is a machine process, though too costly to be widely used.

Sesame seeds tend to be a commercial crop where labor is inexpensive and much of the harvesting is still done by hand. Most of today's commercially produced sesame seeds are grown throughout Central America, Mexico, and the People's Republic of China, with India and Africa a close second.

In the United States, sesame seeds are grown in Arizona and Texas. For the U.S. to become a major producer, less fragile varieties of sesame seeds will have to be developed on a large scale so machine harvesting can keep the prices competitive with the present market.

Health Benefits

Sesame oil rubbed on the skin may soothe a minor burn or sunburn as well as help in the healing process.

It's not unusual to encounter fantastic claims attributed to a single food. Sesame seed oil is said to remove wrinkles when applied to the skin in a facial massage. If this news gets out, there won't be a bottle left on the grocery shelves!

Eat some sesame seeds to relieve constipation and to remove worms from the intestinal tract. They're an aid to digestion, stimulate blood circulation, and benefit the nervous system. Sesame oil makes ideal massage oil because of its excellent emollient properties.

Applied topically, sesame oil is thought to aid in healing chronic diseases of the skin. With its vitamin E content, it's also a benefit to the heart and nervous system.

Nutrition

Sesame seeds are 25 percent protein and are especially rich in methionine and tryptophan, often lacking in adequate quantities in many plant proteins. One ounce of decorticated or hulled seeds contains 6 grams of protein, 3.7 grams of fiber, and 14 grams of total fat. When toasted they lose nutrients, scoring 4.8 grams of protein, gaining a little fiber at 4.8 grams, and packing 13.6 grams of total fat.

The fat in sesame seeds is 38% monounsaturated, and 44% polyunsaturated which equals 82% unsaturated fatty acids.

Natural sesame seeds (unhulled) contain 5 grams of protein per ounce, 3.1 grams fiber, and 14 grams of total fat. When toasted they offer 4.8 grams of protein, 4.0 grams fiber, and 13.8 grams of total fat.

Because sesame seeds are a plant food, there's no need to worry about cholesterol. There simply isn't any to be found within the seeds or the oil.

Tahini or sesame seed paste, contains 2.9 grams of protein per tablespoon, .9 grams of fiber, and 8.1 grams of total fat. Tahini also contains the B vitamins, including 16 mcg of folic acid. That same tablespoon contains 153.6 mg calcium and 3.07 mg iron. Additional minerals include 57.9 mg magnesium and 93.12 mg potassium.

There is often concern that vegans do not get a sufficient amount of zinc in their diet. Include sesame tahini in your diet often and reap the benefit of plenty of zinc with one tablespoon supplying 1.17 mg.

Sesame oils, whether refined or unrefined, all contain about 14 grams of total fat per tablespoon. Sesame seeds are 44 to 60 % oil. The seeds are prone to rancidity, but the oil is resistant to oxidation, meaning that it is not prone to rancidity because of sesamol, a natural preservative within the oil. Sesame oil is polyunsaturated and high in oleic and linoleic fatty acids that are rich in omega 6.

Natural sesame seeds, those that are unhulled, are high in calcium. One tablespoon provides 87.8 mg while the hulled variety offers only 10.5 mg for that same tablespoon. Comparing sesame seeds to milk turned up some surprising figures in the calcium count. One cup of natural sesame seeds had 1404.0 mg of calcium, while one cup of non-fat milk provided 316.3 mg. and one cup of whole milk contained 291 mg of calcium.

Both natural and hulled sesame seeds contain healthy amounts of the B vitamins riboflavin, thiamine, and niacin. With natural seeds scoring 8.7 mcg of folic acid for 1 tablespoon and plenty of vitamin B6, you can count on sesame seeds for excellent nourishment.

Let's look at some of the mineral values of the sesame seed. One tablespoon of hulled seeds contains .62 mg of iron, 27.73 mg of magnesium, 32.53 mg potassium, and .82 mg of zinc. Figures for the natural, unhulled, are slightly higher. Sesame seeds also contain healthy amounts of phosphorous. If you're lacking iron, turn to the sesame seed. Its iron content is equal to that of

liver.

Like all seeds, natural unhulled sesame seeds are living foods capable of producing generation after generation through the process of sprouting. They are nutrient dense in order to trigger the germination process and provide nourishment to the tiny plants as they grow from sprout to maturity.

Nutrients from the sesame seed are best absorbed in the form of sesame oil, tahini or sesame butter. The whole seeds do not break down readily and release all their nutrients.

Purchasing and Storing

Sesame butter, made of ground sesame seeds, is similar to tahini, only thicker, with a consistency similar to peanut butter. Health food markets would be the best place to purchase this specialty.

Sesame seeds are available in hulled and unhulled form. In the United States, the hulled sesame seeds appear as a traditional topping on hamburger buns. The unhulled seeds, also referred to as "natural," are used on crackers, bread sticks, and Italian breads because they have the ability to adhere better.

There are distinct advantages to purchasing the "natural" sesame seeds, those that are unhulled. The hulls act as a protective coating to prevent rancidity and keep the oil more stable. You can recognize natural sesame seeds by their mottled beige coloring. Because they require no processing, these seeds are priced a bit more reasonably. The health food market will most likely have these available.

Most of the sesame seeds sold in the United States are already hulled and used on baked products. Tahini or sesame seed paste is also made from hulled sesame seeds, some of which are toasted and some untoasted or "raw." Sesame aficionados feel that toasting enriches the flavor but those who advocate eating nuts and seeds raw say that heating them destroys valuable enzymes. Both are available in health food markets.

In Chinese and Japanese cuisine, black sesame seeds are prized for their flavor, though most people don't recognize any flavor difference from the ivory seeds. Black sesame seeds do add a dramatic garnish when sprinkled over foods just before serving. You can find them in Asian markets and frequently in the Asian section of large grocery stores.



Sesame oil comes in two varieties. One is cold-pressed with a color that is golden and flavor that leans toward bland. The other is the Asian variety made from roasted sesame seeds, darker in color with intense flavor.

To prevent sesame seeds from becoming rancid, it's best to store them in the refrigerator. They can also be frozen for longer storage. Sesame oil has a long shelf life and is resistant to rancidity. However, as with any oil, it's always safest to buy it in small quantities and use it within two months to preserve its

flavor.

Cooking

TO TOAST SESAME SEEDS:

Put them in an ungreased frying pan and stir over medium-high heat for a minute or two until they become lightly browned. Remove them immediately from the heat and pour them into a dish to avoid residual heat burning them.

As an alternative, you can also put the seeds on a shallow, ungreased pan and toast them in a 350 oven for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring a couple of times.

FRYING:

Because sesame oil is expensive compared to other cooking oils, you can sauté or stir fry your vegetable dishes with a peanut or safflower oil and just add a small amount of sesame oil at the end of the cooking as a flavoring agent.

When frying with sesame oil, cook foods quickly. Be cautious when cooking with the oil at high heat for prolonged periods. There is a tendency for sesame oil to release unpleasant odors.

FLAVORING:

Small amounts of sesame oil added at the end of cooking give special zest to sauces and stir-fries. Salads, too, take on a special life with a touch of sesame oil. It's important to note, however, that sesame oil is anything but bland. Its flavor and aroma is distinctly Asian, and anything seasoned with it will take on a hint of the Orient.

AS A SPRINKLE: Sprinkle toasted or untoasted sesame seeds over vegetables, noodles, eggplant dishes, stir fries, bread doughs and cookies before baking, and over fruit and nut confections. You can also coat confections, or bread sticks by rolling them in toasted sesame seeds before baking.

INCORPORATE:

To create dishes with a rich nutty flavor, include toasted sesame seeds in cookie doughs, pie pastry, yeast breads, and confections. Blend them into tofu cream cheese or soy mayonnaise to make a nutty spread for sandwiches.

SESAME SEED PASTE (TAHINI):

The rich nutty flavor of tahini, the peanut butter of the Middle East, blends with almost any vegetable. Refer to the Recipe Index for the Tahini Falafel Sauce and enjoy it as a dipping sauce for cooked artichokes. The same recipe makes an ideal salad dressing when mixed with a little soy sauce and a sprinkle of water to thin it. And, of course, enjoy the Tahini Falafel Sauce spooned over a tasty falafel (refer to the Recipe Index for easy Homemade Falafel.)

You can enjoy the richness of tahini by simply spreading it on toast and eating it as is or sprinkle a pinch or two of evaporated cane juice over the top.

There's nothing quite like a party dip to bring people together over the communal bowl. It's a bonus when the dip is nutritious and flavorful as well. Here's an easy-to-prepare starter that features the sesame seed at its best.

SESAME, SPINACH, & ARTICHOKE DIP

1 bunch of fresh spinach

1 14.75-oz. (396 g) jar or can water-packed artichoke hearts, drained

2 sprigs fresh mint, leaves only

1/4 C. (60 ml) tahini, (sesame seed paste)

Juice of 1/2 lime

1/2 t. ground cumin

3/4 t. salt

1 T. nutritional yeast

1 t. toasted sesame seeds

Dash or two of paprika

1. Remove stems from spinach, wash thoroughly, and spin dry in a salad spinner. Put spinach leaves into the food processor with the steel blade, and pulse chop until finely chopped.
2. Add artichoke hearts, mint leaves, tahini, lime juice, cumin, salt, and nutritional yeast, and process to an almost smooth puree.
3. Transfer to a serving bowl and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and a dash of paprika. Serve with toasted pita wedges. Makes 1 3/4 cups.

Click here for a recipe for [Tahini Falafel Sauce](#).

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GOING BANANAS!

Bananas at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Medical Benefits	Recipes
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	

Going Bananas probably sounds more like the title of a Woody Allen or Marx Brothers movie than a piece of history that brought the banana from its humble ancient beginnings in Southeast Asia to Central America and, finally, to the breakfast tables of North America.

History

Bananas were thriving in Central America for about 350 years but had never touched the North American soil during that time. One man with more than a moderate dose of greed and ambition was partly responsible for introducing the banana to the United States and Europe. Minor Keith, 23, began the treacherous undertaking of building a railroad through the jungles of Costa Rica in the year 1871.

Many lives were lost during the dangerous construction, but Keith blindly pursued his path. At the same time he created banana plantations on either side of the railroad. By 1881 Keith was sending his bananas by rail to the sea where they were shipped to the United States.

About the time Keith was building his railroad and cultivating bananas in Costa Rica, a Cape Cod sea captain named Lorenzo Dow Baker discovered a "strange fruit" in a marketplace in Jamaica. He brought 160 bunches of these unusual fruits called bananas back to New Jersey and sold them for \$2 a bunch, launching a new business with a healthy profit.

Ten years later Baker became a partner with Minor Keith and Andrew Preston, a Boston businessman, to found the successful Boston Fruit Company.



Another merger in 1899 formed the United Fruit Company and created such



a powerful company of railroads, steamships, and banana plantations throughout Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and Santo Domingo, that they were able to influence and control the governments of these countries. The banana plantations had created such a major export throughout the countries of Central America and the Caribbean that those regions were known as the "banana republics."

The company's greatest misdeeds involved corruption and political influence in Guatemala, where they were able to exempt themselves from taxes for 99 years. In addition, United Fruit Company held much of the unused Guatemalan land, preventing the native population from using it. This issue became a political entanglement that involved the U.S. government and Guatemala with United Fruit charging that Guatemala was a communist government. Subsequently, the U.S. invaded the country to wrest it from communist control.

Today the Del Monte company owns United Fruit Company that fell into financial difficulties during the 1970s.

Despite its infamous Central American involvements, the delectable banana ranks second in popularity among fruits, bowing to the apple in the number one position. Central America, however, is not the actual origin of the banana that is considered one of the oldest cultivated fruits in the world. Scholars of history often debate whether the actual forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden was an apple. The Koran states that it was a banana.

The true origins of the banana are to be found centuries earlier in the region of Malaysia. By way of curious visitors, bananas traveled to India where they are mentioned in the Buddhist Pali writings dating back to the 6th century BCE as well as in national epic poems of India that have ancient beginnings.

In his campaign in India in 327 BCE, Alexander the Great relished his first taste of the banana, an usual fruit he saw growing on tall trees. He is even credited with bringing the banana from India to the Western world.

Theophrastus, a Greek philosopher and natural scientist, 372 to 287 BCE, retells a legend about wise men who sat under the shade of the banana tree and ate some of its fruit. In the time of the legend the banana plant was given the botanical name that translates as "banana of the sages." Though the botanical name is now obsolete, it makes good story telling.

According to Chinese historian Yang Fu, China was tending plantations of bananas in 200 CE. These bananas grew only in the southern region of China and were considered exotic, rare fruits that never became popular until the 20th century.

Eventually, this tropical fruit reached Madagascar, an island off the southeastern coast of Africa. Beginning in 650 CE Islamic warriors traveled into Africa and were actively engaged in the slave trade. Along with the thriving business in slave trading, the Arabs were successful in trading ivory along with abundant crops of bananas. Through their numerous travels westward via the slave trade, bananas eventually reached Guinea, a small area along the West Coast of Africa.

By 1402 Portuguese sailors discovered the luscious tropical fruit in their travels to the African continent and populated the Canary Islands with their first banana plantations.

Continuing the banana's travels westward, the rootstocks were packed onto a ship under the charge of Tomas de Berlanga, a Portuguese Franciscan monk who brought them to the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo from the Canary Islands in the year 1516. It wasn't long before the banana became popular throughout the Caribbean as well as Central America.

Naming the Banana

Arabian slave traders are credited with giving the banana its popular name. The bananas that were growing in Africa as well as Southeast Asia were not the eight-to-twelve-inch giants that have become familiar in the U.S. supermarkets today. They were small, about as long as a man's finger. Ergo the name banan, Arabic for finger. Or, possibly the name banana comes from West Africa where the Guinean word banema was in use.

The Spaniards, who saw a similarity to the plane tree that grows in Spain, gave the plantain its Spanish name, platano.

Almost three hundred and fifty years later Americans tasted the first bananas to arrive in this country. Wrapped in tinfoil, bananas were sold for 10 cents each at a celebration held in Pennsylvania in 1876 to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Instructions on how to eat a banana appeared in the Domestic Cyclopaedia of Practical Information and read as follows:

Bananas are eaten raw, either alone or cut in slices with sugar and cream, or wine and orange juice. They are also roasted, fried or boiled, and are made into fritters, preserves, and marmalades.

By the end of the 1800s, the U.S. was importing 16 million bunches of bananas a year from Central America. This was no easy feat since bananas ripen quickly and spoil easily. In 1903 bananas traveled northward on the first refrigerated ship called the Venus. Today refrigerated ships transport bananas all over the world throughout the year. A special cooling system interrupts the ripening of the bananas, delaying the process until they reach their destination.



Bananas in International Cuisines

A popular dish in the Caribbean features banana fritters flavored with rum, a dish that consists of chunks of bananas that are dipped in flour, then into a rich batter. They are deep-fried in hot oil until golden and then sprinkled with powdered sugar.

Panchamrutham, confections that are spiced and sweetened with honey, are a favorite in India. Other favorites of India include Sweet Banana Lassi, a sweet cooling beverage made of yoghurt and banana, and a sweet yoghurt cheese made with banana, pistachios and almonds, and spiced with cardamom.

The Banana Split, America's classic dessert, became popular in the 1920s. Its first appearance in Pennsylvania in 1904 consisted of a banana split in half, lengthwise, two or three scoops of ice cream, a generous serving of chocolate sauce and strawberry sauce, and the traditional maraschino cherry on the top.

Brazilians make a dessert with mashed bananas mixed with brown sugar, grated ginger, and

cinnamon or cloves. This mixture is slowly cooked over low heat until it thickens. When cool, it is molded into a roll, then sliced and served cold.

The banana flower, also called the banana heart, is stripped of its outer reddish leaves, sliced and added to salads, cooked in coconut milk, cooked into curry dishes, or added to vegetable stews throughout Southeast Asian countries of Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

Even the leaves of the banana plant become incorporated into the cuisines of nearly all of the tropical regions that grow bananas. A banana leaf can be as long as twelve feet by two feet in width, so pieces of one leaf can go a long way. Wrapping combinations of vegetables and spices in banana leaves and steaming them is common from Central America to Java. The flavor can be described as smoky, slightly cooling, and delicately fragrant.

The banana leaf also provides the ideal barrier between the pot and the wood fire, preventing many a rice dish or vegetable stew from burning. In many rural areas of the Philippines the banana leaf is almost essential where cooking over a wood fire is the only way to cook.

Throughout Southeast Asia and parts of India the banana leaf is also used as serving plate, and a number of leaves double as a tablecloth. Sometimes a piece of banana leaf is twisted into a small cone and held together with a sliver to create a container for peanuts or boiled corn. A larger cone becomes that day's container for a farmer's lunch, or it might hold some rice and fish. It even doubles as a container for a take-out meal from the local Chinese restaurant.

Banana leaves are also used as thatching for houses and the base for hemp-like rope. In the Philippines banana fibers are used to make paper.

Bananas in Entertainment

The banana even made its presence known with singer Louis Prima's recording of the songs "Banana Split for by Baby" and "Please Don't Squeeze Da Banana."

The King Sisters, Buddy Clark, Xavier Cugat, and Mitch Miller all performed the "Chiquita Banana" song in the 1940s and 1950s, a song that was used in a radio commercial for bananas.

"Yes! We Have No Bananas" was originally performed in 1923 by Billy Jones and was popular through the 1930s. In the 1950s Spike Jones and Mitch Miller both brought the song back for a successful revival.

Vaudeville comedian Harry Steppe coined the phrase "top banana, " an expression to describe the top comedian performing in the show. "Second banana" was used for the supporting performer who played a secondary role.

Growing

There are two main varieties of bananas, the fruit or sweet banana and the plantain. The fruit banana is eaten raw out of hand when it turns yellow and develops a succulent sweetness with a soft, smooth, creamy, yet firm pulp.



The plantain, a cooking banana, is also referred to as the meal, vegetable or horse banana. Plantains have lower water content, making them drier and starchier than fruit bananas.



Though the banana plant has the appearance of a sort of palm tree, and is often called a banana palm, it is actually considered a perennial herb. It dies back after each fruiting and produces new growth for the next generation of fruit.

Bananas do not grow simply from seed. Man intervened long ago and crossed two varieties of African wild bananas, the *Musa acuminata* and the *Musa baalbisiana*, got rid of the many seeds that were an unpleasant presence, and improved the flavor and texture from hard and unappetizing to its present soft and irresistibly sweet flavor.

Today bananas must be propagated from large rootstocks or rhizomes that are carefully transplanted in a suitable climate, namely the hot tropics, where the average temperature is a humid 80 degrees Fahrenheit (27 degrees Celsius), and a minimum of 3 1/2 inches (75 mm) of rainfall a month. The soil must have excellent drainage or the rootstocks will rot. The plants grow new shoots, often called suckers, pups, or ratoons, from the shallow rootstocks or rhizomes, and continue to produce new plants generation after generation for several decades.

In about nine months the plants reach their mature height of about 15 to 30 feet. Some varieties will grow to a height of 40 feet. From the stems, that are about 12 inches thick, flower shoots begin to produce bananas.

If you have never seen bananas growing, you might be puzzled that they appear to be growing upside-down with their stems connected to the bunch at the bottom and the tips pointing upward. Bananas possess a unique scientific phenomenon called "negativ geotropism." As the little bananas start to develop, they grow downward--as gravity would dictate. Little by little, several "hands" or double rows develop vertically and form a partial spiral around the stem. As they take in more and more sunlight, their natural growth hormones bring about a most puzzling phenomenon, and they begin to turn and grow upward.

As the plant becomes heavier with maturing fruit, it must be supported with poles. The stems are made of layers and layers of leaves that are wrapped around each other. Though quite large and thick, the stems are not strong and woody like most fruit trees and can break under the weight of many bunches of bananas.

Though there are approximately 300 species of bananas, only 20 varieties are commercially cultivated. Local populations and visitors who experience the regional cuisines when they travel enjoy the many non-commercial varieties. Members of the Musaceae family, the banana plant belongs to the monocotyledons, a group that includes palms, grasses, and orchids.

Bananas are mature about three months from the time of flowering, with each bunch producing about 15 "hands" or rows. Each hand has about 20 bananas while each bunch will yield about 200 "fingers" or bananas. An average bunch of bananas can weigh between 80 and 125 pounds (35 to 50 kilograms).

Two-man teams harvest the bananas. While one man whacks the bunch with his machete, the other catches the falling bunch onto his shoulders and transfers it to a hook attached to one of a series of conveyer cables that run throughout the plantation.

Though bananas can be left to ripen on the plant, they would perish too quickly. It is important that

they are harvested in the green state at just the right time. If harvested too early, they would develop a floury pulp instead of a delightfully sweet flavor. Bananas begin the ripening process as soon as they are harvested, when laboratory tests have shown that they contain 20% starch and 1% sugar. When the bananas turn yellow with some brown spots, they are fully ripened, and these figures are completely reversed. The sugar content breaks down as follows: 66% sucrose, 14% fructose, and 20% glucose.

After the bananas have been harvested, the giant stems are cut down to provide rich humus for the next crop that has already begun to sprout new shoots.

Each plantation has a packing station where bananas are graded for quality. Those that are poor quality are sold in local markets or pureed and used as animal feed. The next step is to cut the bananas into individual hands and wash them in a water bath to stop "bleeding" their natural latex or rubber substance that tends to stain the bananas as well as clothing.

Though there are many countries where bananas are grown, not all grow them for export. Brazil, China, India, and Thailand grow them as a local food source and export very few. The major exporters include Ecuador, Costa Rica, Colombia, Honduras, the Philippines, Panama, and Guatemala.

Surprisingly, 80% of the bananas grown throughout the world are of the plantain or cooking variety. To many tropical cultures, plantains are an important part of the daily diet and are prepared in as many ways as other cultures have devised for potatoes.

Plantains may be more familiar to you as banana chips that are first dried, then fried. These cooking bananas are even employed in the brewing of beer in some areas of East Africa.

Brazil and Kenya grow a unique fruit banana called Apple Banana whose flavor reminds one of an apple. This special variety is only three to four inches in length. Another special variety is the Lady's Finger, an especially small banana with a sweet, creamy texture that grows in Thailand, Malaysia, and Colombia. You can recognize the Red Banana by its reddish brown skin. The flesh inside also has a reddish tinge, and the flavor is sweet with a satin-like texture. These grow in most regions where bananas thrive.



Medicinal Uses

Researchers found that two or three bananas a day were beneficial in treating children with celiac disease, an intolerance to grains that contain gluten such as wheat, rye, oats, and barley.

People who enjoy snow sports may on occasion experience mild episodes of frostbite if exposed to the cold too long. Applying the inside of the banana skin to the frostbitten area will bring immediate relief.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s bananas were fed to malnourished children in New England summer camps created to prevent the children from contacting tuberculosis. At one camp in Massachusetts, the children gained weight and thrived because their diet included two bananas daily in addition to other foods.

American folklore gives credit to the banana for contributing to longevity, curing corns, headaches, warts and even stage fright. In her 1933 advice column Ann Landers suggested applying the inside of a banana peel to cure a wart. In a 1997 column she advises headache sufferers to apply the inside of one half a banana peel to the forehead and the other half to the back of the neck. Her column noted that 85 percent of those who have tried this cure found relief within 30 minutes.

The practitioners of Chinese medicine recommend the banana for lowering blood pressure and relieving constipation and hemorrhoids.

Nutritional Benefits

Because of their impressive potassium content, bananas are highly recommended by doctors for patients whose potassium is low. One large banana, about 9 inches in length, packs 602 mg of potassium and only carries 140 calories.

That same large banana even has 2 grams of protein and 4 grams of fiber. No wonder the banana was considered an important food to boost the health of malnourished children.

Those reducing sodium in their diets can't go wrong with a banana with its mere 2 mgs of sodium. For the carbohydrate counters there are 36 grams of carbs in a large banana.

Vitamins and minerals are abundant in the banana, offering 123 I.U. of vitamin A for the large size. A full range of B vitamins are present with .07 mg of Thiamine, .15 mg of Riboflavin, .82 mg Niacin, .88 mg vitamin B6, and 29 mcg of Folic Acid. There are even 13.8 mg of vitamin C.

On the mineral scale Calcium counts in at 9.2 mg, Magnesium 44.1 mg, with trace amounts of iron and zinc. Putting all of the nutritional figures together clearly shows the banana is among the healthiest of fruits.

The plantain, when cooked, rates slightly higher on the nutritional scale in vitamins and minerals but similar to the banana in protein and fiber content.

Purchasing

Yellow bananas are available year round. Other varieties may also be available in large supermarkets, but ethnic markets are the place to shop for the exotics. Hispanic, Philippine, and Thai markets offer more diversity. There you can find red bananas, burro bananas, plantains, and occasionally Lady Fingers.

Select bananas that are slightly green, firm, and without bruises. If the bananas have a gray tint and a dull appearance, these have been refrigerated, preventing them from ripening properly.

Most Americans avoid purchasing plantains mainly because they do not know how to select them and what to do with them. Plantains can be purchased in any state of ripeness, from very green and firm to completely black and soft, but it is important to note that the very green ones will test your patience.

Banana chips are available in most supermarkets. Because they are sometimes deep-fried in unhealthy oils, they are very high in calories. We recommend avoiding these or eating them only occasionally.

Storing

Never store unripe bananas in the refrigerator. They simply will not ripen properly because the cold interferes with the ripening process. Bringing refrigerated bananas back to room temperature will not reverse the process. However, once bananas are ripe, they can be refrigerated for up to two weeks. Take note that their skins will turn black.



Give yellow-green bananas time to ripen at room temperature to a sunny yellow color, from one to three days, or they will taste astringent and be difficult to digest.

Ripen plantains at room temperature. They may take up to three weeks to soften and ripen to a dull yellow color mottled with numerous black spots.

Most fruits give off an ethylene gas in the process of ripening. Because bananas release a higher concentration of ethylene gas, they ripen quickly. If you've bought green bananas and want to accelerate the ripening, place them into a paper or plastic bag. Adding an apple to the bag will encourage faster ripening.

To take advantage of very ripe bargain bananas, simply peel them, cut them into chunks, and wrap them in plastic. Tuck them into the freezer and use as needed for smoothies, or defrost and mash them for baking or making fruit sauces.

Raw

Nothing beats the pleasure of savoring a fresh banana. It comes in its own protective casing, needs no washing, no preparation, and no special equipment. Just peel and enjoy!

A particularly delightful treat is to put banana chunks into the freezer until partially frozen. Remove and give them a whirl in the blender. Then enjoy a frothy ice cream-like dessert--a great summertime dish.

Mash ripe bananas and enjoy them for breakfast as a topping over raw, soaked grains like steel cut oats. See the Recipe Index for Raw Rocky Road Oats.

Mashed banana sauce adds a special touch to a fresh fruit salad.

Enjoy sliced bananas in cold cereals.

Make a breakfast smoothie thickened with ripe bananas.

FROZEN CAROB BANANAS

For a delightful raw banana dessert, prepare ahead.

4 ripe, firm bananas

1/2 C. (118 ml) water

3/4 C. (177 ml) raw carob powder

1/4 C. (59 ml) maple syrup

2 T. canola oil

1/4 t. imitation maple extract

1/4 t. imitation rum extract

2 C. (480 ml) crushed raw nuts of your choice or even a combination (walnuts, pecans, macadamias)

1. Peel firm ripe bananas, cut them in half crosswise, insert a heavy skewer into the base of each banana half, and freeze them.
2. Prepare a carob sauce by processing water, carob powder, maple syrup, canola oil, and flavor extracts in the blender until the texture resembles a thin flowing sauce. Put this sauce into a deep, wide-mouth glass.
3. Spread crushed raw nuts out onto a large dish.
4. Assemble by dipping each frozen banana into the carob sauce, then rolling in crushed nuts. Makes 8 servings. Sauce recipe makes about 1 cup (237 ml.)

Cooking

Plantains can be boiled, roasted, baked, or deep-fried. First, score each plantain lengthwise with a sharp knife, then peel. Slice fully ripened plantains about 1/4-inch thick and spread them on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Bake at 375 (Gas Mark 5) for about 10 minutes. Turn them, and bake another 10 minutes. Enjoy as a simple dessert or serve the baked plantains as a side dish at the dinner table.

Plantains can also be eaten uncooked if left to ripen fully with their skins completely blackened and pulp almost mushy when gently squeezed.

Mashed ripe bananas can be added to breads, pancakes, cakes, muffins, and cookies.

One mashed ripe banana, or approximately 1/3 cup (79 ml), can take the place of one egg when baking.

Breakfast or brunch becomes a special treat for vegans who can enjoy pancakes that are free from all the usual egg and dairy products. Serve with a hearty fresh fruit salad and some vegan sausages.

For ease in turning the pancakes, we suggest that you bake the pancakes on teflon-coated baking sheets, and use a plastic spatula to avoid scratching the surface.

BANANA PECAN PANCAKES

1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu

3 medium size, medium-ripe bananas

2 pinches of salt

1/2 t. ground cinnamon

2 T. evaporated cane juice

1/3 C. (79 ml) whole wheat pastry flour

3/4 t. vanilla extract

1/4 t. maple extract

1 T. lemon juice

1/3 C. (79 ml) soy milk

2/3 C. (158 ml) raw pecan pieces

1. Lightly oil 3 baking sheets. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. (Gas Mark 6).
2. Break up tofu into pieces and put into the food processor. Add bananas, salt, cinnamon, evaporated cane juice, pastry flour, vanilla and maple extracts, lemon juice, and soy milk. Process until all ingredients are completely blended and bananas are thoroughly pureed.
3. Drop by heaping tablespoon onto baking sheets, putting about 12 pancakes on each sheet. Keep pancakes small, no larger than 2" (5 cm) in diameter, for ease in turning them.
4. Sprinkle pecans over the tops of each pancake and lightly press them into the batter.
5. Bake 12 minutes. Turn pancakes with a spatula, and bake 5 to 7 minutes longer. Serve with maple syrup. Makes about 36 to 40 small pancakes, or about 4 servings.

For some ideas on how to use overripe bananas check with Aunt Nettie at <http://www.vegparadise.com/asknettie4.html>

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PEANUTS--WHADA'YA MEAN IT''S A BEAN?

Peanuts at a Glance

History	Uses	Nutrition	Medical Benefits
Growing	Storing	Preparation	Recipe

Maybe you've always thought of the peanut as part of the nut family. You're certainly not alone in thinking so, but the plain truth is, peanuts are not nuts! To confuse us further, the supermarkets shelve them alongside the nuts, so why would anyone think they weren't nuts. Further proof that they must be nuts is their dominant presence in cans of mixed nuts and in trail mixes with dried fruits and nuts.

Would you be surprised to learn the peanut is actually a bean, and an odd one at that? While most of the beans in the legume family grow in pods on sprawling, and climbing vines, the peanut plant is a singular bush that matures its pods underground.

Origins

The common peanut has become so universally enjoyed throughout the world that most people never connect it with South America, its place of origin. The ancient Incas of Peru first cultivated wild peanuts and offered them to the sun god as part of their religious ceremonials. Their name for the peanut was *ynchic*

Peanut cultivation was also active in Ecuador as well as Bolivia and Brazil. The Brazilian peanut farmers were Indian tribal women who wouldn't allow the men to tend the plants, believing the plants would only produce peanuts under their own care.

As evidence of the early existence of this legume, preserved peanut shells were found at many archeological excavations in Peru dating back to 2500 BCE. Scientists believe it was the dry climate of the region that kept the shells so well preserved.

During excavations of the Moche people's burial graves in Peru, archeologists discovered earthenware pots with carved replicas of peanut shells on the covers, indicating the importance of the peanut as a dietary staple. The pottery dated back from 100 to 800 CE.

The Ancon people, who lived on the Peruvian coast, believed in an afterlife and prepared the dead with items they recognized as necessary for their journey. Other archeological finds in the Inca burial sites were string pouches that contained peanuts along with maize, beans, and peppers, provisions to sustain the departed in the next world.



During the early 1500's South America was invaded by the Spanish and the Portuguese who were inquisitive about many new food plants they had never seen before, among them were peanuts the natives called *mandi* and *mandubi*.

Not long after, natives in the Caribbean were cultivating peanuts as an important food. A Spanish explorer's account from 1535 describes a plant called *mani* found growing in Hispaniola, an island in the West Indies. "They sow and harvest it. It is a very common crop . . . about the size of a pine nut in the shell. They consider it a healthy food."

When the explorers first encountered peanuts, they were hesitant to eat them. Bernabe Cobo, a Catholic priest living in Peru in the early 1600's, declared that eating peanuts caused the body discomforts such as dizziness and headaches. In general, these European conquistadors were rather skeptical about many of the "new foods." At first they thought peanuts were a substitute for almonds. Some even attempted to roast and grind them to create a new kind of coffee, but these did not gain acceptance. Eventually the Indians shared their knowledge of peanut cultivation with the Europeans and even traded peanuts for some Spanish goods.

When peanut plants were brought back to Spain and Portugal, they struggled to survive in a climate that was not warm enough. The few peanuts harvested did not earn an enthusiastic reception. Rather, they were considered bizarre.

Peanuts and the Slave Trade

But, don't weep for the peanuts. They were well received in Africa when they arrived with the Portuguese who introduced the plants during their slave trading missions. India, too, met up with the peanut because of the Portuguese.

Spain's active trade business began in the 1500s with routes that connected the West Coast of Mexico across the Pacific to the Philippines. The galleons that left the port of Acapulco carried silver, peanuts and other precious New World items to Manila where they were traded to buy spices, silk, and porcelain. Via the trade routes, peanuts were soon familiar food items in China, Japan and the East Indies.

By the late 1600s active slave trading brought black slaves to the American south to work the plantations, though it wasn't until the 1700s and 1800s that thousands of them were taken from their homes in West Africa to the Southern plantations. To keep the slaves nourished during the long voyage across the Atlantic, the captors took along peanuts and maize for their sustenance.

Once here in America, the slaves planted their familiar comfort food, the peanut, which they ate along with corn, beans and greens. The slave owners, however, only fed the peanuts to their cows and pigs, rejecting them as food unfit for humans to consume.

Peanuts Feed the Troops

This snobbish attitude was completely reversed during the Civil War of the 1860s, when food shortages were a serious concern. Peanuts soon became appreciated as they nourished the soldiers from both the North and the South. Many days, there was nothing else to eat but peanuts. At other times troops ground and boiled them to create a substitute coffee.

During times when they were camped, the soldiers roasted peanuts over the fire. When they were marching, soldiers often found raw peanuts the day's only meal; they even began to embrace them. It may have been the soldiers who corrupted the peanut's Bantu name *nguba* when they called them goobers or goober peas. Peanuts were also called **pinders, ground peas, and groundnuts.**



The painful period during the Civil War struggle inspired one Confederate soldier's poetic talents to create this verse:

Sitting by the roadside, on a summer day,
Chatting with my messmates, passing time away,
Lying in the shadows, underneath the trees,
Goodness how delicious, eating goober peas!
Peas! Peas! Peas! Peas! Eating goober peas!
Goodness how delicious, eating goober peas!

The Union soldiers who came back home introduced their friends and families to the joys of the peanut, and turned many a negative attitude around. Not long after the war, a number of soldiers who couldn't find work began roasting and selling bags of peanuts on the streets along with entrepreneurs who saw a financial opportunity.

Topping the list as a favorite snack food, roasted peanuts began to show up everywhere. In 1870, the famous Phineas T. Barnum of the renowned Barnum and Bailey Circus offered bags of roasted peanuts for sale at circus performances. People loved them. What followed brought the peanut fame and favor. Roasted peanuts appeared at baseball games. The "peanut gallery" was the name given to the cheap balcony seats at the theater where patrons snacked on voluminous quantities of peanuts in the upstairs seating.

Peanuts, a Sticky Business

Peanut butter had its start as the all-American food in 1890 when a doctor in Missouri created it for his elderly patients in an attempt to offer them good nourishment that didn't require chewing and was easy on the digestive system. The doctor's recipe contained only roasted peanuts ground into a spreadable paste. Soon entrepreneurs began adding sugar and salt to enhance their product that quickly became popular. Peanut butter rose to fame when it met up with its ideal partners--jams and jellies, and the peanut butter and jelly sandwich was born. Moms loved its convenience and accepted it as healthful food for the kids.

Though we tend to think of peanut butter as an American innovation, it was actually the Indians in South America who ground peanuts into a gooey sticky paste, a practice that dates back about 3,000 years. Their peanut butter was made by hand and never reached the smooth creamy texture of ours. Today we create desserts that combine peanut butter and chocolate, but we weren't the first to create this combination either. The ancient Incas made use of their local resources and flavored their peanut butter with cocoa beans that were ground into a powder and pounded into the peanut mixture.

Today peanut butter is the end product of one half of the peanut crops grown in the United States. Interestingly, peanuts began their existence in the Americas and journeyed across oceans to Asia and Africa only to return to the Americas. The southern states of Georgia, Texas, Alabama, and North Carolina, where peanuts made their American return, still remain the U.S. peanut-growing center. More peanuts are eaten in the United States than walnuts, almonds, and hazelnuts combined.

Think about the many ways peanuts have become connected to our culture--they are eaten at baseball games, fed to elephants at the zoo, munched on at the circus, served at beer parlors, and offered as airline snacks. At home we may include them as a typical party snack or pack a few peanut butter cookies in a kids' lunchbox. You can't get more American than fixing the occasional peanut butter and jelly sandwich or snacking on chocolate covered peanuts. And if you enjoy cooking, you may have even prepared peanut soup, peanut sauce, peanut brittle, or even a rich peanut butter pie. Today, Americans top the list as the largest consumer of peanut butter.

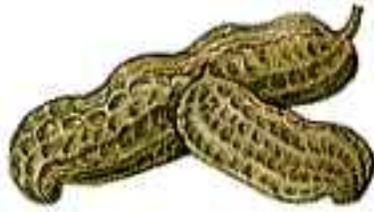
The Planters Peanut Company began in the early 1900s. It was in 1916 that their mascot, Mr. Peanut, who stands tall with top hat, monocle, and cane, made his debut. Mr. Peanut was the winning entry in a contest the company's owner, Amadeo Obici, offered to school children.

Peanuts were thoroughly enjoying the limelight and appeared in many news headlines in 1977 when Jimmy Carter, a Plains, Georgia peanut farmer, became President of the United States.

If you were to combine all the peanuts grown in the world annually, you would have a grand harvest of more than 26 million tons of peanuts. China, India, and the United States are the world's largest growers. Here's a trivia tidbit you might try out at your next party: How many peanuts does it take to make a one-pound jar of peanut butter? The answer, 720.

The Peanut Wizard

Born into a slave family in 1864, scientist George Washington Carver developed more than three hundred products derived from the peanut while working at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He became known as "the peanut wizard." From the shells, leaves, and nuts of the plant, Carver introduced products such as soaps, shaving cream, and dyes. His peanut innovations also led him to create food items like cheese, coffee, ice cream and mayonnaise. His book, *How to Grow Peanuts and 105 Uses for Human Consumption*, was published in 1925.



It was Carver who saved many southern farmers from losing their farms. In 1905 the boll weevil destroyed half the cotton crops and left numerous farmers in debt. Carver shared his knowledge and convinced them that peanuts were easy to grow. That was the beginning of the South's peanut growing success.

In 1921, George Washington Carver was given 10 minutes to tell Congress about peanuts. His presentation so fascinated everyone that his 10 minute talk stretched into an hour and a half. His birthplace is now a national monument.

Today's peanut farmer allows nothing to go to waste, from the peanuts themselves to the oil, the shells, the plant itself, the skins, and even the roots. At present peanut oil is used in cosmetics, paints, shampoo, soap, lamp oil, textile fibers, and for lubricating machinery. The farmer appreciates peanuts because they provide an inexpensive source of high-protein livestock fodder as well as green manure to fertilize the next year's crops. The roots, too, are composted to enrich the soil.

Even the peanut shells are useful for household items such as compressed fire logs, cat litter, and wallboards, while the skins are turned into paper. In the early days of railroad transportation, peanut oil was the preferred product the engineers used to lubricate their locomotives.

Aflatoxin in Peanuts

In recent years, the public has expressed concern about aflatoxin contamination in peanuts and peanut butter. Two known strains of fungi, *Aspergillus flavus* and *Aspergillus parasiticus*, produce aflatoxins, toxic and carcinogenic compounds, found in peanuts and peanut products. Invisible to the naked eye, the mold is linked to cancer in laboratory animals but has not been known to affect humans. Other foods affected by aflatoxins are milk and dairy products, dried figs and fig products, and corn and corn products. The aflatoxins in peanuts may have developed from mold during the critical drying process.

To prevent aflatoxin-affected peanuts from reaching the consumer, farmers have developed an efficient blanching and color sorting process. Testing for aflatoxin has revealed a connection to damaged peanut kernels. To eliminate these peanuts from entering the retail market, the farmer first removes the red skins from each kernel. Then, using an electronic color sorter he is able to discard the damaged kernels. With this system, approximately 91% of the aflatoxin in contaminated peanut lots is eliminated.

Peanuts Enter National Cuisines

It was in Africa that the peanut achieved great importance as a desperately needed diet staple. Acceptance came quickly in that continent where little meat was consumed, the land produced few plants that could sustain life, and people were hungry. Peanuts were ideal and became nourishing everyday food, especially in West Africa, where they were first roasted to bring out their flavor, then ground and cooked with yams, okra, tomatoes, and green leafy vegetables.

The Africans, who believed that peanuts had souls, so highly revered them they cast the legumes, shell and all, into bronze and gold.

West Africa's **Groundnut Stew** became a favorite dish that took on regional differences. In Ghana

it was served with *fufu*, dumplings made of yams, plantains, and cooked manioc, a starchy root used in making bread and tapioca. In Mali and Senegal, chicken is added to the stew called *mafi* along with sweet potatoes.

During the 1700s, peanuts were often ground into a peanut butter-like paste, spread on bread, and eaten by the people of Nigeria. This innovative peanut delicacy was even enjoyed in Haiti.

The people of Southeast Asia incorporated ground peanuts into their flavorful cuisine that combined rice, meats, and vegetables seasoned with chiles, coconut milk, and lime juice. Spicy peanut sauce is a traditional Indonesian accompaniment to an appetizer called *satay* and is always served as a salad dressing over *gado gado*, a combination of cooked vegetables that are served cold.

On the island of Java, peanut fritters in a rice flour batter are a well-known delicacy. On special holidays they serve rice topped with toasted coconut, spices, and ground peanuts.

In the Szechwan region of China where spicy dishes are common, peanuts and chiles enter the stir-fry wok together, while India curries favor with the peanut, either ground or whole, in their curry dishes and sauces.

Peanuts were also revered for their clear, tasteless oil that became part of Asian and African deep-fried and stir-fried dishes. Peanut oil can be heated to high temperatures without burning or smoking, making it a favorite cooking oil even today. Though most Europeans never appreciated the peanut itself, they readily adopted its oil in which they cooked everything from the lowly dishes of England to the haute cuisine of France.

Medicinal Uses

Before 500 BCE peanuts had been brought to Mexico. There the Aztecs cultivated peanuts as a medicine. From the *Log of Christopher Columbus* translated by Robert H. Fuson, Friar Bernardino de Sahagun describes the Aztec marketplace medicine seller who was considered a "knower of herbs, a knower of roots, a physician." The Aztecs used ground peanuts mixed with water to cure fever.

Historians have noted that the Aztecs were applying peanut paste to soothe aching gums about 1500 CE.

Growing

The peanut is technically considered a pea and belongs to the bean family. Scientifically, the pods are legumes called *Arachis hypogaea*.

There are two basic kinds of peanut plants, runner peanuts and bush peanuts. The runner plant spreads out like a vine with peanuts developing from the main horizontal branches. The bush peanuts look similar to pea plants and grow about 18" to 30" high with the peanut nodules developing closer to the roots. Both varieties require about five months before peanuts are ready to harvest.

United States farmers grow four peanut varieties: **Runner peanuts**, **Virginia peanuts**, **Spanish peanuts**, and **Valencia peanuts**. Half of the peanuts grown here in the United States are **Runner peanuts**. **Virginia peanuts** have larger seeds or peanuts than other varieties. The **Spanish peanuts** have a higher oil content than the others, while the **Valencia peanuts** contain three or more peanuts to the pod.



Each peanut is actually a seed that will produce a new plant, a process that begins with the farmer planting peanuts about two inches under the ground in the spring. In a week or two, leaves begin to sprout above the ground and continue to form a strong, thick main stem with many additional stems and leaves branching off from the main stem.

By summer the plants begin to blossom with small yellow flowers that open at sunrise and wilt the following day. Within a few days a tiny shoot, called a peg, begins to grow from the base of the flower stem. Unlike other plants of the legume family, the peanut plant puts its energy into this shoot or peg that begins to grow downward toward the ground. In a few weeks, the peg miraculously burrows its way into the ground and grows in a horizontal direction.

The peanut pod begins to form at the end of the peg and develop a hard shell by late summer, while inside the peanuts are taking shape and maturing. When it is time to harvest, the home gardener will dig up the entire plant with a shovel and find about 20 peanuts on each plant. With special hybrid seeds used by commercial farmers, the yield can be more than one hundred peanuts from each plant.

Determining the ripeness of the peanut crop can be challenging. Commercial growers have hundreds of peanut plants and simply pull up several plants to examine the peanuts inside the shell as a test.

If you have only one or two peanut plants, here's what you do: Wiggle your finger into the soil at the base of the plant's tap root until you can feel a peanut pod, which will be quite soft until it is dried. Now, carefully lift it with a pulling motion. If the peanut pod breaks off the peg easily, that's a good sign. Next, open the pod and examine the peanuts inside. If their color is white to pale pink and watery, give the plant another two weeks. It's common for the peanuts to ripen at different times, so it's best to allow a little more time when most of the peanuts will be ripe.

Harvesting on a peanut farm is done with a special tractor that has a digger, a shaker, and an inverter. First, the digger delves into the soil and cuts the tap roots. Next, the shaker lifts up the plants and shakes the dirt from the peanuts. Finally, the inverter turns the plant to allow the peanuts to sun-dry for a few days before putting them into the combine to separate the peanuts from the plant. The peanuts are then put into a drying wagon, the final step before they are sorted, packaged, and sent to market.

Since freshly harvested peanuts have a moisture content of 25 to 50%, their drying process is very important or they will develop unwanted mold. As a mold prevention, warm air is pumped into the drying wagon to bring the moisture content down to 10%.

Nutritional Information

Peanuts pack more protein than tree nuts, consisting of 20 to 30% protein, 5 to 15% carbohydrate, and 40 to 50% oil or fat. In fact, they are so nutritious that producer Billy Rose survived on one

5-cent bag of peanuts a day for three days when all he had to live on was 15 cents.

Dry roasted, unsalted peanuts are a powerhouse of protein, though not a complete protein, providing 7 grams for only 1 ounce. While it's easy to indulge in peanut pleasures, keep in mind that each ounce has 170 calories and 14 grams of fat, 2 of them saturated.



Dry roasted, unsalted peanuts contain the important B vitamins, B1, B2, and B3. Niacin, vitamin B3, is extraordinarily plentiful with 1 ounce registering 3.80 mg., while folic acid measures in at a whopping 41.2 mcg. Even vitamin B6 appears with trace amounts measuring .07 mg.

The minerals calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, copper, and zinc are all part of the nutritional make-up that give peanuts a thumbs up.

Raw peanuts also provide 7 grams of protein for 1 ounce, with the same fat content and 162 calories. This quantity provides 2.8 g of fiber, while the dry roasted offers 2.67 g. Raw peanuts also have a natural sodium content of 2 mg for 1 ounce, with the dry roasted peanuts registering less than .5 mg.

The B vitamins in raw peanuts register only minimally higher than the dry roasted with the exception of their folic acid content listed at 68 mcg for 1 ounce. Calcium, iron, and potassium are also slightly higher in raw peanuts than the figures for dry roasted.

Let's look at the numbers for peanut butter. A two tablespoon serving of the natural, unsalted, crunchy style piles up 190 calories, with 8 grams of protein, and 16 grams of fat. The saturated fat content varies between 1 and 3 grams in different brands.

Peanut butter's B vitamins are well endowed with niacin registering 4.40 mg and folic acid climbing to 29.4 mcg. While all the minerals show healthy quantities, potassium stands out at 214 mg for the two tablespoon serving.

Francis G. Benedict, author of *The Energy Requirements of Intense Mental Effort*, enlightens us with this, "The extra calories needed for an hour of intense mental effort would be completely met by the eating of one oyster cracker or one-half of a salted peanut."

Storing

Always store roasted peanuts in a porous bag, such as a paper bag or even a burlap sack. Keep them in an upper cupboard away from moisture. It's important to keep them dry to avoid mold from forming. Because good air circulation is important, never store them in a plastic bag or plastic container. Peanuts can keep for up to 12 months if stored properly. Raw peanuts should be stored in the refrigerator in a tightly covered container to prevent spoilage.

Natural peanut butter can be kept on the pantry shelf for one year. Once opened, stir well with a firm flatware knife to combine the peanut paste with the oil from which it has become separated. Then store the jar in the refrigerator to prevent rancidity.

Raw

Peanuts do not need to be cooked in order to be enjoyed. Simply eat them raw. Add them to salads whole or chop them and sprinkle the bits over your salads, raw soups, and even raw desserts. The flavor of raw peanuts is quite delicate compared to the more familiar taste of roasted peanuts.

Instead of tossing your peanut shells into the trash, be thrifty and crumble them into your houseplants to nourish the soil with minerals.

Roasting

You can roast peanuts in the shell by spreading them on a shallow baking pan, one or two layers deep, and tucking them into a 350 degree oven for 25 to 30 minutes, turning them occasionally. Do a taste test after 25 minutes to check the flavor, and take care not to overdo them.

If you've shelled your peanuts and want to roast them, first remove the skins by blanching. Follow this easy method: Pop the peanuts into boiling water, turn off the heat, and leave them in the hot bath for about 3 minutes before draining off the water. The skins should slip off easily. Next, put them on paper towels and allow them to dry. At this point you can use them in cooking.

If you want to roast your blanched peanuts, spread them out in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast at 350 for 15 to 20 minutes, turning them occasionally.

Cooking

Raw peanuts provide a nutritious boost to vegetable stews and soups.

For garnishing, chop roasted peanuts and sprinkle over salads, casseroles, stir fries, and desserts.

Chopped peanuts offer diverse texture in cooked or dry cereals.

Peanut butter adds thickening as well as distinctive flavor to soups and sauces.

Homemade Peanut Butter

You can easily make your own natural peanut butter at home by putting small amounts of dry roasted peanuts into the blender. Blend until smooth and creamy. For the chunky style, simply chop roasted peanuts to a coarse texture and stir into the creamy peanut butter. It's best to make your peanut butter in small quantities to prevent rancidity.

Since March is National Peanut Month, it's only fitting to celebrate with a recipe that spotlights peanuts with an adaptation of an historical recipe.

WEST AFRICAN PEANUT SOUP

- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 3/4 lbs. (800 g) Roma tomatoes (Italian plum), chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil

- 5 C. (1 liter + 237 ml) water
- 1 8-oz. (226 g) can tomato sauce

1 3/4 t. salt

1/8 t. crushed red pepper flakes

1 T. chili powder

2 t. ground cumin

3 T. fresh mint leaves, minced (optional)

2 C. (480 ml) Swiss chard or spinach, finely chopped

3/4 C. (177 ml) chunky, unsalted, natural peanut butter

1/4 C. (59 ml) fresh mint leaves, finely minced

1/4 C. (59 ml) crushed roasted peanuts

1. Combine onions, tomatoes, garlic, and olive oil in a large stockpot and sauté over high heat until softened and onions are transparent, about 5 minutes. Turn heat down to simmer.
2. Add water, tomato sauce, salt, pepper flakes, chili powder, cumin, and mint leaves, and simmer about 10 to 12 minutes.
3. Add Swiss chard and peanut butter and cook about 3 to 4 minutes, stirring constantly to distribute the peanut butter. Mixture will thicken slightly.
4. To serve, spoon soup into bowls and garnish with a pinch or two of mint leaves and crushed peanuts. Makes 6 servings.

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BROCCOLI: THE CROWN JEWEL OF NUTRITION

Broccoli at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Medical Benefits	Recipe
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	

Looking for a vitamin C fix? Make a beeline for the broccoli. Are your potassium stores low? Partner up with broccoli. Is fiber on your shopping list? Bring home the broccoli. Need an iron boost? Look no further than broccoli.

Though we presently recognize broccoli's many attributes and relish it for its lusty flavor, it was a hard sell in the ancient world. It was so obscure, in fact, that food historians find little written mention of its early beginnings.

It wasn't until the 20th century that broccoli was appreciated in the United States for its culinary attributes, and, more recently, for its exceptional health benefits. Centuries earlier, broccoli made frequent appearances on the dinner plates of the Roman Empire.

Ancient Beginnings

We usually associate the Etruscans with Italy, but these people, originally called the Rasenna, came from Asia Minor, now Turkey. It was in this region that the Rasenna began cultivating cabbages, the precursors to broccoli. These cruciferous vegetables were also grown along the Eastern Mediterranean. During the 8th century BCE, the Rasenna began their migration to Italy.

The ancient Rasenna actively traded with the Greeks, Phoenicians, Sicilians, Corsicans, and Sardinians. No doubt their broccoli cultivation spread throughout the region and eventually reached Rome when they settled in what is now known as Tuscany. It was the Romans who called these immigrants "Tusci" or "Etrusci" and referred to ancient Tuscany as Etruria.

The Romans were enamored with broccoli almost immediately. Pliny the Elder, an Italian naturalist and writer, 23 to 79 CE, tells us the Romans grew and enjoyed broccoli during the first century CE. The vegetable became a standard favorite in Rome where the variety called Calabrese was developed. The Calabrese is the most common variety still eaten in the United States today. Before the Calabrese variety was cultivated, most Romans were eating purple sprouting broccoli that turned green when cooked.

Apicius, the beloved cookbook author of ancient Rome, prepared broccoli by first boiling it and then bruising it "with a mixture of cumin and coriander seeds, chopped onion plus a few drops of oil and sun-made wine."

Long before the modern European cooks were serving broccoli with rich sauces, the Romans were presenting this vegetable with all sorts of creamy sauces, some cooked with wine, others flavored with herbs.

Roman Emperor Tiberius, 14 BCE to 37 BCE, had a son named Drusius who took his love of broccoli to excess. Excluding all other foods, he gorged on broccoli prepared in the Apician manner for an entire month. When his urine turned bright green and his father scolded him severely for "living precariously," Drusius finally abandoned his beloved broccoli.

Broccoli Visits Europe

Catherine de Medici of Tuscany may have been the first to introduce broccoli to France when she married Henry II in 1533, but the first mention of broccoli in French history is in 1560. Catherine arrived in France with her Italian chefs and armfuls of vegetables, including broccoli.

Miller's Gardener's Dictionary, in its 1724 edition, gave one of the earliest accounts of broccoli in the United Kingdom, referring to it as a stranger in England and calling it "sprout colli-flower" or "Italian asparagus." This account assumes that broccoli came from Italy.

When broccoli arrived in England in the early 18th century, no one spread the welcome mat. In fact, the English were soon turning their noses up. The French, too, had little enthusiasm for



broccoli.

In 1883, Vilmorin, a French horticulturist, theorized that broccoli developed before cauliflower. He believed that when the ancient farmers were cultivating cabbages, they experimented with trying to develop the shoots rather than the tightly compacted heads. The result was the beginnings of broccoli cultivation that later lead to development of the highly prized white heads of cauliflower.

Broccoli Comes to America

Thomas Jefferson, often called the farmer president, was an avid gardener and collector of new seeds and plants of fruits and vegetables to arrive in the United States. In 1766 he began keeping detailed notes in his garden book of any seeds or seedlings planted in his extensive garden at Montecello, his home near Charlottesville, Virginia. He recorded his planting of broccoli, along with radishes, lettuce, and cauliflower on May 27, 1767.

As early as 1775, broccoli was described in *A Treatise on Gardening by a Citizen of Virginia* by John Randolph who writes, "The stems will eat like Asparagus, and the heads like Cauliflower." Despite this encouraging description of broccoli, the poor vegetable received nothing more than indifference in the United States.

The one exception was the early Italian immigrants who grew broccoli in their backyard gardens and frequently enjoyed this green treasure at the family table.

Although broccoli entered the United States more than 200 years ago, it was not adopted into popular circles until the D'Arrigo brothers, Stephano and Andrea, immigrants from Messina, Italy, came to the United States along with their broccoli seeds. The D'Arrigo Brothers Company began with some trial plantings in San Jose, California in 1922. After harvesting their first crop, they shipped a few crates to Boston.

Meeting with success, they went on to establish their burgeoning broccoli business with the brand name Andy Boy, named after Stephano's two-year-old son, Andrew. They advertised by supporting a radio program and featured ads for broccoli on the station. By the 1930s the country was having a love affair with broccoli. People were convinced that broccoli was a newly developed plant.

Though some folks devoured broccoli enthusiastically, many gave it a definitive thumbs down. The New Yorker magazine once published a cartoon some time between 1925 and 1930 of a desperate mother trying to convince her child to eat broccoli. The cartoonist was E.B. White who preferred to be anonymous. The caption read as follows:

"It's broccoli, dear."

"I say it's spinach, and I say the hell with it."

Throughout history, mention of broccoli seems to drop out of the historical accounts for long periods of time, indicating that it was so unpopular that it was simply not in use during those times.



The Naming of Broccoli

It's not uncommon for horticulturists to bestow names upon newly developed fruits or vegetables that describe their appearance or their attributes. Broccoli has many strong branches or arms that grow from the main stem, each one sprouting a sturdy budding cluster surrounded by leaves. It was only fitting that the name broccoli came from the Latin *bracchium*, which means strong arm or branch.

Roman farmers called broccoli "the five green fingers of Jupiter."

In late 16th century England our familiar head of cabbage was called "cabbage," while the entire plant was called cabbage-cole, cole or colewort. To confuse matters further, broccoli and cauliflower were

also called colewort.

Throughout its travels during 17th century Europe, broccoli was often confused with cauliflower as well as cabbage, the names often used interchangeably. It was even called broccoli cabbage or Calabrian cabbage.

Growing

Broccoli is in the Brassicaceae family and is classified as *Brassica oleracea italica* belonging to a family whose other members include cauliflower, kale, cabbage, collards, turnips, rutabagas, Brussels sprouts, and Chinese cabbage.

The Brassica vegetables all share a common feature. Their four-petaled flowers bear the resemblance to a Greek cross, which explains why they are frequently referred to as crucifers or cruciferous.

Though the public can easily distinguish broccoli from cauliflower, botanists have difficulty with classification. Both broccoli and cauliflower are akin to the cabbage family. These members develop flower buds that remain in the bud form and do not open. The buds of the cauliflower grow in a tightly clustered manner, while broccoli buds are more definitive and separate from each other.

There are three main types of broccoli, sprouting, calabrese, and romanesco. Calabrese is most familiar because of its large heading portion and thick stalks. Calabrese is what most farmers grow and bring to market. This variety was developed in Calabria, a province in Italy, and is planted in the spring for harvesting in summer.

The sprouting broccoli has smaller flowering heads and many thinner stalks. This type is planted in April and May for harvesting the following winter and spring. Some may be harvested in December.

The romanesco reaches maturity in the fall and is distinguished by its yellowish-green multiple heads.

Though most commercial markets sell only green broccoli, there are cultivars that produce purple and white broccoli. These are more common in Italy and so closely resemble cauliflower in appearance they are easily confused.

With selective cultivation over the centuries, farmers were able to develop broccoli varieties with larger and larger budding heads. In this way they were able to create cultivars that were lighter and lighter in color, until eventually the result was cauliflower.

In recent years, horticulturists have developed the broccoflower, a hybrid combination of broccoli and cauliflower that looks more like cauliflower with a yellow-green color and a flavor that resembles both its parents.

When broccoli is left on the plant too long, its sugars develop into a type of fiber called lignin, creating stems that will be tough no matter how long the cooking process.

Broccoli rabe is native to the Mediterranean region. It is also called Italian broccoli, di rape, rapini, broccoli raab, Chinese broccoli, and Gai Lon. Another member of the cruciferous family, this variety of broccoli is recognized by its thin stems, tiny budding heads, and abundant leaves with jagged edges. Though it's equally as nutritious as our familiar broccoli, its flavor is more pungent and slightly bitter.



Once a wild herb, broccoli rabe is now cultivated in the Italian provinces of Campania and Puglia as well as in the United States.

Ninety percent of the broccoli grown in the US comes from California's Salinas Valley in North and Santa Maria in the Central region of the state. Other states that grow broccoli include Arizona, Texas, Florida, Washington, Wisconsin, Colorado, Oregon, Maine, and both North and South Carolina.

Broccoli prefers a cool climate, between 40 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit, and moist soil to mature in 100 to 120 days. It does not tolerate frost.

Nutritional Benefits

Broccoli is the superhero of the vegetable kingdom with its rich vitamin A content--notice broccoli's dark green color as an indicator of its hearty carotene content. Though a bit on the bitter side, broccoli leaves are completely edible and also contain generous amounts of vitamin A.

With one half-cup of cooked broccoli providing 1083 IU of vitamin A and raw offering 678 IU, this veggie should make a frequent appearance at your dinner table. Folic acid is also abundant with one-half cup cooked registering 39 mcg and raw 31.2 mcg.

Broccoli offers 71.8 mg of calcium for a whole cup of cooked, as much calcium as 4 oz. of milk. That cup of raw contains 42.2 mg.

A cup of broccoli gives you 10% of your daily iron requirement, and the vitamin C content helps the body to absorb the iron.

One cup of cooked broccoli has as much vitamin C as an orange, and one third of a pound has more vitamin C than two and one-half pounds of oranges. A serving of one-half cup cooked broccoli offers 58.2 mg while the raw stores 41 mg. A cup of broccoli actually fulfills your daily

vitamin C requirement

If you're a calorie counter, count broccoli in with only 22 calories for one-half cup chopped and boiled and 12 calories for one-half cup raw chopped.

Though this exceptional vegetable is not a powerhouse of protein, it does contain 2 grams for one-half cup boiled, and 1 gram for the same quantity of raw. These same figures apply to fiber as well with 2 grams, for the boiled and 1 gram for the raw broccoli.

Across the nutrition scale, broccoli contains all the nutrients mentioned above in addition to vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

It is important to note that though the figures listed for raw broccoli seem lower, it is not because raw broccoli is inferior to cooked. Because raw broccoli contains more bulk or volume than the cooked, one must eat more to equal the figures for cooked. Cooking breaks down the volume of broccoli, making it easier to consume larger quantities.

Frozen broccoli contains about 35% more beta carotene than the fresh because the frozen packages consist mainly of the florets. Most of the beta carotene is stored in the florets. But don't jump too quickly. There's plenty of nutrition in those stems, such as extra calcium, iron, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and vitamin C.

The darker colors of the florets, such as blue green, or purplish green contain more beta carotene and vitamin C than those with lighter greens.

Medicinal Benefits

Though definitive proof is not yet published, the National Cancer Institute suggests that broccoli, along with its cruciferous family members, may be important in the prevention of some types of cancer.

Because of its impressive nutritional profile that includes beta carotene, vitamin C, calcium, fiber, and phytochemicals, specifically indoles and aromatic isothiocyanates, broccoli and its kin may be responsible for boosting certain enzymes that help to detoxify the body. These enzymes help to prevent cancer, diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, and high blood pressure.

Broccoli along with onions, carrots, and cabbage may also help to lower blood cholesterol. At the U.S. Department of Agriculture's regional research center in Philadelphia, two researchers, Dr. Peter Hoagland and Dr. Philip Pfeffer, discovered these vegetables contain a certain pectin fiber called calcium pectate that binds to bile acids, holding more cholesterol in the liver and releasing less into the bloodstream. They found broccoli equally as effective as some cholesterol lowering drugs.

Broccoli's wealth of the trace mineral, chromium, may be effective in preventing adult-onset diabetes in some people. At the Beltsville, Maryland, Human Research Laboratories of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. Richard Anderson, a diabetes expert, found that chromium boosts the ability of insulin to perform better in people with slight glucose intolerance.

Purchasing

Though broccoli is available year round, its peak season is from October to April. Prices may be higher in July and August when broccoli is less productive.

Look for compact crowns that have dark green, blue-green, or the purplish-green, tightly closed buds with dark green leaves that are strong and upright. Intense colors are a good indicator of hearty nutritional content. Yellow or yellowish-green broccoli heads and leaves indicate the vegetable is not fresh and has lost nutrients. Pass on the limp stalks and choose only sturdy, crisp, bright green stems.

Look carefully at the cut ends of the broccoli stalks and choose those that are completely closed. The stalks that have open cores on the bottom tend to be older, woodier, and tougher.

Allow 1/2 pound per serving. A medium bunch, about 1 1/2 to 2 pounds, will serve 3 to 4 people.

Storage

Wrap your broccoli in a plastic bag or plastic wrap and refrigerate as soon after purchase as possible. Though this vegetable is a great keeper and will still look good several days later, it's best if used within three days after purchase.

Refrigeration is a good way to protect broccoli's nutrients, especially the vitamin C, which is easily lost if not kept cold. Quite often, broccoli is shipped to market in boxes packed with ice.

Another storage suggestion, though uncommon, is to submerge the stem portions of an entire bunch of broccoli into a wide-mouthed pitcher filled with ice water. Cover the broccoli crowns loosely with a plastic bag, and change the ice water daily. This unique method will keep the bunch fresh and crisp for a whole week.

Never wash broccoli before storing in the refrigerator. The excess moisture promotes mold.

Preparation

For the best flavor and nutritional benefit, cook broccoli soon after purchase. Any vegetable that sits around for a week, even if refrigerated, will lose considerable vitamin value along with flavor.

Wash broccoli thoroughly just before using. Trim tough portion of the stem about one inch from the bottom. How you cut the broccoli prior to cooking is a matter of preference and the nature of the dish you are planning.

For salads and stir-fries, cut the broccoli into bite size pieces. Include the stems, too. Many classic cookbooks will direct the cook to discard the leaves and peel the stems, but think of all the nutrients and fiber you would lose.

Keep those stems in tact, and simply chop them or cut them into julienne strips to take advantage of their valuable vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals.

RAW

Chop or dice broccoli florets and stems into your salad bowl along with crisp romaine lettuce and an array of fresh vegetables.

Enjoy a broccoli slaw by shredding the stems on a coarse grater or the shredding disc of your food processor. Combine with shredded carrots and other veggies of your choice, add a little extra virgin olive oil, some lemon or lime juice, and season to taste.

Add broccoli to a blended raw soup preparation for a vitamin C boost.



Toss chopped broccoli, stems and all, into a blended green drink with water, kale, celery, and cucumber, and sweeten with a chopped apple.

Feature broccoli as the centerpiece of your own original salad with vegetables of different textures and colors.

Broccoli makes a dramatic sauce when combined in a blender with garlic, extra virgin olive oil, vegetable juices of your choice, and your favorite seasonings.

Include broccoli florets in your crudite platter as an appetizer, and serve along with your favorite dip.

STEAMED

Cut broccoli into florets and steam in a covered saucepan with a small amount of water for 4 to 5 minutes.

For a different look, you can cut the broccoli into trees by keeping the stems intact and simply cutting lengthwise through stems and flowering portion. Cook until just tender, taking care not to overcook or you'll lose those precious nutrients. Color can be your guide. At the just tender point, the broccoli will retain its brilliant green color and actually increase in nutrient value. However, when the broccoli turns to a dark olive green color, its nutritional density has been considerably diminished.

An alternative steaming method is to lift the cover several times during cooking to release steam, thus preserving the bright color of the broccoli.

If you choose to steam an entire stalk of broccoli, rather than cutting it into smaller servings, you might consider cutting through the stalks about half-way up the stem. This method will produce stems that cook tender in the same length of time as the florets.

If the broccoli is fresh, it should have a delicate and pleasing sweetness without any seasoning at all. When broccoli is lacking flavor, you can assume two things -- either it is not fresh or it has been grown in depleted soil, soil that is lacking in minerals. Sprinkle with lemon juice and a touch of extra virgin olive oil to bring up the flavor if needed.

Take care not to overcook broccoli or your kitchen will be engulfed with the odor of rotten eggs from the sulphur compounds that include ammonia and hydrogen sulfide released with long cooking.

Broccoli raab cooks more quickly because of its thinner stalks. Time carefully to avoid overcooking. Cooking this vegetable directly in a small amount of water may help to diminish its bitterness rather than steaming above the water. Cook no longer than 3 to 5 minutes.

STIR FRIED

Chop broccoli into bite-size florets and stir-fry in a small amount of olive oil, about 1 teaspoon, combined with water or vegetable broth. Flavor with Bragg Liquid Aminos or tamari, lemon or lime juice, a touch of your favorite vinegar, and finish with seasonings and herbs of your choice.

For an Asian touch, add a tablespoon or two of sesame oil to the stir fry and sprinkle natural sesame seeds over broccoli as a garnish.

SAUCE

Though it may be an unfamiliar way to prepare broccoli, you can create an outstanding sauce with visual appeal. Simply put steamed broccoli into the blender or food processor along with vegetable broth, a little olive oil, and seasonings to create a delicious sauce over brown rice, baked potatoes, polenta, or even pasta.

SOUPS

If you plan to add broccoli to a vegetable soup, cut the stems and florets into bite-sized pieces and add during the last few minutes of cooking.

BOILING We do not recommend boiling broccoli. Too many nutrients are lost in the pot of water.

Here's a sauce that is not for the faint-hearted or for those timid souls who shy away from garlic -- it definitely has a punch. If the quantity of raw garlic is a bit too lively for your taste, you can easily reduce the quantity to one or two cloves. This truly all-purpose sauce is delicious as a topping over all grain dishes, polenta, pasta, and baked potatoes.

BROCCOLI GARLIC SAUCE

1 large bunch fresh broccoli

2 to 4 large cloves garlic, crushed

1/3 C. (79 ml) extra virgin olive oil

1 1/4 t. salt or to taste

1 T. + 2 t. lemon juice

1 C. (237 ml) water

1. Trim off and discard bottom inch of broccoli stems and cut broccoli into large chunks.
2. Put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan with a steamer insert* and steam 4 to 5 minutes or until just tender. Transfer broccoli to the work bowl of a food processor.
3. Start with 1 or 2 cloves of garlic, add remaining ingredients to food processor, and process until pureed. Adjust seasonings for varied size of broccoli, and add more garlic to taste.
4. If desired, turn out into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, and warm over medium heat for about 3 minutes to tame the garlic just a bit. This makes a very thick sauce that can be thinned with water if preferred. Adjust seasonings accordingly. Makes 6 servings.

*If steamer insert is not available, put broccoli into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan with about 1/2" (1 cm) of water. Cover and bring to a boil. Turn heat to low and steam about 4 to 5 minutes.

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TAMING THE WILD STRAWBERRY

Strawberry at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipes

It's spring and you've made an exciting discovery--a field covered with fully ripened wild strawberries! Though you try tiptoeing to avoid stepping on the berries, it's impossible. You're stepping on the fruits because you're standing in wall-to-wall berries. You pluck one off the plant--it's sweet and juicy, but so tiny.

You were drawn to the field blanketed with lush green leaves because an intense sweet fragrance perfumed the air and beckoned to you. You spend the next hour picking and enjoying the sweetest fruits you've ever tasted. This moment becomes an unforgettable experience. In 1600 William Butler wrote, "Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God ever did."

There are still fields of wild strawberries throughout the northern portions of North America, Europe, and South America, the countries where wild patches of strawberries developed into cultivated farms centuries ago.

Strawberries were cultivated and traded in South America in Chile and Peru long before the Spanish explorers arrived. When the English Colonists arrived in Massachusetts, strawberries were already being cultivated by the Native American Indians. In Europe, however, cultivation of this delectable fruit didn't catch on until centuries later.

Historical Facts

Prehistoric man had little value for the wild strawberry because of its inconvenience, though he certainly did consume his share. The plants were found in the woods, often covered by lush overgrowth. The season was brief, only a few weeks, and the berries were smaller than our wild

strawberries today. Hardly worth the trouble, since early man did not know how to preserve and store foods. Yet, a few tiny strawberry seeds were discovered by archeologists in Mesolithic sites in Denmark, Neolithic sites in Switzerland, and Iron Age sites in England.

Though wild strawberries were certainly enjoyed in the ancient world, it is doubtful they were cultivated during that time. Pliny, Roman naturalist and writer, 23 to 79 CE, mentions the ground strawberry, *Fraga*, briefly and states it is different from the tree strawberry. Of the wild plants eaten during his time he lists strawberries, parsnips and hops but says no more about them. Ovid, the Roman poet, also distinguishes between the ground strawberry and tree strawberry but never mentions cultivation.



Other writers of ancient Rome, Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius, never write about strawberry cultivation. Rome's first cookbook author, Apicius, hasn't a single reference to the strawberry in his cookbook, either.

Roman poet Virgil, (70 to 19 BCE), author of the *Aeneid*, confirms that strawberries were not cultivated during his time when he writes only a warning to children picking wild strawberries to beware of serpents lurking in the grass.

Strawberries are not mentioned in the Bible, nor do they appear in any Egyptian or Greek art. This is probably because they grew only in cooler climates and possibly at locales like the mountainous foothills of Rome and France where they could not be easily picked. The ancient Romans can at least be credited for preserving strawberries by pickling them.

Centuries passed without mention of the strawberry in any European literature.

In the 12th century an abbess named Saint Hildegard von Binger declared strawberries unfit for consumption because they grew along the ground where snakes and toads most likely crawled upon them. Her words had such an effect on the local political figures that they, too, made similar declarations, discouraging the population from eating the berries. Among Europeans, this belief held for several years.

Sporadic efforts of strawberry cultivation began in the 1300's with a few plantings of the wild fruits into home gardens. On a grander scale, King Charles V adorned his Parisian gardens at the Louvre with 1200 strawberry plants in 1368. A few years later, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy had their gardener plant a four-block area of their property near Dijon with strawberries.

In the fifteenth century the strawberry was first illustrated in a German botanical volume called *Herbarius Latinus Moguntiae*, the Herbal of Mainz. Interestingly, this volume and the herbals that followed, describes the strawberry not as a food but speaks of it only as a medicine.

Strawberries captured the palates of many of history's explorers. In 1534 Jacques Cartier traveled to Quebec in Canada and wrote this description in his diary of what he had seen, "vast patches of strawberries along the great river (referring to the St. Lawrence) and in the woods."

Thomas Hariot, an English explorer who came to America, was impressed with the strawberries he had eaten in Virginia. His 1588 diary noted that he discovered strawberries "as good and great as those which we have in English gardens." and brought back plant specimens to his home in

London. North America's native strawberries were larger and more flavorful than the European varieties he had encountered.

In 1560, Bruyerin-Champier, physician to King Henry IV, wrote that the English ladies enjoyed their strawberries and cream so much they began planting the strawberries in their own gardens. This hints that European cultivation of the wild strawberry had at last taken root. During this period, many books on horticulture provided information on cultivating the strawberry, noting that the berries grown in the home garden were larger than those gathered in the wild.

Tusser, who wrote *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* in 1557, made a recommendation that would create quite a stir today. He proposed growing strawberries as an appropriate part of the "employment of women," and composed the following poem:

Wife, into the garden and set me a plot
With strawberry roots, the best to be got.
Such growing abroad among thorns in the wood,
Well chosen and picked, prove excellent good.

Toward the end of the 1500's the cultivation trend reached Germany where they grew a variety of strawberries that produced two crops a year.



Roger Williams, a British born clergyman and founder of Rhode Island, remarked, "This berry is the wonder of all the fruits growing naturally in those parts. . . In some parts where the Indians have planted them, I have many times seen as many as would fill a good ship, within a few miles compass. The Indians bruise them in a Morter, and mixe them with meale and make strawberry bread."

It was the French who took up serious cultivation of this captivating fruit. Many a horticulturist owes homage to both King Louis XIV and one of his gardeners, Jean de la Quintinie, who tended the royal gardens at the Palace of Versailles. The King chose strawberries as his favorite fruit and even initiated a poetry contest on the merits of the strawberry. However, it was his gardener who kept the

first detailed account in 1697 of how to develop larger berries, how to prepare the soil and deal with the insects' wont to share the strawberries.

One man, Karl von Linne, a Swedish botanist whose Latinized name was Carolus Linnaeus, defied the common thinking and ate a diet of only strawberries to prove them quite edible. This occurrence took place for a brief period sometime between 1707 and 1778.

Hybridizing of the strawberry first occurred early in the 18th century when a flavorful Virginia variety was crossed with a Chilean variety to produce a berry that was larger and firmer than most. Because of its distinctive flavor, this strawberry became known as the Pineapple strawberry.

It was a crafty French naval engineer named Amédée-François Frézier who noticed the exceptionally large strawberries growing in Chile while he was mapping the locations of West

Coast Spanish forts and colonies in 1712. As an amateur botanist, he took a special interest in these plants the natives called *quelghen*. He wrote that they were, "as big as a walnut and sometimes as large as a hen's egg."

He brought some of these plants back to France, and had two of them planted in the royal gardens. The other five were planted at Plougastel in Brittany, where the climate was similar to their homeland in Chile. The plants grew and grew but produced no berries, a circumstance that confounded everyone until thirty years later someone planted a Virginia strawberry next to them.

What Frézier didn't know was that the Chilean berries produced male and female flowers on separate plants. All his Chilean plants happened to be female and couldn't reproduce without pollen from male plants. A whole new variety developed from this marriage of a South American strawberry and a North American strawberry. Horticulturists named the new offspring *Fragaria x ananassa*. All cultivated strawberry varieties throughout the world can trace their history back to the joining of the Virginia and Chilean berries.

Louis XV was so enamored with strawberries that he ordered his gardener to plant every variety of the berry to be found in Europe. Despite the nearly 300 kinds of strawberries planted there, Alexandre Dumas, in his *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine* written in the mid-1800's, only mentions five kinds. Strawberries were still not commonly eaten in European countries.

During the early 1800's, Americans were planting strawberries with enthusiasm in their home gardens, but because of the fruit's fragile nature, farmers did not ship them to markets far from home. In local markets they sold quickly.

The first "refrigerated" shipping of strawberries across the U.S. occurred in 1843 when some innovative Cincinnati, Ohio growers spread ice on top of the strawberry boxes and sent them on their way. By the middle of the 1800's many regions of the United States were cultivating strawberries.

By 1831 strawberries finally became a fashionable fruit in the English marketplace. Londoners were gathering wild strawberries from the local fields. The English loved them so much that many of the wealthy as well as the commoners lovingly tended small strawberry patches in their home gardens.

The Naming of Strawberries

The name strawberry came about easily because straw was used freely to mulch the plants during the winter, a practice that discourages weeds and lifts the berries up from the soil. When it came time to harvest the berries, children would pick them and string them on a blade of straw. At the London market the children would sell "Straws of Berries."

Originally strawberries were called *strewberries*, a name descriptive of how they grew. The berries appeared to be strewn among the leaves, and the runners themselves appeared to be strewn among the plants. Until 1538, the Anglo Saxon spelling *streoberie* was used. The strawberry's name went through many evolutions including *streowberige*, *strea berige*, *strew berian wisan*, *streabergen*, *streberi leif*, *streberewyse*, *straberry*, *streberie*, *straibery*, and *straubery*.

Linnaeus, the Swedish botanist, gave the strawberry its official species name of **Fragaria**. Each of the romance languages, French, Italian and Spanish, refer to the strawberry as **Fraise** which means

fragrant. Those who shop at farmers' markets will confirm the Latin name an apropos description.

On the North American continent, the Naragansett Indians called it "wuttahimneash" which translated as heart-seed berry.

Strawberry Cultivation in California

The California strawberry boom took root in 1887 with a 9-year old boy named Charlie Loftus whose father moved to a ranch about 20 miles north of Redding, California, an area called Sweet Briar. In a small patch of strawberries inherited from the previous landowner was a singular plant that stood out from the rest. Little Charlie noticed that its berries, larger than the rest, were bright red, conical in shape, and smelled and tasted exceptionally sweet. That winter this special strawberry plant was carefully transplanted into a wooden keg and eventually produced one quarter of an acre of exquisite berries his family named Sweet Briar.

At a breakfast table in 1900 the Sweet Briar strawberries became the subject of a partnership involving Charlie's father, Thomas Loftus, of Shasta County and two growers from Pajaro Valley, Dick Driscoll and Joe Reitner. Together they decided to protect and propagate the Sweet Briar strawberries.

In 1912 the Pajaro Valley partners came up with a unique way to promote their special variety at the San Francisco markets. Each crate of strawberries was dressed up with a blue paper ribbon that had an attractive red strawberry printed on the banner. The innovation was so successful that the Sweet Briar strawberries became known as Banners, a name associated with superiority.

The business has been handed down through the Loftus line and today is in the hands of Roger and Tom Loftus, sons of Tim Loftus. Part of the farm is in Malin, Oregon while the other is in Susanville, California.

Today, 80 percent of commercially grown strawberries are from California's farms, where each acre produces about 21 tons of berries. Approximately one billion pounds of strawberries a year are grown in the state.

Growing

Strawberry plants are members of the *Rosaceae* family also known as the rose family, while all strawberries belong to the *Fragaria virginia* or *Fragaria chiloensis* genus. In the 1500's, when the wild strawberry was transplanted into home gardens, it was given the genus name of *Fragaria vesca*.

Strawberries initially grew best in northern countries where the colder winters kept the plants happier than in the warmer, southern regions. Strawberries require good irrigation and do not tolerate drought conditions. They are unique in their ability to adapt well to a broader range of climates than most other fruits and are not fussy about soil conditions that lean to acidic or alkaline.

Because of their adaptability, strawberries are grown in all 50 states of the United States and in all of Canada's provinces. Some varieties are everbearing, *F. sylvestris semperflorens*, producing berries beginning in the summer and continuing through the fall, some even fruiting until the frost.

Ideally, new plants are put into the ground in the spring. If the weather is too cold, fall plantings

can be challenging; however if special care is given, plants can be successful.

Strawberries are unique in that their seeds are on the outside rather than contained inside. Their seeds do not serve to grow new plants. Strawberry plants multiply by sending out runners along the ground during the time that fruit is developing. These runners develop roots and form new plants. A whole new plantation can be started from these newly formed runner plants.

Because strawberries are so delicate and highly perishable they cannot be machine-harvested and are almost always picked by hand. Strawberries do not ripen after they are picked and, therefore, shouldn't be picked until they are fully ripened.

Birds have played an important role in the distribution of seeds that started many wild strawberry plants growing. When the birds eat ripe strawberries, the seeds pass through them in rather good condition. The seeds require only light to begin germinating and do not actually require soil to begin sprouting.

Ask a Nebraska Court

On January 4, 1996 the Nebraska Supreme Court handed down a decision that affects anyone buying strawberries in a store in that state. In an effort to avoid confusion, the state has created a law that could possibly result in more confusion. Many states across the country have adopted the Uniform Weights and Measures Act stating that small berries may be sold by weight or by volume. Nebraska State inspectors declared that a store could not sell strawberries by weight and by volume in the same store at the same time. If the store desired, they could sell the strawberries by weight one day, and by volume the next. The ruling was an effort to avoid confusing the consumer about which was the better value, a pint or a pound, but . . .you figure it out! Here are a few shopper's comparisons that may provide some help when purchasing strawberries:

- 1 1/2 pounds equal 2 pints or 1 quart
- 1 small basket equals 1 pint
- 1 pint equals 3 1/4 cups of whole berries
- 1 pint equals 2 1/4 cups sliced berries
- 1 pint equals 1 2/3 cup pureed berries
- 1 cup equals about 4 ounces

The sizes and weights of the strawberries will vary; therefore, all pints will not have the same weight.

Favorite Dishes

Strawberry Shortcake, an all-time favorite American dessert is a frequent star on the sweet table when strawberries are in season from early spring through summer. A sumptuous dessert, **Strawberry Shortcake** is composed of sponge cake, divided into two layers, filled with sliced, sweetened strawberries and whipped cream between the layers, and finished with a generous layer of sliced strawberries and whipped cream over the top. In present day California, different varieties of strawberries come into season at different times of the year and are shipped across the country, making this delectable dessert available year-round.



Strawberry Shortcake is not the creation or invention of any one person. The Native Americans Indians inspired the creation of Strawberry Shortcake by introducing the Colonists to their style of baked bread made simply of cornmeal and crushed strawberries. The Colonists then applied their English baking skills and created their own version, strawberry shortcake.

Strawberries and Cream, a tasty combination, has a rather long history. In 1542, an Englishman named Andrew Boorde expresses his appreciation for the comfort combo in this way:

"Rawe crayme undecocted, eaten with strawberyes or hurtes (whortleberry, billberry) is a rurall mannes blanket. I have knowen such blankettes hath put men in jeopardy of theyr lyves."

In Eastern Europe, strawberries are paired with sour cream, while in France and Italy, strawberries are topped with wine and sugar.

Medicinal Uses

During the 13th century the French cultivated strawberries to use as a medicinal herb for numerous digestive discomforts.

The roots, leaves, and fruits of the Alpine Strawberry, *Fragaria Vesca*, were used as a digestive aid and skin tonic. The berry was prescribed for diarrhea and digestive upset, while the leaves and roots were supposed to relieve gout. The berry itself was rubbed on the skin to ease the pain of sunburn and to relieve blemishes. The juice of the strawberry has its own special prescription--it brightened discolored teeth.

The ancient Romans were staunch believers in the curative powers of the strawberry. They believed it relieved melancholy and masked bad breath. According to the ancients, strawberries could cure inflammations, fevers, throat infections, kidney stones, gout, fainting spells, and diseases of the blood, liver, and spleen.

John Gerard, a French herbalist, touted the value of boiled strawberry leaves as a poultice. Of the fruit, itself he says, "the ripe Strawberries quench thirst, and take away, if they be often used, the redness and heate of the face." Patients enjoyed the medicinal fruit treatment so much they began eating them as a food, accompanied with cream or wine.

Folklore and Fascinating Facts

Legends often tell about love rituals. Be careful with whom you share a double strawberry. It is destined that the two of you may fall in love.

Because of their bright red colors and heart shapes, strawberries were the symbol for Venus, the Goddess of Love.

Henry VIII's second wife, Ann Boleyn, was thought to have been a witch because she had a strawberry shaped birthmark on her neck.

During medieval times, strawberries symbolized righteousness and perfection. Stone masons applied their carved strawberry signs onto altars and at the tops of pillars in churches and

cathedrals.

If you live in Bavaria, somewhere out in the country, you might be participating in an annual spring ritual that recognizes the importance of strawberries. The farm folk make an offering to the elves that they believe will help their cows produce healthy calves and a good supply of milk. The spring offerings of little baskets filled with wild strawberries are tied to the horns of their cattle to wait for the berry-loving elves to enjoy the berries and offer their good spirits to their hosts.

The United States honored the strawberry with a 33-cent stamp first issued on April 10, 1999. The stamp featured a cluster of bright red strawberries peeking out from their brilliant green leaves.



Strawberries just happen to be in season during the world-famous Wimbledon Tennis Matches, a time when tennis fanciers nibble on the berries as a snack while viewing the games. If you were British, you might easily think of the event as Wimbledon Strawberry season.

Ever consider bathing in the juice of fresh strawberries? Twenty-two pounds of crushed strawberries made up the bathwater that went into the tub when Madame Talien, one of the court figures of Emperor Napoleon, took her bath. This ritual did not occur often since people did not bathe regularly during Napoleon's time, mid 1700s into the early 1800s.

Many places in the world have been named for the strawberry. Here are a few you may have visited:

- Strawberry, Arizona
- Strawberry, California
- Strawberry Crater Wilderness in the Cocinino National Forest in Arizona
- The Virtual Strawberry Beds west of Dublin, Ireland, a beautiful area unaffected by urban development
- Strawberry Mountain in Malheur National Forest, Oregon
- Mansikkala, Finland translated as The Place of the Strawberry. Farms there grow strawberries that ripen 24 hours a day during the time of the midnight sun
- Horace Walpole, English novelist of the 1700's, named his villa Strawberry Hill. He grew Virginia strawberries on his estate.

A blond whose hair has a reddish tint is called a strawberry blonde.

In the family of finches there is one variety called the Strawberry Finch

Nutritional Information

One cup of fresh strawberries contains only 43 calories and an impressive nutritional profile. Looking at the figures, one cannot help notice that this fruit is not lacking in valuable nutrients, but is endowed with a healthy content of every vitamin and mineral except Vitamin B12.

Just 5 medium-sized strawberries will supply your minimum RDA of Vitamin A and includes the following nutritional benefits:

1 g. protein

.5 g fat
10 g. carbohydrates
3 g. fiber
.6 mg iron
1 mg sodium
20.2 mg calcium
30 mg phosphate
39 IU Vitamin A
.03 mg thiamine
.10 mg riboflavin
81.6 mg Vitamin C
239 mg potassium
.02 mg zinc
14.4 mg magnesium
.09 mg Vitamin B6
25.5 mcg folacin

Purchasing and Storing

Since strawberries do not ripen after they are picked, select only those with a fresh shiny look and bright red color. Check to see that the green stems, too, look fresh and not wilted. Refrigerate soon after purchasing the berries.

Do not wash the strawberries until shortly before ready to serve. Berries are highly perishable, and the extra water on them causes their cells to break down more quickly. Wash the berries and pat them dry before removing the stems. This method avoids excess water entering the berries from the stem end.

Wash and cut up only what you can consume that same day. If you've refrigerated any leftovers, you'll notice that they have lost their fresh appearance, much of their water content has oozed out, and they simply don't taste the same.

The best way to store strawberries, if you have the space in your refrigerator, is to arrange them in a single layer on top of paper towels. Use the berries within three or four days.

If you are picking fresh strawberries, use a shallow basket or bowl and don't pile them more than two layers high. Too many layers will crush the fragile berries on the bottom.

Freezing

To freeze strawberries, wash and dry them, remove the stems, and arrange them single layer on a baking sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer until the berries are solidly frozen. Then pack them into a zip-lock freezer bag and keep them frozen until ready to use.

Raw

Strawberries are so special just the as they are; they don't require any formal preparation. Simply wash 'em and eat 'em.

Coarsely mash them into a sauce, maintaining lots of their texture, and pour the sauce over a fruit salad. Sweeten if desired.

Slice them into a tossed green salad for a touch of spring color.

Serve them as dessert in combination with blackberries. Create a sauce by mashing a few of the strawberries to pour over the top.

Combine them with soaked grains and nuts for a hearty breakfast.

Create a unique salad dressing with strawberries. Whirl them in the blender with oil, balsamic vinegar, and seasonings to taste. See the Recipe Index.

Make a strawberry smoothie with strawberries, bananas, a splash of lime juice, and a little sweetening.

Make a savory strawberry sauce by adding crushed garlic and minced jalapeno to mashed strawberries.

Cooked

Bake a strawberry pie. A favorite among pie lovers is the combination of strawberry and rhubarb that is also in season.

Stir them into pancake or waffle batter. As an alternative, serve them on top of your breakfast favorites.

Cook up some strawberry jam to spread on your morning toast.

Make a strawberry cobbler.

Prepare a strawberry mousse with frozen strawberries, soft silken tofu, and a sweetener.

For an elegant finish to a meal, serve some strawberries dipped in dark chocolate and some in white chocolate. Leave the stems on for added color.

This month we offer two recipes featuring strawberries--one as a light beginning to your meal, the other, an ideal finishing touch.

Strawberries almost always bring to mind thoughts of something sweet. Our soup, while retaining the natural sweetness of the berries, has added dimension fusing a hint of the salty, along with a touch of tartness.

SAVORY STRAWBERRY SOUP

1 pint (1/2 liter) fresh strawberries, hulled
1 small clove garlic, finely minced
1 t. lemon or lime zest
1 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos
2 1/2 t. mirin (Japanese sweet wine)
2 T. diced fresh avocado

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender except the avocado. Blend on low speed until thoroughly pureed. You may have to stop the machine a few times to redistribute the strawberries. Chill at least 2 hours before serving.
2. Pour into serving bowls, and garnish with diced avocado. Makes 2 cups (480 ml) or 2 small servings.

SENSUOUS STRAWBERRY SORBET

1 pint (1/2 liter) fresh strawberries, hulled
1 T. lemon juice

20 pitted dates
1/2 ripe banana

4 small sprigs of mint leaves

1. Wash strawberries and put them into the blender with the lemon juice. Blend until thoroughly pureed. You may have to stop the machine a few times to redistribute strawberries.
2. Add dates and banana and blend until thoroughly pureed.
3. Pour into a metal loaf pan and freeze. To serve, remove pan from freezer and allow to stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Then scoop into the blender or food processor and process briefly.
4. Spoon into long stemmed wine glasses or attractive dessert bowls and garnish with a sprig of mint. Makes 2 cups (480 ml) or 4 servings.

See [Recipe Index](#) for other strawberry recipes.

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CANTALOUPE HIDE THEIR TRUE IDENTITY

Cantaloupe at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Medical Benefits	
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

If CIA agents were to launch their Great Cantaloupe Investigation, they would quickly unveil the mystery: a cantaloupe is not really a cantaloupe. Muskmelons have been masquerading as cantaloupes in the United States for many years.

True cantaloupes are not netted, have deep grooves, a hard warty rind, and orange or green flesh. These are grown only in Europe where the population easily makes the distinction between muskmelons and cantaloupes. Muskmelons that most Americans call cantaloupes have a distinct netted or webbed rind.

History

Food historians have been befuddled when it comes to determining the exact origin of the melon. Some say it was in Persia that the melon was first eaten; others say Afghanistan while still other historians pinpoint Armenia.

Cantaloupes were cultivated in Egypt and across to Iran and Northwest India dating as far back to Biblical times, about 2400 BCE. Egyptian paintings dating back to that period include fruits that are identified as melons. In the ancient world no distinction was made between melons that were netted, such as the cantaloupe, or non-netted, as in the honeydew.

When Moses led the Hebrew people into the desert where they wandered for 40 years, one of the foods they craved was melons, possibly a variety of cantaloupe. In Numbers 11:5 the Hebrews remembered, "the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons."





In the Gilgamesh, a Sumerian epic completed about 2000 BCE, the hero, a Babylonian king named for the poem, ate "cassia melons," a name indicating the fruit had a spicy aromatic flavor.

The Assyrians were well acquainted with melons. They grew them in the garden of King Merodach-Baladan. In the city of Ur a resident named Ur-Nammu planted them in his garden as well. The fruits are depicted on the festive tables of several Assyrian bas reliefs, though it is unclear whether they are cantaloupes. Melons are also listed in an Assyrian Herbal.

A Middle Eastern proverb states, "He who fills his stomach with melons is like he who fills it with light--there is baraka (a blessing) in them."

All throughout the Middle East, dried and roasted melon seeds have long been a favorite snack. Between 200 to 100 BCE, even the Chinese royalty were enjoying melon seeds. In a more recent archeological site discovered in 1973, a perfectly preserved female body was found in the province of Hunan in a nested coffin that was buried sixty feet deep. Melon seeds were found in her esophagus, stomach, and intestines. The woman was identified as the wife of the Marquis of Tai during the Han dynasty, pinpointing the date at about 125 BCE.

In the first century CE, Pliny, The Elder, a Roman naturalist and writer, wrote about a plant called melopepo that grows on a vine that does not hang like the cucumber, but rather lies on the ground. He describes its fruit as spherical and yellowish and even notes that it detaches easily from the stem--all qualities that describe the cantaloupe.

At the foot of Mt. Vesuvius in ancient Sicily a wall painting depicting melons cut in half was discovered in the city Herculaneum. This city, close to Pompeii, was buried in a volcanic eruption in 79 CE but many treasures were found practically unharmed.

Galen, a second century Greek physician, discusses the medical benefits of melons in his writings.

About the third century CE, the Romans were importing their melons from Armenia. These were not the large, weighty melons we know today, rather they were about the size of oranges. Some people were also growing the melons, since there were Roman manuals that gave specific directions on their cultivation.

Apicius, Ancient Rome's first cookbook author, included melons in his Imperial cuisine. These were eaten raw, while gourds, also considered melons, were cooked.

Charlemagne was one who appreciated new fruits and vegetables and continually added new cultivars to his garden. About 800 CE, melons were a new addition to his royal gardens. He probably discovered them in Spain where they were planted a century before by the Moors. In spite of Charlemagne's love of this fruit, melons didn't become popular in France until much later.

En route to China, sometime around 1254 to 1324 CE, Marco Polo traveled to the city of Shibarghan in Afghanistan. There he found what he considered "the best melons in the world in very great quantity which they dry in this manner: they cut them all around in slices like strips of leather, then put them in the sun to dry, when they become sweeter than honey. And you must know that they are an article of commerce and find a ready sale through all the country around."

Albertus Magnus, European writer of thirteenth century, clearly describes the watermelon and the

pepo, a term used by Europeans to refer to the cantaloupe.



When the Roman Empire collapsed, Italy no longer received shipments of melons from Asia Minor. Historians tell us it wasn't until about the fourteenth century that melons returned to Italy, still in their orange-size portions. At that point the Italians took their cultivation seriously, and melons began to expand in size and weight.

During the fifteenth century, cantaloupes were growing in popularity in the southern part of Spain. Melon seeds were brought in by the Arabs who settled in Andalusia. From there they were introduced to the New World on Columbus's second voyage in 1493 when he took melon seeds to Haiti. One of his journal entries dated 1494, records that he found cantaloupes growing in the Galapagos from a planting only two months prior.

The Indians of Central and South America were delighted to discover a new fruit and eagerly adopted cantaloupes into their cultivated gardens.

By the 1600's cantaloupes were grown in North America from Florida to New England, but the melons did not attain popular acceptance until the 19th century. It was not until after the Civil War, which ended in 1865, that cantaloupes became a major crop in United States

Sometime during the sixteenth century, melon seeds from Armenia were planted in the Papal gardens of Cantaloupe, a city near Tivoli close to Rome. According to historians, cantaloupes acquired their name here where this species was first grown in Europe.

In the seventeenth century, melons were becoming a popular fruit in France and Italy, but could only be grown in the southern regions, and then only under glass to capture enough warmth for them to mature. At that time the French were referring to melons as "sucrins," meaning sugar. Charles Estienne, printer and publisher, reveals the secret of success to growing sweet melons. He says, "gardeners watered them with honeyed or sweetened water." Even Jean de la Quintinie, gardener to Louis XIV, planted seven varieties of melons under glass.

In the mid 1800's Navahos in the United States Southwest were growing cantaloupes whose seeds probably arrived via Latin America. On a trip to Armenia some time during the 1900's, British novelist Michael Arlen learned it was the Armenians who introduced the casaba melon into California. That variety of melon acquired its name from the city of Kasaba, in Turkey, where it was also cultivated.

On France's 1881 official records, the Netted Gem, our familiar cantaloupe, was first exported to the United States. It wasn't until 1895 that commercial production of the cantaloupe actually began, surprisingly, in the state of Colorado. We can also thank the French for the bringing us the honeydew melon about 1900, a variety they called White Antibes winter melon.

The French had much to say about melons. One poet said, "There are three things which cannot support mediocrity, poetry, wine, and melons." Claude Mermet, a French writer of the 1600's

expressed an expectation of mediocrity in melons when considering them as friends. He wrote, "fifty had to be tried to find a single good one." When Mermet's thoughts were translated into English, it became a rhyming jingle:

Friends are like melons. Shall I tell you why?
To find one good, you must a hundred try.

Another French writer, Brillat-Savarin, took offense at that little poem, defending melons by expressing that good ones were the rule, bad ones the exception. He did explain that melons must be eaten at the exact moment when they had attained "the perfection which is their destiny."

Today, cantaloupes grown in California come from one of two regions: the Imperial Valley and the San Joaquin Valley. In the Imperial Valley, a more desert-like area, the melons are planted in December through March.

In the San Joaquin Valley, in Central California, plantings begin in February and continue through July. Between these two areas, local cantaloupes are available from May through October.

Cantaloupes in Many Cultures

In the United States, cantaloupes are eaten uncooked, often as dessert or as part of a fruit cup presented as an appetizer.

In the Orient, melons are commonly cooked and eaten as vegetables; however, these are not the sweet varieties familiar to cantaloupe and honeydew fanciers. The Chekiang melon is one variety grown from Thailand to Southeast China. Pickled, this melon keeps for several months and serves as a tasty condiment.

Dried melon seeds are a common snack in Central and South America, China, as well as the Middle East from Iran to Egypt.

One of Apicius's recipes describes raw melons served with a sauce of "pepper, pennyroyal, honey or condensed must, broth and vinegar. Once in a while one adds silphium." Silphium is possibly asafoetida, an herb used in the cuisine of India.

Some people sprinkle their cantaloupes with salt and pepper, others add a dash of powdered ginger. Citrus lovers feel that a sprinkle of lemon or lime juice adds a definitive enhancement to the cantaloupe.

Medicinal Benefits

Medieval alchemists claimed that melons "promoted blood moderately, and suited phlegmatic and bilious temperaments." It was said that they relieved "the pain of calculi and cleansed the skin, but caused flux from the belly which could be treated with syrup of vinegar."

A Chinese herbal claims that sweet melons cool fevers, moisten the lungs, and benefit the urine. In addition, the seeds will clear phlegm and benefit the intestines. Sweet melons are also prescribed to relieve tuberculosis cough, and constipation. For a toothache caused by wind and heat, take six grams of melon skin, add water and steam till cooked. When cool, use as a mouth rinse.

Cantaloupes may be helpful to people with heart disease because they contain an anticoagulant called adenosine. With their very high beta carotene content, cantaloupes rank high as an

anticarcinogenic food. Abundant in potassium, cantaloupes may be beneficial for those with high blood pressure. Because of their high water content, they serve as a diuretic.

Growing

The term muskmelon crops up often when referring to cantaloupes. Historically, the cantaloupes grown in the United States were called muskmelons. However, today, growers in the U.S. use both words interchangeably.

Cantaloupes are the melons that mature in late spring and early summer and are netted with green and yellow rinds.

Late summer maturing, specialty melons referred to as winter melons, include casaba, crenshaw, Christmas, and canary varieties.

Naming the Cantaloupe

The scientific name for cantaloupe is *Cucumis melo* with seven different botanical variations. The *Reticulatus* variation is our familiar cantaloupe. Others in the cantaloupe group are the Galia, Persian, and Charentais.



Cantaloupensis, the true cantaloupe, has a completely different appearance and is only grown in Europe.

Cucumis melo var inodorus referred to as Winter Melons, are those that mature in late summer. These include casaba, crenshaw, Christmas, canary and honeydew melons.

Cantaloupes are also members of the *Curcubit* (*Curcubitaceae*) family that includes watermelons, squashes, pumpkins, gourds, and cucumbers. The *curcubit* family members can readily cross-pollinate with other varieties of that same family, so farmers are careful to keep them apart. To explain, if you have planted two varieties of cucumbers close together, bees may carry pollen from one to the other. You won't see anything unique in that planting season. However, if you save the seeds from those plants and plant them the following year, you may discover a strange looking cucumber or two.

Cantaloupes, called vine crops, thrive in hot and even humid regions. Since they are heat loving, you can imagine they are very frost sensitive. Most melons are annuals, though a few are perennials

Botanically, the melon family is a *pepo*, a more European term, with many variations on a theme. The salad members of this family include cucumbers. Cooking members include pumpkins and squashes. Dessert members include watermelon, muskmelons, honeydews, and cantaloupes.

Our familiar cantaloupe, or muskmelon, was developed by W. Altee Burpee Company in 1881. Because of its very netted rind, the cantaloupe earned the variety name of Netted Gem

Today, California grows 70% of the U.S. muskmelon crop, with Texas and Arizona second and third in production.

Muskmelons produce two kinds of flowers, "perfect flowers" that have both male and female parts, and staminate flowers that have only male parts. The vines produce large, attractive flowers that

last only one day.

Pollination by bees is a must for fruit to set. Most melon growers will have one or two honeybee hives per acre next to melon fields for ideal melon production.

Early plantings are best grown on well-drained sandy loam or silt loam soil with a more alkaline ph, about 6.0 to 6.5 because these soils warm more quickly. During the main growing season, loam and loam clay soils are preferred because they hold moisture longer, allowing for a longer growing season. More acidic soil produces weaker plants with fewer melons.

Harvesting of cantaloupes is mostly done by hand beginning in May. Nature has created the perfect built-in system of determining when the melons are just ripe for picking. When the sugar content reaches its peak, a buffer layer develops between the stem and the melon, forming a shield that prevents more nutrients from entering the melon. Only those that separate easily from the vine with light pressure are considered mature. The peak season is June through August.

Cantaloupes are considered quite perishable. Once the melons are picked, growers quickly cool them through forced-air cooling or a hydrocooling system, from 50 degrees F (10 degrees C) to 39.2 degrees F (4 degrees C) until they are transported by truck to local markets or across the United States and Canada. A small number of these melons travel across the Pacific to Asian markets.

Below are a number of melon varieties that will be familiar to you. Some are considered specialty melons that are rare to see in the supermarket. Farmers' markets are the place to experience these unusual varieties.

Honeydew: Smooth, creamy white rind with a pubescence (a soft, invisible, downy texture that disappears when ready to eat), light green flesh, juicy, sweet. Newer varieties include orange fleshed honeydews. 5 to 7 lbs.

Casaba: Matures late summer. The skin is corrugated and pale to bright yellow or greenish yellow, not netted or ribbed. Flesh is white or cream colored, sweet, considered spicy, and very juicy. 7 to 8 lbs.

Crenshaw: Late summer maturing. Has elongated shape, rough skin, corrugated with yellow and green mottled coloring. Flesh is pale pinkish orange, sweet distinctive flavor. Large 7 to 10 lbs.

Canary: Late summer maturing. Oval shape similar to crenshaw , bright yellow corrugated rind. Flesh is pale green to white with pale orange seed cavity, mild and delicately sweet. 6 to 7 lbs.

Santa Claus or Christmas: Elongated shape similar to canary but with mottled green and yellow rind and green flesh. Its name is derived from its long keeping qualities. 6 to 7 lbs.

Charentais: Small European melon also known as Chaca, French or Italian melon. Slightly elongated. Can be smooth or slightly netted, gray or gray-blue rind with dark green furrows. Flesh is deep orange, firm and sweet. 1 1/2 to 2 lbs.

Persian: Late summer maturing. Similar to cantaloupe but with a more rounded shape. Dark green rind with slight tan cracks and sparse netting. Flesh is orange-pink, sweet and firm. 5 to 6 lbs.

Ogen: Netted rind turns golden yellow when fully mature. Very fragrant with sweet flesh. Small, 3 to 5 lbs.

Galia: Netted rind like cantaloupes, green flesh similar to honeydew

Sharlyn: Netted rind greenish orange in color. Has white flesh and a sweet flavor that combines the qualities of honeydew and cantaloupe.

Nutrition

The ideal summer fruit, cantaloupe's cooling ability is not so surprising when we realize its weight is 95% water, while the sugar content is only 5%.

Cantaloupe is a dieter's delight! It's extremely low in calories, has almost zero fat, and its flavor is positively ambrosial. One fourth of a medium cantaloupe has only about 50 calories and provides 80% of the RDA for both vitamins A and C.

Cantaloupe really shines when it comes to vitamin A. That one fourth of a medium cantaloupe provides a hearty 4450 I.U.

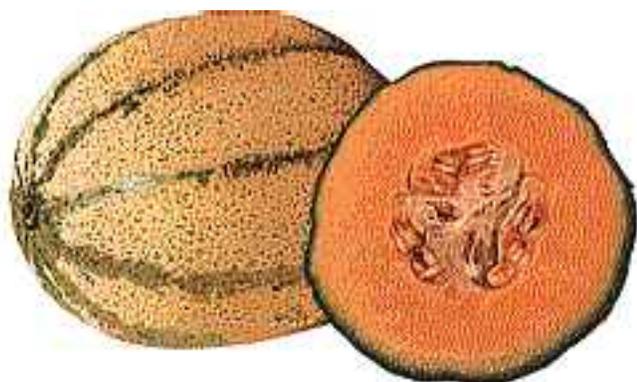
That same quarter of a cantaloupe also provides 2% of the RDA for both iron and calcium, offers 1 gram of fiber and 1 gram of protein.

Though it's hardly mentioned, cantaloupe provides a moderate amount of B vitamins, including 23.4 mcg of folic acid. It's not bad on the minerals either. That one-fourth cantaloupe provides 426 mg. of potassium and 15.2 mg of calcium.

Cantaloupe is higher in vitamin A and C than honeydew or the winter melons such as casaba or crenshaw.

Purchasing

Though the harvest season for cantaloupes in California is usually May through October, many fruits arriving at supermarkets from Central and South America, extend melon availability year round. Those that travel here from Chile, however, are not as sweet as our locally grown melons.



When cantaloupes are harvested, they are considered fully matured, or ripe, but still firm. Occasionally, they are harvested too early. Once they leave the vine, they do not increase in sweetness since they have no starch reserves to convert to sugar. However, they do "ripen" or soften.

In order to select the perfect cantaloupe, learn to recognize the characteristics of ideal ripeness.

First, look at the rind. It should have a slightly golden color rather than a greenish tone. Then, examine the stem end. A slight indentation indicates a "full slip" or ripeness.

Press gently on the blossom end of the melon. It should be slightly soft. At room temperature, the blossom end should also have a sweet melon fragrance, indicating it is ready to eat. The fragrance

test is challenging in the supermarket since melons are kept well chilled

If the melon has a section that is whiter or smoother than the rest of the surface, most likely it's where it rested on the ground during its growing. It shouldn't affect the flavor or quality.

Avoid melons with a rough stem end or with portions of a stem still attached, called a peduncle. They may have been harvested too early. Also avoid melons with sunken areas that indicate overripeness and the beginning of mold.

A ripe honeydew will have a skin with a slightly sticky quality. Casaba and Crenshaw should have a yellow skin and a slight softness when firmly pressed at the blossom end.

Storage

For best flavor, "ripen" cantaloupes at a room temperature of approximately 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21.1 C) for about two to four days. Once they have reached desired softness, store them in the refrigerator where they can keep 10 to 14 days.

Cantaloupes are sensitive to ethylene gases and can overripen quickly. If you've purchased two or three melons on sale, store them on the kitchen counter, check them daily for ripeness, and refrigerate them as soon as you judge them ready.

The winter melons, casaba, crenshaw, canary, and honeydew, can be stored up to a month in the refrigerator.

Preparation

Begin by cutting the cantaloupe in half. Using a spoon, scoop out and discard the seeds. Remove and discard the strings as well. The melon can then be cut into slices, quarters, wedges, or chunks. For special occasions, you may want to create melon balls using a handy tool called a melon baller.

Raw

Nothing could be simpler than starting your day with a quarter of a cantaloupe. For a flavor variation, squeeze a little juice from a fresh lime over the top. Equip yourself with a spoon and enjoy scooping mouthfuls of one of the most succulent of fruits.

Create a melon fruit salad with chunks of cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon.

Make a cantaloupe basket with a few creative cuts into the rind. Scoop out the seeds, and fill the basket with a colorful array of fruits.

Here's a little secret to making attractive melon balls that are completely round: turn the melonballer two or even three full times around.

Another dramatic presentation is to cut a cantaloupe crosswise into rings using a large, sharp knife. Trim off the rind and scoop out the seeds. Then fill the center with a mound of diced fruits. Be sure to use appealing colors that provide dramatic contrast. You may even want to include chopped raw nuts of your choice.

Add a gourmet flair to garnish a raw dinner entrée by placing a skewer of cantaloupe balls alternated with berries and sprigs of fresh mint leaves either at the edge of the plate or across the

center.

Cantaloupes will soon be peaking into their most abundant season and sales will be tempting. Don't resist! Enjoy their refreshing qualities to the fullest, while experimenting with a few new culinary ideas.

Cantaloupe Frappé

1 large cantaloupe, cut into chunks
1 1/4 C. (296 ml) unfiltered apple juice

Garnish

Toothpicks or small skewer threaded with small chunks of cantaloupe
Sprig of mint

1. Arrange half the chunks on a metal pan in a single layer and freeze until firm. Refrigerate the remaining chunks.
2. Put refrigerated melon chunks and apple juice into the blender. Blend on low speed.
3. With motor running, add frozen melon chunks one at a time and blend until consistency reaches a pleasant, thick puree. Toward the end you may have to stir the top portion of the mixture with a spoon to push the chunks downward into the blender blades.
4. Spoon into 6-ounce (177 ml) glasses. Garnish with a cantaloupe threaded skewer and a sprig of mint lying across the top of each glass. Makes 4 servings.

See [Recipe Index](#) for other cantaloupe recipes.

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Thinking of a Thorny Thistle? This Bud's for You!

Artichoke at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

In the 16th Century eating an artichoke would be a scandalous adventure for any woman. At that time, because the artichoke was considered an aphrodisiac, it was reserved for men only. In fact, the artichoke was denied to women and reserved for men because it was thought to enhance sexual power.

Fortunately such esoteric attitudes do not prevail in the 21st Century where both men and women are privy to the pleasures of the artichoke. However, there are places around the world where people have neither tasted nor seen the artichoke.

On first encounter, this globular green monster may be somewhat off-putting. Admittedly it does look somewhat inedible. Cookbook author Faye Levy aptly describes artichokes when she says, ". . . they might appear to be encased in armor. . .

History

Food historians puzzle over the origins of the artichoke whose history seems to be entangled with the cardoon, another thistle-like Mediterranean plant relished for its edible leaves and stalks. Cardoon, *C. cardunculus*, is possibly a close relative of the artichoke. The distinction becomes even fuzzier when some botanists insist that the cardoon and the artichoke are in the same family while others strongly disagree. Early references seem to confuse the two plants, making it a which came first, the chicken or the egg.

Some historical books indicate that the artichoke was developed from a wild form of the cardoon, while Geoffrey Grigson's *A Dictionary of English Plant Names* states that the cardoon "may have been derived in cultivation" from the artichoke.

Historians are in agreement on one thing: the artichoke originated in a Mediterranean country, possibly Sicily or nearby Tunisia, known as Carthage in ancient times. Some references say it was not known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, while others say it was.

During the Middle Ages there was hardly a mention of artichokes in historical references, though it was known they were definitely enjoyed at Sicilian tables. This same period saw Saracens growing them in Granada while the Moors were cultivating them in North Africa.



Naming the Artichoke

The origin of the word "artichoke" was most likely the Arabic word *al-qarshuf*. The Spanish called it *alcachofa* that sounds like the Arabic word. The Moorish invasion of Spain may account for this similarity. The Italian *carciofo* appears to be influenced by the Spanish. Their baby artichokes are called *carciofini*. The French word for artichoke is *artichaut*.

From Sicily, artichokes found their way to Naples, then traveled to Florence about 1466. By the time Catherine de Medici was born in 1519, her beloved Tuscany had been growing these treasures for nearly fifty years. It was possibly Catherine who introduced the artichoke to France when she became the 14-year-old bride of Henry II, King of France. Along with her personal servants came an entourage of Italian cooks with their traditional foods and cooking techniques they introduced into the French royal kitchens.

Catherine defied the popular convention dictating that women were not to eat vegetables thought to possess aphrodisiac qualities. That practice was reserved for men only. But Catherine loved artichokes, ate them openly, and in large quantities. One historian who observed her practice is quoted as saying that she "liked to burst."

A female writer of that period, referring to Catherine de Medici, wrote, "If one of us had eaten artichokes, we would have been pointed out on the street. Today young women are more forward than pages at the court."

From the 16th century to the end of the 20th century, the French were growing artichokes in Paris and even raised them to gourmet status. Like many uncommon vegetables of that time, artichokes were so costly only the wealthy aristocracy could afford them. When farmers in Italy, Greece and Spain began to grow artichokes in large quantities, the vegetable lost status in France and cultivation began to diminish.

In the 1690's two entrepreneurs created a different role for the artichoke. A Mennonite bishop and a printer teamed up to open a paper mill in Germantown, Pennsylvania where they experimented by digressing from the standard ingredients of used garments and linen rags to make paper. Instead, they employed the strong fibers of the artichoke along with thistles, nettles, moss, asparagus, peat, rush, and sea weed. Their results, unfortunately, were a dismal failure.

Wolfgang Goethe, eighteenth and nineteenth century poet and dramatist, shunned the artichoke. In his book *Travels Through Italy* he says, "the peasants eat thistles," a practice he could never adopt.

During the nineteenth century, the Spanish introduced the artichoke to California while the French brought them to Louisiana. The unique vegetable was considered quite the delicacy among the French. Even today, restaurants in New Orleans, where so many people of French origin settled, regularly feature artichokes on their menus.



In contrast to the French, the British all but ignored the artichoke. This is not surprising. The English were reluctant to accept practically all new vegetables that passed their way.

Today most artichokes grown worldwide are cultivated in France, Italy, and Spain, while California provides nearly 100 percent of the United States crop.

California was reintroduced to the artichoke in the early 1900's when a number of Italian immigrants settled in the northern coastal city of Half Moon Bay. After harvesting their several hundred acres of artichokes, they sent their first shipment to the East Coast in 1906.

Interest in this vegetable continued to mount in Northern California. By the 1950's artichokes became so popular in the state, they earned the status of official vegetable of Monterey County.

Castroville, California, with its population of 5,000, named itself "the Artichoke Center of the World" for its ideal climate of moist air, even temperatures, and plenty of summertime foggy days along the coast. With its two packing houses and the country's only artichoke processing plant, Castroville became the United States artichoke growing center. Every year the town celebrates the harvest during the month of May with a festival that brings many visitors for a taste of innovative artichoke creations.

Artichokes in Other Cultures

Italians love to stuff artichokes with a seasoned breading mixture. Another typical Italian approach is to fry the sliced hearts in olive oil.

Some counties discard the artichoke stems while others eat them with gusto. This is understandable. Sometimes the stems are fully edible, tender, and flavorful, but with old or overripe artichokes they can be tough, fibrous, and even bitter.

The Italians grow a number of varieties of artichokes. They particularly enjoy the very small ones that cook to such tenderness they can be eaten in entirety. Four of their main varieties include Catanese, Romanesco, Spinoso Sardo, and Violetto di Toscana. Some of these appealing cultivars have tints of pink and purple on their outer leaves. A few of the purple varieties can be eaten raw if they are very young. They are seldom exported, but travelers remark about their exquisite flavors.

The rich cooking style of the New Orleans French Quarter turns the artichoke into a receptacle for stuffing with seafood and seasoned bread crumbs laced with onions, garlic, Romano cheese, and fresh lemon peel. Another French innovation involves serving artichoke leaves surrounding a bowl

filled with an oyster dip.

Folklore and Strange Phenomena

European royalty enjoyed artichokes with enthusiasm because they were believed to possess aphrodisiac properties. Henry VIII was especially fond of them and consumed generous quantities. Faith in this vegetable's aphrodisiac qualities seemed to evolve around the Middle Ages.

Because cynarin, a phytochemical found in artichokes, has such a potent effect on the taste buds, people who enjoy wine with their meal find it unpalatable when eaten with artichokes. They suggest ice water instead. Two taste tests, one in 1934, the other in 1972, confirmed this phenomenon, noting that the majority of the people in the test found that after eating an artichoke, a sweet taste lingered for a short period. Those sweet tasters discovered that anything eaten immediately after tasted sweet.

This finding dismayed one winemaker in particular, an Italian who produced Cynar, an aperitif made from artichokes, thinking it would make foods tastier. Ah, well. It was a sweet thought.

Growing

The artichoke is actually a flower head or bud that has not completely matured. When fully matured and opened, the inedible bloom, a brilliant bluish-purple thistle, can be as large as four or five inches in diameter, some even as large as seven inches across. The plant itself, an herbaceous perennial, can grow to a height of ten to twelve feet, though the commercial plants range from four to six feet. The bushy plants spread to a six-foot diameter.

Each plant produces small, medium, and large artichokes with the largest artichokes formed at the top of the terminal buds along the central stem. The smaller artichokes develop on lower branches.

What we call the leaves that resemble petals are actually bracts. The edible portion is at the base of the bract where it attaches to the heart or stem. Artichokes come in all sizes from 2 3/4 to 5 inches (7 to 12.5 cm) in height and can weigh from 5 ounces to 2 1/4 pounds (141.8g to 1.1 kg).

The globe artichoke, the most abundant producing artichoke, *Cynara scolymus*, belongs to the thistle group of the sunflower family/ *Compositae* (*Asteraceae*) family.

Artichokes can be grown from seed or from crown shoots. However, California commercial growers prefer the crown shoots from the Green Globe variety for their higher yields of marketable artichokes. These shoots are obtained from root sections attached to the basal stems, often referred to as stumps.



The desert regions of California and Arizona are now experimenting with a hybrid globe variety. Even the East Coast is interested in artichoke cultivation with Connecticut and Virginia working toward developing varieties that will grow successfully in those climates. During the 1990's several new varieties, Emerald, Imperial Star, Grand Buerre, Purple Sicilian and Talpiot have been grown in California's inland valleys, where the climate is hotter and drier. Growers of the new varieties in varying climates have seen mixed results.

Temperatures below 25 F(-4 C) during winter can be damaging and require heavy mulching. In very cold climates the outer skin of the artichoke, or bud as it is called by growers, blisters and turns whitish, making it unattractive and hard to sell, though it does not affect the eating quality.

The plants thrive in very deep, well-fertilized, and well-drained soils that provide plenty of room for root development. Artichokes can be grown as annuals in areas that experience freezing temperatures. Purchasing seedlings from a local nursery during the spring season would certainly be an easier choice for home gardeners.

Plants produce for five to ten years with new growth of shoots stimulated by completely cutting back the plant several inches below the surface. This is done after every harvest.

Because the artichokes do not mature all at the same time, each plant must be harvested every seven days throughout the growing season. Harvesting is labor intensive and is done completely by hand with pickers who cut and toss each bud into a large basket carried on their backs. A full basket can weigh up to 80 pounds (36.3 kg).

About three-fourth of the artichokes harvested are sold fresh, with one fourth going to canning processors or frozen packers where they become artichoke hearts, bottoms, quarters, and even marinated varieties.

When harvesting artichokes, cut the stem 1 to 1 1/2 inches (2.5 to 3.8 cm) below the base of the bud. The remainder of that stem should be cut to allow new artichoke buds to develop. Refrigerate the artichokes soon after cutting them from the plant.

Commercial growers will cool their artichokes at 32 F to 33 F (0 C) within hours after harvest by packing them in waxed cartons with adequate ventilation holes that allow the release of heat and gas. With this method they can keep artichokes in storage for two to three weeks.

Health Benefits

In past centuries the artichoke was used as a diuretic. It was even thought to have deodorizing properties and was considered an ideal breath freshener.

In Turkey artichoke decoctions are used as blood cleansers and for detoxing the liver which in turn cleanses the skin. That country also considers the artichoke to be the ideal remedy for hepatitis.



Today, vegetables are recognized as mini packages of vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals. The artichoke is being examined in research labs to explore its phytochemical contents. Two of these compounds, cynarin and silymarin, possess powerful antioxidant properties that may be beneficial in helping the liver to regenerate tissue growth.

That our ancestors considered the artichoke an appetite stimulant is no surprise. Research has found that the phytochemical cynarin truly does stimulate the taste buds. It's also responsible for bringing sweet flavors to any foods you eat immediately after eating the artichoke.

Nutrition

Fiber is a prime feature of this vegetable with one medium artichoke supplying a hearty 6 grams. Dieters can also enjoy the artichoke for its low count of only 60 calories.

This delectable vegetable is a heavyweight on the protein chart offering 4 grams.

The artichoke is truly a no-fat, no cholesterol treat that offers a host of vitamins and minerals including magnesium, chromium, manganese, potassium, phosphorus, iron, and calcium.

The vitamin A content soars to 212 IU. For the B vitamin, niacin, it supplies 1.20 mg while vitamin B6 offers .13 mg. All-important folic acid adds up 61.2 mcg and vitamin C provides 12 mg.

Artichokes are a good source of calcium measuring 54 mg while iron supplies 1.5 mg. Magnesium climbs to 72 mg while potassium scores an impressive 425 mg. Even zinc makes an appearance with .6 mg. for that medium size.

Because artichokes are so well endowed with nutrients and phytochemicals, many health researchers believe eating them may contribute to the prevention of certain types of heart disease, cancer, and birth defects.

The Nitty-Gritty of Eating an Artichoke

Artichoke lovers will always deny that eating a large artichoke is a test of patience. One must never be in a hurry when presented with such a delicacy. It's assuredly a hands-on experience--ideal for those who love to dive in and get personal with their food. If you want to create a relaxed atmosphere with a group of dinner guests who've never met, just serve them artichokes and a variety of sauces for dipping. A guaranteed ice-breaker is to serve one artichoke shared between two people.

When fully cooked, the individual leaves of the artichoke are pulled off from their fleshy base and eaten one at a time. This practice led to an Italian expression, "*la politica del carciof*," referring to the policy of dealing with opponents one at a time.

Each leaf is dipped into a sauce and eaten by biting down and pulling the leaf, curved side down, through the clenched front teeth to scrape off the edible 20% portion of the vegetable. The leaf is then discarded. The sauce one chooses for dipping can vary from plain to flavored mayonnaise to pungent salad dressings and vinaigrettes.

Wait, there's more! The best is yet to come! When nearly all the leaves are eaten, there is a small cone of thin leaves that surround the "choke." Simply pull these off altogether to expose the choke. Now you must remove the choke, that fibrous, inedible, spiked or bristled portion attached to the heart that one can easily recognize as the immature thistle. The choke can be easily pulled off in bits and pieces by hand, scooped out with a spoon, or trimmed off with a knife.

The portion that's left is considered the piece de resistance, the favored heart of the artichoke, a succulent, meaty segment that can be cut into pieces and used in other recipes or simply enjoyed as is dipped into your favorite sauce.

Now, don't forget about the fleshy stem. Unless the artichoke is old or overripe, the stem is nearly as delicious as the heart.

One last suggestion: Be sure to provide a bowl for the discarded leaves. Most people don't like to see a messy bunch of leaves and fuzzy chokes piled up helter skelter on their plates.

Purchasing and Storing

California artichokes are available throughout the year. The peak season, however, is from March through May with another harvest in October.

Select artichokes that are heavy and compact for their size, an indication that they will be moist and fleshy. Choose those of bright olive green color or with a minimum of darkening on the outer leaves. Look for artichokes that have closed or nearly closed leaves that are thick and sturdy. Those with leaves that are wide open are considered overripe and may be tough and less flavorful.

Avoid those with large areas of black or dark brown color on the tips of the leaves and especially avoid those with black areas at the base of the leaves. The black areas indicate the artichokes have begun to rot. Don't choose those that are light in weight and look shriveled. These are indications they are old and may have begun to dry.

Refrigerate artichokes in a perforated plastic bag soon after purchase. They will keep for 4 or 5 days. Cooked artichokes are quite perishable. After cooking, store leftovers in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for no more than 2 to 3 days.

Cooked and marinated artichokes can also be purchased by the pound or in jars in Italian markets and in supermarkets. Also available are those that are cooked, quartered, and water-packed in cans.

Frozen artichoke hearts, available in supermarkets, have no added ingredients. Simply heat them a minute or two in boiling water.

Preparation

If this is your first encounter with an artichoke, let us reassure you it's not as intimidating as it may look. It's quite easy and once you've mastered the technique, you'll agree.

The artichoke consists of four main parts--the leaves, the choke, the heart (or bottom), and the stem. Begin by thoroughly washing the vegetable, then turning it upside-down to drain off all the water.

Next, pull off and discard a few of the small outer leaves at the base. These will be tough, even after cooking so you won't miss them. Then lay the artichoke on its side, and using a sharp, serrated, non-carbon steel knife and a sawing motion, cut off and discard the top third of the leaves. A carbon steel knife will react with the artichoke and turn it black.

With a kitchen scissors, snip off the top half-inch of the remaining leaves to remove the sharp prickly thorns.

Use a small paring knife to peel the outer layer of the stem and the tough edges at the base of the leaves you removed.

Now you're ready to cook the artichoke.

Cooking

Artichokes can be steamed, boiled, baked, fried, and stuffed. Cooked, they are delicious served hot

or cold. They can be served as an appetizer, a side dish, a featured ingredient in soup, or even as a main course.

Steaming

Avoid cooking artichokes in aluminum or cast iron pans or your artichokes will turn an ugly, dark grayish green. Cook the artichokes upside-down in a covered saucepan with 1/2 to 1 inch (1 to 2.5 cm) of water depending on what size and how many artichokes you are cooking. Include a couple of generous pinches of salt, and add a lemon wedge to the pot to help the artichokes retain their attractive green color. Most cookbooks suggest cooking the artichoke standing upright. In addition, they also suggest cutting off and discarding the stem. We prefer to savor the stem and keep it attached.

Turn the heat to high to bring the water to a boil. Then turn the heat down to medium, and steam for 25 to 45 minutes depending on the size of the artichoke. To test for doneness, lift the cover and pierce the heart with a fork. There should be no resistance.

After steaming, large artichokes can also be stuffed by spooning seasoned stuffing of choice between the leaves and baking just long enough to firm the stuffing, about 30 to 45 minutes at 325 F (Gas Mark 3).



Baby artichokes are far easier to deal with. When completely cooked, they are so tender, the entire vegetable can be eaten, choke, leaves, and all. Baby artichokes can be steamed or deep-fried. When cooked they can be marinated. Steaming time is 12 to 15 minutes.

Salads

When you haven't the time to cook artichokes from scratch, the water-packed canned ones are a delicious addition to any salad. You can add them whole or cut them into halves or quarters.

The marinated variety offers great flavor simply served as a party appetizer along with a dip.

Canned, water-packed, cooked artichoke bottoms (or hearts) also make an ideal base for a party appetizer. Simply fill them with tabbouli, hummus, mock tuna salad (made from soy protein), guacamole, a finely minced marinated mushroom salad, or soy cream cheese sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds.

Braising

Prepare the artichokes for cooking, and put them into a saucepan with onions, garlic, a bay leaf, dried herbs, salt and pepper. Add 2 T. olive oil and cover with water. Simmer one to two hours depending on size. Test for doneness by piercing the heart with a fork. There should be no resistance.

Another suggestion is to remove the leaves and choke of two or three artichoke. Slice the hearts or cut them into chunks. Combine them in a large saucepan or Dutch oven with tomato wedges, zucchini chunks, sliced onions, sweet potato chunks, garlic, herbs, and water. Cover, and cook

about 25 to 30 minutes until all vegetables are tender. Adjust seasonings to taste.

Cold

Cooked whole artichokes make an excellent presentation as a cold dish served with a pungent vinaigrette. As an alternative, the hearts can be part of a separate recipe, while the separated leaves make an ideal buffet platter as they surround a thick dipping sauce.

Add cooked artichoke hearts to bean salad, potato salad, grain salads, and even pasta salads. Crisp tossed green salads taste even better with artichoke hearts.

Stuffing

To prepare the artichoke for stuffing, cut off the stem at the base and follow the directions for steaming. After it is fully cooked, use your fingers to spread open the outer leaves. Pull out the inner core of leaves that cover the choke. This will reveal the choke so it can be scooped out with a spoon. Now the artichoke is ready for stuffing.

STUFFED ARTICHOKES

You couldn't want a more eye-appealing dish. The appetizing stuffed artichokes resemble giant flowers in full bloom. For an attractive plate presentation, put a serving of cooked grain, such as, barley, bulghur wheat, or brown rice, on the side of the plate and sprinkle it with finely minced dill, parsley, or green onion tops. The artichoke will occupy the remainder of the platter.

3 large (not giant) fresh artichokes

Stuffing

1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 of a green bell pepper, chopped
1/2 of a red bell pepper, chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 T. extra virgin olive oil
1 1/4 t. salt
Freshly ground pepper

1 lb. (453 g) firm tofu
1 to 2 T. nutritional yeast
3 T. raw pine nuts
2 slices whole grain bread, diced
2 t. soy sauce
1 T. lemon juice or to taste

To Prepare the Artichokes

1. Prepare artichokes for steaming by removing a few of the smaller leaves around the base and discard. Lay the artichoke on its side, and cut about 1-inch (2.5 cm) off the top with a heavy-duty serrated knife.

2. Cut off the stem where it joins the bottom of the artichoke so it will stand upright when served. Reserve the stems.
3. With a kitchen scissors, snip off the top 1/2-inch (1 cm) of the remaining leaves, and use a small paring knife to trim off the outer skin from the stems.

To Cook the Artichokes

1. Stand the artichokes upside-down in a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Add 1-inch (2.5 cm) of water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Turn heat down to low and steam until tender, about 25 to 45 minutes depending on the size of the artichoke.
3. Test for doneness by piercing the bottom or heart with a fork. There should be no resistance. Remove to a plate to cool.

To Prepare the Stuffing

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F (Gas Mark 3). Put onions, red and green bell peppers, garlic, and olive oil in a non-stick skillet. Sauté over high heat for 7 to 8 minutes, turning frequently. Add salt and pepper.
2. Drain off liquid from tofu and rinse in cold water. Squeeze tofu through the fingers into a large mixing bowl. Add pine nuts, nutritional yeast, diced bread crumbs, soy sauce, and lemon juice. Add cooked onions and peppers and mix until all ingredients are well distributed.

To Stuff the Artichoke

1. Gently spread artichoke leaves, taking care not to break them off. Reach into the center and remove the cone of lighter colored leaves by lifting them out. With a spoon, scoop out the hairy inedible choke and discard.
2. With a teaspoon, fill the center with the stuffing. Then stuff between the leaves starting with the outside and working inward.
3. Put the stuffed artichokes in a baking dish, and cover lightly with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake at 325 F (Gas Mark 3) for 10 to 12 minutes. Makes 3 sensational main-dish servings or 6 shared servings as a side dish.

Serving Suggestion: Serve with a tossed green salad full of crunchy vegetables and a grain such as brown rice, quinoa, bulghur wheat, or barley.

You may want to serve some sauce on the side for dipping the heart of the artichoke. Some suggestions are the **Tahini Falafel Sauce** or **Lemon Dill Silken Sauce**. For the recipes see our [Recipe Index](#) under Dips and Spreads and/or Sauces.

For other artichoke recipes see [Recipe index](#).

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High Flying Barley Crashes in Modern Times

Includes Recipe Below

A glass of beer, a loaf of bread, a bowl of porridge, a standard of measurement, a form of currency, a medication--they all began with barley, an ancient grain possibly even older than rice. Barley's once exalted status has been redefined. No longer does it serve as a unit of monetary exchange or a unit of measurement. No physician thinks of prescribing it for an ailing patient. Now barley is largely relegated to being animal food or a key ingredient in the making of beer, though a few grains manage to find their way into the kitchen.

We owe much to the desert nomads and the camel caravans who endured sand storms and unrelenting heat to trade their sacks of barley with distant neighbors who traded with other distant neighbors. Our steaming bowl of bean and barley or mushroom barley soup is a hand-me-down recipe with roots that take us back to prehistoric man.

History

During the latter part of the Stone Age, early man was sprinkling grains of barley over various foods, adding a chewy, nutty quality to his meals. Humans had not yet discovered how to grind grain into flour.

Ancient cultures were forming loaves of barley bread long before domesticating wheat. Since barley contains only miniscule quantities of gluten, the protein that makes wheat breads rise easily, the breads made from this grain were heavy and quite dense but nutritious nonetheless.

Our cultivated barley of today was once a wild grass that originated in the Near East, though some food historians believe China was the place of origin, while others say it was Ethiopia.

Archeologists discovered remnants of wild barley, *H. spontaneum*, at many sites across a belt that stretches from North Africa on the west to Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan in the east.

Wild barley has a unique feature that guarantees self-propagation.



When the seeds are fully matured, they become so loosely attached they simply fall from the spike that holds them during growth. Cultivated barley, in contrast, remains firmly attached and must be harvested. About the sixth century BCE cultivation of barley led to the development of barley seeds that clung firmly to their stalk.



Before cultivation, the early forms of barley were 6-rowed. With cultivation 2-rowed barley became the norm, a feature that has been carried up to the present. The original 6-rowed variety of barley appears on many ancient coins and wall paintings.

The earliest archeological site where uncultivated grains of barley were discovered is at Tel Mureybat in Syria, a place that dates back to 8,000 BCE. The earliest form of uncultivated wheat was also found at this site, though it is evident by the quantity found that barley was the most popular grain at that time. Grains were also discovered at various archeological sites in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Asia Minor. Those areas, too, showed a preference for barley over wheat.

Egyptian hieroglyphics dating back to 5,000 BCE mention barley's importance to sustenance, while the Sumerians note the use of barley for measurement and as a form of money on their cuneiforms dating back 3,500 BCE. In the Code of Hammurabi, 1750 BCE, the Babylonians employed barley as simple monetary exchange.

About that same period in the Indus Valley, a region that includes Northern India, Pakistan, and Southwestern Tibet, a Vedic writing mentions barley and rice as "two immortal sons of heaven." The Babylonians created the oldest known recipe for making barley wine and inscribed the directions in a cross-shaped form on a library brick dating back to 2,800 BCE.

Barley journeyed into China before wheat. The Chinese in the northern part of the country had a preference for millet, though barley appeared often at their meals cooked in broth, consumed as flat breads, and even eaten instead of rice. The Emperor Shen Nung placed a high value on barley when he mentioned it as one of the five sacred cultivated plants of China in his writings dated 2,800 BCE. The other sacred plants he revered were rice, wheat, millet, and soybeans.

Recovered shards of Chinese pottery from the Hsia Dynasty dating back about 1520 BCE demonstrate barley's value by depicting the hulled grains falling from the sky into a peasant farmer's rice bowl. These ancient Chinese farmers revealed a kinship to the heavy-bearded variety of barley by declaring it as a symbol of male potency.

Before barley was cultivated in China, nomadic peasant families followed the path of wild barley as mature spikes were about to open. They set up tents right on the fields to catch the precious falling seeds before a hearty gust of wind could carry them away.

Since barley was the major grain of the Egyptians as well as the Hebrews it is not surprising that barley should be mentioned in the bible. Exodus I of the Old Testament tells of a pounding rain of hailstones "by which the barley was smitten," one of the ten plagues brought on the Egyptians.

The Bible mentions barley frequently. Ezekiel paid penance to God by eating a diet relying on barley. When three angels came to visit Abraham, he offered them barley bread. Ruth was

gathering barley from the field when Boaz first saw her. Joab's fields of barley were set afire when Absalom ordered his servants to burn Joab's grain. From the New Testament in the miracle of the loaves and the fishes, the five loaves of bread that Christ fed to five thousand people were made of barley.

To many Egyptian workers barley meant sustenance. The enslaved people who built the pyramids endured intense desert heat, heavy labor lifting huge stones, and dawn to dusk hours on a spartan diet. Their meals consisted of a mere three loaves of barley bread a day and an allotment of beer--made from barley, of course.

Before the Common Era, barley carried a great deal of importance since it was the major staple grain throughout the entire Near East, Egypt and Greece. Spain was introduced to this grain in the fifth century BCE before travelers brought it to France and Germany. Historians believe barley reached Britain about 500 BCE, southern India about 300 BCE, and southern China in 200 BCE.

In ancient Greece, Turkey, Syria, and Egypt barley was frequently served in the form of porridge or unleavened bread. These ancient civilizations also developed the art of malting barley for making beer.

As the Common Era was approaching, barley began to lose favor in Rome and Greece. Cooks of that period learned that bread making with wheat could offer a superior loaf that was lighter, more flavorful, and was able to keep longer. Barley contains so little gluten, the protein that gives bread its ability to rise, that breads were extremely dense and heavy. Gluten also helps breads retain moisture, a quality lacking in barley, causing barley breads to become stale rather quickly. Barley, however, still remained the grain of the poor, while the rich were breaking bread with wheat.

No longer in existence, Eleusis, an ancient town in Greece, rewarded game winners with sacks of barley. Barley mush was selected for training the athletes because the Greeks considered it more strengthening than other grains. In Rome the gladiators, often called *hordearii* or "barley men," were consuming a staple diet that relied on barley.

During the Common Era and up until the sixteenth century, European aristocracy developed a resourceful use for barley. They only used the barley bread as "trenchers," an Old English word for plates. While the aristocracy derided barley, the French peasants of this period were thriving on barley bread and bean soup. John Locke, a British philosopher, noted that in France "there was no flesh in the countryside. "

In North America, Massachusetts grew its first crop of barley in 1602. The pilgrims planted the barley seeds they brought with them but had little success; however, the grain found the climate in Pennsylvania more favorable. The Pennsylvanians then added limestone water to the barley and created something they considered much more interesting and more enjoyable than bread. With a little barley sprouting, a little fermenting, and a little distilling, their end product was whiskey. Since wheat and corn were plentiful in North America, barley was never used for baking bread. It gained its popularity as an important ingredient for making beer.

While wheat was coming into popular use during the 18th and 19th centuries in Britain, barley was still favored in the more remote areas of the north and west. As wheat became more affordable throughout Europe, and the average person discovered its merits in bread making, barley was relegated as fodder for the animals.



Barley malt, used as a sweetener, originated in China before it became popular and used almost exclusively as a sweetener in Japan.

Today, pearl barley is a favorite of the Japanese, while the grain is highly valued in Tibet and surrounding areas of the Himalayas for its ability to grow successfully in those high altitudes where weather conditions are extreme.

Barley will grow in many areas of the world where wheat will not thrive. Because barley is so adaptable to a variety of soils and can even grow in soil high in salinity, such as along the Zuyder Zee in Holland, that it remains a popular grain in diverse areas like Tibet, northern Germany, Finland, Israel, the Italian Alps, the Sahara, and Ethiopia.

At present, barley is the world's fourth most important crop and an important staple in many countries. Though the U.S. is the third largest producer of barley, only a small portion reaches the dinner tables. Most of it is sold to farmers for animal feed, while the remainder goes to the production of barley malt for making beer.

In contrast to barley's importance as a food grain in the ancient world, it is now grown in the United States mainly for animal fodder. The animals receive the healthiest of barley's by-products: hay, straw, green fodder, bran and pearlings (the outer layers of the barley that are removed to create pearl barley), barley malt sprouts, the grains that are left after brewers and distillers finish their process, and the hops and yeast left over after brewing beer.

Barley Weights and Measures

The term barleycorn, originally barli-corn, can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon era in England about the fifth and sixth centuries through the eleventh century.

To illustrate the high value placed on barley during that period, farming communities relied on this grain as a unit of measurement as well as weight. The word barleycorn referred to each grain of barley as a unit of length equal to 1/3-inch or about 8.5 millimeters, with about 3 barleycorns laid end to end equal to one Anglo-Saxon *ynce*, which later became "inch." Twelve of these *ynces* was determined as one foot, or 36 barleycorns, or the running foot at 39 barleycorns.

From the 1300's to the 1700's the barleycorn standard of measurement became the foundation of the measurement system that existed in Great Britain and America. When the first shoe manufacturer opened a factory in Massachusetts in 1888, a press release announced that Size 13 or 39 barleycorns would be the largest shoe size they would produce.

The term originally used for the weighing of barleycorn is "grain," eventually becoming "gram" in the metric system. This term existed before the *troy* and *avoirdupois* weight systems.

Barley Dishes Old and New

From barley and millet the Etruscans made *puls*, a thick porridge they used as a bread when it became firm. The Romans were copycats and chose barley as their grain for making a bread they called *pulmentum*.

Apicius, ancient Rome's first cookbook author, made a complex broth by soaking barley a full day

before cooking it next day with oil, dill, onions, salt, and herbs and spices such as coriander, lovage, cumin, and pepper. Pliny mentioned oily barley bread seasoned with coriander. No doubt he was looking over Apicius's shoulder.

You may be familiar with orgeat, a beverage flavored with almonds and orange flowers. The base liquid is made from barley, its origins, barley water. Barley water is a beverage prepared by grinding 1/2 cup (118 ml) of pearl barley in a coffee grinder, then boiling it in 3/4 cup (177 ml) of water about 20 minutes. Salt may be added or it may be sweetened and sometimes flavored with lemon or orange. Enjoyed as a cooling, invigorating beverage, orgeat was often given to infants and the elderly infirm. Even the Wimbledon tennis players imbibed this beverage.

Tibetan monks prepare *tsampa*, a porridge made with barley that is toasted first, then ground into flour and blended with yak butter and boiling tea. Native Tibetans enjoy their prayer wheel bread made from fermented barley that is formed into round loaves and raised overnight. As the loaves rise, they spread out in a large circle resembling a prayer wheel.

Barley sugar, a 17th century English creation, was originally a highly sweetened, caramelized confection made from barley water that was sugar sweetened and boiled into a syrup that was further boiled until it caramelized. While the term "barley sugar" is still used, barley is no longer an ingredient in the product. Presently, lemon juice has replaced barley, and the mixture is boiled to the hard crack stage, quickly poured onto a flat surface, then cut and twisted before reaching a solid state.

At some point in the 17th century Benedictine nuns in France began preparing this barley sugar confection. A former nun named Felicite was commissioned by Napoleon to keep him in steady supply. By the 18th century, barley sugar was in production on a commercial basis by a French company said to include a secret ingredient known only to one person. This form of the confection is shaped into a triangle rather than twisted.

While people in many countries prepared barley porridge, each culture added unique touches. Sephardic Jews prepared *Belila*, a sweetened porridge made with nuts and served in celebration of a baby cutting its first tooth.

In Britain, aleberry or barley berry was a favorite dessert in some areas. First, stale barley bread is boiled in mild ale until it becomes quite thick. Then it is sweetened with honey and served with cream.

The Lothians of Southeast Scotland enjoy barley pudding made by boiling pot barley with water, currants, and a touch of salt. Served with sugar and cream or milk, this barley treat is still favored today.

A simple old English dish called Barley Bake combined barley, celery, and mutton broth. On the list of barley foods that have survived are the barley soups and especially Scotch barley broth that can often be found in the pubs throughout Great Britain.

Scottish Bannocks, now made from oats, were once made of barley. These were griddlecakes made from sweetened dough that was rolled out and baked. Enjoyed as a hearty breakfast, they were served with jam. A recipe for Welsh Barley Cakes sounds very much like Bannocks. It begins with a stiff dough made with skim milk. The dough is rolled out into a circle about 3/4-inch

thick, then baked on a heated griddle. Broken in half or smaller pieces it is served at breakfast with butter or jam.

The self-governed Isle of Man located in the Irish Sea still serves up a 19th century recipe for **Bonnag**, a barley bread. A barley bread recipe dating back to medieval times still appears on the tables in Jura, a city in the mountainous region of France. The recipe was originally made exclusively with oats, and then it was combined with barley. Now barley alone makes up into small, very hard loaves of **boulon** that are served with a soupy casserole into which pieces of the bread are dunked.

The Old English **baere** was the origin of the word barley. The Scots say **bere**, a term that exists even today but originally referred to "of barley."

The Japanese prepare barley tea by roasting pearl barley until it reaches a deep brown color and develops a distinct earthy aroma. The roasted barley is then boiled in water about 10 to 20 minutes. The end result is a richly flavored, aromatic tea that is caffeine-free. This tea is a favorite among Korean and Chinese populations as well.

Most people have never heard of "Patent barley" because it never reaches the consumer directly. Made from pearl barley, it is ground into a meal for use as a commercial thickener and as baby cereal

The Business of Beer

The earliest brewing methods, originating in Mesopotamia, actually began with barley bread made from sprouted grains. The breads were partially baked, then torn into pieces and tossed into water to ferment. The result was a rich, bitter ale. The finer art of beer making was developed during the Middle Ages. The original brewmasters were Sumerian women who created about eight different kinds of barley ale they made and sold from their homes.

The common Sumerian workman earned a daily allotment of almost two pints (scant liter) of ale. High-ranking Sumerian CEO's were rewarded with about eight pints (4 liters) of brew.

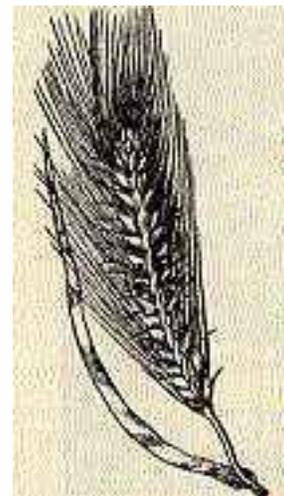
To make beer and Scotch whiskey one must begin with grains of barley, essential for creating barley malt that is fermented to produce alcohol.

Barley malt was responsible for the initiation of Rheinheitsgebot, meaning purity law. Thought to be the first consumer protection law, it was decreed in 1516 by Duke Wilhelm IV of Bavaria. The law stated that beer could only be made from barley malt, hops, and water. That law prevails today.

The complex process of making barley malt begins with the whole barley seeds, husks and all. First, they are soaked for several days until they sprout. During this process, proteins within the bran become converted into enzymes that work to change the starches into sugars.

The barley is then dried to inhibit further sprouting. Next, it is lightly cooked to create the malt that is crushed and combined with warm water. With this process the enzyme action starts the conversion of starch into sugar. The barley is now ready for the process of fermentation by yeast, resulting in alcohol. For the familiar beer flavor, hops are added.

Other products that require barley malt include malt vinegar, cod-liver oil, and confections that employ the sweet, thick syrup that is similar to un sulphured molasses.



Medical Findings

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin discovered that barley's endosperm contains a substance that contributes to human health by inhibiting cholesterol production.

Imagine antibiotic tetracycline eaten regularly with every bite of grain. It may have been part of the daily diet of a colony of ancient Sudanese who lived along the banks of the Nile River about fourteen hundred years ago. When their bones were carefully examined, they were found to contain considerable amounts of the tetracycline. Researchers at the University of Massachusetts surmised that bacterial growth in the mud bins where barley, wheat, and millet were stored was responsible for producing the natural antibiotic.

The British employ barley in a number of folk remedies, claiming that barley water will settle an upset stomach. They have also rumored that barley water is the secret behind the beautiful complexions of their British women.

Growing

Hordeum vulgare is the cultivated variety of barley. Adaptable to various climates from the chill of the Arctic regions to the intense heat of Ethiopia, barley tolerates a variety of soils as well, though it does not do well in areas of high humidity, such as in the tropical zones.

Barley is a very hardy perennial with a relatively short growing season, maturing in about three months. Its hardy qualities permit barley to tolerate flooding, drought conditions, and even frost. An added bonus for the farmer is this amazing grain's ability to resist insect infestation.

Compared to other grains, barley is just about the toughest grain in the field. Before exposing the endosperm, recognized as our familiar pearl barley, two inedible husks and another softer, edible coating called the aleurone are removed. The germ, layered between the two outer husks, is also discarded, leaving a pile of valuable nutrients in the bin that becomes animal feed rather than human food.

Through many years of cultivation, more than 200 varieties of barley were developed. The type of barley consumed by humans differs from that used for making beer.

Today this grain is cultivated in Europe, Ethiopia, Russia, China, India, Canada, the United States,

and the Mediterranean areas that include Greece, Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Egypt.

Nutrition

Nutritional data for cooked barley is quite encouraging and just may inspire you to dash off to the market to buy some.

One cup (237 ml) of cooked pearled barley contains 193 calories, while the whole-grain (hulled) form contains 270 calories and contains as much protein as a cup (237 ml) of milk.

The protein content for pearled is 4 grams; the whole-grain has 7 grams. The pearled carries 44 grams of carbohydrates; the whole-grain has 59 grams.

Weighing in on the dietary fiber, pearled barley has 9 grams while the whole-grain ranks higher with 14 grams. Barley is an excellent source of soluble fiber helpful in lowering cholesterol and in preventing constipation.

The all-important minerals calcium, potassium, and phosphorous also find higher figures in the whole grain variety. The pearled form has 17 mg calcium, the whole-grain 26 mg. Phosphorous scores for the pearled barley show 85 mg with the whole-grain at 230 mg. Potassium content for the pearled form is 246 mg while the whole grain has 230 mg.

The difference is quite apparent. The whole-grain form rates higher in almost every nutrient comparison with the exception of sodium, thiamin, and niacin, where the pearled form is slightly higher. The only nutrients lacking in barley are vitamin C and vitamin B12.

Purchasing

Hulled Barley is the most nutritious form of barley with only the outermost hull removed. With its bran still intact it is nutrient dense and high in fiber. It's full of important trace minerals like iron and contains a range of B vitamins. Although the cooking time is longer than for other types of barley, the nutritional benefits are worth the effort. The added bonus is its distinct nutty flavor and brownish color. While it's unavailable in most supermarkets, you'll likely find it in health food stores.

Pearl Barley or **Pearled Barley** is the most common form of barley available and is sold in most supermarkets. Because the outer hulls including the bran have been removed, the grains have a pearly white color. The polishing process involves scouring the barley six times during milling to completely remove the outer inedible hull and the bran layer. Though pearled barley cooks in less time than the whole grain hulled form, many of its nutrients are scoured away along with the bran. Still, pearl barley is rich in protein and high in fiber.

Quick Barley, or instant barley is pearl barley that is pre-steamed then dried, shortening the cooking time considerably, about 10 to 12 minutes.

Scotch Barley, also called **Pot Barley**, is slightly less refined than the pearl barley and is scoured only three times, leaving part of the hull remaining. Health food markets may be the only place to find this uncommon variety.

Barley Grits are processed similar to bulghur wheat. The grain is cracked, and toasted or parboiled, then dried, making it a quick-cooking product. The health food store is your best bet for locating this form of barley.

Barley Flakes, Pressed Barley, or Rolled Barley have the appearance of rolled oats and are often included in muesli-type cereals. Since barley flakes are a favorite grain of the Japanese and Koreans, they can often be found at Asian markets as well as health food markets.

Barley Flour is hulled barley that is finely ground and has a lightness and delicate sweetness. Since barley has such a low-gluten content, it is frequently blended with other flours in baking. Health food markets are likely to stock barley flour.

Job's Tears, Hato Mugi, Juno's Tears, and River Grain are different names for a variety of barley that is larger than pearled barley and has flavor reminiscent of mild beans. Though these are an Asian favorite, they are seldom available in American markets. Asian markets or health food markets are your best bet.

Many health food markets have a bulk foods section where you can purchase grains by the pound. You can usually save money when buying grain products in bulk.

Storing

It's always best to store grains in airtight containers. Unrefrigerated, barley will keep for six to nine months. If the grains are stored in the refrigerator, they will keep several months longer.

Cooking

Barley can be used in place of rice in almost any dish. For convenience you may want to cook a large quantity to have on hand for different recipes. Reheating takes only a few minutes.

The cooking method for all forms of barley is the same--only the cooking times vary. Combine barley, water, and salt in a heavy saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat to low and steam until grains are soft and all liquid is absorbed.

To shorten the cooking times listed below, soak the barley overnight for cooking in the morning, or soak all day for cooking the barley at dinnertime.

Cooking Barley

BARLEY (1 cup dry)	CUPS WATER	COOK TIME	CUPS YIELD
Pearl Barley	3	50 - 60 min.	3 1/2
Hulled Barley	3	1 hr. 15 min.	3
Quick Barley	2	10 to 12 min.	2 1/2
Barley Grits	2/3	2 to 3 min.	1
Barley, flakes	3	30 min.	2 1/4

SOUPS

Whole-grain hulled barley is ideal for soups that often simmer on the stovetop for a couple of hours. Add some beans, vegetables, and seasonings for a hearty meal. Pearl barley will work equally as well and requires a shorter cooking time.

Barley combined with vegetables, potatoes, dill, and a variety of dried mushrooms blend together

to create a richly flavored Polish-style Mushroom Barley Soup called Krupnik. Polish cooks (vegetarian Polish cooks, that is) top off this soup with a dollop of tofu sour cream.

BREAKFAST

Barley grits make a quick breakfast that delivers a wholesome dish in practically no time.. Follow the directions on the package for the barley grits, then add a topping of chopped fresh fruits, a sprinkle of cinnamon, some chopped nuts, a heaping tablespoon of flaxseed meal, and a sprinkle of evaporated cane juice, if desired. A little soymilk tops off this great starter we call Breakfast Sundae.

Breakfast Sundae comes together even more quickly with leftover cooked barley. Simply reheat the barley by adding 2 or 3 tablespoons of water to the pot, cover, and warm over medium heat for about 4 to 6 minutes. Then create your own toppings with a dash of cinnamon, raisins, nuts and seeds, a little maple syrup and your favorite soy milk or rice milk.

SALADS

Leftover cooked barley, either hulled, pearl, or barley flakes make the perfect base to build a salad. Add some chopped tomatoes, thinly sliced sweet onions, trimmed snap peas, raw sweet corn, minced garlic, and chopped basil leaves. Dress it up with some extra virgin olive oil, lemon or lime juice, and salt and pepper to taste.

Other combinations work equally as well. Choose your favorite crunchy veggies or even leftover steamed or roasted vegetables, such as steamed broccoli, roasted peppers, roasted zucchini, or roasted carrots.

For a heartier salad, add nuts, seeds, sautéed tofu cubes, diced vegan cheese, chopped vegan meat substitutes, or crumbled veggie burgers.

SIDE DISHES

While your barley is steaming, sauté some chopped onions and minced garlic. Simply add these to your cooked barley and season if needed.

MAIN DISHES

Barley Primavera: Create your own original Barley Primavera just as you would with pasta. While the barley is steaming, sauté chopped vegetables, add seasonings to taste, and prepare your favorite sauce. For each serving, mound the barley on the center of the plate, top with some sautéed vegetables, and finish with the sauce. The sauce could be a marinara, oil and garlic, or a creamy tofu sauce. A light sprinkle of toasted nuts or seeds adds an appealing touch.

Stuffed Vegetables: Barley is an ideal grain for stuffing vegetables. Try stuffing cabbage, peppers, zucchini, tomatoes, acorn squash, or even Japanese pumpkin (kabocha squash). To the barley, add sautéed chopped vegetables, ground nuts or chopped vegetarian sausage, and dried herbs. Season to taste, and bake about 25 to 30 minutes at 350 (Gas Mark 4).

Barley Risotto: Pearl barley makes a delightfully creamy risotto. Refer to your favorite recipes; however, the timing will vary with barley. For risotto, use only the pearl barley. The hulled barley will not break down to the creamy state like pearl barley.

DESSERTS

Barley Pudding: Make a barley pudding much like you would make a rice pudding. Add sweetening, spices, and dried fruits. Prepare a fruit sauce by whirling your favorite fruits in the processor with a touch of sweetening and a squeeze of lemon and use that as a topping.

An alternative sauce can be quickly prepared in the food processor with 1 12-oz. (340 g) package of soft silken tofu, 15 to 18 pitted dates, and a 1/4 t. vanilla extract.

Here's a hearty main dish with great flavor that will satisfy even the fussy eaters. It's also an ideal make-ahead recipe you can proudly serve your guests. For a complete meal serve with a tossed salad and some steamed green vegetables such as string beans, okra, broccoli, or asparagus.

BARLEY STUFFED EGGPLANT



2/3 C. (158 ml) barley flakes*

2 C. (480 ml) water

3/4 t. salt

1/2 small onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped

1/3 C. (59 ml) raw pine nuts

1/3 C. (59 ml) raw pumpkin seeds

2 large eggplants or 4 small to medium size

1 T. organic canola oil

1 green bell pepper, chopped

1 red bell pepper, chopped

1 medium sweet onion, chopped

1 or 2 cloves garlic, minced

1/3 C. (59 ml) water

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

1. In a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan combine barley flakes, water, salt, onion, and garlic. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat to low and steam 25 to 30 minutes, until all liquid is absorbed. Turn off heat and set aside for 10 minutes.
2. Combine pine nuts and pumpkin seeds in a non-stick skillet. Toast over high heat, stirring constantly for about 2 minutes. Pour into a dish to cool and set aside.
3. Wash eggplants and cut them in half lengthwise. Using a grapefruit knife, remove eggplant pulp leaving a 1/2" (1 cm) rind. Brush rinds with canola oil, and put them on a baking sheet. Broil rinds about 3" from heat source for about 10 minutes, or until pulp begins to soften. Set eggplant rinds aside.
4. Chop eggplant pulp and put into a large stir-fry pan.
5. Add bell peppers, onions, garlic, salt, water, and olive oil to stir-fry pan and sauté over high heat, stirring frequently, until softened, about 10 to 12 minutes.

6. Add cooked barley flakes and toasted nuts and seeds to stir-fry pan and mix well. Adjust seasoning if needed.
7. Spoon barley mixture into eggplant rinds and bake uncovered at 350 F (Gas Mark 4) for 25 to 30 minutes. Serves 6 to 8. Large eggplants can be cut in half crosswise to make 8 servings. Small to medium eggplants will also make 8 servings.

*Barley flakes are available in health food markets and Asian markets.

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THE WALNUT--A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK

Walnut at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

One day Jim climbed into his truck, revved up the engine a bit, and drove back and forth in his driveway about half-dozen times before getting out of the vehicle. His neighbor, Bill, was watching this process quizzically and thinking that Jim was behaving oddly.

"Watcha up to, Jim," Bill asked.

"Oh, not much," Jim answered, "Just crackin' a few black walnuts--that's what it takes, ya know,"

Imagine a nut so tough to crack that it takes the weight of a car to loosen the hull. While the familiar Persian walnuts, often called English walnuts, can be cracked easily, often by holding two of them in the palm of the hand and squeezing, the black walnut and the butternut require the utmost of "S" and "S"--strength and strategy. These natives of North America sport the toughest husks that cling firmly to their tough shells.

One garden reference actually does suggest driving a car back and forth over the whole nuts to loosen their husks but warns that this method could permanently stain the driveway. The husks are frequently used as a dye. One nut lover recommends smashing the hulls with a determined swing of the hammer on a hard surface, while another suggests stomping on them with the heel of the foot.

Because of their hard shells, walnuts were well protected from light, heat, moisture, and water and could last for months before spoiling, making them the ideal world travelers--the perfect food for a long journey across many oceans to become everyday food throughout the globe.

History

Though many historians pinpoint Persia as the country of the walnut's origin, confusion persists because archeological remains of walnuts were found as far eastward as the Himalayas and to the distant west and northwest of Persia into Turkey, Italy, and Switzerland as well.

The oldest archeological site where walnuts were unearthed is in the Shanidar caves in northern Iraq. Following that find, at a considerable distance from Persia, evidence of walnuts was discovered in a Mesolithic dunghill in Switzerland.

During the New Stone Age or Neolithic period, items found in Switzerland's lake district included walnuts. The Neolithic period began in Southwest Asia from about 8,000 BCE and expanded throughout Europe between 6,000 to 2,000 BCE.

Traveling slightly eastward, archeologists delicately brushed away layers of dirt in Perigord, France, from Peyrat to Terrasson, to uncover petrified roasted shells of walnuts from the Neolithic period.

You may have heard walnuts referred to as Persian walnuts. In ancient Persia, only royalty was privy to the pleasure of devouring the walnut, the fruit referred to as the Royal Walnut.

Mesopotamia, the area that is now modern Iraq, boasted of walnut groves in the famed Hanging Gardens of Babylon about 2,000 BCE. As testimony, Chaldeans left clay tablet inscriptions that accounted for these orchards. These were the earliest written records mentioning walnuts.

Slightly later, about 1795 BCE, Hammurabi, the 6th king of the 1st dynasty of Babylon, set down a code of laws known as the Code of Hammurabi. These laws were incised on black diorite pillars and categorized by subject. Mention of walnuts was included in the section on laws governing food.

In the Song of Solomon 6:11 of the Old Testament, King Solomon is quoted, "I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruit of the valley." These words refer to walnut groves flourishing and producing abundantly.

The first cultivation of walnuts is attributed to the ancient Greeks, but it may have actually been the Persians who first cultivated a superior variety. The walnuts growing in Greece were small and didn't produce a significant quantity of oil. When the Greeks encountered the larger Persian walnuts, they began to improve their variety by cultivation. The ancient Greeks utilized the walnut not only for food, but also as a medicine and a dye for the hair, wool, and cloth.

About one hundred years after the Greeks were commonly using walnuts, the Romans discovered their merits and were willing to pay dearly for the luxury of serving them along with fruits for dessert. In the ruins of Pompeii whole, unshelled walnuts were among the foods on the table at the Temple of Isis on that fateful day of August 24, CE 79 when Mount Vesuvius erupted.

Though written records of the walnut's arrival in Kashmir are absent, walnuts were an established presence and, from there, may have journeyed to China during the Han dynasty, some time between 206 BCE and 220 CE.



Since trading existed long before written records, merchants, explorers, and conquerors were credited with bringing the walnut from the Mediterranean into Europe, possibly during the third century BCE. Some historians question this theory because of archeological evidence discovered in Switzerland centuries earlier.

It is possible that during the last Glacial Period, known as the Pleistocene era, walnut trees disappeared from the frozen earth of the Northern European countries. After that era, barbarian invaders and Greek and Roman conquerors brought the trees from their homelands into Europe.

In spite of the frequency with which walnuts are referred to as English walnuts, they didn't really penetrate the English soul until after World War I when they became a commercial enterprise. Though the English climate didn't provide the most ideal conditions for growing walnuts, some trees survived nonetheless.

The first mention of the walnut's arrival in the British Isles appeared in the Encyclopaedia Britannica dated 1567. However, walnuts were only acceptable served at the end of a meal along with port and Stilton cheese.

In contrast, the French went nuts over the walnut. Early cultivation began there during the fourth century. Charlemagne, eighth to ninth century, ordered his gardeners to plant walnut trees on his extensive properties. Walnuts were so highly regarded that during the eleventh century, the French peasants were expected to tithe walnuts to the church.

From Medieval times up until the end of the 18th century, Europeans were blanching, crushing, and soaking walnuts and almonds to create a rich, nutritious milk, a common household staple. While the poor dined on the wild walnuts, the rich were able to afford the larger, more expensive, cultivated variety.

Toward the end of the 17th century, walnuts along with chestnuts became important staples in France. During the famine of 1663 the poor consumed their walnuts and then resorted to grinding up the shells along with acorns to create coarse, unpalatable bread.

In World War II when families living in the small villages of Perigord, a region in the southern part of France, had little to eat, they turned to their walnut groves for a source of protein.

The Black Walnut, a Native of North America

Native American Indians enjoyed the pleasures and health benefits of the black walnut well before European explorers arrived. The upper Great Lakes region provides archeological evidence of walnut consumption dating back to 2000 BCE. Along with eating the walnut itself, the Indians used the sap of the walnut tree in their food preparation.

Wherever the black walnut grows, there is limestone in the soil, a good sign of fertile soil. The early Pennsylvania Dutch made a point of selecting properties that had a stand of sturdy black walnut trees on the land, assuring them of rich soil.

The early colonists carried seeds of the English walnut to the New World and planted them diligently where they settled in Massachusetts and Virginia. However, the trees did not adapt to their new climate and didn't even survive long enough to bear fruit. Black walnuts, however, were plentiful and soon became a valued ingredient in cookies and confections.

Walnuts Enjoy California Sunshine

In the early 1800's Spanish Franciscan monks established missions along the California coast. Part of their teachings included the cultivation of food plants and trees in the areas surrounding the missions. One area that eventually became the city of Walnut, California, was home to the San Gabriel Mission named for the Gabrielino Indians, originally of Shoshone origin. Many acres of walnut trees, originally brought from Spain, were planted here and became known as "mission walnuts." These first walnut trees produced small nuts with very hard shells.



During the first half of the 1800's, land grants of several acres were issued, and ranchos were established. Walnut groves became well established on these land grants by the 1870's in Southern California near Santa Barbara.

In 1867 Joseph Sexton, a horticulturist, initiated California's first commercial walnut enterprise when he planted a grove of English walnuts in Goleta, a small town in Santa Barbara County. Within a few years, 65% of all fertile land in this region was planted with Sexton's English walnuts.

In spite of this early success, by the late 1930's the commercial walnut business was destined to move northward to Stockton, California, where improved irrigation, better pest control, ideal climate, and rich soil were more conducive to larger yields.

Today, the California walnut has found its ideal home in the center of the state, an area that produces 99% of the commercial United States walnut supply. On the global market, California produces two-thirds of the world's supply of walnuts. Other countries that grow commercial walnuts include Turkey, China, Russia, Greece, Italy and France.

Though the first walnuts to arrive in the United States came from Spain in the early 1800's, the French contributed many of their varieties during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Walnuts Featured in World Cuisines

Creative cooks and chefs of many countries have eagerly adopted walnuts and incorporated them into a multitude of dishes from soups to desserts and even dessert cordials.

Baklava, a well-known delicacy served throughout the Middle East, is a rich dessert made of alternate layers of buttered filo dough and ground walnuts. A final topping of sweet spiced syrup is poured over the top and allowed to soak in for several hours before the baklava is cut into diamond shapes and served.

Though we are most familiar with fully mature walnuts, green walnuts, completely edible but quite sour, are an ideal ingredient for pickles, jams, and marmalades. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many English cookbooks touted an abundance of recipes for pickling both black and green walnuts.

In the Middle East, a sweet syrup is used to preserve half-ripe walnuts, a process that takes several weeks before the delicious confections are ready to eat.

In Italy, walnuts are sometimes added to the pine nuts in the preparation of pesto, a thick basil and

olive oil sauce served over pasta. The French enjoy their Walnut Soup and relish sauces made of walnuts, garlic and oil, while the Persians favor a dish called Fesenjen made of poultry or meat, walnuts, and pomegranate juice.

The ancient Persians made a paste of ground walnuts and used it to thicken soups and stews. During the Middle Ages this handy technique was introduced into Europe. Before the colonists arrived in America, the Narragansett Indians of the Eastern United States also pounded the black walnut into a paste to thicken their soups and vegetable stews.

During the fourteenth century, walnuts appeared on the dessert list at a French royal banquet. The walnuts for this occasion were preserved in a spiced honey mixture that was stirred once a week for several weeks in preparation for the event.

Naming the Walnut

The origin of the word nut is derived from the Latin *nux* referring to the fruit inside the shell, the nut kernel itself. The walnut tree's formal botanical name, *Juglans regia*, comes from the Romans. The word *juglans*, from the Latin, means "the acorn of Jupiter," while *regia* refers to royalty. You could actually translate its Latin name to mean "the royal acorn of Jupiter."

Another Roman version, *Jovis glans*, though not its botanical name, is translated as the royal nut of Jove, another name for Jupiter who is the highest god in Roman mythology. Yet another Roman name for the walnut, *Nux juglandes*, translates as "the nut of Jupiter."

Because the walnut shell has an appearance reminiscent of the human brain, the Afghanistani word for walnut is *charmargh*z or "four brains" in their language.

From Teutonic roots comes the German *Wallnuss* or *Welsche Nuss*. Since many words of our English language came from the German, it's quite apparent how the word *walnuss* could have easily evolved into "walnut."

Folklore

The Romans associated the walnut with the Juno, the Roman goddess of women and marriage and the wife of Jupiter. This association led to the unique wedding practice of throwing walnuts at the bride and groom as a symbol of fertility. Women often carried walnuts to promote fertility.

There is a legend that presumes walnuts were one of the gifts presented to Jesus by the three wise men.



English merchant sailors transported walnuts across the globe during Medieval times. Walnuts became so associated with the English that they were often called English walnuts, a name that is still used today.

One custom in Poitou, France is to have the bride and groom dance around the city's gigantic walnut tree. The villagers believe that by participating in this dance the bride will produce an abundance of milk for her baby.

In the French countryside, it was tradition to hang a bag of walnuts from the ceiling beam in the kitchen to represent abundance. Walnuts also represented longevity.

Some young men in the French countryside believed the walnut tree to possess aphrodisiac powers and attempted to sneak a leaf into the shoe of a young woman they admired.

Along with some items of amusing folklore, the walnut tree holds a few dark superstitions. In seventeenth century Italy there was a walnut tree, the Tree of Benevento, that was believed to be the place where witches gathered. According to a legend, the Bishop removed the tree, roots and all, but another witch-haunted tree grew where the original stood.

Another legend warns it is unlucky to plant walnut trees too close to a stable because it might bring illness and death to the animals. Even travelers along the road were warned not to choose the walnut tree as a refuge for the night, fearing they may become ill.

Superstitions and fears also surrounded the shade of the walnut tree. A passage in Pliny's writings states that the shadow of the walnut tree dulled the brain. He also considered the walnut tree a nuisance wherever it was planted.

Another superstition warns that one should not try to grow anything near the walnut tree, because it contains evil or poison.

The medieval Doctrine of Signatures stated that because the shape of the walnut resembled the brain, the nut would be beneficial for all ailments associated with the head and brain, including headaches. Later, toward the end of the fourteenth century, walnuts were thought to cause headaches.

One superstition held that if a walnut were dropped into the lap of a person suspected of being a witch, she would be unable to rise from a sitting position as long as the walnut remained in her lap.

Growing

Walnuts belong to a family that includes the pecan and hickory pecan. There are three main varieties of walnut trees, the most familiar variety being *Juglans regia*, known as the Persian or English walnut. For the past two centuries its main growing region has been North America, specifically California. Southeastern Europe also grows many varieties of the English walnut which is also cultivated from Turkey to the Himalayas and even reaching into China. This variety grows to a height of 40 to 60 feet high and has a lifespan of about 60 years or more.

Juglans nigra, or the Black Walnut, grows mainly in the Eastern and Central United States, from New England to Minnesota and Nebraska, and south to the Gulf of Mexico. The black walnut can grow to a height of 150 feet, with the nuts bearing a more rounded shape. Though the tree is grown mainly for lumber, there is a minor industry in harvesting the nuts because of their distinctive, rich, and oily flavor that is valued for baking, candymaking, and preparing black walnut ice cream. The black walnut tree is known to be a centenarian, living for 100 years or longer.

Juglans cinerea, refers to the Butternut, or white walnut, that is also in the same family and grows in the Eastern United States as well. The butternut tree averages about 30 to 50 feet in height and bears an oval or egg-shaped nut. Considered the hardiest of the walnut trees, its lifespan varies from 50 to 75 years. In some varieties of the Butternut, the bruised leaves and the husks are aromatic.



The walnut consists of three distinct parts. The edible portion, known as the kernel or fruit of the nut, is actually the seed of the walnut tree. It has two lobes. The inner part of the lobe is ivory colored and is covered by a thin brown skin that is firmly attached.



The shell, called the endocarp, is a very hard material made up of two distinct halves firmly sealed together. The shell is light brown in color and has an appearance reminiscent of the convolutions of the human brain. An inedible, thin, cellulose-like membrane separates the two lobes of the walnut inside the shell.

The husk, called the pericarp, covers the shell with a soft, fleshy, green skin that protects the walnut. When fully mature the husk is about two inches in diameter. Not commonly known, is that the very immature green husk is edible. At this stage the shell and the nut have not hardened and both are also edible, though they taste quite sour.

All walnut trees are deciduous and grow well in temperate zones if sheltered from extreme cold and strong wind. They thrive best in deep, fertile soil free of alkali and should not be planted closer than 60 to 70 feet apart. The trees will grow easily on mountainsides up to an altitude of 3,000 ft.

Walnut groves must be irrigated frequently because the trees require an abundance of water to produce nut kernels that are moist and well developed. However, it is also necessary to provide good drainage. Deep watering in the winter is important.

In Europe the trees grow to a height of 60 to 85 feet with a typical trunk circumference of 3 feet. One farmer recorded a circumference of 16 feet in a farmers' almanac. In the United States walnut trees can grow to a height of 20 feet in 6 to 8 years and finally reach about 90 to 100 feet when mature.

Those superstitions about not being able to grow anything in the soil surrounding the walnut tree actually have truth and reason to back them up. The tree's roots tend to secrete juglone, a poisonous substance, into the soil that actually poisons some plants growing near the trees. Horticulturists recommend not planting tomatoes, rhododendrons and azaleas within 80 feet of any walnut tree.

Each tree produces both male and female flowers that bloom in April and May, about the same time the leaves begin to appear. Though the trees self-pollinate, most growers will plant one or two other varieties in the grove for optimum cross-pollination.

In the United States, California's Sacramento Valley is the center of walnut production, whereas in France, Perigord is known for its abundance of walnut groves that were thriving well before 1657.

Throughout Europe the two varieties of walnut are the *Juglans regia*, the familiar commercial walnut, and the black walnut, *Juglans nigra*.

The English walnuts reach maturity in the early fall when the husks split open. The black walnut and the butternut also mature in the fall season.

Before the age of mechanization, the traditional September harvesting of walnuts consisted of

shaking the trees by hand using long hooked poles to knock the nuts to the ground where they could be easily gathered. Today, the trees are shaken by machine, while another machine uses vacuum suction to collect the fallen nuts.

Commercial hot-air dehydrators with blower fans circulate warm air to reduce the moisture of the walnuts to between 12 and 20% to preserve their shelf life. In past centuries, walnuts were simply left on drying racks away from the sun until they were properly dried.

Medicinal Benefits

In one region of southern France known as Perigord the long-standing traditional diet is very high in fried foods, rich meats, and fatty patés. Yet, the people suffer fewer heart attacks than Americans. At first medical experts explained this phenomenon by attributing this miracle to the red wine they drink. Red wine is known for its superior antioxidants to protect the heart. Yet, the residents of this region didn't drink any more red wine than those in other parts of Europe. Closer examination revealed that their daily green salads were dressed with walnut oil and chopped walnuts, helping to lower their levels of LDL and overall cholesterol in the bloodstream.

A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, May 1994, showed that those whose diets included nuts, either walnuts or almonds, were able to lower their LDL cholesterol by 9 to 10%.

Another study that appeared in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association, July 1995, found that walnuts could also diminish the extent of heart damage after a heart attack.

From ancient times through the nineteenth century herbalists prescribed the walnut, the bark, the roots, and the leaves as an astringent, a laxative, a purgative to induce vomiting, a styptic to stop bleeding, a vermifuge to expel worms or parasites, and a hepatic to tone the liver. The walnut served to induce sweating, cure diarrhea, soothe sore gums and skin diseases, cure herpes, and relieve inflamed tonsils.

The nut itself was used to prevent weight gain, calm hysteria, eliminate morning sickness, and to strengthen one's constitution. The hulls were boiled and used to treat head and body lice, herpes, intestinal parasites and worms, skin diseases, and liver ailments. The leaf was decocted to cure boils, eczema, hives, ulcers, and sores.

Even the walnut oil was employed as a medicinal aid. It was first diluted before it was used to treat colic, dandruff, dry hair, gangrene, and open wounds, while the green rind of the walnut was used to treat ringworm.

Uses for the Walnut Tree

The walnut tree has provided the creative entrepreneur many opportunities. The wood of the tree is exceptionally hard, making it ideal for fine furniture, wall paneling, musical instruments, sculpting, and woodcarving. The walnut wood has found its way into the kitchen in the form of plates and spoons, while the farmer employed the wood for animal yokes and water jugs. Even wooden shoes were formed from the walnut tree. During war times the Europeans made gunstocks from the firm wood of the walnut tree. During World War I, the hardy wood of the black walnut was used for making airplane propellers.

In past times walnut shells served many purposes as well. Pliny suggests crushing them finely to

use for filling dental cavities. Imagine shaving with the edge of heated walnut shells instead of a razor. King Louis XI's barber engaged in this practice because he thought it would prevent nicks. To prevent bread from sticking, bakers would spread powdered walnut shells on the base of their ovens.

More recently, finely powdered walnut shells served many commercial industries. The powder was employed as a polish for metals used in the aeronautical industry and as face powder in the cosmetics field. Oil riggers use the powdered shells to sharpen their drills. NASA has even put powdered walnut shells to use as thermal insulation in rocket nose cones. Apparently, the powder can withstand extreme temperatures without carbonizing.

The French have created a fine liqueur with walnut husks as its base, but leave it to the Italians to create *Nocino*, a renowned cordial made from green walnuts. The recipe originated in Modena, where the unripe walnuts are picked on the Festival Day of St. John on June 24. The walnuts are cracked, steeped in alcohol for two months, and then filtered to remove any debris before the cordial is sipped with gusto.

In past centuries people discovered that all parts of the walnut could be processed to create colors and dyes. Furniture makers and finishers use the husks to create a rich walnut stain. Women developed a beauty secret to enhance their appearance, a hair dye made from the walnut hulls. Scribes made a rich brown ink from walnut hulls. Since prehistoric times weavers extracted a rich dark brown dye from walnut juice, while they used the green husks to make a yellow dye. They also boiled the bark to extract a deep brown dye used for coloring wool.

Walnut Oil

Though the walnut oil was used for many purposes, the first pressing of the walnut kernel was highly prized by chefs for its lightness and delicate flavor. High in polyunsaturates, walnut oil is also rich in gamma-tocopherol, a form of Vitamin E considered nutritionally superior. Since it is so high in antioxidants, the gamma-tocopherol protects the oil from becoming rancid quickly.

In France during the eighteenth century, before walnuts were pressed into oil, they were stored for two to three months to cure. To extract walnut oil, the nuts were first crushed into a paste. The most highly valued oils were achieved by heating the paste delicately to bring out the best flavor of the nuts. Next, the nuts were pressed to extract the oil. Oil could also be extracted from walnuts without heating, but heating was preferred, resulting in exceptional flavor. It takes about four pounds (approximately 2 kilograms) of nuts to press out a scant quart (a liter) of oil.

Aside from the delicacies of the table, walnut oil served rather diverse purposes. The ancient Egyptians used the oil in the embalming of their mummies. Parts of Europe where walnuts were plentiful used a lower quality of the oil to light their oil lamps. In nineteenth century France walnut oil was used in the church as holy oil.



European artists favored walnut oil as a paint medium to be mixed with pigment. In fact, many of the French impressionists preferred it to poppy and linseed oils that actually surpassed it in quality. The paintings of Monet, Pissaro, and Cezanne carry traces of walnut oil as shown by chemical analysis.

Nutritional Benefits



Nuts are a highly concentrated form of excellent nutrition; however, it's important to stress that they ought to be eaten in moderation. Because walnuts, like other nuts, are high in fats, it's important to note they are also high in calories.

While one-fourth cup of raw, unsalted walnuts contains 180 calories, be aware they contain 18 grams of fat, 1.5 grams saturated. The fat in walnuts is mostly polyunsaturated. If you are watching the fat, you can calculate your fat intake by dividing the 77% of calories from fat by the 180 calories to learn that a one-fourth cup serving contains 43% fat. That percentage may sound high, but it should not discourage a healthy person from gaining nutritional benefits from eating walnuts in small quantities.

Walnuts are rich in protein, providing 7 grams for that same one-fourth cup, 2 grams of fiber, and only 7 grams of carbohydrates. Walnuts can be considered a super food because they contain a full complement of vitamins, including B1, B2, B3, B5, B6 and folic acid. They also contain a wealth of minerals, such as iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

Walnuts contain Vitamin E--alpha, beta, delta and gamma-tocopherol, making it exceptionally high in antioxidants.

Nutritionists tell us that Omega 3 fatty acids are found in only a few plant food sources, yet are essential to a healthy body. In a 2,000-calorie diet, 3 tablespoons of walnuts will provide our daily requirement of these Omega 3 fatty acids.

Using Walnut Oil

All vegetable oils are high in calories, and all should be used sparingly. Walnut oil contains 260 calories per ounce. One tablespoon contains 120 calories and 14 grams of fat. Use small amounts as a salad dressing or drizzle delicately over steamed vegetables.

Purchasing, Storing and Preparing Walnuts

Since walnuts are harvested in early autumn, usually in September, the freshest nuts are purchased during the autumn season. The supermarket will sell walnuts by the pound in bulk throughout fall and winter. If kept in their shells, they can keep for six to eight months without spoiling. Shelled nuts are usually sold in 1 pound plastic packages and are best kept in the refrigerator to prevent rancidity. For longer storage, pack them in heavy plastic bags and store them in the freezer.

When shopping for walnuts in the shell, make sure they do not smell rancid. Shake the nut. If it rattles, the kernel is old and dried up. Look for shells that are undamaged and contain no cracks or wormholes.

Though it is a rarity to find black walnuts or butternuts for purchase in the west, they may be available along the U.S. East Coast. They are almost always sold in shelled form because the nuts are difficult to extract from the shells. Packed in plastic bags and stored in the freezer, they keep up to one year.

Toasting

To enhance the flavor of walnuts, toast them lightly. Simply put a cup or two of walnut halves or pieces into a deep, non-stick open skillet over high heat on the stovetop. Using a wooden spoon, stir constantly for one to two minutes, taking care not to burn the nuts. Immediately pour them out

onto a dish to cool. If left in the skillet, the residual heat may burn them.

Cracking

Removing English walnuts from their husks and shells is rarely a problem. Almost any nutcracker will do. Though they are seldom used today, a nut pick can be quite handy for pulling the walnut out from its shell.

Chopping

Chopping nuts can be done in the food processor using the pulse-chop method. If you only have a few nuts to chop, simply break them up by hand. If you want coarsely ground walnuts, use a nut mill, an item that may be available in kitchen shops.

An ideal gift for special friends at holiday time or simply an extra special treat to serve on a dessert table, these nutty treats can be made well in advance of the holiday rush. They're good keepers if you store them in airtight containers.

The success of this recipe depends on measuring out all ingredients in advance of assembly. It actually comes together quickly once you have everything ready to pour in.

SUGAR PLUM SPICED NUTS

1/2 C. (118 ml) evaporated cane juice

Spice Mixture

2 t. ground cinnamon

2 t. ground cloves

2 t. ground allspice

2 t. ground nutmeg

2 t. ground cardamom

2 t. ground ginger

1/4 t. ground cayenne pepper

1/4 t. salt

Coating

1 T. canola oil

1/3 C. (79 ml) evaporated cane juice

3/4 C. (177 ml) rum

3 C. (717 ml) raw walnuts

1. Make vegan powdered sugar by grinding in batches the 1/2 C. (118 ml) evaporated cane juice in an electric coffee grinder until finely powdered. Pour into a medium bowl and set aside.
2. Measure spice mixture into a bowl or cup, mix well, and set aside.
3. Prepare remaining ingredients by pouring canola oil into a large stir-fry pan. Measure 1/3 C. (79 ml) evaporated cane juice, rum, and walnuts in separate cups and set aside near stir-fry pan. Now you're ready to begin.

4. Heat canola oil in stir-fry pan over high heat for about 1 minute. Add the 1/3 C. (79 ml) evaporated cane juice and stir another minute until hot.
5. Pour in rum and stir constantly until sugar is completely dissolved, about 1 minute.
6. Quickly pour in walnuts and continue stirring over high heat until all liquid evaporates and mixture becomes sticky and shiny. Cook about 1 - 2 minutes longer to eliminate any liquid clinging to the nuts.
7. Sprinkle in 2 T. of the spice mixture and toss to coat, stirring until mixture is dry, about 1 minute. Turn off heat and add remaining 2 T. spice mixture, tossing continuously for another minute.
8. Pour spiced nuts into bowl with vegan powdered sugar and toss to coat completely. Spread nuts out on a large dish or baking sheet to cool completely. Store in airtight container at room temperature. Will keep up to 1 month. Makes 3 1/2 cups (835 ml).

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AND THE 24 CARROT AWARD GOES TO . . .

Pecans at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

Bugs Bunny knows a good thing when he plucks a stolen carrot from Elmer Fudd's garden, takes a bite, and declares, "Eh, what's up doc?" Bugs even eats the green carrot tops recognizing that carrots, tops and all, are among the most nutritious foods on the planet.

Despite their goodness, carrots had to be taught to be sweet by enthusiastic green thumb gardeners who took an interest in improving their flavor. Probably no one would be eating carrots that were once small, very thin, red, purple, and even black taproots with a distasteful bitterness if no one had taken an interest in improving their flavor. Luckily, some motivated folks took carrots under their horticultural wings and taught them how to be sweet.

History

Today the wild carrot grows throughout Europe and in Western Asia, from Afghanistan and westward into Turkey. Both continents are home to archeological sites where ancient seeds were found in prehistoric lake dwellings in Switzerland as well as the 8th century BCE royal gardens of Babylon, an area that is now a part of Iraq. Evidence shows the Babylonians appreciated the pleasing fragrance from the leaves and seeds of carrot plants and grew them as aromatic herbs rather than eating them for their roots.

Some historians believe the carrot's origins are rooted in Afghanistan where purple and deep red varieties can still be found growing. Because it was common to confuse the carrot and the parsnip, the Greek physician Galen named the wild carrot *Daucus pastinaca*, though confusion remained steadfast until botanist Linnaeus set the record straight in the 18th century with his system of plant classification. The scientific name he gave the carrot is *Daucus carota*, the parsnip *Pasticaca*

sativa.

During the first century CE, the Greeks cultivated a variety of root crops that included leeks, onions, radishes, turnips, and a poorly developed variety of carrots. The unpleasant tasting carrots were rarely eaten but were applied medicinally. Though the Greeks excelled in cultivating many food plants, they never succeeded in developing the carrot into a flavorful vegetable. Even Galen, the 2nd century physician at the court of Marcus Aurelius, stated that the wild carrot is less fit to be eaten than the cultivated variety.



Charlemagne, the 8th century ruler of France, welcomed new fruits and vegetables into his royal gardens and set aside an area for growing carrots, though their flavor did not win them a great deal of acceptance there either. To lessen their appeal, the purple carrots turned brown when cooked. Worse still, any liquid and foods cooked in the same pot also turned brown.

Centuries passed before the carrot received additional mention in historical literature. During that period the carrot traveled westward into the Mediterranean countries. Arab writer Ibn al-Awam gave a definitive description of two varieties of carrots he encountered in the early part of the 12th century: a red one he says is tasty and juicy and the other, a yellow and green carrot, he calls coarser and of inferior flavor. Al-Awam writes that carrots were served with a dressing of oil and vinegar or added to vegetable mixtures and cereals, probably grains.

Al-Awam who lived in Andalusia, a region in southern Spain, noted that Arab travelers brought carrots from their homeland to the European continent. The curious carrot traversed the route eastward via European travelers and explorers to set its roots into India and the Far East during the 13th century. By the 14th century the Netherlands, France and Germany were introduced to the carrot. It took another century to reach England's shores during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

After Columbus' first visit to the Caribbean in 1492, the islands became the melting pot of the world with explorers from Europe, Asia, Africa, and America who each brought plants, animals, and customs from their homelands. By the 1600's carrots along with cabbages, onions, and garlic were growing on many of the islands. The cultivated European carrot was even found growing on an island off the coast of Venezuela when it was discovered in 1565.

During the 16th century avid Dutch horticulturists began improving the color and flavor of this new vegetable. The purple variety fell out of favor quickly, bringing the brighter yellow carrot into the spotlight. A white carrot appeared as an anomaly in Germany during the mid 16th century and now occasionally appears in agricultural harvests. The truly orange carrot, indicating the presence of beta carotene, is attributed to Dutch cultivation and is depicted in Flemish paintings of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Though the Dutch were avid growers of carrots and applied their craft in developing a genuinely sweet carrot, they apparently did not eat many of them. Rather, the carrots they grew were fed to their prized Holstein cows. Throughout Europe the Dutch became known for producing the richest, yellowest butter, owing this success to their cows' regular carrot feed.

During the 17th and 18th centuries foods from many parts of the globe arrived in the New World

at a steady pace. Vegetables like carrots, cabbages, and turnips, though not yet commonplace, began their transition from the home garden to the beginnings of the commercial farm. Carrots also made a favorable impression on native American Indians who eagerly adopted them because of their bright orange color and novel flavor.

By the mid 1800's a number of English middle and upper class people emigrated to Australia to assume positions as officers and administrators in the penal colonies. They made their journey by ship with hearty portions of chickens, venison, ham, suet puddings, beer, ale, and vegetables that included carrots, cabbages, and Brussels sprouts.

Following World War I carrots came into popularity in the U.S. because several American travelers visited Europe, tasted the uncommon roots, and thought them novel enough to stir interest. Shortly after, farmers began growing carrots in Michigan and California. Today, most commercial carrots grown in the United States come from California, Texas, and Michigan.

The Carrot in Other Cuisines

Because of their natural sweetness, carrots were used during the Middle Ages to sweeten cakes and desserts throughout Europe. The British were known for their steamed puddings that frequently included carrots or parsnips as sweeteners. By the 18th and 19th centuries British cookbooks often included carrots in their pudding recipes.

In Asia, carrots are made into preserves, jams, and even syrups. In Central Asia and Iran bright orange carrots are shredded to garnish their dishes, while India features carrots in their Halva and Khir, two pudding-like desserts enjoyed even today.

The carrot cake's roots reach across the ocean into English soil. During the Second World War the Ministry of Food published recipes for carrot cake and Christmas pudding along with other carrot recipes.

Buttered carrots, considered common today, are thought to have originated in the royal kitchens of Queen Elizabeth I of England when a Dutchman presented her with a diamond studded wreath of bright orange carrots and a tub of butter from his country. Without hesitation, she plucked off the diamonds and sent a servant to the kitchen with the carrots and butter. The royal chef combined the ingredients giving birth to the classic dish of buttered carrots.

Castelvetro, an Italian chef of the 17th century, took delight in sprinkling pepper on carrots that were pink and yellow, the only ones available to him.

Flemish Carrots prepared with a recipe from the 1800's began by simmering them in water, butter, salt and pepper. Then the carrots were finished with a little sugar, a pinch of chopped parsley, two egg yolks, and a little cream.

The Dutch love their carrot soup with cream, herbs, celery, mushrooms, and bacon. Tsimmes, a slow cooking casserole made with prunes, is an old favorite of Eastern European Jews. Carrot Dumplings are a favorite of the Amish, while the Finnish add carrots to lighten their meatballs

Medicinal Benefits





Dioscorides, physician and surgeon of Roman Emperor Nero's army, discovered that the Greeks used carrots in the treatment of cancerous tumors. He also recommended using the wild carrot seeds to relieve bladder infection, to bring on menstruation, and as first aid for venomous snakebites.

Like many foods eaten in excess, carrots can produce unhealthful results too. Carotene, the pigment that gives carrots and other yellow fruits and vegetables their color, can cause jaundice when consumed in excessive quantities. Some people who have imbibed large quantities of carrot juice in a relatively short time developed a yellow hue to their skin. Though the yellowing of the skin from indulging in a heavy dose of carrots is seldom serious and will disappear in a few days, continued carrot gorging can cause medical problems. In 1974 one unfortunate English health advocate named Basil Brown consumed 10 gallons of carrot juice and took 10,000 times the recommended RDA of vitamin A in a period of 10 days. Those 10 days were the unfortunate man's undoing--his skin turned bright yellow and he died of severe liver damage.

During the first century CE the ancient Greeks and Romans rarely ate the bitter carrots but used them instead for medicinal purposes. Any ulcerous sores were treated with a compress of ground up carrots. Carrots were prescribed as a stomach tonic and believed to improve eyesight.

That carrots contribute to improved eyesight is no myth. The high content of vitamin A is beneficial and contributes to the function of the retina of the eyes. During World War II, Royal Air Force pilots were urged to consume carrots to maintain good eyesight. Because beta carotene is a powerful antioxidant, eating carrots frequently may help prevent cataracts.

Researchers at the USDA found that study participants who consumed 2 carrots a day were able to lower their cholesterol levels about 20 percent due to a soluble fiber called calcium pectate.

During the Middle Ages physicians prescribed carrots for all sorts of ills including syphilis and dog bites.

While today's carrot contains beta carotene, the precursor to Vitamin A, the purple carrots of ancient times possessed anthocyanin, the same phytochemical in vegetables such as purple cabbage and the skin of the eggplant. Because beta carotene is a powerful antioxidant, carrots are considered important in preventing cancer and lowering cholesterol.

Folklore and Oddities

Carrot tops were considered a fashion statement when worn by the ladies of the English court. The lacy green foliage provided an attractive hair ornament or an adornment on their hats.

Carrots were prepared as a love potion by the ancient Greeks. The carrot was thought to endow men with the power of passion, while compelling women to become more submissive.

First century Roman Emperor Caligula, known to be insane and sadistic, fed his entire Roman Senate a banquet comprised only of carrot dishes so he could witness their aphrodisiac effects first hand and watch the senators "fornicating like beasts of the field."

The Greek foot soldiers who hid in the Trojan Horse were said to have consumed ample quantities of raw carrots to inactivate their bowels. In opposition, the Roman invaders fed carrot broth to

their female captives in hope of loosening their straight-laced demeanor.

Carrot juice and marigold petals were the first colorants used to enhance the appearance of pale colored European cheeses. Today synthetic beta carotene is a common additive used to color cheese.

While the root and leaves of the carrot were used as a yellow dye in 16th and 17th century Europe, carrots are still used in France to brighten the color of pale butter.

The Carrot Gets its Name

The Greeks called the carrot *Philon* or *Philtron* from their word *philo* that means loving. However, the carrot's Latin name *Daucus carota* most influenced its present name that came from the French who named it *carotte*.



Growing

Daucus carota refers to the wild carrot. The modern, domesticated or cultivated carrot is classified as *D. carota* var *sativa* and belongs to the botanical group Umbelliferae. Other family members include celery, anise, caraway, dill, coriander, cumin, chervil, fennel, parsley, and parsnip, as well as Queen Anne's Lace and poison hemlock.

Queen Anne's Lace is the ancestor of today's cultivated carrot that may in its second year of growth develop the typical umbelliferous flat-topped flowers of its ancient past. The carrot's attractive foliage grows about 10 to 12 inches (25.5 to 30 cm) in height

Carrots thrive in a garden that gets plenty of sunshine and grow best in deep, moist, sandy soil with good drainage. Choose carrot varieties that are suited to the type of soil in your garden. Loose, deep soil will do well with long, thin varieties, while more compacted soil is best for growing shorter, thicker

carrots.

To start the carrot patch from seed, cover with finely sifted compost, fine sand, or vermiculite and water gently. Either scatter the seeds in a row and thin them out or plant seeds at 1-inch (2.5 cm) intervals in a more contained space such as two or three square feet. The mature carrots can be harvested in about 45 days and another crop planted in their place.

Carrots thrive best in cooler climates where the temperatures range between 40 and 80 degrees F (4.4 and 26.7 C). and the maximum temperature does not exceed 88 degrees F (31 C). Apply two fertilizer applications during the growing season, one when the foliage is 3 to 4 inches (7.5 to 10 cm) tall and another at 6 to 8 inches (15 to 20 cm) tall. After each feeding, cover the tops of the roots with one-half-inch (1 cm) of soil to prevent sunburn. This will also prevent loss of sweetness.

The rust fly can be a problem for carrots by burrowing deep into the soil and attacking the roots. Growers suggest interplanting carrots with onions and annual flowers to discourage this unwelcome pest.

The carrot gets its exceptional flavor from its seeds that contain essential oils, a feature that belongs to only two botanical families, the carrot family and the mint family. The seeds

themselves are considered complete fruits.

Today the home gardener can choose from many carrot varieties, from the short globe-shaped baby carrots to extra long tapered roots. Short 'n Sweet, Thumbelina, and Parmex fall into the short, stubby, or baby carrot range; Fly Away, Nantes Express, and Chantenay Royal are medium length roots; Blaze, Artist, Chamberley, and Ingot are varieties that fall into the 7 to 9-inch (18 to 23 cm) range. One can even purchase seeds of heirloom varieties like Danver's Half Long, Red Cored Chantenay, Scarlet Nantes, and St. Valery.

Nutrition

A carrot a day ought to join the apple a day motto for its outstanding health benefits. Carrots contain beta carotene, one of 600 carotenoids that are pigments that give yellow and orange fruits, vegetables, flowers, and autumn leaves their color. The beta carotene in carrots assists the vegetable in converting to vitamin A. While animal foods contain vitamin A, fruits and vegetables contain only the vitamin's precursors--the carotenoids.

One large raw carrot packs a whopping 20,253 IU of beta carotene yet has only 31 calories. Now that's a dieter's delight! With 1 gram of protein and 2 grams of fiber, this crunchy treat has only 7 grams of carbohydrate and zero fat.

Carrots are packed with nutrients. Raw carrots contain vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 and offer 10.1 mcg of folic acid. Load your body with 233 mg of potassium in one large raw carrot that even contains vitamin C, iron, magnesium, and 19.4 mg of calcium. Additionally, the minerals zinc, cobalt, fluorine, silicon, and chlorophyll make an appearance along with the amino acids arganine, lysine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine.

A medium cooked carrot contains slightly lower figures but still offers plenty of nutrition with 11,295 IU of beta carotene, 6.4 mcg of folic acid, and 14.3 mg of calcium. Vitamins B1, B2, B3, and B6 are also represented while potassium offers 104 mg. Like the raw carrot, in its cooked form the medium carrot offers 1 gram of protein and 2 grams of fiber.

For anyone eating on the run, one cup of fresh carrot juice can offer a quick energy boost with its 2 grams of protein, 2 grams of fiber, and only 94 calories. The beta carotene fix measures up 25,833 IU along with a healthy dose of vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6 and 9 mcg of folic acid. A hearty 56.6 mg of calcium and 689 mg of potassium go hand in hand with 20.1 mg. of vitamin C and a bit of iron and zinc in addition.

Carrot tops are an outstanding source of chlorophyll, the green pigment that studies have shown to combat the growth of tumors. Chlorophyll contains cleansing properties that purify the blood, lymph nodes, and adrenal glands. Scientists have been unable to synthesize chlorophyll in the laboratory, but green plant foods contain sufficient quantities to protect the human body.

Potent antioxidants are among carrots' best features. These include the monoterpenes that protect against heart disease and cancer and polyacetylenes that inhibit tumor growth. The beta carotene prevents cataracts and premature aging.

Carrots contain a small amount of vitamin K, a fat-soluble vitamin that helps with blood clotting and prevents the body from losing calcium loss through urination.

On the sweetness scale among vegetables, beets score the highest. Carrots rank second with a sugar content of 7 percent.

Purchasing

Commercially grown carrots are planted at regular intervals throughout the year, making them available to the consumer all year long. Look for carrots that are bright orange in color and that have a smooth skin. Bright color and smooth texture are indicators of a sweet, flavorful carrot. Plump, deep green, attached carrot tops are a true sign of freshness. Carrots with their tops still attached are always sold in bunches. Size does not usually determine the sweetness of a carrot--baby carrots as well as giant ones can be equally sweet. If the greens are wilted and turning yellow or brown, the carrots have lost their freshness and, no doubt, some of their nutrients.

Carrots with a rough, pale, or cracked skin are seldom sweet. A rim of green color at the top of the carrot indicates it may have become sunburned and will frequently have a bitter flavor. Old carrots can be recognized by their limp, shriveled appearance. Another sign of an aging carrot is roots that are beginning to sprout along the surface of the skin.

Don't toss those perky looking carrot tops into the trash--they're completely edible and highly nutritious.

Miniature carrots have become popular items in the produce market, but may lack nutritious qualities. Some miniature varieties have a delicate, pastel orange color, a tell-tale sign they have diminished beta carotene content. Others, with a stubby miniature appearance, are not genuine miniatures but may have been mechanically trimmed from large carrots to resemble the baby



carrots.

Loose or packaged carrots without the tops are generally not as fresh as those with the greens attached. However, some can be surprisingly sweet.

One pound of loose carrots or 1 bunch with tops will provide 3 to 4 servings, while one pound of grated carrots yield about 3 cups.

Storing

Though most refrigerators operate at about 40 degrees F (4.4 C), the ideal storage temperature for carrots is 32 degrees F (0 C). Because they contain dissolved sugars and salts, they don't freeze until the temperature drops several degrees below the freezing point.

Plastic bags prevent carrots from drying out, though long storage in plastic will deny them needed oxygen. It's best to purchase only what you will use within a week.

Because carrot tops tend to pull moisture from the carrots, the tops should be cut or twisted off and stored separately. Store carrots in a perforated plastic bag or an open plastic bag to allow air to circulate.

Avoid storing carrots close to fruits such as apples and pears. Many fruits create ethylene gas that hastens ripening and may affect the carrots.

Preparation

Carrots can be sliced, diced, shredded, or grated, and can be boiled, steamed, sautéed, fried, baked, roasted, or mashed. They are among the most versatile vegetables in the garden. They stand alone as a side dish or blend with other items to form casseroles, salads, soups, and main dishes. Carrots can also be added to cakes and muffins.

To peel or not to peel, that is the question. For aesthetic reasons most people prefer to peel their carrots. Restaurants never serve unpeeled carrots, caterers and haute cuisine chefs would never serve unpeeled carrots, and highly respected cooking schools teach students to peel the carrots. Yet, most of the carrot's nutritive elements are just under the skin and get peeled off into the garbage or compost heap.

Wash carrots thoroughly under running water and use a vegetable brush to remove earthy bits of debris that cling the skin. But, for goodness sake, leave the peel on! The goodness of this practice will be a decided health benefit.

Raw

For ease and convenience, nothing compares to a well-scrubbed, fresh organic carrot. Nature has provided a veggie or two that requires absolutely no preparation at all. Just wash and eat--it doesn't get much easier than that.

However, if you're inclined to putter a little, simply shred a carrot or two on the coarse grater, finely shred some green and red cabbage, and dress your slaw with a little oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper.

The traditional carrot salad with raisins and nuts can go equally as well with some variations like chopped dried fruits and sunflower seeds. For an exotic touch try adding a teaspoon or more of

rose water or orange blossom water available in Middle Eastern markets.

Grate or dice carrots into a tossed salad. The added color is eye appealing, while the extra vitamins and minerals provide health benefits.

Carrot sticks pack well in a lunch sack, add color and crunch to a relish tray, and provide the ideal finger food to serve with dips. Try crinkle cutting carrots served with dips--they appear more inviting and hold more dip that clings to the zig-zag indentations.

Juicing aficionados will appreciate the refreshing flavor and energy boost a glass of carrot juice can offer. And don't overlook the chlorophyll-packed carrot tops that add nutrients to a juiced green drink.

Add some finely chopped carrot tops to a tossed salad. Those chopped carrot greens even make a nice addition to tabbouli salad.



Steamed

Slice carrots thinly, and put them into a saucepan with a cover. Bring them to a boil over high heat, turn heat down to low, and steam for about 5 to 6 minutes. Cut into thin julienne, carrots will steam in about 4 minutes.

After steaming carrots, puree them in a food processor. A little of the cooking water may be added for a smoother puree. Spices like cinnamon and nutmeg add a pleasant touch to really sweet carrots. If the carrots are not sweet, add a pinch of salt and some cumin, coriander, or dill.

Steam parsnips along with the carrots and puree them together for a delightfully sweet side dish.

Roasted

Cut small carrots in half lengthwise, large ones into thirds lengthwise. Arrange them on a lightly oiled baking sheet and roast open at 375 F (Gas Mark 5) for 25 to 35 minutes. If desired, toss them with canola oil before roasting.

Enjoy a great start to a festive December gathering with a hearty ladleful of soup from the steaming kettle. With its rich flavor and savory fragrance, this aromatic soup that shines the spotlight on carrots goes well with almost any entrée. Serve the soup with the herb garnishes, croutons, and chardonnay wine at the table as optional add-ins.

CALIFORNIA CARROT BISQUE

- 6 C. (1 liter + 480 ml) water or vegetable broth
- 1 3/4 lbs. (.8 kg) carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 1/2 lbs. (.7 kg) russet potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 1 small sweet potato (about 8 oz. or 230 g) peeled and cut into chunks

1 medium onion, chopped

1/3 C. (80 ml) water

1 bunch fresh dill, minced

1 T. + 1 t. lemon juice

1 1/4 t. salt or to taste

Garnish

2 large cloves garlic, minced

3 T. fresh parsley, chopped

1 to 2 T. fresh chives, minced

3 T. fresh sorrel, minced (optional)

Croutons

1 C. (240 ml) kosher chardonnay wine

1. Combine the water, carrots, russet potatoes, and sweet potato in an 8-quart (2 liter) stock pot. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
2. While carrots and potatoes are cooking, sauté onion in water in a medium skillet. Cook until transparent and soft, about 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a food processor or blender.
3. Add carrots, potatoes, and onions and their liquid to food processor or blender in batches. Puree completely and return to stock pot. If you prefer a smoother puree, use the blender instead.
4. Measure 3 T. minced dill into a small bowl, and set aside for garnish. Add remaining dill to stock pot along with lemon juice and salt. Adjust seasoning if needed.
5. For the garnish, combine the garlic, parsley, chives, and sorrel together in the bowl with the reserved minced dill. Pass the bowl around the table for guests to sprinkle a little into their soup. Serve the croutons in a separate bowl, and pour the wine into a small pitcher to serve at the table as additional soup accompaniments. Serves 6 to 8.

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Don't Nobody Love a Quince?

Quince at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe	

Won't someone take this poor, unloved quince under wing? True, the quince doesn't have the great eye appeal of a shiny apple, or the brilliance of a persimmon. Its rather pale yellow, mottled skin, sour taste, and lumpy shape isn't enticing either. But . . .the quince is easily transformed into marmalades, jams, and jellies that have been revered for centuries throughout the Middle East and Europe. And wouldn't a generous dollop of quince preserve on whole-wheat toast make breakfast more enjoyable?

Quince, like the apple and guava, produces a natural pectin when cooked, making it ideal for jelling. Yet, while a multitude of fruits are turned into jams and preserves, this country's commercial jam companies have yet to bring a jar of quince marmalade, jam, or jelly to market. However, quince preserves are readily available in Middle Eastern markets throughout the country.

History

The homeland of the quince lies between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, a mountainous region called the Caucasus that touches northern Turkey and Iran as well as Southern Georgia. A knobby, irregular shaped variety still grows wild in this part of the world.

Mention of quince appears in Greek writings about 600 BCE as a ritual item in wedding ceremonies. Pliny, a Roman naturalist and writer of the first century CE, was familiar with quince and mentioned it when he described the Mulvian variety, a cultivated quince, as the only one that could be eaten raw. Columella, another ancient naturalist, describes three other varieties he names as the sparrow apple, golden apple, and the must apple.

Cultivation of the quince began in Mesopotamia, an area now Northern Iraq between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Between 200 and 100 BCE, this "golden apple" was cultivated by the Greeks as it traveled into the Eastern Mediterranean. The quince was actually cultivated prior to the apple and reached Palestine by 100 BCE. Reference to the apple in the Song of Solomon may not have been an apple at all but might have been a quince instead.



Did Eve really bite into an apple that she plucked off the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden? No specific name is given to the fruit she tasted from that tree, though apples are mentioned later in the Bible. Some historians believe Eve's fruit of temptation might have been a pomegranate or possibly even a quince.

Following the battles for power between the Arabs and the Byzantines circa 763 CE, the Arabs moved their capital from Damascus to create the walled city of Baghdad. Beyond the walls a melting pot of communities took up residence and brought goods and foods from the East. From China travelers brought cinnamon and rhubarb to trade. Some went to India to return with coconuts. Others traveled to Isfahan in Persia for quinces, apples, saffron, and salt.

Charlemagne was partly responsible for introducing the quince into France with his orders in the year 812 to plant trees in the royal garden. Even Chaucer mentions quince using the name *coines*, a word that comes from the French *coing*.

During the 18th century, when Australia and New Zealand were becoming colonized, Australia began to raise sheep but became dependent on many imported foods brought by ships traveling from Britain. New Zealand, however, fell back on the Maori culture for fresh fruits and vegetables including quince, though how the quince reached New Zealand is not commonly known. It may have arrived by ship from England, but a more likely prospect is that the quince traveled eastward through India, China, and Japan and finally south to New Zealand.

Quince enjoyed the spotlight only briefly during the colonial period in New England. A March 16, 1629 entry in the Massachusetts Bay Colony's Memorandum listed quince as one of the seeds requested from England. By 1720 quince was thriving in Virginia. Many home gardens throughout the colonies were reaping a fall harvest from their quince trees; however, apples quickly snatched the spotlight from the quinces.

When European and Near Eastern immigrants began to settle in the New World, they planted quince in North America. Americans had become accustomed to sweet fruits like the apple and found little about the quince to favor. Quince grew traveling legs as the westward movement took hold in the United States. In the 1850's a Texan who owned a large land grant grew many fruit trees on his property. Among them was quince, along with peach, fig, raspberry, pomegranate, and plum.

Unpopular for most of its existence in the United States, the quince was more successful in some Latin American countries, especially Uruguay. A Spanish explorer of the nineteenth century visited Chile and wrote about quinces that were quite acidic and astringent, but that developed a sweetness if allowed to fully ripen on the tree. This may explain why the common practice of eating raw quinces in South America and Mexico surprised early explorers who only experienced them as hard and acidic. Humans tend to develop a palate for foods that have become part of their diet from childhood and are less apt to accept foods that are strange looking and have unappealing flavor.

In the Middle East quince is considered a common food, and, though it is sour, is eaten raw as well as cooked. Quince is also popular in Germany and South Africa, countries whose cuisine tends to be quite fatty. The quince with its high acidity counteracts the greasiness of the foods and is often served in the form of a sauce like applesauce as an accompaniment to fatty meats.

Today, the quince is relegated to the specialty fruit list in the United States where there are very few trees in production to bring quince to its limited market. However, the quince excels among fruits in other countries and is widely grown in Turkey, South America, and throughout the Mediterranean.

Folklore and Oddities

Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, was known to consider apples sacred. Historians believe the apple favored by Aphrodite were really quince. The legendary golden apple of Hesperides that Paris gave to Aphrodite was really a quince.

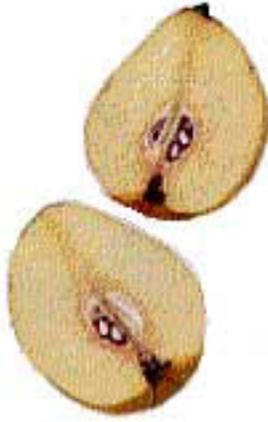
The ancient Greeks considered quinces to be the symbol of fertility and dedicated them to the goddess of love.

An Athenian wedding tradition of the ancient Greeks had friends and family tossing quinces into the bridal chariot as the groom was escorting his bride to her new home. Once they arrived, the bride ate a ceremonial cake flavored with honey and sesame. To insure fertility, she was then presented a quince.

One myth says that pregnant women who indulge their appetites in generous quantities of quinces will give birth to industrious and highly intelligent children.

Quince Known by Many Names

The Greeks referred to the ordinary quince as *strythion* but with their skills in cultivating fruits and vegetables, developed a finer quality in an area called Kydonia on the island of Crete. The new variety was eventually named *Cydoni* or *mela Kudonia* translated as apples of Cydonia.



The Romans also favored the quince and sweetened their quince preserves with honey. They took the Greek word for "honey apple" and called the quince *melimelum*.

Other names given to the quince include *coines*, *coing*, Cydonian apple, elephant apple, *maja pahit*, *ma-tum*, pineapple quince, *quitte*, and *vilvam*.

Medicinal Benefits

In Medieval times, Europeans thought quinces aided the digestion and prepared them frequently along with meats. The English called the combination *chardequince* meaning flesh of quince.

Quince Enjoyed in Various Cuisines

Apicius, Rome's first cookbook author, first century CE, preserved whole quinces with their stems and leaves attached in a bath of honey diluted with defrutum, a newly prepared wine that is spiced and reduced by boiling.

Another quince dish prepared by Apicius, *Patina de Cydoniis*, combines them with leeks, honey, and broth in hot oil.

The earliest true preserves came about during classical times when quinces were cooked with honey and vinegar, a combination that produced a gel or pectin-like quality.

From the 15th century to the present, *Cotignac d'Orleans*, a clear gel made from boiled quince juice and sugar, is set into small wooden boxes to form confections. These treats were originally presented to French royalty in honor of their visit to cities and outlying villages. *Cotignac* is still available in some areas of France and is known by other names in Spain and the Middle East.

When Joan of Arc arrived in Orleans in 1429 to liberate the French from the English, she received the honored gift of *cotignac*.

The English, during the 16th and 17th centuries, delighted in preparing many variations of quince preserves which they called *quidoniac*, *quiddony*, *marmelade* or *paste of Genoa*. The preserves formed a thick paste that could be shaped into animals or flower forms. Though the quince paste is rarely found in England today, a coarse version, called *membrillo*, is a favorite treat presently served along with cheese in Spain.

In 1570 Pope Pius V gave a spectacular banquet that featured as its piece de resistance, a quince pastry that required "one quince per pastry."

Hindus prepare a quince *sambal* by pounding peeled quinces with onions, hot peppers, salt and a little orange juice into a coarse puree to serve as a condiment very much like chutney.

Stews that combine sour fruits, such as quince, with meats are traditional foods in Iran and still remain popular today. Iranians also peel and core the quince and stuff the cavity with meat stew.

Moroccan cuisine incorporates the quince in its highly seasoned *tagines*, stew-like combinations of meats and dried fruits often spiced with cinnamon and cloves.

In Britain quince was incorporated into the cuisine in various pies and tarts, often appearing in

apple pies where it added a unique flavor and a hint of pink coloring. The British also prepared a sauce made from quince that became a traditional accompaniment to roasted partridge.

The ancestor of our American baked apple filled with raisins and nuts was no doubt the quince. The British were filling quince cavities with sugar and baking them long before Americans were baking apples. The British were also fond of marmalades and jellies made from quince, but these sweet spreads began to lose their popularity during the 20th century.

Although the most favored quince marmalade, called *marmelada*, originated Portugal during the 1500's, the British were preparing many versions of marmalade from quince well into 1600's. Joining the marmalade brigade is the Italian version called *cotognate*, a preserve that is still prepared in Southern Italy today.

Korean scholars of the 1700's and 1800's had great influence on the revival of tea drinking. Among the many teas they considered superior to Chinese teas were fruit teas sweetened with honey. Quince, along with citron, dates, pears, strawberries, cherries, watermelon and peaches, was made into delicious and fragrant fruit teas.

Interestingly, quince marmalade was commonplace centuries before orange marmalade, which didn't arrive on the scene until 1790 when it was created in Dundee, Scotland.

Quince cheese, an old New England specialty of the 1700's, required all-day boiling of quince preserves to achieve a solidified state, probably similar to the French specialty *cotignac*.

Alternative Uses for the Quince

Pruned branches of the quince tree are very hardy and make excellent kindling wood.

The whole quince fruits are so fragrant at room temperature they were used in ancient times to perfume the room, much as we use room fresheners today.

With their naturally pleasing aroma, quinces make ideal bases for pomanders studded with cloves and hung as decorations or given as gifts during the Christmas season.

Growing

Though the quince has had many names bestowed upon it, the true scientific names are *Cydonia oblongata* or *C. vulgaris*. There are two main varieties; the more rounded variety is highly acidic and is used mainly for making confections and jams. The cultivar that more closely resembles the pear in appearance tends to be slightly sweeter, though it is not considered a sweet fruit.

Because of its pear-shaped appearance and approximate pear size and pale yellow color, the quince was considered part of the pear family by plant historians who named it *Pyrus cydonia*, a name that was shortlived. The quince is actually part of the rose family, *Rosaceae*, that includes pears and apples; however, it stands uniquely apart because of its intense perfume-like fragrance, its tartness, and unusual growing habits.

The quince tree is small, only about 12 to 20 feet in



height, compared to many other fruit trees that easily reach 30 feet and higher. Interestingly, pears are frequently grown on quince rootstock to prevent the trees from growing too high for convenient harvesting. The quince possesses an independent nature, though, and will not hybridize with the pear. Another demonstration of the quince's self-reliance is its ability to self-fertilize.

Quince trees are deciduous, very hardy, and thrive well for approximately 30 years. They characteristically grow into bushy twisted and contorted shapes and require very little care. In spring the trees flower with single, large pink or white flowers that are reminiscent of apple blossoms. The unopened flower bud of some varieties has red stripes that evoke memories of an old barber pole.

Not many fruit trees grow easily from seed, but quince will, though it is usually best to purchase a small tree that has been grown from established rootstock.

With their shallow roots, quince trees thrive in moist soil, prefer temperate climates, and require protection from harsh cold or wind. In its favor, the quince rarely suffers from insect problems.

The tree's natural tendency is to grow in a scraggly fashion. Minimal pruning is needed for quince but may be helpful in eliminating unwanted suckers or heading-back interfacing branches.

Appealing as an ornamental, the quince offers attractive foliage, spring flowers, autumn colors, and an artistic appearance with its winter-bare entwining branches. While the spring blossoms provide food for beneficial insects, the autumn fruits left on the tree offer nourishment for birds and squirrels. The tree can be successfully planted in a lawn setting with a single tree producing ample fruit for cooking and feeding the wildlife.

Purchasing

Quinces are a seasonal fruit available in the early fall through January, though in some areas they may still be purchased through February and March. Though most large grocery chains will have quinces available in the fall, the consumer may have to look a little harder to find them in a tiny corner of the produce section. Not big sellers, quinces are considered a specialty item.

Ethnic markets that specialize in Middle Eastern items will definitely have quinces during the fall season. They are familiar fruits throughout the Middle East.

Quinces can be round, oval or somewhat pear shaped. Their appearance resembles a golden apple or pear. Choose those that are firm with a pale yellow skin. The yellow skin is often somewhat mottled with brown spots that don't affect the flavor or quality. Quinces that are shriveled, soft, or brown all over are no longer fresh.

Most varieties of quince are rock hard and quite sour, though in the 1990's a sweeter variety called the "apple quince" was developed and can be eaten raw. Because of their firmness and sour taste, quinces are almost always peeled, sweetened, and cooked, frequently into preserves. In the cooking process, the flesh turns a delicate pink and emits a delightful perfume-like fragrance

Storing

If the quinces are not completely yellow, store them at room temperature until they are fully ripened, yellow all over, and emit a pleasant aroma. They should then be used quickly or they will

become mealy.

If you don't plan to use the ripe quince immediately, then store them in the refrigerator where they will keep up to two weeks. However, it's best to store them apart from apples and pears because their penetrating aroma may affect the other fruits.

Raw

Unless the sweet variety of quinces are available, they are too acidic and astringent to be eaten raw.

Cooked

Quince has the firmness of a hard winter squash, so be sure to use a large, firm chef's knife to cut it into halves, quarters, or slices. Peeling works well with a vegetable peeler or a small paring knife. Remove the core with a small, very firm paring knife.



A slice or two of peeled quince added to apples or pears while they cook will add appealing flavor and aroma to the dish.

Quince makes an excellent fruit sauce similar to applesauce. Though the flesh is white when raw, it turns a delicate pink when cooked. Peel a few quinces, slice them with a very firm knife, and remove the seeds. Cook them in a small amount of water with plenty of sweetener of choice until they reach a pulpy consistency like applesauce. Mash or puree in a food processor, and serve as a dessert or accompaniment to savory dishes.

Quince sauce makes an excellent companion to potato latkes (pancakes).

A modern adaptation of Quince Cheese involves coarsely chopping quinces and oranges and cooking them in a small amount of water until they become pulpy. Next they are strained, combined with sugar, and simmered for almost 2 hours. A drop or two of orange blossom water or rose water is added. Then, the mixture is turned into an oiled bowl, sealed, and stored for about three months. The "cheese" is then unmolded onto a platter and served as an accompaniment to savory dishes.

Quince Jelly

Making quince jelly is easy and delicious. A jar of this special jelly also makes a well-appreciated homemade gift. When making the jelly, do not peel the quinces, and do not discard the seeds. Include them in the cooking process to enhance the jelling process.

To make a batch of quince jelly, combine in a large stock pot 20 large Granny Smith or Rome Beauty apples cut into eighths, 1 dozen quartered quinces, and 2 quarts currants. Cover this mixture with water and cook until softened. Spoon cooked mixture into several layers of cheesecloth or a fine mesh bag with small openings. Hang the bag from kitchen faucet over a large bowl or pot and allow to drain overnight to extract all juice. The solid pulp can be reboiled for a second batch, if desired.

For each cup of juice, add 1 cup sugar and reboil to dissolve sugar. Pour into hot sterilized jars,

seal, and store in cool dry place.

An easy and pleasing winter dessert, this baked fruit treat may be reminiscent of baked apples. After a large meal, guests often groan when dessert is mentioned. However, the lightness and flavor of this fruity delight will be welcomed with pleasure.

BAKED QUINCE WITH SPICED DRIED PLUM SAUCE

Sauce

3/4 C. (180 ml) lemon juice

24 pitted prunes

3/4 C. (180 ml) water

3/4 C. (180 ml) pure maple syrup

4 quinces*

2 sticks cinnamon

Ground allspice

Ground nutmeg

1. Puree lemon juice and prunes together in a blender, and pour into a medium-size bowl.
2. Add water and maple syrup to bowl and stir to combine. Spoon a little of this mixture into the bottom of a 9" x 13" (23 x 31 cm) Pyrex baking dish.
3. Peel skin from the quinces with a vegetable peeler or a sharp paring knife. Cut quinces in half. Core out the seeds and place them, cut side down, in prepared baking dish.
4. Pour remaining sauce over the tops of the quinces.
5. Add cinnamon sticks, and lightly sprinkle tops with allspice and nutmeg.
6. Cover with aluminum foil, shiny side inside. Bake at 325 (Gas Mark 3) for 1 hour and 20 to 30 minutes. Serves 6.

* Quinces are available in the produce department of most markets from autumn through early spring. If they are not available in your local market, try a Middle Eastern grocery store. If quinces are impossible to find, you can easily substitute apples and bake them for only 1 hour.

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Pease Porridge Hot, Pease Porridge Cold

Peas at a Glance

History	Uses	Folklore/Oddities	Growing
Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

If you grew up enjoying nursery rhymes read by parents or grandparents, you may find this Old English rhyme familiar:

Pease porridge hot,
Pease porridge cold,
Pease porridge in the pot
Nine days old.

For many, the rhyme didn't have a clear meaning--it simply sounded good and was easy to recite with its singsong rhythm. However, if you were a young peasant child growing up in sixteenth century England, your frequent meals of pease porridge served hot, cold, and in-between may have prompted you to express your lack of enthusiasm in just such a verse.

A large kettle containing a thick porridge made of peas hung over the fire in many English and Scottish homes during the Middle Ages and was customary even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Because few of the peasants could afford meat, they based their meals on pease porridge with an abundance of whatever vegetables were on hand. When the fire died down at night, the morning porridge was quite cold. Each day the fire was relit, and more peas and vegetables were added to the kettle. Indeed, the original ingredients in the kettle could have been nine days old.

Pease porridge actually evolved from Pease Pottage, a very thick porridge made of dried peas that was served with highly salted bacon. The pease porridge, cooked without salt, relied on the bacon for flavor.

History

Food historians express differing opinions on the exact homeland of peas that are part of the legume family. The general consensus is that peas could have originated in the region that spans from the Near or Middle East across to Central Asia. Considering that most peas are a cool-weather crop, some historians believe their country of origin may have been northern India, Burma, or Northern Thailand.

Some say the word pea possibly came from the Sanskrit, while others determined that the Latin *Pisum* was the true origin of the word. The Old English word *pise* eventually evolved into pease, as in Pease porridge hot . . .

Archeologists exploring the "Spirit Cave," located on the border between Burma and Thailand, found peas that were carbon dated at 9750 BCE. No doubt these were a variety of wild peas that were gathered rather than cultivated. Another archeological dig at Jarmo in northwestern Iraq uncovered peas that were dated between 7,000 and 6,000 BCE. The Jarmo find is confusing to historians because there was no account of peas growing in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

The archeological remains of Bronze Age villages in Switzerland contain early traces of peas dating back to 3,000 BCE.



Another confusing issue among archeologists is the discovery in ancient Egyptian tombs of something that resembled peas. Some scholars determined that it was not the familiar variety of peas we enjoy at our dinner tables, but a smaller variety unfamiliar to western botanists. Called the oasis pea, *Pisum elatius*, this legume grows in the Sahara Desert, is presently cultivated in Algeria, and is thought to be native to Egypt.

Peas were one of the earliest cultivated food crops. Cultivation brought stability to once nomadic tribes, a factor that made it possible for peas to be brought by travelers and explorers into the countries of the Mediterranean as well as to the Far East.

The Greeks and Romans were cultivating this legume about 500 to 400 BCE. During that era, vendors in the streets of Athens were selling hot pea soup. Apparently take-out foods are not a modern-day innovation after all. The question remains of how peas arrived in Greece. Scholars ponder whether they traveled from the area around Switzerland southward into Greece, or whether they arrived via an eastward route from India.

Apicius, Rome's first cookbook author of the ancient world, has nine recipes for cooking peas, each involving extensive preparation. Some are cooked with a number of vegetables and herbs, while others combine peas with meats and poultry and numerous seasonings. The mere fact that he offers nine unique preparations for peas exhibits the extent of their importance during that period.

Though botanical historians are unsure when peas arrived in China, evidence shows that by the 7th century peas were being cultivated by the Chinese and were called *hu tou*, meaning foreign legume. Some historians believe the Chinese were the first to consider peas a vegetable and consume the entire pea pod and its seeds, referring to the snow pea that was developed in China.

During the Middle Ages, dried peas became a staple food of the European peasants. In their dried form peas had the capability of long storage throughout the winter months. They were inexpensive

and plentiful and made a filling wholesome meal the poor could afford.

Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great and Emperor of France, was fond of finding new vegetables and fruits from other lands and cultivating them in his gardens. When peas reached France about 800, he had them planted in his domains.

By the 13th century peas were a common food in France. Street vendors in Paris would cry out, "I have fresh peas in the pod." At the end of the 14th century, the Italians had cultivated tiny peas they named *piselli novelli* which were eaten fresh rather than dried.

When Catherine de Medici married Henry II of France in 1533, she brought many of her favorite foods with her from her Italian homeland. Naturally, *piselli novelli* were included among her many favorites. The new little peas were such a novel change from the dried peas that had become peasant fare that they created a new vogue in French cuisine. The French became known for their exceptional tiny peas called *petit pois*, a name that has remained since the 1500s.

The familiar garden pea was readily accepted and quickly became popular in Europe during the 16th century. Some areas of France became so well known for their extraordinary little peas that the names of the towns of Saint-Germain and Clamart were attached to the names of recipes that incorporated the little peas.

Peas became a familiar Lenten dish not only in France, but in England, too. Lent was not the only time that peas were a staple on the English menu. During the mid-1700's, major changes occurred in England's agricultural laws, designating large plots of farmland to private farming estates. King George III's Enclosures Act denied access to the poor, who relied on small pieces of land to grow enough to feed their families. Unable to grow their own vegetables, they turned to simple foods like dried peas that could be purchased cheaply.

During the reign of English King James I, 1566 to 1625, a shopkeeper could be heard touting his wares in the streets of London, "Hot Grey Peas and a suck of bacon."

Thomas Jefferson, elected third president of the United States in 1800, was an avid gardener. He thought so highly of peas that he and James Hemings, his slave-chef who was trained in Paris, planted 30 varieties of them. Peas, apparently, were his favorite vegetable. During his presidency, he sent orders to his gardener to cultivate a particular plot and devote that area "to Ravenscroft peas, which you will find in a canister in my closet."

The Vegetable Garden, an encyclopedia of cultivated vegetable plants, published in France in the 1800's, devoted 50 pages to the varieties of cultivated peas. Some of those same varieties are still grown today, while many have been lost as well.

During colonial times in Southern United States peas provided nutritious sustenance. In fact, peas took precedence over beans and appeared in dishes like Hoppin' John that was a favorite of both the poor and the rich. In an effort to tempt new colonists to settle in the South, one writer boasted the land was so fertile that peas grew ten inches in ten days.



Though most Europeans who settled North America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not accustomed to eating many vegetables, many of those who settled in the South found the land and climate conducive to growing a wide variety. The ability to produce vegetables in abundance brought a new enthusiasm. One housewife's gardening calendar of 1806 noted that peas were prominent among the many other vegetables she had included.

When canned vegetables came into vogue during the late 1800s, they were very affordable. Peas were probably among the first vegetables to be canned by a company that became a household name that remains familiar today. The Campbell Soup Company began canning peas in 1870. Though the heat of the canning process destroys the chlorophyll that gives peas their natural bright green color, the dull olive green color and distinct canned flavor did not discourage true pea aficionados. Canned peas turned up frequently as a familiar side dish on English as well as American dinner plates.

Frozen vegetables appearing in the 1920s and 1930s provided a distinct advantage for peas. They could be harvested and frozen almost immediately before their sugars turned to starch, a process that begins within hours of harvesting. People who did not grow their own peas or who lived a great distance from a farm could enjoy the fresh, sweet flavor of frozen peas.

More than 1,000 varieties of peas are in existence today, (some producing green peas, some yellow). Countries like France, China, Denmark, and Russia lead in the production of dried peas, with the U.S., England, Hungary, and India mainly producing fresh peas. China's fresh peas consist mostly of snow peas.

Folklore and Oddities

The French court became so enamored with green peas that in Paris in 1695 it was common practice for aristocratic women to make them a late evening snack between dinner and bedtime. From the court of French King Louis XIV, Madame de Maintenoy wrote to Cardinal de Noailles: ". . . There are some ladies who, having supped, and supped well, take peas at home before going to bed, at the risk of an attack of indigestion. It's a fashion, a craze!"

Even kings are not immune to overindulgence--some are even well known for their gourmandising. After overindulging in peas, Louis XIV summoned his doctor to offer him relief from indigestion.

Because peas can be challenging to keep on the fork, upscale restaurants rarely serve them in an effort to avoid unprecedented breaches of etiquette that may occur when diners attempt to chase peas around their plates or catch one that rolls off the fork and onto the table.

The pea became so ingrained into the everyday existence of so many cultures from the Middle East to the Mediterranean, Europe, and Asia that the name appeared as part of other legumes such as

pigeon peas, cowpeas, black-eyed peas, chick-peas, capucin peas, and peanut.

William Wallace Irwin, who was once secretary of the United States Chamber of Commerce, expressed passionate concern for peas in the *Garrulous Gourmet* when he wrote, "There is nothing so innocent, so confiding in its expression, as the small green face of the freshly shelled spring pea. Asparagus is pushing and bossy, lettuce is loud and blowsy, radishes are gay and playful, but the little green pea is so helpless and friendly that it makes really sensitive stomachs suffer to see the way he is treated in the average home. Fling him into the water and let him boil--and that's that."

A single pea was the focus of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale "The Princess and the Pea," a cherished children's story he wrote in 1835. In his tale, a young prince wanted to marry and searched his land to find a "real" princess. He almost gave up when on a windy and rainy night a young woman, who said she was a princess, arrived at the castle door drenched and soaking wet. The queen put her through the test by putting a pea on a bed, then piling 20 mattresses plus 20 eider-down beds on top of the pea. The young woman was to sleep on this bed. In the morning the queen asked her if she had slept well. The young woman lamented that she hadn't slept a wink because she was lying on something so hard it made her black and blue all over. When the queen declared that no one but a real princess could be that sensitive, the prince knew he had at last found his real princess. And, they lived happily ever after.

For those who wonder whether peas or pea, is or are, singular or plural, perhaps the following will set the record straight. In the early Old English form, "pease" was the plural form. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, by 1600, the last two letters, "se," were dropped, forming the singular. Today, the traditional name Pease Porridge retains its original spelling. Peasemeal, a flour made of yellow field peas, also clings to its original spelling.

Mendelian Genetics

Gregor Mendel, an Austrian monk, is credited for his scientific contribution to the basics of genetics by the studies he conducted on how pea plants reproduced. His education at the University of Vienna included courses in zoology, botany, chemistry, and physics. During his experiments in the monastery in the 1860s, he developed two standard laws that became fundamental to genetic inheritance. Mendel also recognized that some of the pea plant's traits were dominant and some were recessive. Specifically, he charted that smooth peas were a dominant trait, while wrinkled peas were a recessive trait.

Though he charted his genetic pea experiments with precise detail in a thoroughly scientific manner, he was not recognized for his work during his lifetime. He died in 1884, his work having fallen into obscurity. Scientist Hugo de Vries, along with the scientific community, rediscovered Mendel's work in 1900 and publicly recognized his contribution to the study of genetics.

Pea Cuisine

During the early 1600's the pudding cloth, a closely woven cotton or linen cloth, became a vessel that afforded more creativity to English cooking. Dried peas were soaked before going into the pudding cloth along with sugar, pepper, and mint. The pudding cloth was then tied and boiled in water to produce a very thick, solid Pease Pudding. Eventually, puddings were lightened with the addition of breadcrumbs, eggs, and butter.

Peas still remain popular in English cookery today. A present day favorite, Green Pea Cakes are a savory dish made from cooked dried peas, butter, milk, eggs, flour, baking powder, lard, and salt and pepper.



A sweet version of pease pudding is popular in China. Dried peas are cooked, pureed, combined with sugar and then fried. The mixture is served as a hot dessert.

A Maryland version of Pease Porridge began with a cooked pea mush that was put through a sieve, then seasoned with spices, pepper and butter. Other cooks combined different varieties of peas with butter, celery, and ginger.

One of U.S. President Andrew Jackson's favorite dishes was a Pease Pudding seasoned with onions, cloves, carrots, celery, butter, nutmeg, sour cream, salt, pepper, and sugar.

The Scots enjoy a simple dish called Brose made from Peasmeal, a roasted flour made from dried yellow peas. Their Oatmeal Brose is made with one handful of rolled oats per person plus a little salt. The two are mixed together, then boiling water is poured over them just enough for the oats to swell with moisture. The mixture is then served with cream.

When frozen vegetables gained popularity in the 1930's and 1940's, peas were included in vegetable mixtures called *jardinières* and *macedoines* that appeared in frozen cases in the grocery stores. *Jardinière* is French for garden style, while *macedoine*, also French, refers to a mixture of vegetables or fruits.

Growing

Avid vegetable gardeners know that peas are the time clock of the garden. They gauge the planting of their other vegetables by the date they plant peas. As soon as the ground can be worked, peas are the first vegetable to be planted, and the first to come up. Eastern gardeners will plant them six weeks before the frost-free date. Gardeners in Southwestern United States have more latitude because they experience frost infrequently. They can plant peas during the fall months through the spring. Peas thrive in cool weather when the ground is cool and moist.

When temperatures reach 80 F (26.7 C.), most peas are unable to produce pods, and the vines lose vigor. However, there are some summer varieties that are quite heat tolerant, though their flavor is not on a par with peas grown in the spring. For a winter crop, peas can be planted in late summer, poking them at least 2-inches (5 cm) into the ground to prevent them from drying out before germination.

Vining peas need a sturdy trellis to support them during their growth. The bush varieties grow to a height of 1 to 5 feet (.3 to 1.5 meters) and can be planted close together in a clump to support each other. Mature pea pods measure from 1 3/4 to 6 inches (3.5 to 15 cm) in length and can contain between 2 and 10 seeds that vary in color from green to grayish green.

To harvest, begin checking garden or shelling pea plants carefully about three weeks after they start flowering. Learning to recognize a just-ripe pea pod is considered a gardener's art. Look for pods that are still plump and shiny. Those that have lost their sheen and look dull are overripe. Those peas will also have lost their sweetness because the sucrose begins turning to starch.

Another way to determine a ripe pea is to look at the seam on the sides of the pods. Ripe ones will have changed from convex to concave in shape.

Once you've determined which pods are ripe, take hold of the vine with one hand, and tug on the pod with the other. You'll notice that peas cling rather firmly to their vines.

Snap peas can be picked soon after they emerge from the flower stage. They should be harvested before they start filling out with plump peas. Overripe snap peas will have that same starchy quality as overripe shelling peas.

Snow peas can also be picked soon after the flower stage. Harvest them while the pods are still flat. If left on the vine too long, they will begin to turn yellow and become tough and stringy.

Wrinkled or smooth, those are the two classifications by which peas are judged in their dried form. The wrinkled peas are known to be sweeter, the smooth variety starchier.

Peas come to market either fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Here are some of the more common varieties:

English Green or Garden Peas or Shelling Peas (*Pisum sativum*)

This variety is commonly grown in home gardens where they are picked fresh and eaten raw or cooked. When consumed soon after picking, they are very sweet. However, their sugar content turns to starch rather quickly and some sweetness is lost. Some varieties to consider are *Multistar*, *Alderman*, *Lincoln*, *Green Arrow*, and *Maestro*.

Petits Pois

Smaller than the English Green peas, this dwarf variety of tiny peas is usually grown commercially and becomes available in frozen or canned form. *Petit Pois* are available to the home gardener and are revered for their sweetness. Look for *Petit Provencal* or *Precovil* for spring planting, and *Waverex* for cool planting seasons.

Field Peas

At one time this variety was bestowed the scientific name *S. arvense*. Later it was decided the field pea was just another variety of the cultivated English pea that was left to revert back to its wild form. Its present scientific name is *S. sativum var. arvense*. While this variety is rarely available in the supermarket in its fresh form, it can be found in dried form sold either in packages or in bulk.



Snow Peas or Chinese Peas, (*P. sativum macrocarpum*)

Most of us are aware of the thin, almost flat pea pods that are a common ingredient in Chinese dishes, either very lightly cooked or eaten raw. Inside the flat pod are tiny flat peas. They are sweet, crisp, and bright green in color and have become so popular that most supermarkets will have them in their specialty produce sections.

Sugar Snap Peas

A cross between Snow Peas and English Green Peas, these crunchy, sweet, succulent pods are usually eaten raw in their entirety. The peas inside are fully developed, plump, round, and delicious. Look for the Dwarf Grey Sugar or *Mammoth Melting Sugar* varieties for exceptional results. The French called them *mange-tout*, translated as eat the whole thing.

Nutritional Benefits

Because peas are legumes, they offer many of the nutritional benefits typical of foods in the legume family, such as high protein, high fiber, and low fat. Following is a nutritional comparison of peas that are canned, fresh, and frozen using one-half cup as the common measure.

Canned Green Peas: Different brands of canned peas range in calories from 50 to 80 for a one-half cup measure. The protein range is from 3 to 5 grams, while the fiber spans from 10 to 15 grams. The carbohydrates fall into the 10 to 15-gram range as well.

The vitamin A count is 653 I.U. with a wide range of B vitamins including folic acid that measures 37.7 mcg. Calcium figures total 17 grams; both zinc and iron measure 0.8 mg; potassium provides 147 mg; and magnesium offers 14.4 mg.

Fresh: One-half cup of fresh peas contains 62 calories, 4 grams of protein, 11 grams of carbohydrates, and 4 grams of fiber. While canned peas list no fat content on the USDA Nutrient Database, fresh peas contain 0.2 grams of fat.

The vitamin A count is 534 I.U. with slightly higher figures of B vitamins than the canned peas. Folic acid measures 46.9 mcg; calcium offers 19.2 mg; iron content is 1.3 mg; zinc measures 0.8 mg; potassium content is 134 mg; and magnesium is 23.2 mg.

Frozen: Again, different brands yield different nutritional results. Calories range from 60 to 70; protein content is stable at 4 grams; carbohydrates vary between 10 and 11 grams; and fiber content differs between 2 and 4 grams. Only one brand contained 2 grams of fat, while the others rated 0.

The vitamin A count is 523 I.U., with a wide range of B vitamins. Folic acid content is 38.2 mcg; calcium offers 15.8 mg; iron contents are 1.1 mg; zinc is 0.6 mg; and potassium levels are up to 107 mg.

Snap Peas, frozen: Calorie count is stable at 30 for different brands, as is the protein value at 2 grams. Carbohydrates measure 8 grams, while fiber measures 2 grams.

No figures are shown for the vitamin and mineral contents of Snap Peas.

Snow Peas, fresh, raw whole: Calories measure 13, protein 1 gram. Carbohydrates provide 2.5 grams, while the fiber content is only 1 gram. The fat is only .5 grams.

The vitamin A content is 45.5 I.U., with a wide range of B vitamins. Folic acid count is 26.3 mcg, while calcium offers 27.1 mg. Iron content is 1.3 mg, zinc offers 0.2 mg, and potassium provides 156 mg.

Snow Peas, frozen, whole: The calories equal 30 grams, with 2 grams of protein. Carbohydrates contain 5 grams, with 2 grams of fiber.

The vitamin A content is 101 I.U. with a wide range of B vitamins. Folic acid provides 28.9 mcg; calcium levels are at 36 mg; iron offers 1.4 mg; zinc contents are 0.3 mg; and potassium provides 138 mg.

Green Split peas, boiled: Calorie count is 115; protein measures 8 grams; carbohydrate content is 20 grams; and the fiber count is 8 grams; and the fat content measures 0.4 grams.

The vitamin A content is 7 I.U. with a wide range of vitamin B especially niacin at .85 mg. Folic acid provides 63.5 mcg; calcium levels are 13.7 mg; iron stores are 1.25 mg; zinc is especially high at 1.0 mg; and potassium provides 355 mg.

No figures are given for whole dried peas; however, those figures are no doubt similar to cooked green split peas.

Purchasing and Storage

The freshest, sweetest peas are those picked right from the garden. For the many urbanites whose green thumb leans more toward making purchases of garden-fresh produce, the farmer's market is the best place to buy fresh peas in the spring and early summer.

When selecting fresh peas, look for pods that are bright green, shiny, plump, and moist. When the pods have a dull, lusterless look about them, they are old, have lost moisture, and have very likely lost their flavor as well as many of their nutrients. Purchase 3 pounds of shelling peas to make 4 servings as a side dish.

Use fresh peas as quickly as possible, either by cooking or eating raw. The sugar content of shelling peas begins to turn to starch within hours after harvesting. If stored for too many days, they lose their sweetness, leaving them with a bland, starchy flavor.

The supermarket may have shelling peas, or peas in the pod, in the spring, but by the time the peas reach the market they may be several days old and have lost a great deal of sweetness.

Sugar snap peas, on the other hand, cling to their sugar stores and almost always retain their exceptional sweetness unless they are old and dried up. Look for these in the spring at farmers' markets, farm stands, and even in the supermarkets.

Snow peas have become so popular they can be found year round in supermarket chains as well as Asian markets. Select those that are crisp and bright green. Avoid snow peas that are wilted, limp, shriveled, and yellowish in color. These are no longer fresh and will have lost their flavor and much of their nutritional value.

Frozen peas are closest to fresh peas in appearance, flavor, and nutrients. When grocery shopping, select the frozen vegetables last and put them into the home freezer as quickly as possible to avoid defrosting and re-freezing.

Store sugar peas and snow peas in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Most will keep up to one week, but are best when consumed within 3 days.

Preparation

Fresh shelling peas, sugar snap peas, and snow peas can all be eaten raw. Shelling peas do not have edible pods, while sugar snaps and snow peas can be eaten pods and all.

Break open the pods of the shelling peas, also called peas in a pod, run the thumb along the edge where the peas are attached to the pod to loosen them, and collect the peas in a bowl or cooking pot.

Sugar snap peas and snow peas require trimming to eliminate the stringy edge that holds the two halves of the pod together. While cutting off the tips of the pods with a paring knife, pull along the length of the pod to remove the stringy portion, then discard.

Whole dried peas require soaking for several hours before cooking. Dried split green or yellow peas do not require soaking.

RAW:

One bite into a crisp, fresh sugar snap pea or snow pea will reassure one that nature provides us well. The sweet, succulent flavor brings instant pleasure. The only preparation these peas require is washing. Both varieties are ideal in salads and raw soups.

For sugar snaps, use a paring knife to remove the strings that line the seam. Puree to create a delicious dip or filling to wrap in a lettuce leaf. Season the puree with a little cayenne and use the puree as a zesty topping.

Thin sugar snap puree with extra virgin olive oil, add a little lemon juice and seasonings to create a tasty salad dressing.

The pod of the snow pea makes an ideal appetizer with a filling of a chunky or pureed mixture of seasoned vegetables and sprouted grains.

Frozen peas, when defrosted but left raw, make a base for a delicious salad with sliced mushrooms, diced sweet or purple onion, and coarsely chopped tomatoes. Dress the salad with extra virgin oil, garlic, lemon juice, fresh chopped dill, and seasonings to taste.

Frozen, defrosted peas can be pureed in the food processor with your favorite seasonings to create a delicious dip or spread. A hint of spice with cayenne or fresh diced jalapeno adds a little zest to the dip.

Frozen defrosted peas provide an ideal base for raw soup.

STEAMING:

Put fresh shelling peas, also called garden peas, into a saucepan with about one-half inch (1 cm) of water. Cover the saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam for about 3 or 4 minutes. Long cooking of fresh peas will destroy nutrients and flavor and turn the peas a dull olive green color.

Frozen peas are cooked the same as shelling peas.

STIR FRY:

For a dramatic color accent, snap peas and snow peas may be added the last minute or two of cooking a stir-fry. Overcooking destroys their crispness as well as color and flavor, so keep the cooking brief.

BOILING:

Before cooking whole dried peas, first examine the peas for any that are spoiled or do not look wholesome. Discard any debris in the package such as twigs or tiny pieces of gravel. Soak dried peas in water to cover by 3 inches (7.5 cm) overnight for cooking in the morning or soak all day to cook them for dinner. Discard the soak water.

To cook 1 cup (240 ml) of dried whole peas, cover with 6 cups (1.5 liters) of fresh water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then turn heat down to gently simmer for 1 to 2 hours or until peas are soft. For added flavor, include a coarsely chopped clove of garlic and a coarsely chopped onion. Season with salt about the last 10 minutes of the cooking. Serves 4.

To cook dried split peas, no soaking is needed. Simply put 1 cup (240 ml) into a saucepan, add 4 cups (1 liter) of water, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to simmer, and cook about 50 to 60 minutes or until tender. Additional water may be needed to prevent the peas from cooking dry. Green split peas tend to break down after 60 minutes of cooking, creating a pleasantly thick soup base.

For cooking split yellow peas, follow the same method as for green split peas. However, they take slightly longer to become softened. Cook about 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Cooked dried peas make an ideal thickening agent for soups and stews.

SPLIT PEA VEGETABLE SOUP

For serving a large gathering, I always double this recipe.

- 2 C. (480 ml) dried split peas
- 8 C. (2 liters) water
- 1 large clove garlic, crushed
- 1/2 t. dried rosemary, crushed in a mortar and pestle
- 1 t. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) water
- 3 large carrots, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 1 large parsnip, sliced thin (optional)*

- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Look over peas and discard any imperfect ones. Rinse peas and put them into a large stockpot along with the water, garlic, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Partially cover pot, and bring to a boil. Turn heat down and simmer 30 to 40 minutes or until peas are soft and

broken down when pressed with a spoon.

2. Put water, carrots, onion, tomato, and parsnip into a large wok or skillet. Cook over medium-high heat for 5 to 8 minutes or until vegetables are soft.
3. Puree all ingredients together in batches in a blender for a smooth puree. If you prefer soup with more texture, puree in the food processor. If desired, some portion of the vegetables can be left whole for a little more texture.
4. Adjust seasonings with salt and pepper, if needed, and serve hot with whole grain bread.
Serves 6.

*Though the parsnip is optional, it always adds just a light touch of sweetness, making the soup much more flavorful.

CHUNKY VARIATION: To the already listed vegetables, add 2 turnips, diced, 4 stalks celery, diced, 2 broccoli crowns, chopped, 1/4 head cauliflower, chopped, 1 green bell pepper, chopped and 1 red bell pepper, chopped. Sauté these together in a small amount of water. Add to stockpot after pureeing the peas. Cook gently for about 5 to 10 minutes to blend flavors, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

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Flax--the Plant with a Thousand Uses

Flax at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

If one were to conjure up an ideal, imaginary plant that could provide food, offer healing, and produce many useful products, one could not improve on the multiplicity of the flax plant.

John uses flax oil to prevent his garden pruners from rusting. Mrs. Thompson makes flaxseed tea to relieve her constipation. Sally considers flaxseed oil best for making hand cream. Mark sprinkles flaxseeds on his cereal to lower his cholesterol. Dr. Anthony makes a poultice from flaxseeds to heal his patient's boil. The ABC Linen Company buys linen thread to weave linen cloth. Heinz uses linseeds to make bread from his German mother's recipe. Could all these products be derived from just one plant? Indeed they can!

Actually, the few applications for flax mentioned above are just that--only a few. Scientists and product manufacturers are still discovering new ways to use the flax plant, an unassuming herb whose attractive blue flowers do not even bloom for an entire day.

History

Archeological remains indicate that several plants were first cultivated about the same time in Mesopotamia before traveling southward to Egypt. These plants included flax, emmer wheat, barley, einkorn wheat, peas, lentils, chickpeas, and bitter vetch.

In establishing an acquaintance with flaxseeds, one cannot ignore its strong connection to the linen fibers derived from the plant. Linen was used to wrap the mummies of ancient Egypt dating back at least 5,000 BCE.



The Babylonians may have been the earliest people to cultivate flax as a food source. By 2,000 BCE irrigation ditches were formed along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers of the Fertile Crescent to insure a good water supply for the fields of flax.

In his epic poem *The Iliad* (8th century BCE) Homer writes that linen was used for cord and sail-cloth, an indication that the Greeks were cultivating flax plants and were, no doubt, consuming the seeds as well.

Hippocrates (460 to 377 BCE), a Greek physician often called the "Father of Medicine," recognized the value of flax in relieving numerous intestinal disorders. When he prescribed flax, his patients benefited from its healing properties.

Upon conquering Gaul in 57 BCE, the Romans noticed the extensive fields of flax growing there as well as the attractive, high quality linen woven in the region. Wherever flax was grown for its linen, one can speculate the seeds of the plant were put to use, either as food, medicine, or both.

Fine linen is mentioned several times in the Old Testament:

Joseph wore garments of linen.

One of the ten plagues, hail, was said to destroy the flax fields.

Linen was the fabric used in garments worn by Jewish High Priests.

The curtains of the tabernacle were woven of linen.

Spinning linen was an art attributed to the Caananites.

Linen was also used for lamp wicks, mentioned in Isaiah.

The New Testament mentions that the Savior wore linen garments when Joseph of Arimathaea laid Him in his tomb.

Charlemagne, the 8th century King of France, regarded flax so highly for its health benefits he made detailed entries in his medical law books that pertained to the cultivation and use of flax for food and medicine. He ordered his subjects to consume flax to maintain good health and prevent disease.

Flaxseeds were grown in India for centuries and were consumed as a food grain. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Whenever flaxseeds become a regular food item among the people, there will be better health."

By the 16th century flax cultivation for linen production was a burgeoning industry that brought wealth to local Flemish farmers. During this century flaxseeds were consumed as a common food source throughout Europe. Germans, especially, were incorporating them into a variety of whole-grain breads, a practice their bakers have turned into a fine craft even today.

Raw, unrefined, food grade flaxseed oil was introduced into the U.S. by Nature's Distributors, Inc., a company that began looking into research by German scientist, Dr. Johanna Budwig in 1986. The scientist began her work in the mid 1950's and discovered that flaxseeds play an important role in the function of all the body's processes from normalizing blood pressure to boosting the immune system.

Today, flax, along with spelt and sunflowers, is grown in the northern areas of Europe as an

alternative crop. Because the area suffers from overproduction of pork, butter, and wine, farmers have had to cut back on production and even destroy some of their harvests. The result is that flaxseeds, called linseeds in Europe, have become popular among health conscious Europeans and are readily available in health food stores

Flax Receives its Name

The Latin name for the flax plant is *linum*, derived from the Greek *linon*. The plant's common name, flax, is Middle English, originally from the Old English *fleax*, and related to the German *flachs* that means to plait, or interweave, such as in braiding. The plaiting or weaving connection grew out of the linen fibers taken from the flax plant and spun into thread.

Flaxseed Cuisine

In Russia during medieval and post medieval times, it was common to combine flaxseed oil, flaxseeds, and hemp seeds with peas during religious fasts. During the 17th century, the Tsar's table included dishes prepared with flaxseed oil.

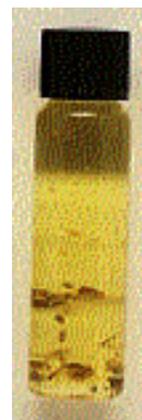
The ancient Greeks made nourishing, high-fiber bread by combining flaxseeds with corn.

In the Middle East flaxseed oil provided the base for Ful Medames, a traditional dish consisting of cooked fava beans seasoned with garlic, lemon juice, olive oil and salt that remains a favorite today.

The Germans prepare a linseed bread called Leinsamenbrot, a heavy, dense bread containing whole flaxseeds, mainly as a remedy for constipation. However, its whole-grain composition and rich flavor make the bread a tasty health food.

Many Uses of Flax Seeds and Flaxseed Oil

Linseed oil has long been a highly favored oil applied to fine furniture. Rubbing each piece with linseed oil always creates a unique finish on quality teak furniture made famous by the attractive styling of Danish furniture designers. Customers were advised to purchase linseed oil at the hardware store and polish the teakwood with it about once or twice a year.



Customary among farmers is the practice of coating their farm tools and implements with flaxseed oil to prevent rust. The oil dries on the implements and forms a hard seal that does not evaporate or dissipate.

While most of us are aware that the earliest writing papers were made of parchment and papyrus, few have knowledge that about 750 CE people of Samarkand and Uzbekistan were making paper of linen rags that originated with the fibers of the flax plant. The process passed through many lands and cultures until it reached paper manufacturers in 18th century Europe.

Because linseed oil readily absorbs oxygen when exposed to air, the oil is incorporated as a drying agent in the manufacture of house paints as well as artists oils. The linseed oil used to polish furniture and to provide a drying medium in paints is raw, unrefined oil. What was unknown in the U.S. is that linseed oil is actually flaxseed oil.

After the oil is pressed from the flaxseeds, the remaining matter, a gummy, mucilaginous material called oil cake, is sold to farmers who purchase it for cattle feed as well as for manure.

A mixture of honey and flaxseed oil was used as a remedy for removing unwanted spots on the face.

People today can make their own hair-setting gel by boiling flaxseed in water to extract its mucilaginous contents. The flaxseeds are then strained off and the liquid cooled to a gel consistency before it is ready to use.

Many European farmers regularly feed their animals with flaxseeds to prevent as well as treat diseases. Farmers also observed that their animals had healthier skin and coats when flaxseeds were part of their regular diet.

Veterinarians who treat farm animals use flax oil as a purgative for horses and sheep.

Today linseed oil is incorporated as an emollient in making soap and as a drying agent in manufacturing printer's ink, artists paints, and house paints. The linseed oil is also used in the commercial production of liniments for burns and joint pain.

Medical Benefits

Flaxseeds contain both soluble and insoluble fiber, with insoluble fiber in the form of cellulose and lignin comprising the larger proportion. The National Cancer Institute recognized fiber to be important in the prevention of various cancers, including colon cancer.

Because ancient herbalists recognized that the mucilaginous qualities of flaxseeds offered relief to sufferers of chronic constipation, they recommended ingesting a tea made of ground flaxseeds. Modern day herbalists recognize the wisdom of the ancients and continue to offer the flaxseed remedy to their patients.

Flaxseed oil contains Omega-3 alpha linolenic acid, an essential fatty acid necessary for regulating a host of bodily functions. Because the human body does not manufacture the essential Omega-3 fatty acid, people must consume it from food sources. Flax is one of the few plant foods that contains the alpha linolenic acid; others include walnuts, soybeans, and canola oil.

The Omega-3 in flax is similar to that in fish but not identical. Some claim Omega-3 from flax may not have the same cardiac benefit as fish oil, but that view is controversial. Fish oils contain two fatty acids, EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexanoic acid) that flaxseed oil does not contain. However, the body can manufacture the EPA and DHA fatty acids from flaxseed oil when other oils are eliminated from the diet, suggesting that flaxseed oil can have the same benefit as fish oil.

Just as amino acids are the building blocks of protein, essential fatty acids such as Omega-3 fats, are the building blocks of prostaglandins, hormonelike substances present in both male and female reproductive glands. The prostaglandins may also aid in regulating blood pressure.

The University of Toronto conducted a study using flaxseeds and found them successful in lowering cholesterol as well as inhibiting the growth of new cancer cells. At a 1995 Toronto meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research, a scientist and member of the study team announced that the lignans in flaxseeds may be responsible for reducing the tumor growth in rats. Flaxseeds contain the highest concentration of lignans found in any food.

Lignans are plant estrogens, also called phytoestrogens, that may aid in maintaining strong bones,

preventing the growth of many cancerous tumors, and inhibiting the formation of gallstones. These plant estrogens may have antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-fungal properties. Lignins are fibers that may bind to testosterone, the male hormone, and inhibit the growth of prostate tumors.

An item reported in the British Journal of Nutrition during a four-week study indicated that flax oil was beneficial in helping to regulate blood glucose levels in diabetics.

Because most Americans consume highly processed refined oils, many are deficient in Omega-3 fatty acids that may provide numerous health benefits to people with high cholesterol, heart disease, stroke, angina, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis and eczema, and cancer. Flaxseeds, an unrefined food, provide the richest source of Omega-3 fatty acids.

Flaxseeds are attributed with the ability to boost the immune system, increase vitamin D levels, and prevent loss of calcium and magnesium.

The seeds may be beneficial in alleviating stomach acidity and heartburn. Since flaxseeds are very alkaline, frequent consumption of flaxseed meal can help regulate the stomach's acid-alkaline balance.

Additional benefits of flax are derived from compounds that are converted into lignans by bacteria in the gut. Some women have derived relief of menopausal hot flashes when using flax on a daily basis.

A Duke University Medical Center study published in the July 2001 issue of *Urology* included 25 men who were awaiting surgery to remove their prostates. Their low-fat diet was supplemented daily with 3 tablespoons of flaxseed meal that they sprinkled on their cereals, salads, yoghurt, applesauce, or juice. After 34 days the men showed lower cholesterol levels, decreased testosterone levels, and fewer tumor cells compared to the control group. Their PSA levels also fell.

Whole flaxseeds may pass through body undigested because they do not break down easily. They must be thoroughly chewed or ground into a meal to aid digestion.

Alpha lipoic acid, a component in flaxseeds, is a powerful antioxidant that protects against free radical damage of both water and fat-soluble nature. Flaxseeds also protect DNA and aid in recycling vitamins C and E. These tiny miracle seeds may even have anti-aging benefits.

Linseed meal is used for poultices, sometimes in combination with mustard seeds at the site of ulcerated wounds to relieve irritation and to discharge pus. Herbalists found it helpful in treating boils and abscesses. To prepare a poultice, put three tablespoons of flaxseeds into the center of an 8-inch (20 cm) square or rectangular cloth. Gather up the ends and twist or tie to enclose the seeds. Lower seed portion of the poultice bag into boiling water to moisten. Wring out excess water. Apply the poultice to the problem area and cover it with a towel to retain the heat. Leave the poultice in place until it cools, then remove.

Flaxseeds are helpful in relieving the discomfort of colds and coughs. Some women have also found that a tea made of flaxseeds alleviates irritation of the urinary tract.

To relieve the pain of burns and scalds, combine flaxseed oil with lime-water and apply to the

wound.

Flaxseed oil and ground flaxseeds are also used as a laxative. The seeds, whether ground or whole, tend to soak up large quantities of water and form a mucilaginous bulk that acts as a digestive aid that eases constipation.

Making Flax Oil

A special, carefully controlled expeller process that does not exceed temperatures of 96 F (36 C) in order to prevent damage produces truly high quality flax oil. Quality flax oil is easily recognized by its lack of odor and its delicate, almost flavorless taste. Some describe the taste of flaxseed oil as slightly nutty.

The term expeller pressed involves a mechanical process of pressing oil from the flaxseeds. Though product labels may say cold pressed, temperatures produced by this process that are not carefully controlled can reach as high as 200 F (93 C), even though no external heat source is used.

Higher temperatures produce more oil though it is of a lesser quality because flax oil is a highly polyunsaturated oil and can easily be damaged by heat, light, and exposure to air. In its damaged state, flax oil becomes tainted with toxic molecules called lipid peroxides that are harmful to the body. The telltale signs are a bitter taste and rancid odor.

Folklore

During the Middle Ages, the flax flowers were believed to be a protection against sorcery.

The Bohemians, who occupied the area that is now Prague, had a belief that centered on seven-year-old children. Families brought their children to dance among the flax fields because their faith led them to believe this rite would make the children beautiful. The ritual also recognized that the entire field was under the protection of a Teuton mythological goddess named Hulda, who is said to have passed on her art of growing, spinning, and weaving the flax to mortals.

Growing

Flax, *Linum usitatissimum*, is an annual herb grown for two distinct purposes: producing linen fibers and harvesting the seeds.

Flax cultivated for its seeds requires a rich soil, similar to soil prepared for growing wheat. The plant is rather particular about its soil. Its preferences are deep, moist loam, rich in vegetable matter, not too loose, not too hard like clay, and neither sandy nor rocky. If manure is added to the soil, it must be well aged.

Enjoying a warm moist climate, flax will grow in all temperate and tropical regions. All of man's efforts to cultivate flax has not prevented it from escaping into a semi-wild state in all the regions where it is grown.



Flaxseeds are planted at the end of March. By the end of May, attractive blossoms appear, making a flax field a breathtaking sight, but only for a few hours. The flowers are mostly blue, with some plants producing white, pink, or violet blossoms. The blooms are extremely delicate and perish quickly. Pollination by bees is a necessity for flax to set seed capsules.

The long, hollow and woody stems vary from 2 to 4 feet (60 to 120 cm).



Round seedpods form at the top of the stem and contain about 10 seeds each that measure about 1/8-inch (.5 cm) in length. The tough, shiny seeds are brown, flat, and pointed at one end and contain about 35% to 45% of the valuable flax oil known for its health benefits.

The flax cultivated for its linen is known for its two varieties: blue-flowered and white flowered. The white-flowered variety produces more seeds and a coarser fiber than its blue rival. Flax grown for its seeds produces poor linen fibers. Today, flax is mostly grown in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Eastern Europe with minor growth in France and Great Britain where it is referred to as linseed. In North America flax is grown mainly for human consumption rather than for its linen fibers.

Nutritional Information

With all its outstanding Omega-3 essential fatty acid properties, flaxseed oil also contains 120 calories for 1 tablespoon that amounts to 14 grams of fat, 1 gram saturated.

Whole flaxseeds have 59 calories per tablespoon and 4.1 gram of fat, .4 saturated. The whole seeds are highly nutritious with that same tablespoon offering 2 grams of protein and 3 grams of fiber.

Surprisingly, 1 tablespoon of the little flaxseeds offer a full range of B vitamins with 33.4 mcg of folic acid. Additionally, that tablespoon contains 23.9 mg of calcium, 43.4 mg of magnesium, 82 mg of potassium, and trace amounts of iron and zinc.

Flaxseeds contain linolenic acid (the Omega-3 fatty acid) and linoleic acid (the Omega-6 fatty acid), both essential to human health. Because humans are unable to manufacture these essential fats, they must supply these fats in their regular diets to assist in the function of the nervous system, the brain, sexual organs, and the largest organ, the skin.

Purchasing

Buy only food grade flaxseed oil. Never purchase artist's linseed oil to use as a human food source.

Always look for this product in the refrigerated section of a reputable health food store. When selecting flax oil, look for oil made from organic flaxseeds to avoid the possibility of pesticides and herbicides that may be present in non-organic flaxseeds.

Check the expiration date on the bottle to make sure it is fresh. Look for the words expeller pressed to avoid those that are heat pressed.

Choose flaxseed oil in liquid form rather than in capsules. The flax oil contained in capsules can become rancid, but the gel caps prevent the buyer from detecting rancidity.

Flaxseed oil is highly perishable when exposed to heat, light, and air. Quality flaxseed oil is always sold in dark, opaque plastic bottles. Some manufacturers are using a natural rosemary antioxidant to make flax oil more shelf stable.

As soon as you bring the flaxseed oil home, put it in the refrigerator. Purchase the oil in small quantities and use it up within a month or two. Flax oil can even become rancid in the refrigerator when kept for long periods.

RAW

Raw is the only way to consume flax oil. Do not use flax oil for cooking. When polyunsaturated oils such as flaxseed oil are subjected to high heat, their chemical make-up is converted to unhealthy lipid peroxides.

Whole flaxseeds do not break down in the digestive system. If you consume them whole, chew them thoroughly. Even then, many may not have broken down and will pass through the digestive system without being absorbed. Still, they offer the benefits of fiber by cleansing the intestinal tract. Store flaxseed meal in the refrigerator.

Be sure to drink plenty of water when consuming whole flaxseeds or the flaxseed meal because flax tends to absorb large quantities of liquid during the digestion process.

Flaxseed flour, purchased in a health food store, can be combined with wheat flour for baking.

Whole flaxseeds can easily be ground into meal by putting small batches into a small electric coffee grinder and processing very briefly, only a second or two.

Enjoy flaxseed meal by sprinkling a heaping tablespoon on cereals and salads.

Flaxseed meal will enhance almost any food, whether it's a tofu scramble, a stir fry dish, or a casserole by adding it at the end of the cooking to avoid excess exposure to heat.

When preparing homemade salad dressing, use flax oil in place of other oils.

Use flax oil in place of other oils in dips, spreads, and bean dishes such as hummos.

Sprinkle whole flaxseeds or the meal as a garnish for soups, salads, entrees, dips, sandwiches, and pasta dishes.

To replace an egg in a recipe, soak 1 tablespoon of flaxseeds in 1/3 cup (80 ml) of water until it becomes gelatinous, then strain off the seeds. As an alternative, combine the same quantities of flaxseeds and water in a small saucepan, and bring to a boil. Immediately reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until the mixture reaches the consistency of a raw egg white. Strain off the seeds.

An excellent way to derive benefit from flax oil is to include it in a robust, tangy salad dressing.

BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

1 1/4 t. salt

1/4 t. dry mustard

4 to 5 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 C. (120 ml) flax oil

1/2 C. (120 ml) balsamic vinegar

1/4 C. (60 ml) lemon juice

1/4 C. (60 ml) water

Combine all ingredients in a jar and shake well. Keep refrigerated and shake well before each use. Use within 2 weeks. Makes 1 3/4 cups (415 ml).

For a creamier alternative, combine all ingredients in a blender, and blend on high speed until well combined and smooth. Transfer to a bottle.

For Aunt Nettie's special recipe for flaxseed tea [click here.](#)

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Collards--the Sweetheart of Soul Food

Collards at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

A typical soul food meal just isn't satisfying without its "mess o' greens." That means collards, of course. And they're as unpretentious as the Southern folks who created soul food cuisine. Matter of fact, the heartbeat of soul food centered on pork first, and collards second, along with turnip greens or mustard greens.

When the African slaves were brought from their African homeland to the South to work on the plantations, they learned to make wholesome meals from the poorest ingredients, discarded scraps, and whatever foods they could grow for themselves. Since collards, along with the whole family of greens, grew profusely in the South, they became a popular item at almost every meal.

The collards, or other greens, were seasoned with scraps such as pig's feet, ham hocks, intestines, testicles, and brains better known as chittlins, mountain oysters, and scrapple. Plantation owners would not eat these discards, but these foods, thrown together in a large iron pot, became important staples to the black slaves. Though these plantation workers had only a few vegetables and a limited number of rejected meat scraps to work with, they developed a knack for making them taste good. As travelers arrived in the South from Europe and other parts of North America, they introduced new food items such as corn, rice, squash, and tomatoes. These, too, were incorporated into the greens and beans pot. Thus, a unique Southern cuisine was born.

The black slaves who worked in the plantation kitchens in the South contributed important nutritional balance to the simple Southern diet by serving collard greens at the masters' tables.

History

Botanists say that the collard plant, has remained almost the same for about 2000 years and is actually a type of kale. Both collards and kale are actually loose-leaf non-heading wild cabbages that are the predecessors of head cabbage. The major differences between collards and kale are the

leaf shape, length of the stem, color, and flavor. While collards have a medium green color, smooth texture, and an oval shape, kale has dark grayish green broad leaves with a crinkled texture. On the flavor scale, collards are several degrees milder than kale, a strong, bitter vegetable.

Historians are unsure of the exact origin of wild cabbage. They surmise that it was growing wild in Asia Minor, now Turkey, as well as in Greece along the Mediterranean long before recorded history. Confucius mentions some varieties of the cabbage family as early as 497 BCE, indicating the Chinese were familiar with the greens. The Asian varieties include pe-tsai that we know as Napa cabbage, Chinese broccoli, and bok choy.



Though the ancient Greeks cultivated the wild cabbages and developed several varieties, they did not relish them. Initially, only the stems of the wild cabbages were eaten, a practice that extended to broccoli as well. However, the Romans were quite fond of collards and cultivated about 400 cabbage varieties including heading cabbages, Brussels sprouts, kohlrabi, cauliflower, and kale.

Wending their way northward and westward around the first century CE, collards turned up in Germany, France, and Great Britain via travels of the Romans or possibly the Saxons.

Throughout history not too many cultures were enamored of the cabbage family. True, the greens provided sustenance during the winter when no other vegetables were able to grow, but they developed the reputation for being unsophisticated and odoriferous. The greens produced two bad odors: one while cooking in the kitchen, the other in the flatulence induced in the eaters. These negative views were not only held by the ancient Greeks, but by the general population all throughout the European continent.

Some historians say it was the Romans who brought the collard family into Europe, while dissenters claim it was the Celts who may have taken a fancy to the greens and brought them into the British Isles. Although the Celts met the Romans in battle about 100 BCE, they did not bring the greens into the British Isles until a much later date.

In 1565 explorers discovered cultivated collards growing in Hispanola, an island in the West Indies that lies between Cuba and Puerto Rico. When the first African slave ship arrived in Virginia in 1619, collards were thriving prolifically in the southern climate. British colonists also brought the seeds of many vegetables, including collards, when they began to settle in the South in the mid to late 1600's.

The Virginia Truck Experiment Station has conducted collard and kale research from 1909 through the 1960's. The acronym "Vates" has become attached to many varieties developed at the research station. Champion along with Flash and Heavi-Crop are two of their collard varieties.

Today, collards are commercially grown in Southern United States where they remain a highly regarded vegetable and an essential part of Southern cuisine. They are also cultivated in Southeast Asia, the West Indies, South America, and the African continent.

Folklore and More

A true Southerner knows he can look forward to a year of good fortune if he eats collards, black-eyed peas, and hog jowl on New Year's Day.

Southerners believed that a fresh collard leaf hung over the door assured that evil spirits would not enter. And we always thought garlic was the magic deterrent.

Princess Pamela, a soul-food cook, shared this wisdom with customers at her restaurant:

"Somebody said something 'bout God musta liked the common people 'cause he made so many of them. I think that the common things is the most important 'cause yuh get to use them all of the time. So it's important to learn to do them the best. Like cookin' a pan of great corn bread, collard greens, ribs and chicken, and sweet potato pie."

Medicinal Benefits

Medical researchers believe that the whole family of cruciferous vegetables helps to prevent cancer. The cruciferous family includes collards, kale, cabbage, bok choy, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, mustard and mustard greens, turnips and their greens, arugula, watercress, kohlrabi, horseradish, and rutabaga. Studies have shown that eating foods in this vegetable family speeds the liver's ability to detoxify ingested toxins.

Southerners chase a headache away by placing a fresh collard leaf on the forehead.

Julius Caesar ate a hearty serving of collards as a preventive to indigestion after attending royal banquets, a testimony to their detoxifying abilities.

Eppley Cancer Institute at the University of Nebraska conducted a study to learn the effectiveness of collards as a cancer preventive. After feeding mice cabbage or collard greens, researchers injected breast cancer cells into the rodents and found they developed fewer metastasized cancers. Other experiments revealed that collards exhibited surprising anti-cancer agents that prevented the genetic changes promoting cancer growth.

Collard Cuisine

Think of Southern cooking and you picture a pot of collard greens steaming on the stovetop. Greens are not only limited to collards, though they are dominant in Southern kitchens. Kale, spinach, mustard greens, and turnip greens have almost as prominent a place as collards.

A "mess o' greens," a southern expression, refers to the quantity of greens it takes to feed a family.

Down home cooking in Portugal features *Caldo Verde*, a potato soup made with shredded collards, onions, and garlic. Considered a national dish, this "green soup" is served almost daily.

Cooking collard greens in the traditional Southern style involves simmering them slowly with a ham hock or salt pork, which is said to temper their pungent flavor and make them pleasantly soft.



The flavorful collard cooking liquid left in the pot is known in the South as "pot likker." A quintessential practice revolving around serving collards in the South includes serving corn bread along with the greens to mop up the tasty "pot likker."



Though pickled cabbage is associated with European countries, some historians write that the technique of pickling vegetables, particularly the greens, to preserve them came from China. Who knows, maybe sauerkraut originated in China and was brought to Europe by the Tartars!

A favorite spicy Ethiopian side dish, *Ayib Be Gomen*, consists of chopped collards cooked with cottage cheese, lots of black pepper, butter and salt. Another Ethiopian collard dish, *Ye'abesha Gomen*, involves steaming them in olive oil, red onions, garlic, green peppers, and spices.

Well known opera singer, Leontyne Price, who comes from Laurel, Mississippi, is quoted telling one of her friends precisely how to prepare collards:

"This is how we do it in Laurel, Mississippi. You have to examine each leaf personally, after you've washed it. You must take the yellow part out, and you must tear every bit of green leaf off the stalk, in pieces as big as postage stamps. It takes time, but this is how you have to do it. There are as many different ways to cook greens as there are to sing soprano roles."

At Princess Pamela's Little Kitchen, a Manhattan soul-food restaurant of a past era, one of the menu choices was a Vegetable Plate. The description listed greens first, followed by rice, yams, salad, and corn bread. While Popeye had spinach, the South had greens, all kinds of greens, with collards as top choice.

Naming Collards

Because collards are part of the cabbage family, their name has evolved from the Anglo-Saxon *coleworts* or *colewyrts* and translates as "cabbage plants."

Growing

Collards and kale, called non-heading cabbages, are close cousins of the cabbage and belong to the family of *Brassica oleracea var acephala* that means "cabbage without a head." They are also relatives of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cauliflower.

A fully mature collard plant resembles a rosette comprised of numerous, long, loosely arranged oval-shaped leaves that are perched on top of a raised, thick stem. While the leaves are a rich, deep green color, the stems and midribs that support them are starkly white.

Two main varieties are Vates and Georgia. The Vates varieties are more resistant to bolting and insect damage in the winter months. Vates varieties can be recognized by their wavy leaves. The Georgia variety has smooth leaves and white stems.

The appeal of growing collards is that they flourish in almost any climate. They are frost tolerant but thrive in warm weather as well as cooler northern climates. Both collards and kale can survive in temperatures as low as 5 to 10 degrees F (-15 to -12 degrees C); however, kale does better in the cold weather, while collards tolerate the heat best. Hot dry weather, however, negatively affects the flavor of collards, making them bitter.

Plant collard seeds in early spring to harvest during the summer. Midsummer plantings produce the best yield and can be harvested in the fall and early winter. Collards are biennial and will send up a flower stalk in its second season. The plants reach maturity in about 60 to 80 days.

To grow collards in a home garden, purchase seeds from seed catalogs or garden shops. An excellent choice in catalogs is the Seed Savers Exchange that offers 41 varieties of kale and 10 kinds of collards, all heirloom varieties.

Prepare the soil with plenty of organic matter and good drainage. Collards are fussy about the pH balance of the soil and prefer levels about 5.5 to 6.5. Water well and frequently, keeping the soil moist for best growth and take-up of nutrients. Seeds should be sown 1/4 to 1/2-inch deep (.5 to 5 cm). Since the plants become quite large, it is best to allow 18 inches (46 cm) between them.

Harvesting collards can be done all throughout the growing season. When the plants reach 10 to 12 inches (25 to 30 cm) in height, harvest the largest leaves, leaving the smaller ones to continue maturing. To ensure the plant continues producing leaves, harvest only a few leaves at a time, leaving three-fourths of the plant intact.

Some people believe collards taste sweeter when harvested in the cool weather. Doug Sanders, a horticulturist, has an explanation. He says, "Cool weather changes starches in the leaves to sugars, and also changes the structure of protein flavor compounds."

Collards, like cabbages, are prone to aphids, cabbage loopers, and cabbage worms. Cabbage worms and loopers actually eat holes in the collard leaves as well as the cabbage heads. Loopers are the larva stage of the small white moths that frequently appear in the garden. Collards planted in the fall are subject to more worm infestation than the spring plantings. Many farmers find that row covers are helpful in keeping the pests away and allow the plants to grow later into the cold weather.

Nutrition

Collards are a dieter's delight with their low calorie, low fat, and low sodium content. Across the nutrition scale, cooked collard greens offer more vitamins and minerals than raw. Though raw collards are still considered nutritious, cooking them breaks down their cell walls and releases higher levels of vitamins and minerals.

One cup of freshly cooked collards contains 49 calories; raw they contain 11 calories. The protein content of one cup of cooked collards offers 4 grams while the raw provides 1 gram.

Fiber in cooked collards lists 5 grams and only 1 gram for raw. The fat content, while extremely low, is 0.7 grams for cooked and 0.2 for raw. Vitamin C is higher in cooked collards with 34.6 mg over the raw with 12.7 mg.

The vitamin A content of collards is impressive in both the cooked and raw states, with cooked providing 5945 I.U. and raw containing 1377 I.U. Again, in their cooked state collards are higher in the B vitamins than the raw. Folic acid content for that same one cup of cooked collards provides 177 mcg, while the raw offers 59.8.

In mineral content cooked collards shine brighter than raw. Calcium jumps well ahead in cooked collards with 226 mg over the raw that contains only 52.2 mg. While the cooked greens have .87 mg of iron in one cup, the raw provides only 0.07 mg.

Cooked collards burst ahead of raw with 494 mg of potassium over the raw that contains 81 mg. Even the trace mineral zinc comes out ahead in the cooked with 0.8 mg over the raw with less than

0.1 mg.

Purchasing and Storing

Collards are available in the supermarket throughout the year. Look for four to eight-leaf bunches that are deep green in color and plump. Those that have turned yellow or look shriveled, wilted, and brown around the edges are no longer fresh and have, no doubt, lost much of their nutritive value. Purchase about a pound of fresh collards for 2 or 3 servings.

Like storing spinach, put greens in a plastic bag in the refrigerator where they will keep for several days at 32 degrees F. (0 degrees C). Stored at 40 degrees F (5 degrees C), collards will deteriorate more rapidly. When they begin to turn yellow, cut away those portions and use the rest quickly. Yellow collards have lost so much of their food value they have little to offer.

Preparation

Wash them thoroughly to remove any sandy bits clinging to the leaves. Collards can be coarsely chopped, shredded, or enjoyed whole. Prepare them any way you might prepare other greens like spinach, either raw or cooked.

RAW:

Winter harvested collards are delicately sweet and offer delightful flavor to a salad. The ribs, too, are sweet and crunchy. Be sure to include them along with the leaves. Chop collards into bite size pieces and combine them with romaine and loose leaf lettuces for a salad that offers plenty of nutrition.

Though the tough stems are frequently discarded when preparing collards for cooking, raw food enthusiasts and health conscious cooks appreciate the sweetness and crunchiness of collard stems and incorporate them into salads without hesitation.

Employ collard leaves as a wrap for raw pates or salads that combine finely diced vegetables and sprouts.

Make a chopped collard salad with fresh corn cut off the cob, chopped tomatoes, chopped sweet onions, raw pistachios, and salt-cured olives.

Include collards in green raw soup along with celery, cucumber, and scallions. Include apple and season with lemon or lime juice, sea salt and pepper.

COOKED:

Lengthy cooking in the soul-food style is a sure way to destroy the vitamin C content of this highly nutritious vegetable. Simply cooked greens are easy. Coarsely chop collards, put them into a saucepan with enough water to cover the bottom of the pot. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam about 5 to 7 minutes. Season to taste.

For the enhanced version of steamed collards, coarsely chop a bunch of collards, put them into a saucepan along with chopped onions, chopped garlic, a little water, and the juice of 1/2 a lemon. Bring to a boil over high heat and immediately turn heat down to low. Steam about 5 to 7 minutes or until collards are tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper and enjoy one of the healthiest



vegetables in the family of greens.

A Mediterranean style collard dish begins by sautéing onions and tomatoes in olive oil. Add chopped collards, salt, pepper, and marjoram, and simmer gently about 15 or 20 minutes.

Chopped or diced collards make a tasty and nutritious addition to soups and stews.

Coarsely chopped steamed collards can be added to a cream sauce made from soy milk and thickened with cornstarch or arrowroot. Add your favorite seasonings and serve over baked or mashed potatoes or cooked grains.

Stir-fry chopped collards in a little extra virgin olive oil along with garlic and onions until tender. Season to taste.

COLLARDS IN CREAM SAUCE

1 large bunch collards
1 C. (240 ml) water (approximately)

Sauce

1 C. (240 ml) soymilk
1/4 t. salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste
1 1/2 T. nutritional yeast
1 T. lemon juice

1 T. cornstarch
1 T. water

1. Wash collards thoroughly. Chop off stems and discard or use them in a salad. Remove the tough portion of vein and discard. Chop collards coarsely and put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan.
2. Add about 1 C. (240 ml) water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove cover, and set aside.
3. While collards are steaming, combine soymilk, salt, pepper, nutritional yeast, and lemon juice in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. With heat on medium-high, bring to a boil, uncovered. Watch carefully to prevent boil-over.
4. Combine cornstarch and water in a cup, and stir into a thin paste. Using a wire whip, add to bubbling soy milk mixture, stirring until thickened into a smooth, creamy sauce, about 1 minute. Adjust seasoning if needed.
5. Drain collards and add to cream sauce. Serve warm. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

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Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries

Cherries at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipes

Songwriters Lew Brown and Ray Henderson had the right idea about life when they created the song "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries." The song, recorded in 1931 during the height of the depression, is actually timeless. The lyrics express the message that the pleasure derived from a bowl of cherries only lasts for a moment in time and ought to be cherished.

Life is just a bowl of cherries.
 Don't take it serious; it's too mysterious.
 You work, you save, you worry so,
 But you can't take your dough when you go, go, go.

So keep repeating it's the berries,
 The strongest oak must fall,
 The sweet things in life, to you were just loaned
 So how can you lose what you've never owned?
 Life is just a bowl of cherries,
 So live and laugh at it all.

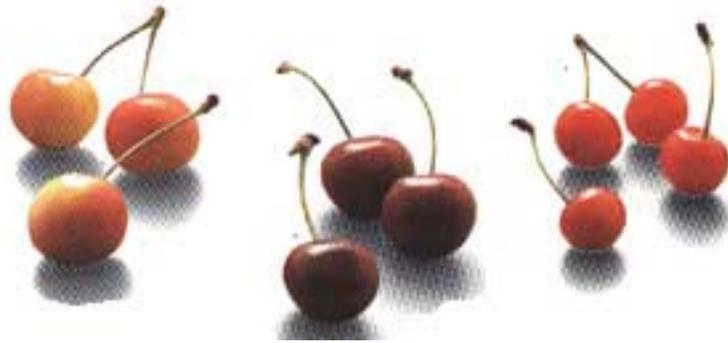
Author Erma Bombeck, on the other hand, had a rather dour view of life when she quipped, "If life is a bowl of cherries, what am I doing in the pits?"

History

Sweet cherries are closely related to the wild cherries that were indigenous in the region of the Caucasus Mountains that lie between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The southern portion, now Azerbaijan, as well as northern Turkey and Iran, were also home to the sweet cherry.

The sour cherry is thought to be a hybrid between the sweet cherry and a wild shrub called ground cherry that grew in the eastern and central portion of Europe.

The Chinese warrior-farmers that lived the northwestern highlands of Shensi in 600 BCE feasted on cherries and plums as their summer dessert. Usually it is royalty or the wealthy who can afford to feast on specialty foods. Because these country peasants lived in a region where cherries grew wild, they had more access to them than did the wealthier aristocrats dwelling further south.



During the early Islamic era, about 600 to 900 CE, Iraq was known for its abundant fruit orchards that included cherries, pomegranates, plums, figs, apples, and pears. These fruits were often traded for other foods and spices via caravan merchants.

Greek writer Theophrastus describes the sweet cherry in his writings about 300 BCE, but Oxford historians write that both sweet and sour cherries were being cultivated well before that time. Credit for fruit and vegetable cultivation is often attributed to the Greeks. Cherry cultivation is no exception, though wild cherries were in abundance long before the horticulturists took an interest in enhancing them.

Pliny the Elder, Greek author of *Natural History*, a compendium of natural sciences written in the 1st century CE, describes eight different varieties of cherries cultivated in Italy, and notes that the Romans did much to spread cherry cultivation as far west and north as Britain. Cherries were already familiar fruits in France during Pliny's era.

Cherry cultivation was eagerly supported in European monastery gardens during the medieval era.

With the Norman invasion of England, in 1066, fruits such as cherries, peaches, gooseberries, plums, and quinces, were introduced to the British. However, it wasn't until the 16th century that serious cherry growing took hold in Kent, England and in Germany.

When the colonists began journeying to the New World in the 17th century, about two dozen different varieties of cherries had been developed by the English who then brought these enticingly sweet fruits to New England.

As French settlers from Normandy arrived in the Midwest in cities like Detroit, they planted cherry pits that they brought to the New World. Soon cherry trees held a prominent place in their gardens along the Saint Lawrence River and the Great Lakes area.

During the late 1700's and throughout the 1800's European explorers traversed the plains, mountains, and deserts of North America on foot. The Native Americans taught them to carry only foods that were light in weight, yet highly nutritious. Wild cherries, known as chokecherries, along with pemmican were packed into rawhide sacks to sustain the explorers for their long journeys.

The chokecherry was growing in North America long before the Europeans arrived and was used for food and medicine by the Native Americans. The wild chokecherry eventually became an important ingredient in the famous Smith Brothers cough drops. Originally the Native Americans used them for cough medicine.

The first thought of cherry production began with a Presbyterian minister named Peter Dougherty who planted a number of trees near Old Traverse City in Michigan in the mid 1800's. Though Dougherty was told the trees would not do well there, the trees thrived and brought Ridgewood Farm, a serious grower, to the area to create the first commercial sour cherry orchard in 1893. The area surrounding Traverse City as well as along Lake Michigan was home to a firmly established cherry industry by the early 1900's.

Traverse City Canning Company, established around the turn of the century, was the first cherry processing plant to set up business. Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee were the initial cities to receive shipments of canned cherries from this company.

Today, Traverse City carries its special distinction as the Cherry Capital of the World and produces 40 percent of the sour cherries in the United States. To this day, cherry trees still line the Lake Michigan coast and burst forth with a dazzling show of white blossoms in May. In 1924 Traverse City hosted the first National Cherry Festival, a spring ceremony that celebrated the beautiful white cherry blossoms. The city continues to be the site of an annual celebration that attracts thousands of visitors during cherry harvest in July.

About the same time that sour cherries were established as a production crop in Michigan, sweet cherry orchards were flourishing in Willamette Valley near Salem, Oregon. Henderson Lewelling loaded root stock onto oxen in Iowa to start his plantings of Bing cherries in Oregon. The sweet Lambert variety was also developed on Lewelling's Farm.

Of all the varieties of sweet cherries grown in the United States, the Bing is most well known. The sweet succulent Bing cherry was named after a Chinese worker who was part of Henderson Lewelling's farm crew in western Oregon during the 1870's and 80's.

In 1876 Lewelling proudly exhibited his Bing cherries at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The cherries were so large people mistook them for crabapples. They sold for the grand price of three cents a cherry.

In 1928 Royal Anne cherries were sold to Salem canning companies for five to seven cents a pound. Today, Bing, Lambert, Royal Anne, and Ranier are the three major varieties of sweet cherries grown in the United States and are sold at considerably higher prices.

Cherry Trees in Japan

The Japanese cherry trees were grown, not for their fruits, but only for their beautiful blossoms. These trees, which seldom bear fruit, occasionally do produce fruits that are so distasteful no one cares to eat them.



In 1910 the mayor of Tokyo presented a gift of cherry trees to the city of Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, they were badly infested with insects and had to be burned. Two years later, the superintendent of grounds imported a second shipment from Toyko. This time the trees were only slightly infested with the Oriental fruit moth. Though the capitol boasts its beautiful white cherry blossoms in the spring, it has a price to pay. The cherry fruit moth also fancies peach trees as well and continues to cause problems to neighboring farms today.

Naming the Cherry

The Latin scientific name, *cerasus*, identifies the cherry family. The derivation is traced back to Greece where it was named *kerasos*. Some believe this name came from an ancient city of that name in Asia Minor, now Turkey, while others speculate the city came by its name from the abundance of cherries that grew there.

Cherry Folklore

Fiction can sometimes become truth when it is told by a highly respected source. The case in point--George Washington and the famous cherry tree quote "Father, I can not tell a lie; I cut the tree."

In 1800 a parson named Mason Locke Weems wrote *A History of the Life and Death, Virtues and Exploits, of General George Washington*. In his effort to lend color to Washington's rather dull and uninteresting life story, Weems fabricated the myth about the childhood George Washington cutting down his father's favorite cherry tree and then admitting to having done it. The tale holds such moral strength, that parents and teachers perpetuated the myth to their children and classrooms ever since it appeared in print.

Cherry Cuisine

Sour cherries may find their way to the table inside a lattice-top piecrust, as a dried fruit, fresh or frozen juice, in a chunky jam, as a canned or frozen product, and even as a highly appreciated distilled liqueur called Kirsch.

Sweet cherries are an exceptional dessert fruit enjoyed fresh off the tree without cooking or processing of any sort. Yet, they are also cooked and end up in the same products as sour cherries.

Cherries have played a prominent role in the liquor industry for well over 100 years. Three liqueurs, maraschino, kirsch, and ratafia, were distilled from the cherry.

Today maraschino cherries are cooked in syrup and artificially flavored and colored with a red dye. However, they were originally derived from the marasca, a small, black, bitter wild cherry that grew in Dalmatia, the capital of Croatia. They were used in preparing maraschino, a sweet liqueur or cordial made from fermented marasca juice and cherry stones that are crushed to extract their almond flavor. The mixture is fermented first, then distilled. This delicacy was imported into the United States during the 1890's and earned its elite reputation at the finest hotels and restaurants.

With their ultimate creativity, U.S. cherry processors discovered they could produce their own, less expensive version of maraschino cherries. In 1896 they substituted Royal Ann cherries for the marasca, and almond oil for the cherry stones. Creating this new version of maraschino cherry, they entered the market earning sales that surpassed the original European version.

Today maraschino cherries are alive and well, embellishing tropical drinks such as Mai Tai and Pina Colada. Maraschino cherries also provide the bright pink accents in canned fruit cocktail.

Kirschwasser, most often called Kirsch, is a prized liqueur that originated in Germany. Surprisingly colorless, it is made from the distilled juice of black cherries and crushed cherry stones.

Ratafia, of French Creole origin, is made by soaking ripe cherries in alcohol for several days, after which a sugar syrup is added to encourage fermentation.

Apicius, Rome's first cookbook author, gives the following directions for preserving cherries: Gather them carefully with their stalks and put them in honey, so that they do not touch each other.

Sour cherries paired with meat are popular in Persian cuisine. When not in season, dried sour cherries are used in place of the fresh.

In many Hungarian homes, cold sour cherry soup is a popular summer treat, as is black cherry jam, and cherry strudel.

You may have experienced the succulently sweet chocolate covered cherries, a French creation called *griottes* that also includes kirsch encased in the chocolate.

Fresh or canned cherries have their special place as an important ingredient in German Black Forest Cake along with kirsch.

Cherries Jubilee, a dessert that was popular in the 50's and 60's, begins with sweet canned cherries that are flamed with brandy. Kirsch is also added to create a rich sauce served over vanilla ice cream.

A few weeks before the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, glaze cherries appear on the market shelves for making fruitcakes. These are made by preparing a thin syrup used to glaze the fruit.



Sometime during the early 1800's, Korean Buddhist monks developed delicious hot tea made from a variety of fruits including cherries. The monks were the first to adopt the tradition of drinking green tea introduced to them by the Chinese about the 7th century. Later they created teas from many grains, seeds, herbs and fruits.

Cherry Cheesecake, considered the ultimate dessert by many Americans, consists of a blanket of bright red glazed cherries as a topping to this classic dessert.

Medicinal Uses of Cherries

Europeans of the 15th and 16th centuries did not visit HMO's to cure their ills. Instead, each household kept a "confection box," a term derived from the words comfit, (a sweetmeat,) and confect (prepare by combining). The box contained seeds, spices, and herbs mixed with honey or saffron. Among the contents were cherry seeds that contain prussic acid, considered a volatile poison. In small doses, the cherry seeds were used to relieve a number of discomforts including chest pains, stomach and intestinal spasms, throat irritation, and even labor pains. Six cherry

kernels a day were said to prevent kidney stones from forming.

A report by researchers at the Medical College of Ohio found that the ellagic acid found in cherries, strawberries, raspberries, grapes, loganberries, plums, and apples may inhibit cancer causing chemicals from damaging DNA.

Throughout the centuries, healers and physicians prescribed foods as medicine. Cherries had many applications: as tonics, antiseptics, and even as anthelminics capable of expelling intestinal worms and parasites.

Growing

Cherries are members of the *Prunus* genus in the rose family (Rosaceae) that includes the stone fruits called drupes. The sour cherry is classified as *Prunus cerasus*, while the sweet cherry is *Prunus avium*, that means bird's cherry.

The sour cherry grows to a height of 15 feet (4.5 meters) on a bush that is self-pollinating. The sour cherry can also be used to pollinate sweet cherries. Because the fruit is almost always processed, special care in retaining a perfect appearance need not be a concern. The bush can be harvested with a mechanical shaker, a device that looks like an upsidedown umbrella.

Sour cherries are grown in the United States, Russia, Germany, and in Eastern Europe. The countries that cultivate sweet cherries include Spain, Switzerland, France, Italy, the United States, Russia, and Germany. Germany is the largest cherry producer worldwide, with the United States ranking second.

Today, most of the sour cherries grown in the U.S. come from Michigan, New York, and Wisconsin. Farmers growing sweet cherries are concentrated in the northwestern states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington as well as California.

To demonstrate their popularity worldwide, over 900 varieties of sweet cherries are recorded, while 300 sour cherry varieties are in existence.

Sweet cherries ripen earlier than the sour varieties. Bing, Royal Ann and Ranier come to market from late May through August. The shorter sour cherry season, that includes Morello, Montmorency, and Early Richmond, runs from June through August.

A third variety of cherry, the Duke, is a hybrid version that combines both the sweet and the sour cherry.

Sweet cherries grow to a height of 30 to 35 feet (9 to 10.5 meters) and require about 900 hours of winter temperatures below 45 F (7 C). A soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 is ideal for sweet cherries. They require cross-pollination and are harvested by hand. The harvesting of cherries requires special attention to timing, or the birds will harvest the crop first. Many farmers put netting over the trees or use colorful pennants to discourage the birds.

Temperate climates are best for cherry growing. The trees are sensitive to frost during the bloom cycle and suffer sunburn from high temperatures when the fruit is ready for harvest. Too much rain just before harvest can cause the fruits to absorb extra moisture and split open.

While the sour cherry is considered to be quite resistant to diseases, the sweet cherry is highly

susceptible to disease.

A native American wild cherry, *Prunus virginiana*, called chokecherry, bears very acidic astringent fruits often used for making jelly. This cherry grows on a low bush in the eastern part of the U.S. The western counterpart, *Prunus virginiana* var. *Melanocarpa*, is sweet when fully ripened.

Nutritional Information

Glucose and fructose in nearly equal amounts, totaling about 10%, comprise the sugars that make cherries taste so sweet. The tart flavor is attributed to malic acid that ranges from 0.5 to 2.0% content, with sour cherries leaning toward the higher number.

Though sour cherries are higher in nutrients, they are not usually eaten fresh like sweet cherries. The sour cherries are higher in vitamin C and beta carotene than the sweets.

An ideal nutrient-dense snack, one cup of sweet cherries has only 84 calories. Sour cherries have even fewer calories, only 52.

Though most people do not associate fruits with fat or even protein, all plant foods contain protein, carbohydrates, and fat. That one cup of cherries has 1 gram of protein, 19 grams of carbohydrates, and 1.1 gram of fat.

One cup of sweet cherries will yield 250 I.U. of vitamin A and trace amounts of vitamins B1, B2, B3, and B6. The folic acid content measures 4.9 mcg, while there is 8.2 mg of vitamin C.

Calcium content adds up to 17.6 mg, with 0.5 mg of iron. The magnesium level measures 12.9 mg, while the potassium soars to 262 mg. Cherries contain the trace amount of 0.1 mg of zinc.

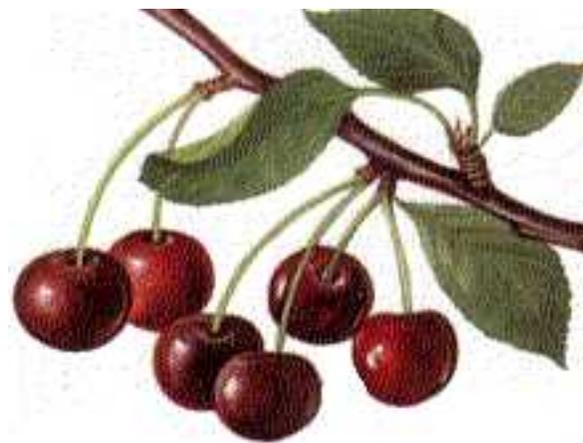
Purchasing

Tart cherries are usually brighter red than the sweets. Sweet cherries are inclined toward the deep reds and into the burgundy shades.

Look for cherries that are glossy, plump, and undamaged. Cherries should be firm. Avoid fruits that are soft, mushy, or broken. The farmer's market or farm stand is the best source for truly fresh cherries.

Cherries lose flavor and plumpness when the weather gets too warm or when kept at room temperature too long. When purchasing them from the supermarket, look for those that have been kept chilled. Color will often be an indicator of sweet flavor, the darker reds almost always reward one with juicy sweetness.

Another indicator of freshness is the color of the stems. The stems should be green. If you are looking at brown stems, the cherries are either too old or have been stored improperly, and their flavor invariably suffers.



Storing

Like many fresh fruits that quickly deteriorate and turn brown, cherries contain polyphenoloxidase, an enzyme that makes them perishable. To prevent cherries from spoiling too soon, store them in the refrigerator soon after purchase, and eat them within a day or two. Cherries are best stored unwashed in a plastic bag.

Cherries can be frozen and kept for up to one year. First, wash and drain them. Then spread them out in a single layer on a plastic or metal tray and freeze them. When completely frozen, they can be packed in an airtight plastic freezer bag.

RAW

Raw is the very best way to enjoy sweet cherries in season. They require so little, just washing, and offer so much flavor and pleasure. When biting into a fresh, plump, ripe cherry, notice how it bursts with a definitive pop and releases its wonderful juice.

Cherries are so exceptional in their raw state, it almost feels criminal to cook them. They lose some of their sweetness and require sweetening. They no longer have the firmness of a fresh cherry nor do they retain their rich color.

The proverbial bowl of cherries makes a divine dessert that can be served chilled or at room temperature.

Add cherries to a fruit salad and notice the dramatic color accents cherries offer to the medley.

Make a fruit smoothie with bananas, either fresh or frozen, dates, and pitted cherries for a delicious breakfast dessert.

COOKED

Remove the stems and pit the cherries with a cherry pitter. Cook them in a small amount of water with added sweetener for about three minutes. If desired, thicken the liquid with equal amounts of cornstarch and water stirred into a thin paste. Add this paste to the boiling liquid little at a time until thickened to desired consistency.

Cooked, glazed cherries make a delicious topping for tarts, cheesecakes, pancakes, or waffles.

Consider filling crepes with cooked cherries.

Following are two recipes to enhance your cherry repertoire:

A dessert that celebrates the cherry season and titillates the taste buds, this sweet, fruity mousse highlighted by Amaretto liqueur is a true taste sensation. If you choose to enjoy the dessert without the Amaretto, the delicious flavor of fresh cherries with the almond accent still comes through with flying colors

CHERRY AMARETTO MOUSSE

1/3 C. (80 ml) blanched almonds *

1 heaping cup (240 ml +) fresh sweet cherries, pitted
1/4 C. (60 ml) + 3 T. Florida Crystals or evaporated



cane juice
1 t. almond extract
1 12.3 oz. pkg. (424 g) extra firm silken tofu

Topping

1 cup (240 ml) sweet cherries, pitted
2 T. Florida Crystals or evaporated cane juice
1/4 t. almond extract

4 whole cherries for garnish

2 or 3 oz. (60 or 90 ml) Amaretto liqueur



1. Process blanched almonds in a food processor or electric coffee grinder to a fine powder or into tiny granules for slightly more texture. Set aside.
2. Combine the heaping cup of cherries, Florida Crystals, almond extract, and silken tofu in that order in a blender. Blend on low speed, stopping as needed to redistribute the ingredients, until blended. Add almonds and blend to a creamy mousse.
3. Pour mixture into 4 long-stemmed wine glasses. Set aside, and rinse the blender.
4. For the topping, combine the cherries, Florida Crystals, and almond extract in the blender and process to a thin sauce. Pour over creamy cherry mousse, creating a tantalizing two-tone dessert. Top with a whole cherry. Chill for several hours.
5. Put the Amaretto liqueur in a small pitcher such as a creamer, and serve on the side. Makes 4 servings.

* If blanched almonds are not available, you can easily blanch your own whole almonds by bringing 2 or 3 inches (5 or 7.5 cm) of water to a boil in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Add the whole almonds, and allow to boil for 1 minute. Drain the almonds into a strainer, and rub them with your fingers. The loosened skins will slip right off with a little pushing motion.

The versatility of cherries is astounding. Throughout history they have been included in every sort of dish from soup to entrees to desserts. However, they are not limited to just those categories. Here, we employ fresh, sweet cherries to dress up a salad. Bursting with flavor, this exceptional salad dressing contains no oil, salt, or added sugar.

CHERRY SALAD DRESSING

10 oz. (280 grams) fresh cherries (about 2 cups)

1/3 C. (80 ml) + 1 T. raspberry vinegar

1/2 C. (120 ml) water

2 T. Mrs. Dash's Original seasoning

7 pitted dates, or to taste

1. Using a cherry pitter, remove the pits or stones. Put cherries into the blender.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend starting on low speed for a few seconds. Then switch to high speed and blend until smooth and creamy. Makes about 2 cups (480 ml).

NOTE: Adjust the number of pitted dates to the sweetness of the cherries and to your taste. Very sweet cherries may not need any sweetening at all, while tart cherries will need more dates.

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Sunflowers Transcend Seedy Existence

Sunflower Seeds at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipes

As the cheerful sunflower smiles down upon us from its daunting 12-foot stature, both humans and birds look forward with anticipation to the nourishment the flower will release as its seeds reach maturity. A plant that so loves the sun and even resembles the sun offers much of the nutrients given to it by the sun.

But the sunflower holds much more promise than its sweet, innocent face reveals. A recent scientific breakthrough by the Institute of Food Research may have uncovered an emulsifier in the sunflower seed's protein that can bind oil-based food ingredients with water-based food ingredients that may in time replace the familiar, well-established dairy-based protein known as casein.

In their search to discover a good emulsifier for stabilizing food, the researchers learned that a study conducted in the 1970's suggested the sunflower might hold promise. The high-tech methods of today's modern equipment allowed the researchers to separate the seed's various proteins and test them for their emulsion properties. One protein stood out with both oil-loving and water-loving abilities.

Further studies currently in progress may produce results that could have a major impact on the food industry. Food companies would have to reformulate their recipes, but the benefit may be worth the effort since sunflower seed protein may not create the allergy problems attributed to dairy-based casein.

History

Sunflowers are native to both North and South America where indigenous people were first to cultivate them. The natives, following a 4,000-year-old practice, chose the largest seeds from the biggest heads year after year, developing the largest sunflowers that, in turn, produced the largest seeds. Ancient farmers tended their sunflower gardens with bone hoes and antler rakes. To

encourage an abundant crop, they created special songs and held ceremonies at the time the seeds were sown.

Buffalo Bird Woman, a Hidatsa Native American farmer born in 1839, carried the ancient tradition forward and sang to her plants. Native Americans form deep spiritual bonds with the earth and are grateful for all it produces. Buffalo Bird Woman said, "We cared for our crops in those days as we would care for a child, for we Indian people loved our garden just as a mother loves her children . . ."

Carbon dating-14 indicated the seeds were an important staple for Native Americans as early as 2300 BCE. Sunflower seeds were part of the regular diet of the Native Americans long before corn, squash, and beans, known as the three sisters, arrived in North America. South of the border, the Aztecs of Mexico were growing sunflowers and eating the seeds well before the white man arrived.

European farmers who came to the U.S. in the 1800's almost entirely disregarded the sunflower plant. They considered wheat, rye and corn far easier to harvest, while sunflower seeds were more labor intensive. Gardening books of that period completely ignored the merits of sunflower seeds as a nutritious food.



Many foods never achieve popularity in their country of origin. It often takes reintroduction from another country that has developed special techniques for growing, cooking, and storing to bring them to light.

Outside the Native American community sunflowers never caught on as a major crop in North America. Even when Columbus, other Spanish explorers, and colonists introduced them to the European continent in the 1500's they received little more than a nod.

However, Russia's Peter the Great (1672 to 1725) traveled to Holland where he was charmed by the sight of sunflowers in bloom. He brought seeds back to Russia where they were eagerly accepted and frequently eaten as a snack. By the 1700's sunflowers were growing throughout Russia and being cultivated for disease resistance and the production of oil. The seeds were a favorite treat and were devoured enthusiastically.

Sunflowers made a return engagement to their native land in the 1870's with the Mennonites. Originally from Russia, the Mennonites settled in Canada where they grew sunflowers from seeds they brought from their homeland. The Mennonites sold their giant Russian-developed sunflower seeds to U.S. seed companies during the 1880's. Meanwhile, Europeans and Russians were cultivating sunflowers and developing their seeds and oil as important food staples.

During the 1870's, Argentina began cultivating the sunflower. When the Spanish Civil War of the 1930's created a shortage of olive oil shipped to Argentina, the Argentine farmers turned to the sunflower and eventually became the second largest producer of sunflower oil.

The Russians and Eastern Europeans discovered that one of the many merits of cooking with sunflower oil is that the oil remains liquid at lower temperatures than fats from animal sources. Sunflower oil was perfectly suited to the colder climates of the northern regions of Russia and

Europe because it could pour easily in cold weather.

During Lent, the Russian Orthodox Church forbade the eating of oily plants. Because sunflower seeds were a new food source, there was no mention of them as a prohibited food during the Church's Lenten period. Therefore, the Russians could enjoy their sunflower seeds with gusto all throughout Lent.

Developed by a Russian crop scientist about 50 years ago, a new variety of sunflower produced 50% oil, almost twice as much oil from its seeds as the typical strains. The oil soon became an important commodity. Today the sunflower is considered second to the soybean as an oil crop on the world market.

The sunflower became a major crop in the U.S. during 1970's from a Russian oil-producing cultivar that was brought to the United States in 1966. Commercially one type of sunflower is grown for its seeds, while another variety is grown for its oil. Presently the states that grow sunflowers for commercial production include Minnesota, Kansas, Texas, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Topping the U.S. production are Russia and Argentina.

Known as "Mr. Sunflower," botanist Charles Heiser devoted his life to researching the details of the sunflower. He spent his career collecting sunflower seeds that were cultivated by Native Americans. His collection resides in the USDA Agricultural Research Service Plant Introduction Station at Iowa State University.

Another avid seed collector, Gary Nabhan, was also gathering sunflower seeds from the Native Americans for the USDA Agricultural Research Service. Many know of him through his non-profit seed conservation organization Native Seeds/SEARCH that makes Native American seeds available to the public.

Considered the most cheerful flower in the world, the sunflower is a symbol of light, hope, and innocence. While the U.S. State of Kansas adopted the sunflower as its state flower, Russia considers the sunflower its national flower. According to a *Life Magazine* article, 1996 was the Year of the Sunflower. However, not everyone held these thoughts dear. U.S. farmers considered the sunflower a weed. In 1972 the state of Iowa officially declared the sunflower a noxious weed.

In 1990, a sunflower-growing contest in Redwood City, California, honored the winner of a sunflower head that measured 23-inches (58 cm) across. Topping that, the *Guinness Book of Records* notes a Canadian grown sunflower head that measured 32 1/4-inches (82 cm) in diameter. It was grown by Emily Martin of Maple Ridge, British Columbia, Canada in September 1983. Surpassing the giants, the tallest recorded sunflower was grown 1986 by M. Heijms of Oirschot, Netherlands. His sunflower plant reached the amazing height of 25-feet 5 1/2-inches (7.76 m) tall. The shortest, developed with a bonsai technique, measured 2-inches (5 cm) across.

Like many plants, some species of sunflowers have become extinct. In particular, a variety of sunflower that once grew in the marshy areas of present day Los Angeles has disappeared. A few other sunflower varieties are now considered on the endangered list.



Preserving ancient varieties, some Hopi, Havasupai, Mandans, and Arikaras Native Americans still grow and preserve seeds of the same varieties originally grown by their ancestors. Though some of these ancient sunflower varieties are close to extinction, seed savers who collect heirloom seeds for their historical value recognize the importance of preserving them.

The sunflower is not only grown for its seeds and oil. The flower itself is favored for its cheery sun-like appearance and brilliant colors and frequently appears as a familiar motif in advertisements, logos, T-shirts, clothing designs, artist's drawings and paintings. Advertisers believe the flower symbolizes zestfulness, youth, and hardiness.

Barbara Flores, author of *The Great Sunflower Book*, grew up along the banks of the Menominee River in Wisconsin and enjoyed wandering through the stalks of wild sunflowers growing along the roadside. "Sunflowers were easy to talk to because they looked at you and came in families," she says.

Along with consuming sunflower seeds in their raw state as well as extracting their oil for cooking, modern day health enthusiasts enjoy sprouted sunflower seeds. People such as Beatrice Trum Hunter, Ann Wigmore, Paavo Airola, and Viktoras Kulvinskis have been instrumental in advocating the health benefits of sprouted seeds.

Naming the Sunflower

The scientific name for the sunflower genus is *Helianthus*, a two-part word. *Helios* means the sun, while *Anthos* means flower. Formally it could be interpreted as flower of the sun and shortened to sunflower.

The French noted that sunflowers have the peculiar habit of turning with the sun and named it *tournesol*, which means "turn with the sun." In the morning when the sun rises in the east, the sunflower faces east, and as the sun begins to sink into the western sky, the sunflower also looks toward the west.

Folklore and Oddities

Buffalo Bird Woman, a Native American of the Hidatsa tribe, describes a long-forgotten ceremonial practice. Under a tree in the garden, a wooden stage, called the watching stage, was built so two young girls could watch the garden and sing "watch-garden songs" to encourage the plants to grow. Buffalo Bird Woman likened the ritual to singing to a baby to "make it quiet and feel good."

Sunflowers were so important in daily life among Native Americans that they took on a significant role in ceremonial dances. Sunflowers symbolized strength and endurance. During the Lakota sun dance ceremony that lasted for several days, dancers wore large medallions shaped like sunflowers around their necks as they danced continuously throughout the ceremonial event.

Highlighting some of their ceremonies, the Hopi Indians drew images of their sacred sunflowers inside their lodges and kivas and dressed their hair with fresh sunflowers.

Sunflower seed balls made from the meal served as sustenance for weary Indian warriors. Far from home and low on energy, they would regain vigor from a bite or two of the nut-butter sunflower seed ball kept in flint cases that hung from their belts.

Vincent Van Gogh may have been responsible for energizing recent interest in sunflowers after a 1987 exhibit of his later paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. All told, his works included 15 paintings of sunflowers. His painting, *Sunflowers*, created in 1888, included 14 sunflowers of both the single- and double-petal variety. That work is displayed a museum in Germany.

To seek refuge from the encroaching Industrial Revolution, people of the Victorian era turned to the sunflower as their symbol of purity and wild spirit. They carved sunflowers onto wooden furniture, painted them on vases, and depicted them on railings made from wrought iron. Sunflower designs were even cast on facades of buildings.

John Piper, a painter, was so enamoured of the sunflower that his gravestone featured a carved sunflower as a reminder of the artist's fondness for the flower.

Sunflower Seed Cuisine

A historical practice of the Native Americans was to parch or dry the seeds and then pound them with smooth stones to a meal used to thicken soups and drinks. Often they were combined with bone marrow of buffalo or deer and then baked into cakes.

The Hidatsa Indian women created sunflower meal by first parching, or roasting, the seeds in a clay pot, and then stirring continually with a small stick to prevent burning them. An occasional taste test helped to determine when the seeds were properly dry and crisp. Using a horn spoon, they transferred the seeds to a wooden bowl and then pounded them into a meal in small batches in a corn mortar.

Native Americans didn't like to waste a single portion of their valuable crops. The outer hulls of the sunflowers were roasted and then steeped in boiling water, to create a coffee-like drink.

In the past, defatted sunflower meal was added to breads, giving them a nutty flavor and added nutrition. Today, the meal is used mainly as animal fodder.

Other Uses

Ancient tribes of Native Americans boiled the seeds of the sunflower in water to separate the oil that they skimmed off the top. The oil was then used as a hair dressing.

The Hopi Indians used the purplish black seed hulls to create red and indigo dyes that were used in dyeing grasses and other natural materials for basket weaving, clothing, and even face paint.

Early American pioneers pounded sunflower stalks to create a coarse fiber. Sunflower stalks also made excellent kindling. The resourceful pioneers of Canada put seed hulls to use by compressing them into kindling logs.

High quality sunflower oil is used for making margarine and salad dressings, while the lower quality is employed in making soaps, paints, and varnishes. Lower grade sunflower oils are even added to diesel fuel.

Sunflower seeds are an important bird food for large birds kept at home as pets as well as a major

ingredient in mixes for wild birds.

The crafts industry is very fond of sunflowers as well as their seeds in making pressed flowers, dried sunflowers, stencils, candle holders for pillar candles, greeting cards, picture frames, flower pots, swags, and wreaths.

In modern industry hardly anything goes to waste. The pith of the sunflower head is ten times lighter than cork and is an important ingredient in the production of life jackets and life belts.

The stalks and leaves are used as food for horses, cattle, and sheep. The crushed seeds left after extracting sunflower oil are then considered defatted sunflower meal and are used as animal fodder. The animals are fortunate to have such nutritious food that is rich in B vitamins and composed of 56% protein and 5% fiber.



Medicinal Benefits

Native Americans valued all parts of the sunflower for its healing properties. For cuts and bruises, the juices from the stem were applied directly to the injured areas.

They made a liniment by boiling the roots and applying the warm liquid to relieve any inflammation, pain and itching from poison ivy, snakebites and rheumatism. The seeds were used as a diuretic, as relief for constipation, chest pain, and ulcers, to rid the body of worms, and to cure warts.

Russians had a unique remedy for relieving rheumatism. They combined chopped sunflower heads, soap chips, and vodka into a mixture that was sun-aged for a period of nine days, and then rubbed the potion on their achy joints.

A tea made by boiling the stems of the sunflower offered relief from coughs and fevers.

John Douglas, a physician, recommends raw sunflower seeds to his patients with cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure because they are high in potassium and low in sodium. He also found that raw sunflower seeds offered allergy relief to some of his patients. For patients who were in his stop-smoking program, he recommended sunflower seeds, not only for their nutritional benefits, but to provide an activity to keep their hands and mouths busy.

The high vitamin E and polyunsaturated fat content provide benefits that help lower cholesterol.

Native American Sunflower Garden of the Mid 1800's

Buffalo Bird Woman, born in North Dakota in 1839, settled with her family along the Missouri River where she cultivated her highly respected agricultural skills. The women in her family used ancient farming practices handed down from generation to generation to work the soil and grow their typical native crops called "the three sisters" (corn, beans, and squash).

Their fourth staple was sunflowers, the first crop to be planted in the spring as soon the frost passed. Rather than planting the sunflowers close together in multiple rows as many commercial farmers would, they chose to plant them around the perimeter of their garden about nine paces apart. To Buffalo Bird Woman's family this sparseness was their measure of beauty.

At harvest time the plants were cut down, and the sunflower heads placed face down on the roofs of their dwellings to dry. The Indians believed that the seeds would dry and loosen more easily with the sun shining on the back of the heads. If rain threatened, they simply brought the sunflower heads inside their homes and carried them back to the roofs when the weather cleared.

Removing the seeds was called threshing, a process that was accomplished with the heads spread out on a skin face down and beaten with sticks. The dry seeds then simply fell out.

Sunflower heads left on the roof late in the fall when nighttime temperatures dipped to freezing resulted in seeds that released greater quantities of oil. The oily quality was so desirable that sometimes the Indians would deliberately leave threshed seeds outside overnight to induce freezing.

Growing

Considered giant daisies, sunflowers belong to the *Helianthus annuus* genus that lists about 67 species, some wild and some cultivated. Most are native to the United States.

More than 150 varieties of sunflowers have been cultivated from these species. Some are branching, some are single stalk, some are very tall, some dwarf, some are summer blooming, and some fall blooming.

Sunflowers do not appear to have particular soil or climate needs. They grow in hot deserts such as the Mojave, the swamps in Florida, and the woodlands in the Pacific Northwest. Loose fertile soil that offers good drainage is important, however, as is a full day of sunshine.

Sunflower plants are self-seeding because of the many seeds that drop to the ground, remain dormant over the winter, then sprout in the spring. However, if you choose to create your own hybrid cultivar, plant two very different varieties at the same time. Remember that the florets (the seeded area from which the petals radiate) mature and open from the outside to the inside progressively. As the flowers begin to open, they are releasing pollen. This is the best time to cross-pollinate.

The outer circle of florets will mature first. Use a tweezers to open the tip of the floret where the pollen forms. Lift off some of the pollen from one plant, and place it on the same area of the other plant. Perform this pollination method on a few dozen florets and place a mark with a waterproof pen on the back of the flower heads to show where you pollinated.

Cover the flower head with a paper bag to protect it from cross-pollinating with other varieties the wind may carry to your plants. When the seeds are fully matured, you can remove the seeds that received your special procedure. Dry them completely and carefully and store them in a glass jar at room temperature until the following season. Plant the seeds in pots one-inch (2.5 cm) deep in full sun and transplant them into the ground when the plants reach a foot (30 cm) in height. Place a stake in the ground at the time of transplanting to avoid damaging the root system later on.

Most sunflowers are drought resistant but will thrive best if watered about once a week, especially in dry climates. To preserve moisture, provide a 3-inch (7.5 cm) to 4-inch (10 cm.) mulch.

For the largest heads with the greatest number of seeds, give the plants plenty of room. Crowded plants will not reach their full potential. Some varieties produce black and white striped hulls,

some gray and white, and others pure white hulls such as the Tarahumara White Shelled variety.

Harvesting can be accomplished by either of two methods. The first is to cover the seed head with cheesecloth or nylon netting and allow the seeds to thoroughly dry on the plant. The covering protects the seeds from the birds. When the seeds are dry, rub the seed head to release the seeds.

The second method is to cut the mature head from the plant with about a foot (30 cm) of the stem attached. Hang in a dry location away from mice, rats, or insects. Placing a paper bag with small air holes in it may be helpful for catching the seeds that may fall as they dry.

Because of their anatomy, sunflowers are closely related to the carrot and dill. Each produces flower tops with clusters of tiny flowers called florets, (the seed portion in the center of the sunflower) surrounded by ray petals. Some varieties contain showy double ray petals.

Each individual sunflower seed, or floret, contains its own ovary, stigma, style, and anthers. Attached to the outer ring of florets are the long ray petals that are sometimes a greenish color when immature and deepen to a yellow or orange color when fully mature. Difficult to imagine, a single sunflower head that measures 12 inches (30 cm) across could have as many as eight thousand florets.

Most people think of a bright yellow flower when forming a picture in their minds of a sunflower in bloom. With the multitude of varieties cultivated in recent years, sunflowers bloom in a constellation of golden hues, not just bright yellow. Gardening books feature sunflowers in many shades of yellow, brilliant yellow orange, white, deep bronzed scarlet, pinkish red, and even light brown. Some sunflowers are a dazzling rainbow of multi-colors. Some sunflowers have deep brown, almost black centers, some light brown, some green, and some even deep yellow brown.

While 20 varieties of sunflowers are annuals, thirty cultivars are perennials that live for several years. The most well known perennial in the sunflower family is the Jerusalem artichoke or sunchoke, *H. tuberosus*. Though sunchoke add pleasant variety to a tossed salad, they have a tendency to take over the veggie garden. Their texture is moist and crisp, similar to jicama, while their flavor is delicately sweet. Plant Jerusalem artichokes in a separate bed where they will not affect other plants. **For more information on the Jerusalem artichoke, see the [Jerusalem Artichoke Caper](#)**

Of greatest importance to commercial sunflower seed growers is the variety *H. annuus* that has been crossed with *H. petiolaris* to produce sunflowers that do not contain pollen. Because of this male sterile cultivar, commercial growers have been able to achieve high productivity of sunflowers that are pest resistant and have seeds with very high oil content.

Sunflowers provide more than beauty in the garden. They are considered excellent companion plants when planted in vegetable gardens, because they draw beneficial insects to the garden to keep the pesty bugs out. Plant sunflowers and squashes close together--they're great pals in the garden.

While all sunflower seeds are edible, commercial farmers focus on the large, hybridized Russian and Israeli varieties with their recognizable black and white striped hulls that are cultivated for their large seeds.

The Russian Mammoth is an heirloom variety grown for its seed kernels. A large head can measure up to 14 inches (35 cm) across and look down from stalks as tall as 12 feet (3.7 m). Seed heads from this variety can produce between 1,000 and 5,000 seeds.

When planting sunflowers for the birds to enjoy, keep in mind that small birds especially enjoy the smaller sunflower varieties with their tiny, more manageable seeds.

Nutritional Benefits

All seeds are highly concentrated food. Sunflower seeds are no exception.

Raw sunflower kernels provide higher levels of nutrients than toasted seeds. One ounce (28 grams) of raw seeds contains 160 calories and only 6 grams of carbohydrates. They offer an impressive 7 grams of protein and 4 grams of fiber. The perfect low-sodium food, they contain only 3 grams of sodium; however, their fat content must be considered if weight is a concern. One ounce of raw seeds contains 13 grams of fat.

Across the nutrient scale, raw sunflower seeds contain impressive figures. Usually found in trace quantities, thiamin registers 0.41 mg, riboflavin 0.04 mg, and niacin 0.81 mg. The champion of folate, raw sunflower seeds contain 40.88 mcg for 1 ounce (28 grams). Minerals make a good showing with 6.68 mg calcium, 0.39 mg iron, 20.38 mg magnesium, 39.63 mg potassium, and 0.29 mg zinc. Because raw sunflower seeds are high in phosphorous, eat them in small quantities to prevent loss of calcium.

One of the richest sources of vitamin E with 50.27 IU for 3 1/2 ounces (100 grams), raw sunflower seeds are a powerful antioxidant that rids the body of harmful free radicals that pose risk for heart disease.

The figures for toasted sunflower seeds are slightly lower for most nutrients while calories are slightly higher at 175 for one ounce (28 grams). The fat content goes up to 16.1 grams, 1.7 grams saturated. Protein rates 5 grams with fiber at 3 grams.

Unsalted sunflower seed butter provides 164 calories for one ounce (28 grams) with 6 grams of protein. Total fat registers 13.5 grams with 1.4 grams saturated. Vitamin A content is 15 IU, while folic acid jumps to 67.3 mcg. The seed butter has a good range of B vitamins with the exception of the absence of B12. Calcium levels measure 34.6 mg, iron 1.3 mg, and magnesium 105 mg. There's even a good supply of zinc with 1.5 mg.

Sprouted sunflower seeds produce impressive nutritional data. Imagine, a little sprouted sunflower seed contains enough nutrients to start a whole new plant growing, one that can reach 6- to 12-foot (1.8 to 3.7 m) heights. In the germination process, all nutrients, including enzymes and trace minerals, multiply 300 to 1200%.

One of the richest sources of protein, 3 1/2 ounces (100 grams) of sprouted sunflower seeds contains 22.78 grams. The mineral content soars in the sprouted state. That 3 1/2 ounces (100 grams) offers a notable 116 mg of calcium, 5.06 mg of zinc, 689 mg of potassium, 1.75 mg copper, and 354 mg of magnesium.

Vitamins increase during sprouting when the seeds are producing a new life. Vitamin A increases to 50,000 IU, and Vitamin E offers 52.18 mg, while Vitamin D provides 92.0 IU for 3 1/2 ounces

(100 grams). The Vitamin B family offers niacin at 4.50 mg, riboflavin at 0.25 mg, and thiamin at 2.29 mg. Sprouted sunflower seeds are also a rich source of iron, providing 6.77 mg for 31/2 ounces (100 grams) that can be a benefit to people with anemia.

Mature sprouted sunflower seeds are a rich source of chlorophyll noted for cleansing or detoxifying the liver and the blood. Chlorophyll benefits many functions within the body including building blood supply, revitalizing tissue, calming inflammation, activating enzymes, and deodorizing the body. Most commercial breath fresheners contain chlorophyll.

Purchasing and Storage

Whenever possible, purchase organic sunflower seeds, shelled or unshelled. Health food markets are one source where they might be available, but you may find the internet helpful in locating sources for organic bulk sunflower seeds at lower prices.

At summertime room temperatures shelled sunflower seeds are very subject to damage from Indian meal moths. For best results, store them in a plastic or glass container and keep them refrigerated year round. They can also be frozen.

Sunflower seeds with shells have an extended life and can be kept at room temperature for up to a year in cooler climates. In areas where temperatures climb above 70 degrees (21 C), the seeds are best kept in the refrigerator.

The highest quality sunflower oil is cold pressed. Once the bottle is opened, store it in the refrigerator to prevent spoilage. Though it has a low rancidity level, sunflower oil will spoil if not properly stored.

Caution:

Sunflower petals are NOT edible and are highly poisonous. Do not attempt to eat them or decorate foods with the petals.



Shelling Sunflower Seeds

Rarely do we see people in the United States cracking open sunflower seeds one at a time and snacking on them. The task proves to be too tedious in our busy world. An easier, more efficient method is to put a quantity of seeds into a large, plastic zip-lock bag, and use a rolling pin to break up the shells. Transfer the seeds to a large bowl filled with water and give them a vigorous stir. You'll notice that the kernels will sink to the bottom, while the shells float to the surface where they can be skimmed off. Then, spread the kernels out on an absorbent kitchen towel to dry.

Raw

The nice thing about sunflower seeds is that once they're shelled you don't have to do anything to them. You can even buy them already shelled, a real convenience.

Sprinkle them on your breakfast cereal or soaked oats and diced fruits.

Enhance a salad with a touch of crunch from a handful or two of sunflower seeds.

Add a handful to a fruit smoothie for added nutrition.

Garnish a raw soup with a sprinkle of sunflower seeds over the top just before serving.

Add them to your homemade trail mix of raw nuts, seeds, and diced dried fruits.

Add a little plastic baggie of sunflower seeds to kids' lunchboxes.

Combine sunflower seeds with pine nuts when making a pesto sauce.

Soak the sunflower seeds and prepare a seed pate in the food processor. Combine them with vegetables of choice and fresh herbs, a touch of lemon or lime juice, and season to taste.

Add sunflower seeds to a fruit and nut confection.

For the wild birds that visit your yard in the springtime, prepare a Birdie Trail Mix with sunflower seeds in the shell. Some birds love peanuts in the shell, so include a generous portion for them, and add some millet for the tiny birds. Include some dried currants, and the birdies will rejoice at the welcome meal you've provided.

Grind sunflower seeds in a nut mill and combine with rolled oats and chopped fresh herbs. Use this mixture to sprinkle over a tossed salad.

To create your own seasoning blend, toss raw sunflower seeds with sesame and flax seeds along with a little salt and your favorite herbs into the blender. Blend to a powdered consistency. Add cayenne pepper if you enjoy a spicy edge to your seasoning blend.

To make sunflower seeds more alkaline and enhance their digestibility, soak them overnight.

Toasting

Two methods of toasting sunflower seeds allow the cook to heighten the flavor of the seeds, adding a crunchy accent or flavorful garnish to a dish. Depending on time available, choose the quick toasting stove-top method or the slow oven-roasting technique.

Stove-top Method: Toss a handful or two of raw sunflower seeds into a dry non-stick skillet. Using high heat, stir continuously with a wooden spoon until seeds turn light golden brown, about 2 or 3 minutes. Watch them carefully to avoid burning. As soon as they begin to turn brown, turn off heat, and remove the seeds to a waiting dish to cool. Store in a tightly covered plastic container in the refrigerator.

Oven-roasting Method: Oven roasting permits the cook to toast a larger quantity of seeds at one time. Put a single layer of seeds on an ungreased baking sheet and roast at 300 F (Gas Mark 2) for 30 to 45 minutes, turning once or twice during roasting. Remove to a dish to cool. Store in a tightly covered plastic container in the refrigerator.

Toasted seeds add interesting texture to pasta dishes.

Sprinkle toasted seeds over salads.

Roasted vegetable salads come to life with a handful or two of toasted sunflower seeds.

Add a couple of handfuls of toasted sunflower seeds to cooked rice or grains.

Baking

When baking bread either the old-fashioned way or in a bread machine, add about 1/3 cup (80 ml) of sunflower seeds for a pleasantly nutty flavor.

Muffins are more enjoyable when the home chef adds special touches like sunflower seeds, either raw or toasted, that lend a pleasant texture.

Cookies are just made for crunchy add-ins like sunflower seeds.

Pancakes and waffles are a perfect medium to add an extra touch of health with 1/4 cup (60 ml) of sunflower seeds in the batter.

Homemade granola just begs for crunchy nutty additions like sunflower seeds.

Sprouting

Sunflower seeds are easy to sprout and offer many health benefits. Steve Meyerowitz, the Sproutman, says, "Sprouts are baby plants in their prime. At this stage of their growth, they have a greater concentration of proteins, vitamins and minerals, enzymes, RNA, DNA, bio-flavinoids, T-cells, etc., than at any other point in the plant's life--even when compared with the mature vegetable."

A wide mouth glass jar, a natural bamboo basket with shallow sides, a sprouting bag, or potting soil work well for sprouting sunflower seeds. Sprouting can be accomplished with the shells intact or with the shells removed. Delicious sunflower sprouts can be harvested in 8 to 12 days and stored in the refrigerator.

Shelled sunflower seeds can be soaked overnight in a bowl with water to cover. Next morning, drain off water, rinse the seeds, put them into a sprouting bag ideally made from linen, and sprout for two days at room temperature. The sprouting bag prevents the seeds from oxidizing and turning brown like cut up apples and pears. The sprout bag also keeps the sprouts perfectly moist while easily draining off excess liquid. Rinse the sprouts two or three times a day, and hang the bag over the faucet or lay on a dish drainer rack to drain. Refrigerate the sprouted seeds.

Sunflower seeds in the shell can also be sprouted. Though any untreated sunflower seeds will sprout, the small, black oil-sprouting grade will produce the best, most abundant results. The striped shell variety is a little more labor intensive because the shells have to be removed by hand after the seeds have sprouted.

Sprout Basket: Start by soaking about 6 tablespoons of the seeds overnight. If any seeds float, stir them into the water. Next day, drain off all the water and put the seeds into a loosely woven natural bamboo basket that has not been treated, painted, or coated with shellac. Create a loose tent with a plastic bag that is larger than the basket and can be zipped closed. Put the basket with the seeds inside the tent and zip closed. Remove and rinse about 3 times daily under a spray faucet and return to the tent. While light is important for developing the green leaves of the maturing sprouts, the seeds will do best with indirect light. In hot weather, it may be helpful to leave the end of the tent open for improved air circulation.

Sprouting Jar: Though a jar is not the best method for sprouting sunflower seeds, it does produce limited results. Sunflower sprouts do best when given the opportunity to grow tall, about 4 to

6-inches (10 to 15 cm) in height, and not be cramped into a jar that will inhibit their growth. When using a glass jar for sprouting, start by soaking the seeds overnight in the jar. Cover the top of the jar with cheesecloth secured with a rubber band. Next day, drain off water. Lay the jar on its side at an angle with the mouth of the jar resting lower to allow for drainage. Rinse sprouts 3 times a day, drain, and lay the jar on its side. There is no need to remove the cheesecloth to rinse the sprouts.

Soil-Sprouting: Purchase two aluminum foil pans, one about 9-inches by 13-inches (23 by 32.5 cm), the other a little larger to act as the drip pan. Use an ice pick or pointed nail to punch holes in the smaller pan. Then put a 1-inch (2.5 cm) layer of potting soil in the smaller pan. Soak the sunflower seeds with shells overnight, and drain the next morning. Arrange the seeds over the soil, cover with a layer of wet newspapers, and set the smaller pan into the larger one. Keep the newspapers moist, lifting each day to check the progress of the seeds. When you notice little sprouts emerging from the shells, remove the newspapers and provide plenty of light and warmth. Keep the soil moist. After several days you'll notice leaves begin to form at the tip of the sprout stem. Harvest your beautiful sprouts in about 10 to 14 days and enjoy them in salads and sandwiches.

Sunflower Oil

Because of its high vitamin E content, unprocessed sunflower oil has a low rancidity level, making it shelf stable and good for cooking. However, it is best used in its uncooked form to retain its valuable nutrients.

Light and delicate, sunflower oil is ideal for salad dressings. Sunflower oil also combines well with other robust flavored oils such as extra virgin olive oil.

When preparing an infused oil, use sunflower oil from the first pressing (usually stated on the label).

Easy infused oil: Fill an attractive glass bottle half full with fresh herbs, such as rosemary, tarragon, basil, or thyme. Add some spices such as peppercorns, ginger, fresh chiles, or paprika. Fill the bottle with sunflower oil, and allow herbs to infuse for about two weeks. Enjoy the flavored oil over salads.

Avoid infusing fresh garlic in oil that will be sitting out on the counter at room temperature. The result can cause botulism.

With a pleasant tang from the lemon juice, this easy blender salad dressing could become a favorite. It's quick to fix, enhances all varieties of greens, and stores well.

SUNFLOWER OIL AND LEMON DRESSING

- 1 t. salt
- 1/8 t. black pepper
- 1/2 t. dried oregano
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) raw sunflower seeds
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) sunflower seed oil
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) fresh lemon juice

1/2 C. (120 ml) water

1 T. balsamic vinegar

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a creamy consistency. Pour into a jar or salad dressing bottle and store in the refrigerator.
 2. Shake well before each use. Makes 1 1/3 cups ((320 ml).
-

Even people who don't like to cook will find these easy preps a temptation to spread on bread, toast, or crackers. When served with raw or even steamed veggies, these tasty dips will provide a wholesome, nutritious meal. The great thing about these recipes is that they are perfect for any season--just vary the veggies you serve on the side.

SUNNY SEED DIP

1/2 C. (120 ml) raw sunflower seeds

1/4 t. salt

1/2 t. ground cumin

Pinch of cayenne pepper

1 T. apple cider vinegar

1/2 t. Bragg's Liquid Aminos

1/4 C. water

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor, and process until almost smooth and creamy. You may have to stop the machine several times to scrape down the sides and redistribute ingredients. .
 2. Transfer to a small serving bowl.
 3. Serve with a platter of carrot sticks, celery sticks, bell pepper strips, anise bulb sticks, cucumber sticks, turnip slices, kohlrabi slices, rutabaga slices, and cauliflower and broccoli florets enjoy a wholesome meal. Makes about 1 cup (240 ml).
-

WASABI SUNFLOWER SPREAD

1/2 C. (120 ml) raw sunflower seeds

1/2 t. salt

1/4 t. evaporated cane juice

1/4 + 1/8 t. wasabi paste

1 T. rice vinegar

3 T. water

1/2 t. Bragg's Liquid Aminos

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until almost smooth and creamy. You may have to stop the machine several times to scrape down the sides and redistribute ingredients.
2. Transfer to a small serving bowl and serve with whole grain bread or raw veggies. Makes about 1 cup (240 ml).

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Grapefruit--the New Kid on the Block

Grapefruit at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

History

The grapefruit, not even 300 years old, is just a kid in the world of fruits. The offspring of the pummelo, sometimes spelled pomelo and even known as shaddock, the grapefruit may have appeared as a horticultural accident during the 1700s in Jamaica. The grapefruit might never have made a debut at all if it hadn't been for Captain Shaddock, a 17th century English ship commander who brought seeds of the pummelo from the East Indies and delivered them to the West Indies in 1693.

Another theory is that the grapefruit may have been a cross between the pummelo and an orange, though no records of a deliberate hybridization exist. In either case, the pummelo, that is native to Malaysia and Indonesia, seems to have fathered the grapefruit that began as a smaller fruit than our familiar grapefruit and was actually about the size of an orange.

By 1750 it was known in Barbados as the "forbidden fruit," a name that traveled to Jamaica by 1789. There the grapefruit was also called the "smaller shaddock" after Captain Shaddock. In his book *In Search of the Golden Apple*, USDA citrus scientist William C. Cooper describes grapefruit and sweet oranges growing wild on many islands of the West Indies. While researching in Haiti, he noticed a citrus fruit resembling the grapefruit, but called chadique that was flourishing in the mountains.



In Jamaica the grapefruit was not a popular fruit because of its bitter, acidic flavor. However, the Jamaican ugli, a hybrid of the grapefruit and the tangerine that appeared in the early 1900's, is favored for its appealing sweet flavor and juiciness. Somewhat resembling the grapefruit, the



ugli suffers image problems. Its unattractive skin is thick and wrinkled, and it is oddly shaped out of round with a flat bottom. The ugli varies in color from mottled deep green to greenish yellow and

sometimes even yellow orange.

A French botanist, the Chevalier de Tussac, wrote in his notes in 1820:

"I have had the occasion to observe, at Jamaica, in the botanical garden of the Government, a variety of shaddock whose fruits, which are not bigger than a fair orange, are disposed in clusters; the English in Jamaica call this the 'forbidden fruit' or 'smaller shaddock.'

The grapefruit first appeared in the U.S. in 1823 when Count Odette Phillipe brought the seeds from the Bahamas to Safety Harbor near Tampa, Florida. Like so many other foods introduced into the United States from distant countries, the grapefruit did not gain immediate popularity. One American gardening encyclopedia referred to grapefruit as "thick-skinned and worthless."

The seeds from those first plants thrived and produced fruit. The neighborhood received a gift of the seeds from those grapefruits, launching the first cultivation of grapefruit in that region. By 1840, grapefruit was stirring some minor interest.

One day in the year 1870 John A. MacDonald noticed an unusual tree near his home in Orange County, Florida. The large clusters of golden fruits were so appealing he bought them all. Soon after, he established the first grapefruit nursery from the seeds of that tree.

In 1885, Florida's first shipment of grapefruits to New York and Philadelphia created a flurry of interest in the fruit and was the beginning of a serious commercial grapefruit industry.

By the late 1800's grapefruit trees were popping up in unlikely locales like the southern part of Texas where it was thought too cold for citrus to survive. One very determined grapefruit tree froze to the ground during a very cold Texas winter but survived to produce fruit. After freezing many winters, the tree proved to be a survivor and lived to produce fruit repeatedly.

Florida developed into a major commercial center with its burgeoning grapefruit crop of Duncan and Marsh varieties. The Duncan, whose ancestor was a seed planted by Count Phillipe, is a flavorful but seedy grapefruit most used for canning. Because they discolor, pink grapefruits are not used for canning. The Marsh may have been a chance seedless variety and was developed in the 1860's by a nurseryman named C.M. Marsh.

As early as 1910 farmers were successfully growing grapefruits in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, and in Arizona and California. However, during the 1940's grapefruit became a household favorite across the U.S. Canned grapefruit sections, grapefruit juice, and fresh grapefruit were not only shipped throughout the country, but also exported. During this era Jamaica, Trinidad, South America and Israel ventured into grapefruit cultivation.

New grapefruit varieties, including those with pink and red flesh, were developed in the early 1900's and became a popular commodity in the northern states. In 1929 a Texas citrus grower marveled at the red grapefruit growing on a tree that was producing pink grapefruits. That mutation became a new cultivar named Ruby Red that was the first grapefruit granted a U.S.

patent. That Texas Red became the official state fruit of Texas in 1993.

As its popularity grew, grapefruit could be found in Mexico, Argentina, Cyprus, and Morocco. Today Mexico exports grapefruits to the United States, Canada and Japan. In the Orient, where the pummelo reigns, grapefruit is a minor crop. Central Americans consider grapefruit too acidic, preferring their sweet tropical pineapples, papayas, and melons.

Presently, the United States produces 41 percent of the world's grapefruit and consumes more than other countries. Florida, the state where grapefruit was first grown, is still the largest producer with Texas following close behind. California and Arizona also have thriving commercial grapefruit orchards.

Commercial growers focus on developing fruits that are larger, more uniform in size, and with attractive color. Unfortunately, flavor is sacrificed for appearance. The heirloom varieties were far tastier than today's new cultivars but are only used for canning grapefruit juice.

Naming the Grapefruit

Reverend Griffith Hughes came upon the grapefruit in 1750 and called it the "forbidden fruit" when he and others were seeking the origin of the tree of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. The grapefruit carried the "forbidden fruit" name for many years after.

Originally named *Citrus paradisi Macf.*, the grapefruit was considered a sport of the pummelo, the giant of the citrus family. Botanically, a sport is a dramatic variation of the normal variety resulting from a mutation. James MacFayden, a botanist, differentiated the grapefruit from the pummelo in his 1837 work *Flora of Jamaica*.

More than 100 years later in 1948 citrus horticulturists began to examine the grapefruit's botanical origins and concluded it was not a sport of the pummelo but a hybrid between the pummelo and the orange that occurred accidentally. The grapefruit now has the scientific name *Citrus X paradisi*.

The grapefruit's common name probably came from the 19th century naturalist who noted that the fruits appeared to grow in clusters like grapes. He was observing those fist-sized fruits that grew from seeds brought to the West Indies by Captain Shaddock.

Several attempts to change the grapefruit's name to something more appealing were unsuccessful. American horticulturists, convinced the grapefruit's name was unfitting, wanted to call it pomelo, but some people suggested it would be confused with pummelo. Then as recently as 1962, the Florida Citrus Mutual attempted to give the grapefruit a name that would be more commercially appealing and increase its marketability. This effort, too, failed because of public outcry. The grapefruit is still a grapefruit.



Some Dutch people refer to the grapefruit as a shaddock, others call it a *pampelmoose*, a name originally given to a pomelo but now used for grapefruit.

The French call grapefruit *pamplermousse* (pumpkin-sized citron). The Italians named it *pompelmo*.

Oddities

The highly publicized grapefruit diet of the 1970's claimed that a person could lose 10 pounds (4.5

kg) in 12 days by consuming either one-half grapefruit or eight ounces of grapefruit juice with every meal. Grapefruit, because of its enzymes, was said to literally burn fat away, yet no scientific evidence has proved this claim.

The U.S. stock market crash of 1929 and the following years of depression were the catalyst for introducing the grapefruit to destitute families across the country. Grapefruit, along with other citrus fruits, could be had for free with orange food stamps from the welfare board. Families encountering the fruit for the first time weren't quite sure whether it was to be cooked or eaten raw. The welfare board received frequent complaints that the families had cooked the grapefruit for several hours and still found it too tough to eat.

Aroma-therapists turn to the essential oil of the grapefruit for its uplifting and reviving qualities. Used to scent a room, grapefruit oil creates a relaxed and happy environment and can relieve stress and nervous exhaustion. Grapefruit oil is said to balance the emotions.

Grapefruit Cuisine

When grapefruit became popular in the U.S., most households owned a set of grapefruit spoons that were provided whenever grapefruit halves was served. The utensils had pointed tips and serrated edges for separating the flesh from the membranes.

During the '30's, '40's, and '50's half of a grapefruit frequently appeared as a breakfast favorite, its sections loosened by a special knife with a serrated, curved blade. Topping the grapefruit was a spoonful of honey or sugar and sometimes a dash of cinnamon, nutmeg, or cloves.

A popular salad included grapefruit and orange sections tossed with lettuce and onion rings and dressed with a French, poppyseed, or honey-mustard dressing.

During the '50's and '60's the fruit cup of canned grapefruit and orange sections in sweet syrup served with a maraschino cherry on top became the cliché of the day. Dinner at fancy restaurants and elegant weddings often began with the syrupy citrus fruit cup. Colorful Jello molds were a must on every buffet or smorgasbord table. Many molds featured yellow, orange, or green Jello with chopped grapefruit and orange sections imbedded. Broiled grapefruit topped with sweetener was popular as a starter as well as a dessert.

The English enjoy grapefruit marmalade, while confectioners prepare candied grapefruit peel.

Because grapefruits are well endowed with juicy pulp, squeezing the fruit into juice was a natural that began when grapefruit became popular from the '30's on. A glass of grapefruit juice at breakfast still offers delightful refreshment. Even today, diners would feel that something was missing if a breakfast buffet didn't include pitchers of grapefruit and orange juice.

Culinary enthusiasts flavored vinegar with grapefruit juice.

For the imbibers, there is grapefruit wine, grapefruit beer, and grapefruit liqueur. Forbidden Fruit is a potent, cognac-based grapefruit liqueur made with sweet oranges and sweetened with honey. The liqueur has a hint of bitter undertone and is often blended with fruit juices, gin, vodka, rum, or brandy. Also available is Pink Grapefruit Liqueur.

The process of making grapefruit beer begins with six peeled and sliced grapefruits combined with three gallons of hot water in a large crockpot. Cool and add 12 ounces of yeast. Seal the crock and

allow it to ferment. Bottle it immediately after fermentation and drink.

The oil extracted from grapefruit peel is used as a flavoring agent in soft drinks and as an enhancement in reconstituted grapefruit juice.

After bleaching and refining, grapefruit seed oil is used as mild, unsaturated oil for cooking, though it is uncommon and difficult to locate.

Hardly any portion of the grapefruit goes to waste. What is considered waste matter from grapefruit packing stations is transformed into molasses and fed to cattle. After extracting oil from the seed hulls, the hulls are used by farmers as a natural soil conditioner. Sometimes the hulls are combined with dried grapefruit pulp and fed to cattle.

Medicinal Uses

Every part of the grapefruit is recognized for its many health benefits. Grapefruit seed extract, available in health food stores, is commonly used as an anti-fungal remedy.

An infusion prepared from grapefruit flower blossoms becomes a treatment for insomnia. The beverage is also valued as a cardiac tonic.

Grapefruit stimulates the digestive tract and aids in relieving indigestion and gas. The fruit also has diuretic properties helpful to people with water retention and liver and gall bladder conditions.

Rubbed on the skin, grapefruit is beneficial in treating acne and oily skin.

Grapefruit pulp, because of its acidic nature, is an effective treatment for urinary infections.

An extract drawn from the leaves of the grapefruit tree contains antibiotic properties.

Pectin contained in the grapefruit rind and the membranes clinging to the grapefruit sections is effective in lowering serum cholesterol.

Medical Warning: Some medications interact with grapefruit and grapefruit juice, causing the medication to become more intense. Check with your physician or pharmacist to make sure grapefruit will not affect your medications. To be on the safe side while taking medications, drink other fruit or citrus juices. Most will provide plenty of vitamins and minerals. While you are taking medications, read beverage labels carefully to be sure juice combinations do not contain grapefruit.

Growing

Officially named *Citrus X paradisi* by 1830, grapefruit, which only had white flesh at that time, was established as its own citrus species.

The grapefruit varieties are divided into two main categories--the white and the red. Florida developed the white Marsh, a seedless grapefruit, while Texas bred the pink and red varieties (*C. reticulata*). Red Blush and Ruby Red were developed from the Marsh. Ruby Red and Red Blush can be recognized by the hint of red blush on the bright yellow skin. The flesh of the pink grapefruit varies from pale pink to intense reddish tones, depending on the season and differences in soil condition. The many common varieties have developed from these two main categories.

While the Marsh is considered a seedless grapefruit, it does actually contain a few seeds. The term seedless refers to those grapefruits that produce five seeds or less per fruit.

Popular varieties grown today include Duncan, Foster, Marsh, Oroblanco, Paradise Navel, Redblush, Star Ruby, Rio Red, Ruby Sweet, Sweetie, Thompson, and Triumph.

The flesh of the grapefruit is similar to that of the orange, with individual sections joined by a thick, somewhat fibrous, edible membrane. Fruits average about 5 to 6 inches (12.5 to 15 cm) in diameter.

The grapefruit begins to bear fruit four to six years after planting and can produce up to 30 or 40 fruits on a single branch. A single tree, in a productive year, can generate 1300 to 1500 pounds of fruit.

Most grapefruit trees grow about 15 to 20 feet in height (4.5 to 6 m) though some can grow to 45 feet (13.7 m) when very old. The tree, an evergreen, is attractive with a rounded top and branches that spread horizontally. Overall, the tree has a rounded appearance with darker leaves at the top and lighter leaves on the lower branches. When the tree is in full fruit, the branches nearly touch the ground.

Fragrant grapefruit blossoms appear in the spring. The closed buds are white with a green tint and open into white, four-petaled flowers that may be single or in clusters. The grapefruit itself, depending on the variety, is round, pear-shaped, or oblate (basically round but flattened at the top and bottom).

The skin of the fruit is a pale lemony color though sometimes has a delicate pink tint. Its texture may be smooth or rough and slightly bumpy and has a characteristic thickness of about 3/8-inch (1 cm). Between the outer skin and the fruit inside is a white pithy layer that has a somewhat bitter flavor. While some varieties are seedless, others bear many seeds.

The fruit inside is juicy and varies in color and flavor depending on variety. Whether the flavor is sweet or tart, grapefruit has a distinctive, sometimes astringent and slightly bitter overtone. Some varieties are mildly sweet, while others are intensely sweet. Some grapefruits have white flesh inside, some delicately pink, while others, known as "ruby reds" appear intensely red.

Climate plays a significant role in the length of maturity and the level of acidity of the grapefruit. In cooler, temperate zones grapefruit matures in about 13 months compared to 7 or 8 months in warmer regions. Grapefruits grown in hot tropical climates have a lower acidic level than those cultivated in cooler regions. Florida grapefruit is known for its superior flavor owed to the moist hot temperatures.

Growers recognize that grapefruits with thin skins and juicy pulp are grown in a humid climate like Southern Florida. Those with thick rough skins and drier pulp are the result of drier climates such as the desert regions of Southern California.



Grapefruit thrives on plenty of rain and flourishes contentedly with 36 to 44 inches (90 to 111 cm) annually. Soil requirements are varied. Some varieties of grapefruit grow best in acidic soil, while others prefer a more alkaline environment. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Texas A & M University and Rio Farms, Inc. in Texas, conducted a



program in 1946 of testing grapefruits grown on different rootstock to determine which would bring the best results. The researchers learned that soil condition and its mineral content played a significant role in successful production.

Commercial growers can extend the marketing season of grapefruits by picking some mature fruits while leaving others on the tree for up to three months before harvesting. This natural method of "storing" on the tree allows those fruits to grow larger.

Harvesting is accomplished by various methods. Some growers prefer to hand pick the fruits on the lower branches and use ladders to clip the stems of those higher on the tree. Because the citrus twigs are thorny, gloves and protective clothing are helpful to avoid skin scratches. Picking hooks, once popular, are seldom used today because they were found to damage many fruits

Many California citrus growers employ harvesting machines that literally shake the fruits off the tree. For this method, trees must be carefully pruned to accommodate the machine that is operated by a team of three workers.

Nutrition

GRAPEFRUIT SECTIONS, ONE CUP (240 ml): Fresh grapefruit sections from California or Arizona, whether pink, red, or white, have about 85 calories, 1 gram of protein, and about 3 grams of fiber. Grapefruit sections from Florida have 69 to 74 calories.

The carbohydrate content varies between 17 and 22 grams, while the fat content is negligible.

Red and pink grapefruit shines with its approximately 596 I.U. of vitamin A. The white grapefruit is much lower in vitamin A with about 23 I.U.

Grapefruit has a full range of B vitamins with the exception of vitamin B12 and contain about 28 mcg of folic acid.

Grapefruit sections are a good source of vitamin C ranging from 79 to 88 mg.

Grapefruit offers plenty of calcium, potassium, and magnesium as well as trace amounts of iron and zinc.

The grapefruit membranes are a good source of pectin, a soluble fiber helpful in reducing cholesterol.

GRAPEFRUIT JUICE , ONE CUP (240 ml): Canned grapefruit juice has about 100 calories and 1 to 2 grams of protein. Most canned grapefruit juice is sold with the pulp removed, resulting in a loss of fiber. The carbohydrate content of the juice is similar to the grapefruit sections with 17 to 22 grams.

Pink grapefruit juice supplies 1087 I.U. of vitamin A, while the white provides a minimal 25 I.U.

With the exception of vitamin B12, the juice swells with B vitamins with 10 mg of thiamine, .05 mg of riboflavin, and .49 to .57 mg of niacin. Folic acid content is about 25.7 mcg, while vitamin C ranges from 72 to 93.9 mg.

Calcium content varies from 17.2 to 22.3 mg, and potassium offers 378 to 400 mg. Iron and zinc are present with zinc providing 12 to 22 mg and iron at .05 mg.

Purchasing and Storage

Grapefruit is harvested when fully ripened and is available in the supermarkets year round. However, its peak season is January through June.



Grapefruit can keep a week or slightly longer at room temperatures of 65 degrees or higher. For longer storage, about six to eight weeks, store the fruits in the fruit and vegetable keeper of the refrigerator.

Commercial grapefruit is often washed and waxed before coming to market to retard moisture loss and lengthen shelf life. Frequently, fumigants and fungicides are applied to the grapefruit to prevent spoilage. Wash grapefruit thoroughly before cutting into the flesh.

For a juicy grapefruit, choose one that feels solid and weighty. Look for a shiny, smooth skin to be sure of freshness. Reject those with soft areas, large brown spots, or dull dry looking skin.

ENJOY GRAPEFRUIT RAW

To consume grapefruit at optimum flavor, keep the fruit at room temperature at least 2 hours before eating.

The traditional half grapefruit sectioned with a grapefruit knife simply can't be beat. Enjoy it as a breakfast, lunch, or dinner starter. If the grapefruit's distinct bitter bite is not to your liking, sweeten with a spoonful agave nectar, maple syrup, date sugar, or Florida crystals and add a dash of cinnamon.

Nothing compares to the delightfully rich flavor of a glass of freshly squeezed grapefruit juice. When fresh grapefruit is not available, frozen juice is an excellent substitute.

Grapefruit juice adds a robust zing when blended with other fruits such as apples, pears, and oranges. Prepare a refreshing beverage or smoothie in the blender.

Grapefruit has a natural affinity for the avocado. Combine them in a salad along with greens and some crunchy vegetables like jicama, celery, sweet onions, or kohlrabi. Add a tangy dressing or one with a hint of fruity sweetness.

When citrus is in season, take advantage of the varieties by joining them together in a fruit cup, a beverage, or a salad. Include white, pink, and red grapefruit for more color variety.

Grapefruit sections, either pink or white, along with orange and tangerine sections make a tempting salad dish when arranged over spinach or baby greens and topped with sweet onion rings and a creamy avocado dressing.

Elysa Markowitz in her book *Living With Green Power* creates an innovative zesty soup by juicing 2 oranges and 3/4 of a peeled grapefruit. She then garnishes the soup with 1 sliced avocado, 1 orange, and the remainder of the grapefruit.

Make a grapefruit spritzer with sweet grapefruit juice and seltzer.

Score the whole grapefruit and peel as you would an orange. Separate the top portion of the sections, keeping the bottoms attached. Open like flower petals and fill center with fruit salad or a tangy chopped vegetable salad.

Prepare a unique sorbet with grapefruit juice. Thin slightly with water, sweeten to taste, and freeze about 2 or 3 hours. Remove and stir, and return to the freezer until ready to serve.

Grapefruit, with its bracing bite, lends extraordinary punch to any food combination. Enhance your salad of mixed greens with a unique oil-free salad dressing made from fresh pink grapefruit. Add sweet fruits such as chopped apples or pears, and raisins to balance the acidic nip of the grapefruit.

PINK GRAPEFRUIT VINAIGRETTE

- 1 C. (240 ml) chopped sweet pink grapefruit sections with membranes
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) + 2 T. water
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) apple cider vinegar
- 3/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. ground black pepper
- 1/4 t. guar gum*
- 4 T. maple syrup

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until grapefruit is fully pureed, about 30 seconds. Using a funnel, pour into a narrow neck bottle for easy serving. Shake well before serving. Store leftovers in the refrigerator. Will keep about a week. Makes 2 cups (480 ml).

*Guar gum is a dried white powder that comes from the seed tissue of the guar plant grown in India and used for thickening. The powder is available in health food markets.

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Pecans --The True Blue-Blooded Americans

Pecans at a Glance

History	Uses	Name Origin	Folklore/Oddities	Medical Benefits
Growing	Nutrition	Purchasing	Preparation	Recipe

The quiet little pecan, delicately sweet and so rich tasting, is as American as, well, pecan pie! There's no doubt about it--the pecan tree, which is a kinsman of the hickory and walnut family, was growing wild in the United States long before any newcomers arrived here. Because the flavorful, convoluted nut doesn't grow naturally in any other part of the world, one would think the United States had an exclusive contract with Mother Nature and the wild pecan.

The pecan, because of its pure American heritage, is honored by having the month of April declared as National Pecan Month. Because of its popularity in Texas, the pecan became the state's official tree in 1919 by an act of the Texas Legislature.

History

Though pecan trees grow mostly throughout the Southeastern United States today, their birthplace is thought to be the central southern portion of the country from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic coast and as far north as Iowa and even New York. While some historians describe the region surrounding the Mississippi River Basin as the homeland of the pecan, others claim the state of Texas is their place of origin.

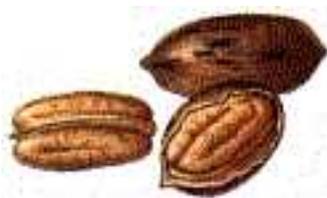
Texas may, indeed, be where the pecan laid its first claim in the U.S., considering that there are over 70 million wild pecan trees in Texas, and that Texans have been consuming voluminous quantities of pecans since the state was inhabited.

The hickory tree, which is in the pecan family, was growing wild in North America when the first humans crossed the Bering Strait from Asia before 8,000 BCE. Those first inhabitants were hunter-gatherers and collected the nuts in autumn for winter sustenance along with walnuts and a variety of berries.

Native Americans learned how to use the fruits of the earth for their subsistence and relied on pecans as an important food staple. The early colonists learned survival lessons from the Indians who shared their knowledge and taught the early settlers how to gather and utilize the nuts for sustenance throughout the harsh winters.

In addition to his political contributions to the country, Thomas Jefferson, was an avid gardener. He contributed much to U.S. historical botany from his practice of gathering and saving heirloom seeds as well as unique food plants that were brought here by explorers.

In one of his horticultural endeavors, Thomas Jefferson transplanted some pecan trees from the Mississippi Valley to his home in Monticello. At that time he presented some of the trees to George Washington who planted them on March 25, 1775 at his Mount Vernon home. Washington referred to pecans as "Mississippi nuts." Three of those original trees still thrive on the property at Mount Vernon. The pecan was a favorite nut of both presidents, who frequently snacked on handfuls of them. In fact, George Washington was said to carry pecans in his pocket frequently.



Commercial cultivation of pecans began in the early 1800's but didn't become a major business until the late 1800's when Gustav Duerler embarked on his pecan candy business in San Antonio, Texas.

Commercial pecan growers were in such short supply, Duerler contracted with Native Americans to supply him with sufficient quantities of the nuts. He received them wrapped in deerskins. Shelling the nuts was as important to his business as the making of the candy. Lacking our modern factory machinery, he used a railroad spike to crack the nuts and a sack needle to separate the meat from the shells.

According to the National Pecan Shellers Association, Long Island, New York, holds the distinction of being first to cultivate pecans in 1772. However, in the mid 1800's a Louisiana slave named Antoine developed a method of grafting pecan scions to pecan plant stock, a method called top-working, that improved on the quality of the wild pecan and increased the tree's productivity. Antoine was noted for developing the variety called "Centennial" at the Oak Alley Plantation. Now there are about 500 varieties of cultivated pecan trees that originated from his "Centennial."

While many very old original pecan trees still produce nuts that are gathered and marketed, today most commercial pecans come from cultivated trees. Pecans from the cultivated trees have a thinner shell that is much easier to crack than the wild pecans, making them more marketable. The cultivated trees are also more reliable fruit bearers than their wild cousins that bear erratically.

Though pecans are popular in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, they have never achieved world notice. Pecans had not reached Europe until the 1700's and were shown little enthusiasm. Today, they are grown on a small scale in Israel, New South Wales in Australia, and Natal in South Africa. Australia began harvesting its first good crop in 1960, while Israel's harvesting began in the 1970's. Still, the pecan digs its roots deeply into its North American home without much of the wanderlust experienced by other Native American food plants such as the tomato, today a cherished global favorite.

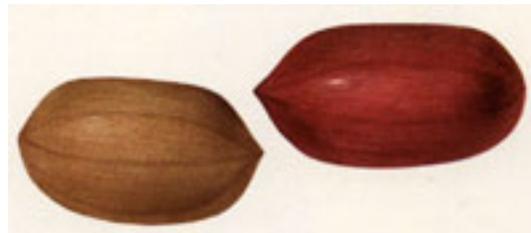
Pecans rank second in popularity among nuts in the U.S. with the number one spot devoted to peanuts. Presently, pecans are grown from the Atlantic to the Pacific in South Carolina, Oklahoma,

Texas, North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, California, Georgia, Arizona, Arkansas, New Mexico, Kansas, and Louisiana. The United States produces more than 350 million pounds annually, about 80 percent of the pecans grown worldwide.

Many people believe hickory nuts and pecans are the same and mistakenly use their names interchangeably; however, there is a clear distinction between them. Hickories are part of the *Carya* family that includes pecans and walnuts but are seldom cultivated. Though all hickory trees bear nuts, not all of them are edible. Of those that are, only a few varieties are flavorful, but their tough shells are challenging to crack, and there is a limited demand for them.

The *Carya laciniosa* also called shellbark hickory is cultivated on a small scale. The trees produce a sweet nut and are grown from Iowa to New York and in Tennessee and Oklahoma.

Another hickory variety with a thinner shell, called the *Carya ovata* or shagbark hickory, produces sweet, edible hickory nuts. This variety grows from Quebec to Minnesota and from Florida to Texas.



Pecan Cuisine

Frederic Rosengarten, Jr. writes in *The Book of Edible Nuts* published in 1984:

"A creamy liquid called *powcohicora* or 'hickory milk' was prepared by the Algonquins; paccan kernels were pounded into small pieces, cast into boiling water, strained and stirred. This rich, nutty concoction was added to broth to thicken it, and to corn cakes and hominy as a seasoning."

The Native American Indians made pecan milk by pounding the nuts with a mortar and pestle before adding water and stirring them into a nourishing beverage. Pecan milk was an ideal energy food for their infants as well as the elders because it was so easy to digest.

In Pre-Columbian times Native Americans gathered wild pecans and combined them with fruits. Frequently they would add the nuts to vegetable dishes that included beans, corn, and squashes. To thicken meat stews, pecans were ground into a fine meal and added at the end of the cooking. In preparation of the hunt, the Indians included roasted pecans as part of their travel supplies that sustained them when foods along the journey were scarce. The high fat content of pecans provided them with a nourishing source of energy as well.

Of the many favorite American dishes inspired by the pecan, none surpasses the beloved pecan pie with its rich, dark, custard-like filling and heavily encrusted, crunchy pecan topping. Exactly where the pie originated is a mystery, but some suggest the wife of a Karo Corn Syrup executive may have developed the pie more than 70 years ago in an effort to create recipes to help sell the product.

Other historians presume the pecan pie originated in the backwoods of Georgia or Alabama where even the poorest of families had the pie's basic ingredients of corn syrup and pecans in their pantries.

In addition to holding dear the classic pecan pie recipe, inventive chefs have done their best to

create the ultimate pecan pie with the additions like chocolate, molasses, bourbon, sweet potato, cinnamon apples, vanilla, maple syrup, and even a scoop of vanilla ice cream on the top.

Other pecan favorites that come from the southern regions of the U.S. include pralines, sticky buns, candied pecans, fruitcake, pecan tarts, sweet potatoes or grits with pecans, and pecan stuffing for meat dishes. Not to be overlooked is butter pecan ice cream, a favorite treat that Texas is proud to claim as its own.

Euell Gibbons, an American Naturalist who enjoyed gathering wild foods, mentions maple nut divinity made with hickory nuts and pecan pralines as well as praline sauce in his book *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*.

Other Uses of the Pecan

Hickory wood is considered valuable timber and is used as hardwood for building, making logs, plywood, veneer, fine furniture, walking sticks, and even drum sticks. Hickory chips are popular for infusing a smoky flavor into grilled foods, adding a pleasant aroma as well.



Pecan shells are utilitarian in many diverse ways--they are finely ground to create an abrasive material used for cleaning chemical and refinery equipment. This abrasive material is also used in other industries to polish soft metals, wood, plastics, fiberglass, stones, gun casings, and jewelry. Ground pecan shells are also employed to filter metals from water.

Pecan oil is uncommon in food use because it is seldom sold in grocery stores. However, there are spice companies that produce an undiluted flavoring oil from the pecan that concentrates the aroma and taste of the pecan that can be used to enhance the flavor of foods such as pecan pie.

Pecan oil is also sold as a pleasant, lightweight massage oil for its ability to sooth and soften dry skin. Some companies incorporate the oil into soap bars.

Naming the Pecan

The pecan's scientific name, *Carya illinoensis*, is somewhat confusing to historians and is possibly a misnomer because pecan trees did not naturally grow in Illinois. Some have speculated that a southerner brought a pecan cultivar northward where it was discovered in the Illinois region by French missionaries or possibly fur traders. Scientific names are often attributed to the locale where they were discovered.

The pecan's name comes from the Algonquin Indians who called it *paccan* or *pakan* meaning "all nuts requiring a stone to crack." Paccan also referred to all hickory nuts.

The Algonquin Indians, who lived in the northern portions of New York and New England, called the hickory nuts *powcohicora*, but with the arrival of settlers in the United States, the name evolved to *phickory* and eventually hickory.

The scientific name for the nuts was originally *Hicoria pecan* but was changed to *Carya*

illinoensis during the late seventeenth hundreds. Fur traders traveling from Illinois to the Atlantic coast brought pecans with them and referred to them as Illinois nuts.

Folklore and Oddities

The Native American Indians recognized that pecans were ideal trading commodities. As they journeyed and camped along their trading routes, they planted pecan trees to assure that they and their progeny would have a steady supply of the precious nuts for trading. When the trees began to bear fruit, the Indians would plan their routes to take advantage of the harvest. Their precious pecans paid for goods such as hides and mats from the first Spaniards in Florida.

Some North American Indians likened the pecan tree to the Great Spirit. The nuts were so valued by the Texas Mariame Indian tribe they actually ate them as their only sustenance for two months of the year. Cabeza de Vaca, a Spanish explorer whose given name was Alvar Nunez, was shipwrecked in 1528 and held captive by the Indians for six years. In his account he wrote that the pecan "is the subsistence of the people for two months of the year without any other thing."

Annual pecan festivals throughout the South and Southwest from Louisiana to New Mexico celebrate the pecan in unique ways. The Historic Richmond Business Association sponsors a pecan festival in Richmond, Texas, every October and holds a pecan bake-off with the stipulation that each recipe must include at least one cup of pecans.

The Red River Farm Trail in Charlie, Texas, holds its pecan festival in November and draws record crowds for its pecan baking contest, pecan relay races, pecan shelling contest, and even a pecan guessing contest.

The 11th Annual Pecan Festival of Cuchillo, New Mexico sold 333 pecan pies in 2003 and planned to bake more than 400 pies in 2004. Highlights of the festival were the great pecan pie give-away drawings held throughout the day.

Many Texans believe their native pecan trees produce a tastier nut than the cultivated varieties. During the fall season when the nuts mature, the wild pecans in areas of East, North, and Central Texas are offered for free to anyone who will pick them.

Medicinal Benefits

Medical researchers give pecans the thumbs-up for their ability to lower cholesterol when small amounts are included in the diet on a regular basis. Scientists exploring the beneficial properties of pecans discovered they are a concentrated source of plant sterols known to lower cholesterol.

In addition, pecans contain phytochemicals that offer antioxidant protection from many diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Because pecans contain mostly monounsaturated fatty acids, they are touted by the American Heart Association that advises Americans to "substitute grains and unsaturated fatty acids from fish, vegetables, legumes and nuts" and limit their intake of saturated fats.

Pecans are sodium-free and contain more than 19 different vitamins and minerals, making them an ideal nutritious alternative to animal-based foods.

Oleic acid is the main monounsaturated acid in most nuts, including pecans, and is credited with lowering LDL cholesterol while not affecting the HDL. Many studies reveal that a high ratio of

monounsaturates to polyunsaturates is helpful in reducing risk of heart disease.

Essential oil from the pecan is used as an inhalant as well as topical oil. Putting 2 or 3 drops on a handkerchief and breathing the oil stimulates the body to make antibodies, endorphins, and neurotransmitters that help build a strong immune system. Benefits can also be derived from putting the oil into the bathtub, a diffuser, or even a footbath.

Pecans are high in zinc, a mineral that helps the body to generate testosterone. Both men and women benefit from good levels of testosterone, a hormone responsible for sparking sexual desire.

Growing

Pecans belong to the botanical genus *Carya pecan* also *C. illinoensis*, that includes the hickory tree and the walnut tree in its family. All three belong to the *Juglandaceae* classification with the pecan considered the largest of the three.

Pecan trees like cool winters and sustained high summer temperatures. The trees will adapt to a variety of soils but prefer well-drained loam with friable subsoil.

Remarkably long lived, the pecan can survive more than a thousand years and is capable of reaching heights more than 100 feet (50 meters). The pecan does not begin producing fruit immediately. Growers must wait about 10 years for the tree to produce a sufficient crop for commercial production. In a fruitful year, one pecan tree can bear more than 400 pounds (181.4 kg) of nuts.

A commercial pecan orchard requires a considerable area of land. Although the tree has a diameter of only about 8 feet, the roots extend double that distance, making it necessary to plant the trees no closer than 80 feet apart in order for the trees to receive sufficient water and nourishment. The leaves are opposing, elongated, about 4 to 7 inches (10 to 18 cm) in length, and come to a sharp point at the tip.

The pecan is classified as a drupe, meaning that it has an inner fleshy portion covered by a skin-like outer layer called the husk and an edible kernel inside. The drupe grows about 1 3/4 inches to 3 1/2 inches (4 to 9 cm) long. At maturity the kernel splits into 4 edible lobes that closely resemble the walnut. Its hard shell has a smooth surface with color ranging from a rich medium brown to a reddish blush.



The pecan tree is difficult to grow from seed. Commercial orchards are cultivated from trees that have been budded onto rootstock, a laborious process considered a horticultural specialty. Grafted trees will bear 3 or 4 years after planting, producing fruits that grow in clusters of 2 to 8 nuts.

Pecan trees have both male and female blossoms on one tree, each sex producing a distinctly different flower from the other. The male flower is recognized by its three-branched pendulous catkins (a drooping spike resembling a cat's tail.) Flowers grow from the last season's wood. The two to ten flowered spikes that grow on the terminal of the current season's growth distinguish the female blossoms.

While native pecans and hickory nuts are renowned for their tough, difficult to crack shells, today pecans are cultivated to have thin, easily crackable shells.

Pecan aficionados may at some time encounter a Hiccan, a hybrid of a hickory and a pecan. Commercial growers have cultivated two varieties, the Burlington and the Bixby; however, neither bear large quantities of nuts, and demand for them is small.

Harvesting of pecans takes place in the fall when the fully ripened husks open and the nuts fall to the ground where they must be gathered frequently to prevent spoilage. Not all the nuts fall to the ground predictably. Those that still cling to the tree require a little encouragement. Shaking the tree will usually loosen them enough to fall to the ground.

Before the pecans are brought to market, they must be dried in a shady, well-ventilated area for about two to three weeks.

Nutrition

Although the pecan is kinfolk to the walnut, and the nut kernel itself bears a distinct resemblance to the walnut, its flavor is much milder and sweeter and lacks the bitter bite characteristic of the walnut.

Also differing from the walnut is the pecan's oilier composition, containing about 70% monounsaturated fat (oleic acid). The fat composition of pecans includes several oils (gamma tocopherol, alpha tocopherol, and delta tocopherol) but mostly linoleic and oleic fatty acids which are monounsaturated fats. Good quality pecans contain 73% to 75% oil.

With its nearly 18% protein content, the pecan is listed on the USDA Food Guide Pyramid as part of the protein group as a healthful alternative for people on a plant-based diet.

One Ounce of Raw Pecans:

A good source of protein, yet not excessive, pecans contain 2 grams. With dietary fiber essential to good health, count on pecans to deliver 3 grams.

The total fat content is 20.4 grams, mostly monounsaturated, with only 1.8 grams saturated fat. While this small quantity of pecans (approximately 20 halves) contains 196 calories, studies reveal that frequent consumption, several times a week, does not cause weight gain. In some cases, study participants have even shown a small weight loss.

Plant sterols are highly touted today for their ability to lower cholesterol. Pecans contain about 40 mg of plant sterols.

Pecans offer B vitamins with 0.29 mg of thiamine, 0.04 mg of riboflavin, 0.33 mg of niacin, 0.06 mg of B6, and 6.2 mcg of folic acid. While calcium is not considered high in pecans, it does register 19.8 mg, which adds up when combined with other calcium containing foods eaten throughout the day.

Hard-to-get zinc and iron offer 1.3 mg and 0.7 mg respectively. Pecans are a good source of potassium with 116 mg and magnesium at 34.3 mg.

An ideal healthfood for the low carb disciples, pecans have only 4 grams of carbohydrates.

Overall, pecans contain 70% monounsaturated fats, 12 to 15% carbohydrates, 9 to 10% protein, 3 to 4% water, and 1.5% minerals.

Purchasing and Storing

The freshest pecans are available in autumn, just after they have been harvested. They are moist and bursting with sweetness. In the fall the supermarkets usually feature bins of nuts in the shell that are sold by the pound. For convenience, purchase them already shelled.

Look for pecans that are plump and crisp, indicating they contain a high content of oil. Those that are shriveled and dry or hollow contain less oil and have not been properly stored.

Because of their high oil content, pecans can become rancid in warm temperatures. Shelled, they can be kept at 70 F for up to three months but are best kept refrigerated in glass jars. Pecans in the shell can keep at room temperature for up to four months but should be refrigerated for longer storage.

For storage of one year or longer, whether shelled or in shell, they are best kept frozen. Thaw them slowly. Transfer them to the refrigerator first, then bring them to room temperature to avoid condensation on the kernels. Frozen, pecans shelled or in the shell can keep for two to four years.

Linoleic acid is the component of pecans that becomes rancid when stored at high humidity, causing molding and deterioration of the texture. When humidity is too low, the pecans will become dry quickly.

Preparation

Pecans are one of the most versatile foods vegetarians can enjoy. The nuts can be eaten fresh without any preparation at all just by cracking them with a simple, old-fashioned nutcracker.

Pecans can be ground, grated, shredded, pureed, and diced. Added to any dish, pecans are a nutritional and gastronomic enhancement. They can be added to soups, salads, appetizers, main dishes, grain and legume dishes, and even desserts.

RAW

When preparing foods containing a considerable quantity of nuts, take advantage of the convenience of already shelled nuts



For some old-fashioned pleasure, purchase a pound of pecans in the shell along with a few nutcrackers. Gather around the table, and serve the nuts as a dessert along with fresh fruit. People become friendly quickly, exchanging jokes and enjoying stimulating conversation. Be sure to provide a bowl for the shells.

Pecans make a great garnish.

Include them in a salad for pleasant texture and great taste.

Using the blender, blend a handful of pecans into a salad dressing as a thickener.

For a great energy boost, include pecans in a smoothie along with fruit and juices.

Prepare a pecan milk by blending raw pecans and water into a creamy nutmilk. Pour through a fine strainer to remove any pieces.

TOASTED

To toast pecans, put 1 cup (240 ml) into a non-stick skillet. Toss them over high heat constantly for about 1 to 2 minutes. Stirring is important to prevent burning. Immediately transfer them to a dish to cool. Store them in a cool, dry place.

To roast: Put larger quantities of pecans on a baking pan and roast in the oven at 350 F (Gas Mark 4) for 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to another pan to cool.

Make pecan milk from toasted nuts. Combine with water in a saucepan, and boil 1 or 2 minutes. Allow it to rest a few hours to develop flavor. Then blend and strain.

A truly spectacular salad, this dynamic combination offers a dramatic burst of color along with pungent savory flavors tastefully balanced with sweet accents. The success of this salad relies on advance preparation of the balsamic vinegar reduction, the caramelized pecans, and the marinated tofu. If these items are prepared a day ahead, the salad can be assembled quickly.

24 PECAN SALAD

4 T. balsamic vinegar reduction

2 T. maple syrup

24 raw pecan halves, or 1/2 C. (120 ml)

1/4 C. (60 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce

1 T. umeboshi plum vinegar or red wine vinegar

1/2 lb. (225 g) firm or extra firm tofu

Salad

4 leaves frilly kale, finely shredded

1/2 head Boston lettuce, torn

1 red bell pepper cut into 1-inch long thin julienne

1/2 yellow or orange bell pepper cut into 1-inch long thin julienne

12 snap peas or snow peas trimmed, cut in half lengthwise

1 apple, cored and chopped

5 radishes, sliced

1/2 C. (120 ml) currants or black raisins

3 T. extra virgin olive oil

Balsamic Vinegar Reduction

Measure 1/2-cup (120 ml) balsamic vinegar, and pour it into a small saucepan or a butter melter pot. Simmer uncovered over medium-high heat for about 12 to 15 minutes until reduced by half, to about 4 tablespoons. The vinegar will become slightly thickened. Cool and store in the refrigerator.

Caramelizing Pecans

Put the maple syrup into an 8 to 10-inch (20 to 25-cm) non-stick skillet and bring to a boil over

high heat. When the syrup begins to bubble, add pecans and toss with a wooden spoon to coat completely. Stir for 1 to 2 minutes until all liquid is absorbed. Turn off heat, and immediately pour coated pecans onto a dish to cool. When cool, break apart the nuts that have stuck together. Set aside.

Marinating Tofu

Create a marinade by combining Bragg Liquid Aminos and the umeboshi vinegar in a plastic storage container. Crumble the tofu into the marinade, and stir to coat evenly. Cover container, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight, tossing occasionally.

Assembling the Salad

Combine the salad ingredients in a large bowl and toss with extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle crumbled tofu over the top. Drizzle balsamic vinegar reduction over the tofu. Top with caramelized pecans and serve. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

NOTE: For individual servings, spoon the oil-dressed salad ingredients onto individual salad plates. Top each with the marinated tofu crumbles. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar reduction, and garnish with the caramelized pecans.

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This issue we feature Dr. Michael Greger who has graciously permitted us to reprint an article that appears on his website, AtkinsFacts.org, that discusses the Atkins "Nightmare" Diet.

Dr. Greger is a general practitioner specializing in vegetarian nutrition and a founding member of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine. He is author of *Heart Failure: Diary of a Third Year Medical Student* and has contributed to a number of books on veganism and food safety issues. Dr. Greger is a graduate of the Cornell University School of Agriculture and the Tufts University School of Medicine. In addition to AtkinsFacts.org, Dr. Greger also has his own website at <http://www.veganMD.org>

Dr. Greger is currently taking off a few months from his busy speaking schedule to work on his new book, *Optimum Vegan Nutrition*, to be published by Gentle World Press.

Atkins Comes in Last for Long-Term Weight Maintenance

By Michael Gregor, M.D.

Even if people can handle the side effects of the diet, there are no data to show that the initial rapid weight loss on the Atkins Diet can be maintained long term. Many of the studies on the Atkins Diet have lasted only a few days; [212] the longest the Atkins Diet has ever been formally studied is one year.

There have been 3 such yearlong studies and not a single one showed significantly more weight lost at the end of the year on the Atkins Diet than on the control diets. [213-215] In the yearlong

comparison of the Atkins Diet to Ornish's diet, Weight Watchers, and The Zone Diet, the Atkins Diet came in dead last in terms of weight lost at the end of the year. Ornish's vegetarian diet seemed to show the most weight loss.[216] The Atkins website has no comment.[217]

Noting that by the end of the year, half of the Atkins group had dropped out, and those who remained ended up an unimpressive 4% lighter, *Fat of The Land* author Michael Fumento commented, "Do you really think any of them could sell a single book copy, much less as many as 15 million (for Atkins), by admitting to a 50 percent drop-out rate in one year with a mere five percent of weight loss among those left?"[218]

Ornish's vegetarian (near-vegan) diet has been formally tested for years.[219] Even though the diet was not even designed for weight loss, after five years most of the Ornish adherents were able to maintain much of the 24 pounds they lost during the first year "even though they were eating more food, more frequently, than before without hunger or deprivation." [220] This is consistent with what research we have on vegans themselves. Vegans are vegetarians that also exclude dairy and eggs from their diet.



The biggest study on vegans to date compared over a thousand vegans in Europe to tens of thousands of meat eaters and vegetarians. The meat eaters, on average, were significantly heavier than the vegetarians, who were significantly heavier than the vegans. Even after controlling for exercise and smoking and other nondietary factors, vegans came out slimmest in every age group. Less than 2% of vegans were obese.[221]

In a snapshot of the diets of 10,000 Americans, those eating vegetarian were the slimmest, whereas those eating the fewest carbs in the sample weighed the most. Those eating less carbs were on average overweight; those eating vegetarian were not.[222]

Vegetarians may have a higher resting metabolic rate, which researchers chalk up to them eating more carbs than meat eaters (or possibly due to enhanced adrenal function).[223] At the same weight, one study showed that vegetarians seem to burn more calories per minute just by sitting around or sleeping than meat eaters--almost 200 extra calories a day. Although earlier studies didn't find such an effect,[224] if confirmed, that amounts to the equivalent to an extra pound of fat a month burned off by choosing to eat vegetarian.[225]

The only other two formal yearlong studies found that although the initial drop in weight on Atkins was more rapid, weight loss on the Atkins diet reversed or stalled after 6 months. The longer people stay on the Atkins Diet, the worse they seemed to do.[226-227] None of the three longest studies on the Atkins Diet showed a significant advantage over just the type of high carbohydrate diets Atkins blamed for making America fat.

Anyone can lose weight on a diet; the critical question is whether the weight loss can be

maintained and at what cost. If low carb diets really did cure obesity, the original in 1864 [*Letter on Corpulence* written by undertaker/coffin maker William Banting] would have eliminated the problem and no more diet revolutions would be necessary. Short-term weight loss is not the same thing as lifelong weight maintenance.

For other articles on the Atkins Diet by Dr. Greger go to AtkinsFacts.org

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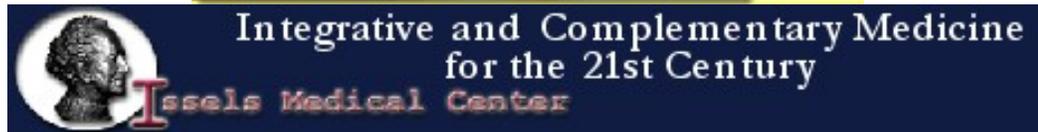
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Vegetarians In Paradise

Join **Zel and Reuben Allen** as they share their vegetarian lifestyle and what it means to be vegetarian. Zel and Reuben publish a Los Angeles Vegetarian Magazine on www.vegparadise.com Awesome site...check it out! Callers include questions about current fad diets and weight loss. Learn how these diets can damage your health while shaving pounds and how to reduce the Healthy Way.

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<p style="text-align: center;">6/3/2004</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Howard Lyman, author of the "Mad Cowboy" and ex-cattle rancher goes vegan!</p> <p>Straight forward ex-cattle man turned vegan Howard Lyman, explains the dangers of chemical farming and chemical cattle ranching. Learn why dairy, especially "Casein" is so dangerous for the human body and for anyone who has cancer!</p> <p>Nathan Jaynes (Master Herbalist, School of Natural Healing) walks you through a three day juice fast during the last segment. After listening to this show you just might be ready for a cleanse!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Download mp3 of show</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5/20/2004</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Taking the "Mysticism" out of Healing Touch Therapy</p> <p>Jane Anderson, LMT explains how CranioSacral Therapy is able to balance the flow of the cerebrospinal fluid, which encourages your body, when it is ready, to release restrictions and return it to a more naturally balanced state so healing can take place. I've personally had many CranioSacral sessions and give testimony to the benefits</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Download mp3 of show</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5/13/2000</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"How To Be Your Own Doctor" with Master Herbalist Nathan Jaynes</p> <p>Tune in for an introductory look at how herbs work to cleanse and nourish the body. Agi and Nathan share personal testimonies about various herbs and old world remedies. Look for Nathan's monthly, "Ask the Herbalist Show" and call in or email with your questions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Download mp3 of show</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5/6/2004</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Enzymes, Your body's Super Tools</p> <p>Agi's guest was Clinical Nutritionist Troy Aupperle of the Enzymology Research Center. Agi & Troy discussed all the exciting new research being done in the enzyme field and how that field is rapidly becoming mainstream, with new studies showing exceptional results not only in cancer and other degenerative diseases, but in health and longevity in general. Specific enzyme therapies and health maintenance programs were outlined, as well.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Download mp3 of show</p>
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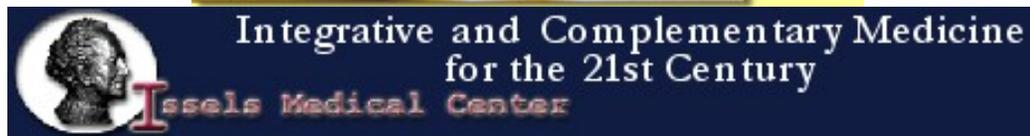
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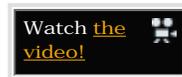
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I want to thank you for pursuing me to become a vegetarian. I've learned so much in the past year and I'm glad that I've had this website to turn to. Your discussion boards are wonderful and I love the advice that I receive while on them. I JUST ABSOLUTELY LOVE THIS WEBSITE! Thank you so much for everything!

- Mindi 7/24/04

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From time to time Vegetarians in Paradise presents informative articles by guest contributors on subjects of interest to vegetarians and vegans. This month we feature Judy East, MPH, RD, CDE, who is a Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator with a background in wellness, cardiac rehabilitation and diabetes education. She is currently the Staff Dietitian for Gelson's Markets in Southern California where she provides information to customers and associates about nutrition and food safety through a monthly newsletter and store appearances. Judy can be reached at 1-800-GELSONS or at jeast@gelsons.com

Zinc Makes It To The Big Time

by Judy East



Iron and calcium are two minerals that are regularly addressed as potential concerns for vegetarians. Can vegetarians get enough of them in their intake? Is absorption better or worse from plant sources? In the past couple years, another mineral has jumped into the ring. Until now, very little has been studied about how our intake of zinc relates to the myriad of body mechanisms it plays a role in. It seems the tables have turned however because currently there are studies going on to discover zinc's roll in coronary heart disease, fertility, pregnancy outcomes, immune deficiency states, Alzheimer's disease and more.

As minerals go, zinc is of particular interest to vegetarians since it is a nutrient that they are at risk of lacking. Here is some information about zinc and ideas of how vegetarians can insure an

adequate intake.

Functions: Zinc is quite busy in our bodies. It promotes cell reproduction and tissue growth and repair, which makes it very important for fetuses and small children. It is essential in maintaining our immune systems and it serves as a part of more than 70 enzymes.

Intakes in the Research: Studies show zinc intake to be equal to or lower in vegetarians compared with non-vegetarians. And yet, it's been found that serum zinc levels are in the normal range in vegetarians. It is believed that there may be compensatory mechanisms that help vegetarians adapt to diets that are lower in zinc. However, it is not understood whether this mechanism can meet the needs of people who need more zinc than that of a typical healthy adult, such as persons suffering from an acute or chronic illness, women who are pregnant or lactating or high level athletes. Because of the low bioavailability of zinc from plant foods and until zinc is better understood, vegetarians should strive to meet or even exceed the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for this unique mineral.

RDA for Zinc

Children	10 mg
Males 11 years +	15 mg
Females 11-50 years old	15 mg
Females 11 years +	12 mg
Pregnant	15 mg
Lactating (1st 6 mo/2nd 6 mo)	19 mg/16 mg

Deficiency: A severe enough deficiency during childhood can cause retarded growth. During pregnancy, a zinc deficiency can contribute to birth defects and may contribute to complications. Other symptoms of zinc deficiency include appetite loss, skin and hair changes, and reduced resistance to infections. Vegetarians, in particular vegans, are among the groups of Americans who are at risk for sub optimal zinc intake. It is difficult for many people, whether or not they are vegetarian, to eat foods containing the recommended level of zinc.

Sources: Foods of animal origin, including meat, seafood, and liver contain more zinc than their plant-based counterparts and the zinc is more bioavailable. Eggs and milk supply zinc in smaller amounts. However, there are many vegetarian sources of zinc including nuts, seeds, grains, legumes and soy products.

Vegetarian Sources of Zinc

Zinc Milligrams per serving

Breads, grains, and cereals

Bran flakes, 1 c 5.0

Wheat germ, 2 Tbsp 2.3

Legumes (1/2 c cooked)

Adzuki beans 2.0

Chickpeas 1.3

Lima beans 1.0

Lentils 1.2

Soy foods (1/2 c cooked)

Soybeans 1.0

Tempeh 1.5

Tofu 1.0

Textured vegetable protein 1.4

Nuts and Seeds (1 oz)

Almonds 1.4

Cashews 1.6

Hazelnuts .70

Macadamias .49

Peanuts .93

Pecans 1.55

Pistachios .38

Sesame seeds 2.9

Sunflower seeds 1.44

Walnuts .97

Vegetables (1/2 c cooked)

Corn 0.9

Peas 1.0

Sea vegetables 1.1-2.0

Dairy foods

Cow's milk, 1 c 1.0

Cheddar cheese, 1 oz 0.9

Yogurt, 1 c 1.8

Supplements: If you plan to supplement zinc, it is recommended to stay within the recommended dietary requirements. Toxicity is rare because too much zinc usually causes stomach upset. However, too much zinc can actually impair immunity and can interfere with copper absorption. Impaired immunity has been seen with as little as 50 mg of zinc supplementation. If you take a multivitamin it probably already contains the RDA for zinc.

End Note: The fact that you are visiting this website and reading this article probably means that you are already conscientious about what you eat, so I am not about to lecture you on balancing meals or eating healthy. The one point I would like to reiterate is that food is most nutritious in its natural state. Getting the necessary vitamins and minerals from food versus supplements means making up our meals from calories of whole grains, seeds, nuts, beans, fruits and vegetables while minimizing processed foods that have been drained of much of their micronutrient benefits.

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Summertime is party time. Guests love to gather around food. Serve them a succulent, flavorful hot dip, turn them loose, and the conversation just naturally starts to flow.

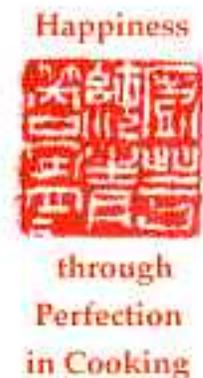
ARTICHOKE PARTY DIP

- 1 can (13.5 oz. or 382 g) water-packed artichoke hearts
- 1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu or Chinese firm tofu
- 2 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 1/2 + 1/8 t. ground coriander
- 1/2 + 1/8 t. dried dill weed
- 1 1/4 + 1/8 t. salt
- 1/2 t. onion powder
- 1/4 t. ground black pepper
- 1/2 t. evaporated cane juice
- 1 T. Red Star nutritional yeast
- 2 T. Soymage vegan parmesan
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 1 T. + 1/4 t. rice vinegar
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) soy mayonnaise

- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 1 can (4.6 oz. or 128 g) water chestnuts, drained and diced
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) raw pistachios, coarsely ground

Paprika

1. Preheat oven to 350 F (Gas Mark 4). Drain artichoke hearts, reserving liquid. Measure 1/4



C. (59 ml) artichoke liquid and set aside. Chop artichoke hearts into 1/2-inch (1 cm) pieces and set aside.

2. Into food processor put tofu, garlic, coriander, dill weed, salt, onion powder, pepper, evaporated cane juice, nutritional yeast, vegan parmesan, lemon juice, rice vinegar, and soy mayonnaise.
3. Add reserved artichoke liquid and process until smooth and creamy. Transfer to a 2-quart (2 liter) baking dish and stir in artichoke hearts, green onions, and water chestnuts, mixing well.
4. Stir in pistachios, reserving 2 T. to sprinkle over the top.
5. Sprinkle with a dash or two of paprika. Bake at 350 F (Gas Mark 4) for 30 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 6 to 8 as a party dip or 4 to 5 as a lunch or dinner fondue.

Serving suggestion: Prepare a platter of raw vegetables and a basket of assorted whole grain breads. Then simply enjoy the dipping experience.

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Whenever you're cooking a whole dinner for guests, finding the time to prepare an appetizer that looks great, tastes divine, and takes practically no time to assemble can be quite a challenge. You can always rely on this easy preparation, and enjoy the compliments, too. This recipe makes an ideal starter to bring to a potluck.

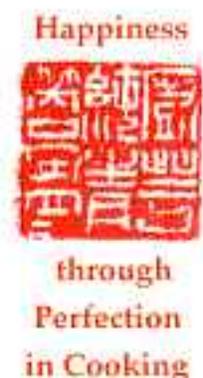
CASHEW STUFFED MUSHROOMS

20 button mushrooms
1/4 C. apple cider vinegar
1/4 C. Bragg Liquid Aminos
3/4 C. raw cashew pieces
4 green onions, coarsely chopped
1/3 of a red bell pepper, chopped
1/3 of a green bell pepper, chopped
2 to 3 heaping T. drained capers
1 t. Bragg Liquid Aminos

Garnish

Cilantro leaves
Pine nuts

1. Wash mushrooms and pat dry. Using your thumb, press gently on the stems to loosen and remove them. Set stems aside.
2. Combine apple cider vinegar and Bragg Liquid Aminos in a large bowl and add mushrooms.



Toss to coat evenly. Marinate for 1 or 2 hours.

3. Into a food processor using the "S" blade, combine mushroom stems, cashews, green onions, red and green bell peppers, capers, and Bragg Liquid Aminos. Process to a fine chunky texture.
4. Remove mushrooms from marinade and dry with paper towels. Stuff cavities with cashew mixture.
5. Arrange stuffed mushrooms on a lettuce-lined dish. Garnish by pressing the base of each tiny cilantro leaf into the center of the stuffing with a toothpick. Push an upright pine nut into the center next to the cilantro leaf. Serves 10 as an appetizer.

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I'm planning a rather large party next month and want to serve a nice variety of raw veggies and dips as a starter. I know it's impossible to do everything in one day, so I thought of cutting all the vegetables the day before. What's the best way to keep them fresh? Hope you have some suggestions for me.

Sincerely,

Maria

Howdy Maria,

How lucky yer party folks are to be treated to fresh vegetables, the bestest food in the world. Yer such a darlin' ta go ta the trouble. These days ain't many folks spendin' much time in the kitchen. Land sakes! They jes' don't know what they're missin'. Now there I go a-ramblin' when I should git right down ta business.

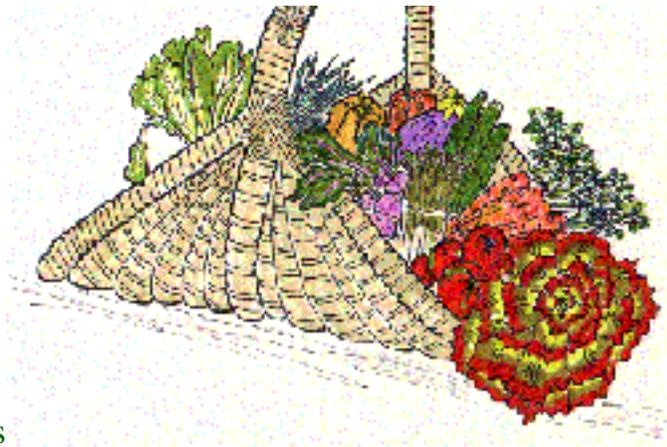
Right off the bat, git out a nice deep bowl, fill it with water 'bout 3/4 full, an' set it on the counter. Now, let's start with the drier veggies. First, wash all them purty l'il veggies afore any cuttin' up. Now, peel yer carrots, cut 'em any which way ya like, and plunk 'em right into the bowl with the water. Then cut up yer celery, radishes, cauliflower, an' broccoli an' plunk 'em right cozy into the bowl with the carrots. If yer includin' beets, put them in a separate bowl so everthin' don't turn red. Hope yer fridge is purty good size 'cause it's a-gonna git filled up right quick.

Fer makin' the veggies look mighty fancy, use one o' them crinkle cutters if y'all have one. If yer like me, yer sure ta have one 'cause ya jes' can't live without one! If y'all know how ta make radish roses, those look even better the next day 'cause the petals open up nice 'n wide in the water.

Now, mind, 'cause this is important. Yer vegetables



that are kinda wet, like bell peppers, jicama, zucchini, yellow crookneck squash, Jerusalem artichokes, an' kohlrabi should be washed, dried, an' put separately inta them plastic baggies with the little zippers. Jes' afore ya do that final zippin', push on the baggies ta git out all the air. All them vegetable-filled baggies goes into the fridge, too.



If yer usin parsley or greens o' some sort, wash 'em thoroughly, shake out the extra water, and dry 'em with a cloth kitchen towel. These go inta them baggies with the zippers, too, an' don't ferget to push out the air afore storin' in the fridge.

Mushrooms an' green beans can be washed separately right quick an' dried with a nice terrycloth kitchen towel. Then it's inta the zipper baggies and inta the fridge.

Last of all, lets talk 'bout tomaters. Cherry tomaters can be washed, dried, and put into a bowl or plunked into the plastic baggies. But, I hafta tell ya true, I purfer ta wash 'em the day o' the party. That way they taste fresh as the day they came off the vine.

Now, my little secret fer impressin' yer party folks is ta call them plain ole raw veggies by the fancy French word *Crudités*. If yer writin' it out, be sure ta put in that l'il accent mark and pronounce it **CROOD - it - tayz**. That'll have 'em standin' on their hind legs!

Well, Maria, the most important thing of all when yer havin' a party is ta relax an' enjoy it. If yer havin' a grand ole time, sure 'nuff yer friends will too.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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CURRIED TOFU PUFFS

Tofu is an enigma for the new vegetarian, yet remains a treasured ingredient for the seasoned vegetarian cook. The newbie asks, "How do you make it taste good? What can I do with it other than chop it up and put it into a salad, or stir fry?"

As an old vegetarian standby, tofu lends itself to infinite creativity in the variety of dishes one can create with it. Here's an easy, make-ahead appetizer that can be enjoyed hot, warm, or cold. There's even a dipping sauce to heighten your pleasure with its exotic flavor. What a great way to begin a meal!

- 1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu
- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. ground pepper
- 1/2 t. curry powder
- 1 T. + 1 t. rice vinegar
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 2 green onions, minced
- 1 medium carrot, coarsely shredded
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) chopped snow peas or snap peas, ends trimmed



- 1 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1 to 3 edible chrysanthemums

1. Combine the tofu, salt, pepper, curry powder, vinegar, lemon juice, green onions, carrot and snow peas in a food processor and process until completely pureed and well combined.
2. With clean hands, form 1" (2.5 cm) balls and lay them out on a lightly oiled baking sheet and press down slightly.

3. Bake at 400 (gas mark 6) for 15 minutes. Turn puffs over and bake 5 to 10 minutes longer, until lightly browned.
4. Remove to a serving platter. Garnish with cilantro and flowers, and serve with ASIAN DIPPING SAUCE. Makes about 20 tofu puffs or 6 servings.

ASIAN DIPPING SAUCE

1/4 C. (59 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or Tamari

1/4 C. (59 ml) lemon juice

1 to 2 T. blackstrap or light molasses

1 small clove garlic, minced

1/2" piece fresh ginger, peeled and minced

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and serve with CURRIED TOFU PUFFS.

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Your December calendar may be filled with a full schedule of holiday happenings that bring guests to your home and invitations to visit friends and family. Party food takes the spotlight this month. Perhaps you've decided on the main course you'll serve, but haven't quite settled on the appetizer. Possibly you're looking for an appetizer to bring to a potluck.

Here's an appealing starter that has it all--great flavor, visual delight, and a pleasing lightness. To save time in preparation, the pancakes can be made a day ahead and briefly reheated or served at room temperature. The guacamole must be prepared shortly before serving to prevent discoloration.

CURRY PANCAKES WITH GUACAMOLE TOPPING

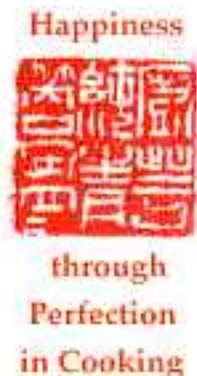
- 1 lb. (453 g) firm tofu
- 1 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1 t. curry powder
- 2 T. raw pumpkin seeds
- 1 T. rice vinegar
- 1 T. lemon juice
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 green onions, minced
- 1 medium carrot, coarsely shredded

Guacamole Topping



- 1 large avocado
- 1/2 medium tomato, diced
- 3 T. onions, chopped
- Juice of 1/2 lime (about 1 T.)
- Salt to taste
- 10 cherry tomatoes cut in half
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1 or 2 edible chrysanthemums

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. (Gas Mark 6). Lightly oil a large baking sheet or jellyroll pan with canola oil.
2. Combine tofu, salt, pepper, curry powder, pumpkin seeds, rice vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, green onions, and carrot in a food processor and process briefly to puree mixture.
3. Drop by heaping tablespoon onto a lightly oiled baking sheet. Bake at 400 (Gas Mark 6) for 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven for 1 minute, then turn pancakes over with a spatula. Bake 10 to 12 minutes longer, until lightly browned.
4. While pancakes are baking, prepare guacamole by cutting avocado in half and discarding the seed. Scoop out flesh into a medium bowl and mash with a fork. Add tomatoes, onions, and lime juice and mix well. Add salt to taste.
5. When pancakes are done, remove them to a large serving platter. Top each one with a generous dollop of guacamole and garnish with a cherry tomato half.
6. Garnish platter with cilantro and flowers. Provide small dishes and forks to serve. Makes about 16 to 20 pancakes or 6 servings.



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Veganizing Easter and Passover Celebrations

[Easter Menu](#) ***** [Passover Menu](#)

Easter and Passover share many common threads. Each of the holidays connects people to their spiritual roots, brings families and friends together, and celebrates the occasion with foods that are part of a long tradition.

Vegans, too, enjoy familiar holiday traditions but recognize that animals are sentient beings. Their celebrations are conducted in ways that do not cause pain, suffering, or death to other creatures.

EASTER CELEBRATION

Easter Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection of Christ and ends a 40-day period of fasting and penitence that commemorates Jesus' fasting in the wilderness. For Western Christians, Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox about March 21.

Because of the multicultural diversity of our American population, we notice there are many variations on the familiar traditions that include going to church, presenting the children with Easter baskets, and watching them find their treasures during the customary Easter egg hunt.

Vegans practice the same traditions but the packaging takes on a different focus. For instance, the vegan Easter basket would not likely be filled with the typical candies made of refined white sugar whitened by refining the sugar over animal bones. The vegan Easter basket might be filled with fruit juice sweetened whole grain cookies made without eggs. Nuts in the shell may appear in the basket along with little wrapped packages containing simple gifts appealing to children, such as toy cars, little dolls, or small books.

Though eggs may seem like a benign food that does not kill the chicken, confined chickens raised

for egg production suffer a miserable, painful life. Instead of hunting for hidden Easter eggs, vegan children might search in the garden or the house for fresh carrots and little boxes of raisins that become a dinnertime carrot-raisin salad. Possibly the hunt may take on a special theme that appeals to children, like searching for little toy dinosaurs or other animals.

In most American homes, the Easter meal is centered on the time-honored ham. However, in the vegan household we spare our friend, the highly intelligent pig, and choose a planet-friendly entrée instead. With vegetarian meat substitutes made from soy and wheat gluten, the main course can easily imitate the flavor of ham without disturbing the real piggy from his nap or playful romp in the mud.

Because we aim for innovative food combinations, we plan our menu with lively flavors that blend together to offer extraordinary taste sensations. Our festive dinner then becomes a memorable event.

EASTER DINNER

Easter Menu Recipes Below

- Eggless Deviled Eggs
- Salad with Triple Citrus Dressing
- Curried Veggie Ham Polenta
- Pear Raisin Chutney
- Quick and Tasty Black Beans
- Steamed Asparagus
- Pistachio Peanut Bonbons
- Fresh Strawberries

The **Eggless Deviled Eggs** is our conversation-piece appetizer. To imitate the appearance of hard-boiled egg white halves, cut half-inch thick slices of firm tofu. Using a paring knife, shape the slices into several small ovals that resemble egg whites. Then scoop out the centers and fill them with a tofu mixture seasoned just like the real deviled eggs. Sprinkle them with paprika, bring them to the table, and be ready for questions like, "What, these are not real eggs? Well, then, what are they?"

Our Easter dinner begins with a salad of mixed greens, lots of chopped chunky vegetables like carrots, radishes, celery, sugar snap peas, and cucumbers. The special dressing, **Triple Citrus Dressing**, blends orange, lemon, and lime juice with zesty seasonings to create a salad that stands apart from the tired, humdrum iceberg lettuce with thousand island dressing.

The main entrée, a **Curried Veggie Ham Polenta**, features a polenta-based dish dotted confetti-fashion with bright green peas, diced red bell pepper, and totally fat-free veggie ham made from soy and wheat gluten. An ideal accompaniment is **Pear Raisin Chutney** with sweet, pungent flavors.

Quick 'N Tasty Black Beans flavored with garlic and tomatoes offers pleasing flavors and a flamboyant color contrast cuddled next to the polenta. A tasty alternative to the beans might be **Baked Sweet Potatoes and Apples**. The **Steamed Asparagus** is the perfect choice for this season and complements our platter with the ideal touch of intense green color.

With a hearty and satisfying meal such as this one, most guests will appreciate a light dessert. Those who enjoy that little touch of something sweet at the end of the meal but don't have room for a really big dessert will appreciate the bite-size **Pistachio Peanut Bonbons** along with a bowl of plump, fresh **Strawberries**.

With a creative spirit and a few extra minutes, this unique version of **Eggless Deviled Eggs** emulates the real thing rather closely without ever causing our friend, the chicken, to give up a moment's pleasure as she pecks for worms in the barnyard.



EGGLESS DEVILED EGGS

1 t. salt
2 C. (480 ml) warm water
1 lb. (450 g) firm tofu (for egg whites)

1/2 lb. (225 g) firm tofu (for filling)
1/2 C. (120 ml) + 1 T. Vegemise
or other soy mayonnaise
1/2 t. dry mustard
3/4 t. salt
1/8 t. pepper
3/4 t. turmeric
2t. rice vinegar
1/2 t. vegan Worcestershire sauce

Paprika
Cherry tomatoes

1. **EGG WHITES:** Combine salt and water in a large baking dish, and stir well to dissolve the salt. Set aside.

2. Drain and rinse the 1 lb. (450 g) of tofu. Cut tofu into one-half-inch (1 cm) thick slices vertically, Cut each slice in half to become 2 pieces that are almost square. Using a small paring knife, form each square into an oval, imitating the shape of a hard-boiled egg cut in half.
3. Then, with a small spoon, carefully scoop out the centers of each of the ovals to form a cavity. Marinate all the prepared ovals in the salt water while preparing the filling. Add cut-away pieces to filling.
4. FILLING: Drain and rinse the 1/2 lb. (225 g) tofu. Using the fingers, crumble the tofu into a medium-size mixing bowl.
5. Add remaining ingredients except the paprika and cherry tomatoes, and stir well to blend thoroughly. Adjust seasonings to taste if needed.
6. Drain "egg whites" on several layers of paper towels, and fill cavities with prepared filling.
7. Sprinkle the tops with paprika and arrange on a lettuce-lined platter leaving the center open. Fill the center with cherry tomatoes. Makes about 16 halves.

TRIPLE CITRUS SALAD DRESSING

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

Dazzling color and alluring flavor combine to make this dish a sensation. With its no-fat Veggie Ham, it's an ideal vegan alternative to serve for a gourmet Easter dinner. To bring the meal together with ease, prepare it a day or two ahead and simply reheat.



For guests who are timid about curry spices, consider using the smaller amount in the recipe. For medium spicy, use one full teaspoon of curry powder.

CURRIED HAM POLENTA

1 C. (240 ml) frozen peas

1 1/2 medium onions, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 red bell pepper, diced

1 5.5-oz. (155 g) pkg. Yves Veggie Ham, diced

1/2 t. dried oregano

2 t. Bragg Liquid Aminos

1/2 C. (120 ml) water

4 C. (1 liter) water

5 oz. (120 ml + 2 T.) soymilk

1 1/4 t. salt

1/2 to 1 t. curry powder

1 C. (240 ml) medium or coarse cornmeal (polenta)

Fresh herb sprigs, such as parsley, rosemary, or oregano

Tomato slices or cherry tomatoes

1. Put frozen peas into a medium-size bowl and thaw by pouring water over them to cover. Set aside.
2. Combine onions, garlic, peppers, Veggie Ham, oregano, Bragg Liquid Aminos, and 1/2 C. (120 ml) water in a large, deep skillet. Cook over high heat, stirring frequently until softened, about 10 minutes. Set aside.
3. Combine the 4 C. (1 liter) water, soymilk, salt, and curry powder in a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, uncovered. Watch carefully to prevent boil-over. Add cornmeal to boiling mixture and turn heat down slightly. Boil gently, stirring frequently, until thickened to the consistency of thick oatmeal, about 10 minutes. Taste to see that cornmeal is fully cooked and soft.
4. Add cooked vegetables and ham to the polenta, drain and add peas, and stir to distribute ingredients evenly.
5. Spoon or pour into a 5-cup (1 liter + 240 ml) ring mold or an 8-inch (20 cm) square Pyrex baking dish, and refrigerate for 1 hour to firm up.
6. Reheat briefly by covering with aluminum foil, dull side up, and warming in the oven at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for 12 to 15 minutes. Unmold onto an attractive serving dish.
7. Garnish by arranging herb sprigs around the outer edge. Arrange tomato slices or cherry tomatoes on top of herbs. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

NOTE: To reheat next day: Gently sprinkle the top of the polenta with water, cover with aluminum foil, dull side up, and heat at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for about 20 to 25 minutes. If you've chilled the Curried Ham Polenta in a Pyrex baking dish, reheat by starting it in a cold oven to prevent the dish from cracking.

Enjoy the pungent flavors of this sweet-and-sour entrée accompaniment that adds flavor balance to the savory dishes on this festive Easter menu.



PEAR AND RAISIN CHUTNEY

3 bosc or other firm pears

1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins

1/4 C. (60 ml) golden raisins

3 cloves garlic cut in half lengthwise

1-inch (2.5 cm) piece of ginger, peeled and thinly sliced

1/4 t. salt

1/8 t. cayenne

1 C. (240 ml) apple cider vinegar

1 C. (240 ml) evaporated cane juice

1. Cut pears in half lengthwise and remove seeds and stem. Cut into crosswise slices 1/4-inch (.5 cm) thick and put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan.
2. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil, uncovered, over high heat.
3. Turn heat down to medium-high and simmer 15 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently. Cool completely before refrigerating. Makes about 3 cups (720 ml).

NOTE: For a sweeter chutney, add 1/4 C. (60 ml) additional evaporated cane juice.

QUICK 'N TASTY BEANS

With the complexity of bringing together a festive meal, you will appreciate the simplicity of this dish that has hidden rewards. The earthiness of the garlic, cooked briefly with the tomatoes, adds such pleasing flavors you'll welcome this easy recipe into your repertoire.

1 3/4 lbs. (790 g) Roma tomatoes (Italian plum) chopped

6 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 C. (120 ml) water

2 1-lb. (450 g) cans black beans, drained and rinsed

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Combine tomatoes, garlic, and water in a large skillet, and cook over high heat, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes.
2. Add beans to skillet, season to taste, and cook 5 to 6 minutes. Adjust seasonings if needed. Serves 6.

Those inevitable sweet cravings can be quickly sated with this delightful confection that keeps well for two to three weeks in the refrigerator.

PISTACHIO PEANUT BONBONS

1 C. (240 ml) chopped pitted prunes
1/2 C. (120 ml) chunky peanut butter
1/4 C. (60 ml) + 2 T. maple syrup
3/4 C. (180 ml) Fearn's Soya Powder*
2 T. vegan carob or chocolate chips, chopped

1/4 C. (60 ml) coarsely chopped raw pistachios or chopped salted peanuts

1. Combine the prunes, peanut butter, maple syrup, Soya Powder, and carob chips in a large bowl and mix well to combine all ingredients. You'll be employing a little muscle power when the mixture becomes thick, but it's important to distribute ingredients evenly.
2. Put chopped pistachios in a separate bowl.
3. Using a teaspoon of the prune, peanut butter mixture, roll into small balls. Dip one side into chopped pistachios and place on an attractive serving dish. Serve immediately or cover with plastic wrap and chill for serving the following day. Makes about 20 bonbons.

*Soya powder is made from soy flour that has been cooked. The texture is lighter and finer than soy flour and leaves no aftertaste.

VARIATION:

1. Spread a piece of waxed paper, about 25-inches (65 cm) long, horizontally on the countertop. Spread pistachios along the center, horizontally.
2. Pile prune, peanut butter mixture onto the waxed paper and form a long roll, about 18-inches (45 cm) long and 1-inch to 1 1/2-inches (2.5 cm to 3.5 cm) in diameter, covering the surface with the pistachios.
3. Fold waxed paper to cover roll and twist the ends to seal. Wrap in plastic wrap to retain the moisture. Chill for several hours.
4. To serve, cut into slices about 1/4" to 3/8" thick (.5 cm to .7cm). Refrigerated it keeps for 2 to 3 weeks. Makes about 15 to 20 slices.

PASSOVER SEDER

Passover, or Pesach, is the festival of freedom. The Passover Seder revolves around foods that are symbolic of the events that led the Jews out of slavery when they made their exodus from Egypt thousands of years ago. Friends and family gather around the table to recreate the historic event with ritual foods, prayers, and songs.

Many consider the holiday a somewhat bittersweet occasion. On the one hand they remember the struggle their ancestors experienced living in a hostile land. On the sweet side is the joyous feeling the Jews expressed when they were finally free from the cruel Egyptian Pharaoh.

The Passover Seder is celebrated on the first and second nights of the eight-day holiday. On every Seder table is the ritual Seder plate. Traditionally a roasted lamb bone representing the Paschal lamb that the ancients sacrificed for this holiday has its place on the plate. Vegans, however, spare the lamb and roast a beet or a "Paschal yam." In place of the roasted egg that symbolizes life, they may use a roasted or boiled potato or a mushroom. Horseradish, a bitter herb, represents the bitter life of the Jews in Egypt, while Charoset, a sweet tasting mixture of grated apples, chopped walnuts, wine, and unrefined sugar represents the mortar the Jews used to build the pyramids.

Greens such as parsley, watercress, or lettuce are dipped in salt water and eaten to symbolize hope and renewal that the spring season brought to the Jews. Matzoh, the cracker-like bread eaten during the week of Passover, represents the unleavened bread the Jews took with them when they hurriedly left Egypt.

Wine, symbolic of redemption, is an important part of the Seder ritual with the cup refilled four times during the service. Though wine is traditionally served at every Jewish ceremony, many vegans prefer to partake of the fruit of the vine in the form of pure grape juice.

Especially appealing to the children is the hunt for the *afikomen*, a piece of matzoh that the head of the Passover service hides some time during the meal. After dinner, the hunt commences, sending children scurrying all over the house to see who can find it. The enticement is the competition of finding a hidden treasure plus a prize of money, usually a dollar or two.

PASSOVER DINNER

Passover Menu Recipes Below

- Mock Chicken Soup with Matzoh Balls
- Charoset (Apple Relish)
- Almond Nutloaf with Tomato Herb Gravy
- Sautéed Snow Peas, Green Peas, Onions, and Mushrooms
- Carrot and Parsnip Ragout
- Fruited Matzoh Kugel
- Poached Pears in Wine Sauce
- Medjool Dates and Sultana Raisins

Finally, after the Seder service that can last an hour or more, the long-anticipated dinner is served. The traditional meal begins with chicken soup and matzoh balls. But, as you've no doubt guessed, vegans spare the chicken and opt for richly flavored **Mock Chicken Soup** (a vegetable broth) instead. The ideally feather-light **Matzoh Balls**, are often a subject of teasing when they turn out leaden-weighted. The eggless vegan version averts the teasing and, instead, earns praises for its

light-as-a-feather texture.

The traditional entrée is usually roasted chicken or roasted brisket. Once again, we depart from tradition and choose a delicious **Almond Nutloaf** with a robustly seasoned **Tomato Herb Gravy** as the centerpiece of our plate. The festive nutloaf combines onions, potatoes, and nuts and pairs them with the zesty flavors of garlic, herbs, and a hint of cayenne.

Passover foods typically celebrate spring with generous portions of colorful vegetables. Tasty vegetables bring visual appeal, crunch, and pleasing balance to the meal with **Sautéed Snow Peas, Green Peas, Onions, and Sliced Mushrooms**.

A bright saffron color takes its place on the plate with the **Carrot and Parsnip Ragout** that blends such pleasing flavors it needs no special seasonings. In keeping with tradition is the **Fruited Matzoh Kugel with Prunes, Apricots, and Raisins** flavored with cinnamon and ginger but sans the eggs.

In many households the **Charoset** is so favored it remains on the table as a dinner accompaniment. As Jews settled in various parts of the globe, they brought the cuisines of those countries into their traditional dishes. The **Charoset** presented here is a complex dish that includes chopped dates, dried fruits, cinnamon, and almond extract customary in the Sephardic tradition from Jews who settled in Southern Spain.

The finishing touch is always an abundance of sweet treats. In place of the typical Passover Sponge Cake that calls for a dozen eggs, or the macaroons made with egg whites, a healthy vegan option places **Poached Pears in Wine Sauce** at the top of the list. Accompanying the pears is a platter of **Medjool Dates** and giant **Sultana Raisins**.

One last symbolic ritual signals the end of the Passover Seder celebration. At the beginning of the Seder a single cup of wine for the prophet Elijah takes its place in the center of the table. When the meal is over, one of the children is asked to open the door for Elijah to enter and drink from the cup of wine. This tradition is especially intriguing to children as they stare at the cup to see if the invisible Elijah has made some of the wine disappear.

[MOCK CHICKEN SOUP](#)

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

[MATZOH BALLS](#)

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

[CHAROSET \(APPLE RELISH\)](#)

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

[ALMOND NUTLOAF](#)

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

NOTE: Our original recipe for **Almond Nutloaf** contains nutritional yeast that adds pleasing flavor. Though this product is kosher, it is not kosher for Passover. If you choose, eliminate the nutritional yeast and top the loaf with the **Tomato Herb Gravy** recipe below.

TOMATO HERB GRAVY

3 C. ((720 ml) water
3 medium size Roma tomatoes (Italian plum) diced
2 large cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 t. onion powder
1 T. + 1 t. Tamari (wheat free)

1/2 t. dried rosemary leaves
1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
1/2 t. dried sage leaves

2 T. cornstarch
2 T. water

1. Combine water, tomatoes, garlic, onion powder, and Tamari in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan.
 2. Put herbs into a small piece of cheesecloth, and tie with a string. Add to saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat.
 3. Turn heat down to medium and simmer about 5 to 8 minutes. Remove cheesecloth and discard.
 4. Combine cornstarch and water in a small cup and stir to form a runny paste. Stirring with a wire whip, add to bubbling mixture in the saucepan a little at a time until thickened to desired consistency. Cook one minute longer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes about 3 1/4 cups (780 ml).
-

SAUTÉED SNOW PEAS, GREEN PEAS, ONIONS, & MUSHROOMS

1 large onion, thinly sliced lengthwise
1/2 lb. (225 g) crimini mushrooms, sliced
1/4 lb. (110 g) fresh shiitake mushrooms, sliced or 2 oz. (56 g) dried
1 lb. (450 g) frozen green peas
1 t. extra virgin olive oil
2 T. water

1/2 lb. (120 g) fresh snow peas, trimmed
Lemon juice
Salt

1. Prepare all vegetables before starting to cook. If using dried shiitake mushrooms, soak them in very warm water for 1 hour before using, and cut off the tough stems after soaking.
2. Combine onions, mushrooms, frozen peas, olive oil, and water in a large deep skillet or wok and sauté about 3 or 4 minutes.
3. Add snow peas, lemon juice, and salt to taste, and cook 1 minute longer. Turn off heat and adjust seasonings. Serves 6.

[CARROT AND PARSNIP RAGOUT](#)

[\(click here for recipe\)](#)

With its delicate spices and fruity ingredients this festive kugel (pudding) adds the ideal sweet touch to the Passover meal. To ease the many preparations surrounding the Passover Seder, plan to make the kugel the day before and simply reheat it at 350 F. for about 20 minutes.

Though tofu is not considered a typical Passover food in the Ashkenazic tradition, many Rabbis accept the use of legumes for Passover when they are altered from their original form, such as when they are mashed. In this recipe, the vegan approach of using mashed tofu forms the ideal binder in place of eggs.



FRUITED MATZOH KUGEL

3 matzohs

Boiling water

1/4 C. (60 ml) Florida Crystals or evaporated cane juice

1/4 t. ground cinnamon

1/4 t. ground ginger

1/4 t. salt

2 Granny Smith apples, cored, peeled, and coarsely grated

8 pitted prunes, chopped

8 dried apricots, chopped
1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins
2 T. canola oil
2/3 C. (160 ml) well mashed firm tofu

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) and oil a 9-inch (23 cm) spring-form pan or an 8-inch (20 cm) Pyrex baking pan.
2. Break matzohs into small pieces and put them into a large mixing bowl. Soften matzohs by pouring boiling water over them. Drain off all water instantly.
3. Add remaining ingredients and mix well to distribute ingredients evenly.
4. Pour into prepared spring-form pan and press to the edges with the back of a spoon spreading evenly.
5. Bake at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for 1 hour or until lightly browned around the edges. Cool 10 minutes before unmolding. Makes 5 to 6 servings.

No matter how hard one tries to simplify the Passover menu, the meal invariably turns out to be labor-intensive with its many symbolic foods and traditional dishes. The family chef deserves praise and a respite from having to prepare a fussy dessert. With a meal as large as the Seder dinner, a light, quickly prepared, wholesome dessert is a welcome close to the festivities of the evening.



POACHED PEARS IN WINE SAUCE

Six firm pears, peeled and cored

1 C. (240 ml) kosher dry red wine
1/2 C. (120 ml) fresh squeezed orange juice
3/4 C. (180 ml) evaporated cane juice
1 stick cinnamon
4 whole allspice berries
2 whole cloves
1 slice crystalized ginger, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. (Gas Mark 3) Arrange pears in an 8-inch (20 cm) square Pyrex

baking pan.

2. Combine wine, orange juice, evaporated cane juice, and spices in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and gently boil for 2 minutes to dissolve the sugar.
3. Pour over pears in baking pan. Cover with aluminum foil, dull side up.
4. Bake at 325 F. (Gas Mark 3) for 1 hour. Serve warm or chilled in individual bowls along with the syrup. Makes 6 servings.

NOTE: If desired, fill pear cavities with golden raisins before poaching.

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CUPID'S ANNUAL MISSION

A VALENTINE'S DAY VEGAN DINNER

Includes Recipes Below

Without a little romance life would certainly be missing those shared moments of tenderness and passion that make us feel special. Thoughts of love bring contentment to the heart, and add fervor to our dreams. Love makes us smile more often, makes the heart beat a little faster, and sparks our life to know that someone cares about us.

Valentine's Day reminds us how fortunate we are to celebrate an entire day devoted to affairs of the heart. While some may think Valentine's Day ought to be celebrated more often, Cupid knows that stoking the fires of love with extra special attention once a year is just right. On Valentine's Day people in love make the effort to do extraordinary things for each other they might not do otherwise. Lovers whisper expressions of endearment to their beloved, words that they might not use ordinarily. This unique holiday puts romance on a pedestal and steams the heart with powerful emotion.

While each pair of lovers recognizes Valentine's Day in different ways, the one thing they have in common is the desire to please that special person in their lives. In planning a Valentine celebration at home, set the scene for romance to bring pleasure to all of the senses. You may choose to put on some soft music to pleasure the ears, candlelight to create soft light for the eyes, flowers and potpourri to provide delightful fragrance, or poetry for the romantic at heart--those things that symbolize sentiment.

Treat your lover to an exceptional home-cooked dinner for two that's full of lusty flavors and aromas. Some couples even enjoy preparing meals together. Welcome the occasion by toasting with a glass of **your favorite wine** or **sparkling apple cider** served in long-stemmed glasses.

Then serve a dish of hot or cold **Eggplant Cornucopias**, a succulent appetizer that combines eggplant with seasoned garbanzo beans in a unique presentation. Perhaps a crackling fire sets the stage for romance. If so, this tasty first course makes a perfect fireside starter.

A **Sweetheart Salad** of baby greens with plenty of colorful, crunchy carrots, radishes, and jicama topped with a zesty **Avocado Caesar Dressing** offers a sensuous, light beginning with its varied textures and flavors.

The hearty, brightly colored entrée works magic in the love arena with pleasing aromas and tantalizing tang. **Passionate Pineapple Tempeh** embraces the tropical island flavors of ginger, garlic, and soy sauce with the sweetness of pineapple to create a distinctive dish that blooms with flavor. Decorated with bright red bell pepper hearts that appear to dance on the plate, the visual feast expresses romantic intentions.

Also gracing the plate is our **Cupid's Favorite Quinoa** dotted with roasted tomatoes and onions and heightened with a hint of cinnamon. **Steamed Asparagus Spears** lend an earthy green accompaniment while **Roasted Beet Hearts** offer a deep red color accent and plenty of sassy flavor.

Wrapping the evening in romance, our **Love Tart** is definitely the choice for the impassioned raspberry aficionados. Filled with spiced pears and raspberries, the tart is complemented with a romantic bleeding heart **Raspberry Almond Sauce**.

A warm embrace and a sip of warming, fruity liqueur by the fireside combine to form special memories of romance on this Valentine's Day.

Valentine Dinner Menu

Appetizer

Toast with glass of your favorite wine or sparkling non-alcoholic beverage
Eggplant Cornucopias

Salad

Sweetheart Salad with Baby Greens
Avocado Caesar Dressing

Entree

Passionate Pineapple Tempeh
Cupid's Favorite Quinoa
Steamed Asparagus Spears
Roasted Beet Hearts

Dessert

Love Tart with Raspberry Almond Sauce
Peach Brandy in a long stemmed liqueur glass

Our appetizer recipe makes considerably more than two lovers will want to nibble for a first

course, but the cornucopias are so flavorful you'll welcome the leftovers the next day. Made with large eggplants, the cornucopias can even be served as an entrée.

Because these little babies are quite messy, be sure to serve with plenty of napkins. When time is limited, you can make these a day ahead and serve them hot or cold. As a bonus, the garbanzo filling is versatile enough to make a zesty dip for veggies or toasted pita wedges.



EGGPLANT CORNUCOPIAS

2 medium eggplants, unpeeled
1 red bell pepper, quartered

Filling

1/3 C. (80 ml) walnut pieces
1 1-lb. (450g) can garbanzo beans, drained, liquid reserved
4 T. reserved garbanzo liquid

1/8 to 1/4 t. ground cayenne pepper
3/4 t. salt
1 t. dry mustard mixed with 2 t. water
1 clove garlic
1 T. lime juice

2 green onions, white part only, minced

Toothpicks

Paprika

Parsley

3 julienne strips of red bell pepper, 1/4-inch (.5 cm) width

1. Lightly oil 2 baking sheets. Wash eggplants and slice crosswise about 3/8-inch (1cm) thick, making sure there are at least 12 slices. Lay them out on baking sheets along with quartered red bell pepper. Bake at 400 F. (Gas Mark 6) for 25 to 30 minutes. While eggplants are baking, assemble filling.

2. Coarsely grind walnut pieces in a nut grinder or food processor and put into a medium-sized mixing bowl. Set aside.
3. Pulse garbanzo beans and the 4 T. reserved liquid in a food processor and process until almost pureed. Add cayenne, salt, dry mustard, garlic, and lime juice, and process until well combined. Add to the nuts along with the minced green onions, and mix well.

To assemble

Cut roasted red bell pepper into 12 strips lengthwise, and place a strip on each slice of roasted eggplant.

Put approximately 1 tablespoon of garbanzo filling in the center of each eggplant slice. Pinch bottom together to form a cornucopia and secure with a toothpick.

Sprinkle exposed filling with paprika. Arrange on a serving platter, place a nest of parsley in the center, and overlap red pepper strips on top. Serve hot or cold. Makes enough filling to stuff about 12 eggplant cornucopias.

Nothing quite compares to the crisp snap of a freshly prepared salad with its multi shades of green and satisfying crunchy add-ins. Because of their high water content, raw vegetables provide a much-needed lightness to a large meal.

SWEETHEART SALAD

- 3 C. (720 ml) baby lettuce or field greens salad mix
- 1 small carrot, shredded
- 1 C. (240 ml) diced jicama
- 4 radishes, sliced
- 8 cherry tomatoes

Combine all ingredients in an attractive bowl, and toss. Divide into two portions, and serve with Avocado Caesar Dressing on the side.

Rich with color, tantalizing in flavor, and pleasing with creamy satin texture, avocado makes the perfect base for a tangy salad dressing. The recipe makes a generous portion to enjoy over other dishes like baked potatoes, grains, or steamed vegetables.

AVOCADO CAESAR DRESSING

- 1 medium avocado
 - 1 clove garlic
 - 1/4 C. (60 ml) vegan Parmesan alternative
 - 1 t. salt
 - 1/4 t. ground black pepper
 - 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) water
 - 1/2 C. (120 ml) lemon juice
1. Wash avocado and cut in half. Scoop out flesh and put into a blender.
 2. Add remaining ingredients, and blend on low speed for a few seconds. Then blend on high

speed until smooth and creamy. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl and serve with a ladle. Refrigerate leftovers. Will keep well for 5 to 6 days. Makes 2 1/2 cups (600 ml).

Charm your lover with a dish that captivates the heart at first glance. Who could resist a meal with sublime flavors and dancing red hearts? Easy to prepare, this dish will quietly marinate for several hours while you assemble other recipes for the meal.



PASSIONATE PINEAPPLE TEMPEH

Marinade

3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 1/2-inch (3.5 cm) piece of ginger root, peeled and grated
1/2 C. (120 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or tamari
6 T. pure maple syrup
1/4 t. + 1/8 t. coarse black pepper
1/3 C. (80 ml) water
1 T. extra virgin olive oil

Tempeh

1 1/2 lbs. (675g) tempeh
1 to 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
1 C. (240 ml) crushed pineapple with natural juices
2 green onions, chopped
2 T. cornstarch
2 T. water

Parsley

1 red bell pepper, halved

1. Combine marinade ingredients in an 8-inch ((20 cm) square or 7-inch x 9-inch (17.5 x 23 cm) baking dish. Set aside.
2. Score tempeh on both sides, making diagonal cuts 1/4-inch (.5 cm) apart and 1/4-inch (.5 cm) deep. Continue scoring by making crisscross cuts in the opposite direction, forming a diamond pattern. Scoring helps the tempeh to absorb the marinade. Cut the tempeh into 6 portions, and spread out in marinade dish, turning to coat evenly. Cover dish and marinate for 2 to 6 hours, turning pieces frequently.
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Using a slotted spatula, lift tempeh from marinade and brown for 1 to 2 minutes on each side over high heat. Remove to a serving dish and set aside.
4. Pour remaining marinade into the skillet and add pineapple with its juice and the green onions. Bring to a boil.
5. Combine cornstarch and water in a small cup or bowl and pour into boiling pineapple mixture a little at a time, stirring constantly, until thickened to desired consistency, about 1 minute. Pour over browned tempeh.
6. Using a cookie or canape cutter, cut 3 large hearts and 2 small hearts from the bell pepper, and dice about 1/4 cup (60 ml) of remaining red bell pepper. Decorate plate with parsley and arrange the hearts attractively just before serving. Serves 6.

The ancient grain of the Incas comes to life dressed in roasted tomatoes and onions and accented with a complement of cinnamon. Simple to prepare, this dish gives the impression of a more complex preparation.

CUPID'S FAVORITE QUINOA

2 large tomatoes, chopped
1 medium, onion, chopped
1/4 t. ground cinnamon
Salt and pepper

1 C. (240 ml) quinoa
2 C. (480 ml) water
3/4 t. salt

1. Combine tomatoes and onions on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Sprinkle with cinnamon, salt, and pepper and toss well. Roast at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 45 minutes, tossing once or twice during roasting.
2. While tomatoes and onions are roasting, prepare quinoa. Put quinoa in a fine mesh strainer, and rinse under running water for a full minute to remove any of the natural saponin coating that might give the grain a bitter flavor.
3. Transfer to a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, and add water, and salt. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam 15 to 20 minutes, or until all liquid is absorbed.
4. Add roasted tomatoes and onions to cooked quinoa, and mix well. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Always a welcome addition to any meal, fresh asparagus, wearing its handsome shade of rich, warm green, is the perfect choice to complement our entrée. When ranking vegetables in order of favorites, people will frequently list asparagus on the top. It's no surprise--asparagus is simply delicious.

STEAMED ASPARAGUS

1 lb. (450g) fresh asparagus spears

Water

Pinch of salt

1. Wash asparagus, and break off tough end by bending the stalk and allowing it to snap off naturally where the soft portion begins.
 2. If you have an asparagus steamer, use it to cook the asparagus. Otherwise, put the spears into a saucepan large enough to lay them flat. Add water to cover the bottom of the pan by 1/2-inch (1cm). Add salt.
 3. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam about 4 or 5 minutes. Remove immediately and serve. Makes 2 to 3 servings.
-

How sweet, you might say! And they are. Little color accents that just happen to taste great, these heart-shaped roasted beet slices remind two lovers that Valentine's Day is all about sharing those special feelings that touch the heart.

ROASTED BEET HEARTS

2 or 3 medium beets

Canola oil

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. (Gas Mark 5), and lightly oil a baking sheet. Wash beets thoroughly. Cut off stem end, and peel skin with a vegetable peeler.
 2. Slice beets, thickly or thinly as desired.
 3. Place beets on prepared baking sheet, and brush lightly with canola oil. Cover baking sheet with aluminum foil, shiny side down, and roast at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 25 to 35 minutes, or until fork tender.
 4. Using a heart-shaped cookie or canape cutter, cut slices into heart shapes. Makes 2 to 3 servings.
-

Our Love Tart is as captivating as it sounds. Sweet, yet saucy, this tantalizing dessert will win your lover's heart at first bite.



LOVE TART WITH RASPBERRY ALMOND SAUCE

Filling

2 firm Anjou pears, cored and diced
1 12-oz. (340g) package frozen raspberries, thawed and divided
2 T. golden raisins
1/3 C. (80 ml) + 1 T. evaporated cane juice
1/4 t. ground cinnamon

2 T. lemon juice
1 T. cornstarch

1. Preheat oven to 375 F (Gas Mark 5). Put pears into a medium mixing bowl. Add 1 cup (240 ml) of the raspberries, raisins, evaporated cane juice, and cinnamon, and toss well.
2. Combine lemon juice and cornstarch in a small bowl and stir until cornstarch is well dissolved. Add to pear mixture and stir well. Set aside while preparing crust.
3. When crust is prepared, fill the tart shells with pear mixture and press edges of dough inward so only a small portion of filling is exposed.
4. Put filled custard cups on a large baking sheet and bake at 375 F (Gas Mark 5) for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Cool completely. Serve with warmed Raspberry Almond Sauce.

Crust

2 C. (480 ml) barley flour
1 T. evaporated cane juice
2 pinches salt

2 T. canola oil
5 T. cold water

8 T. cold water

Barley flour

1. Have three 10-ounce (280g) Pyrex custard cups ready. Combine barley flour, evaporated cane juice, and salt in a medium mixing bowl.
2. Add canola oil and 5 T. cold water and mix into small pellets with a fork or pastry blender.
3. Add remaining cold water and mix into a soft dough.
4. Sprinkle 1 T. barley flour over pastry board and a little more on the rolling pin, and roll dough into a large circle about 15 inches in diameter. Cut circles 1 1/4 inches (2.5 cm) larger than rim of custard cups and press circles into the cups. You may have to gather dough into a ball and re-roll for the third cup.

Raspberry Almond Sauce

Remaining raspberries
1/4 C. (60 ml) water
1/4 C. (60 ml) + 2 T. evaporated cane juice
3/4 t. almond extract

Combine ingredients in a food processor and puree. Transfer to a small saucepan and warm gently just before serving the Tarts. Makes 1 cup (240 ml) sauce.

PEACH BRANDY

Keeping the romance of the evening well-stoked, finish the meal by sipping Peach Brandy served in a long-stemmed liqueur glass. Possibly you have a favorite liqueur you prefer instead of brandy. The warming effect of a sweet liqueur or brandy does wonders for adding a special glow to the cheeks and encouraging thoughts of tender passion. According to the winged cherub, Cupid, sweet, sentimental thoughts of love are the perfect ending for a perfect Valentine's Day.

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Here's an easy way to incorporate healthy nuts, namely pistachios, into your repertoire. Depending on your presentation, this dish can either make a casual meal or a gourmet signature dish.

GARBANZO BEAN PATE WITH PISTACHIOS

It's a blessing when a recipe can lend itself to great diversity. With this pate, the slices can be cut into squares and served as an appetizer, and the large slices make a perfect sandwich filling. The pate is great hot or cold in a pita, perfect for a picnic, and delectable as a main course with a dollop of [Silken Magic Sauce](#) that can be found in the [Recipe Index](#).

Because this special dish needs to be refrigerated for a minimum of 4 hours, begin preparation several hours ahead or the day before.

- 1 large onion, finely minced
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 t. dried basil
- 1/4 t. crushed dried thyme
- 1 t. curry powder
- 1 t. ground cumin
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. ground black pepper
- 3 T. tamari or soy sauce
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 T. lemon juice



- 1 3/4 C. (420 ml) garbanzo bean flour* or alternate legume flour**
- 3 1/2 C. (840 ml) water
- 1/3 to 1/2 C. (80 to 120 ml) shelled raw pistachios
- Thinly sliced tomatoes for garnish
- 4 basil leaves or 6 arugula leaves



1. Begin by lining a 9" x 5" x 3" (23 x 32.5 x 7.5 cm) loaf pan with plastic wrap large enough to drape over the sides. Set aside.
2. Combine onion, garlic, basil, thyme, curry powder, cumin, salt, pepper, tamari, olive oil, and lemon juice in a large, deep skillet or wok and saute over high heat for 3 to 4 minutes. Turn heat down to low.
3. Add garbanzo bean flour to skillet. Then add water a little at a time, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon until smooth. Turn heat up to medium to medium-high, and cook for about 20 to 30 minutes, stirring frequently, until mixture reaches the consistency of very thick porridge and begins to pull away from sides of pan.
4. Stir pistachios into cooked mixture, and turn out into prepared loaf pan, pressing firmly to eliminate air spaces. Fold excess plastic wrap over pate and chill several hours or overnight.
5. Unmold pate onto an oval serving platter, and garnish top of the pate or sides of the platter with tomatoes and herbs. To serve, cut slices about 3/8" to 1/2" (approximately .5 to 1 cm) thick. Makes 8 to 10 slices.

*Garbanzo bean flour, also called chick pea flour, can be found in Middle Eastern or Indian markets.

**Lentils or green split peas also work well in place of the garbanzo bean flour. These can be ground into flour in an electric coffee grinder or spice grinder. For lentils or green split peas, start with 3/4 lb. (350 g) dried.

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Marie Oser is a best selling author and food writer with a weekly column in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Her next book, *Soy of Cooking II* will be published by John Wiley in 2000.

It's Soy Easy!!

By Marie Oser

Soy food sales are soaring. Natural foods are making a move into the mainstream and soy foods are turning up in retail stores, restaurants, and home kitchens, as savvy food manufacturers enter the market with many new and innovative soy products.

High in protein (38% by weight) soy is recognized by the U.S. government as a protein alternative, equivalent to that found in meat, milk, and eggs. Soybeans are an excellent source of fiber (15% by weight) and are high in iron, calcium, zinc, B vitamins, and vitamin E.

Nutritionists and physicians are more frequently recommending regular consumption of soy products as part of a healthy diet to lower cholesterol levels, combat pre-menopausal symptoms, osteoporosis and many forms of cancer. In fact, soy protein is so effective in lowering blood cholesterol that the National Health Service in Italy provides soy protein free of charge to physicians for the treatment of high blood cholesterol in their patients.

Soy is also an excellent source of calcium, and consuming soyfoods is beneficial for bone health because phytochemicals (plant chemicals) present in soybeans called isoflavones can actually prevent bones from breaking down. However, most of the attention paid to the health benefits of

consuming soy have been regarding the phytoestrogen (plant estrogen) genistein and it's role in cancer prevention.

More than 150 studies have shown that when genistein is added to cancer cells growing in a test tube, their growth is inhibited. This applies to all types of cancer cells. Based on studies of populations and their diets, it seems that as little as one serving of soy foods a day could be enough to reduce cancer risk.

It's really easy to add the goodness of soy to every meal. Vegans can be especially pleased with the variety that soyfoods can add to a plant based diet. Familiar dishes like lasagna, tacos, chili, and burgers are examples of traditional style meals that can become vegan-friendly because of the versatility of this extraordinary bean. And this nutritious kitchen chameleon can assist you in creating rich tasting dips, cream sauces, quiches, and scramblers effortlessly. You just have to use your BEAN!!



Start collecting your healthy rewards from soy and check out the following soy recipes, reprinted from my book *Soy of Cooking*.

Spicy Roasted Pepper Dip with Garlic Pita Crisps*

(see next recipe to make garlic pita crisps)

*Reprinted w/permission, *Soy of Cooking*, Marie Oser, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998

This is a delicious, savory dip that is low in calories and fat.

Makes 3 cups

- 1 1/4 cups lite silken tofu (firm)
- 1/3 cup eggless mayonnaise*
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- 3/4 cup roasted sweet red and yellow peppers (jarred is fine)
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
- 2 teaspoons tamari
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram

1. Place tofu in food processor and blend.
2. Add tofu mayonnaise, garlic, and peppers and pulse to mix.
3. Add remaining ingredients and pulse until blended, but chunky.
4. Refrigerate several hours or optimally, overnight.
5. Serve well chilled with crudites or pita crisps.

*Vegenaise or Nayonnaise

Nutrition Analysis: per 3 oz. serving

Calories 28, Protein 2g, Carb 4g, Fiber 1g, Fat 1g, Chol 0.0mg, Calcium 20mg. Sodium 69mg.

Calories from protein: 24%

Calories from Carb: 51%

Calories from Fat: 25%

Garlic Pita Crisps:* Low fat and flavorful, this quick and easy alternative to chips, is a terrific accompaniment to any dip.

12 servings

12 whole wheat or oat bran pita pockets

granulated garlic

Cooking oil spray

1. Preheat oven to 400f Oil spray baking pan lined with foil.
2. Cut pita pockets into eighths and place on prepared pan.
3. Lightly oil spray top side of pita, and sprinkle with granulated garlic. I sometimes like to add Gomasio (Sesame & salt sprinkles) Bake 10 minutes.
4. Place under the broiler 3 to 4 minutes, or until lightly browned.
5. Place dip in center of platter or dip tray, surrounded by pita crisps, or serve alongside several dips in a napkin lined basket.

Nutrition Analysis, per serving: 8 pita crisps:

Calories 122, Protein 5g, Carb 25g, Fiber 3g, Fat 1g, Chol 0.0 mg, Calcium 15 mg. Sodium 172 mg.

Calories from Protein: 15%

Calories from Carb: 77%

Calories from Fat: 8%

Savory Stuffed Peppers*

*Reprinted w/permission, *Soy of Cooking*, Marie Oser, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998

Colorful, tasty and satisfying!

8 servings

2 qts. of boiling water

4 bell peppers (2 green & 2 gold, orange or red), halved and seeded

1 1/2 tsp. olive oil

1 medium red onion, chopped

5 cloves garlic, minced

14 oz. pkg. Gimme Lean, sausage flavor or ground beef flavor.

2 cups cooked brown rice

2 tsp. thyme

4 lg., fresh basil leaves, snipped

- 1/2 cup white wine
- 14 oz. can stewed tomatoes, Italian spiced
- 25 oz. can fat-free tomato sauce
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 fresh basil leaves, snipped
- 1 tsp. granulated garlic

1. Preheat oven to 375 f and take out a 9" by 13" baking pan.
2. Place halved peppers in boiling water and blanch 5 minutes.
3. Plunge into cold water, set aside.
4. In a 10" frying pan, heat oil over medium high flame, 1 minute.
5. Add onions and garlic, saute 3 minutes.
6. Add Gimme Lean, stir using a large spoon to break apart, cook 5 minutes.
7. Add the next 3 ingredients and cook 3 minutes.
8. Add wine and lower heat, simmer 5 minutes, or until ready to stuff peppers.
9. In a medium saucepan, mix together the tomato sauce with the remaining ingredients and cook over medium low heat, 10 minutes.
10. Cover bottom of pan with half of the sauce.
11. Fill each pepper half with savory filling and place in the pan.
12. Top with remaining sauce and cover casserole with foil.
13. Bake 30 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking for an additional 10 to 15 minutes.

Nutrition Analysis, per serving:

Calories 232, Protein 13g, Carbohydrates 42g, Fiber 7g, Fat 2g, Cholesterol 0.0 mg, Calcium 55 mg, Sodium 409 mg.

Calories from Protein: 22%

Calories from Carbohydrates: 72%

Calories from Fat: 6%

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Kelly Smith is co-founder and vice-president of research and product development at [Hempola Inc.](#) She has spent the last 6 years researching essential fatty acid and hemp nutrition. She holds a degree in Physical Education and Physical Therapy. In addition to her responsibilities at Hempola, she practices in Toronto, Ontario, in a busy physiotherapy clinic that she owns.

HEMP SEEDS: THE PERFECT FOOD

By Kelly Smith

Hemp is one of our oldest and most versatile plants and has been documented as far back as the 28th century BC. *Cannabis sativa*, which is the Latin term for "useful hemp" has made a comeback in the food and textile industries, and Canada is leading the way.

Hemp is an exceptionally hardy plant that grows well in our climate. It is grown in Canada both conventionally and organically. It can be grown free of herbicides and pesticides because it is so naturally resistant to pests. For the same reason, genetically engineering hemp is not considered.

Once harvested, the seeds are thoroughly cleaned and should be cold pressed in the absence of light and oxygen, preserving the freshness of the oil. Read the label of any oil product you buy to make sure! Canadian hemp seed oil is produced with only the freshest viable grain possible. Nothing should be steam-sterilized or treated with radiation. The golden rule is "less is more." Less light, less heat, less processing!

This pressing produces a high quality polyunsaturated oil and seed cake (the crushed seed hulls). The oil can be eaten on its own, blended into other food products, blended into body care products, used as a lubricant or natural wood finish in addition to many other uses. The seed cake can be ground into flour, used to brew beer or added to animal feed.



Another process, called de-hulling, can remove the seed coat leaving the "hemp nut" which is widely used in recipes. The stalks of the plants are ground up and used in animal bedding, garden mulch and pulp and paper. Hemp can actually be used in 25,000 potential products!

One of the most commonly asked questions is whether hemp seed oil has any psychoactivity, i.e. will it get you high? The answer is no! Canadian hempseed oil is extremely safe to consume for individuals of all ages.

Hemp seed oil is truly unique. Approximately 80 percent is polyunsaturated fat, the highest of any vegetable oil. Specifically, it contains the essential fatty acids (EFAs) linoleic acid (omega 6) and alpha linolenic acid (omega 3). These EFAs cannot be produced by the body and must be obtained from our diets. Hemp seed oil also contains gamma linolenic acid (GLA), from which omega 6 is naturally converted. Modern day diets and sluggish enzyme activity often impair this conversion and cause GLA deficiency. Hemp seed oil solves this problem. No other single source oil has this ideal combination of EFAs.

Nutrition experts generally recommend that for EFAs to do their job effectively and provide optimal cell function, daily requirements must range from 7 to 11 gm of linoleic acid and from 2 to 3.5 gm of alpha linolenic acid. This can be obtained from one tablespoon of hemp seed oil. However, individuals who consume a diet high in saturated or trans fats will require more, as will people who are overweight or under a great deal of stress.

The hemp seed is 35 percent oil, the richest source of EFAs in the plant kingdom. It is also the king of protein! Of all plant-based sources, its 25 percent protein content, comprised of all eight essential amino acids, is second only to that of the soy bean. The protein in hemp seed is readily digestible, being primarily composed of edistin and albumin that are the components of human blood plasma. Hemp seed derivative products are ideal for ensuring that there is adequate, complete and assimilable protein in the vegetarian diet.

The hemp seed cake can be ground into a rich, nutty tasting flour (41 percent protein) that adds a unique culinary and healthy twist to your baking. Add the flour in its "raw" form to a smoothie for a high powered quick start to your day. The flour is gluten-free and has been approved by the celiac society as a safe ingredient for anyone suffering from this disorder.

The best part of any hemp seed product is the taste! It has a wonderful nutty flavour that fits well into most recipes. Try the oil in salad dressings, pour it on pasta or pizza, mix it into hummus, add the flour to your favorite bread or muffin recipe--the possibilities are endless!

Hemp seed oil is a delicious functional food that ensures an adequate intake of essential fatty acids and protein. Here are two recipes to help you reap the benefits of hempseed oil.

HEMPOLA HUMMUS

- 1 can organic chick peas (drained and rinsed)
- 3 tbsp organic tahini
- 2 cloves garlic (pressed)
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) Hempola Hempseed Oil
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) water
- 1 tsp cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Hot sauce to taste

Mix all ingredients in a food processor until smooth and serve with your favorite pita bread.

BONE BUILDING BROCCOLI

- 1 bunch broccoli
 - 2 T Hempola Hempseed Oil
 - 2 T (or to taste) low sodium soy sauce
 - 1 T toasted sesame seeds
 - 3 T orange juice
 - coarsely ground pepper
1. Steam broccoli until tender crisp, drain, and return to pot.
 2. Toss with Hempola Hempseed Oil, soy sauce, pepper, and orange juice.
 3. Transfer to serving bowl, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and serve immediately.

To toast sesame seeds, place them in a small pan over medium heat, shaking frequently, until they are golden brown. No oil is necessary.

Try adding fresh, finely chopped ginger for added flavor.

For more recipes and information about Hempola products, check their website at <http://www.hempola.com>

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Vegan Mother's Day Dinner

Includes menu and recipes below.

Mom basks in the limelight on her special day as her attentive family showers her with gifts of flowers, cards, candies, fragrance, or wearable items to express appreciation for her loving care and devotion. Long distance phone calls become special moments for Mom as her children and grandchildren greet her from across the country and around the world. If children want to present a most unusual gift, they can even have a star named after their mother.

Mom doesn't even have to cook on her special day. Tradition in some families is to treat her to dinner at her favorite restaurant, while in others Dad and the kids prefer to don aprons and try a bit of culinary wizardry to prepare her favorite dishes at home.

The first Mother's Day began with a completely different focus. In 1870 Julia Ward Howe urged women whose sons fought or died in the Civil War to gather in an act of pacifism. In 1872 Mother's Day was established as an annual holiday.

Many years later the focus of the holiday turned in a completely different direction. Anna Jarvis, a teacher in West Virginia, wanted to memorialize her mother's death in a special way. She recognized that children didn't often express appreciation to their mothers while they were living. In 1908 Anna honored her mother's memory at a church service where she displayed white carnations as a symbol of purity.

While Mom is enjoying all the family's fuss and attention lavished on her special day, she may want to express appreciation to President Woodrow Wilson, who on May 9, 1914, declared the second Sunday in May as the official Mother's Day. As a public statement expressing love and reverence to mothers, President Wilson directed government buildings to display the U.S. flag on Mother's Day and invited the people to display the flag at their homes as well. A year earlier the

House of Representatives adopted a resolution establishing that the President, his Cabinet, and the Congress all tuck white carnations into their lapels on Mother's Day.

Some historians believe that a special day honoring mothers dates back to the ancient Greeks who celebrated spring festivals recognizing a variety of mother goddesses. The ancient Romans honored a goddess named Cybele. Some believe the Roman Catholic church adopted the ancient tradition but transferred the attention to the Virgin Mary as the figure representing motherhood.

Possibly it was the English who created our tradition by establishing Mothering Sunday. On the fourth Sunday in Lent, sons and daughters who were apprenticing returned to their homes with gifts for Mom: small knickknacks, nosegays of wild flowers and violets, and little cakes. Sometimes the English "mum" received frumenty, a sweetened dish of wheat cooked with milk and spices. Scottish moms were offered little pancakes, called Carlins, made from pease porridge fried in butter and seasoned with salt and pepper.

Though there are many countries that adopt the U.S. tradition and recognize Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May, there are those that have chosen other dates throughout the year. Some countries have special ceremonies as a tribute to mothers. Families in Portugal and Spain recognize Mom on December 8 in church with special prayers to the Virgin Mary and a concert afterward.

Japanese tradition has children between 6 and 14 years old honoring their mother by entering a contest with a drawing of their mom. Mexico celebrates on May 10 with a mass at a shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe who symbolizes motherhood.

France heralds the last Sunday in May as Mother's Day with a special family dinner. Sweden celebrates mom on the last Sunday in May. There, the Swedish Red Cross uses money from the sale of little plastic flowers to treat mothers encumbered with many children to a well-deserved vacation.

Whether the family celebration is simple or lavish, keep Mom in the spotlight and spoil her just a little. Ask her how you can make her day memorable. Just this once, she may ask for a lot, but she knows it's only for a day.

If dinner at a restaurant seems too hectic on Mother's Day, why not create the perfect vegan meal at home. Begin by setting the table with tablecloth and cloth napkins, and create a warm ambience with candlelight. Then, enjoy a Vegan Mother's Day Dinner by dining leisurely and savoring every course that celebrates Mother Nature's best offerings.

Those families who enjoy the togetherness of chopping, mixing, and conjuring up a delectable dinner for Mom can begin by serving her a refreshing beverage of **Curried Carrot Zinger** served in a long-stemmed glass and garnished with a celery stalk for stirring the seasonings together.

Leisurely nibbling before the main meal is always a welcome opportunity to share the news of the week. **Hot Karachi Pea Dip** made with peas and pistachios and heightened with a hint of spice will have Mom dipping in again and again to enjoy the exceptional flavors that take on the spices of India.

The cheery salad course is **Fruited Spinach Salad** with the brilliant colors of oranges, apples,

tomatoes, and shredded carrots. The medley of colors is garnished with raisins, macadamias, and hearts of palm and topped with edible spring flowers. To accompany the salad is a rich, plant-based **Lemon Herb Dressing**.

For the entrée, **Stuffed Artichokes** make a stunning presentation as gigantic, earthy flowers in bloom. Stuffed with sautéed vegetables and well-seasoned tofu, the artichokes will impress Mom with her first bite. Accompanying the entrée is **Bulghur Wheat Pilaf with Mushrooms and Carmelized Onions**, deliciously marinated **Moroccan Carrots**, and colorful **Sunny California Salsa**.

Spoil Mom right up to the end of the day with some tempting desserts and a refreshing after-dinner beverage. A dazzling **Green Satin Mousse** creates an irresistible finishing touch. Unique ingredients provide a surprisingly sweet, dreamy dessert with brilliant color. **Sesame and Fruit Jewels**, little confections that can be prepared ahead, make pleasing little accompaniments that can be plucked off the dish and eaten out of hand at dessert time. The celebratory meal comes to a close with cups of comforting **Hot Herbal Tea**. If the weather is steamy, make that **Iced Herbal Tea**.

Appetizer

Curried Carrot Zinger

Hot Karachi Pea Dip with Whole Grain Crackers

Salad

Lemon Herb Dressing

Entrée

Stuffed Artichokes

Bulghur Wheat Pilaf with Mushrooms and Carmelized Onions

Moroccan Carrots

Sunny California Salsa

Dessert

Green Satin Mousse

Sesame and Fruit Jewels

Hot or Iced Herbal Tea

Traditional celebration gatherings almost always begin with a clinking of glasses to toast the occasion. Bring a new twist to freshly squeezed carrot juice with a hint of spice and a touch of curry.

CURRIED CARROT ZINGER

3 3/4 C. (900 ml) carrot juice

2 1/2 t. curry powder

1 3/4 t. rice vinegar

2 or 3 dashes Tabasco sauce or cayenne pepper to taste

5 celery sticks 4 to 5-inches (10 to 12.5 cm) long

1. Stir all ingredients except celery together in a pitcher and stir well. Chill if desired.
2. Pour into long stem glasses and serve with a celery stick garnish. Makes 5 servings.

Dipping into a communal bowl is a great way to bring people together whether it's at a large gathering or an intimate get-together. Dips that come together quickly and easily are invaluable additions to any cook's repertoire. Here's an appetizer with a colorful personality.

HOT KARACHI PEA DIP



- 1/2 C.(120 ml) raw pistachios
- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) frozen peas, thawed
- 3/4 t. salt
- 3/4 t. curry powder
- 1/4 t. cayenne pepper or to taste
- 5 T. water
- 1 T. lemon juice

Pomegranate syrup

1. Combine everything but the pomegranate syrup in the food processor. Process to a creamy puree.
2. Transfer to a 1-quart (1 liter) saucepan and gently heat until thoroughly warmed but not boiling.
3. Spoon into a serving bowl and lightly drizzle top

with pomegranate syrup.

4. Serve with toasted whole-grain pita wedges or whole-grain crackers. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (360 ml) or 5 to 6 servings.

Leafy greens enhanced with sweet fruits, crunchy nuts, and a savory dressing combine to offer a pleasing salad course that earns a gourmet rating. A truly beautiful salad, its dramatic colors of bright orange, red, and white contrast dramatically against the intense deep green of the spinach and are highlighted with a sprinkle of edible flower petals.

FRUITED SPINACH SALAD

- 1 1/2 bunches spinach
- 1 11-oz. (310 g) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 crisp sweet apple, chopped
- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) cherry or grape tomatoes
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) chopped sweet onions
- 2 large carrots, shredded
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) golden raisins
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) chopped, toasted macadamias

1 15-oz. (425 g) can hearts of palm, sliced

Edible flowers, either whole or petals*

1. Wash spinach thoroughly and remove stems. Pat with a kitchen towel to remove excess moisture or use a salad spinner. Cut or tear large leaves into smaller, easily manageable pieces and put them into a large salad bowl.
2. Add mandarin oranges, apples, tomatoes, onions, and carrots, and toss well.
3. Garnish salad with raisins, toasted macadamias, and hearts of palm and toss edible flowers over the top. Serve with Lemon Herb Dressing on the side. Serves 6.

*Edible Flowers: Make sure the flowers you use have never been sprayed with insecticide. Most herb blossoms are edible. Society garlic is one example. A few varieties of edible flowers include calendula, dianthus, marigolds, nasturtiums, pansies, roses, stocks, violas, violets, and the blossoms of oranges, lemons, and limes.

An easy to assemble light dressing makes an ideal complement to the Fruited Spinach Salad and allows the colors and flavors of each of the fruits and vegetables to stand out and be fully appreciated.

LEMON HERB DRESSING

1 1/4 t. salt

1/4 t. pepper

1/4 t. dried oregano

1 1/4 t. salt

1 large clove garlic, crushed

1/2 C. (120 ml) extra virgin olive oil

1/2 C. (120 ml) fresh lemon juice

1/2 C. (120 ml) water

1 T. balsamic vinegar

1 T. maple syrup

1. Combine all ingredients in a jar and shake vigorously. Shake well before each use.
2. Store in the refrigerator where it will keep well for several weeks.
3. Be sure to remove the dressing from the refrigerator about 1 hour before serving to allow the olive oil to reach room temperature and blend well. Makes about 1 1/3 cups (320 ml).

You couldn't want a more eye-appealing dish for a springtime occasion. The appetizing stuffed artichokes resemble giant flowers in full bloom. For an attractive plate presentation, place the stuffed artichoke off center close to the edge of the plate and arrange servings of bulghur wheat pilaf, Moroccan carrots, and Sunny California Salsa in sections radiating out from the artichoke.

STUFFED ARTICHOKE



3 large (not giant) fresh artichokes

Stuffing

1 medium onion, chopped

1/2 of a green bell pepper, chopped

1/2 of a red bell pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely minced

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 1/4 t. salt

Freshly ground pepper

1 lb. (450 g) firm tofu

1 to 2 T. nutritional yeast

3 T. raw pine nuts

2 slices whole grain bread, diced

2 t. soy sauce

1 T. lemon juice or to taste

To Prepare the Artichokes:

1. Remove a few of the smaller leaves around the base and discard. Lay each artichoke on its side, and cut about 1-inch (2.5 cm) off the top with a heavy-duty serrated knife.
2. Cut off the stem where it joins the bottom of the artichoke so it will stand upright when served. Reserve the stems.
3. With a kitchen scissors, snip off the top 1/2-inch (.5 cm) of the remaining leaves, and use a small paring knife to trim off the outer skin from the stems.

To Cook the Artichoke:

1. Stand the artichokes upsidedown in a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Put stems into the saucepan. Add 1-inch (2.5 cm) of water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Turn heat down to low and steam until just tender, about 25 to 45 minutes, depending on the size of the artichoke.

3. Test for doneness by piercing the bottom or heart with a fork. There should be no resistance. Remove to a plate to cool.

To Prepare the Stuffing:

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F. (Gas Mark 3). Put onions, red and green bell peppers, garlic, and olive oil in a non-stick skillet. Sauté over high heat for 7 to 8 minutes, turning frequently. Add salt and pepper.
2. Drain off liquid from tofu and rinse in cold water. Squeeze tofu through the fingers into a large mixing bowl. Add pine nuts, nutritional yeast, diced breadcrumbs, soy sauce, and lemon juice. Add cooked onions and peppers and mix until all ingredients are well distributed.

To Stuff the Artichoke:

1. Gently spread artichoke leaves, taking care not to break them off. Reach into the center and remove the cone of lighter colored leaves by tugging and lifting them out. With a spoon, scoop out the hairy inedible choke and discard.
2. Use a teaspoon, fill the center with the stuffing. Then stuff between the leaves, starting with the outside and working inward.
3. Place the stuffed artichokes on a baking dish and cover lightly with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake at 325 F.(Gas Mark 3) for 10 to 12 minutes to warm through. Makes 3 sensational main-dish servings or 6 shared servings as a side dish.

You may want to serve some sauce on the side for dipping the heart of the artichoke. Some suggestions are Tahini Falafel Sauce or Lemon Dill Silken Sauce located in our Recipe Index.

A hearty grain dish of bulghur wheat adds its welcome earthy flavor to round out the colorful dinner menu. This recipe can be prepared a day ahead and simply reheated just before serving without losing any of its savory flavors.

BULGHUR PILAF WITH MUSHROOMS AND CARMELIZED ONIONS

1 large onion, chopped
1 t. extra virgin olive oil
2 t. balsamic vinegar
1/2 lb. (225 g) button mushrooms, sliced

1 C. (240 ml) coarse grind bulghur wheat
2 C. (480 ml) water or vegetable broth
3/4 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper

1. Combine onions and olive oil in a large deep skillet or wok. Sauté over high heat, stirring frequently, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add 1 t. balsamic vinegar and continue cooking and stirring for another minute or two. Add the other teaspoon of balsamic vinegar and continue cooking until onions are quite browned. Add mushrooms and cook 1 minute longer, stirring often. Remove to a bowl and set aside.

2. Put the bulghur wheat, water, salt, and pepper into the skillet. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam for 15 to 20 minutes, until grains are tender and all liquid is absorbed.
 3. Stir in onions and mushrooms and serve. Makes 4 to 6 servings.
-

This is a deliciously pungent dish that can be served hot or cold. It actually tastes better the following day when the carrots have had time to marinate.

MOROCCAN CARROTS



8 medium carrots, peeled and angle sliced 1/8" (.25 cm) thick
1 C. (240 ml) water
1/4 t. salt

1/3 C. (80 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1/4 C. (60 ml) apple cider vinegar
1 C. (240 ml) water
1 1/2 t. salt
1/4 t. ground coriander
1 stick cinnamon
4 whole allspice berries

Parsley, finely chopped for garnish

1. Combine carrots, water, and salt in a 4-quart (1 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam 10 minutes. Drain off liquid, reserving it for a future soup stock.
 2. Combine olive oil, apple cider vinegar, water, salt, coriander, cinnamon, and allspice and add to drained carrots. Cover and cook on high for 8 to 10 minutes or until carrots are softened. Transfer to an oval serving bowl.
 3. Just before serving, garnish with 1 teaspoon of minced parsley. Serves 6 to 8.
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SUNNY CALIFORNIA SALSA

- 1 orange, chopped
- 1 apple, chopped
- 1 pear, chopped
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) sweet onion, chopped
- 1/4 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 T. unsweetened dried shredded coconut
- 1 T. apple cider vinegar
- 1 T. maple syrup
- Pinch or two of cayenne pepper

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss well. Serve immediately or marinate for several hours or overnight. Serves 4 to 6.

A dessert like none other, its surprising texture and flavor will win you over in spite of some initial reluctance to consider the avocado as an ideal dessert base. The creamy, light, satin smooth texture provides the background, while the zesty tang of lime pleases with a delightful balancing sweetness. Presenting the tasty pairing of sweetened avocado and lime revives a long-forgotten dessert once typically served in Latin America. This updated version uses soymilk and a touch of pistachio for garnish.

GREEN SATIN MOUSSE

- Flesh of 1 medium avocado, chilled
- Juice of 1/2 lime, chilled
- 3 T. evaporated cane juice
- 3 T. soymilk, chilled

1 t. crushed raw pistachio nuts

1. Combine all ingredients except pistachios in the blender and start machine on low speed. You may have to stop the machine and redistribute the ingredients several times. Process until consistency is fully pureed and creamy light.
 2. Spoon into 2 small custard cups or demitasse cups and garnish with crushed pistachios. Serve to 2 fortunate dessert lovers.
-

Take them to a pot luck, give them as a gift, serve them to company, pack them in the kids lunches, enjoy them on a road trip, munch on them as a snack. These little fruity treats are jewels with great versatility. They can be made well ahead and stored in the refrigerator for at least two weeks without spoiling.

SESAME AND FRUIT JEWELS

- 3/4 lb. pitted prunes
- 1/4 lb. dried apples
- 6 oz. (170 g) dried Calmyrna figs (golden figs)
- 15 pitted dates

1/2 C. (120 ml) natural sesame seeds

3/4 t. vanilla extract

1 T. maple syrup

1/4 C. (60 ml) + 2 T. water

1/2 t. ground allspice

1/8 t. ground cloves

1/4 t. ground cinnamon

2/3 C. (160 ml) natural sesame seeds

1. Combine all ingredients except the spices in a food processor in batches if needed. You may have to stop the machine several times to redistribute ingredients. Process until all fruits are broken down into a thick puree.
2. Transfer to a large bowl, and add spices. Mix in by hand.
3. Form into 1-inch (2.5 cm) balls and roll in sesame seeds. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Keeps well for 2 weeks. Makes about 50 to 60 confections.

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24 Carrot Award



In each issue **Vegetarians in Paradise** presents the **24 Carrot Award** to an outstanding person or organization that endeavors to practice or promote education, natural health, wholesome nutrition, and ecology techniques for the mutual benefit of humans, animals, and the earth.

Vegetarians in Paradise proudly presents its **24 Carrot Award** to **Cherie Soria**, founder of the **Living Light Culinary Arts Institute**. **Cherie Soria** has been a guiding force in inspiring and training the current leaders in the raw food culinary movement.

What follows are the questions asked by Vegetarians in Paradise (VIP) and the answers by Cherie Soria (CS).

VIP: What initially turned you on to raw foods? What were the primary influences encouraging you to pursue a career in raw food? How long have you been a raw foodist?

CS: I went to Puerto Rico in 1992 to study with Dr. Ann Wigmore, after reading books about the amazing results she achieved using wheat grass and raw food to heal cancer and other terminal illnesses. I was curious about Dr. Wigmore's work and thought a vacation in Puerto Rico sounded like a good idea. I had no intention of trading my cooked vegan diet for a raw food diet, but after witnessing the amazing healings that transpired there, I came home a true believer in the power of the raw food lifestyle.

I knew that the majority of Dr. Wigmore's clients would return to their old way of eating, because her diet was designed for cleansing and healing. I understood human nature enough to know that most people would be bored to death if forced to eat that way the rest of their lives, because food has to feed more than the body, more than the emotions--food must nourish the soul. So, as soon as I returned home, I began creating foods that were delicious, satisfying, comforting, and nourishing. Foods like lasagna, burritos, burgers, spaghetti, pizza, brownies, and ice cream, are not easily forgotten. My goal became to make them raw, leading to the birth of the gourmet raw cuisine I teach today.

VIP: Prior to raw food what was your experience with vegetarianism and veganism?

CS: I became a vegetarian in the late sixty's after reading several books such as *Silent Spring*, by Rachel Carson, and *Survival Into The 21st Century* by Viktoras Kulvinskis. Several of my family members had illnesses such as cancer and heart disease, and I had already concluded that eating meat had a negative impact on our health, but these books expanded to the interrelationship of all

things. Adopting a vegetarian diet was very appealing to me, since I had witnessed the slaughter of my pet chicken at an early age and never felt the same about meat after that.

I read everything I could about natural health, including books by Walker, Bragg, Wigmore, Kulvinskis, Jenson, Shelton, Ehret, Hauser, Christopher, and Kellogg. Ultimately, however, my personal experience with Dr. Ann Wigmore was the catalyst that catapulted me from an 80% cooked vegan diet to an 80% raw diet. I had been teaching vegetarian cooking for nineteen years when I went to study with Dr. Wigmore. I loved to cook and I loved teaching classes about cooking, which I used as a forum to introduce my students to vegetarianism. I was active with PETA and EarthSave, was working on a vegan cookbook and had a large following of culinary students.

In 1992, when I went to Puerto Rico, I knew very little about Dr. Ann, as she was called there, but she soon became a huge inspiration to me. She was the most energetic woman of any age I had ever met. Just before I left Puerto Rico, she told me that I would be a beacon of light for her teachings. I didn't know if she told everyone that or if she really thought I was that special, but I went home and immediately began teaching raw vegan culinary arts-- first in my home, then through community colleges and vegetarian conferences throughout the country. In 1996, I published my first raw vegan recipe book, *Angel Foods Healthy Recipes for Heavenly Bodies*. Later, my friendship with Viktoras Kulvinskis motivated me to start Living Light Culinary Arts Institute.



VIP: What events led to the establishment of Living Light Culinary Arts Institute (LLCAI)? How did you come to select that name?

CS: Shortly after returning from Puerto Rico, I began catering the National Essene Gatherings at Breitenbush Hot Springs and become friends with Viktoras Kulvinskas. He and his wife, Youkta loved the gourmet cuisine I was creating with raw vegan foods and invited me to cater their yearly retreat for women in the healing arts. Viktoras was adamant that the style of cuisine I had created should be taught to the top chefs in the world.

At another Essene Gathering, I met an inspiring woman named Dr. Janedare Winston, a professor and teacher of the living food lifestyle, who insisted that I should devote myself to teaching teachers, so there would be an army of people sharing the live food lifestyle with the world. "One person can only do so much," she told me. That was enough for me, and by the time I drove home from Oregon to California, I had decided to create a school for individuals, chefs, and instructors of raw living foods. The name came a few days later. I knew I wanted something that could endure without me, so I couldn't name it The Cherie Soria Raw Culinary Institute. I wanted it to reflect the interconnection of all things. Living lightly on the land, eating light and being in the light were all themes for me, so Living Light Culinary Arts Institute was born.

VIP: What are the goals and principal activities of Living Light Culinary Arts Institute? How many instructors are involved in LLCAI? Which courses do you personally teach?

CS: At Living Light we are committed to teaching individuals, chefs, and teachers of raw vegan culinary arts. We have a strong focus on teaching teachers because we seek to influence the greatest number of people. Individuals, chefs, and teachers are represented fairly equally at each training session. One-third of the participants attend because they want to add more delicious raw food to their own diets (and that of their families), 1/3 want to incorporate raw cuisine into their professional careers (or make a career change and become a professional chef), and 1/3 are passionate about raw foods and want to teach it to others.

Our Mission Statement is: Living Light Culinary Arts Institute educates and inspires people to reach the highest standards of leadership and professionalism in raw culinary arts while promoting balance and happiness in their everyday lives. Through training, personal support, and unconditional acceptance, we empower participants to share their gifts with others in joyous celebration of healthful living. Living Light Community is a family of conscious individuals devoted to excellence, connection, and transformation of body, mind, and spirit.

People who attend our trainings know that we are more than a business-- we are a family. Community building is as important to us as teaching raw culinary arts. Right now we have 12 staff, whom we consider family, plus several angels who attend to serve the community when we conduct our trainings and events. Eight of the twelve are outstanding chefs and instructors who make their living teaching and catering gourmet living foods. The students love having a variety of instructors and have the opportunity to work one-on-one with each of us.

As general rule, I am present at most of the classes we conduct at our Harbin Hot Springs location and I teach a large percentage of the classes. Teaching is my passion, and I love to connect with the students on a personal level, so I am a very hands-on director. My partner and co-director of LLCAI, Dan Ladermann is a certified Hippocrates Health Educator, and teaches most of the classes in raw nutritional science.



VIP: Can you describe some of the courses you offer that would introduce newcomers to raw foods?

CS: Our entry-level course is FUNdamentals of Raw Living Foods. We consider this to be the first step toward a new culinary awakening, because it opens a whole new world of raw cuisine to people who wouldn't have believed it possible. At Harbin Hot Springs this two-day course precedes the chef training, but it is also offered in many areas of the country as a one-day intensive. During this introductory workshop, students attend dozens of superb culinary presentations teaching a wide variety of raw, delicious easy-to-prepare appetizers, fruit smoothies, soups, sauces, salads, dressings, entrees, patés, wraps,

rolls, nut milks, nondairy cheeses, dehydrated goodies, such as crackers, and amazing desserts. Included is how to use all the essential equipment and supplies necessary in a raw kitchen, and instruction in sprouting and kitchen gardening. Even though we consider it a basic course, it is so full of information that people who have been preparing raw foods for years are amazed at how much they learn.

Anyone who wants this class offered in their area and is willing to host us, can call our office and we will help them schedule classes.

VIP: If someone wanted to be certified as a raw chef, what training would the person need?

CS: Following FUNdamentals is our second level class, Essentials of Raw Culinary Arts, a 5-day hands-on workshop that expands on the FUNdamentals course. Students gain the confidence to transition to a healthy lifestyle and the foundation necessary to attend LLCIA's Associate Chef and Instructor Training. Students work one-on-one with a variety of the world's most outstanding raw food chefs and teachers, with a ratio of one instructor per five students.

In this workshop, students learn the secrets of gourmet raw food preparation. They gain an understanding of flavor dynamics, and some basics of raw nutritional science. They become skilled in knife technique and familiar with kitchen equipment and timesaving gadgets of all kinds. Students particularly love learning how to combine herbs and spices to create classic and ethnic flavors without using recipes. Recipe development, learning to balance textures and flavors within individual recipes or entire menus, creating raw variants of cooked food recipes, while learning to organize and manage a raw food kitchen, are all part of the curriculum that prepares students to go on to the next level, the 9-day Associate Chef and Instructor Training. By the time students have completed the chef training, they can confidently prepare everything from appetizers to desserts, create their own recipes, organize dinner parties, teach classes, and have fun while doing it!

We also offer classes in Food Design, Raw Event Catering, Elegant Entertaining and Gourmet Spa Cuisine & Recipe Development. In July, we offer a Raw Kids Camp designed and directed by a former Montessori school teacher and administrator. While their parents are attending the LLCIA Associate Chef and Instructor Training, the kids learn to prepare their own meals in junior raw food chef classes, and enjoy programs in arts and crafts, eco-games, story telling, and movement in the beautiful setting of Harbin Hot Springs.

VIP: We understand that LLCAI also trains raw food instructors. Could you give us the features of that training?

CS: We have a strong commitment to teaching teachers, and do everything we can to teach and mentor individuals who want to teach. The fact is, everyone who chooses to eat a high-raw diet will be asked questions about it and will share it with friends, so even those students who do not plan to teach classes to the public, will benefit from taking the course. The instructor training includes everything a teacher needs to confidently teach a culinary class, including planning and organizing, marketing tips, public speaking, and cost analysis. Once students have graduated from the teacher training, they are eligible to purchase our Instructor Empowerment Kits, providing everything they need to teach successful classes. We also advertise these standardized LLCAI licensed classes on our website to assist our graduates in marketing their classes.

LLCAI supports individuals in making life choices that promote health and well being in all aspects of their lives, including career changes. Many of our former students are now making a living teaching raw food classes and catering raw events.

VIP: In addition to your efforts at Harbin Springs in Northern California, you have been involved in activities around the world. Could you tell us about some of these events such as the Raw World Festival in Costa Rica?

CS: I have co-produced several retreats in tropical locations, including Jamaica, Hawaii and Costa Rica, as I love the beach, warm weather, and tropical fruits. This is the second year my partner, Dan Ladermann, and I have produced RAW WORLD International Festival of Raw Food Enthusiasts, located on a pristine stretch of beach in Costa Rica. It's a beautiful gathering of active, fun-minded people who want to experience a healthy vacation and eat some of the best raw gourmet cuisine in the world. We invite great chefs and speakers, including top leaders in the raw community. This is by far THE most awesome healthy lifestyle vacation ever!

VIP: LLCIA has inspired a number of books on raw food. What are some of the works that have been authored by your former students?

CS: Our school attracts people from all walks of life who are enthusiastic about learning to create delicious gourmet raw vegan cuisine and want to share it with others. Many of our students have gone on to become authors and write about their experience with raw food, sharing their recipes with others. Among Living Light's roster of outstanding graduates are:

Roxanne Klein, owner of Roxanne's and coauthor of **RAW**

Chad Sarno, author of *Vital Creations*

Elaina Love, author of *Elaina's Pure Joy Kitchen*

Renee Loux-Underkoffler, author of *The Raw Truth*

Sergei and Valya Boutenko, coauthors of *Eating Without Heating*

Suzanne Alex Ferrara, author of *The Raw Food Primer* and many more too numerous to mention

VIP: LLCAI has a distinguished roster of alumni. Who are some of the celebrity chefs trained at your institute?

CS: Roxanne Klein, of Roxanne's restaurant, is the most famous raw food chef in the world. Her restaurant has received rave reviews around the world. She was recently featured on the cover of

Bon Appetite magazine as one of the 10 most innovative chefs of the decade. Roxanne attended Living Light about a year before opening her now famous restaurant, Roxanne's.

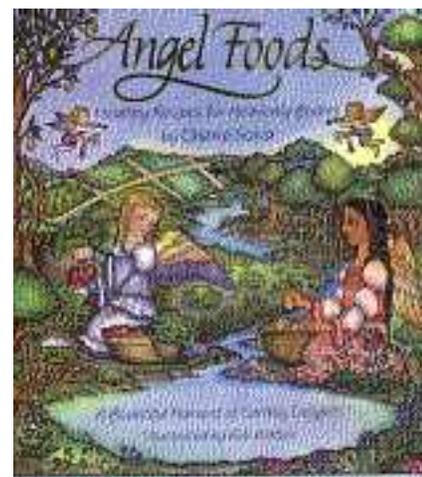
Chad Sarno, now head chef for Spirit New York, spent two years training with me before going to work with Roxanne, helping with recipe and menu development.

Elaina Love, author of *Elaina's Pure Joy Kitchen* and Matt Samuelson, both full-time instructors at the school, teach classes around the world.

Jennifer Cornbleet, a celebrity chef in Chicago, is another of our esteemed instructors. There are many other internationally known instructors of raw foods who have trained with us -- some came as novices and others were already raw food chefs and teachers, but wanted an opportunity to work with me personally. These include people like the Boutenkos, Renee Loux, Rose Lee Calabro, and Nomi Shannon, to name a few.

VIP: Your book *Angel Foods* has a spiritual quality along with some unique recipes and techniques of raw food preparation. Would you share the essential message of the book with our readers? Are you planning another book?

CS: I spent many years championing EarthSave and learned the importance of meeting people where they are. That is why my book is not 100% raw. It is 100% vegan and contains about 125 raw recipes and 125 cooked recipes. I feel my place is to help people move in the direction of healthy living without judgment about where they are or how far they want to go. I have a gentle approach and consequently I attract a lot of people who are not vegetarians when they first come to our school.



My book reflects my spiritual approach to life. I believe that love and appreciation are powerful creators, and I use prayer and intention as a means of creating a joyful life. It was inconceivable to me to separate my spiritual self and my work, even though I was warned that many health food stores would not carry a recipe book that included spiritual content. I have a second book in print that was written in Spanish, called *Comiendo Pura Vida*, which means "Eating Pure Life." I co-authored it with Rodrigo Crespo, a Costa Rican. *Angel Foods* will soon be published in German and I am working on a third book, *Raw Inspiring Gourmet Living Foods*, which will include lots of beautiful photographs.

VIP: How has your raw food lifestyle affected your relationship with friends, relatives, and associates?

CS: In the 60's, when I first decided to quit eating meat, my friends thought I was pretty weird, so I began teaching vegetarian cooking. I wanted to make friends with people who were interested in eating healthy food. Since then, as my diet evolved from vegetarian to vegan and then to raw vegan, I continued to attract friends who wanted to learn about creating all these great tasting, cutting-edge, healthy gourmet foods. I find I have more in common with people who eat the way I do, so it works out great. Now, most of my friends and associates eat a high-raw diet, even if they aren't 100% raw. I don't really focus on percentages, anyway. If they like raw food, they are raw food enthusiasts -- no matter what percentage raw they ate that day. As far as my family is

concerned, they love my food, but don't want to make changes in their own lives. I honor their choices, just as they honor mine.

VIP: We notice the raw food movement has grown tremendously in the last few years. What do you envision for the future of the raw lifestyle?

CS: I believe the raw food movement is growing faster than the vegetarian movement did in its infancy because people don't have to give anything up. They can simply add more delicious raw foods to their diet. The more they eat the better they feel. Raw food is less threatening than diets that restrict certain foods. Also, it just makes sense to people that the more raw food they eat the better off they will be. And, don't forget, we have over 300 Living light graduates out there sharing this with people who are sharing with others, and so forth! It is exponential growth!

VIP: Could you give us some of the highlights of your education and career?

CS: I am completely self-taught. I never attended college or culinary school, which is a surprise to many people. I always had a natural talent for cooking and read cookbooks from cover to cover -- the way other people read novels. I grew up watching cooking shows on TV. My favorites were The Galloping Gourmet, The French Chef and the Frugal Gourmet. I also studied the textbooks from the CIA and other culinary schools and have attended classes with great vegetarian cooks like Olympic Gold Medal winners, Ron Pickarski and Ken Bergeron. In fact, I have had the pleasure of working with many great vegetarian chefs over the years.

I am a certified hypnotherapist and have a line of self-improvement/guided visualization and affirmation tapes. I have earned two Black Belts in karate and had my own dojo, which taught me a tremendous amount about dedication and discipline, empowering me in many ways. I was a hair designer for many years and taught hair design at shows all over North America. I also ran a large, successful salon in Sun Valley, Idaho and had an import export business. I feel everything I have done in my life has enabled me to walk the path I am now on, which empowers and motivates people to live healthier, happier lives.

VIP: What are some of the awards and honors you have received?

CS: My greatest awards come from people who write and tell me how much I have influenced their lives. No other award can be as meaningful.

VIP: Of all of your personal accomplishments, which ones give you the most pride and satisfaction?

CS: My devotion to teaching vegetarian foods for 30 years has saved the lives of countless innocent animals and that dwarfs any of my other accomplishments; I have personally certified over 300 raw food instructors, many of whom are now living their passion, teaching and influencing others; Each time someone shares that the information they have learned through the school, my books, or one of our graduates has helped them create a healthier, happier life; Being an early pioneer of gourmet raw vegan cuisine and helping to further this movement; Influencing the consciousness of people and helping them realize how their food choices affect themselves and the planet; Lastly, hearing from women who say that I am an inspiration to them. There are not enough female leaders for women to look up to. It is very gratifying and humbling to be considered an inspiration to others.

VIP: What personal goals have you set for yourself in the coming years?



I want to create a permanent, full-time location for Living Light where we can have on-going raw vegan culinary arts classes and other programs for conscious living. We are focused on promoting community, permaculture and organic living, programs in personal growth, yoga and movement classes, meditation and guided imagery, performance art, various healing

modalities, life coaching, programs for kids, and a lot more. We need a place where our staff can live and work together. Intentional community is an important goal for all of us at Living Light.

We are currently working with The Institute for Vibrant Living, a non-profit 501(c)(3) that was created for the purpose of building community and promoting a raw plant-based diet. The institute is interested in assisting us in realizing our dream for a permanent location and can receive tax-deductible donations to acquire a facility that will provide us with the space to manifest our vision. You can contact them about contributions at dan@vibrantliving.org

I also have a new book coming out in a year and plan to create videos and on-line education for people transitioning to a raw food lifestyle. We have lots of great ideas and a wonderful, talented, capable family of staff who is dedicated to our common vision.

VIP: What leisure activities and hobbies do you enjoy?

CS: My life is very full these days and I don't allow myself much leisure time, but I enjoy RAW WORLD, our winter vacation in Costa Rica, even though it is a working vacation. I like traveling and meeting new people and inspiring them. That really feeds me. I enjoy doing anything with my partner, Dan Ladermann. We walk or run on the beach nearly every day when we are at home. I like spending time with my friends and family. I like to ski and hike and play in the ocean.

VIP: What person or persons have had the most influence on your life?

CS: My father, Fred Soria, because of his passion for teaching, his ethics and honesty, and his altruism; spiritual leaders like Krishnamurti, Yogananda and the Essene teachings; teachers of the power of positive thinking like Earnest Holmes, Maxwell Maltz, Nathaniel Hill, Alan Watts, the Seth material written by Jane Roberts and other writers of higher knowledge; and Dr. Ann Wigmore and Viktoras Kulvinskis for their tireless work spreading the message of raw foods to the world.

VIP: Have we overlooked anything that you would like to share with our readers?

CS: If you are in a position to help us create a permanent school for Living Light; have the kind of administrative ability to run a full-time culinary school; can assist financially or write grants, we can use your help. This is the seventh year our school has been in existence and we are ready to evolve to the next level. With more classes offered, we can reach even more people. You can also help to support us by telling others about our school and by shopping at our on-line store, which offers supplies, books and equipment for the raw vegan kitchen.

If you desire a more healthful and conscious way of life, want more energy and vitality, want to

learn about environmentally friendly cuisine, and the benefits of raw organic foods for your health and for the planet, Living Light Culinary Arts workshops and retreats are perfect for YOU! Please call us at 800-816-2319 or 707-964-2420 or visit our website at <http://www.RawFoodChef.com>

***Vegetarians in Paradise* is pleased and privileged to be able to share some of Cherie Soria's recipes with our readers. Below are five exciting and delicious raw food recipes from her repertoire.**

**[Hot Chocolate Brownie and Walnut Gelato Cake](#)
[Served with Maple, Chocolate, and Raspberry Sauces](#)**

[Black and White Halvah](#)

[Banana Nut Brittle](#)

[Italian Pesto Almond Torte](#)

[Stuffed Mushrooms with Pine Nuts and Herbs](#)

Here is the dessert that I demonstrated at the Women's Chef and Restaurateur Association National Conference. It includes brownies, maple walnut ice cream, and three sweet sauces--maple, chocolate, and raspberry. One could serve the brownie as a traditional, square-cut brownie for an after school treat; the ice cream could be served alone or with any of the sauces as a simple dessert; or the ice cream and brownie could be served together as cake and ice cream with one or two sauces.

One could also layer the ice cream and crumbled brownie mixture with the sauces in a parfait glass and use some whole raspberries on top for a beautiful effect. For the WCR event, I chose to take it a step further. I pressed the brownie mixture firmly into a very shallow rectangular pan, 1/2 inch thick, and froze it. I did the same with the ice cream. Then, I put the ice cream layer on top of the brownie layer, cut the entire thing in half, and placed one half on top of the other--creating a frozen, double layered cake. I served it sliced, in six layers, with all the layers visible, on a grid of sauces. In this form it would be titled:



Hot Chocolate Brownie and Walnut Gelato Cake **Served with Maple, Chocolate, & Raspberry Sauces**

Hot Chocolate Brownies

Serves 8

- 4 cups walnuts, soaked 8 to 12 hours, then dehydrated
- 1/2 cup pitted soft dates, chopped
- 1/2 cup dried figs, soaked 15 minutes, drained, and chopped
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil, warmed to liquid
- 1 cup cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- pinch solar-dried sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts, soaked for 8 to 12 hours, then dehydrated

1. Place the walnuts in a food processor and pulse until they reach the consistency of meal.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and continue processing until it is well mixed and sticky. The mixture should hold together when pressed into a ball. If oil begins to separate from the mixture, it is over processed. You may still use it, but it is not the desired effect.
3. Press the mixture firmly into an 8- x 8-inch brownie pan. Cover and chill.
4. Cut into 8 equal pieces. May be stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator or freezer. Keeps in the refrigerator for 1 week or in the freezer for 1-2 months.

Maple Walnut Ice Cream

Serves 8

- 2 cups walnuts, soaked 8 to 12 hours
- 1 cup cashews
- 2 1/4 cups water
- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon maple extract
- pinch solar-dried sea salt
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts, soaked for 8 to 12 hours, then dehydrated (optional)

1. Drain and rinse the walnuts.
2. Put the soaked walnuts, cashews, and all remaining ingredients, except the chopped walnuts, into a blender and blend until completely smooth and creamy. The mixture should resemble the consistency of a thick milkshake.
3. Pour the walnut cream into ice cube trays and freeze until hard.
4. Put cubes through a Green Life or Champion Juicer outfitted with the homogenizing plate.
5. Stir in the chopped walnuts and return to the freezer for a couple of hours. Serve immediately or store in the freezer until ready to use. Keeps in the freezer, in a sealed container, for 1 to 2 months.

If you have an Italian ice cream maker, simply follow the directions to make your ice cream, then fold in the chopped walnuts when the process is completed or before returning the ice cream to the

freezer.

Maple Sauce

Serves 12

- 1 cup pine nuts, soaked 2-4 hours
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup soft dates, pitted
- 1/4 cup coconut oil, warmed to liquid
- 1 vanilla bean, soft center scraping or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon maple extract
- water to thin, as needed

Combine ingredients in a high-powered blender and blend until smooth and creamy, adding water if needed to create a thick drizzle.

Rich Chocolate Sauce

Serves 8

- 2 ripe avocados, peeled, seeded, and mashed
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 3/4 cup sucanat
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 vanilla bean, soft center scraping or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Combine ingredients in a food processor or blender and puree until smooth.
2. Add a little more water, if needed. The more water you add, the thinner the sauce will be.

Raspberry Coulis

Serves 8

- 1 pint fresh raspberries
- 1 1/2 cups soft dates, pitted
- water, if needed

1. Put raspberries in a blender with a small amount of water, if needed, to puree.
2. Pour the blended raspberry sauce into a mesh bag and strain to remove the seeds.
3. Return the raspberry sauce to the blender along with the dates and blend until smooth.
4. Store the coulis in a sealed container in the refrigerator until ready to use. Will keep for one week in the refrigerator.

This version of Halvah is made with a wonderful, raw black tahini that has a natural smokey flavor, available online from Living Tree Community. Halvah is easy to make (only four ingredients), melts in your mouth, and is high in calcium. Best of all, it is delicious!



Black and White Halvah

Serves 6-8

1/4 cup pure, raw coconut oil

1/2 cup pitted soft dates

1/4 cup raw tahini

1/4 cup raw black tahini (or substitute regular raw tahini for blond halva)

1. Put measured coconut oil in a sealed glass jar and place it in warm water to liquefy. Put liquid oil in the blender with dates, and process until smooth.
2. Divide the date paste in half and blend half with the regular tahini. Add the black tahini to the other half and blend it well.
3. Put both Halvahs in the refrigerator for a few minutes to firm up. Remove after a few minutes, and knead the two together to create a swirled effect or form the design of your choice.
4. Refrigerate Halva until firm. Cut into small pieces. Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

When the kids come home from school, they will love this crispy nut brittle that is good and nutritious. Make several batches at once and store it in a sealed container in the freezer. It will last for months.



Banana Nut Brittle

Serves 12

- 2 1/2 cups pitted dates
- 8 bananas -- peeled
- 3 cups almonds -- roughly chopped
- 3 cups dried, shaved coconut
- 1/4 cup flax meal

1. Blend bananas, dates, and flax meal until smooth.
2. Stir in nuts and coconut.
3. Evenly spread 4 cups of mixture on a dehydrator tray lined with a teflex sheet. Score into the size and shape you want. (I like 4 x 6 to create 24 rectangles.)
4. Dehydrate at 105 degrees for 12 hours, then flip them over and continue dehydrating for another 12 hours or until crispy.
5. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator or freezer for up to 4 months.

This pesto torte, made from soaked almond cheese, is always a showstopper! I have taught it to thousands of people since I created it in 1990. One taste of this and people understand that raw food does not mean just salads. I guarantee that if you make this for your guests, they will not guess it is raw and will doubt it is vegan.



Italian Pesto Almond Torte

Serves 12

Almond Cheese

2 cups almonds, hot soaked and peeled
2 tablespoons light miso
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon Celtic sea salt
Chlorine-free water, as needed

1. To make the almond cheese, blend ingredients in a blender until creamy adding as little water as possible.
2. Pour almond batter into a cheesecloth-lined colander and allow it to ferment on the pantry shelf or in a cupboard for 10-12 hours. Place a weight on top of the cheese after about 2 hours of fermenting.
3. When the fermentation time is completed, place the cheese in a tightly covered container and refrigerate for another 8-10 hours or until well chilled and firm. Remove cheesecloth and serve as desired. (See assembly directions, below.)

Basil Pesto

1 cup basil leaves tightly packed
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup pine nuts
1 clove garlic
1/2 teaspoon Celtic salt

To make the basil pesto, place the ingredients in a food processor using the "S" blade and puree, leaving it a little bit chunky. Chill.

Sun-dried Tomato Pesto

- 1 cup sun-dried tomatoes (1 cup = 2.5 oz), soaked 3-4 hours
- Reserved tomato water, if needed
- 2 soft dates, pitted
- 1 clove garlic
- 3 tablespoons red onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- 1 Roma tomato, seeded and chopped
- 4 leaves chiffonade of fresh basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon Celtic salt

To make the sun-dried tomato pesto, place the ingredients in a food processor using the "S" blade and puree, leaving it a little bit chunky. Chill until needed.

To assemble the torte

1. Prepare a mold by draping it with damp cheesecloth.
2. Evenly pack 1/3 of the almond cheese into the bottom of the mold.
3. Next, create a layer of sun-dried tomato pesto using all of the tomato pesto. Firmly pack pesto into place.
4. Evenly pack another 1/3 portion of the almond cheese on top of the sun-dried tomato pesto.
5. Next, using all of the basil pesto, gently and firmly place a layer of basil pesto on top of the cheese. Firmly pack pesto into place.
6. Finally, spread the remainder of the almond cheese evenly on top of the pesto. Press gently.
7. Invert the torte onto a plate and remove the cheesecloth. Serve with crudité's, sliced cucumbers or sliced apples.

Note: The torte may be stored in an enclosed container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

These savory stuffed mushrooms can be prepared as appetizers, using small button mushrooms, or as a main course using medium size portobello mushrooms. They may be served warm or cold and are always a hit.



Stuffed Mushrooms with Pine Nuts and Herbs

From *Angel Foods Healthy Recipes from Heavenly Bodies* by Cherie Soria
Serves 6

- 1 tablespoon Nama Shoyu or wheat-free tamari
 - 1 teaspoon Celtic sea salt
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 18 large mushrooms, wiped clean
 - 1 1/2 cloves garlic, crushed, optional
 - 3/4 cup pine nuts, soaked, minced
 - 1/4 cup parsley, minced
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh basil leaves, minced
 - 1 tablespoon unpasteurized light miso
1. Combine first 4 ingredients and toss with mushrooms. Allow them to marinate for at least one hour.
 2. Combine remaining ingredients and use to fill mushrooms.
 3. Place in the food dehydrator at 105 degrees for 2 - 4 hours, or until they reach the desired texture. Serve warm.

Recipes by Cherie Soria, Director Living Light Culinary Arts Institute
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Fourth of July Vegan Barbecue

Includes Recipes Below

A vegetarian at a barbecue is not like a fish out of water. A vegetarian barbecue is not an oxymoron. It happens all the time all over the vegetarian world, especially on summer holidays.

Whenever people gather at holiday celebrations like the 4th of July, there is always an abundance of food. And, what kind of food? A barbecue, of course! The mention of an old-fashioned 4th of July celebration easily conjures up images of friends and family chatting, joking, and teasing the man of the house who dons an apron and tends the smoke-spewing barbecue. With long tongs firmly in hand, he dutifully turns the hamburgers, steaks, hot dogs, sausages, or shrimp until flames shoot upward and the food is well charred.

But, let's leave that old-fashioned image behind, and step out onto the patio of the vegan household to see what's cookin' for this year's 4th of July barbecue. The vegan gathering of family and friends pays homage to its furry friends, the animals, by letting them roam free, while the barbecue sizzles with some tasty treats of the season.

Though people unfamiliar with the vegan table consider it very limited, it's actually quite the opposite. With so many possible choices of excellent dishes, the host and hostess have the challenge of narrowing them down to just a few special recipes that take advantage of the outdoor grill. Here's what we've chosen for this year's barbecue menu:

Appetizers:

Island Chiller Smoothie

Marinated Tofu Fingers with Spicy Peanut Sauce

Entrée:

Tossed Salad with Coconut Curry Dressing
Grilled Tempeh Steak
Grilled Veggie Skewers
Grilled Red Onions
Grilled Corn on the Cob

Dessert:

Nutty Chocolate Frozen Bananas
Stars and Stripes American Pie

Next, add some red, white, and blue decorations, a patriotic gesture to commemorate the signing the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Fourth of July just wouldn't be complete without a few flags and streamers adding visual flavor to the party scene. Perhaps you've found a patriotic tablecloth, some napkins to match, and a package of red, white, and blue balloons at the local party shop. A CD playing strains of "God Bless America," "The Star Spangled Banner," and "America the Beautiful" completes the scene. These may seem like little things, but they instantly create a festive mood from the moment guests arrive.

Then begin preparations. Enlist the help of the children or grandchildren to take care of the decorations--young people love to contribute to the party activities including the preparation of the food. Many dishes can be prepared a day or two ahead, making the party day as enjoyable for the home chef as well as the guests. Make-ahead dishes include the **Curried Coconut Salad Dressing**, the **Grilled Tempeh Steaks** (made from fermented soybeans and available at natural foods markets), the **Spicy Peanut Sauce**, and even the **Marinated Tofu Fingers**. Both desserts can be made the day before, too.



When the party day arrives, prepare the **Tossed Salad**, assemble the **Veggie Skewers**, soak the corn in their husks, and slice the onions for grilling. Shortly before guests arrive, prepare the **Island Chillers** and put the dessert chocolate sauce into a saucepan ready for warming later. Then greet the guests with a smile, and turn the grilling over to the barbie chef.

While the guests begin sipping on a refreshing **Island Chiller Smoothie** made with mangoes and pineapple juice, the barbecue chef can toss some succulent, skewered **Marinated Tofu Fingers** on the grill to warm before dipping them into a **Spicy Peanut Sauce**. While everyone is chatting, munching, and catching up on the latest happenings, the presoaked fresh corn in the husk can have its turn on the barbie.

Soon, drifts of the aromatic fresh-picked sweet corn float in the air. Set the corn aside to cool off, and give the **Grilled Tempeh Steaks**, **Grilled Onions**, and **Veggie Skewers** their place on the barbecue for a brief grilling. Now is the time to bring on the colorful **Fresh Tossed Salad** with homemade **Coconut Curry Dressing**. Soon the plates will be heaping with the lavish foods and luscious flavors of a celebratory vegan barbecue.

Dessert, often considered the pièce de résistance, can be equally as delectable as the entrée. For

some, the dessert is the highlight of the meal. There will be no disappointed diners this night with two earthy desserts that cater to the sweet tooth.

First, the dessert lovers will encounter **Nutty Chocolate Frozen Bananas** secured on heavy-duty wooden skewers. These are dipped into a rich, warm **Chocolate Sauce** to coat the surface. Then, before the chocolate hardens, each guest rolls the banana in a combination of chopped toasted pecans and walnuts. One bite of this heavenly treat brings on emissions of ecstasy and delight. It's a winning threesome--chocolate, banana, and crunchy toasted nuts.

The second treat, the **Stars and Stripes American Pie**, is a recreation of the American flag with fruits of the season that include strawberries, blueberries, and a creamy coconut filling. It looks sensational, tastes great, and makes a perfect conversation piece--and a memorable one at that.

Here's an ideal starter that quells the hunger pangs, yet not heavy enough to be filling.

ISLAND CHILLER SMOOTHIE

- Flesh of 2 ripe mangoes
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) firm silken tofu
- 1 1/4 C. (300 ml) unsweetened pineapple juice
- 1/4 C. (60) coconut milk
- 4 T. maple syrup
- 1 C. (240 ml) ice cubes

Combine all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth and creamy. Pour into old-fashioned glasses. Makes 2 delicious servings.

MARINATED TOFU FINGERS WITH SPICY PEANUT SAUCE



Marinade

- 1/4 C. (60 ml) + 3 T. rice vinegar
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) Sucanat (unrefined cane sugar) or turbinado sugar
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu, cut into 10 thick fingers
- 10 wooden skewers

1. Combine rice vinegar, Sucanat, salt, and crushed red pepper flakes in a small saucepan. Gently heat on medium until sugar is dissolved. Pour into an 8-inch (20 cm) square baking dish and add tofu fingers.
2. Marinate for several hours or overnight, turning several times.
3. Insert skewers deeply into tofu fingers, and grill for about 5 to 8 minutes, turning frequently to avoid burning. Serve with Spicy Peanut Sauce for dipping.

SPICY PEANUT SAUCE

- 1/3 C. (80 ml) crunchy peanut butter
- 1/4 t. salt
- 3 T. lemon juice
- 3 T. maple syrup
- 1 T. water
- 3 or 4 dashes Tabasco Sauce

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir with a wire whisk until smooth and creamy. Can be made a day ahead. Makes 2/3 cup (160 ml) sauce.

Go for a dressing that promises not to cover up the fresh, sweet flavors of your crisp tossed salad. Those crunchy veggies will show-off their best with a dressing that compliments their earthiness.

OIL-FREE COCONUT CURRY DRESSING

- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. black pepper
- 1/8 t. cayenne pepper
- 1 1/4 t. curry powder
- 1/8 t. guar gum *
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2-inch (1 cm) piece of ginger, peeled and finely minced
- 1 1/3 C. (320 ml) coconut milk **
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) + 1 T. lemon juice
- 2 t. mirin (Japanese sweet cooking wine)

Combine all ingredients in a 1-quart (1 liter) jar and shake until well blended. Alternatively, you can add the ingredients to the blender and blend until well combined. Pour into a narrow-neck

bottle and chill. To serve, shake well. Makes about 1 3/4 (415 ml) cups.

* Guar gum is a fine powder made from the seeds of a legume called cluster bean that grows in India. The powder is an excellent thickening agent that requires no cooking. The powder is on the FDA's GRAS list. Used in small quantities it is considered completely safe. Guar gum is available in health food markets.

** Choose a coconut milk containing at least 8 grams of total fat for a good consistency and flavor.

GRILLED TEMPEH STEAK

A tasty marinade can raise the status of a simple food like tempeh to a level that deserves to be defined as "special" or even "elegant." By marinating the tempeh the day before you plan to serve, this dish can be prepared in just a few minutes.

1 1/2 lb. (675 g) tempeh

Marinade

3/4 C.(180 ml) rice vinegar

3/4 C. (180 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce

6 cloves garlic, minced

1 1/2-inch (3.5 cm) piece ginger root, peeled and minced (about 1 1/2 T.)

1/4 + 1/8 t. Chinese Five Spice Powder

4 T. extra virgin olive oil

3 T. blackstrap molasses

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 green onion cut into 1-inch (2.5 cm) lengths and finely slivered

1. Score tempeh on both sides, making shallow diagonal cuts about 1/4-inch (.5 cm) apart. Cut tempeh into 6 portions and spread out in one layer in a baking dish.
2. Combine marinade ingredients in a bowl, and pour over tempeh, turning to coat both sides. Marinate in refrigerator for 24 hours or longer, turning pieces several times.
3. Preheat barbecue and grill 5 to 7 minutes on each side. Remove to a serving platter and garnish with the slivered green onion. Save leftover marinade to use as a dipping sauce for a future recipe. Serves 6.

GRILLED VEGGIE SKEWERS

Prepare skewers of your favorite summer vegetables arranging them in a colorful order for visual appeal. Here are some vegetable suggestions: Red, yellow, and green bell peppers, zucchini squashes, yellow crookneck squashes, patty pan squashes, red and white onion wedges, button mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, eggplant cubes, bite-size chunks of sweet potatoes, bite-size chunks of butternut or kabocha squash.

Brush your skewers with your favorite well-seasoned oil and vinegar dressing, a prepared marinade, or your own homemade marinade. Turn skewers frequently, and cook about 10 to 12

minutes total.

GRILLED RED ONIONS

2 to 4 large red onions, peeled and thickly sliced

Organic canola oil

Salt and pepper (optional)

1. Arrange onion slices on a large baking sheet, and brush the tops with canola oil.
 2. Using a large spatula, place slices on the grill, oiled side down, and grill 5 minutes.
 3. Brush the tops, turn, and grill a few minutes longer. Season with salt and pepper if desired.
Serves 4 to 8.
-

GRILLED CORN ON THE COB

Sweet, succulent, fresh-picked corn is a much-anticipated treat on 4th of July because it is often the first corn of the season. If you have a farm-stand or farmers' market nearby, consider yourself fortunate. The corn is usually picked the very day you purchase it and tastes wonderfully sweet. By the time sweet corn arrives at the supermarket, it is often several days old, and has lost much of its sweetness. Ever wonder why? It's because the corn's natural sugars have begun turning to starch.

Click here and scroll down to the end of the article for the Grilled Corn on the Cob recipe
<http://www.vegparadise.com/highestperch9.html>

NUTTY CHOCOLATE FROZEN BANANAS

A few simple preparations made the day before serving puts this sinfully delicious treat into the category of nearly trouble-free.

3 ripe bananas

1 C. (240 ml) raw walnut and pecan pieces

6 squares unsweetened baker's chocolate

1 1/4 C. (320 ml) Florida Crystals (finely ground unrefined sugar)

2/3 C. (160 ml) boiling water

1. Peel bananas and cut them in half crosswise. Insert a sturdy wooden skewer deeply into the center of the cut end, and lay bananas on a metal baking pan. Freeze for several hours or overnight.
2. Coarsely grind the nuts in a nut mill, and put them into a wide mouth bowl. Set aside.
3. Melt chocolate squares in a 1-quart (1 liter) saucepan over very low heat, stirring frequently.
4. Measure Florida Crystals in a large measuring cup. Pour the 1/2 C. (120 ml) boiling water over the sugar and stir to dissolve.

5. When chocolate is completely melted, turn off heat, and add sweetened water, stirring to a shiny, smooth consistency.
6. Pour chocolate sauce into a wide mouth bowl, and remove bananas from the freezer.
7. Holding skewer firmly, roll each frozen banana in the sauce to coat, then immediately roll in the nuts. Makes 6 chocoholics ecstatic.

A patriotic holiday like 4th of July really deserves a patriotic dessert to top off the celebration with flair. Instead of waving a flag, we create a dessert that represents our flag, and savor the patriotic moment.

STARS AND STRIPES AMERICAN PIE **(Coconut Cream Fruit Nut Pie)**



Crust

1 1/3 C. (320 ml) raw almonds

15 pitted dates

1/2 t. coconut extract

1 T. water

Filling

2/3 C.(160 ml) raw cashews

1 12-oz. (340 g) pkg. soft silken tofu

23 pitted dates

2 T. coconut milk

1/2 t. coconut extract

1/2 t. vanilla extract

2 C. (480 ml) unsweetened flaked coconut, divided

Topping

14 fresh strawberries, sliced into thirds crosswise

42 (approximately) fresh blueberries

1. Line a 12-inch (30 cm) by 15-inch (37.5 cm) cutting board or tray with cooking parchment by wrapping it around the board and taping it on the bottom. Set aside.
2. Crust: Put almonds in the food processor and process to an almost fine meal. Add dates, coconut extract, and water. Process until dates are well incorporated.
3. Turn mixture out onto parchment, and using your fingers, press into a rectangle 10-inches (25 cm) wide by 7-inches (18 cm) high. Keep edges even. Set aside.
4. Filling: Grind cashews into a fine powder in a blender. Add to blender the tofu, dates, coconut milk, coconut and vanilla extracts, and blend to a thick puree on low speed. You may need to stop the machine and redistribute the ingredients.
5. Turn out into a medium mixing bowl, and add 1 cup (240 ml) of flaked coconut.
6. Spread mixture over the top of the prepared date-nut crust, spreading to the edges to cover crust completely. Top with the remaining 1 cup (240 ml) coconut.
7. Topping: Arrange blueberries in the left top corner of the rectangle. Form the flag's red stripes with strawberry slices. Chill or serve immediately. Serves 6 to 8 generously.

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A VEGAN HALLOWEEN PARTY

For a dozen frolicking ghouls

Includes Recipes Below

Anticipation mounts throughout the land each year as darkness heralds the evening of October 31. The deep velvety night brings out witches, goblins, and ghosts of all ages who gather for their annual celebration of rollicking haunts and taunts in honor of an ancient Celtic festival, originally called *Samhain*, then *Hallowmas*, and now known as Halloween.

Halloween began as the eve of All Saints Day or Allhallows, an ancient Celtic celebration that defined the summer harvest's end and recognized the new year and the approaching dark, cold winter. At nightfall the celebration called *Samhain* began as people gathered together around large bonfires to recognize the spirits of the dead and pacify the supernatural powers. The ancient Celts dressed in costumes of animal skins and heads and often included fortune telling as part of the festivities.

During the 800's *Samhain*, pronounced Saawen, became All-hallows Eve. People of this period were fearful of the dark and believed that dressing up in costumes and masks disguised them so ghosts would not seek them out when they went out at night. The holiday was introduced into the United States by the Scottish and Irish immigrants during the 1800's.

The trick or treat tradition evolved from "going a-souling," when the poor would beg for food during All Soul's Day in exchange for praying for the families' dead relatives. The tradition of bobbing for apples arose out of a November 2nd Roman tradition of honoring the Goddess Pomona whose symbol was the apple.

While *Hallowmas* was once a religious tradition, Halloween became a playful holiday for children who don costumes, stay up late, and knock on neighbors' doors to beg for candy. Now a well-honed tradition in the U.S., Halloween is a night of unusual stirrings that befalls every city,

town, and burg with jarring howls, screams, eerie laughter, and creepy crawly sounds. A sudden loud knock warns that the little monsters have come to YOUR door festooned in colorful costumes and shouting the typical greeting "trick or treat!" Better be prepared with a few treats to ward off the tricksters.

Wrapped candies have become the expected tradition, but perhaps a departure from the resulting sugar highs and dental concerns may be refreshing. Party shops have many items on their shelves that could go into a trick or treat bag without costing too much. Party favors like balloons, blowers, balls, and toy cars are always welcome. Colorful pencils, pens, and unusual erasers are items kids love. Money is always received well--quarters or dimes are a big deal to little children. On the food scene, tiny boxes of raisins or small packs of nuts or seeds provide healthy treats.

For the big monsters, parties that linger long into the wee hours are becoming quite the trend. Costumes, homemade, rented, or purchased are the vogue or in some cases, even required for the ghastly night's festivities. Dressing up, or in some cases dressing down, allows people to role-play and have fun. In a witch's costume, a reveler might play at casting a love spell over someone special. A ghost or ghoul weaves through the crowd growling spooky chants, while the smiling good fairy waves her wand and grants long-desired wishes.

Naturally, food and drink are an essential aspect of the party scene with a buffet that makes the planning and serving easy for the host and hostess. A table spread with appealing treats helps to create a friendly focal point where people can assemble and chat and charm as they wish.

The table centerpiece could be a tall vase filled with leeks and plump scallions, greens side down. The upright root ends become the hair, while ghost faces are easily created on the white part of the leeks with allspice berries for eyes and a few cuts for the nose and mouth. The mouth can be colored bright red with beet juice or turmeric.

A punchbowl or two labeled **Witch's Cauldron** or **Vampire's Blood** adds to the occasion, along with snacks like **Dracula's Teeth**, the **Goblin's Pate**, and a **Devilish Dip**. **Warlock's Special** and **Ghoulie Greens** provide the hearty entrée, with **Howling Banshee Treats**, **Rollo the Pet Tarantula**, and the **Devil's Brew** for dessert.

A great conversation piece is the large brimming punchbowl that oozes a foggy cloud into the air like a witch's steaming cauldron. The punch is a tasty combination of fruit juices with sparkling water added. Dry ice is the magic ingredient that creates the whirling puffs of steam.

Halloween decorations are expected. A spooky Halloween party wouldn't be quite complete without dem bones, a skeleton or two hanging up on the wall or in a doorway where it's sure to get attention. Black and orange balloons and streamers



fill the empty spaces with color and atmosphere. Some creative touches could include cardboard headstones with RIP placed askew in the front yard or even inside the house. Lots of candles and dim lighting set the mood, while a spooky sounds record plays in the background with howls and eerie sounds that make the skin crawl.

A carved Jack-o-Lantern is a must. If time permits, carve several jack-o-lanterns. Guests love to contribute their artistry to the haunted event. Perhaps you could request some carved pumpkins from those who offer their help.

Vegan Halloween Party Menu

Witch's Caldron - Fizzy Fruit Punch with dry ice or **Vampire's Blood** - Hot Spiced Cranberry Punch

Dracula's Teeth - Roasted Salted Pumpkin Seeds

The Goblin's Paté - A nut and vegetable paté shaped like a pumpkin with plastic spiders crawling on it

Devilish Dip - Here's an especially appealing presentation for your Halloween party. Form a container that lends a devilish appearance from a large green cabbage. Make bulging eyes from whole black olives, horns from red Fresno chiles with pointed ends upward. Use toothpicks to fasten the ears made from green bell pepper halves, and carve out a large mouth to hold the zesty dip. Serve with crudités of your choice.

Warlock's Special - Sloppy Joe's with a Mexican flavor on whole-wheat burger buns with shredded vegan cheese sprinkled on top before heating under the broiler

Ghoulie Greens - tossed salad with Kalamata Walnut and Caper Dressing

Howling Banshee Treats - Crisp Chewies, cookies with a hint of cinnamon and ginger

Rollo the Pet Tarantula - Fruit and Nut Confection formed into a huge spider

The Devil's Brew - Steaming Hot Chocolate

Make both beverages, one hot and one cold, or choose whichever appeals most. Either will add to the spooky ambience of the Halloween celebration. Invariably, guests gather where the food is. Just starting the party with something to sip and nibble relaxes the guests and encourages conversation. As conversation flows, so does the party.

VAMPIRE'S BLOOD

Hot Spiced Cranberry Punch

2 quarts (2 liters) unsweetened cranberry juice

6 C. (1.5 liters) water

2 C. (440 ml) white grape juice concentrate

Evaporated cane juice to taste

4 sticks cinnamon

10 whole cloves

Lemon slices

1. Combine all ingredients in a large stockpot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 10 minutes. Remove spices and float lemon slices in the punch.
2. For an informal approach, have a long-handled ladle in a spoon-rest nearby, and serve from the stovetop. Keep the punch warm on low heat. Serve in paper or styrofoam hot cups.
3. Alternatively, carefully and slowly pour the punch into a punch bowl and place on a heat-protected table or countertop. Serve in small glass punch cups. Makes about 4 quarts (4 liters).

While the hot punch offers comfort on a chilly night, the contradiction of a cold punch that appears to be steaming brings a chilling shiver and sparkling conversation among guests.

WITCH'S CAULDRON

Fizzy Fruit Punch

- 1 48-oz. (1.5 liter) bottle cranberry juice cocktail, chilled
- 1 12-oz. (360 ml) can frozen apple juice concentrate
- 2 juice cans chilled water
- 1 42.3-oz. (1.25 liter) bottle sparkling water, chilled
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced

10 lbs. (4.50 kilograms) dry ice

1. Make sure to begin with chilled ingredients. Combine everything but the dry ice in a punch bowl, and stir well.
2. Add about half the dry ice to begin the steamy cauldron action. Then add dry ice as needed to keep the cauldron actively steaming. Makes about 20 6-oz.(180 ml) servings.

GOBLIN'S PATÉ

Nut and Vegetable Paté

Don't worry about the spiders--they won't eat much! Just ignore the arachnids and serve this tasty appetizer with whole-grain crackers and a colorful array of crudités such as wedges of bell peppers, sliced turnip, celery sticks, cucumber slices, radish slices and crinkle cut carrots.



- 3/4 C. (180 ml) raw sunflower seeds
- 3/4 C. (180 ml) raw almonds.

- 3 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 3 medium carrots, coarsely shredded
- 1 C. (240 ml) chopped sweet onion
- 1/2 to 1 chile, finely minced
- 3/4 t. salt
- 1/2 t. paprika
- 1/2 C.(120 ml) lemon juice
- 3 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos
- 2 slices whole wheat bread, cut into cubes



Garnish

- 1 small cucumber (Persian or Armenian variety) for stem
- 1 lettuce leaf
- 1/3 bunch watercress

Plastic spiders

1. Soak nuts and seeds in plenty of water to cover for about 10 to 12 hours. The sunflower skins become loosened and float in the water. Rinse and remove as many of them as possible by rubbing the seeds between the hands and using a fine strainer to scoop the skins as they float to the top.
2. Put soaked nuts and seeds in the food processor. Add garlic, carrots, onion, chile, salt, paprika, lemon juice, Bragg Aminos, and bread cubes. Process at least a full minute or two to create a fine textured paté.
3. Spoon mixture into a lettuce-lined plate, and form the shape of a pumpkin with the hands. Cut the cucumber in half and place it in the center to form the stem. With the fingers, form indentations to imitate the corrugations of some pumpkins and decorate with strips of thinly cut cucumber.
4. Arrange watercress around the base and toss a few plastic spiders onto the pate. Serves 25 along with other appetizers.

DEVILISH DIP

- 1 12.3-oz. (360 g) pkg. extra firm silken tofu
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. Mrs. Dash's Original Seasoning Blend
- 1/2 t. chili powder
- 3/4 t. ground cumin
- 1/2 t. coriander
- 3 T. lemon juice
- 1 T. white wine vinegar
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) water

Paprika

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a smooth, creamy consistency.
2. Transfer to the Devil's Head Cabbage or a serving bowl, sprinkle with a dash of paprika, and place on a platter with your choice of crudites. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (360 ml).

A pungent dressing fitting to the evening's expressive attire and ghoulish ambience.

OIL-FREE KALAMATA CAPER WALNUT SALAD DRESSING

(Best if made a day ahead)

- 1/4 C. (60 ml) walnuts
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) water

- 3 cloves garlic
- 1/3 C. (180 ml) drained capers
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) pitted Kalamata olives

- 1 C. (240 ml) water
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) lemon juice
- 2 T. kosher balsamic vinegar (Bartenurra's)
- 1/2 t. dry mustard
- 1/4 t. ground black pepper
- 1/4 t. guar gum *

1. Combine walnuts, 1/2 C. (120 ml) water, garlic, capers, and olives in the blender. Start machine on low speed until ingredients are puréed.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend on high speed for 30 seconds. Pour into a 1 quart (1 liter) jar and refrigerate. Makes 3 cups.

*Bob's Red Mill makes guar gum, a dry white powder that acts well as a thickener. Guar gum is available at Whole Foods Market or other health foods stores.

When cooking for parties, I always look for the perfect make-ahead dish. Enjoy this easy recipe with robust flavor that has never failed to please. That captivating taste comes from the Spanish olives that also add character to the visual aspect of the dish..

WARLOCK'S SPECIAL

Spanish Sloppy Joes



- 1/2 C. (120 ml) TVP (textured vegetable protein)
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) boiling water

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 orange or yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 15-oz. (425 g) can pinto beans, drained, reserving liquid

- 1 14.5-oz. (410 g) can diced tomatoes
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) tomato sauce
- 3 T. tomato paste
- 2 T. soy sauce
- 1 t. apple cider vinegar
- 1 t. Dijon mustard
- 12 Spanish green stuffed olives, sliced
- 1/2 t. salt

Whole Wheat Buns

1. Put TVP into a small bowl and pour boiling water over. Set aside for 5 minutes.
2. Combine onions and bell peppers in a large deep skillet. Pour in 1/4 C. (60 ml) reserved bean liquid and sauté vegetables over high heat until softened, about 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Add softened TVP along with remaining ingredients and cook about 5 minutes to blend flavors.
4. Lightly toast whole-wheat buns in the oven, and spoon Sloppy Joe mixture over the top. Makes about 4 to 6 servings.

Here's a handy confection recipe that can be made a few days ahead and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

ROLLO THE PET TARANTULA

Nutty Fruit Confection

- 1/2 C. (120 ml) raw sesame seeds
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) raw sunflower seeds
- 1 C. (120 ml) raw pecan pieces

- 7 1/2 oz. (210 g) moist dried peaches, quartered, divided into 3rds
- 51 pitted dates, divided into 3 batches of 17 each
- 3 t. vanilla extract, divided into 3rds 6 T. water, divided into 3rds

Large round platter

Bright orange colored paper or cloth napkin

Plastic Wrap

1. Combine sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, and the 1 C. (240 ml) pecan pieces in a food processor and process to a coarse meal, leaving a little texture remaining. Transfer to a bowl.
2. In 3 separate batches, add the dried peaches, dates, vanilla extract, water and 1/3 of the ground nut mixture to the processor, and process until dried fruits and nuts are well

incorporated and fruits almost form a paste. Stop the machine as often as needed to scrape down sides and redistribute ingredients. Transfer to a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight to firm up the mixture for easier handling.

3. Prepare platter by covering it with orange paper or an orange napkin. Wrap the dish completely with clear plastic wrap. Put the confection mixture on the platter. Then, using the hands, form mixture into a giant tarantula. Decorate plate with plastic spiders or ants, and invite guests to break off pieces to nibble.

VARIATION 1: As an alternative to making the tarantula, divide mixture into thirds, place each third onto an 18-inch (45 cm) long piece of waxed paper. Lightly oil hands. Form into 3 logs. Spread 2 C. (480 ml) broken pecans pieces out onto a large baking pan, then roll the fruit roll into the nuts. Firm up in refrigerator. Cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) slices and arrange on a serving platter.

VARIATION 2: To make confection balls, lightly oil hands, and roll about 1 teaspoon of the fruit mixture at a time into balls; then roll them into 2 C. (240 ml) coarsely broken pecan pieces, pressing them onto the surface. Arrange on an attractive serving dish, and garnish with a large citrus leaf or two and a small bunch of grapes. Makes about 50 confections.

HOWLING BANSHEE TREATS

Crisp Chewies

- 8 oz.(225 g) firm tofu
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) walnuts

- 2 C. (480 ml) evaporated cane juice
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) organic canola oil
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 t. ground ginger
- 1 t. baking soda
- 1 t. vanilla
- 3 C. (720 ml) unbleached white flour
- 1 C. (240 ml) whole wheat pastry flour

1. Preheat oven to 350 F (Gas Mark 4) and lightly oil 2 baking sheets.
2. Combine tofu and nuts in the food processor and process until almost smooth and creamy. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.
3. Add cane sugar, oil, salt, cinnamon, ginger, soda, vanilla, and flour, and mix well. Mixture will become very thick.
4. Form into balls slightly larger than 1-inch (2.5 cm), and place on baking sheet about 2-inches (5 cm) apart. You may have to bake in two batches.
5. Bake about 12 to 13 minutes. Remove, and using a fork, press each cookie down to 1/2-inch (1 cm) thickness. Bake another 10 to 13 minutes or until bottoms are golden brown. Loosen with a spatula, and cool thoroughly. Store in airtight container or heavy-duty plastic bag. Makes 4 dozen cookies.

NOTE: If desired, cookies can be trimmed in white frosting and ghost faces painted on with

melted chocolate.

THE DEVIL'S BREW

Steaming Hot Chocolate

- 3 C. (720 ml) soymilk
- 3 T. + 1 t. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 to 4 T. evaporated cane juice
- 2 t. Billington's dark brown molasses sugar
- 1/4 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

1. Combine all ingredients in a 3-quart (3 liter) stock pot and stir with a wire whip to combine. Heat to almost boiling over medium high heat, stirring occasionally and watching carefully to prevent boil-over.
2. Pour into mugs and serve immediately. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

NOTE: To make enough for 20 people, use the proportions below and heat in a 12-quart (12 liter) stock pot.

- 21/2 qts. (2.5 liters) soymilk
- 1 1/4 C. (300 ml) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 C. (240 m.) + 2 T. to 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) evaporated cane juice
- 4 T. Billington's dark brown molasses sugar
- 1 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1 T. vanilla extract

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

This month Aunt Nettie would like to share a recipe that came from one of her regular fans. Jansie wrote to Aunt Nettie asking for a Tofu Jerky recipe. Aunt Nettie went into a dizzying spin searching for a recipe, but to no avail. None was to be found. Then, to quote her pal, Jansie, "The universe always answers." Jansie, herself, discovered this recipe in the *Whole Life Times* February issue.

Howdy Jansie,

Bet ya didn't expect ta see yer name in print on the world wide web, but I gives credit where credit is due. Y'all did the searchin' work so y'all should git the writin' credit, too. This recipe sounds mighty tasty an' jes' might come in handy when yer a travelin' er needin' a little somethin' ta munch on while dinner's a-fixin'.

ORIGINAL PEPPER TOFU JERKY

- 1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu, drained
- 1/2 C. (237 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce
- 3 to 4 T. liquid smoke
- 1/8 C. (30 ml) water
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder or 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. sweetener

1. Cut the drained tofu into long narrow strips (about 1/4" thickness or .5 cm). They may look big but will shrink during baking.
2. In a small bowl whisk together Bragg Liquid Aminos, liquid smoke, water, onion powder, garlic, pepper and sweetener.

3. Place the strips in a shallow baking pan or on a cookie sheet and pour the marinade over them. Let them marinate several hours or overnight for best results.
4. Cook the tofu in a food dehydrator or bake in the oven for about 4 to 6 hours at 200 degrees (gas mark 1/8).
5. Turn the tofu over once every hour so it bakes evenly. Continue until the texture is chewy, but not crispy.
6. Tofu jerky will keep indefinitely. Store in a container with a tight fitting lid.

The magazine credited *How it all Vegan! Irresistible Recipes for an Animal-free Diet*, Arsenal Pulp Press, 1999.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with megabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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When you're planning to have guests for lunch or dinner, consider an appetizer that not only tastes scrumptious, but offers a mosaic of colors and flavors to please the eye as well. The three components of this dish can be prepared ahead and quickly assembled as soon as guests arrive.

POLENTA PIZZA

Crust

- 4 C. (960 ml) water
- 1 3/4 t. salt
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 C. (240 ml) whole-grain cornmeal

1. Combine water, salt, and oil in a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan and bring to a full boil.
2. Pour cornmeal into boiling water, stirring constantly with a wire whisk.
3. Turn heat down to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently for about 5 or 6 minutes. Mixture will thicken to the consistency of cooked oatmeal.
4. Pour cooked polenta onto a lightly oiled pizza pan or a rectangular baking pan, using the back of a large spoon to spread outward. The crust should be about 3/8" (about 1 cm) thick. Set aside. At this point the crust can be wrapped in plastic film and refrigerated if serving the next day.

Sauce

- 9 large Roma tomatoes (Italian plum tomatoes)
- 8 fresh basil leaves or 1/2 t. dried basil
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil

5 cloves garlic, whole

3/4 t. salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1. Whirl the sauce ingredients together in a food processor until pureed.
2. Spread generously over crust, covering the surface completely.
3. Refrigerate remaining sauce for future use.



Toppings

1/2 red bell pepper, diced

1/2 yellow bell pepper, diced

1 small zucchini squash, diced

6 or 7 button mushrooms, diced

1/4 to 1/2 small red onion, diced

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Sprinkle vegetables over the tomato sauce. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
2. Broil pizza 3" (7.5 cm) from the broiler for 5 to 8 minutes.
3. Cut pizza into wedges or squares and serve on small plates. Serves 8 to 10 as an appetizer or 5 to 6 people as a lunch entree.

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I've encountered a heavenly dish called Lettuce Wraps at a Chinese restaurant recently and wondered if you had a recipe for this fabulous appetizer.

Melissa

Howdy there Melissa,

I been hearin' 'n hearin' 'bout Lettuce Wraps so much I decided t'was time I rustle up them fixin's in my own kitchen. A l'il o' this 'n a l'il o' that 'n I come up with some mighty fine eatin' if'n I do say so myself. Then I had 'n idea. Them fixin's would be real fine a'top some nice brown rice er some other healthy grain sech as quinoa, wild rice, er even buckwheat.

Now, if yer a'wondrin' why I got coconut fixin's in a Chinese dish, it's cause I been a'thinkin' 'bout my friend, Neal, who lives in a Polynesian paradise on the island of Oahu so's to explain the coconut. Now, mind, coconut ain't real important in this dish, so's you kin leave it out if ya please an' still have a mighty fine appeetizer.

Well Melissa, if'n y'all got the time, do write back, darlin', 'n tell me if this l'il dish was pleasin' ta yer taste.

Yer Ever Lovin' Aunt Nettie

POLYNESIAN PARADISE LETTUCE WRAPS



Butter, green leaf, or romaine lettuce leaves

1 T. cornstarch

1 T. water

2 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 lb. (453 grams) extra firm tofu, cut into 1/2" cubes

1/4 small head green cabbage, shredded

1 large carrot, shredded

1/2 red bell pepper, diced

1/2 medium onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2" piece ginger, peeled and minced

1/4 C. (49 ml) water

1 1/2 t. evaporated cane juice

2 t. sesame oil

1 T. water

2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1/4 C. (59 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos, tamari, or soy sauce

1/4 C. (59 ml) rice vinegar

1/4 C. (59 ml) dry red wine

1/2 C. (118 ml) shredded fresh or dried coconut (optional)

2 or 3 T. chopped cilantro (optional)

1. Separate lettuce leaves, cut very large ones in half crosswise, wash, pat dry, arrange on a serving plate, and set aside. Combine water and cornstarch in a small cup or glass to form a thick paste, and set aside.
2. Combine the 2 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos and 1 T. olive oil in a wok or large, deep skillet and turn heat on high. When mixture begins to bubble add tofu cubes and cook over high heat, stirring frequently, until cubes are golden brown, about 7 to 10 minutes. Remove to a dish and set aside.
3. In same skillet combine cabbage, carrots, red bell pepper, onions, garlic, ginger, and 1/4 cup (59 ml) water, and cook over high heat, stirring frequently until softened and transparent, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl while preparing sauce.
4. In same skillet combine the evaporated cane juice, sesame oil, water, olive oil, Bragg Liquid Aminos, rice vinegar, and dry red wine and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir cornstarch mixture briefly and add to bubbling liquid, stirring until thickened, about 1 minute.
5. Add cooked vegetables, browned tofu, and shredded coconut, and stir until all ingredients are coated with sauce and warmed through.
6. Spoon the mixture into an attractive serving bowl, garnish with chopped cilantro if desired, and serve at the table with the platter of prepared lettuce leaves. Have each person put a



little of the tofu vegetable mixture into a lettuce leaf, fold or roll the leaf, and enjoy a tasty first course. Serves 5 to 6 generously.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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A Vegan Super Bowl Sunday

Includes Recipes Below

Shouts of joy and laughter, expressions of encouragement, and pounding fists of frustration inevitably accompany the annual Super Bowl Sunday gatherings. The noise and clamor are simply part of the scene on this special day when "THE GAME" focuses on the TV set as the center of attention. When friends and family congregate for the event, you can count on the mood being unrestrained. Serious football fans even say it's no fun when the guests are just too sedate.

The excitement of rooting for your favorite team is heightened when the host organizes a contest to see who can guess the final score and then presents a prize to the winner. Some even challenge the guests to predict scores for the first half as well as the final score.

Kick off the big game in the company of your favorite friends and family with old-fashioned comfort foods that offer cozy warmth and evoke compliments from the mesmerized fans who can barely take their eyes off the TV long enough to express appreciation.

Begin the food offerings with a pungently flavored hot **Artichoke Party Dip** that features artichoke hearts and tofu flavored with a host of zesty herbs like garlic, coriander, and dill and sparked with vegan Parmesan cheese and lemon juice. For pleasing texture, we nurture the taste buds by adding crunchies like water chestnuts and pistachios.

A simple **Sun-Dried Tomato Hummos** comes to the football gathering dressed as a football. Prepare a double quantity of this popular garbanzo bean dip and flavor it with sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, and a touch of spice. Shape it like the pigskin zooming across the football field and decorate with turnip strips to resemble the laces.

A platter, bowl, or basket of **Toasted Pita Wedges** and fresh **Crudité**s placed between both appetizers will give the party guests all they need to nibble while they stay glued to the screen. Include vegetables like carrot and celery sticks, bell pepper and jicama strips, turnip sticks,

radishes, and zucchini strips. More varied suggestions might include snap peas, cabbage wedges, broccoli and cauliflower florets, and fresh asparagus spears.

For an appealing salad course, offer guests the option of composing their very own bowl of crisp lettuces with the zesty colors of an inviting **Touchdown Salad Bar**. Begin with a giant bowl of deep green romaine, add a touch of dark red with some torn radicchio, and then sprinkle in some coarsely shredded carrots. Bring some creative add-ins into the offerings with separate bowls of olives including kalamata, pitted black, and stuffed green Spanish olives. Present diversity with additional bowls of thawed frozen peas, chopped cucumbers, sliced radishes, chopped red bell peppers, diced or julienne jicama, fresh cherry tomatoes, and shredded purple cabbage.

To dress the salad, the assertive flavors of **Tahini Miso Dressing** make the perfect pairing. This quickly prepared dressing calls for ingredients to be poured into a jar and simply shaken. Prepared the day before, it's even better.

Since halftime is ideal for serving up the entrée, be sure to have the oven preheated. Guests will truly savor the light-as-a-feather **Swedish Meatballs**, an old-time dish that takes on its new vegan identity with a sausage-flavored meat substitute bathed in a richly flavored soy milk-based sauce. You can choose to serve these mock meatballs over steamed brown rice or oven baked potatoes.

If you have a bread machine, making your own whole-grain bread is quick and effortless. Otherwise, choose hearty whole grain bread with some satisfying tooth to it and generously slather on some **Homemade Garlic Spread**.

Round out the meal with a heaping portion of **Winter Fruit Medley**, a chunky salad of the sweet fresh fruits that include a variety of apples, pears, oranges, and tangerines with an accent of persimmons and shredded coconut. Finish the salad with a splash of orange juice and Grand Marnier liqueur.

When the game is over, both winners and losers will feel consoled with a sweet finish of **Chocolate Peanut Butter Mousse** and cups of **Steaming Hot Chocolate**.

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY MENU

Appetizers

Artichoke Party Dip
Sun-dried Tomato Hummos shaped like a football
Toasted Pita Wedges
Crudites

Entrée

Touchdown Salad Bar and Tahini Miso Dressing
Swedish Meatballs served over Steamed Brown Rice or Baked Potatoes
Whole Grain Bread with Homemade Garlic Spread
Winter Fruit Medley

Dessert

Chocolate Peanut Butter Mousse
Steaming Hot Chocolate

A dip with the perfect personality for a Super Bowl Party, this artichoke dish with its unsurpassed flavors combines both savory and pungent qualities. Prepare it the day before and simply reheat about 15 to 20 minutes at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) until it begins to bubble.

ARTICHOKE PARTY DIP

The recipe can be found by clicking on [Artichoke Party Dip](#)



Easy is the key word when preparing for a party that allows the host and hostess to enjoy the events of the day. Placing the hummos mixture on a platter, shaping it into a football, and trimming it with turnip strips for the laces takes a few minutes but creates a visually tempting hors d'oeuvre. Make it the day before and simply bring it to the table. Don't feel slighted when the guests show only brief delight at your effort to embrace the theme of the day before plunging in and demolishing it. No doubt you'll hear more appreciative comments after the game is over. For a big crowd, plan to double or triple the recipe.

SUN-DRIED TOMATO HUMMOS

6 sun-dried tomato halves
1/3 C.(80 ml) boiling water

1 15-oz.(425 g) can garbanzo beans
1 large clove garlic, crushed
3/4 t. salt or to taste
1 or 2 pinches cayenne
5 T. lemon juice
1/4 C. (60 ml) tahini
3 T. garbanzo liquid

1 small turnip

1. Put sun-dried tomatoes into a small bowl, and pour boiling water over them. Set aside to soak for about 5 to 8 minutes.
2. Drain and reserve garbanzo liquid. Put garbanzo beans into the food processor, and add remaining ingredients, including the 3 T. garbanzo liquid.

3. Add soaked sun-dried tomatoes, and process to a thick puree. Spoon mixture onto an oval platter and form into a football shape.
 4. Peel turnip. Cut enough thin julienne strips from the turnip to form the laces of the football. Surround the football with your favorite crackers and provide several spreaders. Serves 6.
-

Toasting pita is an easy task and makes the perfect accompaniment to the Artichoke Party Dip and the Hummos. The homemade toasted wedges look terrific surrounding the appetizers and make a nutritious and sturdy base for dipping and spreading.

TOASTED PITA WEDGES

6 whole wheat pita breads

1. With a serrated paring knife, separate the layers of each of the breads.
 2. Stack two or three layers together and cut breads into quarters or eighths if you prefer.
 3. Spread wedges out on two large, ungreased baking sheets. Bake in slow oven at 200 F. (93 C) for 20 to 30 minutes. Cool completely. Stored in a heavy-duty Zip-lock bag they will keep for 2 to 3 weeks at room temperature. Serves 8 to 10.
-

TOUCHDOWN SALAD BAR

1 head romaine lettuce, torn
1 small head radicchio, born
2 medium carrots, peeled and coarsely shredded

Salad Bar

1 6-oz. (168g) can black olives, drained
1 12-oz. (340g) jar stuffed Spanish green olives, drained
1 6-oz. (168g) can of kalamata olives, drained
1 lb. (450g) package of frozen green peas, thawed
1 or 2 cucumbers, peeled if thick skinned
1 bunch radishes, sliced
1 or 2 red bell peppers, chopped
1 medium jicama, peeled and cut into julienne
1/2 head shredded purple cabbage
Cherry tomatoes

Our featured salad dressing is one that doesn't fade into the background but rather announces itself with distinctive and robust flavor. Though the ingredients are few, the combination delivers a pleasing tangy punch.

TAHINI MISO DRESSING

1 1/2 T. red miso *
1 C. (240 ml) water, divided

1/2 C. (120 ml) apple cider vinegar

1/4 C. (120 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos
3/4 C. (180 ml) sesame seed paste (tahini)

1. Combine miso and 1/3 C. (80 ml) of the water in a small bowl. Use a whisk to thoroughly dissolve the miso into the water. Add remaining water and mix. Transfer to a 1-quart (1 liter) jar.
2. Add apple cider vinegar, Bragg Liquid Aminos, and sesame seed paste and shake well. Store in refrigerator until ready to serve. Shake well before each use. Keeps up to 1 month in the refrigerator. Makes 2 1/2 cups (600 ml).

* Red miso is the stronger flavored variety and can be found in Asian markets as well as health food markets. Some large grocery chains also stock a variety of miso in the Asian section or in a refrigerated case.



Veganizing an old classic American recipe can imitate the original so closely that some meat eaters might believe they are actually eating the real thing. This is definitely a make-ahead dish that tastes even better the next day. The meatballs are feathery light while the flavor is lusty enough to please the sports fans oblivious to anything but television. On party day, just warm them and they're ready to serve over steamed brown rice or baked potatoes.

SWEDISH "MEATBALLS"

6 slices whole wheat bread, toasted
1/2 C. (120 ml) unsweetened soymilk

2 lbs. (900g) Gimme Lean Sausage flavor
2/3 C. (168 ml) chopped onions
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 t. ground allspice
1/4 t. ground nutmeg
1/4 t. ground cardamom
1 t. dried dill weed or 1 T. fresh dill, chopped
1 t. salt
1/4 t. ground cayenne pepper

6 T. extra virgin olive oil

Sauce

1 qt. (1 liter) unsweetened soymilk

2 12.3-oz. ((340g) aseptic packages of soft silken tofu

2 t. salt

1 t. ground black pepper

1 T. light miso

2 t. Tamari

Pinch of dill weed

Dash of ground nutmeg

4 T. cornstarch

4 T. water

1. Break bread into pieces, put pieces into a bowl, and pour soymilk over them. Mix to moisten bread, and set aside.
2. In a large bowl combine Gimme Lean, onions, garlic, allspice, nutmeg, cardamom, dill weed, salt, and cayenne. Add soaked bread, and mix all ingredients by hand, squeezing through the fingers to break up and blend the Gimme Lean with the seasonings.
3. Form mixture into tiny meatballs about 1/2-inch (1 cm) in diameter, and put them on a platter. Put one third of the olive oil into a deep skillet, and heat oil. When hot add one third of the meatballs to the skillet, and brown on all sides. Remove to another platter lined with paper towels to drain.
4. Brown remaining meatballs in remaining oil, and drain on paper towels.

Sauce:

1. While meatballs are browning, prepare sauce. Put half the soymilk, silken tofu, salt, pepper, miso, Tamari, dill weed, and nutmeg into the blender. Blend on low speed for a few seconds; then switch to high for a few seconds. Transfer mixture to a large stockpot.
2. Add remaining half of sauce ingredients to blender and process. Add to stockpot.
3. When meatballs are fully browned, add to stockpot with sauce and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes to combine flavors. Serve over brown rice or baked potatoes. Serves 8 to 10.

NOTE: The sauce has a tendency to thicken when refrigerated overnight. When reheating, add a little soymilk or water to thin the sauce to desired consistency.

Whole grain bread with an assertive garlic spread fires up the cheering section for the Super Bowl get-together. Garlic is the key to unlocking the vocal forces when the group starts to cheer for their favorite team. You'll notice the shouts become louder after the garlic goes down.

HOMEMADE GARLIC SPREAD

6 large heads of garlic

1 cup (240 ml) unsweetened soymilk

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Leaving the head intact, peel away the outer layers of cellulose covering the garlic heads. Leave the covering on the individual cloves and do not detach them from the heads.
 2. Put the garlic heads into a baking dish, and cover with aluminum foil, shiny side down.
 3. Bake at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for 1 hour. Carefully remove aluminum foil and set aside for 10 minutes. When cool enough to handle, break off individual cloves and squeeze the softened garlic into a bowl.
 4. Add soymilk, mash, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer spread to a small ovenproof bowl or dish. Warm in the oven at 350 F. for a few minutes just before serving. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (360 ml).
-

When cut into bite size chunks and served in an attractive fashion, fruits of the season offer a kaleidoscope of colors and textures. Their flavors and juicy nature provide a welcome balance to the plate and contentment to the palate. Fruits presented in a footed trifle bowl will deliver great visual appeal. To heighten the flavors of the fruit, we've added a touch of orange flavored liqueur. Of course, this ingredient is optional and will not diminish the wonderful flavors of the fresh fruits if omitted.

WINTER FRUIT MEDLEY

- 2 firm red apples
- 1 Granny Smith apple
- 2 Bosc pears
- 1 Anjou pear
- 3 navel oranges
- 2 tangerines
- 3 Fuyu persimmons
- 1/2 (120 ml) to 1 C. (240 ml) unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) fresh-squeezed orange juice
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) Grand Marnier or Cointreau liqueur (optional)

Sprig of mint

1. Wash fruits thoroughly. Core apples and pears, and cut into bite size chunks. Put them into the fruit bowl.
 2. Peel the oranges and tangerines, removing seeds, and cut into bite size chunks. Add to fruit bowl.
 3. Remove the stem from the persimmons, and dice.
 4. Add coconut, orange juice, and liqueur, and toss to coat all the fruit. Garnish with a sprig of mint and serve. Serves 8 to 10.
-



Heavenly, decadent, unsurpassed--These are a few of the complimentary adjectives expressed whenever we serve our favorite mousse. Rich and indulgent, this chocolate mousse brings out even more passion than the garlic spread, but with a divine sweetness that assuages the sugar cravings. Small servings are sufficient with a mousse as captivating as this one.

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER MOUSSE

1 12-oz. (340g) package soft silken tofu
2 ripe bananas
3 heaping T. creamy peanut butter

1/2 C. (120 ml) coconut milk*
3/4 t. ground cinnamon
1/4 t. nutmeg
1 t. vanilla extract

1 12-oz. (340g) package vegan chocolate chips
1/2 C. (120 ml) Florida Crystals or evaporated cane juice

Sprigs of mint
Strawberries or persimmon slices

1. Combine tofu, bananas, peanut butter, coconut milk, cinnamon, nutmeg, and vanilla in a food processor and process until creamy. Set aside.
2. Combine chocolate chips and sugar in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring frequently, until chips are completely melted and mixture has no lumps.
3. Add melted chocolate chips to processor and process to a smooth puree. Spoon into 6 custard cups or footed dessert dishes, and chill for several hours until firm.
4. Just before serving, garnish each dish with a sprig of mint and a strawberry or persimmon slice perched on the rim of the custard cup. Serves 6.

* For an extravagantly rich mousse use a coconut milk with at least 8 grams of fat.

A classic hot beverage, the steamy cup of hot chocolate never fails to bring contentment and mellowness to the fortunate guests who are indulged and pampered by their caring host. Because of the zesty nature of chocolate, one cup lifts the spirits and brings the evening to a satisfying conclusion.

STEAMING HOT CHOCOLATE

- 3 C. (720 ml) soymilk
- 3 T. + 1 t. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 to 4 T. evaporated cane juice
- 2 t. Billington's or other vegan dark brown molasses sugar
- 1/4 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 t. vanilla extract

1. Combine all ingredients in a 3-quart (3 liter) stock pot and stir with a wire whip to combine. Heat to almost boiling over medium high heat, stirring occasionally and watching carefully to prevent boil-over.
2. Pour into mugs and serve immediately. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

NOTE: To make enough for 20 people, use the proportions below and heat in a 12-quart (12 liter) stock pot.

- 2 1/2 qts. (2.5 liters) soymilk
- 1 1/4 C. (300 ml) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 C. (240 m.) + 2 T. to 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) evaporated cane juice
- 4 T. Billington's dark brown molasses sugar
- 1 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1 T. vanilla extract

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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise introduces VOW, a recently diagnosed diabetic, who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #1

The Adzuki Bean

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

Sitting on a doctor's examining table wearing nothing but a paper dress is pretty intimidating all by itself. However, when the doctor has flipped through your most recent lab reports and pronounces, "You have diabetes," you could be standing buck-nekkid in an airport, because your world is turned completely upside down, and nothing is ever the same again. If you are like me, you simply grabbed the printed copy of the "American Diabetes Association 1800-calorie-a-day Diet," your prescriptions for oral medication, a glucose meter and test strips, and walked out of the office in a

daze.

To a newly-diagnosed diabetic, I say this: LEARN. You've been handed a life-changing diagnosis, but it doesn't have to be life defeating. The first place you should go is to the bookstore and buy a copy of Gretchen Becker's book, *The First Year Type 2 Diabetes: An Essential Guide for the Newly Diagnosed*. This book contains an absolute wealth of information presented in an easy-to-understand format, and it will help make life a lot less confusing for you. Once you are introduced to some standard diabetic terms, like complex carbohydrates and glycemic index, you can look at vegan eating as a very important tool in diabetes management.

Here's my story: My daughter began dating a young man who comes from a vegetarian family. After they had been going together for a while, she made the announcement that she wanted to become a vegetarian also. I'd say she was about 16 at the time. She's 20 now, still living at home, and engaged to the vegetarian boy.



We had recently lost my mother who had been in extremely poor health. I'm sure the pain of her death upon the whole family was the motivation behind my support of my daughter's decision. I even protected her from the teasing by her brother and her father. And after I understood this was indeed a permanent lifestyle choice of hers, I respected it, and told her I would do whatever I could to adapt the kitchen to her needs.

We made a trip together to the market in a nearby city established by and populated with Seventh-Day Adventists. For those of you "in the know," I'm talking about Loma Linda, California. The market carries no meat, poultry, or fish, but does have lacto/ovo foods. My daughter and I browsed the aisles carefully, educating ourselves, and selecting many items.

Thereafter, it was my goal to cook comparable foods for my daughter (and when he was visiting, her boyfriend as well), so she could eat with the family. I would sample her dishes, but I pretty much continued with the standard family menu.

We shared holiday meals with her boyfriend and his family, and I always made sure there were items on the menu acceptable to them. His mother was extremely appreciative. She said they had friends who would not make such an accommodation to their diets.

My daughter's fiance LOVES my cooking. He is eager to see just what I've invented lately, and I've often sent things home for his whole family to enjoy. I kid my daughter, saying he only wants to marry her because of my cooking.

I was diagnosed in December, 2002, with Diabetes, Type 2. In the extensive research I've done on the disease, and how to treat it, I found that a vegan diet obtains more positive results than any other recommended diabetic diet. One such enlightening article is this:

<http://www.pcrm.org/research/diabetes.html>

Veganism was not foreign to me, since I have been shopping and cooking vegetarian for about four years now. So I made the decision: I'm going vegan.

My decision opened my eyes to a very diabetes-friendly, vegan-friendly food: legumes. So I invite you to accompany me on an excursion I call, "The Adventures of the Bean."

The Adzuki Bean

<http://www.island.wsu.edu/CROPS/ADZUKIBE.htm>

http://www.gnc.com/health_notes/Food_Guide/Adzuki_Beans.htm

<http://www.adzuki.com/>

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/afcm/adzuki.html>

With the above links, I'm sure you learned more than you EVER wanted to know about Adzuki beans! One link even shows a picture of the dark red bean, a little bit bigger than a pea, with a white spot on it. Adzuki cooks up to a completely red bean, almost round in shape, colored like a kidney bean with a kidney-bean type flavor to it, but the skin is much more tender than what a kidney bean has.

Let's look at the nutritional information on the adzuki:

Adzuki beans, 1 cup (230g) (cooked, boiled)

Calories: 294

Protein: 17.3g

Carbohydrate: 57g

Total Fat: 0.23g

Fiber: 16.8g

*Excellent source of:

Iron (4.6mg)

Magnesium (119.6mg)

Potassium (1,223mg)

Zinc (4.0mg)

Folate (278mcg)

The calorie count looks pretty hefty, until you see all the goodies packed into that one cup of cooked beans! Over 17 grams of protein! For most folks, recommended daily intake for protein is about 50 grams. That means a cup of Adzuki beans at every meal would pretty much take care of your protein needs for the day! I'm not recommending a bean-only menu, but this does show a vegan diet CAN easily achieve adequate protein intake!

Diabetics who need to lose weight can refer to the Ornish/MacDougal/Pritikin-type diets, which recommend complex carbohydrates and low fat. Again, looking at the nutritional information for Adzukis, the near ABSENCE of fat in those little guys shines like a beacon in the pit of despair the newly-diagnosed diabetic inhabits.

At 57 grams of carbohydrate, it looks like our Adzukis are bad guys. Wait, though, read a bit further: there are almost 17 grams of fiber in that single cup of beans! That means a net total of 40 grams of carbs. And remember, our fantastical beans are in the category of complex carbohydrates. To a diabetic, those are the good guys. The fiber slows down the digestion of the beans, so that fuel doesn't get dumped into your bloodstream all at once. It's like putting a well-seasoned log of hardwood on the coals in the wood stove at bedtime, so you wake up to a warm house in the morning!



Here's my recipe using Adzuki beans (or any red-type bean you have on hand) that makes a fine soup for lunch!

Adzuki Apple-Bacon Soup

1 lb. (450 g) of dry adzuki beans, rinsed and picked over
1 3-inch (7.5 cm) piece kombu (dried seaweed)
5 slices fake bacon
1/2 white onion, chopped
2 teaspoons garlic, minced
2 cups (480 ml) veggie broth (or more)
1 14.5 ounce (410 g) can diced tomatoes
2 stalks celery, chopped
1/3 cup (80 ml) diced dried apple
1/2 cup (120 ml) red wine (optional)
2 sticks cinnamon, broken into large pieces
salt and pepper to taste

1. Soak beans overnight in fresh water with kombu.
2. In the morning, drain and place in crockpot (include kombu). Add broth, onion, celery, and garlic; cook on high through half the day.
3. Cut fake bacon into 1/2-inch (1 cm) pieces, and add with chopped dried apple to crockpot. Stir in wine (if used) and broken cinnamon sticks. Taste beans.
4. If almost completely cooked, dump can of diced tomatoes with juice into crockpot. If beans are still crunchy, continue to cook on high until they are almost done, then add tomatoes.
5. Turn crockpot down to low and simmer until dinnertime. Remove broken cinnamon sticks. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serves 8

Note: the Kombu adds little to no flavor to the recipe and should completely disintegrate into the soup through cooking. If pieces are still visible and not aesthetically pleasing to you, the Kombu can be removed before serving. Kombu cooked with beans renders them more digestible, and reduces the "fragrant side effects" from eating beans.

One pound of dried Adzuki yields approximately three cups of cooked beans. At 8 servings for this recipe, it works out to about 20 grams carbohydrate per serving.

Next adventure: The Peruano Bean!

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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #3

The Blushing Lentil

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

I always thought a lentil was a lentil. I remember the Bible story where Esau sold his birthright to his brother, Jacob, for a bowl of lentil soup. I thought that had to be pretty good stuff, until I asked my mother. Since she didn't care for lentils at all, we never saw them on the family table. "Lentils, yuck!" is what I believe she said.

On one of my first trips to the bulk foods section at the Loma Linda Market to buy vegetarian goodies for my daughter, I noticed one of the bins was labeled, "Lentils." I thought, "Ehhh, why not?" and filled up a plastic bag with about a pound. When I cooked them up with the requisite

onion and garlic, the end product tasted pretty good to me! I Googled my little heart out, searching for recipes online.



What? There is more than one KIND of lentil? Well, at the next shopping foray, I noticed THREE bins of Lentils: Persian, French, and Red. I was intrigued by the Red Lentils. They were actually sort of orange, and VERY pretty. A pound of Red Lentils jumped into the shopping cart and followed me home. I rinsed them, dumped them into my trusty crockpot with seasoned broth and onion and garlic, and walked away to do other chores. Imagine my SHOCK when I ventured into the kitchen again and peeked into the crockpot! The Red Lentils, which are really a shade of orange, turn BRIGHT PSYCHEDELIC YELLOW when cooked!

I did some more looking on the net searching for this bean and found:

<http://www.foodsubs.com/Lentils.html>

http://www.gnc.com/health_notes/food.asp

<http://www.vegparadise.com/highestperch22.html>

1 cup dry lentils will yield 3-4 cups cooked

Lentils, (boiled) 1 cup (198g)

Calories: 229

Protein: 17.8 g

Carbohydrate: 39.8 g

Total Fat: 0.75 g

Fiber: 15.6 g

Excellent source of iron (6.6 mg), potassium (730 mg), and folate (357 mcg)

Good source of niacin (2.1 mg)

Once again, we see that lentils look like a carbohydrate nightmare, until the fiber grams are subtracted. Diabetics are taught to subtract fiber grams from carbohydrate grams because the fiber slows the digestion of the carbohydrates that in turn keeps the blood sugar level more stable. A cup of cooked lentils will have a net of about 24 grams carbohydrate with lots of protein, almost no fat, and, goodness, all that potassium and folate! Lentils are a wholesome food for the vegetarian diabetic!

VOW Diabetes Update 12/1/03

Now, for the latest installment of my diabetes battle:

As a chubby kid, a plump teen, a round-shaped young adult, and now as a downright FAT middle-ager, I've probably done all the diets known to humankind more than once. I've gained weight, lost it, gained more, in a never-ending cycle. I was at my all-time highest weight when finally diagnosed with diabetes. I felt crappy as well, so I was more than ready to make some changes.

One change that all the diet programs want you to undertake is that dreaded word, "exercise." As far as I'm concerned, that word is the most foul profanity you can utter. I hated it as a kid, loathed it in school, and did my best to completely ignore it thereafter. However, when you get bonked over the head with diabetes, you **MUST** place that word in your daily vocabulary.

That's revolting

HOWEVER, the complications to diabetes, such as kidney destruction, blindness, and foot amputation are powerful motivators. Complications occur when the blood sugar levels keep rising. Here's the kicker: medication and diet alone won't lower dem numbers, folks. You **MUST** get those big muscles in your body moving, so they become blood glucose furnaces. Without the consumption of glucose by the muscle tissue, you won't get the necessary control over your numbers.

So, get up off your butt and **MOVE**. One of the best ways to do that is to **WALK**. You remember that! Treat yourself to a **GOOD** pair of walking shoes. Go to a shoe store which specializes in "hard to fit" feet and tell the people there you have diabetes, and you need a sturdy, comfortable walking shoe. This is no time to pinch pennies and get the cheapies. You can't afford the potential irritations to your feet! Blisters are a no-no to diabetics! After you buy your shoes, then get to walking! Start with around the block. Park a little further from the store than you normally do. Make some laps around the mall at lunchtime. Then give yourself some positive reinforcement and test your blood glucose level when you are done!

After you work up an appetite, fix this fantastic soup for dinner! It's both visually and gastronomically satisfying, and it's good news for diabetics!

Apricot Lentil Soup

1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/3 cup (80 ml) dried apricots, chopped
2 stalks of celery, chopped
1-1/2 cups (360 ml) red lentils
5 cups (1 liter + 240 ml) stock
14 ounce (395 g) can of diced tomatoes,
juice included
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
salt to taste
ground black pepper to taste
1 cup (240 ml) diced carrots



1. Saute onion, garlic, celery, and apricots in olive oil. Add lentils and stock. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes.
2. Stir in tomatoes and juice, and season with thyme, and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for 10 minutes, or until lentils are tender.
3. Puree lentil mixture in blender, and return to pot. Add diced carrots, and simmer gently until carrots are cooked, yet still slightly firm. The contrast in textures is what you are looking to achieve. Makes 8 servings.

92 calories per serving
23 g carbohydrate
8 g fiber
1 g protein
Vitamin A 48%
Vitamin C 16%
Calcium 1%
Iron 15%

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Giorgio Bosso, macrobiotic counselor and cooking instructor, learned from personal experience that the macrobiotic lifestyle was a healing path for him. Today he helps others to discover the energizing, soothing, and revitalizing powers of macrobiotics. Giorgio shares his experience and offers some tantalizing recipes below.

A BLESSING FROM HEAVEN

BY GIORGIO BOSSO

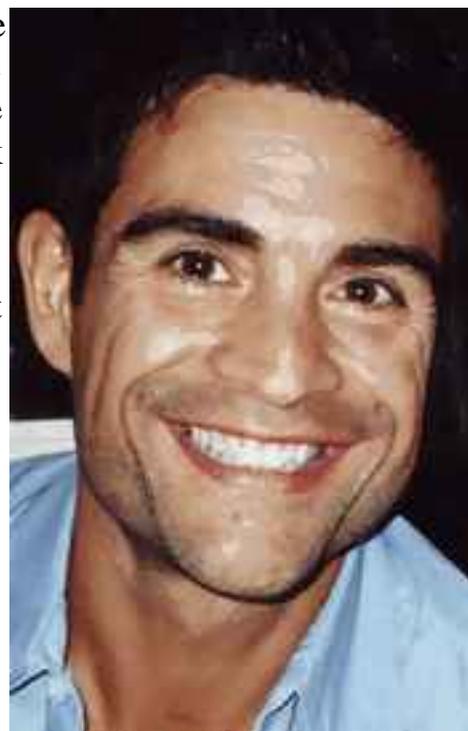
My journey to healing started in winter 1984 in Milan, Italy. It was pouring rain and I had just gotten the result from the doctor that the Elisa test result was positive: I was infected with the HIV virus! When the doctor told me I literally felt as if I was sinking into the earth. I felt all my energy leaving my body. I got so scared I couldn't understand what the doctor was saying. I left the hospital without a destination and took a filovia (an electrical subway) which took me aimlessly around the city. I thought this was a death sentence for me, with no hope left.

A little later I ran into my yoga teacher, who had a great knowledge of alternative therapies. She calmly said to me everything would be fine and suggested homeopathic remedies and enzyme therapy. She hugged me, and all of a sudden I felt very safe. From then on I took care of myself.

From an Italian Family

I come from an Italian family. My mother always ate very well, but when we had to move to Argentina, not only her life, but her diet changed. She started eating more meat, fried foods, fruits, bread, pastas, tomatoes and spices. So we all grew up on that nutrition.

When I turned 18, I started using drugs and went out a lot. It was a moment of my life where I wasn't happy at all; I was very angry and very sad. Longing to be loved by someone, I felt that I needed to break through the walls of restriction to become free, but I didn't know how to do it without killing myself. I thought that taking some anesthetics would help the pain go away. A lot later I found out that this idea was nothing but an illusion. Later I would also discover that the restrictions were in my mind and in my heart, accentuated by the way I was eating. All the food and drink I was consuming was creating an ever-plummeting energy; I was never going to heal.



My Diet

My diet was based on pasta, steaks, pork, juices, jam, bread, cheese, and a lot of sweets. My intake of greens was almost non-existent; they were strange aliens to me. The problem was that I was eating too much cheese and raw food, which made my extremities go very cold. After thinking for a while of becoming a vegetarian, I decided to give it a try hoping it would cure my aching soul. Yet it took me another six years to listen to my body, to trust my intuition and to find guidance on what to do next.

A short time after turning vegetarian, I left Argentina and went to Milan to pursue my career as a hairdresser. I can't remember anymore what year it was, but I remember that I broke out with eczema all over my body, starting from the right side of my face, along the back of my neck, on my buttocks, hands and legs. I was in shock by my very appearance, but I couldn't stay at home because I needed the money to pay the bills and the rent. A skin problem was the first symptom that I developed since I had been diagnosed HIV positive. Other indications followed: recurrent herpes on my buttocks and discharge on my feet (just like athlete's foot) with the skin peeling off from the sole, from the sides, and between the toes. Sometimes also the skin would break and bleed.

Natural Support

From the beginning of being diagnosed I had decided not to take any medication. I was very scared. One of the reasons was that the only medication available at that time was AZT, and the doctors didn't understand the long-term side effects. During these years I saw friends and clients getting worse with their own condition, developing so many symptoms, creating so much pain and struggle that what I was seeing frightened me. I kept my promise to myself not to take any medication and continue in my quest for the natural support that I was looking for. I also realized

later that this was my path for my healing.

I decided to read more about nutrition and got very interested in macrobiotic cuisine. The more I read the more I knew that it would be my safe passage to health. It all made sense to me: no dairy, therefore, no cheese and no milk, no refined products (which are depleted of energy and nutrients), no pizza, raw foods, and so on. My studies brought me back in touch with my mother's way of cooking before she had left for Argentina. In Italy her cooking had been very simple with a lot of grains, beans, fresh vegetables and proteins whenever it was possible, at least once a month.

Lifestyle Changes

I started changing my lifestyle; no more drugs and no more parties, no long nights without sleep, no more alcohol and no more late food. I also changed my work. I quit my work as a hairdresser to become a counselor for people with alcohol and drug addictions. I was much happier! I took classes at Il Naviglio, a macrobiotic restaurant, and studied there for two years to graduate as a chef. Those two years gave me so much information about the macrobiotic lifestyle and philosophy behind it that cooking came to me a lot easier. For the first time I was in charge of my health and my destiny.

Being HIV positive, or having cancer or any other illness is not about the label we carry. But rather it is a blessing from heaven, which we have to decode to find a new path to life, rather than focus on our anger or looking for somebody else to tell us what to do. We are our father, mother and children; we do not need any others for approval. To me this was a second chance given to me to rebuild my life.

I saw a lot of friends leaving me behind as their condition deteriorated. No medication could create peace or a long time relief; all that was treated was their symptoms. When I came to Los Angeles, I volunteered as a counselor for people with HIV and AIDS at Los Angeles AIDS Project. I was assigned to a self-help group. People there thought I would understand them, but quickly became very upset with me as I didn't make "the symptoms" the center of my attention. I was more interested in helping them to create a better lifestyle and understanding how to release that anger and finger pointing.

So I left the group and concentrated on myself and on my own healing more than ever.

Trying to please my lover, who is so important to me, and other friends, I went to several doctors. It didn't work out for long. They were focused on giving me medication because my TC count was low and my "statistical profile" indicated it was going downhill with my health. So I decided to give up on a medical solution and to trust what I was seeing. Even though I lost 10 pounds during my healing cooking (my normal weight is 130 pounds) I put it back in one year. I was getting stronger and stronger.

Living a Happy Life

Today, 16 years after having been diagnosed HIV positive, I live a happy life with my partner and two beautiful dogs (Mina and Sugo.) I teach macrobiotic cooking to cancer patients and people with AIDS. All of them know of my condition and it has a positive impact on them. I practice Kundalini yoga every other day and meditation. My body is in great shape and my spirit is strong. I have nothing to regret, and I embrace what happened, because without it, I would not be the man I am today.

Following are some menus and recipes to cook during springtime. Enjoy and remember the last ingredient in all the food you prepare is to **SHARE WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE**.

We are grateful to the George Ohsawa Macrobiotic Foundation for permission to reprint this article that originally appeared in *Macrobiotics Today*, January/February 2001. For a free catalog, email: foundation@gomf.macrobiotic.net or call 800-232-2372

For our readers who are interested in what types of foods are part of a macrobiotic diet, we are printing two menus with recipes from Giorgio's repertoire.

MENU

Minestrone Soup

Pasta Primavera

Arame with Shiitake & Sesame Seeds

Nishime Style Cooking

Minestrone

-Makes four servings -

Ingredients

1 C. northern beans, soaked overnight
1 C. diced, onions
1/3 C. diced celery
1 T. sesame oil, optional
4 green cabbage leaves, chopped
1/8 tsp. oregano, optional
1/8 tsp. basil, optional
1 C. wax beans
5 C. filtered water
1 inch kombu
1 tsp. kudzu
Sweet miso
Parsley to garnish

Preparation:

1. Heat oil in a soup pot over medium-low heat.
2. Add onions, celery, and herbs, and saute for 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add kombu, beans, and water and bring to a boil.

4. Reduce heat and cook for 1 hour, or until beans are cooked.
5. Add wax beans and cabbage and cook for 5 more minutes.
6. In a small bowl dilute the kudzu with 1 tablespoon cold water. Add the miso into it, stir well, and add to the soup.
7. Cook for 5 more minutes. Serve in individual bowls and garnish with parsley.

Note: If you want a more creamy consistency, add 2 cups of the minestrone into a blender. If you want a more soupy texture, add more water and probably you may need to add a little more miso.

Arame With Shiitake Mushrooms

Ingredients

1/3 C. arame, dry weight
1/3 C. plus 1 T. water
1 shiitake, soaked for 20 minutes
1 C. fresh or frozen organic peas
Water from the soaking shiitake just to cover 1 inch of the pan
Shoyu
Scallions to garnish

Preparation:

1. Into a skillet first add the sliced mushroom, followed by arame with the soaking water plus the water from the shiitake, in total to cover 1 inch of the pan.
2. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and cook for 20 minutes.
3. Add 1 tsp. Shoyu. Add the peas and cook for 5 more minutes, or until water is evaporated.
4. Garnish with scallions.

Pasta Primavera

(spring noodles)

Ingredients

1 package noodles to serve 2 plus a little more
1 leek, cut thin diagonal
1 onion, cut half moon
1 carrot, cut julienne
1 tsp. sesame oil to saute vegetables
1 C. filtered water
Black sesame seeds for garnish
Parsley for garnish

Preparation

1. In a skillet heat oil over medium heat. Add the leek, onions, and carrots; saute all until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes.

2. You may need to add a little more water to prevent burning. Set aside.
3. In another skillet add the sesame seeds, and pan roast on low heat to prevent the seeds from clumping. Set aside.
4. Cook the pasta following the instructions on the package.
5. Strain the pasta and toss into the vegetables, sesame seeds and parsley. Serve warm.

Variation Sauce: Combine 1 T. tahini, 1 tsp. mellow miso, 1 C. water. Stir well and cook for a few minutes. Add to the pasta.

Nishime Style Cooking

Ingredients

1/2 C. daikon, cut diagonal
1/3 C. rutabaga, cut lengthwise
1 C. broccoli florets
kombu
1 inch water
1 tsp. shoyu

Preparation

1. In a ceramic pot add the kombu, rutabaga, and daikon.
2. Add water just to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil, cover, and reduce heat to low.
3. Cook for 15 minutes. Five minutes before the time is up, add the broccoli florets, cover, and cook.
4. Add shoyu and cook for 5 more minutes. Cook off the remaining water with lid off.

Menu

Brown Rice with Sweet Rice & Chestnut

(pot boiled)

Dried Tofu with Vegetables

(light stew)

Boiled Salad with Ume Vinaigrette

Nori Condiment

Vegetarian Apple Jell-O (Kanten)

Brown Rice Dish

Ingredients

- 1 C. brown rice (50%)
- 5 T. sweet rice (40%)
- 2 T. chestnuts (10%)
- 1 inch kombu
- 2 C. water

Preparation:

1. Wash the rice together until water becomes clear. Put the rice in a bowl, add 1 cup water, and soak over night.
2. In another bowl soak overnight the chestnuts with 1 cup water. In the morning take off the red skin that covers the chestnuts and cut chestnuts in half.
3. In a pressure cooker add kombu, rice, chestnuts, and the water. Bring cooker to full pressure and reduce heat. Place a flame reflector under the cooker and cook for 45 minutes.



Dried Tofu Stew

Tofu has a soft texture, mild taste, and versatile shape that combines well with many foods. Tofu comes in different forms: regular, hard, soft, silky, spiced, and dried. Tofu can be steamed, sauteed, boiled, baked, deep fried, used in soups, and as a substitute for egg white when you scramble. Dried tofu is made from thin dry cakes, and gives a unique texture to the dish you cook.

Ingredients

- 2 pieces dried tofu
- 1 onion, cut into chunks
- 1/3 C. carrots, diced
- 4 Brussels sprouts, cut in half
- Water
- Shoyu
- 1 inch kombu
- 1 tsp. kudzu
- Parsley to garnish

Preparation:

1. Soak kombu
2. In a saucepan add kombu, onion, tofu (discard water from tofu) and water. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Add vegetables and cook for 5 minutes. In the meantime, dissolve kudzu with a little water along with shoyu and add to the stew. Stir gently and simmer for 1 minute.
4. Garnish with parsley.

Notes: If you use root vegetables, cook them along with the tofu for 15 minutes and follow steps 3

and 4.

Boiled Salad with Ume Vinaigrette

Ingredients

1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup cauliflower florets
1 cup carrots, cut julienne
1 cup red radish, quartered
1 cup yellow wax beans, sliced in 1 inch lengths
water

Preparation:

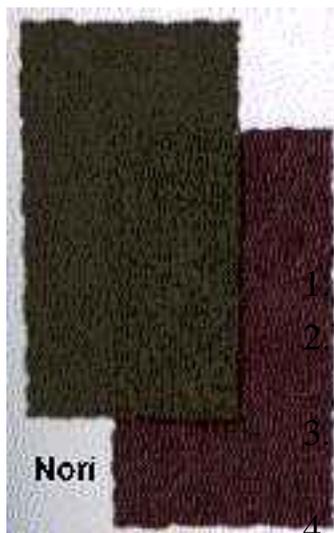
1. In a deep bowl bring water to a boil. Add vegetables and cook until tender.
2. Set aside in a colander to cool off.
3. Place vegetables in a serving bowl and toss with the vinaigrette.

Ume Vinaigrette

2-umeboshi plums
1/2 onion, grated
Juice of one lemon
1 T. sesame tahini
Dash of umeboshi vinegar
Water or broth from boiled vegetables

Nori Condiment

(Serves 2 people)



Ingredients

2 sheets toasted nori
1 cup spring water
Shoyu

Preparation:

1. Tear nori into pieces. Put nori in a saucepan and cover it with water.
2. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to low. Simmer until most of the water evaporates and the nori forms a thick paste, about 10 minutes.
3. Add several drops of shoyu and cook another ten minutes. The nori should have a light salty taste.
4. Cool and then store in a glass container in the refrigerator.

Notes: Cooking without the lid allows "the fishy" taste to escape during the cooking. As a rule of thumb, saltier condiments keep a longer time than less saltier ones, but also you need

less amount in the serving.

Vegetarian Apple Jell-O or Kanten

Kanten is a delicious, all natural gelatin made with apple juice or any other juice as a base. It can be made with nuts, fresh fruits, or even beans, like azuki with raisins. A few nuts or seeds may be added for crunchier texture. Kanten is an vegetarian alternative to commercial Jell-O that is made with animal products.

Properties of agar-agar: High calcium and iodine. Very good for the intestines.

Ingredients

- 1 cup apple juice
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup apples, cored and diced
- 2 T. brown rice syrup
- Pinch sea salt
- 2 T. agar-agar flakes

Preparation:

1. In a saucepan combine the apple juice, water, and sea salt with the agar-agar.
2. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and cook until kanten is dissolved, about 10 minutes.
3. Add the apples and the rice syrup and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Take pot off the fire, set aside, and spoon into individual serving bowls. Chill before serving.

Giorgio teaches, cooks, and coaches macrobiotic cooking in Los Angeles. He can be reached by email at: healingfoods@comcast.net or by phone at 323-936-1354.

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about vegetarian food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I make a simple navy bean soup, but my husband is getting bored with it. Can you suggest a recipe for soup that has beans but is not too complicated?

Your friend, Frieda

Howdy there Frieda,

Well darlin', yer husband is gonna be huggin' you tight tonight 'cause I gots a recipe that I'm shure will send him dancin' 'round the kitchen. It's easy as pie, an' you probably have all the fixin's right there in yer own kitchen. All's you need is a big stockpot an' a few minutes ta put it together. Then set back an' let the stove do all the work!

I jes know yer gonna have a fine kettle o' soup tonight!

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

AUNT NETTIE'S COUNTRY BEAN KETTLE

- 1/3 C. (80 ml) green split peas
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) brown lentils
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) pearl barley

- 1 1-lb. (450g) can kidney beans, with liquid
- 1 1-lb. (450g) can pinto beans, with liquid
- 7 C. (1 liter + 720 ml) vegetable stock
- 1/4 t. dry mustard
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) chopped fresh parsley or 2 T. dried parsley
- 1 t. dried marjoram
- 1 t. dried oregano
- 1/2 t. paprika

1/4 t. sugar

1/2 t. salt

2 T. instant minced onions or 1/2 medium onion, minced

1/8 to 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper

2 to 4 T. lemon juice

1. Wash split peas, lentils and barley. Drain and set aside.
2. Put canned beans, vegetable stock, dry mustard, parsley, marjoram, oregano, paprika, sugar, salt, instant minced onions, and pepper into a large stockpot. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally.
3. Add washed peas, lentils and barley, and return to boiling. Turn heat down to medium and simmer 45-50 minutes. Adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Add lemon juice to taste for a tangy finishing touch. Serves 5 - 6.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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Father's Day Vegan Barbecue

Includes menu and recipes below.

On the first official Father's Day in 1910, Dad didn't receive the proverbial tie or even a baseball hat. He wasn't treated to a special dinner at a restaurant nor did he enjoy the revelry of today's Father's Day celebrations. Instead, he was honored at a solemn church service.

Just a year earlier, Sonora Louise Smart Dodd was attending a Mother's Day church sermon when she thought about creating a day to honor her father and express her appreciation for his love and devotion. Her dad, a Washington state farmer, Civil War veteran, and father of six children, raised the family himself after his wife died giving birth to their sixth child.

To express her love and affection for her father, Sonora petitioned the Ministerial Association of Spokane to initiate an official holiday on her father's birthday, June 5 in 1910. Government offices, however, seldom act quickly and June 19 was set aside instead. The celebration that followed was a rather uneventful church service rather than today's typical gift presentation and festive brunch or dinner.

President Calvin Coolidge recognized Father's Day in 1924 but no official declaration was proposed until 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson made Father's Day an official holiday by issuing a presidential proclamation. However, it was President Richard Nixon who signed the 1972 law declaring the third Sunday in June as Father's Day.

Some Dads delight in a pre-Father's Day shopping spree at the hardware store, the electronics store, sporting goods store, gourmet wine shop, or the mens' clothing store. Perhaps a family movie makes the day perfect for Dad. Whatever his choices, Father's Day is the ideal time to spoil Dad.

While many restaurants offer dinner specials on holidays like Father's Day, dining out does not

compare to the enjoyment Dad experiences when the celebration takes place at home. Kids love to pitch in to make special cards for Dad, set the table, and even work right alongside Mom to prepare a special meal.

Though not a written edict, a synonymous relationship between Dad's day and a barbecue has emerged. If Dad is the type who enjoys tending the barbecue, give him plenty of opportunity to take charge. With vegan foods, the barbecue monitoring is actually quite brief.

Spare nothing --have the entire family select the festive trappings starting with a brightly colored apron and a chef's hat for Dad. Create the ideal barbecue setting with a red and white checkered tablecloth and napkins to match. Then enlist the entire family in preparing the menu items that could be created a day or two in advance.

Raise a glass of **Tomato Tornado**, a robust beverage with a tomato juice base to begin the Fathers' Day celebration. Perhaps each member of the family can plan a special toast that need not be lengthy or belabored. Dad will appreciate the thoughtfulness and sincerity. Then for a captivating appetizer, dip chunks of barbecued **Skewered Seitan** into the community bowl of succulent **Hawaiian Teriyaki Sauce**.

Though a traditional Father's Day menu is quite carnivorous, the compassionate approach features hearty feasting on delicacies of the plant kingdom. Dad won't miss the meat with the zesty flavors of marinated **Veggie Texas Kebabs**, skewers threaded with marinated onions, mushrooms, bell peppers, tofu, and tempeh that are then slathered in **Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce**, a positively irresistible mopping sauce.

Since a barbecue meal isn't quite complete without a simmering pot of beans, Dad can look forward to the lusty flavor of **Bean Medley in Dragon's Breath Sauce**.

Accompanying the **Texas Veggie Kebabs** is **Dad's Favorite Potato Salad**, a mouth-watering a medley of white and sweet potatoes enhanced with red and green bell peppers, sweet onions, diced apples, and bits of veggie Canadian bacon.

Make sure Dad receives his 5-a-day-plus veggies with **Brassica Slaw** that features plenty of crunchy vegetables like red and green cabbage, carrots, shredded kale, broccoli, and raisins in a well-seasoned dressing.

A **Roasted Tomato Onion Relish**, drizzled with olive oil and seasoned mild or spicy to please Dad's taste, completes the dinner plate. Be sure to include some whole-grain rolls that are warmed and served with individual bowls of **Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce** for home-style dunking.

After the meal settles a bit, roll out the **Rude Chocolate Sauce** and the **Seasonal Fruits** for a do-it-yourself dipping dessert. Cut some thick chunks of fresh pineapple and serve along with strawberries, cherries, and other seasonal fruits so everyone can join in dipping into a robust pool



of sauce.

Menu

Appetizer

Tomato Tornado for toasting

Skewered Seitan

Hawaiian Teriyaki Sauce

Entrée

Texas Veggie Kebabs

Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce

Dad's Favorite Potato Salad

Brassica Slaw

Bean Medley in Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce

Roasted Tomato Onion Relish

Whole wheat rolls with bowls of barbecue sauce for dunking

Dessert

Rude Chocolate Sauce

Seasonal Fruits -- pineapple, bananas, strawberries, cherries

TOMATO TORNADO

A lusty beverage with a bristling tang partners well with the appetizer course. With practically no preparation at all, you'll have a great beverage that's just right for the barbecue celebration. Keep this all-occasion drink recipe a handy for serving at any season.

1 46-oz.(1.36 liters) can tomato juice

1/4 C. (60 ml) lemon juice

1 t. Chinese Five Spices powder

1 T. + 1 t. apple cider vinegar

1 t. Tamari or soy sauce

4 dashes Tabasco Sauce

6 Spanish olives

1. Combine all ingredients in a 2-quart (2 liter) pitcher and stir well. Chill.
2. Just before serving, make a slit at the base of each olive and stand it on the rim of each glass. Makes six 3/4-cup (180 ml) servings.

A truly enticing sauce is the result of a complexity of diverse flavors. Typical of Asian seasonings, this combination of sweet, sour, and salty flavors blend together to enhance almost anything infused with it. In this dish, the sauce makes a heavenly pairing with seitan, a hearty protein made from wheat gluten.

HAWAIIAN TERIYAKI SAUCE

3/4 C. (180 ml) rice vinegar

- 3/4 C. (180 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2-inch (3.5 cm) piece ginger root, peeled and minced or grated
- 1/4 + 1/8 t. Chinese Five Spices powder
- 3 to 4 T. evaporated cane juice
- 4 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 3 T. blackstrap molasses
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 green onion, thinly sliced

1. Depending on the number of people at the celebration, you may consider doubling the recipe or cutting it in half. For 6 people, prepare 1 1/2 recipes of the sauce. That will allow a good portion to be set aside for dipping the Seitan appetizer and plenty for marinating the Kebabs.
2. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir to incorporate flavors. Makes about 2 cups (480 ml).

Set aside a bowl of the sauce for dipping the seitan appetizer, and reserve the remainder to marinate the Texas Veggie Kebabs. The sauce can be made several days in advance.

Seitan is a ready-to eat product available in the refrigerated deli section of large health food markets and comes in half-pound packages. Made from wheat gluten, seitan (pronounced SAY-tan) has the chewy texture of meat, yet is totally vegan. Receptive to flavorful marinades or sauces, seitan whets the appetite for a great barbecue experience and requires no advance preparation.

SKEWERED SEITAN

1 1/2 lbs. (675g) seitan

1. Cut seitan into bite-size chunks and thread 1 or 2 on a thin wooden skewer.
 2. Heat briefly on the barbecue, then dip into the Hawaiian Teriyaki Sauce. Makes 6 to 8 servings.
-



The kebabs can be assembled and marinated a day ahead to ease the days preparations. Pleasing to look at, the platter of these colorful skewers instantly liven the meal and will certainly earn a thumbs-up from Dad.

TEXAS VEGGIE KEBABS

1 lb. (450g) extra firm tofu

1 lb. (450g) tempeh

1 red bell pepper

1 green bell pepper

1 yellow bell pepper

2 large onions

1 lb. button mushrooms

2 or 3 large fresh mangos

Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce

1. Cut the both the tofu and tempeh into 1-inch (2.5 cm) cubes. Set aside in separate bowls.
2. Cut the bell peppers into large 1 1/2-inch (2.5 cm) squares and the onions into large wedges. Set aside. Wash mushrooms and set aside.
3. Cut the mangos into two halves vertically. Cut each half into three strips lengthwise, and trim rind off. Cut into large chunks.
4. Thread vegetables, tofu, and tempeh onto wooden skewers arranging in a colorful pattern. Alternatively, arrange some skewers of alternating tofu and tempeh chunks and some with just the vegetables.

5. Pour the Hawaiian Teriyaki Sauce into a shallow baking dish and arrange the skewers in the sauce. Turn skewers to coat them evenly or brush the marinade on with a pastry brush. Marinate for several hours or overnight.
6. Toss on the barbecue and stand by with tongs to turn them every few minutes as they cook. Total cooking time may vary, but about 8 to 12 minutes is average.
7. The last couple of minutes, brush with Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce. Serve with pride. Makes about 6 servings.

A homemade barbecue sauce wins over the prepared varieties every time because you can adjust the spice and seasonings to your own family's preferences. If a few family members' taste buds lean to a spicier level simply make the basic recipe and take a portion off that can be seasoned to their fiery desires. Enjoy the barbecue sauce on a host of other dishes like baked tofu or tempeh, seitan, or as a condiment on bean patties or vegetarian burgers.

DRAGON'S BREATH BARBECUE SAUCE

- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 to 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large red bell pepper, diced
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 3 T. water

- 1 28-oz. (792g) can whole, crushed, or diced tomatoes
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) Billingsly's dark brown sugar
- 1/2 of a 6-oz. (170g) can tomato paste
- 1/4 C. (60g) white wine vinegar
- 1 T. + 1 t. chili powder
- 1/4 t. allspice
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 t. lemon juice
- 1/2 t. Wright's hickory smoke flavoring
- Pinch of cayenne pepper or to taste

1. Combine onions, garlic, bell peppers, olive oil, and water in a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan. Sauté, stirring frequently, over medium-high heat until soft and lightly browned, about 12 to 15 minutes. Add more water as needed to prevent burning vegetables. Set aside.
2. Combine remaining ingredients in a food processor and process to a puree. Add to saucepan, and simmer about 5 minutes to temper seasonings. Makes about 5 cups (1 liter and 240 ml).

NOTE: Use some of the sauce for last minute brushing on the Texas Veggie Skewers, some for simmering the Pinto Beans, and some for dunking bowls for the Whole Grain Rolls.

The perfect entrée accompaniment, this relish is almost effortless, yet proudly parades its appealing flavors. If ever two vegetables were meant to be partners, without debate these two are the perfect couple.

ROASTED TOMATO ONION RELISH

4 medium onions
8 medium tomatoes

Extra virgin oil
Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. (Gas Mark 5). Slice onions thickly, about 3/8-inch (.5cm) thick, and quarter them. Lay them on a large baking pan.
2. Cut tomatoes into coarse chunks, and add them to the baking pan with the onions.
3. Lightly drizzle olive oil over the top, and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
4. Roast at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 30 minutes. Use a spatula to turn the vegetables over, and roast 15 to 20 minutes longer. Adjust seasoning if needed.
5. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl and serve warm or at room temperature. Serves 5 or 6.

Old fashioned cole slaw teams two vegetables touted for their great health benefits--cabbage and carrots. Add kale, broccoli, and red cabbage to the mix and chomp on an even healthier combo of veggies that are known for their ability to stave off those nasty FR's (free radicals).

BRASSICA SLAW



3 C. (720 ml) red cabbage, thinly sliced
3 1/2 C. (840 ml) green cabbage, thinly sliced
3 medium carrots, peeled and shredded
1 large leaf of kale, finely sliced
1 C. (240 ml) finely chopped broccoli
1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins
1/4 C. (60 ml) lemon juice
3 T. organic canola oil
1/2 t. salt
1/2 t. garlic powder
3 dashes Tabasco Sauce (optional)
3 cherry tomatoes

Few sprigs of parsley or cilantro

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss well to distribute vegetables and seasonings evenly.
2. Garnish with cherry tomatoes nestled in a bed of parsley at the edge of the bowl. Serves 6 to 8.

The mere mention of potato salad conjures images of an old-fashioned deli style medley of ingredients. For Dad a new version emerges with the addition of sweet potatoes, apples, and a tasty vegan mayonnaise. Destined to become a new favorite, this hearty potato salad offers a delightful complexity of flavors.

DAD'S FAVORITE POTATO SALAD

2 lbs. (1 kilo) unpeeled white potatoes

1 1/2 lbs. (675g) sweet potatoes, either yellow or orange

Water

1 t. salt, divided

1 large red bell pepper, diced

1 large green bell pepper, diced

1 C. (240 ml) diced sweet onions

1 large apple, diced

1 6-oz. (170g) package Yves Canadian Veggie Bacon, cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) pieces and separated

3/4 C. (180 ml) Vegenaïse (vegan mayonnaïse)

1 t. salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 T. rice vinegar

Paprika

1 small carrot, shredded

2 sprigs of fresh basil

1. Cut the white potatoes into bite-size chunks and put them into a 3-quart (3 liter) saucepan. Add enough water to just cover potatoes. Add 1/2 t. salt, cover pan, and bring to a boil over high heat. When boiling, reduce heat slightly, and cook about 8 minutes. Test for doneness with a fork. Drain off water and run cold water over potatoes to cool them. Drain well, and put them into a large mixing bowl.
2. Cut the sweet potatoes and cook them separately in a 2 or 3-quart (2 or 3 liter) saucepan with the other 1/2 t. salt. Follow the same procedure as with white potatoes. Cook them for only 6 to 8 minutes, then drain and add to mixing bowl.
3. Add remaining ingredients and gently mix with a wooden spoon to distribute seasoning evenly.
4. Garnish with a light sprinkle of paprika. Spoon the shredded carrots at the edge of the bowl and place basil sprigs on either side. Serve at room temperature or chill. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

What's a barbecue meal without beans? Embracing those wonderful little nuggets is pure delight when they're bathed in a mouthwatering barbecue sauce.

BEAN MEDLEY IN DRAGON'S BREATH BARBECUE SAUCE

2 C. (480 ml) dry bean combination (pinto, kidney, white) **

Water

7 C. (1.75 liters) water

1 onion, coarsely chopped

1 clove garlic

Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce

1. Pick over dry beans, and discard any broken or discolored beans. Look for any debris like twigs or tiny bits of gravel.
2. Wash beans and soak them for 8 hours in a large stockpot with 3 inches (7.5 cm) of water to cover.
3. Pour off soak water and add 7 C. (1.75 liters) water, the onions, and garlic. Bring to a boil over high heat, uncovered. Turn heat down slightly, and simmer beans about 1 hour or until tender.
4. Remove beans from liquid and put them into a baking dish. Spoon a generous quantity of Dragon's Breath Barbecue Sauce into the bean dish and stir well.
5. Bake, uncovered, at 300 F. (Gas Mark 2) for 1 to 2 hours to create a rich blend of bean medley and sauce. Check frequently to make sure beans do not become dry. Add more sauce as needed. Serves 6 to 8.

** For an easier preparation, used canned beans and simply combine them with the sauce and bake.



Following a hearty meal where the colorful abundance invites second helpings, the guests appreciate a brief respite before gathering for dessert. Because of its lightness, fruit is always an excellent choice for a sweet finish. The added fun of enhancing the fruit with chocolate, a favorite sweet, brings the occasion to a delightful climax.

RUDE CHOCOLATE SAUCE

Chocolate Sauce

- 2 C. (480 ml) soymilk
- 3/4 C. (180 ml) + 2 T. evaporated cane juice
- 8 oz. (225 g) unsweetened baker's chocolate
- 1 t. vanilla extract

Fruit Platter

- 1 fresh pineapple, cut into bite-size chunks
 - 2 pints fresh strawberries, stems removed
 - 1 to 2 pounds fresh cherries
 - 3 bananas, cut into 1-inch (2.5 cm) chunks
1. Heat soymilk and evaporated cane juice together in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan over medium high until the sugar dissolves, stirring frequently.
 2. Break chocolate into 1 ounce (28 g) pieces with a knifepoint, and add to soymilk. Turn heat down to medium and stir continuously until dissolved, about 5 or 6 minutes.
 3. Cool slightly, and add vanilla extract.
 4. Set aside for several hours to rest and thicken. When ready to serve, warm gently over medium heat, stirring constantly until it reaches desired temperature. Bring to the table and set on a trivet. Makes about 3 cups (720 ml).
 5. Bring the platter of fruit to the table, and serve each person a fondue fork or regular fork for a delicious dipping extravaganza. Serves 6.

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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #4

Homemade Soymilk

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

Any vegetarian diet has a place for soymilk in it, and the diabetic vegetarian is no different. As long as you count the carbohydrates and keep track of the calories, soymilk can be a nutritious and good-tasting part of your daily "fuel." When I decided to become vegan, I tried soymilk for the first time and I have to admit, I was pleasantly surprised at how good it was, and how good for me it was! An added surprise benefit was that most soymilks also contain some fiber! Hey, cows, try THAT!

In my surfing adventures around the web, I've seen references to soymilk machines. These handy appliances can take a quantity of dried soybeans and convert them into fresh milk. And the descriptions of that fresh milk sure didn't sound like the stuff I was pouring out of aseptic cartons!

My interest in home made soymilk increased exponentially when I bought a brand of soymilk I had never tried before. Blechhhhh! I paid MONEY for that?

At my next shopping trip, I looked for bulk dried soybeans, and those little guys were going for ninety-nine cents a pound. Organic, even! The little calculator tucked away in my brain started clicking away. Store-bought soymilk runs \$1.00 a quart or more. And I'd already made the BLECHHHH discovery that cheaper is NOT better. Soy BEANS are 99-cents a pound, and a batch of soymilk from the home machine uses about a half-cup of dried beans. It doesn't take a calculus major to figure out that we're talking savings and taste here!



For about \$230, I bought a soymilk machine. For this particular brand, the beans are soaked overnight. Load the soaked beans in the little filter basket, fill the container with water, and push a button. In about 15 minutes, voila! I now had about a quart and a half of hot, fresh, foamy soymilk that smelled like Heaven! And it sure didn't look like the stuff I had been drinking from the carton, either! This stuff was a rich, creamy, sort of eggshell color and reminded me of eggnog. In fact, I sweetened the very first cup of milk a little bit, poured in a drop of vanilla extract and then sprinkled cinnamon and nutmeg on top and called it "soynog."

For daily, typical soymilk consumption, the homemade milk needs a touch of salt and a small amount of sweetening. In a single, one and one-half quart batch, I add about a quarter teaspoon of salt and one packet of stevia. If you do this while the milk is still warm, the additions dissolve readily.

But wait, there's more! (Sheesh, I sound like an infomercial!)

The "leftover" in the little filter basket is the soybean pulp, and it's even got a name: okara. It looks like cooked rice, or maybe grated coconut. Don't get out a spoon and dig in, though. The uncooked soybean contains an enzyme that prevents the human body from utilizing all the nutrition in it. However, you can add this amazing stuff to all kinds of recipes and it's a fantastic source of protein, fiber and vitamins! I used it in my homemade bread and dazzled everyone with new moistness and dense texture. I discovered a whole world of okara recipes and now it looks like I'll be making soymilk just to get the pulp!

Next on my list: homemade TOFU!

I haven't given up on my beans, though. I'm still cranking up the crockpot and adding all kinds of good things to create Adventures of the Bean! This installment has a triple "scoop" feature: lentils, Good Mother Stallard beans, and Cannellini beans. The Stallard bean is a maroon and white mottled color, <http://beanbag.net/cgi-bin/image/templates/bg3.jpg> and perfect for soups. If you cannot find it, though, pinto beans or cranberry beans can be substituted. I used the pinto bean nutritional information when calculating the recipe.

Cannellini beans are popular with Italian cooking. It's a large white bean <http://www.heirloomseed.com/img163.gif>, often called the Italian kidney bean. Great Northern

beans can be used instead. This recipe also calls for Persian lentils. These are sometimes known as green lentils, but any lentil may be used.

Get out your crockpot!

Bean Ragoo

Serves 10

1 cup (240 ml) dried Good Mother Stallard beans, washed and sorted
1 cup (240 ml) dried Cannellini beans, washed and sorted
1 3-inch (7.5 cm) piece Kombu
1 cup (240 ml) dried Persian lentils, washed and sorted
1/2 package (4 pieces) Yves breakfast link sausages, diced
6 cups (1 liter + 480 ml) veggie broth or water
3 stalks celery, diced
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 fresh eggplant, diced
1 14-ounce (395g) can diced tomatoes, with juice
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp ground turmeric
1/4 cup dark raisins
salt and pepper to taste

1. Place washed and sorted beans in crockpot. Cover with water and add Kombu, soak overnight. In the morning, drain soaking water.
2. Add washed and sorted lentils, veggie broth or water, celery, onion, and garlic. Cook on "high."
3. When beans are tender, broil eggplant and sausages until golden brown. Add to crockpot with tomatoes and juice, seasonings, and raisins. Continue cooking until eggplant is soft and sausages are tender.

This soup freezes beautifully.

Enjoy, enjoy, enjoy!

Nutritional information, per serving:

255 calories total
70 calories from fat
7 g fat
620 mg sodium
39 g carbohydrates
19 g fiber
19 g sugars
19 g protein
6% Vitamin A
9% Vitamin C
2% Calcium
12% Iron

Next adventure: Portuguese Bean Soup!

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Adventures of the Bean #2

The Peruano Bean

by VOW

[Includes Recipe Below](#)

Living in Southern California, I'm accustomed to seeing parts of the mainstream supermarkets devoted to Hispanic foods. Bins of dried chili peppers and pinto beans sit alongside the produce department where the head lettuce and beefsteak tomatoes are found. One day, I noticed what appeared to be a new item: a yellowish dried bean called Peruano.

Once I made the transition to veganism, and focused on the heroic legumes, the Peruano bean was in my sights. I popped around the internet to see what I could find on this guy.

<http://www.annebarone.com/beans.html>

Tastes sorta like a navy bean? Great! I found a recipe, made vegan modifications, and used the Peruano beans in it!

I did some more looking on the net searching for this bean and found:

http://www.americanradioworks.org/features/food_politics/beans/3.html

<http://www.greens.org/s-r/22/22-21.html>

Holy Moly! A political bean! I thought the most controversy a bean could generate was the social aspects of gas! This story of intrigue was almost as convoluted as the stevia issue. I felt tiny stirrings of my anti-establishment youth, and I HAD TO HAVE THIS BEAN!

With this recipe, now you can have it too!

"Beef," Bean, and Barley Stew

1 lb. (450 g) dry Peruano beans, rinsed and picked over
1 3-inch (7.5 cm) piece kombu (dried seaweed)
8 ounces (225 g) "beef chunks" TVP (Texturized Vegetable Protein), dry
hot water
1 small onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
4 cups (960 ml) veggie broth
1 14.5 ounce (410 g) can diced tomatoes, undrained
2 carrots, chopped
1/4 medium head cabbage, shredded
1/3 cup (80 ml) quick-cooking barley
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon dried basil
1/4 teaspoon dried rosemary
salt and pepper to taste

1. Soak beans overnight in fresh water with kombu.
2. In the morning, drain and place in crockpot (include kombu).
3. In small bowl, place dry TVP and pour enough hot water over chunks to completely cover with liquid.
4. Add broth, onion, carrots, garlic, and barley to crockpot.
5. When TVP is reconstituted add also, including any remaining liquid. Cook on high.
6. When beans have cooked to the point where they are no longer crunchy, add can of diced tomatoes with juice.
7. Stir in shredded cabbage, and cook on high for 30-45 minutes longer. Season with salt and pepper to taste, serve to compliments! Serves 8.

Note: the kombu adds little to no flavor to the recipe and should completely disintegrate into the soup through cooking. If pieces are still visible and not aesthetically pleasing to you, the kombu can be



removed before serving. Kombu cooked with beans renders them more digestible, and reduces the fragrant side effects

This soup freezes beautifully, and makes a wonderful lunch to take to work!

One pound (450 g) of dried Peruano yields approximately three cups (720 ml) of cooked beans. At 8 servings for this recipe, it works out to about 20 grams carbohydrate per serving.

Nutrition Facts

Per serving:

Calories 210

Calories from fat 8

Total carbohydrates 29g

Fiber 13g

Protein 17g

Vitamin A 87% RDA

Vitamin C 28% RDA

Calcium 9% RDA

Iron 21% RDA

VOW Diabetes Update 10/1/03

After three months of vegan eating, I nearly danced to my next doctor appointment! I was looking forward to amazing results in my blood work, and I wanted to show off my 30-pound (13.61 kilos) weight loss (total, since diagnosis).

I was so disgusted at the lab results, I wanted to throw furniture. My HbA1C had risen a small amount, my cholesterol had a negligible drop, and my triglycerides had RISEN. I was heartbroken!

Fortunately, I have a very compassionate, understanding doctor. She fully supported me in my diet choice to become vegan. She herself is Seventh-Day Adventist, and she knows the healthful benefits to a vegetarian diet. And from her understanding of vegetarianism, she said the rise in my triglycerides was a NORMAL response to the low-fat vegan diet.

Whereas elevated triglycerides are a cause for concern, she said that this is one of those instances where the "big picture" comes into play. In fact, she refused to let me be discouraged! The weight loss alone was cause for celebration!

Some of what she said must have sunk in, LOL, because I didn't run right out and eat an entire cheesecake. While I may have a few lapses here and there, I'm still basically vegan. And I think I'll stay with it for a while longer. Who knows?

I do understand that managing diabetes consists of LIFESTYLE changes, not just a diet to reach a certain weight. For me, a vegan diet is one of the easiest of those changes that I can make.

Next adventure: The Blushing Lentil

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about vegetarian food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

My doctor says I'm supposed to increase my intake of fiber. Any suggestions?

Your friend,
Joyce

Howdy there, Joyce,

Well, darlin,' that's no problem a'tall. Fiber is ever'where in fruits, vegetables, grains, an' beans. All's ya gotta do is eat 'em ever' day an' you'll be surprised at jes how good you'll start feelin.' Now, I'm gonna give y'all a recipe ta git ya started -- it's got beans an' grains put together, an' it tastes so good you'll be jumpin' up fer second helpin's.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

BUCKWHEAT 'N' BEANS

- 2 C. (480 ml) water
- 1 t. salt
- 1 C. (120 ml) buckwheat (raw or toasted)

Mushroom Gravy

- 1/2 lb. (225g) white mushrooms, sliced
- 2 1/2 C. (600 ml) water
- 1 T. Tamari or soy sauce

- 3 T. cornstarch
- 3 T. water

- 1 15-oz. (425g) can garbanzo beans, drained

1. Put the water and salt in a 3-quart (3 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Add buckwheat, turn heat down to low, and steam 15 minutes.
2. While buckwheat is cooking, combine mushrooms, water, and Tamari in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, and cook over high heat until mushrooms are cooked, about 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Combine cornstarch and water in a small cup and stir until smooth. Add to bubbling mushroom liquid, stirring constantly until thickened, about 1 minute. Makes about 2 1/2 cups (600 ml).
4. When buckwheat is cooked, add about half the Mushroom Gravy and the garbanzo beans. If mixture is too dry, add more of the gravy. Refrigerate the remaining gravy to use for another meal. Makes about 4 delicious servings.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

[Click here for past Ask Aunt Nettie Columns](#)



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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #8

The Dawn Phenomenon and Chile Verde

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

As bragged about in my last bean article, I'm now a diabetic "controlled by diet and exercise."

Sometimes, it's a pain in the rear end.

For me, the aggravating part is the cursed Fasting Blood Glucose level in the morning, the first test of the day. Here I've been SLEEPING all night long, and the numbers look like I've been to the movies and eaten a tub of buttered popcorn, a couple of candy bars, and washed it all down with a giant soda pop.

According to Joslin Diabetes Center's Guidelines for Pharmacological Management of Type 2 Diabetes, November 2, 2003, the goal plasma blood glucose ranges for people with diabetes for the fasting, before-breakfast reading should be 90 to 130 mg/dL. This morning, mine was 151 mg/dL. That doesn't seem too bad, but ideally, most doctors would like to see a number closer to 100 mg/dL. Kinda makes me want to crawl back in bed!

There can be several reasons for this rise in blood sugar. Remember that diabetes, especially Type 2 diabetes, is a derangement of a whole network of body interactions. Everything you do has to be viewed on how it affects the entire body as a whole. And when you are controlling diabetes by diet and exercise, it's often a guessing game more convoluted than the mystery game "Clue!"

If only diabetes management could be solved as easily as "Colonel Mustard in the Library with the lead pipe!"

One cause of high morning fasting numbers is an occurrence called the Dawn Phenomenon. This is one of those evolutionary developments that harkens back to the caveman days. Imagine waking up next to the campfire as the sun is rising in the east. Last night's evening meal is only a memory, and there is no pantry full of supplies, nor can you run down to the corner café for a stack of pancakes. No, if you want breakfast, you are going to have to go CATCH it. It's hard to start out for a day of hunting and gathering when your belly is growling and you must combat the weakness of low blood sugar.



Mother Nature found a way to remedy this, with the Dawn Phenomenon. The liver is a fantastic all-purpose factory, and one of its many jobs is storage. It contains a supply of ready-to-use glucose, and it very conveniently will dump some into the bloodstream when necessary. In the morning, this provides you with a burst of energy to literally find breakfast.

Of course, those cave days are gone, and we are still left with the evolutionary developments. The Dawn Phenomenon is actually a rotten thing to have in present time, especially for an overweight Type 2 diabetic. Aside from the crummy blood glucose numbers, the Dawn Phenomenon will allow you to get up, get ready for work, and be on your way with no discernable hunger pangs. "I don't need breakfast, I'm not hungry!" is the morning mantra for many. If you could stand to lose a few pounds, you think this is a wonderful way to economize on the daily calorie allotment!

Wrong!

That elevated blood glucose number isn't going to stay elevated forever. The liver dump is a one-time thing. Pretty soon, the extra glucose will be used up by your activities, and if you haven't eaten ANYTHING, the bill will come due. That means you will suddenly find yourself ravenous, ready to pounce on just about anything edible, and any good intentions for watching your calorie intake will fly out the window as you set yourself on a "Search and Consume" mission! Vending machines will lure you with their siren call, convenience markets will appear to be an oasis in the

desert wasteland, and you will be seduced yet again by the words, "Fast Food."

What to do? Talk to your doctor and your nutritionist and/or your diabetes educator. Make sure your diet plan includes the right proportion of fats, protein, and carbohydrates. See if a session of exercise right before bedtime can help bring down those early morning numbers. Some people may find that a protein-rich snack right before retiring can also have a positive effect on the fasting blood glucose the next morning.

And eat breakfast, please!

Here's a recipe where I really shine in my creativeness! Make sure you reserve some leftovers to have as the late-night high protein snack, or even to reheat for an out-of-the-ordinary breakfast!

More and more mainstream supermarkets and grocery stores are carrying vegetarian meat analog products. Green Giant has "Veggie Crumbles" you can use in place of browned, ground beef in recipes, and we've all got our favorite Gardenburger entrées. For the most part, "fake meats" consist of soy, magically manipulated to mimic beef, chicken, or pork. However, if you do some careful investigation, there is another substance that comprises many meat substitutes, and that is wheat protein, or gluten.

Years ago, this protein substance, often called Seitan, was created through an extremely arduous process of kneading a dough made from flour and water, UNDER water, to rinse away the starch. Today, thank heavens, you can buy the powdered gluten, sometimes called "vital wheat gluten," in many stores featuring homemade bread supplies. A couple of tablespoons of vital gluten added to a bread recipe will increase the protein content of the bread, and give the bread dough more elasticity to trap the carbon dioxide released from the yeast fermentation, resulting in a lighter, more airy loaf. Depending on where you buy the gluten, you'll find it's a relatively inexpensive product, often costing less than two dollars a pound if purchased in bulk.

At that price, it's a bargain, and here's why:

Powdered gluten is mixed in a ratio of 1:1 with water, to produce a very stretchy dough. This dough can then be formed into steaks, cutlets, roasts, nuggets, or any other meat-type shape. It essentially has no flavor of its own, and will absorb whatever seasonings you add to it, or immerse it in. Seitan has been a popular ingredient in many Asian cuisines for years. Some people have even given it the clever name, "wheat meat."

I predict once you see how easy it is to make, and how versatile it is, and how doggone CHEAP it is, you'll love it as much as I do!

To accompany this nifty substance, I found the perfect bean! As I explained last month, rice is often a food that becomes a fond memory to diabetics. If you don't want to limit yourself to a very small serving, or if you can't find that intriguing purple rice, there's another solution: The Rice Bean. Yep, there's a little white bean that is SHAPED like a grain of rice! It tastes like a navy bean, but it sure looks like something that should be named Uncle Ben! It's available from many sources online: <http://beanbag.net/br8.html>

<http://www.phippscountry.com/beans17.htm>

<http://shop.store.yahoo.com/chefshop/zurricbean1.html>

Interested? Good! We're going to head to the kitchen to make a Mexican style dish called "Chile Verde." The seitan will be cooked in a green chile sauce, and served over rice beans.

Chile Verde with Seitan

1. The night before you want to serve this masterpiece, rinse one pound of rice beans, add a three-inch strip of kombu, and cover with water. Let this soak while you sleep and dream of the next day's gastronomic adventure!
2. The next morning, drain the water, replace with fresh water (keeping the kombu), and cook the beans on "High" in your crock pot or simmer on top of the stove until tender. Adding a little bit of garlic is always nice!

While the beans are cooking, get busy on the rest of the dish.

Seitan

- 2 cups (480 ml) vital wheat gluten
- 2 cups (480 ml) chicken-style veggie broth
- 1 t. minced garlic
- 2 T. Kitchen Bouquet seasoning

Place ingredients in bread machine as manufacturer suggests. Use "dough" setting.

Chile Verde Sauce

- 1 pound (450 g) fresh tomatillos
 - 3 to 4 fresh Anaheim chiles
 - 2 to 3 fresh yellow wax chiles
 - 2 bottles (710 ml) of dark Mexican beer (or 3 to 4 cups chicken-style veggie broth)
 - 1/2 C. (120 ml) raw, unsalted pumpkin seeds
 - 2 T. minced garlic
 - salt and pepper to taste
1. On griddle or grill, roast the chiles until skins blister and blacken, set aside in covered dish to cool.
 2. Remove "paper skins" from tomatillos and cut into fourths.
 3. Place in large saucepan with beer and garlic. Simmer tomatillos for 10 or 15 minutes, remove from heat.
 4. While tomatillo mixture cools, remove the charred skins from the chiles, de-stem, take out the seeds, and coarsely chop, then set aside. Once the tomatillos have cooled, you should be able to slip off and discard the skins.
 5. Add chopped chiles to tomatillo mixture.
 6. In dry skillet, gently toast the pumpkin seeds over low heat. Once they become golden brown, add to tomatillo mixture. Bring mixture to gentle boil, lower temperature, and simmer for 15 minutes.
 7. In small batches, blend the sauce to a smooth consistency. Then add 1 large or 2 medium onions, coarsely chopped.
 8. Simmer for another fifteen minutes.

9. By now, the dough should be done. Warning! It's going to look like a big, gloppy mess. Take it out of the bread machine, and you can use kitchen shears, a sharp knife, or just pull off bits of the dough in walnut-sized pieces. It won't really have a shape, so don't be upset if you aren't producing uniform, cookie-cutter portions.
10. Place the lumps in the chile verde sauce. They will overlap, so try to coat them with the sauce so they don't stick together in a big, ugly mess.
11. Once you have completely converted the big glob into a bunch of little globs and put them into the saucepan, cover the pan with a lid, and gently, GENTLY simmer. Do not boil, as that will make the seitan tough. The concoction needs to cook for at least an hour. Check on it frequently, stir occasionally to keep it from sticking, and enjoy the aromas that will fill your kitchen.

The entire recipe will make eight generous servings, with the seitan and the Chili Verde sauce divided equally. It's hard to give a portion amount, since the sauce volume will vary based on the size of the fresh veggies used to make it.

One pound (450 g) of rice beans will make approximately six cups (1.5 liters) of cooked beans. A serving size is 1/2 cup (120 ml).

Nutritional Information:

Calories 475 (440 if using chicken-flavored broth instead of beer)

Calories from Fat 30

Total Fat 3g (0g Cholesterol, 0g Saturated Fat)

Total Carbohydrate 44g (41g with chicken-flavored broth)

Protein 32g

The dish is also a good source of folate, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin C.

For some reason, I'm hungry for Mexican food right now!

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The month of March still brings some chilly weather, a little rain, and possibly some snow if you're in the East. Comfort is at hand with this easy, tasty, and healthy bean fondue that warms us from nose to toes while promoting camaraderie at the table. The fondue also makes a great topping for baked potatoes or cooked grains and doubles as a sandwich spread as well.

DILLED GARBANZO FONDUE

- 1 1-lb. (450 g) can garbanzo beans with the liquid
- 2 large cloves garlic, whole
- 1/4 t. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 t. dried dill weed
- 1/2 t. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 t. salt or to taste
- 5 oz. (140 g) (approximately 1/2 pkg.) firm silken tofu
- 1 t. lemon juice
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil

1. Put all ingredients into the workbowl of a food processor, and process until coarsely or thoroughly pureed, as desired.
2. Transfer to a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan and warm gently over medium heat.
3. Serve with whole-grain bread or pita, raw vegetables, and steamed tender-crisp vegetables. Serves 2.
4. For a family or company presentation to serve 6, triple the recipe. Transfer the warmed fondue to a tureen, and serve bowls at the table to ladle out each serving.

5. Arrange a platter of raw vegetables, a platter of steamed tender-crisp vegetables, and a basket of breads to serve at the table. Below are some vegetable and bread suggestions:

Bread Basket:

- Whole wheat pita
- whole wheat English muffins
- rice cakes
- whole wheat bread
- whole rye bread
- multi-grain bread
- whole wheat or oat bran bagels

Raw Vegetable Platter:

- Bell pepper strips using red, yellow, orange, and green bell peppers
- Tomato wedges
- Carrot sticks
- Celery sticks
- Jicama sticks
- Turnip sticks
- Cauliflower and broccoli florets
- Daikon radish spears

Steamed Vegetable Platter:

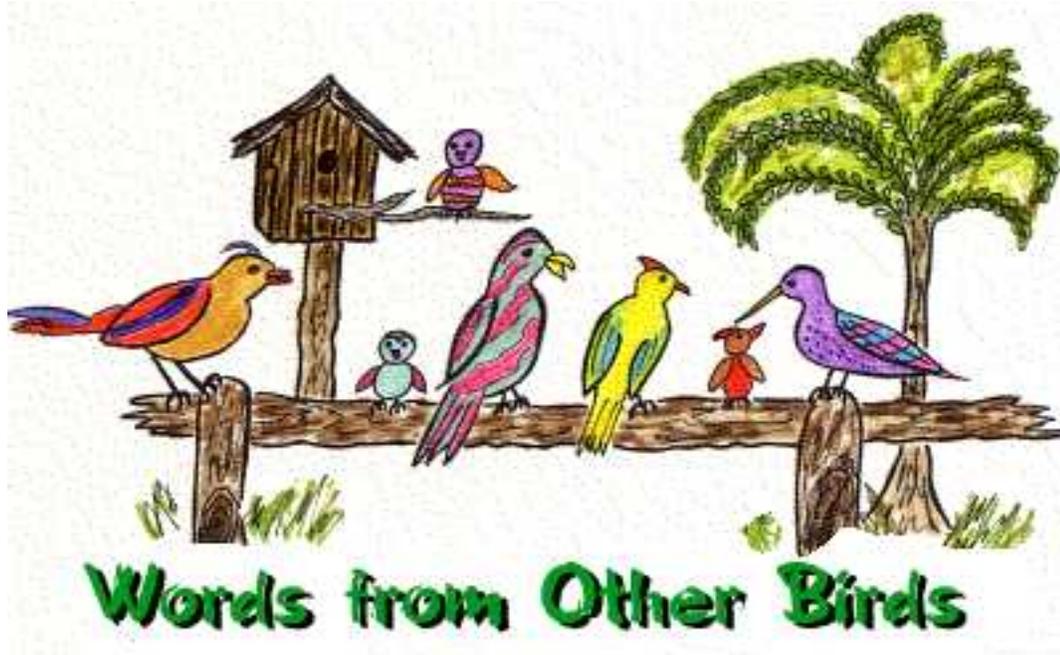
- Broccoli florets
- Cauliflower florets
- Asparagus spears
- Green beans
- Brussels sprouts

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***Vegetarians in Paradise* regularly presents informative articles by guest contributors on subjects of interest to vegetarians and vegans. This month we deviate from our usual procedure to present a special VIP feature that focuses on prominent raw and living-foods restaurants across the United States.**

Raw's the Rage

U.S. RAW RESTAURANTS OFFER EXCEPTIONAL ECLECTIC DIVERSITY

All across the country raw food restaurants are quickly sprouting up, in a movement blossoming with foods that offer a brilliant color palate rarely seen in most American restaurants. To the uninitiated, raw foods offer tastes and textures never before experienced.

A trend that began rather quietly several years ago, going raw has picked up steam in recent months and has climbed to gourmet status. Even classic chefs are visiting raw restaurants to discover a cuisine that offers surprising diversity, awesome flavor, and visual pleasure. Now many of these restaurants are assuming greater visibility in small strip malls, in old houses, on major highways, and in stand-alone prime locations.

Because raw foods are prepared without conventional cooking methods, the raw food kitchen looks far different from any standard kitchen. There is no oven in sight, no range top, no microwave--even a mundane can opener is absent from the scene. Most likely a food processor, a high-powered blender, a variety of juicers, and a variable-temperature dehydrator complete the major kitchen equipment.

Proponents of the raw lifestyle say they adhere to the diet of uncooked fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grains, and, sometimes, legumes because they experience heightened energy and vibrant health. They find that they require less sleep and can maintain a slim figure while enjoying a hearty appetite. It's not unusual to hear raw foodists credit their raw lifestyle for helping them reclaim their health and overcome years of illness.

Newbies frequently ask why raw foods have gained such a positive reputation and learn that it's the live enzymes in raw foods that offer superior nutritional value and also provide an aid to digestion. Some raw foodists claim that any heat above 105 degrees destroys these valuable enzymes. Others turn up the dehydrator dial to 114 degrees, and others, still, put a limit on 118 to 120 degrees in order to preserve the precious enzymes.

Like learning any new cuisine, the newcomer will acquire different skills in the preparation of raw foods. Techniques like soaking nuts and seeds (to remove their enzyme inhibitors) and sprouting are an integral part of raw food skills. The student chef learns that advance planning becomes routine, since many dishes incorporate grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes that must be soaked and sprouted overnight or longer.

To introduce our readers to the raw food restaurant scene, Vegetarians in Paradise is presenting some of the most popular raw restaurants from around the United States. In each case we are presenting the story behind the restaurant and its specialties. We would like to express our appreciation to the restaurants for permitting us to print recipes of their customers' favorite dishes.

The Raw Truth and Wellness Center

Eastwind Center (new location beginning December 1, 2002)

2381 East Windmill Lane

Las Vegas, Nevada 89121

Phone: 702-450-9007

FAX: 702-433-1142

The Raw Truth, an informal eatery, opened in January of 1999 after owner Bob Saladino started seeing positive healing results in just 15 days after embarking on a raw food regimen. Following his doctor's diagnosis of high cholesterol and high blood pressure with possible chronic fatigue syndrome, Bob visited an herbalist who suggested he try a raw food diet.

"I never felt better in my life. I never knew what it was like to feel good," says Bob.

Jason Babcock, Bob's partner, performs his inventive wizardry in the kitchen, while Bob handles the front end. Jason is an artist in another realm as well. When he's not preparing meals at the restaurant, he spends his time creating in his art gallery. He's proud of his exceptional raw food offerings, boasting that his Silk Pie more than competes with Marie Callender's version. His pie contains a filling of avocado, dates, and carob nestled in a crust of





Brazil nuts, sunflower seeds and dates. Though he has a degree in hotel and restaurant management from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, Jason says the administration of raw foods is scratching new territory not taught in university courses.

On a daily basis The Raw Truth ships food by FedEx to customers across the country. Whole Foods Markets will soon be carrying their energy bars, taco chips, flaxseed chips, and breads in their stores nationwide. Their specialty pizza crust is so highly regarded that raw food restaurants in other parts of the country have ordered it to serve their customers.

Jason and Bob hope to stimulate your kitchen genes with these recipes from their restaurant menu:

Taco Salad

Arrange a bed of shredded lettuce on a plate. Leaving room in the center for Mock Refried Beans, place a scoop of guacamole in one corner, a scoop of salsa in another corner, and a scoop of minced Bermuda onion in another corner. Top with a dollop of Mock Sour Cream.

Mock Refried Beans

6 Roma tomatoes

2 tablespoons ground cumin

1 tablespoon minced onion

1 tablespoon minced garlic

2 cups (480 ml) sunflower seeds, soaked overnight

2 cups (480) almonds, soaked overnight

1. Put tomatoes into the food processor and process until thoroughly pureed.
2. Add cumin, onion, and garlic and process.
3. Add sunflower seeds and almonds and process to desired texture. For a creamier consistency, process longer.

Mock Sour Cream

1 cup (240 ml) Brazil nuts soaked overnight

1/2 cup (120 ml) water

1/4 cup (60 ml) lemon juice

1/2 + 1/8 teaspoon Celtic salt

Combine nuts, lemon juice, and Celtic salt in a food processor and process until light and creamy, about 3 or 4 minutes. Makes about 1 1/4 cups (300 ml).

Mock Chocolate Cream Pie (formerly called Silk Pie)

Crust

2 cups (480 ml) sunflower seeds, soaked overnight

2 cups (480 ml) Brazil nuts, soaked overnight

11 pitted dates

1. Combine crust ingredients in a food processor and process until nuts are broken down and

thoroughly blended.

2. Using the fingers, press mixture into the bottom and sides of a 9-inch (23 cm) springform pan.

Filling

2 cups (480 ml) avocado
2 cups (480 ml) pitted dates
1 1/2 cups (360) organic carob powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 or 2 sliced strawberries for garnish

1. Combine avocado, dates, carob powder, and vanilla extract in a food processor and process until smooth and creamy.
2. Spoon mixture into prepared pie crust, and allow to set for 4 hours.
3. Garnish with sliced strawberries.

Ecopolitan

**2409 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405
Phone: 612-87-GREEN (47336)
Web site: <http://ecopolitan.com>
E-mail: info@ecopolitan.net**

Not only does Ecopolitan strive to offer its customers the healthiest 100% vegan, organic raw foods possible, but it is also concerned with the purity of the air and water in the restaurant. Owner Adiel Tel-Oren, M.D. and certified clinical nutritionist, has brought this eatery and its customers to a higher level of awareness about conserving the earth's ecology. He has taken steps to put ecology into everyday practice.

By serving organic vegan foods, he conserves the earth's water and topsoil resources. A reverse osmosis water filtering system insures pure water for washing all the restaurant's produce and preparing drinks and juices. In addition, all produce is soaked in a diluted, food-grade hydrogen peroxide, and dishes are washed in this solution as well.

Another ecological focus is the Oxygen Bar that adds pure oxygen to the air in the restaurant (when the oxygen is not in use by the customers).

The restaurant's wine selection also reflects its philosophy with 100% organic non-sulfite-added raw vegan wines at affordable prices. Even the central location of the eatery was chosen with an ecological focus to allow easy access by foot, bus, or bicycle rather than by car, though convenient off-street parking is available.



The opening of Ecopolitan two years ago was sparked by a few of Dr. Tel-Oren's patients,

especially one who invited him to a raw potluck. Soon after, his nephew, Ofek, discovered *Raw: The Uncook Book* by Juliano. The book sparked more than a mild interest and inspired the doctor with its exciting flavors, colors, and unique combinations of ingredients.

Dr. Tel-Oren, a vegetarian from birth, had been following a vegan regimen for two years prior to opening the restaurant. After many experiments creating his own raw dishes and growing a kitchen sprout garden, he began to question the practice of buying fresh, organic whole foods and proceeding to cook the enzyme life out of them. The unecological practice of buying packaged foods that add to the country's overloaded landfills became another issue that concerned him.

Now the restaurant sends regular smoothie take-out customers home with glass containers that are returned and recycled. Further, Ecopolitan composts all of its kitchen waste, leaving almost nothing to fill the trash containers.

For the breakfast crowd the menu offers Flax Jacks, raw flaxseed-apple pancakes with tahini, seasonal fruit, chopped almonds, and maple syrup. Other selections include Raw Granola, Fruit Salad, and Oat Porridge.

Some of the tasty offerings hungry diners can sample include unique appetizers such as Essene Bread with Pumpkin Seed Paté or Dried Black Figs stuffed with strawberry-marinated eggplant and cashews.

Entrees like the Green Burrito include curried garbanzo paté, seasonal vegetables, marinated mushrooms, sprouts, and sunflower seeds, wrapped in a collard leaf and served with salsa, guacamole, and mixed greens on the side. Pizza lovers can choose the Pesto, the Mediterranean, the Red Avocado, or the Marinara Pizza, all heaping with colorful toppings.

Diners can satisfy the sweet cravings with Carob Mousse, the Daily Special Pie, Berry Parfait, or the UnCookie of the Day. Additional offerings include fresh juices, smoothies, and exotic drinks.

In addition to enjoying great raw food, customers can shop for a variety of natural, non-toxic home and body products.

Ecopolitan is as much about education and community support as it is about delicious, healthy raw foods. Its doors are open to non-profit organizations that need a meeting place.

Sprouted Garbanzo Hummus

- 2 1/2 cups (600 ml) sprouted garbanzos
- 1 1/2 cups (360 ml) raw tahini
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) purified water
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 1/2 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 3/4 cup (180 ml) Bariani's stone-pressed organic extra virgin olive oil

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process to desired consistency. Longer processing will produce a smoother consistency.

Hearty Lentil Soup

3 cups (720 ml) Almond Milk (recipe follows)
1 avocado
3 tablespoons minced garlic
3 tablespoons minced onion
1/2 cup (120 ml) diced bell pepper
3/4 cup (180 ml) chopped tomato
3 tablespoons fresh dill
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 cup (120 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 cup (240 ml) water
3 cups (720 ml) sprouted lentils

Blend all ingredients except lentils in a VitaMix or blender. Stir in lentils and serve. Serves 5.

Almond Milk

1 1/2 cups (360 ml) raw almonds soaked for several hours or overnight
3 cups (720ml) water

Blend ingredients together in a VitaMix. Strain off pulp in a fine mesh strainer. Makes 3 cups almond milk.

Arnold's Way Vegetarian Raw Café

319 West Main Street, Store No. 4, Rear

Lansdale, Pennsylvania 19446

Phone: 215-361-0116

Web site: <http://www.arnoldsway.com>

Arnold, a 55-year old a raw foodist who is married and has four children, says, "I rock, literally, figuratively and totally, and love what I do." A man who experiences vibrant health and boundless energy, Arnold Kaufman is on a mission to spread the word about healing by self-empowerment while following a raw food lifestyle. His only employee is his daughter. Arnold offers six to eight classes weekly in addition to a free breakfast lecture on the benefits of raw foods.

Available for his restaurant customers who are eager to learn about the raw lifestyle are hundreds of books, videos, and magazines that teach about the benefits and how-to's of a raw food regimen. This bubbly restaurateur also distributes informative bi-monthly newsletters to his customers.

A natural teacher, Arnold says, "We specialize in education--our food is secondary. As most raw foodists can tell you once they have been following this regimen for a few years, simplicity rules. The technical word is monotropic--eating one food at a time."

Included among the raw snack food line Arnold distributes nationwide are his original Arnold's Way Fruit Bars, Carob Cookies, Dry Dehydrated Nuts, and Frozen Pies. His delicious Fruit Bars, one year in the making, "will rewrite the standards of excellence in snacks. These delicious fruit bars are hand-made in small batches; a little bit of love in every dang bar," says Arnold. A blend of bananas, dates, raisins, walnuts, and lemon juice, these exceptional fruit bars are dried for 48 hours and have a shelf life of nine months.



Dedicated raw foodists, along with foodies who crave the adventure of something new, can enjoy biting into Arnold's Monti's Steak, a combination of mushrooms, carrots, flax and sunflower seeds. His Gazpacho is a pleaser with its smooth blend of celery, tomatoes, olives, zucchini and peppers spiced with a touch of ginger. For a sweet finishing touch Arnold offers Fruit Whips, Smoothies, and slices of Frozen Fruit Pie.

ARNOLD'S PIZZA

Crust

- 6 ounces (169 g) carrot pulp
- 6 ounces (169 g) buckwheat soaked for 24 hours
- 6 ounces (169 g) flaxseed soaked for 24 hours

Sauce

- 2 tomatoes
- 2 beets
- 8 to 10 olives
- 2 ounces (56 g) cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil

Toppings

- Tomatoes
- Red bell peppers
- Broccoli
- Mushrooms
- Olives
- Avocado

1. Blend the carrot pulp, buckwheat, and flaxseed in a VitaMix or high-powered blender.
2. Spread the mixture onto an Excalibur dehydrator Teflex sheet. Set the dehydrator at 105°F (40 ° C) and dehydrate for 20 hours. Flip the crust over and dehydrate for another day.
3. For sauce, blend the tomatoes, beets, olives, and olive oil in a blender. Spread over pizza crust.
4. Finely cut the topping ingredients and spread over the sauce. Serve and enjoy. Makes 1 or 2

servings.

ARNOLD'S FRUIT PIE

Crust

4 ounces (113 g) fresh-squeezed apple juice
3 bananas
18 pitted dates

Filling

Frozen bananas
Any favorite fruit
Dates

1. Blend crust ingredients together in a VitaMix or high-powered blender until pureed. Pour into a round 8-inch (20 cm) plastic bowl, and freeze overnight.
2. Add frozen bananas and any of your favorite fruits to your Champion juicer using a blank screen. Add some dates for sweetening to the juicer. Process through the juicer, mix well and fill the crust. Makes 1 or 2 servings.

Sprout Café Shinui Living Food Learning Center

1475 Holcomb Bridge Road, Suite 200

Roswell, Georgia 30076

Phone: 770-992-9218

Web site: <http://www.SproutCafe.com>

E-mail: gideon@sproutcafe.com

New on the restaurant scene, Sprout Café opened its doors in June 2002, spreading the message that living foods promote benefits for the mind, body, and spiritual awareness. Before embarking on a restaurant endeavor, owners Jackie and Gideon Graff were career-minded professionals. Jackie, a graduate of the University of South Carolina, spent 32 years in nursing at Georgia's Northside Hospital. Her Israeli-born husband, Gideon, graduated from Haifa Institute of Technology. His studies in Hospitality and Management earned him a career managing resorts and luxury hotels.

The couple gradually adopted the 100% raw-food lifestyle over a period of three years and has experienced the benefits first hand. Now they have combined a restaurant with an organic market and a learning center where they offer classes on site. An intensive three-day, 30-hour food preparation class covers all aspects of raw food preparation from sprouting and growing wheat grass, to soaking grains and nuts, to dehydrating combinations of ingredients.





Jackie, a gourmet cook for many years, easily assumed the role as the restaurant's living foods chef. "We wanted to offer a peaceful oasis where people can come from the community to eat healthy, support each other, and learn," says Jackie.

Diners living in the Roswell area can drop in for a casual meal of raw sandwiches, wraps, organic juices and smoothies. At the Food Bar toothsome offerings include salads with homemade dressings plus a variety of raw soup creations. Among the specialty dishes are Stuffed Portabella, Meetloaf, Zucchini Pasta, and Lasagna. The restaurant's equivalent of mashed potatoes and gravy is made from pureed cauliflower and topped with mushroom gravy. For dessert lovers the Nice Cream Bar features Banana Splits, Carob Brownies, and Shakes made from macadamia nuts and raw honey.

Noasted Nurkey (Tastes like dressing and turkey)

2 cloves garlic, chopped fine
2 tablespoons fresh sage
2 tablespoons rosemary
2 tablespoons fresh thyme

2 cups (480 ml) walnuts soaked 12 hours and drained
2 cups(480 ml) almonds soaked 12 hours and drained
1 tablespoon organic unpasteurized white miso
1 large onion, chopped very fine
6 stalks celery, chopped fine

1 cup (240 ml) parsley sprigs (as garnish)
1 cup (240 ml) cranberries (as garnish)

1. Place garlic in a food processor and process well.
2. Add sage, rosemary, and thyme, processing well.
3. Add walnuts, almonds, and miso, one at a time and process well.
4. Remove to a bowl and stir in onion and celery.
5. Place on a sheet of Teflex and form into an oval loaf shape. Place in a dehydrator for 6 hours.
6. Remove and turn loaf over, removing the Teflex sheet from the bottom. Dehydrate for 4 to 6 hours more.
7. Garnish with parsley and cranberries. Serves 8.

Pumpkin Pie

2 avocados, peeled and seeded
1/2 cup (120 ml) raw honey
4 dates soaked in 1 cup (240 ml) filtered water
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup (240 ml) raw macadamia nuts

- 4 cups (960 ml) raw pumpkin, peeled
- 1 teaspoon ground psyllium husks
- 1 cup (240 ml) organic raisins

- 1/2 cup (120 ml) pumpkin seeds
- 1 Honey Nut and Date Pie Crust (recipe follows)

Advance Preparation:

1. Wash pumpkin seeds. Soak for 8 hours and drain. Dehydrate for 6 to 8 hours at 95°F (35 °C)
2. Soak macadamia nuts for 8 hours and drain.

Pie Preparation

1. Place avocado, honey, dates with soak water, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, salt, macadamias, and water into blender and blend until smooth.
2. Add pumpkin and blend until very smooth.
3. Add psyllium and blend well. Let this mixture sit for 10 minutes and blend well again.
4. Fold in raisins.
5. Pour into piecrust and top with 1/2 cup (120 ml) pumpkin seeds. Serves 8.

Honey Nut and Date Pie Crust

- 1 cup (240 ml) almonds (dry)
- 1 cup (240 ml) pecans (dry)
- 1 cup (240 ml) walnuts (dry)
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup (240 ml) medjool dates, pitted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla powder (Recipe follows)
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) raw honey

Advance Preparation:

1. Soak almonds, pecans, and walnuts separately for 12 hours.
2. Drain, and dehydrate for 12 hours

Pie Crust

1. Place almonds in food processor with "S" blade and process until mixture resembles flour.
2. Add salt and vanilla to almonds and process well.
3. Add pecans, walnuts and dates to processor and process.
4. Add honey to the nut and date mixture and process just until mixed well.
5. Press mixture by hand into an 8 to 10-inch (20 to 25 cm) glass pie pan. Makes 1 pie crust.

Note: Crust may be made ahead and refrigerated or frozen.

Vanilla Powder

5 vanilla beans

1/2 cup (120 ml) soft spring wheat berries or hulled buckwheat

1. Place vanilla beans and wheat berries in a VitaMix or seed/coffee grinder and grind to a powder.
 2. Place in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator.
-

Quintessence

263 East 10th Street

New York, New York 10009

Phone: 646-654-1823

566 Amsterdam Avenue

New York, New York 10024

Phone: 212-501-9700

353 East 78th Street

New York, New York 10021

Phone: 212-734-0888

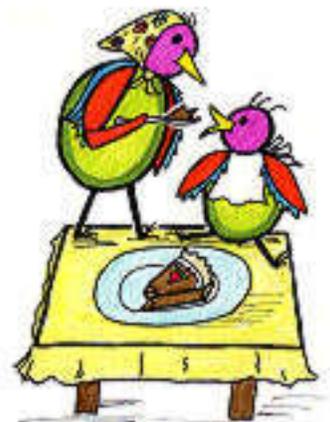
Web site: <http://www.quintessencerestaurant.com>

Quintessence owners Dan Hoyt and Tolentin Chan, once marriage partners, opened their first restaurant in Manhattan's East Village in November 1999. They opened this small eatery that seats about 22 to 24 diners after learning that a raw food regimen could help them overcome personal health problems.

A familiar story told by many, their health concerns responded well to the raw food diet that the partners tried to maintain but found difficult. Tolentin concluded that opening a raw foods restaurant was the only way to stay on track with 100% raw foods.

Opening any restaurant and achieving success is difficult, but sustaining a totally raw establishment that serves a very small niche market is highly challenging. Yet, the couple has been embraced by the raw community and is now operating two more locations.

Customers can dine on unique appetizers like Black Olive and Cream Dim Sum made of nori cups filled with a spiced mixture of diced avocado and black olives. Their version of Burrito Mini is a creative combo of "refine beans" and "cheddar cheese sauce" nestled in a lettuce leaf with a side of guacamole, tomatoes and onions topped with drops of cayenne vinegar hot sauce. They jokingly warn customers it's so good it can be addictive.



Entrees include the Sun Burger, a creatively fashioned look-alike burger made from sunflower and

flaxseeds mixed with vegetables, then dehydrated. The burger is served with all the typical fixings and sandwiched between their homemade pumpernickel rye or kamut essence bread. Other entrée offerings include their Nut Loaf, the Middle Eastern Plate, Livoli, and the Special of the Day.

Dan's dessert specialties include Coconut Crème Pie, a Fruit Fondue, a Berry Carob Moose Pie, and a dramatic presentation of Pecan Pie that some say rivals the traditional version.

When the time came to choose a name for their restaurant, Dan did some cyber searching for a word that described the concept of "natural" and "balance." Quintessence best expressed the essence of their vision.

Both partners had experience in restaurants in the past and work well in dividing up the tasks. While they both work with staff and share in decision making, Tolentin handles the business details such as the money and bookkeeping while Dan oversees all aspects of the food and menu, handles repairs, and keeps the restaurant well-maintained.

Plum Pudding

1/2 cup (120 ml) macadamia nuts
4 dried apricots
3 plums
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon lemon

Blend until smooth and creamy, then serve.

Vegetable Kurma

Marinade

2 cups (480 ml) water
3 medium cloves of garlic
1/2 cup (120 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt
2 to 3 tablespoons yellow curry powder

1 cup (240 ml) soaked raw almonds

1/4 cup (60 ml) cilantro
1/4 cup (60 ml) parsley

1. Combine water, garlic, olive oil, sea salt, and curry powder in a blender to create a marinade. Pour the marinade into a bowl.
2. Soak any veggies of your choice in the marinade for 24 hours. Strain veggies, reserving the marinade.
3. Pour marinade back into the blender and add the almonds. Blend thoroughly.
4. Add cilantro and parsley and blend at medium speed for about 20 seconds. Serve over marinated veggies and sprouted wild rice or sprouted quinoa. If desired, adjust seasonings

with additional curry or add cayenne pepper.

Bell Pepper or Summer Squash Soup

1 medium yellow bell pepper or summer squash

1/2 medium cucumber

1/4 medium red onion

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon sea salt

1/3 cup (80 ml) water

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until pureed. Serve.

Option: Combine yellow bell pepper and summer squash in the soup.

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HOMEMADE FALAFEL

Here is an original adaptation of a well-traveled Middle Eastern dish. Falafel is traditionally deep fried, but in this recipe we present a low-fat baked version. Falafel makes a tasty lunch treat served with a variety of cooked, marinated salads or an excellent filling in a pita sandwich. The familiar accompaniment of Tahini Sauce follows.

- 1 C. (240 ml) medium grade bulghur wheat*
- 1 C. (240 ml) cooked garbanzo beans, well drained
- 3 slices whole wheat bread, soaked in water and squeezed dry
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 T. fresh parsley, minced
- 1 t. baking powder
- 1 1/2 t. ground cumin
- 1/2 t. ground coriander
- 1/2 t. paprika
- 1/4 t. cayenne pepper
- 1 1/4 t. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. Soak bulghur in warm water to cover by 1 1/2" (3.5 cm) for 1 hour. Drain off excess water.
2. Preheat oven to 400 F. (Gas Mark 6). Put all ingredients into a food processor including the soaked bulghur wheat. Process until everything is well combined. If mixture seems too dry and will not process well, add 1 to 3 T. water. Adjust seasonings to taste.
3. Lightly oil 2 baking sheets with canola oil. Drop falafel mixture from a teaspoon onto baking sheets. Flatten slightly with a fork for more even baking.
4. Bake 10 minutes. Turn the falafel over with a spatula and bake for 10 to 12 minutes longer.

Makes 45 to 50 small falafel cakes.

5. *Bulgur wheat is available in natural food stores and Middle Eastern grocery stores.

NOTE: For a pita sandwich, use 1 whole wheat pita per person. Slice open one edge and fill with falafel, chopped tomatoes, chopped cucumbers, shredded lettuce, and Tahini Falafel Sauce. Additional fillings can include roasted vegetables, marinated mushrooms, and marinated artichoke hearts.

TAHINI FALAFEL SAUCE

Tahini Sauce makes a tasty topping over the falafel or a sauce to moisten the falafel in a pita sandwich.

1 C. (240 ml) sesame seed paste (tahini)*

1/2 C. (120 ml) + 1 T. lemon juice

3 , 4 cloves garlic, finely minced

1/4 t. ground cumin

1 to 1 1/2 t. salt**

3/4 C. (180 ml) to 1 1/4 C. (300 ml) water**

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl. Using a whisk, beat briskly into a smooth sauce. This takes about 1 to 2 full minutes of beating.

This sauce can be served at room temperature or chilled. Refrigerate leftovers. Keeps well for 5 to 7 days. Makes 1 1/2 cups (360 ml).

*Sesame seed paste (tahini) is available in Middle Eastern groceries.

**3/4 C. (180 ml) water makes a very thick sauce use 1 t. salt

1 C. (240 ml) water makes a medium thick sauce use 1 1/4 t. salt

1 1/2 C. (360 ml) water makes a very thin sauce use 1 1/2 t. salt

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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #9

VOW and Hubster Visit Future Dream Spot

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

This month's offering will be a quickie. Hubster and I are escaping the rat race and taking a week off to celebrate our anniversary! A couple of years ago we bought undeveloped land in Arizona, and we're going there to dream our dreams. Hopefully we will be able to retire from our jobs and settle there in the not-so-distant future, living the good life, breathing clean air, and surrounding ourselves with lots of growing things.

I have mentally designed gardens where I will plant all sorts of yummys, including my precious heirloom beans! In fact, one of the reasons for my aggressiveness in diabetes management is to have the health to enjoy the numerous Golden Years I plan on spending on our patch of dirt in

Arizona!

Cannellini Returns for an Encore

A couple of months ago, I introduced the cannellini bean, or Italian kidney bean. It's a sturdy fellow, accustomed to holding up well in well-seasoned Italian dishes flavored with herbs and tomatoes. Knowing this, I figured that cannellini would also be an excellent salad bean. I wanted something that wouldn't turn to mush when combined with crunchy veggies and doused with dressing.

I was right, too!

It's summertime, and who wants to sit down to a steaming bowl of soup? Wouldn't you rather have something cold from the fridge that isn't wimpy or, God forbid, "light?" It may be hot outside, but hunger pangs still need to be satisfied. Here's a bean dish that will fill you up, store nicely in the refrigerator without becoming soggy or blah, and also makes a beautiful presentation for parties or picnics.

And with beans as the basis, it's also nutritious.

(If you use the "cheats" (canned beans), it's incredibly easy too!)

Italian-Style Bean Salad

1 pound (450 g) dry cannellini beans or substitute
canned, drained cannellini beans or navy beans, 2 1/2
cups (600 ml)
2 bunches fresh kale
2 bunches fresh radishes
1 bunch green onions
Bottled fat-free Italian salad dressing.

1. Rinse and soak beans overnight, using kombu if desired. Drain the next morning, cover with fresh water, and cook until tender, but still firm.
2. If using canned beans, drain well and rinse slightly, measuring out two and a half cups.
3. Wash kale, trim from ribs, and steam or microwave briefly, then cool immediately in ice bath or under cold running water. Drain well. Dice kale (about two cups' worth) and add to cooked beans.
4. Wash and trim radishes, then dice. You should have about one cup. Add to beans and kale.
5. Wash and clean green onions, then cut into small slices. You should have about a half-cup. Add to beans, kale, and radishes.
6. Add about a cup of the fat-free bottled Italian salad dressing, or to taste. For more zing, a splash or two of cider vinegar is nice.
7. If your herb garden is flourishing, diced basil and oregano are excellent in this!
8. Cover and refrigerate overnight, to allow flavors to blend. This should make eight servings, about two-thirds of a cup each.



Nutrition Information, per serving:

108 calories

6g protein

20g carbohydrate (5g fiber, so 15g net carb)

A good source of phosphorous, potassium, folate, calcium, potassium, Vitamin A and Vitamin K!

Next month, I'll bore you with details about being a diabetic traveler, or "**How to Behave While Living out of a Suitcase!**"

[Click here for more Adventures of the Bean](#)



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LENTIL STUFFED TOMATOES

I treasure a recipe that's versatile enough to be at home on the plate any time of year, breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Here's one of my favorites. It's light enough to make a pleasant summer main dish, yet hearty enough to satisfy throughout the winter and seasons in-between. With little dollops of Tofu Sour Cream on top for garnish, these delicious morsels can even make great company fare that can be prepared ahead and reheated. (Look in the Recipe Index under Sauces for the Tofu Sour Cream recipe.)



1 C. (240 ml) red lentils

2 C. (480 ml) water

1/2 t. salt

1 red bell pepper, chopped

1/2 yellow bell pepper, chopped

1/2 Pasilla pepper or green bell pepper, diced

1 medium onion, chopped

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

2 large tomatoes, cut in half, horizontally

Salt and pepper

1. In a 3-quart (3 liter) saucepan, combine lentils, water, and salt. Bring to a boil, uncovered, over high heat. Turn heat down to medium-high, and cook, stirring frequently, until lentils form a thick puree, about 15 to 20 minutes.
2. In a large, deep skillet, sauté peppers and onion in olive oil until tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add to cooked lentil puree, and mix well.
3. Using a grapefruit knife, scoop out pulp and seeds from tomato halves, and put pulp into a small saucepan. Cook briefly over high heat, season to taste, and reserve for topping.

4. Put tomato shells on a baking sheet and sprinkle them lightly with salt. Broil about 5 minutes. Stuff tomato shells with lentil and vegetable mixture. Top with seasoned tomato pulp, and warm briefly in the oven if needed. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

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Instead of our usual guest essay that graces this page, we decided to take our readers on a restaurant cruise around Los Angeles where they could vicariously experience some vegetarian and vegetarian friendly restaurants. We asked several of our local restaurants if they would share some of their favorite recipes with our readers. To our delight and your good fortune they agreed.

By preparing these unique recipes in your own kitchen, you could be transported to a dining experience at REAL FOOD DAILY, NATIVE FOODS, P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO, and FOLLOW YOUR HEART.



REAL FOOD DAILY opened its first location in Santa Monica in 1993 and treats its numerous loyal customers to tasty, organic, vegan specialties for lunch and dinner seven days a week in a unique multi-leveled dining atmosphere. Owner Ann Gentry opened a second restaurant in West Hollywood two and a half years ago where hungry devotees become part of the bustling scenery while waiting patiently for an open table. Ann eagerly shares five of her restaurant's recipes, a hearty Red Bean, Squash and Okra Stew with all the trimmings (Skillet Corn Bread, Scallion Butter, and Garlicky Greens) and a delectable Sweet Potato Pie, If you haven't been to Real Food Daily yet, enjoy a great meal at the following locations:

Santa Monica: 514 Santa Monica Blvd. Phone: 310-451-7544

West Hollywood: 414 North La Cienega Blvd. Phone: 310-289-9910

RED BEAN, SQUASH AND OKRA STEW

This slow-simmering stew makes a satisfying meal served with Skillet Corn Bread, Scallion Butter, and Garlicky Greens.

- 3 cups (717 ml) dried red beans
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced one-half inch thick to yield 3 cups
- 2 large carrots, diced one-half inch thick to yield 1 cup
- 4 stalks of celery, diced one-half inch thick to yield 1 cup
- 2 small butternut squashes, skinned and diced three-quarters inch thick to yield 3 cups.
- 1 small red pepper, diced one-half inch thick to yield 1 cup
- 1 small green pepper, diced one-half inch thick to yield 1 cup
- 1/4 jalapeno pepper, minced
- 1/4 cup (59 ml) garlic, minced
- 4 cups okra, (960 ml) diced into 1/2 cubes - when not available substitute zucchini
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 3 tablespoons dried sage
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 teaspoon chili flakes
- 2 cups (480 ml) canned whole tomatoes with juice
- 1 can tomato paste
- 2 cups (480 ml) water or vegetable stock
- 1/4 cup (59 ml) tamari
- 1 cup (237 ml) cilantro, minced

1. Clean and rinse beans.
2. In a small pot place beans and bay leaf.
3. Add enough water to cover the beans by one-inch (2.5 cm). Cover and simmer for 35 minutes. Beans will not be done, but will complete cooking in the stew.
4. In a large stockpot, heat oil, onions and carrots. Sauté for five minutes.
5. Add celery, squash, bell peppers, jalapenos and garlic. Sauté for five minutes.
6. Add okra, spices, salt, and tomato paste.
7. In a food processor, blend whole tomatoes with their juice, and add to the pot.
8. Add the beans, bean cooking juice, and the water or vegetable stock. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
9. Add tamari and cilantro. Serve hot.

SKILLET CORN BREAD WITH SCALLION BUTTER

- 2 cups (480 ml) corn meal
- 1 cup (237 ml) whole-wheat pastry flour

1 cup (237 ml) unbleached white flour
3 tablespoons baking powder
2 cups (480 ml) soy milk
1/2 cup (118 ml) canola oil
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/3 (79 ml) cup maple syrup
3 tablespoons olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 400f (Gas Mark 6).
2. Sift dry ingredients (except salt) into a large bowl and mix well. In a separate bowl combine soymilk, oil, salt and syrup. Blend well. Combine wet and dry ingredients, and mix only until blended.
3. Heat oil in an 11-inch (28 cm) round cast-iron skillet until it starts to smoke. Add batter and bake approximately 40 minutes, or until lightly browned and a toothpick inserted in the center emerges clean.

SCALLION BUTTER

6 scallions, cut off 2 inches of green tops
2 tablespoons umeboshi paste
6 tablespoons chopped parsley
6 tablespoon toasted sesame butter or tahini
3 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced

Place all ingredients in a food processor and puree. Refrigerate for about two to three hours before serving.

GARLICKY GREENS

1 bunch kale, about 10 cups
1 bunch collard greens, about 10 cups
2 tablespoon olive oil
1 large onion cut into thin half moons to yield 2 cups
1/2 cup (118 ml) garlic, minced
1/2 tablespoon sea salt
1 tablespoon tamari

1. De-vein the kale and collard greens. Cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) pieces. In a steamer basket steam greens for about 2 minutes.
2. In a large skillet, heat the oil, add onions, garlic and sea salt.
3. Sauté for 5 minutes or until the onions are well cooked.
4. Add tamari.
5. Add the cooked greens; toss with the onions and garlic.
6. Sauté for 3 minutes. Serve hot.

SWEET POTATO PIE

With holiday time nearing, your vegan guests can enjoy this version of a traditional sweet potato pie without dairy, eggs and sugar. The roasted and glazed pecans are incorporated for a final gourmet touch.

FILLING

5 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces

Juice and zest of two oranges

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

2 pinches sea salt

2 teaspoons vanilla

1/2 cup (118 ml) maple syrup

3 tablespoons kuzu dissolved in 3 tablespoons of water

CRUST

1 1/2 cups (355 ml) rolled oats, ground into oat flour in a food processor

1/2 cup (118 ml) whole wheat pastry flour

1 pinch sea salt

1/4 cup (59 ml) canola oil

1/4 cup (59 ml) maple syrup

1/4 cup (59 ml) water

TOPPING

1 cup (237 ml) roasted whole pecans

3 tablespoons barley malt

3 tablespoons maple syrup

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (Gas mark 4).
2. Place sweet potatoes in a large pot of water and simmer until very tender, about 10 minutes. Drain well, Mash with a potato masher or puree in a food processor for a few minutes.
3. Add oranges, spices, vanilla, maple syrup and dissolved kuzu. Set aside.
4. To make the pie crust, combine the oat flour, whole-wheat pastry flour and salt in a large bowl. Whisk together oil, maple syrup and water. Add the dry ingredients to the wet and stir until well combined. With moistened fingertips, pat the oat mixture into an oiled 9-inch (23 cm) pie plate. Bake for 10 minutes.
5. Pour sweet potato filling into the baked crust. Leave enough room for the pecan topping. Set aside.
6. Scatter the pecans on a baking sheet and bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until toasted.
7. Combine barley malt and maple syrup and douse over pecans so they are shiny but not drenched. Place pecans mosaic-fashion on top of pie filling.

8. Bake the pie for 40 minutes, or until topping is bubbling and caramelized and the crust is brown at the edges. Cool pie before slicing.

YIELDS: 9 one-inch (2.5 cm) slices

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

COOK TIME: 40 minutes



NATIVE FOODS, whose theme is "Don't panic! It's organic!", began its first venture in Palm Springs in 1993. Palm Desert's good fortune began when owners Tanya Petrovna and Ray White opened a second location in 1996. Now their Westwood restaurant, opened in 1999, enjoys a bustling clientele daily for their innovative dishes served at lunch and dinner.

Located close to the University of California at Los Angeles, the restaurant serves an enthusiastic college crowd and employs equally enthusiastic restaurant personnel. With tables practically shoulder to shoulder, diners become friendly very quickly and are eager to recommend their favorite dishes. Below readers can enjoy Chef Tanya's recipes for a Simple Marinara and Native Eggplant Rollatini with Tofu Ricotta.

Palm Springs: Smoke Tree Village, 1775 E. Palm Canyon Dr. Phone: 760-416-0070

Palm Desert: 73-890 El Paseo Phone: 760-836-9396

Westwood: 11110 1/2 Gayley Ave. Phone: 310-209-1055

SIMPLE MARINARA

- 1 28-oz. (680 gram) can crushed tomatoes (organic if possible)
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- 3 Tb. olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil

1. In saucepan sauté garlic in olive oil until lightly browned, add crushed tomatoes, salt and pepper and let simmer ten minutes on low.
2. Turn off heat and stir in fresh basil. Voila!

NATIVE EGGPLANT ROLLATINI WITH TOFU RICOTTA

- 2 medium eggplants
- sea salt
- olive oil or sunflower oil to saute

1. Slice ends off eggplants and then slice lengthwise (the long way) in quarter-inch slices.
2. Lightly salt both sides and place in colander to drain about 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Prepare Tofu Ricotta while eggplant is draining.

4. Pat eggplant slices dry, and heat 2-3 Tb. of oil in saute pan until hot but not smoking. Add eggplant slices and lightly brown on each side.
5. Place on plate when done and let slightly cool.
6. Put about two tablespoons of Tofu Ricotta on one end of eggplant slice and then rollup.
7. Place in baking dish, drizzle with a little Simple Marinara, cover and bake at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 25 minutes.
8. Should be soft and delicate when done.
9. Serve over rice or pasta topped with Simple Marinara and a fresh vegetable garnish.
Steamed broccoli and sliced carrot pieces look great for color and are GOOD FOR YOU!

VARIATION: Sauté some tempeh, season, and chop in 1/2 inch cubes and put 2 to 3 cubes in each eggplant roll.

TOFU RICOTTA

- 1 lb. (453 grams) Chinese style firm tofu
 - 1 Tb. tahini (sesame butter)
 - 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped or pressed
 - 1 Tb. chopped fresh parsley
 - 1 Tb. chopped fresh basil
 - 2 green onions, finely chopped or 3 Tb. chopped fresh chives
 - 1 tsp. sea salt
1. Drain water from tofu, then crumble in bowl.
 2. Add all other ingredients and mix well with large spoon until mixture resembles a ricotta texture.



P.F. CHANG'S CHINA BISTRO at last count owns and operates 52 locations across the country. Because of the restaurants' popularity, patrons know they must wait for a table any time they come for lunch or dinner. Until 2001, it was a restaurant that

had very few offerings for vegetarians, but that has changed dramatically. Owner Rick Federico introduced four new vegetarian dishes on the lunch menu that can also be ordered for dinner. They use a vegetarian oyster sauce made from a mushroom base that contains no oysters. The sugar in the recipes can be substituted with evaporated cane juice, and except for the sugar in the vegetarian oyster sauce, the dishes can be made vegan. Below are two of these specialties you can enjoy at home:

Los Angeles: Beverly Center, 121 N. La Cienega Blvd, #117 Phone: 310-854-6467

Santa Monica: 326 Wilshire Blvd. Phone: 310-395-1912

Woodland Hills: The Promenade, 21821 Oxnard St. Phone: 818-340-0491

TEMPLE LONGBEANS

This simple stir-fry of Chinese longbeans in a vegetarian oyster sauce is true to the spirit of Chinese Buddhist cuisine, hence the name "Temple Longbeans."

Pressed five-spice tofu, vacuum-packed and with the consistency of a firm cheese, is sold in the refrigerator cases of many Asian groceries. If you cannot find it or the fragrant Chinese yellow chives, simply double the amount of longbeans. Tasty string beans can also be substituted for the longbeans.

Serves 2-4.

- 2-3 cups (480 to 717 ml) Chinese longbeans, cut into 3-inch lengths
- 2 squares five-spice pressed tofu, cut into thin slices
- 1 small carrot, finely julienned
- 1 cup (237 ml) Chinese yellow chives, cut into 3-inch lengths

Temple Sauce

- 1/4 cup (59 ml) vegetarian oyster sauce
- 2-3 tsp. soy sauce
- 1/4- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 cup (118 ml) hot water
- 2 tsp. canola oil
- 3 Tbl. cornstarch dissolved in 6 Tbl. cold water
- 1/2 tsp. Japanese sesame oil

1. Separately blanch the longbeans and carrots until tender-crisp in unsalted boiling water. Drain and rush under cold water to stop the cooking. Drain again.
2. Combine the temple sauce ingredients, tasting to adjust the soy sauce and sugar to your liking.
3. Heat a wok or wide skillet over high heat until hot. Add the canola oil, swirl to glaze the pan, then add the longbeans, carrots and tofu, and stir-fry until hot, about 2 minutes. Stir the sauce, add it to the pan, and bring it to a simmer. Stir the cornstarch mixture to recombine and slowly add it to the simmering sauce, stirring until the sauce turns glossy, about 10 seconds. Be careful to only add as much of the cornstarch mixture as you need to achieve the desired consistency. Remember you can always add more, but if you add too much it will be thick and goopy. Shower in the chives, stir to blend, then turn off the heat. Add the sesame oil, toss to mix, and serve.

COCONUT-CURRY VEGETABLES

Borrowing the flavors of South East Asia, this is a delicious stir-fry of vegetables available year-round. Use a milder or hotter curry powder to vary the spice.

For a really saucy dish to serve over rice or noodles, double the sauce ingredients and the cornstarch mixture.

Serves 2-4.

- 1 small onion, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 1 small red bell pepper, cubed
- 1 cup halved mushrooms
- 4 ounces (3 cups) (717 ml) cauliflower or broccoli florets
- 1 cup (237 ml) thinly sliced carrots or whole sugar snap peas

Coconut-Curry Sauce:

- 1/2 cup (118 ml) canned coconut milk *
 - 2 Tbl. soy sauce
 - 1/2 tsp. curry powder
 - 1 1/2 to 2 Tbl. packed brown sugar
 - 2 tsp. unseasoned rice vinegar or cider vinegar
 - 2 Tbl. canola oil
 - 2 tsp. cornstarch dissolved in 1 1/2 Tbl. cold water
1. Separately blanch the broccoli, cauliflower, carrots and sugar snap peas until tender-crisp in plain boiling water. Drain and flush with cold water to stop the cooking. Drain again.
 2. Combine the coconut-curry sauce ingredients. Taste and adjust the sugar to your liking.
 3. Heat a wok or wide skillet over high heat until hot. Add the canola oil, swirl to glaze the pan, then add the onions and bell pepper. Stir-fry until tender-crisp, 3-4 minutes. Add the mushrooms and stir until hot, a few minutes more. Add the blanched vegetables and toss to mix.
 4. Stir the sauce and add it to the pan. Bring to a simmer, tossing to combine.
 5. Stir the cornstarch mixture to recombine and add it to the pan. Stir until the sauce turns glossy, about 10 seconds (a bit longer if you're doubling the sauce).

Serve with rice, noodles, or a warm loaf of bread.

*Look for Chaokah brand, sold in Asian groceries. Be sure to stir well to incorporate the solids before using.



machines, and a few funky items such as window crystals, scented candles, and books on tarot.

FOLLOW YOUR HEART 's inception in 1970 consisted of a small vegetarian lunch counter tucked into a corner of a natural foods store. Because of its success, Follow Your Heart soon took over the store. By 1976 they outgrew their space and moved to their present location in Canoga Park, taking over a meat market. Their little lunch counter has become a popular 50-seat restaurant that includes a lunch counter and a small patio as well. They provide the community a complete natural foods market that offers produce, shelf items, supplements, juice

The restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily and is renowned for their outstanding soups, offering some vegetarian and some vegan selections that are included in their book Follow Your Heart's Vegetarian Soup Cookbook available at the market. They offer two vegan soup recipes that are steadfast favorites, Popeye's Swee'pea with Olive Oyl and Minestrone. The Minestrone contains honey that can be substituted with Sucanat or maple syrup:

Canoga Park: 21825 Sherman Way Phone: 818-348-3240

POPEYE'S SWEE'PEA WITH OLIVE OYL

This soup contains all of Popeye's favorites - peas sweetened with yams ("I yam what I yam") olive oil, and, of course, spinach.

- 10 C. (2 1/2 liters) water
- 3 1/4 C. or 1 1/2 lbs. (679 grams) dried green split peas
- 2 C. (480 ml) or 1 large diced red onion
- 2 C. (480 ml) or 1/2 lb. diced yam, unpeeled
- 2 C. (480 ml) or 3 large stalks chopped celery (include finely diced leaves)
- 3 Tbsp. unrefined olive oil
- 1 lb. (453 grams) finely chopped fresh spinach, washed well
- 2 large cloves garlic, pressed or minced
- 2 tsp. crumbled basil leaf
- 2 C. (480 ml) shelled fresh peas, or 1 10-oz. pkg (283 grams) frozen peas, rinsed under hot water to thaw
- 3 Tbsp. tamari
- 3 Tbsp. Barbados or other light molasses or to taste (do not use blackstrap)
- 2 tsp. Spike, or to taste

1. In a 6 or 8-quart pot (6 or 8 liter), bring to a boil: water, split peas, onion, yam, celery, and olive oil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, about 30 minutes.
2. Add spinach, garlic, and basil. Bring again to a boil; reduce heat the simmer, covered, about 25 , 35 minutes, or until split peas have dissolved to form a thick broth. Stir occasionally.
3. Add fresh or frozen peas and tamari. Add molasses and Spike to taste, and simmer 5 minutes, until peas are tender and flavors well blended. Serve. Makes 4 1/2 to 5 (4 1/2 to 5 liters) quarts. Cooking time 1 1/4 hours.

MINESTRONE

Enjoy our vegetarian version of this classic Italian soup.

- 4 C. (960 ml) water, reserve 2 C. (480 ml) to adjust thickness later
- 3 qts.(3 liters) fresh tomato puree or 5 1/2 lbs. (or 18 med.) ripe tomatoes blended in blender
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) unrefined olive oil
- 4 C. (960 ml) thinly sliced celery (include finely diced leaves)
- 2 C. (480 ml) chopped red onion
- 1 1/2 tsp. cut thyme leaf

- 6 bay leaves
 - 2 C. (480 ml) eggplant, unpeeled, chopped into small cubes
 - 1 1/2 C. (296 ml) carrots, quartered lengthwise, then sliced 1/4" thick
 - 3 Tbsp. crumbled oregano
 - 1 Tbsp. dried parsley, crumbled
 - 2 Tbsp. crumbled basil
 - 6 med. cloves garlic, pressed or minced
 - 5 C. (1197 ml) or 2 lbs. (1 kg) zucchini, sliced in thick rounds or chopped into cubes
 - 4 C. (960 ml) broccoli, thinly sliced stalks, bite-sized flowerettes
 - 1/3 C. (79 ml) tamari
 - 2 tsp. apple cider vinegar
 - 1 to 2 Tbsp. honey, to taste
 - 2 to 2 1/2 C. (480 to 598 ml) cooked garbanzo beans (3/4 C. (177 ml) dry) *
 - 2 tsp. Spike
 - 2 tsp. sea salt or Vege-Sal, or to taste
 - 6 oz. (169 grams) whole-wheat shells or elbow macaroni, cooked al dente (until just tender)
1. Bring to a boil: 2 C. (480 ml) water, tomato puree, olive oil, celery, onion, thyme, and bay leaves. Simmer, covered, 1/2 hour.
 2. Add eggplant, carrots, oregano, parsley, basil, and garlic, and simmer, covered, 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
 3. Add zucchini and broccoli, and simmer 10 or 15 minutes, or until tender. Stir occasionally.
 4. Add tamari, vinegar, honey, garbanzos, Spike, and salt. Add water if a thinner soup is desired. Adjust seasonings to taste. Add macaroni or shells, and simmer over low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until nice and hot. Serve.

NOTE: The taste of fresh tomatoes is important to this soup. If fresh tomatoes are out of season, however, you can make puree by blending canned whole or chopped tomatoes in blender to make 3 quarts.

***To Cook Garbanzo Beans:** Soak beans for 6 hours or overnight in plenty of cold water. Drain off soaking water. Place beans in a saucepan with fresh water to cover. Bring to a boil; add 1 teaspoon salt. (Adding salt at this point usually keeps the skins from coming off the beans, thus they are more attractive.) Lower heat and simmer, covered, about 1 to 1 1/2 hours, or until tender. Check water level occasionally and add more if necessary. During last 15 minutes of cooking add 2 tablespoons tamari (or salt, to taste), to make beans more flavorful. The tamari also gives the beans a nice color.

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With this issue Vegetarians in Paradise continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #5

Seeking Relief from Pain

by VOW

Includes Recipe Below

So, here I am, doing my best to manage my Type 2 Diabetes with diet and exercise. The diet part is a lot easier than I thought it would be, since I made the change to veganism. And I was having fun by concocting new creations using all the neat-o beans I discovered. The exercise part was quite a hurdle for me, though (pun intended). I overcame a lot of my physical exertion insecurities by joining a ladies exercise group called Curves. I found it to be a no-pressure, no-hassle, and relatively inexpensive way to increase my activity. I can honestly say that I thought it to be fun, but I felt it was the least-objectionable solution to getting me off my fat fanny and moving around.

Son-of-a-gun, I even started seeing RESULTS. Monthly weigh and measure events Didn't lie: I was losing weight AND losing inches. I found my stamina increasing. I was walking faster! I could PICK UP things that I had previously left for others to manage. And my blood sugars were looking good!

I've got so many things wrong with me, my husband teases that he found me in the as-is department of Goodwill. If you start at the top of my head, I've got migraines. Then you'll find a veritable treasure trove of other maladies and ailments until you reach the flat arches of my feet. One of my defects is something I've had problems with since junior high school: bum knees. Every now and again, one or both knees will act up, sometimes including an actual subluxation of the kneecap. Subluxation is a fancy ten-dollar word meaning the joint partially dislocates. Typically, such trauma means I wear an ace wrap to keep my knee stabilized, I go the ice and Motrin routine, and I try to stay off the leg as much as possible.

Several weeks ago, I didn't get the subluxation, but one knee became so unstable it FELT like it would collapse if I put

any weight on it. And it HURT, too. I described the pain as if someone had taken a particularly vicious knife, heated it over an open flame until the blade glowed red, and then stabbed me in the back of the knee.



Exercise was out of the question. Walking became an Olympic event! Of course I made an appointment with my family doctor, and it wasn't good news. I had my poor knee poked and prodded, and she ordered X-rays. The verdict: degenerative osteoarthritis.

Ugh! I got the okay to buy a knee brace that stabilized my knee enough so I didn't feel like I was going to splatter myself on the pavement whenever I walked. My doctor explained that some people got relief from osteoarthritis symptoms with popular supplements like Glucosamine-Chondroitin, MSM, or SAM-e.

I'd done a little research on these myself, and I had read that the Glucosamine could interfere with my diabetes medication. My doctor said that wasn't necessarily true, but there COULD be a problem with people who are allergic to sulfa drugs. Where does Glucosamine come from? Supplemental sources are derived from the shells of shrimp, lobster, and crab, or may be synthesized. Uhhhhhhh. I had enough problems

managing my problems without having to contact individual companies to find out WHERE they got their Glucosamine.

Besides, I'm allergic to sulfa.

My doctor said to try MSM or SAM-e. She said that neither supplement will rebuild the destroyed cartilage in an arthritic joint, but it can help PRESERVE the remaining cartilage.

Research on MSM reveals that it is "derived from all natural resources." The article I found practically gave a history going back to when God created the Heavens and Earth, and it was difficult for me to slop through all the words to get to the punch line: this one particular manufacturer said they processed MSM from pine trees. I tried to use Medscape to research the various supplements, and found out that MSM is a medicalese term for what I would refer to as "alternate relationships." That's a completely different topic! I popped on over to WebMD, and here's a link to what they had to say about MSM:

<http://my.webmd.com/content/article/78/95613.htm?lastselectedguid={5FE84E90-BC77-4056-A91C-9531713CA348}>

It sounds like a pretty safe substance.

My search for information on SAM-e hit a roadblock. Most resources were just glowing reports from folks selling the stuff. In a sincere effort to find out about this supplement, I made the bold move and joined [ConsumerLab.com](http://www.ConsumerLab.com). WOW! What a wealth of information! SAM-e has been used to treat osteoarthritis, depression, Parkinsonism, fibromyalgia, and liver disease! It's made from a combination of a sulfur-containing amino acid, methionine, and adenosine triphosphate. Most sources merely say that SAM-e is an all natural product, and not much else. Natural WHAT was my question: doggie doo is natural, and I'm not so sure I'd want to take a supplement derived from THAT!

Finally, I found a place that said, "Although SAM-e is present in all living organisms, significant amounts of the substance are not readily available through foods. SAM-e is processed from yeast, and then integrated into a stable compound. HAH. THAT I can live with!

Next time I went shopping, I took a tour of the vitamin aisle. I started getting a headache just looking at the row after row on the shelves of one supplement and vitamin after another. I did find MSM, and also SAM-e. Penny pincher that I am, I bought a bottle of MSM, as it was noticeably cheaper than SAM-e. I took it faithfully for about two weeks, with no real noticeable effect, one way or another. My next shopping trip, I had my husband with me. I showed him the various supplements, and explained that I chose the MSM over the SAM-e based on price. He let out a very exasperated sigh, saying, "If it WORKS, it's worth it." And he tossed the SAM-e into the shopping cart.

I ended up taking both the MSM and the SAM-e, together. After about a week, I noticed a huge improvement. The just-about-ready-to-collapse feeling is gone. I don't wear the brace any more. I still hurt, but not as much. If I'm on my feet too long, or if I do a lot of walking (like shopping at one of those giant warehouse club stores!), I will ache all night.

Very Important Disclaimer: First, get the okie-dokie from your personal physician to do any exercise. Then, if you wind up with out-of-the-ordinary aches and pains, immediately return to your doctor. That's what I did. And finally, before adding any supplement to your personal pharmacy, again, talk to your doctor. It wouldn't hurt to bring a complete list of everything you take, including all your over-the-counter vitamins and herbals, and tell your doc, "This is what I take, and this is what I'd like to try." You can also approach your pharmacist with the same information. After all, you don't want to find out the hard way that two of your pills will combine in your digestive tract and make dynamite!

I'm starting to walk a little bit now. And I plan on returning to Curves soon. I struggled mightily to lose thirty pounds after I was diagnosed with Diabetes. I still have a lot more to lose, and I know for a fact that getting mobile and keeping that way is the secret to success.

So, no additional weight loss to report. But the good news is that even over the holidays, I Didn't GAIN any weight, either. In my book, that's almost like a twenty pound loss, LOL!

Put on your walking shoes (You DID buy those decent walking shoes, right?), grab a jacket, and I'll get a silver bullet to bite on for pain management, and we'll do a couple of laps around the block. When we finish our walk, it will be a great homecoming! I've already started this month's Bean Adventure in my crockpot, and the spiciness of the soup will warm you right up!

You can find many recipes on the Internet for Portuguese Bean Soup, and almost all of them call for CHOURICO. This is a Portuguese sausage made from lean pork and blended with vinegar and a mixture of spices such as salt, pepper, garlic, and paprika. It's available in mild or wild, and it's VERY similar to the Mexican sausage CHORIZO. I perked up when I perused the recipes, because here in Southern California there is a wonderful vegetarian soy chorizo available in many markets. Check out <http://www.melissas.com/> to find a store near you!

I needed a good, sturdy bean to stand up to the spiciness of the chorizo! I checked out all my many online resources and settled on the Appaloosa bean. The Appaloosa is about the size of a kidney bean, with beautiful black and white mottling resembling the coat of an Appaloosa pony. This bean was used by Native American people who lived in the Southwest, and matching it up to culinary heat would be a natural.

<http://beanbag.net/cgi-bin/image/templates/bb2.jpg>

http://www.nowfoods.com/?action=itemdetail&item_id=5589

The Appaloosa is a good match for diabetics, too! Here are the nutritional stats:

One serving, one-quarter cup cooked, of Appaloosas

Calories 80

Protein 9 g

Carbohydrate 24 g

Fat 0 g

Fiber 15 g

Subtracting the 15 grams of fiber, we get 9 grams net carbs, and that's great news!

Portuguese Bean Soup

Serves 10

The night before cooking, rinse and soak one pound dry Appaloosa beans in enough water to cover. Include a 3-inch piece of kombu.

The next morning, drain the beans, keep the kombu in the pot, and pour in 3 quarts of veggie broth. Add:

1 cup chopped onion

3 stalks of celery, chopped

1.5 tablespoons ground cayenne pepper (or to taste) 6 ounces soy chorizo, chopped

Cook on high for 4-6 hours. Then add:

1 14.5-ounce (410 g) can of diced tomatoes, juice and all

1 6-ounce (169 g) can of tomato paste

2 cups (480 ml) of carrots, diced

Finish cooking 2-3 more hours, until beans and veggies are tender.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

I'm having this for my lunch today! I hope you enjoy it as much as I do!

Nutritional Information:

Calories per serving 208

Calories from fat 24

Total fat 3g

Saturated fat 0g

Cholesterol 0g

Sodium 186mg

Total Carbohydrates 51g

Fiber 29g

Sugars 2g

Protein 3g

Vitamin A 58%

Vitamin C 28%

Calcium 5%

Iron 4%

Next month: Antioquian Beans!

[Click here for more Adventures of the Bean](#)



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June 1, 2002 -- Vegparadise News Bureau

Vegetarian Food Goes to Jail

A vegetarian meal--is it the ideal tool for punishment? Or is it, perhaps, quite the opposite, an anticipated pleasure? While one prison warden views a vegetarian meal as punishment for aggressive behavior, another has achieved remarkable results in rehabilitating inmates with vegan foods.

At the Maryland Correctional Adjustment Center in Baltimore unruly prisoners are served a "special management meal." As reported by Scott Simon on NPR's Weekend Edition Saturday (April 6), the meal consists of a one pound loaf that "smells a little bit like the food they serve in the elephant cage at the National Zoo." Simon tasted the concoction and described it as "blandier than bland."

The Victor Valley Medium Correctional Facility in Adelanto, California is miles apart from the Maryland prison, not only in distance but also in the philosophy toward their 550 prisoners and their diet that includes vegan meals for approximately half of the inmates.

When new inmates arrive at Adelanto, they attend an orientation that describes two distinct programs. One option is the traditional program followed by most correctional facilities. The other, the NEWSTART Program, focuses on vegan meals, bible study classes, an anger management program, job training, and psychological counseling. Those who choose the NEWSTART Program must commit to participating in the entire program.

The prison has two dining halls and two feeding lines with all food made in one kitchen. Breads and rolls are made in the prison bakery. Those 50 to 60% selecting the NEWSTART Program are fed a vegan diet, except for the weekend when desserts such as cakes or puddings with milk and eggs are brought in. These inmates receive no meat, fish, chicken, dairy products, eggs, or sugar

with their weekday meals. Because of budget limitations, it was necessary to deviate from the vegan meal program on weekends.

How do the prisoners react to the vegan meals? "They even tell us how tasty the vegan food is," says Doug Anglen, director of food service. " They really like it."

In contrast, Maryland's Warden Thomas Corcoran told Simon the inmates don't like the prison loaf that's served to them three times a day for one whole week. The loaf is part of a plan to "discourage negative inmate behavior," says the warden.

If the prisoner curbs his aggressive tendencies, he returns to the regular prison food that mirrors the standard American diet loaded with animal protein and dairy products. In the two years the prison has followed the behavior modification program, assaults on prison staff have been cut by half. "The proof is in the loaf," says Warden Corcoran.

As the warden admits, the loaf sticks to nutritional guidelines and meets the needs of most special diets.

Studying the ingredients, VIP recognized a wholesome vegetarian dish that could be improved with a bit of seasoning. We also thought of turning the recipe over to our Aunt Nettie who could probably transform that prison loaf into some "purty tasting fixin's."

When we heard the warden describe the change in prison behavior, we thought about the question we posed to Dr. Neal Barnard in our 24 Carrot Award Interview <http://www.vegparadise.com/24carrot44.html>. We asked Dr. Barnard, "We often hear that vegetarians are less aggressive, calmer, more peaceful people. Is there any medical evidence to support this view?"

Dr. Barnard answered as follows:

"Yes. A Massachusetts study on male aging showed that men who had higher levels of SHBG (sex-hormone binding globulin) in their blood were rated by their wives as less aggressive and less domineering. SHBG is a protein that binds to testosterone and reduces its activity, which is generally a good thing. As it happens, high fiber diets boost SHBG."

Anglen echoed Dr. Barnard's comments about vegetarians on high fiber diets being less violent. The NEWSTART prisoners are housed together in one section of the building. "When there is a violent outbreak, 90% of the time it's on the non-vegetarian side of the facility," says Anglen. A vegan himself, Anglen says there are rare occurrences of violence on the vegan side of the prison.

"There is a noticeable difference in the personalities of the vegetarian inmates. They smile more, are fully racially integrated, attend religious classes and anger management classes eagerly," he told VIP. "Within 10 days the vegan inmates express improvement in how they feel."

Anglen detailed some of the health improvements of the vegan inmates. He described how diabetics were able to rid themselves of medications, a good number saw their skin conditions improved, many lost excess weight, and most felt more energetic.

Among the non-vegetarian inmates there is little mixing and more inter-racial fighting. When they are released, there is a 70 to 80% rate of recidivism. In the four years the prison has operated, only 30 to 40 of the NEWSTART inmates have returned. "We have a waiting list to get into the

program," he says.

The Victor Valley Medium Correctional Facility is a privately owned prison that is operated by Maranatha Corrections, LLC under contract with the California Department of Corrections. Maranatha Corrections, LLC is owned by Terry Moreland whose Moreland Croperation was responsible for building the prison. Moreland, a Seventh Day Adventist, is a vegan.

VIP was able to obtain recipes from both of the correctional institutions.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT MEAL (Prison Loaf)

Served at Maryland Correctional Adjustment Center

6 slices whole wheat bread, finely chopped
4 oz. (113 g) imitation cheddar cheese, finely grated
4 oz. (113 g) raw carrots, finely grated
12 oz. (340 g) spinach, canned, drained
2 C. (480 ml) dried Great Northern Beans, soaked, cooked, drained
4 T. vegetable oil
6 oz. (169 g) potato flakes, dehydrated

6 oz. (169 g) tomato paste
8 oz. (226 g) powdered skim milk
4 oz.(113 g) raisins

1. Mix all ingredients in a 12-quart (12 liter) mixing bowl. Make sure all wet items are drained.
2. Mix until stiff, just moist enough to spread.
3. Form three loaves in glazed bread pans. Place loaf pans in oven on a sheet pan filled with water to keep the bottom of loaves from burning.
4. Bake at 325 degrees F (Gas Mark 5) in a convection oven for approximately 45 minutes. The loaf will start to pull away from the sides of the bread pan when done.

Three of the most popular recipes at Victor Valley Medium Correctional Facility are as follows:

STROGANOFF

Gravy

1 C. (237 ml) cold water
2 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos
1 T. cornstarch
1 C. (237 ml) raw cashews
1/4 t. salt
1/4 C. (59 ml) coarsely chopped onion
1/4 t. honey
2 t. lemon juice

2 C. (480 ml) additional water

1/2 C. (118 ml) diced onion
2 T. oil or water
1/2 C. (118 ml) sliced mushrooms, optional

2 C. (480 ml) SUNBURGER chunks
or 1 C. (237 ml) Heartline beef-flavored chunks rehydrated to equal 2 cups (480 ml).
1 T. chopped fresh parsley

1. Measure Gravy ingredients into a blender and blend on high until smooth.
2. Add additional water to blender.
3. In a large pot, saute onions, oil or water, and sliced mushrooms.
4. Pour blender ingredients into pot, and cook, stirring constantly on medium heat until thick.
5. Stir in 2 cups SUNBURGER chunks and parsley. Heat through. Serve with brown rice or pasta, and garnish with extra chopped fresh parsley. Makes 4 servings.

SUNBURGERS

3 1/4 C. ((776 ml) water
1/4 C. (59 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos or unfermented soy sauce
1 t. onion powder
1/4 t. garlic powder
Cayenne pepper to taste, optional
1 t. thyme leaves
1 t. sage
1 t. marjoram leaves
1/4 C. (59 ml) raw sunflower seeds
2 T. nutritional yeast flakes, optional
2 T. canola oil, optional
3 C. (717 ml) quick cooking oats

1. Bring to a boil in a large pot the water, Bragg Liquid Aminos, onion powder, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, thyme, sage, marjoram, sunflower seeds, nutritional yeast flakes, and

canola oil.

2. Add quick cooking oats to boiling mixture.
3. Remove from heat and stir, mixing well.
4. Cover with lid and let sit for 20 minutes.
5. When cool enough to handle, drop by spoonfuls or ice cream scoop onto sprayed cookie sheet and form into patties.
6. Bake at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 15 minutes. Turn over and bake for another 15 minutes. Makes 12 burgers.

These freeze well. Make a double recipe and freeze half to have ready to use for another time. Cool completely, wrap and freeze. When reheating, thaw and heat on a non-stick skillet.

APPLE BURRITOS

Filling

- 8 apples, cored and cut into chunks
 - 1/3 C. (79 ml) apple juice
 - 1/4 C. (59 ml) raisins
 - 1 t. vanilla extract
 - 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 8 whole wheat tortillas

Glaze

- 2 C. (480 ml) water (save small amount to mix with cornstarch)
 - 1/4 C. (59 ml) cornstarch
 - 1 C. (237 ml) apple juice concentrate
 - 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
1. Combine apples, apple juice, raisins, vanilla, and cinnamon in a saucepan. Cook until apples are soft.
 2. Roll mixture in tortillas and place in a baking dish sprayed with non-stick spray.
 3. In a separate saucepan, combine 1/4 C. (59 ml) of the water with the cornstarch, add remaining water, apple juice concentrate and ground cinnamon. Bring to a boil and boil for 1 minute.
 4. Pour glaze over burritos in pan and bake covered at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 30 minutes.
 5. Makes 8 burritos.

Variation:

Substitute fresh or frozen peaches for the apples, and peach or white grape juice for the apple juice.

Add 1/4 t. almond extract if desired.

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With this issue **Vegetarians in Paradise** continues the bean explorations of **VOW**, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent **VIP** issues **VOW** will enlighten our readers with the further **Adventures of the Bean**.

Adventures of the Bean #7

Forbidden Rice Meets the Purple Bean

by **VOW**

Includes Recipe Below

While surfing the Internet for my heirloom beans, I stumbled upon a very unusual rice. Ordinarily, I don't give rice a second glance, because it isn't very kind to my blood sugars. But with a catchy name like "Forbidden Rice," how could I resist? This was a legendary food for the emperors, and it is purple! That started the old brain gears a-turnin' and I wanted to get my hands on this grain that supposedly toned the blood and also was a source of iron. One source of Forbidden Rice is <http://www.worldpantry.com/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/ProductDisplay?prmenbr=127574&prfnbr=146780>



One way diabetics can accommodate rice (or any other high-glycemic-index carbohydrates) into their diets is to combine foods. Pairing up items from each end of the glycemic index



spectrum will give an average impact. Or even a smidgen of fats can slow down the rocket rise to blood sugars. The mental gears began to turn.

It's springtime, and that means longer days, more outside activities, and picnics! I sensed a salad inspiration about to descend upon me, and I waited for the epiphany. What bean is noted for being dark purple? Black beans, of course! I love those beans, and typically enjoy them in a chili recipe. But when you soak those babies overnight, the water is stained a deep purple and it colors just about everything it touches. Purple beans, purple rice. AHA!

Black beans are also called turtle beans, and are common in Latin American dishes and also Caribbean cuisine. One pound cooks up to about two cups of beans. You can also find them canned. For this

recipe, you can either use the dry beans and cook them the day before in a crockpot, or use the canned ones (I won't tell!).

Purple Passion Salad

10 servings

- 4 cups (1 liter) cooked black beans (2 lbs dry or 900g)
- 2 cups (480 ml) cooked Forbidden Rice (1 cup dry or 240 ml)
- 2 cups (480 ml) chopped fresh tomatoes
- 3 cups (360 ml) chopped cucumbers, peeling and seeds removed
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) slivered fresh basil
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) diced red onion
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) dijon-style mustard
- 3 cloves pickled garlic (or more!)
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) toasted sesame oil
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) seasoned rice vinegar
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) cider vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

1. In food processor or blender, place mustard and garlic cloves and buzz to a paste. While motor is running, add sesame oil in a thin drizzle. Then add vinegars and salt and pepper to taste.
2. In large bowl, combine drained beans, rice, tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion and basil. Add dressing and blend thoroughly. Cover bowl and refrigerate until completely chilled. This keeps in the refrigerator for a week or more, and is a wonderful, knock-'em-dead potluck dish or picnic salad!

Nutritional Information:

Calories per serving 128

Calories from fat 48

Total fat 7g

Saturated fat 1g

Cholesterol 0mg

Total Carbohydrate 16g

Fiber 5g
Sugars 1g
Protein 5g
Vitamin A 6%
Vitamin C 17%
Calcium 3%
Iron 10%

Diabetes Update--April, 2004

Don't go running off to the kitchen for some salad just YET. You need to get ready to join me in a celebratory "happy dancie." I had a routine doctor appointment this month, with accompanying blood work. GOOD NEWS all around! Since diagnosis, I have lost almost forty pounds! I still have quite a ways to go, but at least the numbers on the scale are going DOWN.

My HbA1C test, which is an indicator of blood glucose control over the past three months was a spectacular 5.7%! (For information about the HbA1C test, what it measures, how it is used as a guide for diabetes management, see: <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/56/65904.htm>) Now, in the non-diabetic, the HbA1C values range from 4.5% to 6.5%. In the diabetic, good control is considered with an HbA1C level of LESS THAN 7%. So, my number was pretty doggone good!

So good, my doctor has discontinued my medication!
(Cue the "happy dancie!")

Am I cured?
NO!

I am a diabetic. I have diabetes, I will always have diabetes. Diabetes isn't just a level of blood sugar, or insufficient insulin, or insulin resistance. It is a metabolic disorder, where a network within the body isn't functioning correctly. If I were to accept the misguided notion that I no longer have diabetes, I'd do myself a world of hurt. While my blood sugar is in a "normal" range now, the disease is considered to be controlled by diet and exercise.

Should I decide to eat candy bars for breakfast, caramel corn for lunch, and mashed potatoes and gravy for dinner, I'd rack up some horrendous BG numbers! I still have to exercise, too. (UGH) And, if I ever need surgery or if I get an infection, my blood sugar will have to be closely monitored then as well.

The hard work pays off, though!

(for more information about the glycemic Index of foods and how it affects blood glucose levels, you can check out <http://www.glycemicindex.com/>)

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Dr. Neal Pinckney is a graduate of the University of Southern California and Oxford University, where he received his Ph.D. in clinical and educational psychology. He has done post-doctoral work at Stanford University and the University of Vienna. He is professor emeritus and former chair of Behavioral Sciences at California State University, Sacramento and has taught at the University of California, Davis Medical School. He held a private practice in family and individual therapy and psychoanalysis for almost 30 years. He was psychologist and in-service trainer for the California Highway Patrol for 13 years. He is founder and director of the Healing Heart Foundation.

This is the story of Dr. Pinckney's personal experience with heart disease and how it led to the writing of the *Healthy Heart Handbook*.

How It All Began

By Neal Pinckney

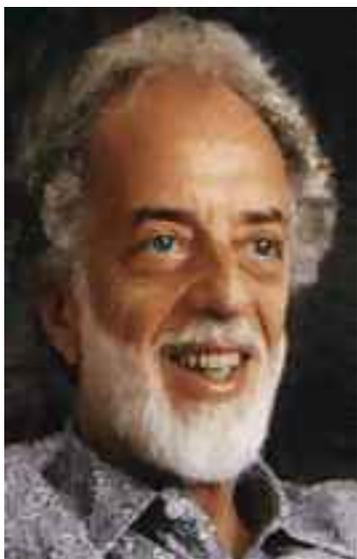
Denial is not just a river in Egypt.

I frequently saw my father, who died of a heart attack at 59, doubled over with pain. He called it indigestion. Years later, when I was shoveling dirt in my yard and a tightness across my chest kept me from continuing, it was, I told myself, muscle strain. Muscle strain was a far more accurate diagnosis than I ever imagined. The muscle was my heart.

Luck enters into many events that change lives. In my case, it was going to a different physician. He looked over my medical records and said that my cholesterol was too high. He noted that my

father had died of heart disease and my blood pressure was higher than normal, making me a prime candidate for a heart attack. When he asked me about any pain I had in my chest during exercise, I passed it off as indigestion, but he wasn't fooled. He encouraged me to have a treadmill test, where heart monitors record information while exercising. A borderline positive result indicated a need for a thallium stress test, a pair of 25 minute heart scans, the first following an injection of a radioactive isotope and the second after going on the treadmill with more thallium injected when at the maximum heart rate. This stress test compares how the heart's blood supply appears at rest and at peak demand. When enough blood doesn't reach the heart muscles at higher exertion levels, ischemia (iss-keem-ee-a) results. And I had it.

When the thallium scan proved positive, the next step was an angiogram. I wasn't too keen about this procedure - a catheter is inserted into the femoral artery at the groin and threaded into the heart. Different catheters are used to test heart muscles and valves and to inject a contrast medium which lets the cardiologist see exactly where any blockages are. The results were worse than expected. My heart's right main artery was 100% blocked and the two left arteries were 90% and 85% obstructed. Polaroid pictures showed me where these blockages were.



I was told there are usually three alternatives. The first is angioplasty, where a balloon is inserted into the heart (in the same manner as an angiogram) and opened to press the obstructing plaque back against the artery walls. Angioplasty wasn't feasible in my case, due to the location and type of blockages. The second alternative was open-heart surgery, a by-pass operation, where a section of healthy blood vessel is shunted around each of the blocked coronary arteries. The third alternative was to do nothing except take medication and get my life together so I could die. I was told that if I didn't have a by-pass immediately, my chances of living another six months were poor.

Here were three doctors, all wanting me to be healthy, telling me I should have a by-pass operation and have it soon. I was told that every tick of my heart was like the tick of a time bomb; it could go off at any moment. I couldn't accuse them of having financial motives; I belong to a prepaid health plan and the by-pass wouldn't cost me anything, the doctors would receive no extra payment, and the plan would be some \$75,000 poorer. The doctors kept insisting; have a by-pass now!

To get them to give me more time to think it over and explore alternatives, I told them that I couldn't have the by-pass right away because it was against my religion. They asked what religion is that? I'm a devout coward, I replied.

Scared to death (more accurately - scared of death), I started reading everything about heart disease I could get my hands on. I was lucky to be retired, with a background in research and statistical analysis. I had time to search through university libraries and using the Internet, read hundreds of articles in medical journals and books. I found out that there was another alternative to open heart surgery that I hadn't been told about.

The scientific articles led me to a bestselling book that showed me a medically sound and proven alternative, Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease. It became my primer for survival, and it remains my guide to this day. Some of what you will read here has its roots in that

book and from communications with clinicians and researchers at Dr. Ornish's Preventive Medicine Research Institute. I learned that I could have much more control over my own destiny than I had ever realized. It taught me that my eating habits and lack of aerobic exercise in the past were the reasons for my medical problems today. It explained how to change those habits, to not only stop the progression of the disease, but how to reverse the damage that I had done to myself. It sounded reasonable, but I was hesitant to make major lifestyle changes on the basis of one book. Especially when my cardiologist and personal physician had doubts about this approach. So I kept on reading.

I found a number of books by Dr. John A. McDougall. These backed up much of what I had learned in Dr. Ornish's book, and went much further in explaining why the changes I should make would help me prevent many other illnesses, improve my general health and even relieve other conditions, such as allergies, I'd had for most of my life. I learned more about what atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) is, how it forms, what it looks like, and how it can be dealt with.

About this same time, a friend and sailing partner began to have severe angina and shortness of breath. He went through the same series of tests that I had, but was told that angioplasty would be helpful. Two days after his angiogram, he had balloon angioplasty to push back the plaque that was blocking his coronary arteries, and a few days later he was home and active again. While I had changed my eating pattern completely, he continued eating the same thing as before: meat, cheese, potato chips and cookies with lots of shortening.

A few months later he was again suffering severe chest pains and shortness of breath. After more tests he was back in the hospital for a by-pass operation. I had given him Ornish's book when his heart problems first started, but it took a major surgery before he would see the need to read it. He has come to understand the message and he's now living in a way that will make it unlikely that he'll need surgery again. His experience reinforces the danger in putting off changes in lifestyle. It's worth your life to begin them as soon as possible.

As I read more about Ornish's program, I learned that one of the important factors for reversing heart disease is being in a support group. I called all the local hospitals, associations, and social agencies in the hope of joining one, but there was none in Honolulu. My next step was to convince someone to start one, but the same reply kept coming back; if you want one so badly, why not start one yourself? I called the nearest medical center, met with the persons in charge of health education who agreed it was a good idea, but they didn't go ahead with it.

After six months of meetings, Kaiser Permanente, Hawaii's largest health maintenance organization, and Castle Medical Center agreed to let me start groups. Suddenly, I was to lead two groups. When we had our first meeting at Castle, an hour and a half drive from my home, the room was swamped with 77 people wanting to join. To take as many as possible, we split into two groups, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Counting driving time, that made an 8 hour day. Leading three groups a week and using a great deal of time preparing information, recipes and charts, I found myself spending about 40 hours a week on the Healing Heart program. So much for retirement.

I have been leading free support groups in Hawaii for over six years, putting more than 700 participants through a ten week series. The enthusiasm of the group members and the amazing improvements in health they report has made it a rewarding experience. Group members report

they have learned much from our groups, and I have learned much more from them than I could ever have found in books alone, gaining more knowledge and understanding about heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and many other cardiovascular related diseases. I learned for myself how life-long allergies disappear when certain foods are given up, notably dairy and egg products. With each new group, I've learned new ways how others deal with their problems in adjusting to new and better lifestyles as well as hints and tips to make those changes easier. This wealth of information lead to the writing of the Healthy Heart Handbook and is a key to the success of those who seek to improve their health.

Each support group discovers their own new and different ways of adapting to a healthier lifestyle. Finding and joining a local support group will make it easier to follow the program and keep you on target longer. Natural food stores and local vegetarian clubs often have information about support groups in the area

We are grateful to Dr. Pinckney and the Healing Heart Foundation for permitting us to reprint this article. For more information on Neal Pinckney and the Healing Heart Foundation click on <http://www.kumu.org>

Dr. Pinckney cooks up tasty originals that are truly low in fat and is delighted to share two of his recipes with our readers. Others can be found on his website.

Quick Southwest Skillet Dinner

1 onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper -- chopped
2 cloves garlic -- minced
2 T chili powder*
1/2 t salt
1/2 t cumin
1 can tomatoes
1 can kidney beans
1 can corn or 1 1/2 C frozen corn
8 oz whole wheat elbow macaroni or other pasta
hot sauce to taste

1. Saute onion, green pepper, garlic, chili powder, salt, and cumin until vegetables are tender.
2. Stir in tomatoes, breaking with spoon.
3. Add kidney beans and corn; bring to boil.
4. Reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Toss with elbows.

* The chili powder does not make this dish hot, and should be added even by those who don't like spicy foods. There are two types of chili powder at most markets, the regular mild one and a hot Mexican style chili powder. For a spicy dish, use the hot chili powder or add hot sauce.

4 servings, each: Calories 446, Fat 1.92 g. (4% cff), Carbohydrate 95.39 g., Protein 17.68 g.

Better Un-Butter Brownies

Dry:

1/2 C whole wheat flour

1/3 C cocoa

1 t baking powder

1/4 t salt

Wet:

1 T EnerG egg replacer with 4 T water

1/2 C pureed prunes or plums (one 4 oz. jar of unsweetened baby food prunes or plums)

2/3 C sugar

1 t vanilla

1. In one bowl mix egg replacer with water, and add the other liquid ingredients.
2. In another bowl mix the dry ingredients well and then add to the liquid. Mix only until evenly blended. Over- mixing will cause the brownies to be flat (and chewy).
3. Bake in a non-stick pan at 350°F. for 20- 25 minutes or until edges look dry and start to pull away from the pan. Can also be microwaved at high for 6 minutes.

8 servings, each: Calories 115, Fat .803g (6% cff), Carbohydrate 25.65 g, Protein 2.51 g. (8%)

Healing Heart Hint:

Use non-stick pans or spray a regular pan with one second's worth of Pam (or other non-stick sprays) These sprays contain a form of fat, so use sparingly. Instead of trying to coat the pan with spray, use a small amount in the center and then spread it with a folded paper towel. Do not use oil to 'grease' a pan; even a little oil adds extra fat that is not required.

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We're delighted to share our Aunt Nettie with you. She's agreed to answer any questions you might ask about vegetarian food, its preparation, and even clean-up tips. But we have to prepare you. She just might want to come right over to your house and help you fix dinner.

Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Hi Aunt Nettie,

I'm trying to stay on my new vegan diet, but it's really hard. After working all day and coping with the heavy traffic on the way home, I'm really too tired to do a lot of cooking. Do you have any suggestions for a quick and easy vegetarian recipe with not too many ingredients?

Your friend,
Maureen

Howdy there Maureen,

I surely do understand 'bout bein' all tuckered out after workin' all day. But you needn't fret, darlin' 'cause I got jes what you need--a vegetarian recipe that's easy, quick, an' mighty dee-lishus. There's only 6 ingredients, so there's not a lot o' fussin'. Now 'nother nice thing is that it makes 'nuff fer two or three days worth. How's 'bout that!

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

SPEEDY LENTILS

1 C. (240 ml) quinoa
2 C. (480 ml) water
3/4 t. salt

1 15-oz. (420 g) can cooked lentils
2 tomatoes, chopped
1/2 medium onion, chopped

1. Rinse the quinoa in a fine mesh strainer under running water for a full minute. Combine quinoa, water, and salt in a 2-quart (1/2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high

heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam 15 minutes.

2. While the quinoa is cooking, open the can of lentils, and chop the tomatoes and onions.
3. When quinoa is cooked, remove half and put it in the refrigerator for another day. Add lentils, juice and all, the tomatoes, and onions. Cover and cook 2 or 3 minutes longer. Serves 3.

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After devouring the irresistible and indulgent treats that grace the holiday table, holiday gluttons frequently make a few New Year's resolutions to return to sensible eating. Actually, many find it a relief to turn away from the sweets to chow down a savory, high fiber hearty dish that fills them up without filling them out.

If you've never seen a savory bean patty that resembles a chocolate chip cookie, this may be your first encounter. Whenever I serve these tasty patties, someone will ask me why I'm serving the chocolate chip cookies as an entrée. We enjoy the patties with fresh salsa, but they also work wonderfully in a pita with lots of trimmings like chopped tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, and shredded lettuce.

ZESTY BLACK BEAN PATTIES

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw, unsalted sunflower seeds

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw walnut pieces

1 small onion, quartered

2 to 3 T. water

2 C. (480 ml) cooked, drained black beans*

1/2 C. (120 ml) oat bran (uncooked)

1 t. salt

1/4 t. garlic powder

1/4 t. ground black pepper

3/4 t. ground cumin

3/4 t. ground coriander
3/4 t. chili powder
2 to 3 T. water as needed

1. Combine sunflower seeds and walnuts in the work bowl of a food processor and process until finely ground. Turn out into a large mixing bowl and set aside.
2. Pulse chop onion in the food processor until diced. Transfer to a skillet, add water and cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Return to processor.
3. Measure 1/2 C. (120 ml) of the rinsed and drained black beans, and add them to nuts in mixing bowl. Put remainder into processor with onions.
4. Add remaining ingredients to processor and process until well blended. Add to bowl with ground nuts and mix well.
5. Lightly oil a baking pan and drop patties from a large spoon. Flatten slightly so they will bake evenly.
6. Bake at 400 F (Gas Mark 6) for 12 minutes. Turn the patties with a metal spatula and bake 10 minutes longer. Makes 9 to 10 very tasty patties.

*1 1/2 one-pound (450 g) cans of drained black beans will give you the 2 cups (480 ml) needed

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

How about a recipe for nut milk. Got nut milk?

Marcy G.

Howdy There Marcy,

Yes, yes, yes, darlin'. I sure do have a rip-roarin' recipe fer an Almond Milk that's smooth as silk an' works on jes' 'bout anythin' y'all might have a mind to whip up. It's packed with vitamins 'n minerals 'n some other fancy stuff called essential fatty acids. I jes' know it's rootin' tootin' good fer ya. An' you'll like this part. Y'all can make it quicker 'n a rabbit jumps into a hole. And, Marcy, if y'all want a real whoop-de-doo dessert fer that special occasion, jes' mosy on over to [The Highest Perch](#) an' fix up some Blanc Mange.

ALMOND MILK

1/2 C. (118 ml) raw whole almonds

2 1/2 C. (598 ml) water

Pinch salt

2 pitted dates

1. Combine almonds, water, salt, and dates in the blender.
2. Start blender on slow speed for a few seconds, then switch to high speed, blending until smooth.

3. Strain milk through a fine mesh strainer to remove almond pulp, and set pulp aside. Makes 2 1/2 C.(598 ml) milk.

This quantity of water will create thick, creamy milk perfect for Blanc Mange. For other purposes, thin with water to preferred consistency.

To make almond milk sweeter, simply add more dates, Sucanat, or maple syrup.

To make almond cream, reduce the quantity of water to 1 C. (237 ml) to create a very thick liquid and strain off pulp.

USING THE PULP: Combine almond pulp with 1 t. Florida Crystals and 1/4 t. almond extract. Mix well and use as a topping for puddings and fruit desserts.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I keep hearing about flaxseed tea and how good it tastes but can never find a recipe for it anywhere in my cookbooks. Thought you might have one.

Sheila

Sheila, darlin',

You li'l rascal, you. You must've been readin' my mind. Why I jes sat down with my cup o' steamin' flaxseed tea, an' it sure feels mighty fine goin' down. The recipe is easy, an' I sure hope you enjoy it much as I do. Thing 'bout it is it's so good fer ya, too.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

Many people are discouraged from making their own flaxseed tea because when heated in liquid, whole flaxseeds will become somewhat gummy and slimy. Because of this quality, flaxseeds can often serve as a binder in some recipes. However, this will not happen with ground flaxseeds that are steeped in hot liquid. This unique tea has a rich, yet delicate flavor that comforts the spirits when that craving for a soothing cup of tea comes along.

FLAXSEED TEA

- 4 T. flaxseed meal
- 2 C. (480 ml) boiling water
- Dash or 2 of ground cinnamon
- Evaporated cane juice to taste

1. Measure the flaxseed meal into a 2-cup (480 ml) measuring cup and fill with boiling water.

Allow to steep about 12 to 15 minutes.

2. Using a fine mesh strainer, pour the steeped tea through the strainer into another 2-cup measure or small pitcher.
3. Shake a dash or 2 of ground cinnamon and sweeten to taste with evaporated cane juice. Makes 1 very large cup or 2 generous teacups of delicious flaxseed tea.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

After dinner my boyfriend, Jeff, and I like to sit down in our giant lounge, drink a cup of herbal tea, and talk about stuff. But lately he's bored with herbal tea, even though I keep trying new kinds. I sure would like a recipe for something different.

Desperately yours,

Kelly

Howdy there, Kelly,

Yer such a dear fer wantin' ta please yer man. Now, don't you fret none, darlin', cause I surely do have jes the right thing fer relaxin' an' sippin'. An' the nice thing is there's no fussin' with this recipe. You kin put a mighty fine cup in Jeff's hand in no time a-tall.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

HOT GINGER SOY SOOTHER

2 1/2 C. ((600 ml) soymilk
2 T. peeled and finely minced fresh gingerroot
1/2 t. finely minced lemon zest
2 T. maple syrup

Dash nutmeg

1. Combine soymilk, ginger, lemon zest, and maple syrup in a 2-quart saucepan. Warm, uncovered, over medium heat until steamy hot, about 10 to 15 minutes. Watch carefully to prevent boil-over.
2. Strain through a tea strainer into 2 mugs. Sprinkle a dash of nutmeg into each mug

and enjoy. Serves 2.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

Whenever I try to cook fresh vegetables for company, it never fails. I always over cook them and have to apologize for goofing up the timing. Any suggestions?

Also, do have a recipe for a spiced holiday punch?

Your friend,
Frieda

Well, Frieda darlin', I have an idea that oughter put an end to yer frettin'. No more overcookin' with this dish. No sir, ya jes make it a day or two ahead, then simply bring it to the table lookin' as perky as pie. An' I got a secret for ya, this works with lots o' other veggies, too.

Now, fer that punch, well, 'course I got a recipe fer that! Jes scroll on down past the first recipe fer some real tasty sippin'.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

MOROCCAN CARROTS



This is a deliciously pungent dish that can be served hot or cold. It actually tastes better the following day when the carrots have had time to marinate.

8 medium carrots, peeled
and angle sliced 1/8" (.25 cm) thick
1 C. (240 ml) water



1/4 t. salt

1/3 C. (80 ml) extra virgin olive oil

1/4 C. (60 ml) apple cider vinegar

1 C. (240 ml) water

1 1/2 t. salt

1/4 t. ground coriander

1 stick cinnamon

4 whole allspice berries

Parsley, finely chopped for garnish

1. Combine carrots, water, and salt in a 4-quart (1 liter) saucepan, cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam 10 minutes. Drain off liquid, reserving it for a future soup stock.
2. Combine olive oil, apple cider vinegar, water, salt, coriander, cinnamon, and allspice and add to drained carrots. Cover and cook on high for 8 to 10 minutes or until carrots are softened. Transfer to an oval serving bowl.
3. Just before serving, sprinkle a garnish of 1 to 2 T. parsley over the top. Serves 6 to 8.

HOT MULLED CRANBERRY PUNCH

1 qt. (1 liter) cranberry juice cocktail

1 6 oz. (180 ml) can frozen lemonade concentrate

1 C. (240 ml) grape juice

1 1/2 C. (360 ml) water

2 sticks cinnamon

10 whole cloves

1 C. (240 ml) whiskey or bourbon

3 lemon slices

1. Into a large stock pot combine everything but the whiskey and lemon slices.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium and simmer 10 minutes.
3. Remove spices and add whiskey and lemon slices.
4. To serve, ladle into punch cups. Makes 10 servings or 1 3/4 quarts (1.75 liters)

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To stay cool on those sizzling summer days, take advantage of this creamy refresher that can be blended almost instantly. If you want to prepare ahead for guests, put all the ingredients into the blender except the ice cubes, and chill. When friends arrive, simply add the ice cubes and blend for a thick, smooth, and cooling treat. When you meet the occasional mango that has more tang than sweetness, adjust the maple syrup quantity to your taste.

MANGO MIST SMOOTHIE

- 1 C. (237 ml) ice cubes
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) coconut milk
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) water
- 3 to 4 T. maple syrup
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- Flesh of 1 ripe medium mango, about 10 to 14 oz. (283 to 339 g)



Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend to a smooth consistency. For 2 servings, pour into tall 12-oz. (355 ml) glasses. To serve 3, use 8-oz. (237 ml) glasses.

For more mango recipes check our [Recipe Index](#).

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It's the new year 2000, and time for toasts and celebrations. This month we present two party recipes that add zest and spice to your holiday celebrations.

Here's the ideal punch bowl beverage to serve your guests. It's creamy, it's rich, it's gustatorial! Enjoy!

PUMPKIN APPLE NOG

1 C. (240 ml) canned pumpkin puree
1 C. (240 ml) unsweetened soy milk*
1/4 C. (60 ml) + 2 T. maple syrup
3/4 C. (180 ml) unfiltered apple juice
1/4 t. ground nutmeg
1/2 + 1/8 t. ground cinnamon
Pinch salt



1. Combine all ingredients in a blender. Process on medium speed until smooth, scraping down sides to incorporate all the flavors.
 2. Pour into individual old-fashioned glasses or into a glass punch bowl.
 3. Sprinkle lightly with ground nutmeg and serve.
 4. If you prefer to add spirits, either brandy or rum make an excellent choice. Makes 2 to 3 servings.
- To prepare in quantity, it will be necessary to make this recipe in several batches. Unfortunately

the blender is not large enough to prepare even a double recipe. However, it's quick and easy.

*I prefer the unsweetened soy milk for its thick creamy richness. The recipe will still work with a sweetened soy milk.

With all our California citrus groves harvesting fruit this season, it's the ideal time to be a savvy shopper and take advantage of the freshest, locally grown navel oranges, grapefruits and tangerines. Here's an easy recipe for a fruit salad you can serve at parties, breakfast, pack for lunch, or even enjoy as a between-meal snack.

CALIFORNIA FRUIT SALAD



- 3 navel oranges, scored and peeled
- 2 ruby red grapefruits, scored and peeled
- 3 tangerines, scored and peeled
- 2 kiwis, peeled

1 small can Mandarin oranges with juice
1/2 C. (120 ml) toasted pecan pieces (optional)
Sprinkle of nutmeg
Mint sprig



1. Remove seeds from grapefruits and tangerines, and chop all the fruit into bite size pieces.
2. Combine in a bowl.
3. Add Mandarin oranges and the juice, toasted pecans, and a delicate sprinkle of nutmeg.
4. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint. Serves 6.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

You've been sharing your great recipes for a long time. I thought I would take this opportunity to share one with you. Here's my recipe for vegan tapioca, one of the few treats I was really missing since going vegan, and it's a pretty absurdly simple recipe.

Take it easy!
John

Well, Howdy there, John,

Yer such a sweet child sendin' me this recipe from yer very own kitchen. I got so dizzy exclaimin' my excitement I pretty near lost the elastic in my knickers! Fer you young'uns out there, knickers is what ole folks like me wear under our skirts--just don't go tellin' everybody 'bout it, now.

Well, darlin', yer recipe sounds so speshul, it oughter be in a magazine with a shiny color pitcher. I got all the fixin's right here an' I'm gonna start a'cookin' it now.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

VEGAN BLUEBERRY CHOCOLATE CHIP TAPIOCA PUDDING

- 1/3 cup (80 ml) organic cane sugar crystals
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) corn starch
- 3 tablespoons tapioca beads
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 3/4 cups (660 ml) soy milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

1/4 cup (60 ml) frozen blueberries

1/4 cup (60 ml) non-dairy chocolate chips

1. In medium saucepan combine sugar, corn starch, tapioca, and salt. Gradually stir in milk until smooth.
2. Stirring constantly, bring to boil over medium heat and boil 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and blueberries.
3. Pour into serving bowls. Cover; refrigerate.
4. Add chocolate chips before serving.

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Here's an email Aunt Nettie received from Susan in Pasadena:

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I know oatmeal is good for me, but it tastes so bland I can hardly get it past my lips. How can I make it interesting enough to actually eat?

Here's Aunt Nettie's response:

Child! Let's see if we can start by turnin' yer mind around. Instead 'a sayin' in yer head, "Oh, yuck! I gotta eat this awful stuff 'cause it's good for me," try thinkin' about makin' a "breakfast sundae" that tastes so good you'll want to have some ever' day. I put on a heap 'o fixin's of all sorts. Here's what I put on top my oatmeal and other cereals I cook in the mornin':

- Raw pumpkin seeds
- Raw sunflower seeds
- Black raisins
- Golden raisins
- Dates, chopped up
- Currants
- Dried apples, chopped up
- Walnuts, chopped
- Pecans, chopped
- Bananas, sliced or chopped
- Fresh fruits, chopped up (Choose yer favorites, of course.)
- Soy milk
- Nut Milk (Homemade or store bought)
- Oat Milk

A little maple syrup or date sugar if the fresh and dried fruits don't sweeten it up enough to make it tasty.

Another delicious way to enjoy yer oatmeal is to cook it up with some chopped up dried pears 'r dates. These are the sweetest of the dried fruits, and they really add some vitamins and minerals to yer body at the same time. Now, if that doesn't do the trick, send me another--uhhh--oh, email is what they call it, and I'll give you another sure-fire fixin.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I tend to be hooked on junk foods but I made an important New Year's resolution to eat healthier. I'm really determined to stick with it this year because I've gained so much weight. What can I eat for breakfast that's not fattening?

Your Friend, Deanna

Howdy-do there, Deanna,

Well, darlin', jes takin' that first step--the decision ta eat healthier is the best resolution possible. Now I'm gonna give y'all a dandy li'l recipe that my family loves fer breakfast. It's made from scratch with millet that's got plenty o' roughage--well, that's what we used ta call it when I was knee high, but today they say "fiber."

If'n ya look at the recipe, you kin see it takes 15 minutes cookin' time. Now don't let that scare ya from tryin' it. It's really easy as pie. Here's whatcha do:

Put yer water, millet, and salt together an' follow the first step. Now, here's the part that makes it easy. Soon's the mixture starts boilin', yer pot lid starts jigglin' an' hootin' up a storm.

That's when ya turn the heat down to low, put yer timer on 15 minutes an' take it with ya while ya go take yer shower. Now when that timer goes off, dash to yer kitchen an' turn off the heat altogether, but don't open the pot. Then when yer all dressed an' ready fer breakfast, why it's ready fer you, too.

FRUITED MILLET



2 C. (480 ml) water
1/2 C. (120 ml) whole grain millet
1/4 t. salt

Fruit Topping

1 large banana
10 pitted dates
1 whole dried peach
1/4 C. (60 ml) pine nuts or cashews
1/4 C. (60 ml) water

1. Combine water, millet, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. To avoid a messy boil-over, stand by to turn heat down to low as soon as cereal begins to boil.
 2. Steam, covered for 15 minutes. Turn off heat and allow to rest for 10 minutes without lifting lid.
 3. While cereal is cooking, put banana, dates, dried peach, pine nuts and water into the food processor. Puree to desired consistency. Transfer to a serving bowl.
 4. Distribute millet cereal into serving bowls and put a generous dollop of fruit topping in the center. Bring remaining fruit topping to the table to add as desired. Cereal makes 2 servings. Fruit topping makes 1 cup (240 ml).
-

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I just recently started a vegetarian diet and am finding it quite a challenge to come up with good breakfast ideas. Any suggestions would be a blessing!

Yours,
Annie

Annie darlin,'

I'm happy as a lark to be hearin' 'bout yer switchin' to vegetarian vittles. Now, I been noticin' that breakfast jes seems ta stump even them that's been vegetarian fer ages. I jes come up with some breakfast fixin's that's good as gold fer ya an' mighty quick ta whip up, too. Land sakes, ya don't even have to cook it! Now how's that fer speshul! I do hope y'enjoy.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

RAW ROCKY ROAD OATS

Chewy, chunky, nutty, and fruity describes this raw breakfast that's sure to make a frequent appearance on your breakfast table. Like many dishes in raw cuisine, it begins by putting up the grain to soak before bedtime. The next morning breakfast comes together quickly, bursting with goodness.

1/2 C. (118 ml) steel cut Scottish oats (McCann's is one well-known brand)
Water

1 large apple, cored and diced (do not peel)
1 Fuyu persimmon or Bosc pear, chopped or any favorite fruit in season
2 T. raw walnut pieces
2 T. raw pecan pieces
2 T. natural sesame seeds
2 T. flax seed meal
1/3 C. (79 ml) raisins
2 to 3 dashes ground cinnamon

1 ripe banana, mashed
1 T. chopped nuts

1. Put oats into a large bowl and cover with warm water by one-inch, and soak overnight.
2. In the morning, pour oats into a fine mesh strainer to drain off water. Transfer to a medium-size bowl.
3. Add grated apple, persimmon, nuts, seeds, raisins, and cinnamon and toss to combine ingredients.
4. Divide mixture into 2 bowls and top with mashed banana. An extra sprinkle of nuts on top gives each bowl a little extra visual appeal. Sit down and enjoy with a nice cup of herbal tea. Serves 3.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I heard that a tofu scramble can take the place of scrambled eggs. I'm trying to get off eggs for breakfast but need a good substitute that can give me the protein and energy I need to start the day. Have you got a good recipe?

Stephanie

Howdy there Stephanie,

'deed I do have a recipe fer a Tofu Scramble that'll git ya up 'n hollerin' from daybreak 'til the farmers' lunch chime rings. I start ya out with some basic fixin's, then give ya couple ideas fer makin' it yer very own recipe.

Well, darlin', ya kin see that leavin' yer eggs behind is no trouble a'tall.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

AUNT NETTIE'S TOFU SCRAMBLE

- 1/2 small red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 yellow red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 small tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 1 small red or white rose potato, coarsely shredded
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 14-oz. ((396 g) pkg. firm tofu, crumbled

1/4 C. (59 ml) raw pumpkin seeds

1. Combine peppers, tomatoes, onions, potatoes, and olive oil in a large, deep skillet or flat bottom wok. Saute over high heat for 3 to 4 minutes.
2. Drain and rinse tofu. Crumble by squeezing the tofu through your fingers. Add to skillet along with pumpkin seeds and toss to heat through.
3. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with whole grain bread topped with nut butter or fruit spread and some fresh fruit. Makes 4 servings.

VARIATIONS:

Squeeze some lemon juice over the top.

Add 1/2 to 1 teaspoon curry powder.

Add 1 or 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast.

Add 1/2 to 1 teaspoon each ground cumin and chili powder.

Add 1/2 cup (118 ml) shredded vegan cheese, either mozzarella or cheddar flavor.

Add 1/4 cup (59 ml) natural sesame seeds in place of pumpkin seeds

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ALMOND PARADISE BAKED APPLES

Deliciously homespun is the image that comes to mind when I picture baked apples. They're no trouble to prepare, they're healthy, and they always provide that satisfying conclusion to a meal. Keeping simple preparation in mind, I created this recipe that offers an enhanced version of an old-time favorite.

4 large firm apples (Braeburn, Rome Beauty, Fuji, Gala, Pink Lady)

Almond Filling

2/3 C. (160 ml) whole raw almonds

2 T. + 2 t. Florida Crystals or evaporated cane juice

3 T. water

1/2 t. almond extract

1 t. rose water

1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins

1/4 C. (60ml) golden raisins

1 1/2 C. (360 ml) unsweetened pineapple juice

3 to 5 T. Florida Crystals or evaporated cane juice

1. Wash and core apples. Arrange them in a baking dish. Set aside.
2. Grind almonds to a fine powder in a small electric coffee grinder and transfer to a food processor.
3. Add Florida Crystals, water, almond extract, and rose water and process to a creamy paste. Spoon into a small bowl and add raisins.
4. Fill apple cavities with almond filling, packing firmly. Mound remaining filling over top of

apples. Combine pineapple juice and Florida Crystals in a small bowl, and pour into the bottom of the baking dish. Cover baking dish with aluminum foil, shiny side down.

5. Bake at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for 1 to 1 1/2 hours. To serve, put apples into dessert bowls and spoon some of the sauce into each bowl. Makes 4 servings.

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APPLE DATE-NUT PIE

We all know it's chancy to try out a new dessert recipe when you're expecting guests and want to impress them. Here's a special treat that pleases every time. With the holidays ahead and newly harvested apples in season, this is the perfect time to explore those new recipes.

Since apples are in abundance all year long, this is a dessert that you can enjoy at any time. However, it's especially appreciated during the coming holidays when you want a finishing touch that's truly memorable.

This unique and unforgettably delicious Apple Date-Nut Pie crossed the spoonerism path one day and ended up with a tangled name that won't go away. As I brought the pie to the table, I proudly announced this was a Dapple Ate-Nut Pie.

Ease the stress of planning a special celebration meal by preparing the pie the day before, cover lightly, and refrigerate.

Crust

- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) raw almonds
- 1 1/2 C. (360 ml) pitted dates, chopped
- 1 to 4 T. water

1. Put almonds into the food processor and process to a fine meal, but not quite powdered.
2. Add dates and process along with enough water to form a dough that holds together when pressed. You may have to stop the machine several



times to redistribute ingredients.

3. Press into bottom and sides of a 9-inch (22.5 cm) pie plate.
4. Set aside and wash processor work bowl.



Creamy Topping

1/2 C. (120 ml) or 4 1/2 oz.(127 g) extra firm silken tofu

3 oz. (84 g) fresh squeezed orange juice

1/4 t. + 1/8 t. ground cinnamon

4 T. maple syrup

1 1/8 C. (270 ml) raw walnuts

1. Put tofu, orange juice, cinnamon, and maple syrup into food processor and process to cream tofu.
2. Add walnuts and process until thick and creamy. Set aside.

Filling

4 to 5 large Fuji apples, about 2 lbs., (about 1 kilo) cored, peeled and thinly sliced

13 pitted prunes, chopped

1/4 to 1/3 C. (60 to 80 ml) water, depending on moisture content of apples

1/2 t. ground cinnamon

4 to 5 T. maple syrup

2 or 3 T. cornstarch

3 to 4 T. water

Pecan halves

Ground cinnamon

1. Combine apples, prunes, 1/4 C. (60 ml) water, cinnamon, and maple syrup in a 4-quart (3.8 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 10 to 12 minutes or until apples are fork tender and there is still a little liquid left in the pot. Add a little more water if needed to provide a base for a sauce.
2. Combine cornstarch and water to form a runny paste. When apples are soft, return pot to boiling and add cornstarch mixture as needed, a little at a time, stirring constantly until thickened, about 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Taste for sweetness and adjust if necessary. Spoon apples into date nut pie crust, and spread Creamy Topping over the apple mixture, leaving a 1-inch border of apples exposed.
4. Decorate top with pecan halves and sprinkle lightly with cinnamon. Refrigerate for several hours. Serves 6 to 8.

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Revisiting a Vegan Thanksgiving

Includes Recipes Below

Thanksgiving is a treasured American holiday that's synonymous with many nostalgic threads: turkey roasting in the oven, family coming to dinner, treasured friends celebrating together, special preparations for the feast, a roaring fire for the gathering, peeling chestnuts, and cooking the time-honored cranberry sauce. While vegans hold many of those same images, we certainly veer in another direction when it comes to the turkey roasting in the oven. We seek a higher plane, one that honors the living turkey and respects its right to live free of the butcher's knife. We rejoice at the Thanksgiving table because we are free from the need to kill an animal, cook it, and eat its flesh forkful by forkful.

Instead, vegans throughout the country, put their creative energies into cooking a host of varied delicacies from the plant kingdom. To date, no single dish has taken on national status to replace the bird. Rather, each family prepares its own favorites for the annual feast.

We invite you to share our recipes for the delectable meal we serve to our family and friends.

Our centerpiece entrée, the [Thanksgiving Torte](#) remains the same as last year, because it has become a favorite family tradition for several years. Baked in a springform pan and unmolded onto an attractive footed cake plate, this aromatic and earthy composition of wild rice, walnuts, pecans, mushrooms, soy sausage, and sage is served with Mushroom Gravy on the side. Because we only serve this dish at Thanksgiving, its lusty, savory flavors have crept into our memories with a warming nostalgia that brings everyone to the table with bursting anticipation.

Other side dishes such as [Cranberry Fruit Confetti](#), [Creamed Chestnuts](#), Roasted Potatoes, and [Brandied Fruit and Cranberry Relish](#) remain Thanksgiving favorites that grace our holiday table each year.

For this year's Thanksgiving feast we offer a few variations on side dishes to add spark to your special celebration meal. You'll notice that color really comes to the foreground. The **Harvest Vegetable Roast** combines squashes, onions, tomatoes, and bell peppers with accents of black beans and fresh cut corn dotting the vegetable landscape.

Always an appealing addition to a meal, mushrooms will join our colorful array of side dishes this year. We've combined our **Mushroom Medley** with sage, rosemary, onions, and garlic. Mushrooms are often described as earthy; we agree they do have a definitive earthy depth. However, we also consider them rugged and robust and look forward to inviting them to our table.

Our [Red Baron Salad #1](#) livens the table with a spirited, freshness that can only come from raw vegetables that offer stout and zesty appeal without fail. As suggested by its name, the Red Baron Salad touts elegance, partly because of its colors and flavors, and partly because of its appealing presentation.

While so many dishes that appear on the Thanksgiving table are cooked, a raw salad with extraordinary flavors offers a welcome change with its crisp crunchy textures. The lusty hue of the deep red beets also adds dimension to the autumn colors at the table.

Finally, the moment arrives for the awaited pièce de résistance. **Apples 'n' Cream Pie** sports the stalwart spicy flavors so favored during the holiday season. Resting at the base of this tantalizing pie is a layer of cinnamon spiced apples. Forming a plush quilt over the apples is a thick blanket of creamy spiced tofu. Baked to perfection and garnished with nutmeg, the pie is a succulent treat you can proudly serve at dessert time.

The Thanksgiving plate that reflects the brilliant colors of autumn brings both comfort and anticipation to the diners. Our Harvest Vegetable Roast most certainly looks appetizing, while offering a medley of the season's gleanings, some from the vine, some from the earth, and others from the bush or stalk. We've not cluttered the recipe with too many seasonings to allow the true flavors of the vegetables to blossom. The emphasis is on freshness and simplicity.



HARVEST VEGETABLE ROAST

2 or 3 zucchini squashes, angle sliced into 1/2-inch (1 cm) chunks
3 large pattypan squashes, cut into 8 wedges
2 large yellow crookneck squashes, angle sliced into 1/2-inch (1 cm) chunks
2 large onions, peeled and cut into 8 wedges
3 ears of fresh sweet corn, kernels cut off the cob
4 tomatoes, cut into 8 wedges each
2 red bell peppers, cored and cut into 1 1/2-inch (3.5 cm) squares
1 can black beans, drained and rinsed

Extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Fresh thyme leaves (optional)
Large sprig of basil for garnish

1. Combine all the vegetables and black beans in a 12-inch x 15-inch (30 cm x 37.5 cm) Pyrex baking dish.
2. Drizzle lightly with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, pepper and thyme leaves, and toss to coat well.
3. Roast, uncovered, at 375 F (Gas Mark 5) for 35 to 40 minutes, stirring ingredients about half way through. Fork-test for tenderness and adjust baking time if needed.
4. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl or deep platter, and garnish with basil. Serves 8 to 10 as a side dish.

Mushrooms, an earthy treasure, never fail to gather aficionados at the table. They make an appealing side dish at the Thanksgiving table because they blend so well with the varied flavors of the harvest bounty.

MUSHROOM MEDLEY

12 fresh or dried shiitake mushrooms

1/2 pound (225 g) oyster mushrooms, coarsely chopped
1 pound (450 g) cremini mushrooms, sliced
1 C. (240 ml) onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, finely minced
Pinch of dried rosemary
Pinch of dried sage
1 T. extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper

1 C. (240 ml) raw cashew pieces
Fresh sage leaves for garnish

1. If using fresh shiitakes, slice them, and proceed with Step 2. If using dried shiitakes, put them in a medium bowl, and pour boiling water over them just to cover. Allow to stand for 1 hour. Then using a kitchen scissors, snip off the stems close to the base, and slice the

mushrooms. Save soak water for a tasty soup base by freezing or refrigerating it.

2. Put the sliced shiitakes into a large skillet, and add remaining ingredients except the cashews. Sauté over high heat, stirring frequently, until mushrooms and onions are softened, about 2 minutes.
3. Add cashews and toss well. Transfer to an attractive serving dish and serve garnished with fresh sage leaves. Makes 6 servings.

Concluding a Thanksgiving feast without dessert would seem incomplete. You would just feel in your bones that the finishing touch of the feast was missing. We couldn't let that happen. Our feast will end with an indulgent, decadent, celebratory dessert that may have you coming back for seconds -- that is, if you have room.

APPLES 'N' CREAM PIE



1 prepared whole grain pie crust for a 10-inch pie plate

Apple Filling

- 3 apples, peeled, cored, quartered, and sliced thin
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) black raisins
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) Florida crystals or evaporated cane juice
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 2 t. lemon juice
- 2 T. water
- 2 T. Florida crystals
- 1/8 t. ground cinnamon

Spiced Cream Topping

- 2 12.3-oz. (340 g) pkgs. extra firm silken tofu
- 1/8 t. salt
- 1/4 t. ground cinnamon
- 1/8 t. ground allspice
- 1/8 t. ground nutmeg
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) Florida crystals
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) maple syrup
- 1 T. + 1 t. vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350 F (Gas Mark 4). Gently lay prepared pie crust into the 10-inch (25 cm) pie plate and flute the edges. Prick the bottom with a fork in several places. Bake, unfilled, for 10 minutes. Remove and cool. Set aside. Do not turn off oven.
2. Apple Filling: Combine apples, raisins, Florida crystals, cinnamon, lemon juice, and water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 10 minutes. Cool apples and drain off any liquid.
3. Add the 2 T. Florida crystals and cinnamon and toss well. Spoon into cooled pie crust.

4. Spiced Cream Topping: Combine topping ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth and creamy. Spoon over apple filling, and spread to the edges. Sprinkle with a dash of nutmeg.
5. Bake at 350 F. (Gas Mark 4) for 30 minutes. Cool completely. Refrigerate several hours or overnight before serving. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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Among our wintertime dessert favorites are baked apples. If you appreciate the depth of flavor and richness of carob, we hope you'll find this unique treatment of baked apples as pleasing as we do.

BAKED APPLES IN CAROB SAUCE

- 2 C. (about 1/2 liter) rice milk
- 3 whole cloves
- 1/2 t. ground cinnamon
- 1 T. carob powder
- 2 t. vanilla extract
- 2 - 3 T. lemon juice
- 6 T. pure maple syrup
- 6 large baking apples (Rome Beauty or Granny Smith)
- 3/4 C. (180 ml) golden raisins
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) black raisins

1. Combine rice milk, cloves, cinnamon, carob powder, vanilla extract, lemon juice, and maple syrup in a 9" x 13" (23 x 32 cm) pyrex baking dish. Stir well to combine. These ingredients will become the sauce to accompany the finished apples.
2. Wash and core the apples. Put them into the baking dish and stuff cavities with raisins. Sprinkle any remaining raisins around the bottom of the baking dish. Spoon some of the sauce over the cavities. Cover with aluminum foil, shiny side down, and bake at 325 F. (Gas Mark 3) for 1 hour. If apples are very large, they may need 15 to 20 minutes longer. Serve warm or chilled in bowls along with some of the tangy sauce. Serves 6.

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Cupid's arrow is ready to touch your heart on Valentine's Day. To share the romance with that special someone, plan ahead by preparing this valentine-shaped, ambrosial dessert with its rich macadamia filling. Top it off with its bright red strawberry sauce just before serving. With its rich flavors and tantalizing presentation, this Coeur is sure to reward with amour.

FRUITED COEUR A LA CRÈME

2 medium size sweet apples (Pink Lady, Gala, or Fuji)

1/2 C. (118 ml) water

2 T. evaporated cane juice

3 T. maple syrup

1/2 t. vanilla extract

1 C. (237 ml) raw macadamia nuts

3 T. evaporated cane juice

1 12.3-oz. (340 g) pkg. extra firm silken tofu

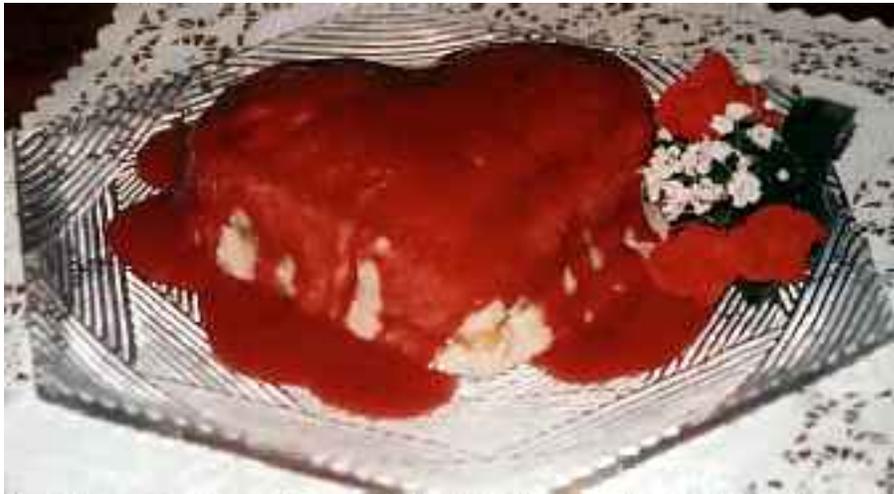
20 pitted dates

1/2 t. vanilla extract

1. Prepare a 4-cup (1 liter) heart-shaped mold by lining it with a large piece of plastic wrap, leaving plenty of excess to drape over the sides. Set aside.
2. Peel and core apples. Cut them into 8 wedges and put them into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan with the water and evaporated cane juice. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat to low and steam 10 minutes. Set aside for 10 minutes, covered.
3. Combine evaporated cane juice and maple syrup in a small saucepan. Stir continuously over

medium high heat until sugar dissolves, about 1 or 2 minutes.

4. Combine macadamias, dissolved evaporated cane juice, and vanilla extract in the workbowl of a food processor. Using the S blade, process to a smooth and creamy paste. Transfer mixture to a small bowl and set aside. Wash workbowl and S blade.
5. Drain excess liquid from cooked apples, and transfer them to the food processor. Add the silken tofu, dates, and vanilla extract. Process until smooth and creamy.
6. Spoon one half of the tofu mixture into the prepared mold and spread to the edges. Crumble the macadamia paste over the top and press down lightly. Spoon remaining tofu mixture over the top and spread to the edges. Cover by folding excess plastic wrap over the top, and refrigerate for several hours or overnight.
7. Later, or next day, open plastic wrapping and unmold onto an attractive platter. Spoon Strawberry Sauce over the top allowing it to cascade down the sides. Save 2 whole strawberries with their stems attached for garnish. Cut them in half lengthwise and lay 3 halves in a cluster in the center, their tips pointing inward. Makes 6 servings.



Strawberry Sauce

- 1 1-lb. 4-oz. pkg. (566 g) frozen strawberries, thawed
- 5 T. evaporated cane juice
- 1 T. lemon or lime juice

Combine strawberries, evaporated cane juice, and lemon juice in the blender. Blend on low speed until sauce becomes thick and smooth. Refrigerate until ready to use. Makes about 3 cups.

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Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I really need your help! My fiancé is coming home from a long business trip next month, and I want to welcome him back with a great dinner and a fabulous dessert. I've got the dinner part figured out, but what I need is that special dessert that won't take all day to fix. I've looked through my vegetarian cookbooks, but everything looks so complicated. Hellllp!

Marnie

Marnie, Child,

Now calm yerself down and don't get to frettin' 'cause I knows the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. I've got some fixin's here that'll set his heart to flutterin' quick as he takes one bite. This one's easy as pie, well, acshully, it's quicker 'n pie. There's only four ingredients. Now, how's that fer easy. The trick here is ta serve it in some purty, long-stem wine glasses - now that's mighty fine romancin' if I say so myself.

Now I know yer gonna look at this recipe 'n start a-wonderin' if Aunt Nettie's gone plum loco puttin' avocado into a dessert. Trust me, darlin', an' you'll see, yer honey will be beggin' fer more. That l'il ole avocado makes this dessert jes' a-melt in yer mouth like it was satin. The lime makes it nice 'n tangy, and the sweetener, well, it jes' touches the heart. Now, you jes' set a-while 'n catch yer breath so's you kin enjoy yer yerself with that special man 'o yers.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

GREEN SATIN MOUSSE

Flesh of 1 medium avocado, chilled

Juice of 1/2 lime, chilled

3 T. evaporated cane juice

3 T. soymilk

1 t. crushed raw pistachio nuts

1. Combine all ingredients in the blender and start machine on low speed. You may have to stop the machine and redistribute the ingredients several times. Process until consistency is fully pureed and creamy light.
2. Spoon into 2 small custard cups, demitasse cups, or long-stem wine glasses and garnish with crushed pistachios. Serve to 2 fortunate dessert lovers.

If You Haven't Met Aunt Nettie. . .

Our Aunt Nettie has a head like a hard disk. It's filled with gigabytes of information about food and cooking. And she's just itchin' to share her learnin' with city folk who live in mortal fear of the stovetop.

Aunt Nettie grew up on the farm. She did not eat out of a can or reach into the freezer. There was no microwave to pop her food into. Everything she made was from scratch. All the food she ate was natural, without pesticides. It was grown right there on the family farm, and she had to cook to survive. At eighty-three years young she still leaps and bounds around the kitchen and can shake, rattle, and roll those pots and pans with the best of them.

Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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Richard in Culver City, California, sent Aunt Nettie an SOS desperately seeking advice about what to do with a whole bunch of bananas that were becoming more speckled by the minute. Here's her advice:

Well, Richard, I'm gonna take the worry outa yer day in the wink of an eye. There's lotsa things you can do with bananas that are goin' over. I've seen more ole bananas dumped into the trash, an' it jes breaks my heart. There's plenty a life still left in them bananas.

First, ya can peel 'em 'n mash 'em to use in a quick banana bread 'er even a corn bread recipe. Mashed bananas over pancakes are mighty good tastin' and ya save some on the calories, too. One of my favorite things to do with mashed bananas is to put a big heap on top my oatmeal or other cooked cereal in the mornin'.



Second, ya can peel 'em, cut 'em into chunks about 1" long, and put 'em into the blender with some soy milk, dates, raisins, and a little cinnamon. A tasty shake like that can git yer engine runnin' in the mornin' without a lotta fussin'.

Third, peel 'em 'n cut 'em into chunks about 1" long. Put 'em on a plastic or metal dish, and put 'em into the freezer. Then, when ya feel like ya jes can't do without dessert, pull 'em outa the freezer and put 'em into the blender with some soft 'r firm silken tofu. Add some maple syrup, vanilla, and a tad a cinnamon. There, now ya got a fancy parfait!

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Peanut butter satisfies in so many ways. Sauces, dressings, and soups are all taste pleasers, but a sensational peanut butter dessert is utterly memorable and evokes passionate expressions of pleasure. Here's a treat that can be prepared a day in advance.

PEANUT BUTTER CAROB PIE

Crust

- 1 1/2 C. (355 ml) raw almonds
- 1 1/2 C. (355 ml) pitted dates
- 3 to 4 T. water

1. Put almonds in the food processor and process to a coarse meal. With machine running add dates a little at a time and water as needed to moisten. Stop machine and test mixture to see if it holds together to form a crust.
2. Transfer mixture to a lightly oiled 9-inch (23 cm) pie plate. Using fingers, press into bottom and sides, bringing sides up just slightly higher than the pan.

Filling

- 1 large banana, sliced
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) carob chips
- 1 12-oz. (340 g) carton extra firm silken tofu
- 1/3 C. (80 ml) Florida Crystals *
- 2 T. maple syrup
- 2 t. vanilla
- 3/4 C. (180 ml) crunchy peanut butter

1 oz. (28 g) vegan semi-sweet chocolate

1/2 t. organic canola oil

1 t. water

1. Arrange banana slices on bottom of pie crust and sprinkle carob chips over bananas.
2. Combine tofu, Florida Crystals, maple syrup, vanilla, and peanut butter in food processor and process until smooth. Set aside.
3. Pour mixture over banana slices in pie plate and smooth top with the back of a spoon.
4. Melt chocolate along with canola oil and water in a small saucepan over lowest heat, stirring continuously until melted and well blended. .
5. Decorate top of pie, forming long zigzag lines by pouring melted chocolate from a pointed teaspoon. Chill several hours or overnight. Serves 6 to 8.

* Florida Crystals is finely ground evaporated cane juice that dissolves easily in cold mixtures.

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Poached Pears are a longstanding, favorite cold-weather dessert. Dried hibiscus flowers are most often steeped in boiling water to make a tangy tea. We discovered the tangy quality of hibiscus lends itself to forming the base of a delightful sauce in which to poach pears. The recipe is easy to prepare and only requires a few ingredients. Enjoy!

POACHED PEARS IN HIBISCUS SAUCE

1 C. (240 ml) dried hibiscus flowers*
2 C. (480 ml) water

6 large pears (Anjou, Comice or Bosc)

1 1/2 C. (360 ml) water
2/3 C. (160 ml) dehydrated maple sugar
15 pitted dates

2 sticks cinnamon
Fresh mint leaves, optional

1. Combine hibiscus flowers and water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Boil for 1 minute. Turn heat off and allow to stand for 10 minutes.



2. Using a vegetable peeler, peel pears, leaving stems intact. Set aside.
3. Remove cooked hibiscus flowers from saucepan with a slotted spoon, and reserve for a future use.** Pour hibiscus juice into a blender. Add water, dehydrated maple sugar and dates, and blend until dates are pureed. Pour this sauce into a 9" x 13" (23 x 32 cm) pyrex baking dish.
4. Put pears into the sauce, standing upright. Add cinnamon sticks. Cover with aluminum foil, shiny side down. Bake at 325 F. (Gas Mark 3) for 1 1/2 hours.
5. To serve, put pears into dessert bowls, and spoon some of the sauce into each bowl. Garnish with fresh mint leaves. Serves 6.



*Dried hibiscus flowers can be purchased at a store that specializes in bulk herbs or at many health food markets where hibiscus flowers are packaged as herb tea.

**The hibiscus flowers can be reused to make another batch of poached pears. Simply put the cooked hibiscus flowers into a plastic bag and store it in the freezer until ready to use. Take them from the freezer and follow the first step in the above recipe.

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For a dessert that's sprightly enough for celebrating the holidays, yet sufficiently versatile to serve throughout the chilly winter season, this treat is unequalled in its zesty flavor and eye-appealing molded form.

Who would ever think of barley as the key ingredient of a tantalizing dessert? Too, the untraditional process would hardly seem to result in a cake, but to call this delectable dessert simply a pudding would diminish its worth. In the end, it is cut into slices and served up just like a cake. With a simple bit of kitchen magic and a cup of barley laced with aromatic spices like cloves and cardamom, you can easily create an irresistible sensation. Your guests will likely ask for seconds, and you won't have leftovers to tempt you the next day.

SPICED TREASURE STEAM CAKE

- 1 large carrot
- 3/4 C. (177 ml) black raisins
- 3/4 C. (177 ml) golden raisins

- 4 C. (1 liter) soymilk
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1 C. (237 ml) evaporated cane juice
- 3/4 t. ground cardamom
- 1/4 + 1/8 t. ground cloves
- 1 T. organic canola oil

- 1 C. (237 ml) barley flakes (pressed barley)

- 1/2 C. (118 ml) raw whole almonds

1. Prepare a 5-cup (1.25 liters) mold by lining it with clear plastic wrap large enough to drape over the sides. Set aside.
2. Peel and coarsely shred carrot, and set aside. Measure raisins, combine them in a bowl and set aside.
3. Combine soymilk, salt, evaporated cane juice, cardamom, cloves, and canola oil in a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan. Bring to a boil, uncovered, over high heat, standing by to prevent messy boil-over.
4. Add barley flakes, carrots, and raisins. Return to boil, then turn heat to low, cover, and steam 40 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed and pudding is thick. During this steaming process a small amount of liquid will seep out of the pot. Don't worry about replacing it--there's enough to do the job. Turn off heat and allow to stand, covered for 10 minutes.
5. Spoon pudding mixture into prepared mold, packing firmly. Cool, uncovered. Drape plastic wrap over pudding and refrigerate several hours until well chilled.
6. Unmold onto an attractive serving platter and push toasted almonds part-way into pudding. Serve with Crème Anglaise Sauce on the side. Serves 6.

Crème Anglaise Sauce (optional)

2 C. (480 ml) rich soymilk*
1 t. vanilla extract
1/4 C. (60 ml) evaporated cane juice
Pinch of salt

2 T. cornstarch
2 T. water

1. Combine soymilk, vanilla, evaporated cane juice, and salt in a 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Combine cornstarch and water in a small cup or bowl and stir into a thin paste. Add to bubbling mixture in saucepan, stirring continuously with a wire whip until thickened, about 1 minute. If a thicker sauce is desired, increase cornstarch and water quantity slightly.

*A rich soymilk contains about 4 grams of fat, making the sauce creamy and luxuriant.

NOTE: Though the sauce is optional, it does add a touch of elegance and eye appeal when serving the dessert.

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Jansie has posed a challenge that sent Aunt Nettie scurrying for answers. Jansie sent an e-mail asking if vegan marshmallows are available. Here's Aunt Nettie's reply:

Dear Jansie,

Apparently there was a company called Emes that was the only manufacturer of vegan marshmallows, but they jes up 'n' quit makin' 'em. Imagine that! So, Jansie, the next best thing I kin recommend is to make 'em yerself. Here's Andrea's recipe that jest might do the trick. On the other hand, some o' the ingredients jes might give yer head a problem. Fer instance, findin' the Emes Kosher Gelatin, er usin' white sugar.

Andi's Vegan Marshmallows (from Andrea on VegList Digest)

2 1/2 T. vegetable gelatin (Emes Kosher Gel)
1 1/2 C. (355 ml) sugar
1 C. (237 ml) light corn syrup
1/2 C. (118 ml) cold water
1/2 C. (118 ml) water at room temperature
1/4 t. salt
2 T. vanilla extract (or flavoring of your choice)
Cornstarch for dusting

1. Combine Gel and 1/2 C. (118 ml) COLD water in the bowl of a mixer with a whisk attachment. Let stand for 1/2 hour.
2. Mix the sugar, corn syrup, salt, and 1/2 C. (118 ml) water in a saucepan. Stir it over low heat until the sugar is dissolved and a syrup has formed.
3. Cook it until firmball stage (244 degrees Fahrenheit about 120 C. on a candy thermometer.) Remove pan from heat, and slowly and carefully pour the syrup into the gelatin/water mixture in your mixer. Beat the mixture at high speed until thick, white, and tripled in size, approximately 15 minutes. (If you stop before this time, you will have marshmallow creme)

which you can store in a jar and use like the commercial stuff.) Add the vanilla and beat just long enough to incorporate it.

4. Dust an 8" x 12" (20 cm x 30 cm) glass baking pan with cornstarch. Pour mixture into pan, and dust the top with more cornstarch. Wet your hands and pat the mixture to smooth out the top. Dust again.
5. Let stand overnight to dry out, uncovered. Next morning turn the "marshmallow cake" out onto a board, and cut in into small pieces with a dry, HOT knife. Dust again. Makes about 45 marshmallows.

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Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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The avocado, with its rich, satin-like creamy texture adds its special flavor to bring a simple mayonnaise into the realm of elegance. It's far more flavorful than ordinary mayonnaise, easy to prepare, and it's totally vegan.

AVOCADO MAYONNAISE

Enjoy this wholesome and easy sandwich spread that wears many hats. Use it as a salad dressing on your greens or enjoy it as a binder and flavor booster on your favorite potato, bean, or grain salad.

1 medium or large avocado

Juice of 1/2 lemon

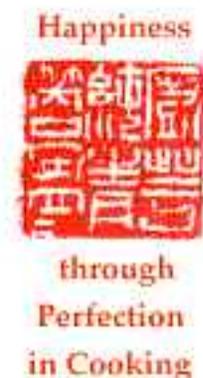
1/4 t. salt or to taste

Pinch of cayenne pepper

1/4 C. (59 ml) organic canola oil

1. Wash the avocado and cut it in half. Scoop out the flesh and put it into the blender.
2. Add lemon juice, salt, and cayenne pepper and blend together.
3. With machine running, add vegetable oil slowly. You may have to stop the machine several times to redistribute ingredients. Puree to a smooth creamy mixture. Makes 3/4 cup (177 ml).

NOTE: Store in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator.



Keeps well without discoloration for 5 to 6 days.

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Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

My husband needs to loose weight and get his cholesterol down. I sure would like to see him get off those pills--if that's ever possible. Do you have any ideas for what he can spread on his toast instead of butter, margarine, or cream cheese?

Alyssa,

Howdy there, Alyssa,

I surely do admire yer carin' 'bout yer husband's health an' I have a mighty fine recipe fer his mornin' toast. First, darlin', make shure his toast is whole grain. Eatin' plenty o' fiber helps ya lose weight. Then, cook him up some ole fashioned oatmeal 'cause it's got plenty o' soluble fiber that works on gittin' that cholesterol down.

Now, fer what ta put on that toast, I jes love usin' dried fruit fer makin' up a spread that's even better'n' butter. It keeps fer a long time, too. Now, haul out a few fixin's an' make up this here l'il recipe. It only takes a few minutes an' I think you'll enjoy it, too.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

APPLE GINGER BUTTER

- 2 C. (480 ml) dried apples, packed down
- 1 C. (240 ml) golden raisins
- 1 C. (240 ml) water
- 3 heaping T. peeled, chopped fresh ginger
- 3 to 4 T. evaporated cane juice

1/4 C. (60 ml) water

1. Combine apples, raisins, water, ginger, and evaporated cane juice in a 2-quart (2 liter)

- saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Turn heat down to low and steam 10 to 12 minutes or until tender.
 3. Transfer fruit and its liquid to a food processor. Add 1/4 C. (60 ml) water, and process for 2 full minutes until mixture is completely blended and ginger is no longer visible.
 4. Spoon into an attractive serving bowl and enjoy as a spread over toast. Makes about 2 cups. (480 ml) Refrigerate leftovers. Keeps well for about 1 month.
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SPAGHETTI SQUASH WITH TWO SAUCES

September weather still has warm days, but those cool nights seem to encourage cooking up heartier dishes that bring warmth to the body. Spaghetti squash creates the ideal base to show off some of your favorite sauces. You'll appreciate its very low calorie content and enjoy its crunchy texture and delicate taste. The lively flavor comes from the sauces and seasonings you provide. Don't just limit this dish to the sauces suggested. Try your own favorite pasta sauce or even a pesto.

2 medium-size spaghetti squashes or 1 large one

1/4 C. (60 ml) each raw toasted pine nuts and raw pumpkin seeds*

Wash squashes thoroughly. Cook until tender using either of the following methods below.

To Bake

Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil, shiny side facing down. Pierce squashes in several places with a fork to prevent them from exploding in the oven. Place baking sheet on lower rack in oven. Bake at 400 F. (gas mark 6) for approximately 1 hour or until skin feels tender when pressed.



Alternatively, cut squashes in half lengthwise, scoop out, and discard seeds. Brush cut sides with canola oil and place cut side down on the baking sheet. Bake at 475 F. (gas mark 7) for 45 to 60 minutes or until tender when pressed.

To Boil: Pierce squashes in several places with a fork and put them into a large stock pot with plenty of water to cover. Cover pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly and boil gently 30 to 45 minutes. Squashes are done when they can be pierced easily.

Remove squashes from oven or stock pot, and cut them in half lengthwise. Gently scoop out seeds, and scrape pulp into a large platter using a fork and spoon. Spoon a little of each of the sauces over the top, and garnish with toasted nuts. Serve the extra sauces at the table. Serves 6.

ROASTED BELL PEPPER SAUCE

3 or 4 green or red bell peppers

1 1/2 oz. (45 ml) water

1/2 t. salt or to taste

1 very small clove garlic

Freshly ground black pepper

1. Wash peppers and lay them whole on a baking sheet. Place 3" (7.5 cm) from broiler and broil for 3 to 5 minutes. Turn 1/4 turn and repeat until completely soft and slightly blackened, about 15 or 20 minutes.
2. Plunge peppers into a bowl of cold water, cool a few minutes, and rub skins off with your fingers. Remove cores and seeds and put peppers into a food processor.
3. Add remaining ingredients and puree until smooth. Adjust seasonings to taste.



*This method of roasting peppers produces a moist pepper with a delightfully grilled flavor. It also allows the skins to be removed easily.

NOTE: For a variation with visual pizzazz, roast 1 red, 1 green, 1 yellow, and 1 orange bell pepper. Then, whirl them together in the food processor to a medium fine, chunky consistency. The colorful, mosaic-like result makes a delightful presentation.

MUSHROOM SUN-DRIED TOMATO SAUCE

2 green bell peppers, cut into thin julienne, 2" (5 cm) in length
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1 1/2 lbs. (680 g) fresh mushrooms, sliced
2 - 3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 C. (240 ml) sun-dried tomatoes
1/2 t. dried basil
1/2 t. dried thyme 2 bay leaves
Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
1 1/2 t. salt or to taste
1/2 C. (120 ml) water
Juice of 1/2 lemon



2 - 3 T. cornstarch
2 - 3 T. water

1. Combine bell peppers, fresh tomatoes, mushrooms, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes, basil, thyme, bay leaves, red pepper flakes, salt, water, and lemon juice in a large wok or skillet and cook over high heat, stirring frequently, about 8 - 10 minutes.
2. Combine cornstarch and water in a small bowl or cup and add to bubbling sauce a little at a time, stirring constantly until thickened to desired consistency, about 1 minute. Adjust seasoning to taste if needed. Makes 6 servings.

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Home cooks who are not familiar with tofu's ability to wear many hats will enjoy this recipe as a spread on bread, toast, tortillas, or crackers as well as a filling for a hearty sandwich. There's a little punch to this recipe. For some it might be too spicy and for others, not spicy enough. Simply adjust the amounts of Tabasco sauce and green chiles to your own palate.

UP-IN-SMOKE TOFU SPREAD

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu, drained and rinsed (no need to press tofu)

1 1/4 t. salt

1/4 t. ground black pepper

1 T. + 1 t. lemon juice

6 dashes Tabasco sauce

1 t. Wright's natural hickory seasoning (a liquid smoke flavoring)

1/2 C.(120 ml) canned diced green chiles

Combine all ingredients in the work bowl of a food processor and process until thoroughly blended. Refrigerate until ready to use. Keeps for 1 week. Makes about 3 cups (720 ml).

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Enjoy this easy-to-prepare recipe for a spread to enhance your hot breakfast cereal. I frequently serve raisins and nuts to sprinkle on cooked cereals. One day I decided to present something a little different at breakfast, and got an instant thumbs up with this recipe. We also spread the pureed fruits on toast and use it instead of jelly on peanut butter sandwiches.

WINTER FRUIT BUTTER

2 C. (480 ml) dried apple slices
12 pitted prunes
18 pitted dates
1 C. (240 ml) water

1/2 C. (60 ml) water*

1. Combine fruits and 1 C. (240 ml) water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam for 10 minutes.
2. Transfer fruits to a food processor or blender and add 1/2 C. (120 ml) water. Process until pureed. If using a blender, you may need to add a little more water to puree the mixture.
3. Serve as a topping to spread over hot, cooked cereal, spread over toast, or use instead of jelly with nut butter sandwiches.

NOTE: If you want a sweeter puree, add 2 or more dates.

*The amount of water you add will determine the thickness of the puree. The first time you make this recipe, use the recommended quantities. If mixture is too thick, add a tablespoon or two of water.

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Howdy Darlin's,

This month I'm a-gonna tell y'all jes what I tole my niece, Zel. She's a young'un, but she listens ever' once 'n awhile. Now you don't have ta go fussin' about the kitchen an' spendin' half yer life a-cookin' an' a-cookin' all day long ta put up tasty vittles fer yer family. Jes' give a look-see down here a-piece fer a mighty good dinner dish I stirred up th' other day.

Mind y'eat yer vegetables now!

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

PISTACHIO FONDUE

A quick meal, a family dinner, or a company dish, this surprisingly light fondue will quickly become a favorite. It also doubles well as a sauce for such varied dishes as grains, baked potatoes, steamed artichokes, baked tofu, and as a topping over vegetable casseroles. Serve this along with some whole grains and a salad to round out the meal.

1 C. (237 ml) raw pistachios, shelled

2 1/2 C.(598 ml) unsweetened soy milk

1 1/4 t. salt

2 T. nutritional yeast flakes

Freshly ground black pepper

Pinch of cayenne pepper

1. Grind pistachios in several batches in an electric coffee grinder, and set aside.

2. Combine soy milk, salt, nutritional yeast flakes, black pepper, and cayenne pepper in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Bring to boil over medium-high heat, uncovered, watching carefully to prevent boil-over.
3. Add ground pistachios to bubbling mixture a little at a time, stirring with a wire whip until thickened, about 2 minutes. If necessary, lower heat slightly to prevent burning.
4. Allow fondue to rest about 15 to 20 minutes. Gently reheat if needed. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

NOTE: Leftovers store well in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS: Serve in small bowls and accompany with steamed vegetables for dipping, such as broccoli florets, cauliflower florets, thick zucchini slices, thick yellow crookneck squashes, button mushrooms, green beans, asparagus spears, or carrot sticks.

Extra firm tofu cut into cubes and browned in a little olive oil and Tamari also makes a tasty item to dip into the fondue. Steamed tempeh cubes can also be dipped.

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This tasty vegan fondue evolved out of a desire to create a main dish that was not dripping with fat. The original intention was to prepare the fondue in the traditional fondue pot and place the pot on the stand. What a disaster! The bottom of the pot began to burn. Since this was not the traditional fondue pot filled with oil, the pot could not stand the heat.

Out of this misadventure came a creative opportunity. Why not serve the fondue in individual bowls and simply enjoy dipping an array of raw and cooked veggies.

So here it is.

TOFU TOMATO FONDUE



2/3 C. (158 ml) finely minced onions

1 lb. (453 g) fresh tomatoes, diced

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 12-oz. (340 g) pkg. soft silken tofu

1/4 C. + 2 T. (89 ml) unsweetened soymilk

3 T. nutritional yeast flakes

1 t. salt

2 T. cornstarch

2 T. water

1. Combine onions, tomatoes, and olive oil in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cook over medium-high heat for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until soft and broken down.
2. Add tofu, soymilk, nutritional yeast, and salt and stir with a wire whip to make a smooth

fondue.

3. Combine cornstarch and water in a small cup and stir until smooth. Add to bubbling fondue a little at a time until thickened to desired consistency.
4. Serve some of the fondue in small bowls and keep the remainder warm over low heat.
Makes 4 servings.

Prepare a platter of raw finger vegetables along with lightly steamed vegetables to dip into the fondue. To round out the meal, serve with salad and cooked grains such as brown rice, barley, or quinoa.

SUGGESTIONS FOR RAW VEGETABLES: carrot sticks, celery sticks, daikon radish strips, bell pepper strips, zucchini sticks or rounds, jicama sticks, red and green cabbage wedges, beet sticks, radishes, anise wedges, turnip rounds, rutabaga rounds, kabocha squash sticks, asparagus spears, fresh green beans, Jerusalem artichokes, kohlrabi slices, broccoli florets, cauliflower florets.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STEAMED VEGETABLES: Asparagus spears, green beans, Brussels sprouts, broccoli florets, cauliflower florets, artichoke hearts, beet slices, winter squash cubes, rutabaga slices, roasted eggplant cubes, zucchini, yellow crookneck squash.

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Sally C. has this question for Aunt Nettie:

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I just moved to Santa Monica and have discovered some wonderful health food markets with grains sold in bulk bins. I'm just getting into the "healthy eating scene" and would like to know how to cook grains like quinoa and millet.

Dear Sally,

Welcome to Santa Monica and the healthiest eatin' in the world, vegan eatin' that is. Well, fer cookin' the quinoa, think of it same as cookin' rice, with 2 cups (480 ml) o' water ta 1 cup (237 ml) o' quinoa. The cookin' time is jes the same as rice, about 15 minutes. The only big difference is that afore cookin', ya have ta rinse the livin' daylight's outa the quinoa or it'll be bitter as dandelion. Those little grains are covered with a natural coatin' called saponins that protect the grains while they're growin'.

Fer cookin' millet, I put 1 cup (237 ml) o' millet and 3 1/2 cups (835 ml) o' water inta my saucepan, cover it, and turn the heat up to high. Now watch yer millet carefully. As soon as it starts ta boil, turn it down ta low instantly er you'll have a good hour's work cleanin' up yer stove. Now, turn on yer timer fer 15 minutes, then shut off the heat, and let the pot rest fer another 10 minutes. When it's ready, you'll have a nice light grain ta serve up.

Oh, dearie me, I almost fergot about the salt! If ya don't add about 1 teaspoon ta each cup of grain, either the quinoa or the millet, it's gonna taste kinda bland. Well, that should do the trick!

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Since there are no questions for her this time, we asked her for a kitchen tip. Here it is.

COOKING WHOLE GRAINS QUICKER

You might be thinkin' that whole grains are just too much trouble to fix 'cause they take too long to cook. Well, I fixed that problem alright and shortened the cookin' time by soakin' the grains overnight or all day. That cuts the cookin' time right in half, and that's a good thing in today's world now, isn't it. Start off by rinsing the grains in a fine mesh strainer. That gets rid of all the little dust bunnies you can't even see but you know they're there. Next, soak the grains in the same amount of water yer recipe tells you to cook'em in. Then, cook yer grains in their soak water for half the usual cookin' time. Try this little soakin' trick with whole wheat grains, rye berries, spelt, barley, and wild rice. Them's the little grains I call "Long Johns."

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Start the new year by making resolutions that are fun and easy to achieve. One suggestion might be to treat yourself to more culinary adventures. One such adventure awaits below with an easy recipe to enjoy the rich flavor of natural sesame seeds.

Some advance planning will make these patties come together quickly. Cook the wild rice a day ahead. Then measure the 2 C. cooked rice for this recipe. The leftover rice can be used in a salad or reheated for another meal.

SESAME NUT PATTIES

- 3 C. (717 ml) water
- 1 t. salt
- 1 C. (237 ml) wild rice
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) raw shelled pistachios
- 2/3 C. (158 ml) raw cashews
- 1 C. (237 ml) raw walnut pieces
- 3/4 t. chili powder
- 1/2 t. dried oregano
- 1/4 t. nutmeg
- 1/4 t. dried thyme
- 1 T. + 1 t. tamari or Bragg Liquid Aminos
- 2 C. (480 ml) cooked wild rice
- 2 to 4 T. water if needed

1/2 C. (118 ml) raw (natural) sesame seeds sprinkled on a dish

1. Combine water, salt, and wild rice in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to medium low and steam for 50 to 60 minutes. Set aside

and cool slightly while preparing remaining ingredients.

2. Grind pistachios, cashews, and walnuts to a coarse meal in a food processor.
3. Add chili powder, oregano, nutmeg, thyme, tamari, and cooked wild rice to processor. Process briefly until all ingredients are well combined, adding more water if needed for moisture.
4. Form mixture into patties, and press both sides into sesame seeds. Arrange on a lightly oiled baking sheet.
5. Broil 3" (8 cm) from heat for 2 to 5 minutes until golden brown, taking care not to burn the patties. Turn with a metal spatula and broil 1 to 2 minutes on second side. Makes about 9 to 11 small patties.

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The bounty of the garden is stacked with earthy flavors that combine to make an undeniably great-looking company dish. This make-ahead entrée is worth the little extra time spent in the kitchen. Just before serving, tuck it under the broiler until the cheese melts, top it with fresh tomato sauce, and serve. This showy dish pays off with rewarding flavors. To complete the meal, serve with a tossed salad of greens and crunchies like sliced radishes, chopped cucumbers, and diced bell peppers. Add steamed broccoli or okra, and a lightly spiced fruit salsa.

If you're only serving 2, 3 or 4 guests, make the whole recipe anyway. It tastes equally as good as a leftover the next day.



STACKED POLENTA

- 1 medium eggplant, sliced 1-inch (2.5 cm) thick
- 2 medium zucchinis, angle sliced 1/2-inch (1 cm) thick
- 3 medium onions, sliced 1/4-inch (.5 cm) thick

Salt and pepper to taste

3 1/2 C. (840 ml) water

1 C. (240 ml) rich soymilk

1 1/4 t. salt

1 C. (240 ml) medium-coarse cornmeal or cornmeal labeled polenta

2 T. nutritional yeast

1 1/2 lbs. (680 g) tomatoes, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

1 lb. (450 g) vegan mozzarella cheese, cut into 12 slices

Garnish (optional)

4 chopped green onions

1 C. (240 ml) finely shredded purple cabbage

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. (Gas Mark 5). Lightly oil 3 baking sheets.
2. Arrange eggplant and zucchini on one baking sheet, and the onions on the other. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Bake at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for about 25 to 35 minutes or until fork tender and lightly browned. The third baking sheet is reserved for the polenta.
3. While vegetables are roasting, heat water to boiling in a 4-quart (4-liter) saucepan. Add soymilk, salt, and cornmeal, and simmer gently over medium heat, stirring frequently with a wire whip, for about 10 minutes.
4. Add nutritional yeast and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until mixture reaches the consistency of very thick oatmeal, about 15 to 20 minutes. Pour out onto the third baking sheet, spreading to a 10-inch by 12-inch (25 by 30-cm) rectangle. Chill until ready to assemble.
5. Put tomatoes into a deep skillet and sauté over high heat for about 3 or 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.
6. ASSEMBLY: On a clean baking sheet, arrange the polenta cut into 6 even servings. Place eggplant slice on top of polenta, slightly askew so polenta is visible.
7. Layer next with zucchini slices, then sliced onions, then top with cheese.
8. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to serve.
9. TO SERVE: Warm tomato sauce. Remove plastic from polenta stack, and place under the broiler for about 3 minutes or until cheese melts.
10. Pour tomato sauce over cheese and sprinkle with chopped green onions. Garnish plate with shredded purple cabbage. Serves 6.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

The weather is heating up and my appetite is practically dragging on the floor. I know I have to eat to survive. Any suggestions for something really light but still wholesome?

Marsha

Howdy Marsha,

Now that appetite draggin' on the floor sets me all to worryin'. Let's git that picked up off the floor quick as a wink an' bring it right on over to the table 'cause I sure as shootin' have the purrfect dish ta charge up yer energy.

In summer, when the weather practically roasts away yer energy, it's not unusual fer the appetite ta drag on the floor. That's when we need foods that are mighty light 'n moist to freshen us up. This time of year I jes' love quinoa. It's the ideal grain ta build a summer meal 'round 'cause it's feather-light. Here I've rustled up some fresh vegetables from my garden, veggies with high water content and sweet as can be.

Well, Marsha, hope the quinoa perks ya up the way it did ta them Incas in Peru.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

SUMMER QUINOA

1 1/2 C.(355 ml) quinoa grains
3 C. (717 ml) water
3/4 t. salt



3 medium yellow crookneck squashes, finely shredded
1 medium onion, finely shredded
3 Roma tomatoes, (Italian plum) or 1 medium tomato, chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 C. (118 ml) water

Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Finely chopped fresh herbs such as dill, parsley, basil, cilantro or mint

1. Rinse quinoa in a fine strainer for 1 to 2 full minutes to remove the bitter coating of natural saponins.
2. Place the quinoa in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan with the water and salt. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, and steam for 15 to 20 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed and grains are tender. Remove from heat and allow quinoa to rest, covered, for 10 minutes to fluff.
3. Meanwhile, saute squashes, onion, tomatoes, garlic, and water together in a large skillet or wok until just tender, 3 or 4 minutes. Season vegetables to taste.
4. When quinoa is cooked and fluffed, remove to a large shallow serving bowl and top with cooked vegetables. Sprinkle lightly with fresh chopped herbs for the finishing touch. Serves about 5 or 6.

NOTE: If you would like to serve this dish as a complete entree, cut 1 lb. (454 g) of firm or extra firm tofu into bite-size cubes and brown in 1 T. soy sauce or Bragg Liquid Aminos and 1 to 2 T. extra virgin olive oil. Add to the cooked vegetable topping.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE TOFU:

1 to 2 C. (237 to 480 ml) cooked and drained beans of your choice

8 oz. (226 g) pkg. tempeh, diced and browned in 1 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos and 1 T. lime juice

1 to 1 1/2 C. (237 to 296 ml) nuts of your choice, ground or chopped, raw or toasted

3 portabella mushrooms, chopped and sauteed in small amount of extra virgin olive oil and seasoned to taste with Bragg Liquid Aminos, freshly ground black pepper, and lemon or lime juice

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Hi Aunt Nettie,

I've only been a vegan for a few months so cooking this way is still kind of new. My family is having a Passover Seder, and my mom asked me to make the soup and matzoh balls. I would like to make a vegetable soup instead of chicken soup and could use a tasty recipe for a vegetable soup that looks more like chicken soup. Is that possible?

Also, how can I make matzoh balls without the eggs? I sure look forward to your answer.

Sincerely,

Rachel

Well Rachel, darlin',

Don't you fret none. Yer family will be clammerin' fer extree helpin's with this delectious soup recipe that has a purty traditional vegetable stock. The matzoh balls kin be made in a snap with a little tofu to hold 'em together. Now, regular matzoh balls is really not too tasty, so I like to add some onion powder to spruce 'em up a tad.

Well, child, I sure hope yer holiday goes as pleasin' as this soup goes down.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

MOCK CHICKEN SOUP (VEGETABLE BROTH)

8 dried shiitake mushrooms

3 C. (720 ml) boiling water

1 parsnip, coarsely chopped

5 medium carrots, coarsely sliced
2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
3 stalks celery, coarsely chopped
1 T. extra virgin olive oil
1/4 C. (60 ml) water

10 C. (2.5 liters) water
1-inch piece of ginger, peeled, thinly sliced
1 clove garlic, sliced
2 bunches green onions, whole, trimmed
1 potato, unpeeled, coarsely chopped
1 t. salt
1/2 t. thyme
1/2 t. marjoram

1. Put shiitake mushrooms into a medium bowl and pour boiling water over them. Soak mushrooms 45 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, put parsnip, carrots, onions, celery, olive oil, and 1/4 C. (60 ml) water into a large stockpot. Sauté over high heat, stirring frequently, for about 7 to 10 minutes.
3. Add 10 cups (2.5 liters) of water, ginger, garlic, green onions, potato, salt, and herbs.
4. Snip off and discard stems from shiitake mushrooms, and slice mushrooms thinly. Add to stockpot along with strained soak water.
5. Cover pot and bring mixture to a boil. Turn heat down to medium, and simmer about 45 to 50 minutes. Strain vegetables, pressing on them to extract all the liquid.
6. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and onion powder if desired . Makes about 10 1/2 cups (2.5 liters).

MATZOH BALLS

Creating vegan matzoh balls for Passover poses quite a culinary challenge. The traditional ingredient that binds the mixture together is eggs. Vegans usually rely on egg replacer that works perfectly for most instances. However, although egg replacer is kosher, it is not kosher for Passover.

The logical alternative was to bind the mixture with tofu, a very untraditional ingredient in Passover cooking. Tofu is an ideal binder in many recipes, but it was not able to live up to its reputation when the matzoh balls were boiled. The only solution was to bake them. Voila! Vegan Matzoh Balls. Many Rabbis accept the use of legumes for Passover when they are altered from their original form, such as when they are mashed.

1/2 C. (120 ml) matzoh meal
1/2 t. salt
1/8 t. black pepper
1/2 t. onion powder

2 T. vegetable oil
6 T. water

1/3 C. (80 ml) well mashed firm tofu

1. In a medium bowl combine matzoh meal, salt, pepper, and onion powder. Stir dry ingredients to distribute evenly.
 2. Add vegetable oil and water and mix well.
 3. Add mashed tofu and mix thoroughly. Refrigerate 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 400 F. (Gas Mark 6).
 4. Form into 1-inch (2.5 cm) balls and place them on a well-oiled baking sheet. Cover with aluminum foil, dull side up. Bake at 400 F. (Gas Mark 6) for 30 minutes. Cool, and refrigerate.
 5. Next day, heat the soup, and add the matzoh balls to each soup bowl just before serving. Makes about 14 matzoh balls.
-

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Includes recipes below.

Those hot summer days are an invitation to take a break from the heat of the kitchen stove and bring on the cooling foods that offer refreshing flavor and feel so good going down. So what's for lunch? What should we fix for a dinner starter? Let 'em eat soup! Quickly prepared, and perfectly chilled, a cold summer soup is ideal.

Enhanced with tomatoes and carrots and the juices of a fresh lemon and fresh orange, this energy-rich, no-cook soup boasts that its natural enzymes are alive and well. The borscht, dressed in its own brilliant hot pink attire, makes an ideal summer lunch or dinnertime first course.

NUTTY BEET BORSCHT

1 C. (240 ml) water
3 small tomatoes, coarsely chopped
1 medium beet, peeled and coarsely chopped
1 large carrot, peeled and coarsely chopped
10 raw Brazil nuts
1 small clove garlic
Juice of 1 fresh lemon
Juice of 1 fresh Valencia orange
1/2 t. salt

Garnish
Tofu Sour Cream
Crushed raw pistachio nuts

1. Combine all ingredients, except garnish, in a blender, starting on low speed. Gradually increase to high speed. Process until completely puréed, about 1 minute.
2. Adjust seasonings if needed, and pour into bowls. Garnish each bowl with a dollop of Tofu Sour Cream and a sprinkle of crushed pistachio nuts. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

A dollop of sour cream is the ideal enhancement to many entrees, appetizers, and casseroles. Add a spoonful to garnish soup or top a fresh fruit salad. Here's a vegan version that's far lower in fat than the traditional sour cream, yet offers the same pleasing qualities as the old fashioned variety. You can also use this recipe as a base for creating a variety of dips.

TOFU SOUR CREAM

1 12.3-oz.(350 g) pkg. extra firm silken tofu
1/4 t. salt
4 T. lemon juice
1/2 t. rice vinegar

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth and creamy. Makes 1 1/2 cups (360 ml).

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Armchair travelling could become hip and trendy this year. Instead of packing your suitcases, simply put on an apron, and take a culinary tour through Africa where the varied cuisines are earthy, highly-seasoned, and very hearty. For a seductive meal in the African tradition, meet up with a kabocha squash and serve this robust stew with a cooked grain like brown rice or millet, cooked spiced lentils, a tossed salad, and some whole-grain bread.

AFRICAN PUMPKIN STEW

- 1/2 small kabocha squash
- 1 large carrot, peeled
- 1 very large red onion or 2 medium peeled
- 1 lb. (450 g) tomatoes, diced
- 1 C. (240 ml) water
- 1 t. ground coriander
- 1/4 t. ground cloves
- 1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
- 1 t. ground cumin
- 1 t. chili powder
- 1 1/4 t. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper



4 T. roasted, unsalted peanuts, coarsely chopped, divided

1. Wash squash and cut in half. Discard seeds. Place cut side down on a cutting board and remove skin with a sharp, firm-bladed paring knife held in a horizontal position.
2. Cut into 1 inch (2.5 cm) cubes, and steam until tender but still firm, about 8 to 12 minutes. Set aside.

3. Mince carrot and onion in a food processor and remove to a large, deep skillet.
4. Add tomatoes, water, and seasonings to skillet, and simmer until vegetables are soft, about 30 minutes. Adjust seasonings if needed.
5. Add steamed kabocha squash and half the peanuts, and heat through to combine flavors.
6. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl, and sprinkle with remaining peanuts. Serves 5 to 6.

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Here's a recipe we enjoy sharing with friends and family on special occasions. An entree that satisfies even those with a big appetite, it can be prepared a day ahead and simply reheated. Serve with a salad and some steamed vegetables, then check out [The Highest Perch](#) for a grand finish of Blanc Mange, an elegant dessert of French origin.

ALMOND NUTLOAF

The ingredient list might look a bit daunting, but this is really a snap to assemble. The combination of exceptional flavor, crunchy texture, and delicate lightness make this a really special vegan dish.



1 1/2 medium onions, about 3/4 lb. (340 g)

1/4 C. (60 ml) water

1 lb. (450 g) Russet potatoes, unpeeled

1 clove garlic, coarsely chopped

1/2 onion, coarsely chopped

1/2 t. salt

Water

2 C. (480 ml) whole raw almonds

1/3 C. (80 ml) raw walnuts

1/3 C. (80 ml) raw pecans

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/4 t. each dried basil, thyme, marjoram
1/2 t. ground nutmeg
1 3/4 t. salt
1/4 t. ground black pepper
1/4 C. (60 ml) + 1 T. Red Star nutritional yeast powder
1 medium tomato, diced
3 oz. (80 ml) water
2 or 3 dashes vegan Worcestershire sauce
1 or 2 pinches cayenne (optional)

1 large tomato, sliced or 2 medium

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. (gas mark 5), and lightly oil an 8-inch x 8-inch (20 x 20 cm) Pyrex baking dish.
2. Put onions into food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Transfer to a large skillet. Add water and sauté over high heat until soft, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove to a large bowl.
3. Scrub potatoes, cut coarsely into chunks, and put them into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Add garlic, onion, salt, and water to cover. Cover pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly and simmer 10 minutes or until fork tender. Drain in a colander, and transfer potatoes to a bowl. Mash with a fork, and add to bowl with cooked onions.
4. Put almonds into the food processor and process until finely ground. Add to bowl with onions.
5. Process walnuts and pecans in food processor until finely ground but still retain a little crunchy texture. Add to bowl.
6. Add garlic, herbs, nutmeg, salt, pepper, nutritional yeast, tomato, water, Worcestershire sauce, and cayenne. Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
7. Spoon into prepared Pyrex baking dish or 8" to 9" (20 cm to 23 cm) springform pan, pressing to compact ingredients.
8. Arrange tomato slices over top and bake at 375 (gas mark 5) for 50 to 60 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to stand for 15 minutes. Cut into squares and serve. Serves 6 to 8.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I grew up on the farm and Mom made the best Meat Loaf. Cold or hot, it was good (that was before I knew what I know now.) But, would you have a receipt for Vegan Meat loaf, with onions, bread crumbs and all the rest. My dad was a butcher, and I can tell you TRUE stories, for I saw it myself. I am always looking for lunch meat that is firm and not mushy when you are eating it. If you can, please help me out on this also.

Gary in Iowa.

Howdy there Gary in Iowa,

I kin see yer missin' yer deer Mom's cookin' an yer needin' a recipe fer some ole fashion tasty meatloaf. I knows what comfort food is, alright. Well darlin', I come up with an easy meatloaf you kin count on fer plain ole eatin' pleasure time after time after time, an' I do mean that.

Now, child, you take this recipe an' git yerself right on over ta the kitchen an' start the fixin's goin'. I gots ta warn ya, though, it's a messy heap o' fixin's 'cause ya have to mix 'em up with yer hands to git everthin' really flavored up right. But when it's done an' all baked up, you'll say, "Why, I didn't mind that a'tall." 'Fore ya know it, yer lickin' yer ten l'il fingers 'cause it's soooo good ya fergit yer manners.

Now you serve it up with some mashed 'taters 'n gravy an' you got yerself some kinda speshul meal.

That lunch meat yer hankerin' fer is right there in one o' them natural food markets in the deli secshun. They's made by Yves Veggie Cuisine or Lightlife an' there's a heap o' different ones to pick out. Why, there's salami, an' turkey, baloney, ham, Canadian bacon, an' pepperoni. Without any trubble 'tall you kin fix yerself a nice fit 'n sassy sandwich.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

AUNT NETTIE'S MEATLOAF

1 1/2 to 2 pieces of whole grain bread, toasted
1/3 to 1/2 C. (80 to 120 ml) soymilk
1 T. Tamari
1 14 oz. (397 g) Lightlife Gimme Lean Ground Beef Style*
2/3 C. (160 ml) sweet onion, finely chopped
1 t. salt
1/2 t. garlic powder
1/4 t. ground black pepper
1 or 2 pinches cayenne pepper or to taste

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. (Gas Mark 5). Break toasted bread into small pieces and put into a large mixing bowl. Pour soymilk over and toss with hands to thoroughly wet all bread.
2. Add remaining ingredients to soaked bread and mix with the hands to incorporate all ingredients completely.
3. Pack mixture into a lightly oiled 9-inch x 5-inch (23 x 12.5 cm) metal loaf pan. Cover pan with aluminum foil, shiny side down, and bake at 375 F. (Gas Mark 5) for 30 minutes. Remove foil, and bake another 12 minutes. Cool 5 to 10 minutes and cut into serving slices. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

*Meat analog made from soy and wheat gluten.

VARIATIONS:

For Italian style add 2 T. chopped fresh basil and 1/4 C. (60 ml) vegan Parmesan cheese to mixture and spoon spaghetti sauce over top before baking.

For barbecue flavor add 1/2 t. liquid smoke to meatloaf and spoon barbecue sauce over top before baking.

For Tex Mex flavor, add 2 T. diced mild canned green chiles, 1/2 C. (120 ml) shredded vegan cheddar cheese, 1/2 t. ground cumin, and 1 to 3 t. chili powder to meatloaf. Spoon chili sauce or enchilada sauce over top before baking.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I recently adopted a vegan diet and lifestyle and am feeling great. The only challenge I'm facing is a very inconsiderate neighbor who regularly barbecues hamburgers and steaks and says to me, "What do you have on your barbecue, lettuce? Ha Ha Ha!"

What can I barbecue? Any suggestions?

Leah

Leah, you poor l'il darlin',

You surely do have an inconsiderate neighbor. Now don't you fret none, 'cause we're gonna whup the pants off yer next door friend with some delectious surprises on yer barbecue. Yer gonna be sendin' mighty temptin' aromas his way, and purty soon he'll be beggin' fer some of yer recipes.

Here's the menu fer 4 hungry folks:

Jamaican Spice Portabella Mushrooms
Barbecued Tempeh
Marinated Tofu
Grilled Corn on the Cob
Grilled Veggie Skewers

Now jes' add a nice tossed salad fer starters and finish up with some fresh melon, either watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe 'r one of them fancy melons like Persian 'r canary. There's yer knock 'em-off-the-timber summer barbecue that'll match anything yer silly neighbor kin cook up. Now be sure to look down below fer them grillin' recipes.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

JAMAICAN SPICE PORTABELLA

Marinade

- 1 1/2 C. (355 ml) unsweetened pineapple juice
- 1 3/4 t. salt
- 1 3/4 t. ground allspice
- 3/4 t. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 t. ground nutmeg
- 1 1/2 t. dried thyme
- 1/4 + 1/8 t. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 C. (79 ml) fresh ginger, finely minced
- 3 cloves garlic, pressed
- 2 to 4 serrano chiles, cut in half, seeded, and finely minced
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) chopped onions
- 2 T. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 T. fresh lime juice
- 2 T. maple syrup

4 large portabella mushrooms

1. Combine all the marinade ingredients in a 9" x 13" (23 cm x 32.5 cm) shallow pan and stir well.
2. Cut stems of mushrooms flush with the base so mushrooms will lie flat. Put mushrooms and stems into the marinade, turning to coat evenly. Marinate several hours or overnight, turning several times to flavor evenly.
3. Remove mushrooms from the marinade, and grill them over hot coals about 5 to 10 minutes, turning frequently and basting with marinade each time you turn them. Watch carefully to avoid burning.



BARBECUED TEMPEH

Start with a 12-oz. (340 g) piece of any kind of tempeh. Score the tempeh lightly on both sides and cut into 4 equal pieces. Marinate in the same pan as the mushrooms. Grill along with the mushrooms about 10 minutes, turning and basting frequently.

MARINATED TOFU

Begin with 12 oz. to 1 lb. (340 g to 453 g) of extra firm tofu. Cut the tofu into 1/2" (1 cm) thick slices. Make a marinade of Bragg Liquid Aminos (or Tamari or soy sauce) and apple cider vinegar.

Find the proportion that pleases you simply by relying on your taste buds. Marinate for at least 2 hours. If you have a barbecue basket, put the tofu slices into the basket and grill 5 minutes on each side. Without the basket, just grill the slices 5 minutes on each side, turning them with a spatula.

GRILLED CORN ON THE COB

Go to <http://www.vegparadise.com/highestperch9.html> and you'll find the recipe for grilling corn right in the husks. You might want to cook the corn first, since they take about 20 minutes. You'll also need to cool the corn for several minutes before attempting to shuck them. While they're cooling, you can be grilling the other components of your barbecue.

GRILLED VEGGIE SKEWERS

Prepare skewers of your favorite summer vegetables arranging them in a colorful order for visual appeal. Here are some vegetable suggestions: Red, yellow, and green bell peppers, zucchini, yellow crookneck squashes, patty pan squashes, red and white onion slices, button mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, eggplant cubes, sliced sweet potatoes, sliced butternut or kabocha squash.

Brush your skewers with a well-seasoned oil and vinegar dressing, or make your own brush-on marinade. Turn skewers frequently, and cook about 10 to 12 minutes total.

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With Mother's Day just ahead you can easily delight Mom on her special day with this succulent, richly flavored main dish. If there are special activities planned for Mom's day and doing all the cooking in one block of time seems impossible, simply prepare the Terrine the day before. Reheat it at 350 F (Gas Mark 4) for about 15 to 20 minutes while preparing any side dishes or setting the table.

Are you unsure about serving tofu for this special occasion? Not everyone is vegetarian? A common complaint vegetarians hear from non-vegetarians is that tofu is bland and that they can't imagine making tofu taste good. Invite the non-believers to dinner, and serve this dish with confidence. Once you've prepared it, you'll know how truly delectable it is. With a little TLC for Mom, a simple dinner can become a memorable occasion for the entire family.

CURRIED TOFU TERRINE

1/2 C. (120 ml) coarsely ground raw walnuts
1 finely minced green onion

Filling

2 medium white or red rose potatoes, unpeeled and coarsely shredded
2 medium carrots, peeled and coarsely shredded
1 small onion, coarsely shredded
1/2 C. (120 ml) water
Salt and pepper to taste

Curried Tofu

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu
1 1/4 t. salt
1/4 t. pepper



- 1 1/2 t. curry powder
- 1 T. + 1 t. rice vinegar
- 1 T. + 1 t. lemon juice
- 2 green onions minced



Garnish

- Arugula
- 1 small carrot, shredded

1. Preheat oven to 375 F (Gas Mark 5), and oil a 9-inch x 5-inch 23 x 12.5 cm) metal or Pyrex loaf pan. Sprinkle walnuts and green onion on bottom of loaf pan. Set aside.
2. Combine potatoes, carrots, onion, and water in a large skillet or wok and sauté over high heat, stirring frequently for about 15 to 20 minutes until softened and to prevent carrots and potatoes from sticking. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
3. While Filling is cooking, combine tofu, salt, pepper, curry powder, rice vinegar, lemon juice, and green onions in a food processor, and process until completely pureed. Press half the mixture into the prepared loaf pan.
4. Spread Filling over the curried tofu mixture, spreading to the edges. Top with remaining curried tofu, spreading out to the edges of the loaf pan. Bake at 375 F (Gas Mark 5) for 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes.
5. Run a knife around all four edges. Unmold onto an oval or rectangular platter, and garnish with arugula and shredded carrots. Cut thick slices with a serrated knife, and use a spatula to serve. Serves 6.

SERVING SUGGESTION: Serve with a steamed green vegetable such as broccoli, okra, green beans, or spinach, and include black beans seasoned with garlic and lemon juice. [Lemon Dill Silken Sauce](#) served on the side makes a tasty accompaniment to the Terrine, if desired.

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EGGPLANT CANNELLONI

Holiday festivities usually include preparing a celebratory meal for guests. With all the typical activities that surround the family and friends gathering, you may be concerned you won't have the time to cook. Make it easy with an outstanding dish that can be assembled the day before. To warm the dish you've just taken from the refrigerator, be sure to start it heating in a cold oven to avoid cracking the pyrex.

3 medium eggplants, about 1 lb. (450 g) each
Canola oil

A double recipe of Cheesy Tofu Spread from the Recipe Index under Dips and Spreads

4 to 5 cups (1 liter) fresh tomato sauce or your favorite prepared tomato sauce

1. Preheat oven to 375 F (Gas Mark 5). Lightly oil 2 large baking sheets with canola oil. Have ready a 9 x 13 (23 x 32.5 cm) Pyrex baking dish. Place a small amount of the tomato sauce into the bottom of the baking dish and set aside.
2. Wash eggplants. Leaving the skin on, slice each eggplant lengthwise at an angle to get long slices about 1/4"(.5 cm) thick. Place eggplant slices on the baking sheets and roast in 375 F (Gas Mark 5) oven for approximately 25 minutes. Test with a fork for doneness. Eggplants should be soft and pliable.
3. To fill cannelloni, lay a slice of eggplant on a dish or countertop and place a heaping tablespoon of Cheesy Tofu Spread across the center horizontally. Fold over the ends and

place in the baking dish with the folded ends on the bottom. Repeat with the rest of the eggplant slices.

4. Spoon tomato sauce over the top.
5. Bake at 375 F (Gas Mark 5) for about 20 to 25 minutes, just until heated through. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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One of our readers asked for a quick-fix dish since she's a working mom, so here's one of Aunt Nettie's treasures.

FASTEST TOFU IN THE WEST

When you come from work all tuckered out, you can still fix tofu tasty enough for all the farm hands to reach for seconds. Jest keep plenty of extra firm tofu on hand, and you'll be all set to cook.

1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu, drained and rinsed

Marinade

1/4 C. (59 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos

2 , 3 T. lemon juice

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 t. chopped fresh ginger

1 or more dashes Tabasco Sauce

1. Start by slicin' up the tofu into 8 , 10 slices and set aside on a dish.
2. Put the marinade fixin's into a 10" (about 25 cm) skillet and heat it all up. Add a few slices of the tofu, and cook on a high fire for 2 , 3 minutes on each side. Put the cooked slices of tofu on a nice clean plate and cook up the rest.
3. Dress up yer plate with a fresh little sprig 'r two of herbs and serve with some baked or mashed potatoes, steamed greens, and a nice fresh salad.

I usually make up a little extra marinade and throw it into the skillet when it starts to run dry. If you don't mind usin' a little vegetarian Worcestershire Sauce, I think it adds a little giddiap to the flavor of the marinade.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I'm a sort of new to vegetarian cooking and I sure could use a little help. Passover is coming at the end of this month and I'm feeling stuck about what to serve. Please, please, do you have any suggestions for a main dish to serve about 6 or 7 people, or possibly 8.

Sincerely,

Brenda

Brenda darlin',

Now don't you go frettin' 'cause I'm right here an' I'm gonna give you a recipe that oughter catch a heap o' compliments right quick. Fer some extra fixin's that go real fine with yer curry, cook up some mashed 'taters and some steamed vegetables in a nice variety o' purty colors. When cookin' yer 'taters, add a little salt n' pepper, a clove o' garlic, and an onion chopped up. Then, when ya git ta mashin' yer 'taters, jes use some o' that tasty cookin' water 'stead o' the butter most folks use.

One more thing, darlin', this recipe is fer 4 people, so sure as shootin' yer gonna need ta double it. Now y'all let me know how it turns out, won't ya!

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

HAZELNUT, WINE AND MUSHROOM CURRY

2 medium zucchinis, sliced

3 Japanese eggplants, sliced
1/2 lb. (226 g) crimini mushrooms, sliced (brown button mushrooms)
1 clove garlic, minced
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1/4 C. (59 ml) kosher dry red wine
1/2 C. (118 ml) water
1/4 t. ground cinnamon
1/4 t. turmeric
1/2 t. curry powder
2 T. extra virgin olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper
Salt to taste

1 C. (237 ml) whole raw hazelnuts

1. Combine zucchinis, eggplants, mushrooms, garlic, tomatoes, wine, water, cinnamon, turmeric, curry powder, olive oil, and freshly ground black pepper in a large skillet.
2. Turn heat to high and stir to distribute ingredients and seasonings. Cook, stirring often, until vegetables are softened and broken down, about 10 to 12 minutes. Season to taste with salt.
3. While vegetables are cooking, put hazelnuts into the food processor and chop coarsely. Put the nuts into a dry skillet and toast over high heat, stirring constantly, for about 2 minutes. Watch carefully to prevent burning.
4. Add chopped, toasted hazelnuts to the curry, and stir until sauce thickens, about 1 to 2 minutes. Adjust seasoning if needed. Serve over mashed potatoes and accompany with steamed vegetables and a salad. Makes 4 servings.

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THE KING'S HARVEST FEAST

With its familiar burst of color, autumn enters the scene, puts a nip into the air, and beckons us to the kitchen to stir up some vittles that warm us through and through. Colors literally blossom on the plate when you bring this fabulous feast to the table.

2 large butternut squashes

2 large bunches broccoli

2 C. (480 ml) whole wheat couscous

1 T. extra virgin olive oil

2 C. (480 ml) boiling water

1 large ripe avocado

1/4 C. (59 ml) toasted raw pumpkin seeds

1 recipe Pineapple Fire Sauce

1. With a large, firm chef's knife, cut the squashes in half lengthwise. Scoop out seeds, and peel off the skin with a potato peeler or small paring knife. Cut squashes into 1" (2.5 cm) cubes and steam for 7 - 12 minutes or until soft. Mash completely with a potato masher or fork.
2. Wash broccoli thoroughly. Cut off stems about half-inch (1 cm) from bottom and discard. Cut remaining stems about halfway down, and chop into bite-size chunks. Cut the crowns into serving size portions and steam along with the chopped stems about 4 - 6 minutes until



just tender.

3. Combine couscous and olive oil in a medium-size bowl. Pour boiling water over, stir thoroughly, and set aside for 5 minutes.
4. Peel and dice the avocado, then set aside.

TO ASSEMBLE THE FEAST:

- Mound couscous in the center of a large serving platter, spreading almost to the edge.
- Pile mashed butternut squash onto the center of the couscous.
- Surround with broccoli and diced avocado.
- Drizzle a little Pineapple Fire Sauce over butternut squash, reserving the remainder to pass at the table.
- Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds. Serve with some hearty, whole-grain bread and salad. Serves 6.

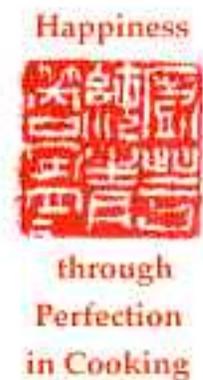
PINEAPPLE FIRE SAUCE

This is not a sauce for those with a timid palate--it's quite spicy, but it can be tamed by eliminating the crushed red chiles. Its zesty flavor adds a lively touch when served over grains, tempeh, tofu, and bean dishes.

- 1 1-lb. 4-oz. can (566 g) unsweetened, crushed pineapple with its own natural juice
- 1/4 t. dried crushed red chiles
- 1/2 t. dried oregano leaves
- 1/2 t. dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 t. salt
- 4 T. + 1 t. vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 2 T. + 1 t. lemon or lime juice

- 2 T. cornstarch
- 2 T. cold water

1. Combine all ingredients except cornstarch and water in a food processor or blender and process until almost pureed. Pour into a saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Combine cornstarch and water in a small bowl or cup to make a thin paste. Add, a little at a time, to bubbling sauce, stirring constantly, until it reaches a medium-thick consistency, about 1 minute. Makes about 2 1/2 cups (598 ml).



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MANGO PASTA SALAD

If you've invited friends over for dinner and want to knock their socks off with a special summer dish, here's a recipe that makes a dramatic presentation and satisfies as well. Whenever I bring this specialty to the table, there's a moment of awed silence and then a burst of complimentary sounds. Hopefully, your experience will be as rewarding as mine.

1/2 head romaine lettuce, shredded

1/2 lb. (226 g) pasta, cooked, preferably penne, large elbows, rotelli, large shells, or bow ties
Sesame Soy Dressing (recipe follows)

1 small jicama, cut into thin julienne

1 medium red bell pepper, cut into thin julienne

1/4 small head red cabbage, shredded

1 small red onion or Texas sweet onion, cut in half and sliced thinly lengthwise

1 small English cucumber, unpeeled and cut into thin julienne

6 green onions, chopped



1 large ripe mango, peeled and chopped

1 C. (240 ml) frozen peas, thawed

Sesame Soy Dressing

Salt and pepper to taste

1 ripe mango

Black sesame seeds

1. Spread shredded lettuce out onto an extra-large serving platter or a large shallow bowl. Set aside.
2. Toss cooked pasta with just enough Sesame Soy Dressing to coat thoroughly. Arrange on top of shredded lettuce.
3. In a large bowl, toss together jicama, bell pepper, red cabbage, red onion, cucumber, green onions, large mango, and thawed peas with enough Sesame Soy Dressing to coat and flavor well.
4. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Arrange on top of cooked pasta.
6. Peel and chop mango and arrange on top of salad. Garnish with several sprinkles of black sesame seeds and serve with pride. Serves 6 to 8.

SESAME SOY DRESSING

Enjoy this dressing on other tossed salads or greens throughout the year. If you're serving foods with an Asian flair, this is a great dressing to have in your repertoire.

- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. dry mustard
- 1/4 t. paprika
- 1 C. (240 ml) water
- 2/3 C. (160 ml) organic canola oil
- 2 T. sesame oil
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) Bragg Liquid Aminos, tamari, or soy sauce
- 1 T. + 1 t. lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in a 1-quart (1 liter) jar and shake well. Makes 2 cups (480 ml).

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Though it's a bit time consuming, this main dish is well worth the effort. Not only will guests be convinced that you're a culinary whiz, your family will appreciate that you've made something special just for them.

To make preparation a little easier, make the Tomatillo Salsa a day ahead. It keeps for several days in the refrigerator and retains flavor quite well.

If you're not acquainted with fresh Poblano peppers, also called Pasilla peppers, here's a bit of info that may help. You never know if you've purchased spicy ones or those that are on the mild side. Even in the same bin there are some of each. Another phenomenon of the Poblano is that it could be spicy at one end and mild at the other. In rating the degree of spiciness, however, we've noticed these peppers are never as hot as jalapenos yet offer exceptional flavor.

STUFFED POBLANO PEPPERS



1 large broccoli crown, about 3/4 to 1 lb (340g to 453g)., cut into quarters

Water

1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu

1 green onion, chopped

1 clove garlic

1 1/4 t. salt or to taste

1/4 t. pepper

3 T. lemon juice

6 large or 8 medium fresh poblano peppers

Garnish 2 T. finely diced red bell pepper

1. Put about 1/4" of water into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, add broccoli, and cover pot. Bring to a boil over high heat, then turn heat to low, and steam until just tender, about 6 minutes. Set aside.
2. Crumble tofu into food processor workbowl. Add green onion, garlic, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Process until well blended.
3. When broccoli is soft, cool briefly under cold water, drain, and chop coarsely. Add to tofu mixture in food processor, and process until well incorporated. Season to taste if needed.
4. Wash and dry peppers. Put peppers on stovetop gas or electric burners over high heat. Using tongs to turn peppers, cook them until almost blackened, turning constantly. Plunge them into a bowl of cold water to cool. Under running water, use fingers to rub off blackened skins.
5. Using a serrated knife, cut around top of peppers to remove stem and core. Rinse out any remaining seeds.
6. Fill peppers with tofu broccoli mixture and arrange them in a 7" x 9" (17 1/2 x 23 cm) glass baking dish. Pour three-fourths of the Tomatillo Salsa over them, reserving the remainder to serve at the table.
7. Sprinkle diced red bell pepper over the top, and bake at 350 F(Gas Mark 4) for 20 to 25 minutes to heat through. Serves 6.

TOMATILLO PISTACHIO SALSA

1 lb. (453 g) fresh tomatillos

1 large onion, coarsely chopped

1 clove garlic

Fresh lime juice to taste

Salt to taste

1/2 (118 ml) cup raw pistachios



1. Remove the husks from the tomatillos and wash them. Cut them in half and put them into a

- 3 or 4-quart (3 or 4 liter) saucepan with just enough water to cover.
2. Cover saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Boil about 2 or 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, put the tomatillos and onions into the food processor along with the garlic. Process to chunky consistency.
 3. Add lime juice and salt, adjusting the flavors to your own personal taste. Remove to a bowl and stir in pistachios. Refrigerate until ready to use. Makes about 3 cups (717 ml).

NOTE: Since the pasilla peppers can sometimes be a bit spicy, we keep the salsa unspiced. However, if you've got a bent for the spicy life, add jalapeno to taste when you whirling the tomatillos and onions in the processor.

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Thanksgiving is practically synonymous with nostalgia because it's the time for gathering. No, not just the gathering of food at numerous stores and farmers markets for those extra special ingredients that perk up our holiday meal, but the gathering together of friends and family. For some it's a time for celebration and feasting. For others, the opportunity presents itself to give thanks and cherish our blessings of good friends and family.

Naturally, feasting and Thanksgiving go hand in hand. What better way to celebrate the holiday than with a dish that includes those special foods freshly harvested this season. Featured in our **Torte** are wild rice, pecans, and walnuts -- the stuff of a hearty, gustatorial banquet.

THANKSGIVING TORTE

2/3 C. (160 ml) wild rice
1 3/4 C. (415 ml) water
3/4 t. salt

3/4 lb. (169 grams) red or white rose potatoes, unpeeled, scrubbed, and cut into 1" cubes
1 C. (240 ml) water
1/8 t. salt (optional)

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw walnut pieces
1/2 C. (120 ml) raw pecan pieces

1 large onion, diced
3/4 lb. (169 grams) Portabella mushrooms, chopped (about 4 large mushrooms)

1 14-oz. (396 grams) package Lightlife GimmeLean! sausage flavor (soy sausage)
1/3 C. (80 ml) water
2 t. poultry seasoning
1/4 t. ground black pepper
2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1/2 t. Wright's Natural Hickory Seasoning (liquid smoke)
1 1/4 t. salt or to taste

2 medium tomatoes, sliced
Red Swiss chard
Orange slices



Mushroom Gravy

8 oz. (226 grams) fresh button mushrooms, sliced
1 3/4 C. (420 ml) water
1/4 C. (60 ml) Tamari or soy sauce
1/4 C. (60 ml) dry red wine
2 T. lemon or lime juice

3 T. cornstarch
3 T. water

1. Lightly oil a 9 1/2-inch (23 cm) springform pan and set aside.
2. Combine wild rice, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat to low and steam for 50 - 60 minutes until rice is tender.
3. Combine potato cubes, water, and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to simmer, and cook 5 - 7 minutes until fork tender. Using a slotted spoon, remove potatoes to a medium bowl, and set aside.
4. Toast nuts in a non-stick skillet over high heat, tossing continuously for about 1 to 2 minutes, and immediately remove to a dish to cool. Set aside.
5. In a large skillet, sauté onion, mushrooms, soy sausage, water, poultry seasoning, pepper, and olive oil together until onions are transparent, about 5 - 7 minutes, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon or paddle to break up sausage chunks. Drain off and reserve any excess liquid. Add Wright's Natural Hickory Seasoning and salt and mix well.
6. Mash potatoes. Add to onions and mushrooms. Add toasted nuts and cooked wild rice. Mix well to combine ingredients. Adjust seasonings.
7. Press mixture firmly into springform pan. Arrange tomato slices over the top, Bake uncovered at 375 (Gas Mark 5) for 1 hour. Run clean knife around edge and unmold onto a platter lined with red Swiss chard. Decorate platter with orange slices. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

For Gravy:

1. Combine mushrooms, water, tamari, red wine, and lemon juice in a saucepan, and bring to a

boil.

2. Turn heat down slightly and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Combine cornstarch and water in a small bowl and add to bubbling sauce, stirring constantly, until thickened to desired consistency, about 1 minute.
4. Serve on the side. Makes about 2 1/4 cups (540 ml).

Variation:

1. Cut 5 acorn squashes in half.
2. Brush cavities with oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Stuff mixture into cavity of each squash half.
4. Put on a baking pan, cover with aluminum foil, shiny side down, and bake at 350 (Gas Mark 4) for 1 hour.

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Cupid Aims His Arrows from the Kitchen

With Valentine's Day just ahead, Cupid is poised and ready to touch two hearts that share thoughts of love. With just a little planning and a few gourmet dishes you can make that special person in your life feel really appreciated. Pamper your lover by going the extra mile to prepare a memorable meal that delights the eyes and pleasures the palate, as well.

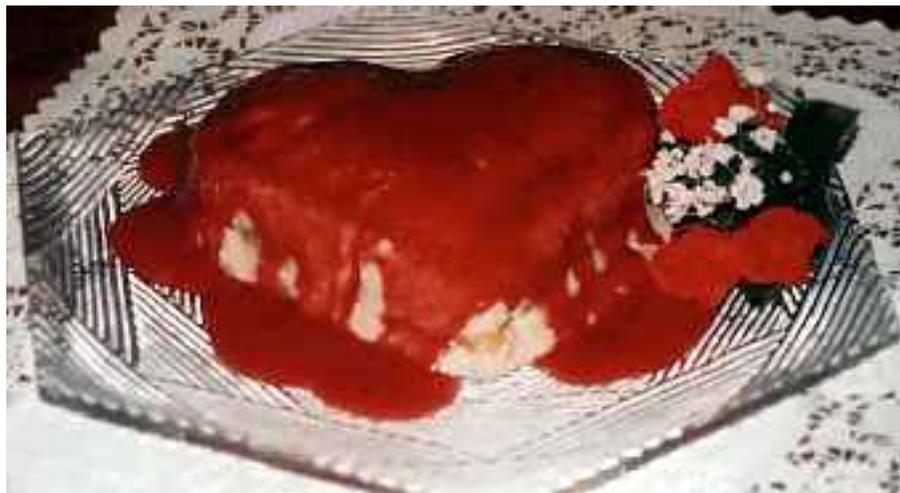
For that special Valentine of yours set the romantic scene with a tablecloth, cloth napkins, candlelight, and, of course, a small vase with a single red rose. A glass of wine or sparkling non-alcoholic wine gets your special Valentine dinner off to a good start.

For an easy, and very tasty starter, consider [Cashew Stuffed Mushrooms](#) that you can prepare one day ahead. Be sure to cut the recipe down to one-fourth so you can both enjoy the rest of the meal. Two mushrooms each may seem like just a tidbit, but they're quite enough considering what lies ahead.

Next, prepare a fresh salad of baby greens enhanced with shredded carrots, diced jicama, sliced radishes, cherry tomatoes, and diced avocado. Top the salad with a knock-your-socks-off **Creamy Garlic Soy Dressing** (recipe below) that can be made a day or two before and keeps well for several days.

Your pièce de résistance is a **Tofu Vegetable Napoleon** (recipe below), an extraordinary dish for an extraordinary occasion. By preparing the crust the day before and reheating last minute, you can assemble this dish rather quickly.

To accompany your tasty entrée, steam some brown rice, quinoa, or bulghur wheat to complete the main course.



Dessert is a beautiful [Coeur à la Crème](#), French for heart of crème. It's light and absolutely gorgeous. Easily prepared in a heart-shaped mold, this treat can be made the day before with the topping spooned on just before serving.

For a soothing ending, mosy on over to Aunt Nettie's corner and enjoy a relaxing cup of **Flaxseed Tea**.

Now that you've done your part,

you can be sure you've given Cupid every opportunity to shoot his arrow with perfect aim. He is, after all, the son of Venus, goddess of love.

CREAMY GARLIC SOY DRESSING

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pecan pieces

4 cloves garlic, peeled

1/4 C. (60 ml) organic canola oil

1/2 C. (120 ml) lemon juice

2 t. salt

1/2 t. dry mustard

1/4 t. ground black pepper

1 1/4 t. soy sauce

3 T. balsamic vinegar

3/4 C. (180 ml) water

3/4 C. (180 ml) organic canola oil

1. Combine pecans, garlic, 1/4 C.(60 cm) canola oil, and lemon juice in a blender. Start motor on slow speed, then switch to high speed until pecans and garlic are completely pureed.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth and creamy. Transfer to a 1-quart jar or bottle and chill. Keeps well in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Shake well before using over fresh tossed salad or your favorite greens. Makes 2 1/2 cups (600 ml).

TOFU VEGETABLE NAPOLEON

CRUST

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu 3/4 t. salt

1/4 t. ground pepper

- 2 T. + 1 t. nutritional yeast flakes
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pine nuts
- 2 t. lemon juice
- 1 1/2 t. red miso

FILLING

- 1 bunch spinach
- 1 red pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1/2 lb. (225 g) button mushrooms
- 1 medium onion

- 2 T. water
- 1 t. extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 t. ground coriander
- 1/2 t. ground cumin
- 1/4 t. salt



TOPPING

- 2 Roma tomatoes, sliced (not too thin)
- 1 T. finely minced parsley

CRUST

1. Preheat oven to 400 F (Gas Mark 6). Cover a 12 x 15 (30 x 37.5 cm) baking sheet with parchment or lightly oiled aluminum foil, dull side up.*
2. Squeeze excess liquid from the tofu by squeezing it with both hands over the sink. Break up the tofu into pieces and put them into the food processor along with the salt, pepper, nutritional yeast, pine nuts, lemon juice, and miso.
3. Process until smooth and creamy, stopping to scrape down sides and process again.
4. Spread out onto prepared baking sheet, forming a rectangle with the back of a spoon to about 3/8" (1 cm) thickness, smoothing surface and making edges somewhat even.
5. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Remove and cool.

FILLING

1. Remove stems from spinach. Put spinach in a deep bowl and fill with water. Wash by pumping up and down to remove all dirt. Change the water two or three times until thoroughly clean. Drain off water completely. Chop spinach coarsely, and set aside.
2. Dice peppers, mushrooms, and onion in food processor. Transfer to a large, deep skillet, and add water, olive oil, coriander, cumin, and salt.
3. Cook over high heat until soft and transparent, about 5 minutes. Add spinach and saute, stirring frequently, for another 2 or 3 minutes.
4. If you've prepared the crust the day before, warm it in the oven at 350 F (Gas Mark 4) for about 10 minutes.

TO ASSEMBLE

Cut the tofu crust in half lengthwise. Then make 2 crosswise cuts to result in 6 pieces. There will be 1 serving extra for seconds. Lay 1 piece on each dish. Top with sauteed mixture. Cover with remaining crust laying it at an angle so half the filling is exposed and part of the crust is resting on the dish.

TOPPING

Arrange tomato slices on an ungreased baking sheet and place under the broiler for about 2 minutes, watching carefully not to burn them. Arrange tomato slices artfully over top crust, sprinkle with parsley, and serve.

*If you own a Silpat sheet, available at houseware specialty stores, lay it over the baking sheet in place of the parchment.

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Vegetarians in Paradise regularly presents informative articles by guest contributors on subjects of interest to vegetarians and vegans. This month Larry Ziegler tells his story of trying to survive as a vegetarian in the heartland of America.

Professionally, Larry is a child and family psychologist who has worked in rehabilitation centers and hospitals. Larry enjoys cooking, especially ethnic foods he prepares for friends and family.

Chef Larry says he became a vegetarian because it is a healthier lifestyle and a good way to lose weight.

Trying To Eat Healthy While Living in Tulsa, Oklahoma

By Larry Ziegler (chflz@swbell.net)

Being transplanted from California to Tulsa, Oklahoma (work related) was traumatic in itself, but going into most food markets was even more shocking, as the few vegetables there tended to be limp and unappetizing.

My wife (being from New Jersey) and I soon discovered several health food stores that carried produce as well as other foods that made our shopping more pleasant.

However, as Oklahoma was a big beef-eating state, eating out proved to be a real challenge to us, as well as having friends over



to our house for dinner. Most people thought our liking and cooking ethnic foods (our favorite kind of foods) was quite strange. Most natives of the state liked mainly meat (beef) and potatoes!

My cooking interest, preparing dishes native to Morocco, tended to be unpopular with our dinner guests. One of my other food interests, Italian cooking, fared a little better. Our efforts with East Indian and many Latino dishes tended to be less popular than the others.

In general, meatless or Soy Substitutions for meat tended to be looked upon as "weird" by most others!

Because deep frying was very popular here also, our "healthier" lifestyle in cooking things was seen as "time wasting."

Once when I was hospitalized, a friend brought me some Molé (a chocolate sauce) with other vegetables in it. She had labeled it "mole." The aides and nurses thought that I was eating moles (those furry, little creatures). Most people in Oklahoma knew little about foods that are non-Oklahoman in origin!

In the past 10 years more ethnic groups have moved here (Latinos, Vietnamese, East Indians), so finding more diverse cooking ingredients (plus Ethnic Restaurants, too) is less difficult. However, at times I still must be creative in providing a reasonable substitute for an obscure food ingredient. This has become more of a challenge rather than a burden.

Since the editors of *Vegetarians in Paradise* asked for one of my favorite recipes, I thought I would give you my version of molé that is adapted from *Nutrition Action* magazine.



Veggie Molé

- 3 medium red onions cut into 1" pieces
- 1 carrot cut into 1"pieces
- 1 1/2 oz. (4l g) bell peppers seeded and cut into 1" pieces
- 3 medium zucchinis cut into 1" pieces

- 3 oz. (8l g) pitted prunes
- 4 T. cocoa powder
- 1 T. + 1 t. sugar
- 1 T. + 1 t. hot or mild chili powder
- 1 t. ground cumin
- 1 1/3 t. cinnamon
- 2 C. ((480 ml) water

- 7 T. of pureed garlic
- Olive oil spray

- 1/2 C. (118 ml) pumpkin seeds
- 4 C. (1 liter) canned tomatoes, only partially blended
- 2 15-oz. (424 g) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 15-oz. (424 g) can garbanzos, drained and rinsed

1. Chop onions in a food processor. Remove to a bowl and set aside. Chop carrots, bell peppers, and zucchini in food processor.
2. In blender combine prunes, cocoa powder, sugar, chili powder, cumin, and cinnamon with 2 cups water. Puree until smooth and set aside.
3. Fry onions and garlic and then add bell peppers, squash, and zucchini. Cook for 10 minutes on medium heat.
4. Add remaining ingredients and prune mixture, and simmer until the vegetables are soft. Serve over cooked brown rice. Serves 8.

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Includes recipes below

[Apple Accent Salad](#)

[Triple Citrus Dressing](#)

The fall season welcomes a colorful array of apple varieties. Our favorite farmers' markets are offering Gala, Fuji, and Granny Smith with Pink Lady and MacIntosh arriving soon. Enjoy a tasty, crisp apple as a snack and include apples in salads such as the following recipe.

APPLE ACCENT SALAD

1/2 to 3/4 head romaine lettuce

1 bunch arugula, chopped

1 large Fuji or Gala apple, chopped

1 C. (240 ml) shredded red cabbage

3 green onions, chopped

1/2 red or yellow bell pepper, chopped

2 carrots, shredded

3 T. chopped, toasted pecans

Alfalfa sprouts

1. Wash lettuce and pat dry with a kitchen towel or use a salad spinner.
2. Put into a large salad bowl.
3. Add remaining ingredients and toss.

4. Top with alfalfa sprouts and serve with **Triple Citrus Dressing**.

TRIPLE CITRUS DRESSING

1 3/4 t. salt or to taste
1/4 t. ground black pepper
3/4 t. dry mustard
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 T. minced green onion tops
1 C. (240 ml) canola oil
1/4 C. (60 ml) lime juice (2 to 3 limes)
1/4 C. (60 ml) lemon juice (1 to 2 lemons)
3/4 C. (180 ml) + 2 T. fresh orange juice (1 to 3 Valencia oranges)
1/4 C. (60 ml) water
2 T. apple cider vinegar

1. Combine all ingredients in a 1-quart (1 litre) jar and shake well.
2. For best flavor prepare one day ahead.
3. Refrigerate leftovers.
4. Keeps for 1 week. Makes approximately 2 3/4 cups (660 ml).

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Thanksgiving would somehow seem incomplete without a cranberry delicacy on the table. As I was beginning preparations the day before Thanksgiving last year, this recipe came together in an inspired moment when I decided that brandy was going to be a featured ingredient.

BRANDIED FRUIT AND CRANBERRY RELISH

1 12-oz. (340 g) package fresh cranberries
3 firm, sweet apples, quartered and seeded (do not peel)
1 C. (240 ml) black raisins
1/2 C.(120 ml) golden raisins
24 pitted dates, cut in half
1/4 C. (60 ml) toasted pecan pieces

3 T. pure maple syrup
2 T. kosher brandy

2 Fuyu persimmons, sliced

1. Put the all the fruits and nuts, except the persimmons, into a food processor and pulse chop until fine. Transfer ingredients to a medium sized mixing bowl.

2. Add maple syrup and brandy and stir to thoroughly combine. Mixture will be very moist. Transfer to a clear glass serving bowl.
3. Garnish by lining the sides of the bowl with the sliced persimmons. Makes 5 cups (about 1 1/4 litres).

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Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

You always seem to have the perfect solution to all sorts of kitchen challenges, but I'll bet my question will stump you. No one else seems to have any idea of what to do with broccoli stems other than to just cook them. Got any ideas?

Marguerite

Marguerite, darlin,'

It takes lots more 'n broccoli stems ta stump ole Aunt Nettie. 'Course you knowed I'd come up with the perfect solution fer them broccoli stems, didn't ya! Why, I jes make 'em inter a salad with lots o' fixin's. If y'all don't have everythin' on hand, jes use what's handy an' it'll be jes fine. Now, don't let them broccoli stems go bad on ya -- use 'em up right quick.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

BROCCOLI SLAW

- 4 broccoli stems, washed and peeled
- 6-inch (15 cm) long piece of daikon radish, peeled
- 2 large carrots, peeled

- 1/2 bunch green onions, chopped
- 2 kiwis, peeled and diced
- 2 T. pine nuts, toasted
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. ground black pepper

2 T. organic canola oil

Black sesame seeds

1. Coarsely grate broccoli stems, daikon radish, and carrots and put them into a bowl.
2. Add green onions, kiwis, pine nuts, garlic, salt, pepper, and canola oil to bowl and toss together. Adjust seasoning to taste, and transfer to an attractive serving bowl.
3. Garnish with a generous sprinkling of black sesame seeds. Summer Slaw tastes best when made 3 - 4 hours ahead. Use as a side dish. Serves 6 - 8.

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With cantaloupes in great abundance this month, low prices make them a tempting purchase. Take advantage of a good sale on summer fruits to enjoy one of the most refreshing soups of the season. This easy recipe is a winner for its flavor, and offers a cooling start to a summer meal.

CHILLED CANTALOUPE SOUP

2 medium cantaloupes, seeded, peeled and cut into chunks.
8 ripe sweet red or purple plums
8 ripe sweet apricots
6 fresh sprigs of mint

1. Put cantaloupe chunks into a blender or food processor in batches and puree completely. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Remove seeds from plums and apricots, and puree separately. Transfer each to a small bowl.
3. To serve, ladle cantaloupe puree into individual soup bowls. Add a small ladle of plum puree and apricot puree to the center. Gently swirl with a large spoon or fork.
4. Garnish center with a sprig of mint for that finishing touch and enjoy the compliments from 6 grateful diners.



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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I served dips in hollowed out red and green cabbages for a recent party. The cabbages made great looking bowls, but it killed me to throw them out at the end of the evening. I hate wasting. Do you have any suggestions?

Angela

Howdy, Angela, darlin',

I'm all fer savin' the cabbage an' I knows how y'all felt when y'all tossed 'em in the garbage heap. I surely do have some suggestions. Now, jes' go ahead 'n make yer cabbage into them purty little bowls. Then, when the party's over, jes' rinse off the cabbages 'n put 'em into a plastic bag fer the next day.

Fer starters how's 'bout makin' a nice, tasty Cole Slaw with some special fixin's. Try this little recipe I jes' put up quick like a fox:

Aunt Nettie's Country Cole Slaw

- 1/2 large head green cabbage, shredded
- 1 C. (237 ml) red cabbage, shredded
- 2 medium carrots, shredded
- 1 large apple, chopped
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) raisins, plumped in hot water to cover
- 3 or 4 dates, chopped
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) of any chopped nuts

Dressing

- 1/2 C. (118 ml) soy mayonnaise

2 to 4 T. lemon juice

1 T. white miso

Freshly ground black pepper

1 t. caraway seeds (optional)

1. Combine the cabbage, carrots, apples, raisins, dates and nuts in a large bowl and toss to distribute ingredients evenly.
2. Combine dressing ingredients in a small bowl, pour over the slaw, and mix well. Makes about 4 to 6 servings.

Y'all can cook up yer cabbage in a little stir fry, if ya please. Try this easy little dish:

Aunt Nettie's Cabbage Stir Fry

1/2 head green cabbage, chopped or shredded

1 C. (237 ml) red cabbage, chopped or shredded

1 medium onion, chopped

1 Granny Smith apple, chopped

1 clove garlic, thinly sliced

2 T. canola oil

1 or 2 T. kosher balsamic vinegar (Bartenura's)

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Combine all ingredients in a large skillet or wok and stir fry over high heat until vegetables are just softened, about 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Adjust seasonings and serve it up to 4 hungry folks.

Now if y'all like soup, ain't nothin' like a sweet 'n sour cabbage borscht ta put those darlin' little cabbage bowls ta good use. I guess I'm thrifty jes' like my Mama. I surely don't like wastin' either.

Fer more idears visit [Cooking with Zel](#) or [On the Highest Perch](#)

Well, Angela, I'm hopin' these idears kin work out fer ya.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

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CUCUMBER DILL SOUP

With the long season of hot weather just approaching, a cooling soup is always a welcome starter to a summer meal. Here's an easy, chilled soup that takes practically no time to prepare. Watch for good buys on cucumbers at the local farmers' markets and enjoy this treat often.

6 medium cucumbers (peel if they are thick skinned)

4 C. (1 liter) water

2 large cloves garlic, finely minced

1 1/2 to 2 t. salt or to taste

1/2 t. garlic powder

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

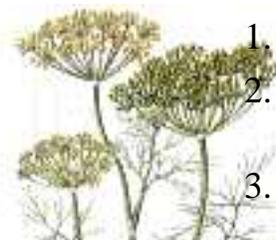
6 T. fresh dill, snipped, or 2 to 3 T. dried dill weed

1/4 C. (60 ml) extra virgin olive oil

2 dashes Tabasco sauce

1/4 of a red bell pepper, diced

2 T. fresh dill minced, or 1 T. dried dill weed



1. Cut cucumbers into chunks and put half of them into the blender.
2. Add half the water and blend. Pour into a large bowl. Repeat process with remaining cucumbers and water.
3. Add garlic, salt, garlic powder, pepper, fresh dill, olive oil, and Tabasco



Sauce and stir. Adjust seasonings if needed. Transfer to a tureen or serving bowl and serve at the table.

4. Garnish each bowl with a sprinkle of diced red bell pepper and a pinch of chopped dill. Makes 6 servings.

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Dramatic color is the first thing people notice when I serve this delightful all-raw salad. The bright orange of the shredded carrots and stark white of the diced apples make an appealing contrast against the deep red and purple of the beets and the cabbage. Color, however, is not the only attribute this recipe has to offer. It's mighty nutritious and tasty as well.

RED BARON SALAD #1

This version of beet salad with its glistening Mango Lime Dressing and green pistachio accents is a show-stopper. Its sweet, yet robust flavor with a hint of cinnamon is an ideal compliment to its pleasing crunchy texture. Unlike most salads that taste best when made fresh the same day, this creation can be made a day ahead and still retain its exceptional flavor.

5 leaves romaine lettuce, torn

1 large or 2 small beets, peeled and coarsely shredded

2 medium carrots, peeled and coarsely shredded

1/8 small head red cabbage, shredded

1 large sweet apple, cored and diced

1/2 C. (120 ml) raw pistachios

1 recipe Mango Lime Dressing

1. Arrange lettuce on a large platter, and set aside.
2. Combine beets, carrots, cabbage, apple, and pistachios in a large bowl and toss to distribute evenly.
3. Add generous amount of dressing, and toss well. Spoon salad over lettuce and garnish with an extra sprinkle of pistachios. Store leftovers in the refrigerator. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

MANGO LIME DRESSING

You can always count on nature to come through with naturally sweet fruits that bathe a salad in luxurious flavors. This dressing couldn't be easier. A quick whirl in the blender and it's ready to serve.

1 large or 2 small mangoes *
1/2 C. (120 ml) water
1/4 t. ground cinnamon
2 T. fresh lime juice
8 dates
Sea salt to taste

1. Wash mangoes. Stand them up vertically and cut from top to bottom on either side of the pit. Scoop out flesh with a spoon and put it into the blender. Remove any extra flesh clinging to pit, and add to blender.
2. Add remaining ingredients and process to a smooth puree. Store leftover dressing in refrigerator. Will keep for 1 week. Makes about 1 3/4 cups (415 ml).

*If mangoes are on the tart side, add more dates to sweeten.

RED BARON SALAD #2



mustard greens

2 large beets or 4 small ones, peeled and coarsely shredded
1/4 small head red cabbage, shredded
3 large carrots, coarsely shredded
1 large sweet apple, diced
1/2 C. (120 ml) black or golden raisins
1/2 C. (120 ml) raw pistachios
3 T. flax seed oil
3 to 4 T. apple cider vinegar
Sea salt and pepper to taste

Green leaf or romaine lettuce leaves or

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss well. Serve nestled in a lettuce or mustard green leaf as a side salad or transfer to a large, bright colored serving bowl to bring to the table. Makes 5 to 6 servings.

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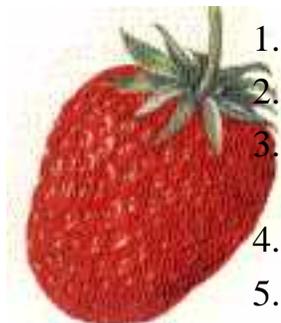
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Strawberries here, strawberries there, and strawberries everywhere this season. And this year they're especially sweet, so plump, and so beautiful. Aside from simply feasting on freshly picked strawberries, I've created two additional ways to enjoy the harvest. The first, a salad dressing, is easy to prepare and was an instant success at our table. The second, a strawberry salsa, makes a colorful, tangy accompaniment to any meal. Enjoy!

STRAWBERRY SALAD DRESSING

1 heaping pint fresh strawberries, or 14 - 16 oz. (about 450 g) by weight
1 1/4 t. salt
1/8 t. black pepper
1/4 t. dry mustard
1 large clove garlic
3/4 C. (180 ml) water
1/2 C. (120 ml) organic canola oil
1/2 t. to 1 t. apple cider vinegar



1. Wash and stem strawberries and put them into the blender.
2. Add remaining ingredients and blend until smooth and creamy, about 1 minute.
3. Adjust seasonings to taste, taking care not to overpower the delicate flavor of the strawberries.
4. Serve over fresh chilled greens. Refrigerate.
5. Makes 3 cups (720 ml). Keeps for 5 days.

SPRINGTIME STRAWBERRY SALSA

- 1 heaping pint fresh strawberries, or 14 to 16 oz.(about 453 g) by weight
- 3 T. walnut pieces, toasted
- 6 T. diced onion
- 1 small clove garlic, finely minced
- 3 T. golden raisins
- 1 to 2 pinches cayenne pepper
- 2 T. kosher balsamic vinegar (Bartenura brand)
- 1 T. maple syrup

1. In a medium sized bowl, mash half the strawberries with a potato masher.
2. Dice the other half and add to bowl.
3. Add remaining ingredients and stir to blend flavors.
4. Once strawberries are cut open, flavors break down rapidly.
5. Best if eaten the same day. Serves 6.

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With St. Patrick's day around the corner, you can expect to see cabbage on sale. Take advantage of the good prices, put up a zesty kraut, and enjoy St. Patty's day in the vegetarian mode.

VEGETABLE KRAUT

If you've been searching for that meal accompaniment that adds tangy flavor, crunchy texture, and bright colors to the plate, this kraut can add a lively touch to many menus throughout the entire year. It travels well, and can be stored for a month or two in the refrigerator. You will, however, find your sense of smell challenged during the marinating process. If you have an isolated room where the kraut can do its thing without offending, all the better.

- 1 medium daikon radish
- 2 red bell peppers
- 1 large turnip
- 3 medium carrots, thinly sliced

- 1 medium head cabbage, shredded

- 4 C. (.95 liter) water
- 5 1/2 T. salt

- 12 C. (2.8 liters) water

1. Cut daikon radish, bell peppers, and turnip into thin julienne, about 2" in length, and put them, along with the carrots, into an 8-quart (8 liter) crock or plastic container. (A restaurant

supply store will have this size plastic container available.)

2. Add cabbage to the container. If you prefer more of one vegetable and less of another, make adjustments to your own taste. Sometimes I substitute a rutabaga for the turnip.
3. Combine water and salt in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, and heat just enough to dissolve salt. Cool slightly and add to vegetables. Add the 12 cups (2.8 liters) of water and stir to distribute salt water evenly.
4. Weight down with a rock placed on a small dish, and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Set aside at room temperature for up to 5 days. A scum will form at the top of the container about the second day, and you will notice a musty odor. This is normal.
5. Taste daily, rinsing the vegetables first, to see if they have reached the desired soured and salty flavor. In warmer weather, the vegetables will marinate more quickly, about 3 - 4 days.
6. When vegetables have reached their desired maturity, rinse them, a little at a time, in a large strainer with cool water. Drain thoroughly and refrigerate in a plastic container. Vegetable Kraut will keep for 1 - 2 months in the refrigerator. Makes about 3 quarts (3 liters) of pickled vegetables.

For more cabbage recipes see [On the Highest Perch](#) and [Ask Aunt Nettie](#)

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Howdy there li'l ones,

Well, no one done writ to me with cookin' problems this week, an' them nice fresh cherries is starrin' me square in the eye, sittin' on the counter lookin' all shiny. So, I done decided it was time ta turn them purtties inter somethin' mighty fine.

I come up with a Cherry Relish ta knock yer boots off. It's not fancy, but it's got real healthy fixin's. Now, it helps a heap if ya has a cherry pitter. I was hopin' fer real sweet cherries fer my relish, but wouldn't ya know, they fergot ta be sweet. Not to worry, though. They's mighty fine in this recipe. Hope y'all enjoy.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

CHERRY RELISH

- 1 sweet apple, diced
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) golden raisins
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) raw pecan pieces
- 1 fresh mango, diced
- 1 T. raspberry vinegar
- 1 heaping cup (240 ml +) of fresh cherries, pitted and cut in half



Put all ingredients into a bowl, and toss to distribute fruits evenly. Makes about 4 or 5 cups (1.25 liters).

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Turkeyless Vegans Hold Thanksgiving Feast

Includes Recipes Below

While most American families will be carving the hallowed, time-honored turkey and gorging on traditional side dishes at the Thanksgiving table, vegans will be feasting in restaurants, at potlucks, or in their homes. That's right, feasting. How is it possible to celebrate on Thanksgiving Day without a turkey? Sounds like a paradox. Vegans, after all, don't eat anything that comes from an animal. That means no meat, chicken, fish, eggs, or dairy products appear at their tables.

Rather than eating the bird, vegans symbolically invite "Big Tom" as an honored guest and give thanks in their own spiritual way for the fruits of the earth. And then they feast! And what a feast! On what, you wonder? Here are some irresistible dishes that spare the bird and turn, instead, to the riches of the harvest season that are plucked from the trees and gathered from the bushes, vines, and roots. Perhaps these colorful dishes with their tantalizing aromas and tastes will beckon you to the table for a Thanksgiving dinner in the vegan style.

Before we actually sit down at the table, we begin our late afternoon family get-together with a colorful, organic Relish Tray and a tasty Garbanzo Bean Dip. By then everyone has arrived, and we set out our banquet on the buffet table. The featured entrée is the [Thanksgiving Torte with Mushroom Gravy](#), a dish that combines the best flavors and textures of the harvest season. Wild rice, walnuts, pecans, and mushrooms are the highlights of this recipe, along with zesty seasonings fitting for a celebratory dish. It makes a lovely presentation, while adding a hearty centerpiece to the meal. To ease the Thanksgiving Day preparations, we prepare the Torte the day before.

As side dishes we prefer Herb Roasted Potatoes sprinkled with thyme and rosemary instead of the traditional mashed potatoes. We enjoy simple Baked Yams over those covered with

marshmallows.

This year we'll be spooning **Creamed Lemony Broccoli** and **Cranberry Fruit Confetti** onto our plates, along with a **Carrot and Parsnip Ragout** to provide a brilliant rainbow of colors on the dish.

We haven't forgotten the traditional Cranberry Sauce. Our [Brandied Fruit and Cranberry Relish](#) will sport some fresh fruit and maple syrup to make it extra special. To complete the meal we'll include **Creamed Chestnuts**, a light, fluffy dish with its subtle hint of natural sweetness.



No holiday meal would be complete without dessert. For our finishing touch we'll turn to old-fashioned tradition with two unbeatable winners--Pumpkin Pie and Apple Pie, vegan versions, of course. Then, as an accompaniment to dessert we'll sip our spiced [Pumpkin Apple Nog](#), with its rich, creamy base of pumpkin perked with apple juice.

In the many years we've been serving holiday meals such as this one, not one person has remarked about missing the turkey. Quite the contrary, most of our guests are surprised at the variety of delicious foods and delighted to have the opportunity to taste a true vegan feast first hand. We hope you'll enjoy some of our feast dishes.

CRANBERRY FRUIT CONFETTI

This unique fruit combination is one of the sugarplums of the autumn season. It's so rich in colors and flavors, you can serve it often as a meal accompaniment throughout the holidays.

2 C. (480 ml) whole fresh cranberries

2 large sweet apples, cored and chopped

2 C. (480 ml) black raisins

30 dates, pitted and chopped

2 large Fuyu persimmons, diced

1 C. (237 ml) pecans, toasted and chopped

2/3 C. (158 ml) toasted pine nuts

1. Leaving the peels on, wash apples thoroughly, and pulse-chop in food processor until finely minced. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the bowl with the cranberries and toss to distribute evenly. This fruit dish can be made several hours ahead. Serves 8 - 10 as a side dish.

Note: If you decide make this dish a day ahead, don't add the cranberries until just a few hours before serving. They have a tendency to lose some of their delightful tang.

CREAMED LEMONY BROCCOLI

Because it's so easy to prepare, this broccoli recipe is ideal when serving a special Thanksgiving meal with its multitude of traditional dishes.

2 broccoli crowns, bottoms trimmed, florette portion cut into 8ths

3/4 C. (177 ml) water

3 to 4 T. lemon juice

1/4 C. (59 ml) + 2 T. water

1/2 to 3/4 t. salt or to taste

1 to 2 T. extra virgin olive oil (optional)

Garnish

1 slice lemon

Parsley sprig

1. Put prepared broccoli into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan. Add 3/4 C. (177 ml) water, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low, and steam 4 to 5 minutes or until broccoli is just tender.
2. Transfer broccoli to the food processor. Add lemon juice, water, salt, and olive oil and process until pureed but still textured. Adjust seasoning to taste. Remove to an attractive serving bowl and garnish with a twisted slice of lemon and a sprig of parsley. Serves 4 to 5.

Note: For a low fat version, eliminate the extra virgin olive, and add extra water if mixture is too thick.

CARROT AND PARSNIP RAGOUT

When you want a brilliant accent of color, you can count on this appealing combo of root vegetables. It's the ideal marriage--both partners are endowed with natural sweetness.

4 large carrots, sliced

4 large parsnips, sliced

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) water

Salt to taste

Dash of nutmeg



1. Combine carrots, parsnips, and water in a 3-quart (3 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down and steam until softened, about 5 to 7 minutes.
2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer cooked carrots and parsnips to a food processor. Add 1/2 to 1 C. (118 to 237 ml) water, salt to taste, and a dash of nutmeg. Process to a smooth puree, adding more water if needed. Serves 6.

CREAMED CHESTNUTS

Here's a unique side dish to serve with festive meals where chestnuts take center stage. Since fresh chestnuts require some patience with the peeling process, it's always best to prepare them the day ahead. If time permits, the entire dish can be prepared ahead and chilled in a serving dish that can be heated gently in the oven the following day.

1 3/4 lbs.(800 grams) fresh chestnuts

Water

1 C. (237 ml) (approximately) soymilk

Salt and pepper to taste

Dash of nutmeg

2 slices Fuyu persimmon, quartered

1. Pierce each chestnut with a crisscross cut on each side and put them into a 4-quart (4 liter) saucepan with water to cover by 2 inches (5 cm). Bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly and boil gently for 20 to 25 minutes.
2. Cool slightly, about 5 minutes, and peel off outer shells and inner skins. Put peeled chestnuts into the same saucepan with clean water to cover. Boil gently for an additional 20 to 30 minutes, or until chestnuts are easily pierced with a fork.
3. Drain off water into a 2-cup measure, and add soymilk to equal 1 1/2 cups (355 ml). Put chestnuts into the food processor along with soymilk and process to a smooth puree. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Transfer to an attractive serving bowl and sprinkle with nutmeg. Garnish with quartered persimmon slices around the outer edge, and serve as a side dish.
5. Serves 6 to 8.



To reheat leftovers, put them into a pyrex baking dish, and cover with aluminum foil. Heat in a 325° F (Gas Mark 3) oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I hear about fruit salsas, but I'm not sure how to make one and what I'm supposed to serve it with. Do you have any ideas?

Your friend, Darlene

Howdy there, Darlene,

I jes love fixin's that are made with them fresh 'n chipper fruits 'n vegetables right from yer garden or from the farmstand. Now, darlin', you jes git out yer favorite kitchen knife an' prepare yerself fer a little cuttin'.

Now there's Summer Fruit Salsa an' there's Winter Fruit Salsa, dependin' on what's in season when yer itchin' fer somethin' extra ta make yer meal speshul. Don't ferget a tiny touch o' herbs makes a salsa bright an' sunny, an' a little touch o' spice is mighty fine 'cause it gives a little zip to yer life.

I'm gonna give y'all a deelicious recipe ta git ya started. Then, turn ya loose with some ideas fer creatin' yer very own kind o' salsa that you kin flavor up the way ya likes. You kin do yer own mixin' an' matchin'--ain't no rules that says ya cain't. An' if ya comes up with a really stand-up'n holler salsa, why you jes send it along, an' I'll share it with everbody so's they kin enjoy it too.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

MANGO SALSA

1 large mango, peeled and diced
1/2 C. (120 ml) diced celery
1/2 C. (120 ml) diced sweet onion
1/2 to 1 red or green chile, finely minced
1 clove garlic, finely minced
2 T. finely chopped mint leaves
Juice of 1/2 to 1 lime
Salt and pepper to taste



Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss well. Chill until ready to serve. Can be made a day ahead and refrigerated. Serves 4 to 6 as a side dish.

Basic Recipe Guide for Fruit Salsa

Determine whether the salsa will be fruit or vegetable dominated. The recipe above is fruit dominated, but when your favorite vegetables are in season, you may decide to do a vegetable salsa. Perhaps fresh, uncooked corn cut from the cob, tomatoes from your garden, or homegrown cucumbers will be the focus of your salsa.

Use the suggestions below to create your own recipe.

Diced fruit (summer, winter, or tropical)

Diced vegetables for crunchy texture (celery, jicama, sweet onions, green onions)

Minced garlic

Minced ginger

Minced chiles

Chopped fresh herbs (basil, mint, cilantro, sorrel, thyme, oregano, dill)

Lemon juice, lime juice, or vinegar

Salt and pepper to taste

Summer Fruits: Peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, grapes, cherries, figs, strawberries

Tropical Fruits Year Round: Mangos, papayas, pineapple, coconut, avocados, kiwi

Winter Fruits: Apples, pears, oranges, tangerines, persimmons, kumquats, Asian pears

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I've been searching for a recipe for oil-free salad dressing, and it's next to impossible to find. I would be grateful if you have any ideas.

Matthew

Well, cuss it all, Matthew, darlin',

There oughter be oil-free salad dressin' in everbody's kitchen an' it makes me angrier 'n a hornet that them recipes is so hard ta find. But, now, don't you fret, 'cause right here's where you kin find jes what yer lookin' fer. Here's some of my favorite dressin' s.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

OIL-FREE BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

- 1 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. dry mustard
- 4 to 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 C. (120 ml) balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 C. (60 ml) lemon juice
- 3/4 C. (180 ml) water
- 1/4 t. guar gum *

Combine all ingredients in a jar and shake well. It's best if made a day ahead to allow the guar gum to thicken the dressing slightly. Keep refrigerated and shake well before each use. Use within 2

weeks. Makes 1 3/4 cups (420 ml) .

For a creamier alternative, combine all ingredients in a blender, and blend on high speed until well combined and smooth. Transfer to a bottle or jar.

* Guar gum is a dried, ground powder that comes from an East Indian plant. Used in small quantities, guar gum is on the FDA GRAS list for use as a thickener or stabilizer. Look for it in health food markets such as Whole Foods or Wild Oats. Many health food markets will special order it for you if it is not one of their regular products.

OIL-FREE CASHEW LIME DRESSING

1/2 C. raw cashews

1 1/2 t. sea salt

1/4 t. ground black pepper

2 cloves garlic

1/2 C. fresh lime juice

1 C. water

1/4 t. guar gum

1. Combine cashews, salt, pepper, whole, peeled garlic, and fresh lime juice in a blender. Blend on low speed for a few seconds, then switch to high speed until cashews are thoroughly ground.
2. Add water and guar gum and blend on high speed until mixture is smooth and creamy. It's best if the dressing is made a day ahead to allow the guar gum to thicken it slightly. Refrigerate leftovers. Keeps well for one week. Makes 1 3/4 cups.

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Spring is here with its colorful blossoms on the fruit trees, gorgeous flowers in bright colors, and lots of green--green leaves filling out those winter-bare trees, green blades of grass popping up, and plenty of lusty green veggies growing in the garden. Why not bring some of that zesty green into the kitchen with a salad dressing that turns a boring salad into pungent delight.

Prepare a nice variety of lettuces, and add some sinkers -- you know, those slices of carrots, celery, and radishes and chunks of cucumber, bell pepper, and jicama. Then just dress it all up with an easy blender dressing that makes a good salad great!

ONION DILL SALAD DRESSING

- 1 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) organic canola oil
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) raw sunflower seeds
- 1/4 C. (59 ml) + 1 T. lime juice
- 1/2 C. (118 ml) water
- 1 T. + 1 t. white wine vinegar
- 4 green onions, coarsely chopped
- 1/3 to 1/2 C. (118 ml) chopped fresh dill or 1 T. dried dill weed
- 2 T. organic canola oil

1. Combine salt, pepper, canola oil, sunflower seeds, lime juice, water, wine vinegar, green

- onions, and dill in a blender and blend, starting machine on slow speed for a few seconds. Switch to high speed and blend until smooth.
2. With machine running, slowly add the 2 T. canola oil, and blend for 30 to 40 seconds.
 3. Pour into an attractive serving bowl, and ladle over your favorite salad ingredients. Store leftovers in refrigerator in a covered container. Makes 1 1/2 cups (355 ml.)

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Dear Aunt Nettie, I don't often have things on hand like vegetarian sour cream or vegetarian mayonnaise, but I do keep a variety of tofu in the refrig. It would be such a help to have recipes for these to make salads or use as a sandwich spread. Can you help?

Lisa M.

Lisa Darlin',

It jes' so happens I have exactly what yer lookin' fer. They's usually stored in the kitchen corner o' my head, but I'm agonna write it down 'cause they sure comes in handy fer spreadin' on sandwiches, mixin' up some potato salad, er dippin' artichokes. Both them recipes is easy as pie, so here goes:

TOFU SOUR CREAM

- 1 12.3 oz. (350 g) package extra firm silken tofu
- 1/4 t. salt
- 4 T. lemon juice
- 1/2 t. rice vinegar

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth and creamy. Store in the refrigerator. Keeps for 1 week. Makes 1 1/2 cups (355 ml).

SOY MAYONNAISE

- 1/2 C.(118 ml) ground cashews (grind in an electric coffee grinder)
- 1 medium clove garlic
- 1 12.3 oz. (350 g) package firm silken tofu
- 1 1/4 t. salt
- 1 1/4 t. lemon juice
- 1 T. extra virgin olive oil

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Store in the refrigerator. Keeps about a week. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (355 ml).

Yer ever lovin',

Aunt Nettie

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Vicki asked Aunt Nettie for some hearty lunch suggestions that would carry her through the day. Here are some of Aunt Nettie's favorite lunch ideas.

Well, howdy there, Vicki,

Lunch is right there in the middle o' the day when yer body is jes itchin' fer a pick-me-up. Now dependin' on yer activity 'er yer metabolism, you'll be the best judge o' quantity. Here's some o' what I like ta fix:

1. Slice up some extra firm tofu and marinate the slices in a tamari and lemon juice marinade fer anywhere between an hour 'er overnight. Then fix yerself a sandwich with as many slices of the marinated tofu as you want, and add tomatoes, lettuce, sprouts, sliced cucumbers, whole basil leaves, 'er mint leaves. A little Dijon mustard or veggie mayo on yer whole grain bread adds a bit o' punch too. Now, that's a tasty sandwich.
2. Fix yerself a salad at night fer lunch next day. Start with some extra firm tofu, 'bout a pound, and cut it up into little chunks. Toss the chunks into the big fryin' pan, a 12-incher, along with a couple tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, a tablespoon tamari, and a couple tablespoons lemon juice 'er apple cider vinegar. Turn the heat up high, an' stir them tofu chunks with a wooden spoon til they're nice 'n golden. This takes 'bout 5 ta 7 minutes. Use some o' the tofu chunks fer yer salad that ya mix up with chopped veggies and dress it up with a little olive oil, lemon juice, 'n minced garlic. Add a touch o' salt 'n pepper an' yer all set up fer yer next day's lunch fixin's. Set the rest o' the tofu chunks in the fridge fer a different salad a day 'er two down the line.
3. A nice salad startin' with a can o' cooked beans is a real easy fix fer lunch. Jes add some chopped veggies, throw in some chopped nuts, sunflower seeds, 'er pumpkin seeds (make sure they're raw), an' dress it up with yer favorite dressin'. Pack some nice whole-grain



crackers er bread an' yer all set.

4. Pack some veggies fer crunchin' like carrots (that's everbody's favorite) an' celery (that's some folks' favorite.) Then try some o' the stuff most folks never pay attention to like turnips, kohlrabi, an' fennel bulb. They're great crunchies with plenty o' vitamins 'n minerals ta give ya energy.
5. Don't ferget some fruit fer yer lunchsack. This season, ya kin hardly beat a nice, crunchy apple er one o' them bosc er anjou pears. A juicy navel orange is mighty good, too. Now the fruit's where ya pick up plenty o' energy an' that important new-fangled word "phytochemicals." It jes means stuff ya can't see but it's in there ta keep ya healthy.

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Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I am 13 and have just turned vegetarian, however I am having a few problems as every Sunday we have a family meal of a Sunday Roast and my mum wants me to still have a big main meal with them but I have no idea what I could have! I also am having trouble finding foods that contain protein as at the moment I am eating mainly cheese.

Please help because it's getting me down and making me reconsider turning vegetarian. What can I get protein from? And what would be a good Sunday meal?

Amy

Howdy there Amy,

Well, darlin', I jes come back from a little vacation, so I hope you'll fergive me fer answerin' so late. Fer starters, y'all might want ta read the [Vegetarian Basics 101](#) on our web site. That should help git ya started. Basically, here's what a healthy vegan eats during the day fer a balanced diet: fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.

Ya might also want ta read [Protein Basics](#) on our web site. Most folks worry too much 'bout protein. Also read [The Road to Vegetaria](#) an scroll down past the introduction fer some easy recipe ideas. Look at the [Recipe Index](#), too. I knows I'm givin' y'all lots o' homework, but that's what it takes---lots o' learnin' is important.

Fer protein, ya jes cain't beat them beans--all kinds are mighty speshul. Tofu, soymilk, tempeh, and veggie meats made from soy are all dern good protein. Nuts has good protein, an' whole grains has protein, too. Even fruits n' veggies has protein, tho' not as much as them beans.

On them Sunday Roast days, make yer life real easy by fixin' yerself a big salad with plenty o' dark green lettuce like romaine and chop up a heap o' vegetables.

Then open a can o' beans an' add some to yer salad (but read the label ta make sure there's no animal ingredients). Buy yerself a ready-made vegan dressin' or go to the Recipe Index and choose one you kin make. Ain't none of 'em too hard ta fix in yer own kitchen.

Toast yerself a piece of whole grain bread an spread some ripe avocado on it instead o' butter. Toss some raw nuts into the salad, and finish up with a piece o' fruit.

In that one single meal ya got yer vegetables, fruit, beans, whole grains, an' nuts. Now, mind you don't have to have all them items in one meal all the time. That's jes one of my favorite dinners that don't take too much trouble.

I kin recommend a real fine book that's jes what every vegetarian teen oughter have at home. It's called *I'm a Vegetarian; Amazing Facts and Ideas for Healthy Vegetarians* by Ellen Schwartz. Y'all might see if yer library has that book. When y'all give it a good lookin' over, ya jes might want ta buy it.

'Nother thing fer more learnin' or if ya cain't git that book 'cause ya lives 'cross the ocean is ta check our [Vegparadise Bookshelf](#) in the first section that's called Children and Teens. There's a heap o' books there.

If'n there's a health food market in yer neighborhood, ya jes might want ta take yer Mum an' spend a l'il time ta mosey 'round the aisles and do some label readin'. Land sakes! She might be surprised ta see all them good ole fashioned fixin's in one place.

Well, darlin', I'm hopin' this is encouragin' fer ya. I knows it's tuff ta git started. What I done is put a l'il recipe fer my favorite dinner salad down below. The recipe makes plenty, so yer family kin enjoy some, too.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

SUNDAY DINNER SALAD **(Main Dish Salad)**

- 6 leaves romaine lettuce, torn into pieces
- 2 leaves collard greens, torn into pieces
- 4 leaves red leaf lettuce, torn into pieces
- 6 radishes, slices
- 1 large cucumber, peeled if thick skinned, and sliced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 large carrots, shredded or sliced
- 1 bell pepper, (red, yellow, or green) chopped
- 1 1/2 C. snap peas, trimmed and cut into thirds
- 2 slices sweet onion, cut into quarters
- 1 wedge purple cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 1 fresh corn on the cob, uncooked, kernels sliced off

- 1 C. raw nuts or seeds (pecans, walnuts, pistachios, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, etc.)
- 1 1 lb. (450 g) can beans, (black, pinto, garbanzo, kidney, etc) drained



1 large tomato, chopped
Sprouts (any kind)

1. Into a large bowl, combine all the vegetables and toss well to distribute ingredients evenly.
2. Bring the nuts, beans, and tomatoes to the table in separate bowls and spoon those out on top. Add a hearty serving of sprouts, and top with a ready-made vegan dressing or one you can choose from the Recipe Index. Serves 6.

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Nowadays, Aunt Nettie just shakes her head and complains, "Nobody cooks anymore. They have no idea about puttin' a meal together." She's on a mission. She wants to help those younguns eat better so they can grow up healthy like her own eight kids.

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Here's a dish that has special appeal for mushroom lovers who can simply revel in mushroomland with this stand-out first course or light meal. Often shiitake mushrooms are referred to as wild mushrooms. During Easter and Passover celebrations this month, enjoy this easy-to-prepare dish with its tempting presentation and hearty flavors. It makes an ideal lunch or a light dinner.

WILD MUSHROOM SALAD IN TOMATO CUPS

Water

1/2 lb. (226 g) dried shiitake mushrooms

6 medium tomatoes, cut in half crosswise

Extra virgin olive oil

1 -2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1 C. (237 ml) jicama, diced

1/2 C. (118 ml) sweet onion, chopped

1/2 red bell pepper, diced

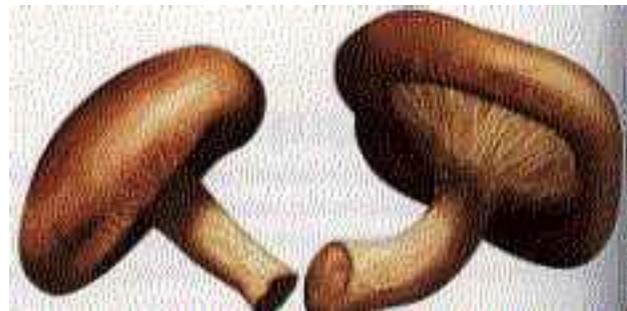
1/4 C. (59 ml) cashew pieces, toasted

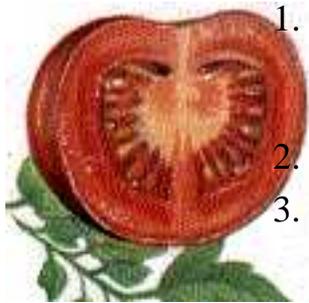
Juice of 1 - 1 1/2 limes

1 - 2 T. extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Sprigs of fresh parsley, dill, or cilantro

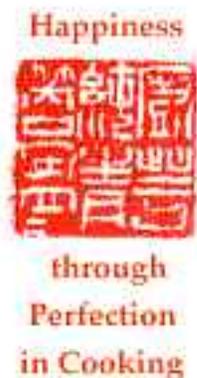




1. Place shiitake mushrooms in a bowl and pour boiling water over them. Allow them to soak 30 to 40 minutes until softened. Cut off and discard tough stems. Chop or slice mushroom caps.
2. Scoop out flesh and seeds from tomato halves. Set flesh aside for another use.
3. Place tomatoes on a baking sheet and brush them with a little extra virgin olive oil. Put them under the broiler about 3" (7.5 cm) from heat source, and broil for about 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
4. Combine mushrooms and 1 or 2 T. olive oil in a large skillet or wok. Saute over high heat, stirring frequently, just until mushrooms are cooked, about 2 to 3 minutes. Remove mushrooms to a medium-size mixing bowl.
5. Add jicama, onion, bell pepper, cashews, lime juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper to bowl and toss well.
6. For a presentation with a food stylist's touch, fill the broiled tomatoes with the warm mushroom mixture. Top each with a sprig of parsley, dill, or cilantro and serve each person 2 filled tomato cups. Be sure to serve with a knife and fork so everyone can enjoy the broiled tomato as well. Serves 6.

NOTE: Here are some suggestions for other ways to enjoy a wild mushroom salad without the tomato cups:

- Serve the salad as a warm side dish, making about 6 small servings.
- Chill and serve as a salad over dressed shredded lettuce.
- For Passover, serve the mushroom salad as an open face sandwich on matzoh.
- Use as a filling for a tortilla wrap or sandwich.



For more information on preparing mushrooms and mushroom recipes, check [On the Highest Perch](#) and [Recipe Index](#).

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During the hot summer weather, we just naturally crave lighter foods. Salads prepared with vegetables that have a high water content are nutritious and can be the foundation of the ideal summer menu. These moist foods are cooling and refreshing while offering us nourishment that provides plenty of energy when the heat tends to slow us down.

A Zucchini Pasta Salad without the pasta? With this easy-to-prepare gourmet salad, you'll discover that the zucchini becomes the pasta. It's all in how you cut it! Enjoy this raw, main dish salad with its appealing, zesty sauce to top it off.

ZUCCHINI "PASTA" SALAD

Makes 2 to 3 servings

- 1 large zucchini
- 1 large yellow crookneck squash
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 orange bell pepper, chopped
- 2 or 3 green onions, sliced
- 6 sliced button mushrooms
- 1/4 lb. (113 g) snow peas, trimmed
- 2 to 3 C. (480 ml to 720 ml) chopped collards, stems removed



1. Trim off ends of both zucchini and yellow crookneck squash. Using a firm chef's knife, cut into very thin slices lengthwise. Stack slices and cut them into very thin julienne to resemble spaghetti. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Add remaining vegetables.

3. Prepare Creamy Cashew Basil Sauce, and serve on the side. Serve optional garnish on the side.

CREAMY CASHEW BASIL SAUCE

1/3 C. (80 ml) raw cashew pieces

1/4 C. (60 ml) raw Brazil nuts

4 T. nutritional yeast (available in health food market)

1 T. Mrs. Dash's Salt-Free Original Seasoning Blend

1/4 C. (60 ml) water

4 T. apple cider vinegar

2/3 C. (160 ml) + 1 T. lemon juice

2 large clove garlic, coarsely chopped

2 oz. (56 g) fresh basil leaves

Salt to taste

1. Put nuts into an electric coffee grinder in small batches, and grind into a fine powder.
2. Transfer powdered nuts to the blender, and add remaining ingredients. Process to a smooth, creamy sauce, and serve on the side. Makes about 1 3/4 cups (415 ml).

GARNISH (OPTIONAL)

2 T. chopped fresh parsley

2 T. chopped fresh dill

1 clove garlic, minced

Combine in a bowl and serve on the side to sprinkle on top.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

Do you have any fresh ideas for sandwiches? Some work friends are getting together at my house for a sandwich party, and I wanted to do something beyond the veggie lunchmeat and veg cheese. They're not vegan or even vegetarian, but I am.

Veronica

Well, Veronica, darlin',

'Course I got some ideas! Betcha yer friends will be tumblin' all over theirselves reachin' fer seconds with a couple o' sandwiches that are easy ta fix an' mighty tasty. Why, I wouldn't be surprised if they's a-hankerin' fer yer recipes after tastin' them sandwiches.

Now, darlin', ya mustn't keep my recipes a secret--you jes go right ahead an' hand 'em out all over the place.

Fer some extra fixins' y'all jes might want to have a bowl o' cherry tomatoes, some celery sticks, cucumber strips, an' some purty red radishes fer munchin' 'n crunchin' with yer sandwiches.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

NUTTY CARROT SANDWICH

3 large carrots, coarsely shredded
2/3 C. raw pecans finely ground in nut mill
1 small clove garlic, finely minced
4 to 5 stuffed green olives, minced
Vegenaise or other soy mayonnaise to moisten

16 to 20 whole fresh basil leaves
8 slices whole grain bread

1. In a medium bowl combine the carrots, pecans, garlic, and green olives with enough soy mayonnaise to moisten well and hold the ingredients together.
2. Spread bread with a light coating of soy mayonnaise and spoon nutty carrot mixture on 4 bread slices. Arrange basil leaves over carrot mixture and top with bread.
3. Cut in half vertically or diagonally or cut into quarters. Makes enough for 4 sandwiches.



RED BELL PEPPER HUMMOS SANDWICH



Hummos

1 15 -oz. (420 g) can garbanzo beans, drained
1 roasted red bell pepper
1 1/4 t. salt or to taste
1/4 t. ground cumin
2 T. lemon juice
3 level T. tahini
1 clove garlic, crushed

Sandwich Ingredients

Whole grain bread
Sprouts (alfalfa, onion, radish)
Sliced tomatoes
Avocado sliced
Fresh mint leaves
Green leaf lettuce

1. Put beans into food processor. Add remaining hummus ingredients and process to a smooth, thick consistency. If a thinner consistency is desired, add lemon juice, tahini, or water.

Makes about 1 3/4 cups or enough for 4 or more sandwiches.

2. Spread hummos generously on both top and bottom slices of bread. Layer remaining ingredients in desired quantities, and cover sandwich with top slice of bread. Cut in half diagonally and serve.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I'm desperate for a good lunch suggestion. I did a silly thing and invited someone for lunch who always makes fun of my vegan philosophy and constantly poo-poo's the things I bring to work for my lunch. You can see my predicament! I need something that that will blow him away.

Desperate,

Patricia

Howdy there Patricia,

You darlin', I been itchin' fer a opportunity jes like this. I do have some fixin's I know yer gonna love, an' that silly friend o' yers is gonna be eatin' crow--an' plenty of it--jes you see. Now ya oughter plan on doin' a tiny bit o' preparin' the night before, an' you'll see how quick this open-faced sangwich comes together.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

PISTACHIO KALAMATA CHEESE MELT

An open-faced sandwich with a tofu base makes an ideal breakfast dish served with fruit or the perfect lunch entrée served with salad. If ever there were a tofu recipe that wore many hats, this one would fit the description.

The basic Pistachio Kalamata Spread makes a great tasting topping on bread, toast, or crackers, a pungent topping for baked potatoes, a robust sandwich filling, and the perfect filling for a layered

vegetable torte. With imagination you may come up with a dozen other treatments for it.

Pistachio Kalamata Spread

1/2 C. (118 ml) raw pistachios

1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu

1 large clove garlic, coarsely chopped

4 T. lime juice

18 pitted Kalamata olives *



Sandwich Fixings

4 slices whole grain bread

2 to 3 tomatoes, sliced

4 to 8 slices vegan mozzarella cheese

1. In several batches, grind pistachios into a fine powder in a small electric coffee grinder, and pour the powder into a small bowl. Set aside.
2. Break up the tofu into chunks and put them into the food processor. Add garlic, lime juice, Kalamata olives, and ground pistachios. Process until all ingredients are well blended, stopping the machine once or twice to scrape down the sides.
3. To assemble the sandwiches, spread a generous layer of the Pistachio Kalamata Spread over each of the bread slices. Top with tomato slices, covering the entire surface. Then lay the vegan Mozzarella cheese over the top, covering the whole surface.
4. Place on a baking sheet and broil 3" (7.5 cm) from heat source until cheese has melted, about 2 minutes.
5. Serve with a knife and fork and enjoy a hearty meal. Serves 4.

* If you cannot locate pitted Kalamata olives, simply cut the olives off the pit.

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Shirley Wilkes-Johnson, a vegan cooking instructor and one of Aunt Nettie's fans, described a tasty vegan sandwich she thought our readers might enjoy. Here's their email exchange and that special recipe for a "Love It or Leave It Vegemite Sandwich."

Shirley, you l'il rascal,

You done come up with a 100% rootin' tootin' tasty soundin' sandwich! I like yer creative l'il ideas. Is it OK if I share the fixin's with the kinfolk on our web site? It sounds mighty fine an' I'm sure lots o' folks would be makin' it if they could git their hands on that recipe.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

Shirley wrote:

Aunt Nettie,

My Vegemite sandwich recipe is below. You might be surprised to know that Texas is an active vegetarian state. Of course the meat crazy people still outnumber us, but there are vegetarian societies in Austin, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. These groups all belong to the Lone Star Vegetarian Network, and this year will host the 14th Annual Lone Star Vegetarian Chili Cook-Off in Houston. I was the director of this group for 13 years and just stepped down to let some of the younger ones take over the job.

By the way, the students in my class on Saturday raved over this sandwich. They loved it!

Best Wishes!

Shirley

Love It or Leave It Vegemite Sandwich

Vegemite is a yeast product rich in B vitamins and protein that was invented in Australia. It was packed into soldiers' K-rations in World War II and used in hospitals as a wellness nutrient for patients. It is said that Australian mothers put it into their babies' bottles. It is served in Australian restaurants in individual packets as ketchup or mustard is in America. This beloved salty product of Australia dumfounds westerners. Why would anyone like it? Open yourself to this Australian experience by taking the advice to spread it thinly -- very thinly -- on bread and pile the bread with delicious toppings as below. The saltiness of the Vegemite and the sweetness of the pineapple are a nice contrast.

For each sandwich:

- 2 slices really good quality bread *
- 1 teaspoon Vegemite
- 2 slices vegetarian ham
- 1 thin slice fresh pineapple
- 1/4 cup (59 ml) shredded carrot
- 1 tablespoon vegan mayonnaise such as Vegenaïse

1. Spread Vegemite thinly on one slice of bread.
2. Layer on veggie ham, pineapple, and shredded carrot.
3. Spread mayo on second slice of bread and top sandwich.
4. Enjoy, mate!

* We use Food of Life Sprouted Grain Burger Buns Ezekiel 4:9. It is awesome bread! We spread a little Earth Balance margarine on it, and skillet toast it a little before adding the filling.

You could use lettuce and tomatoes instead of pineapple and carrots for a more traditional sandwich. A veggie burger patty would be good too.

This recipe will be included in Shirley's upcoming cookbook.

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Cathy from Minnesota calls on Aunt Nettie to offer alternatives for a common kitchen dilemma.

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I'm working on eliminating the use of white flour in my cooking, but now I've run into a little challenge. I hope you can help me solve a problem. I've always used white flour as a thickener for sauces and gravies. What can I use instead?

Here's what Aunt Nettie writes:

Land sakes, Cathy! In this ole head o' mine there's a heap o' choices fer thickenin' a sauce other than usin' white flour. Nowadays I consider white flour ole fashioned an' if there's one thing I ain't, it's ole fashioned even tho I'm lots older than most folks.

Well, fer starters, cornstarch is a handy thickener. You kin buy it in any ole market in the bakin' section. Dependin' on how much sauce ya got, start by puttin' 'bout two tablespoons o' cornstarch in a cup er a juice size glass. Then ya stir in two tablespoons o' cold water. If it feels kinda tight when yer a-stirrin' jes add a tad more water and stir 'til ya have a watery sorta paste. Have this little mixture ready a-fore cookin yer sauce. When yer sauce gits up to a zippy boil, stir in yer cornstarch mixture a little bit at a time, an' keep a-stirrin' fer 'bout a whole minute an' you'll see the sauce takin' on a nice shiny glaze an' gittin' kinda thick. It's easy ta mix up more cornstarch 'n water if the thickness is not to yer likin'. One thing I jes love 'bout cornstarch is if ya don't need all that ya mixed up, jes let it sit on the shelf an' it'll dry out. Then, when ya need it fer another sauce, jes add a tad o' water, stir it up an' it's good as new.

Brown rice flour makes a nice, almost instant thickener. You'll probably need ta take yerself ta the health food market ta buy it, but it don't cost ya much an' if ya keep it in the fridge, it won't git buggy on ya. Use slightly less of the rice flour than the cornstarch, 'bout 1 2/3 teaspoons to one-half cup liquid. Mix it with a bit o' water 'n stir it inta yer bubblin' sauce. Just you watch it

thicken right up nice 'n smooth-like.

Ever try arrowroot? Arrowroot is a sauce thickener with a different kinda personality. It turns yer sauce into a clear glaze sorta mixture an' that's real nice fer a dessert with a fruit sauce. It costs a mighty penny but a little bit goes a long stretch. It takes 'bout the same measures as cornstarch, 'bout 2 tablespoons ta thicken up a cup and a half o' sauce.

If that's not to yer likin', a tad more arrowroot won't hurt none 'cause it don't have much flavor and won't affect yer taste buds none. Ya might want ta know a bit about arrowroot 'cause it's a stranger in most kitchens, so here what I kin tellya. It comes from a root of a starchy plant that grows in far away places I never been ta, like the West Indies 'n South America. This here plant has a fancy name, *Maranta arundinacea*. Some folks boil it up an' eat it kinda like 'taters. Some Chinese restaurants even use it fer thickenin' soups instead o' cornstarch.

Potato starch is some folks' favorite thickener an' sometimes they calls it potato flour. It makes a good thickener fer soups 'n gravies. It don't take much 'n it's cheap, too. Try 'bout 2/3 of a teaspoon fer a half cup o' liquid. Sometimes I jes use plain ole 'taters ta thicken up a soup, too, 'bout one er two does the trick. Potato starch er potato flour is easy ta find in the grocery store. If ya cain't find it easy, look in the aisle with the kosher food.

Now tapioca flour works 'bout same as cornstarch, too. That's probably another one o' them items you'll find in the health food market. If ya cain't find tapioca flour, buy regular tapioca and put them little pearls in yer electric coffee grinder a couple o' spoonsful at a time 'n grind it into a nice powder. Then, mix 2 tablespoons in 2 er 3 tablespoons o' cold water. Git it nice 'n dissolved, then stir it into a bubblin' sauce.

Nuts make a dandy thickener. Now, don't that jes surprise ya? Cashews are my very favorite. I measure up a cup o' raw cashew pieces an' grind 'em to a powder in my trusty little electric coffee grinder. Then, when I'm a-ready ta thicken up my sauce er my soup, I gets it ta bubblin' an' jes add in a little bit at a time 'till it hollers "uncle." If there's some ground up cashews left over, jes save it in a plastic baggie an' put it in the fridge fer next time 'round.

Now raw almonds are nice too, but it's hard ta git 'em ground up as fine as the cashews an' it seems ta take more of 'em ta thicken yer sauce. I grind 'em up in the food processor, an' jes wait 'til you hear the racket them nuts make. I use the almonds when my sauce is a-hankerin' fer a little character. I calls it character, but the fancy cookin' folks use the word "texture." Since the almonds don't grind up to a powder in my food processor, them little tiny pieces add character.

Peanuts grind up nice an' fine in the electric coffee grinder an suit me jes fine as a thickener when I'm a-lookin' fer a peanut flavor ta my sauce.

Peanut butter, almond butter, er cashew butter are purty swell in my book. Watch out fer the peanut butter, though. It jes up an' takes over the flavor of yer sauce. Now, that don't happen with the cashew er almond butter so much, 'cause they're milder. You might start out with two, maybe three tablespoons, stir it in, an' wait a minute ta see if the thickness is ta yer likin'. Then add one tablespoon at a time 'til it's a-singin' Turkey in the Straw nice 'n loud.

Well, Cathy, darlin' that's it in a nutshell.

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With this issue *Vegetarians in Paradise* continues the bean explorations of VOW, a diabetic who has discovered the importance of beans in her diet. In subsequent VIP issues VOW will enlighten our readers with the further Adventures of the Bean.

Adventures of the Bean #6

Lowering Cholesterol and Triglycerides on a Vegan Diet

by VOW

[Includes Recipe Below](#)

In my second bean article (<http://www.vegparadise.com/bean2.html>), I shared the heartbreak of my doctor visit where I discovered that three months' worth of vegan eating did **NOT** produce the results I had hoped for. I practically danced to that appointment, positive that my blood tests would show that my health had improved to an impressive level.

I probably looked like I'd been clubbed with a baseball bat when my doctor informed me that my cholesterol was 196.00 mg/dL (normal range 45.00 to 200.00 mg/dL) which certainly isn't anything to brag about, and my triglycerides had RISEN, and were now 242.00 mg/dL (normal

35.00 to 160 mg/dL).

Where was all the improvement that a plant-based, low-fat, cholesterol-free diet was supposed to produce? Why did I even bother to re-arrange my entire kitchen, and subject myself to the teasing of friends and relatives? Maybe I should march out of the doctor's office, and drive myself to a steak house!



My doctor refused to let me wallow in self-pity. She pointed out the thirty pounds I had lost, and explained that losing weight was a positive step in my journey to better health. She also explained that the cholesterol would HAVE to drop, but it often lagged behind diet changes, and it would take longer than three months for the bloodwork to improve. "Those are just numbers," she said.

She shared that she is a Seventh Day Adventist, and is familiar with vegetarian and vegan diets. And because of her first-hand knowledge, she explained that there is often a RISE in triglycerides when a person begins a low-fat diet, because there is often an increase in carbohydrates to balance the intake.

Some of what she said must have sunk in, because I didn't leave her office and run home to eat an entire cheesecake.

Fast-forward six months. I managed to stay at least vegetarian. The holidays of course are very subversive to a vegan diet! I didn't lose any more weight, but neither did I gain any, either. And in January I reported to the lab and rolled up my sleeve.

Pardon me while I preen a little bit!

- Cholesterol was now 151.00 mg/dL (normal is 45.00 to 200.00 mg/dL) -- a 45-point drop!
- Triglycerides now 139.00 mg/dL (normal is 35.00 to 160.00 mg/dL) -- a 103-point drop!!!

HEY! I'm going to stay Vegan for a while longer!

Are you jazzed now? I am! And I have a fantastic soup to share, and an incredibly impressive bean to use in the soup!

In the Four Corners area of the Southwestern United States, there lived a Native American people called the Anasazi. (Anasazi is a Navajo word meaning, "the Ancient Ones," and right now, it's not actually politically correct to refer to these people by that name.) They lived and worked and farmed and traded, from about AD 1 to AD 1300. Then, for unknown reasons, the settlers in this area abandoned their homes and their farms.

Not much is known about them after they migrated; some experts think they were absorbed in other Native American populations outside of their territory. However, they did leave behind some wonderful archaeological ruins, so we now know how they lived, what they wore, the foods they ate, and the goods they made and traded. <http://www.co.blm.gov/ahc/anasazi.htm#Who>

One of their agricultural products was a type of bean.

<http://beanbag.net/cgi-bin/image/templates/ba2.jpg> This beautiful legume was "rediscovered" in the ancient ruins around 1900, and is named for the Anasazi people. The bean is a mottled maroon and white, and cooks up similar to a pinto bean, having a very tender skin. It is reported to be more digestible than the typical bean, causing less gas in susceptible people.

The following recipe has its origins in Colombia, South America. One of the ancestral peoples in that area is known as Antioquian. In combining Native North American beans with Native South American cooking, I think you will join me in appreciating bean soup celebrating the heritage of the Western Hemisphere!

Antioquian Bean Soup

Serves 8

2 cups (480 ml) dry Anasazi beans, rinsed and picked over (about 1 pound or 450 g.)
1 3-inch (7.5 cm) piece of kombu
Vegetable broth to cover
4 slices of vegetarian bacon, chopped
1 green plantain, finely chopped
2 onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 14-ounce (395 g) can diced tomatoes (and juice)
Salt and pepper to taste.

1. Place rinsed beans in crockpot, cover with water and add kombu. Soak overnight.
2. In the morning, drain the soaking water, keeping kombu.
3. Add broth, bacon, plantain, onion, and garlic. Cook on high for several hours.
4. If beans are tender, add tomatoes and juice, and finish cooking on low until serving time. If beans are still firm, continue cooking on high until they soften, then continue to cook as directed.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Note: the kombu adds little to no flavor to the recipe and should completely disintegrate into the soup through cooking. If pieces are still visible and not aesthetically pleasing to you, the kombu can be removed before serving. Kombu cooked with beans renders them more digestible, and reduces the fragrant side effects (although the Anasazi beans are supposed to be easier on the gut than other legumes!).

Nutrition Facts

Per serving:

Calories 185

Calories from fat 2

Total carbohydrates 35g

Fiber 7g

Protein 11g

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We invite you to share the bounty with this family favorite that could be the highlight of a light meal on those cool winter days. Because butternut squash is readily available throughout the year, this richly flavored soup can actually be enjoyed all year long.

BUTTERNUT CORN CASHEW SOUP

1 large butternut squash
1 C. (240 ml) raw or dry-roasted, unsalted cashews
3 ears of sweet corn, cooked, or 2 cans whole kernel corn, drained*
1/3 C. (80 ml) water
2 medium onions, chopped fine
2 stalks celery, chopped fine
2 carrots, peeled and chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/4 t. ground nutmeg
1 t. salt or to taste
Freshly ground black pepper
2 - 4 C. (1/2 to 1 liter) water
Fresh herbs, minced or shredded raw beets, or pomegranate seeds

1. Place squash on a baking sheet, and bake at 400 F (Gas Mark 6) for 1 hour or until soft to the touch.

2. Put cashews in a food processor and process to a fine meal. Set aside.

3. With a sharp knife, cut corn kernels off the cob. Set aside.

4. Into a large stock pot put the water, onions, celery, carrots, and garlic. Cook until soft, about five minutes, adding more water if needed.

5. Add nutmeg, salt, and pepper to stock pot. Add corn kernels. When squash is cool enough to handle, cut in half and discard seeds. Scoop out flesh, and puree in food processor or blender. Add to stock pot along with ground cashews.

6. Add water to desired consistency, and cook together for 5 - 10 minutes to blend flavors. Adjust seasoning if needed.

7. For a special presentation, garnish each bowl with finely minced fresh herbs, shredded beets, pomegranate seeds, or a fresh sprig of cilantro. Serves 6.

* If desired, the drained liquid from the canned corn can be part of the liquid added to the soup. This gives the soup a more dominant corn flavor, but it definitely makes a very tasty soup.

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The holiday season brings families together to bond over great food. Let's set the nostalgic scene with chilly nights and blustery days, crackling logs in the fireplace, your favorite holiday music on the stereo, presents wrapped in colorful paper, and tempting aromas from the kitchen that seem to waft throughout the whole house. Those beckoning aromas stir the curiosity and you wander into the kitchen to find a simmering soup kettle. Now what could that soup be? Smells delicious, but looks unfamiliar. You steal a little taste. It's great--mmmm, really good-----fabulous! Got to have that recipe!

CHESTNUT SOUP

For the best of flavors, prepare the soup the day before you plan to serve, giving it plenty of time to blend into a satisfying kettle. Cooking the chestnuts is the easy part. Peeling is the challenge. To make an uninspired task more pleasant, pour yourself a cup of herbal tea, bring one bowl to the table for the peelings and another for the peeled chestnuts. Get off your feet awhile, peel, and sip the afternoon away.

1 1/4 lbs. (566 gr) fresh chestnuts in the shell

1 large onion, chopped, about 2 C. (480 ml)

2 large carrots, chopped, about 2 C. (480 ml)

2 stalks celery, diced

1/2 serrano chile, finely minced

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) water

2 qts. (2 liters) unsweetened soy milk

2 T. + 1 t. nutritional yeast

2 t. salt or to taste



1/4 t. dried tarragon

1/4 + 1/8 t. ground nutmeg

3 T. cornstarch

4 T. water

Chopped chives for garnish

1. With a firm-bladed paring knife, make crisscross cuts on both sides of each chestnut. Put the chestnuts into a 4-quart saucepan, cover with about 3-inches of water, cover the pot, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down slightly and boil gently for 20 to 25 minutes.
2. Cool slightly. With a slotted spoon, scoop out about 3 or 4 chestnuts at a time into a small bowl, and peel as suggested above. Keeping the chestnuts warm makes it easier to remove the peel. Set the peeled chestnuts aside.
3. Combine onions, carrots, celery, chile, and water in a large, deep skillet and cook together over high heat until soft, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Set aside.
4. In a large stockpot make a stock by combining soymilk, nutritional yeast, salt, tarragon, and nutmeg, and heat over medium-high heat until simmering.
5. Make a thin paste by combining the cornstarch and water in a cup. Add to simmering soy milk stock, and stir for 1 minute until it is well dissolved and soup is slightly thickened. Turn off heat.
6. Puree three-quarters of the vegetable mixture and three-quarters of the chestnuts in the food processor along with 1 1/2 C. water. Add to soup along with the remaining unpureed vegetables.
7. Chop the remaining chestnuts and add to the soup. Heat gently to warm through and blend flavors. Cool and store in the refrigerator.
8. The next day, heat gently, and garnish each bowl with a light sprinkling of chives. This recipe will thoroughly satisfy 6 to 8 soup lovers.

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Please send any questions to Ask Aunt Nettie at our e-mail address: auntnettie@vegparadise.com

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I've gone vegan for about a year now, and I'm not sorry one bit. There is a however, though. I really miss creamed soups like crazy, especially cream of mushroom soup. Is there a way to make it vegan?

Yours,

Michelle

Howdy do, Michelle,

I knows what them hankerin's is like darlin'. I hears it all the time from folks jes missin' their favorite dishes they left behind. But child, you don't have to put that deevine soup in yer past--you kin put it right back on the table by adjustin' a few o' them fixin's.

Now you jes give a look-see at them ingredients, make yerself a shoppin' list, and git out that ole soup kettle. I jes know yer gonna have a mighty fine bowl o' soup tonight!

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

15 dried shiitake mushrooms
3 C. (720 ml) boiling water

1/2 lb. (225 g) cremini mushrooms
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely minced
1 T. extra virgin olive oil
3 T. water



1/2 t. marjoram
Pinch of each thyme, oregano, rosemary
3/4 t. salt
1/8 t. ground black pepper
1 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos
1 medium carrot, shredded

1 12-oz. (340 g) pkg. soft silken tofu
1 C. (240 ml) unsweetened soymilk

2 T. cornstarch
2 T. water

1. Put shiitake mushrooms into a medium-size bowl, pour boiling water over them, and soak for 1 hour.
2. After soaking, snip off stems from shiitakes and discard. Reserve soak water. Put the mushrooms into the food processor and process into small bits. Transfer to a stockpot.
3. Wash crimini mushrooms and process them along with the onions into small bits in the processor. Transfer them to the stockpot along with minced garlic.
4. Add olive oil and water to stockpot, and sauté over high heat until softened, about 5 minutes.
5. Measure soak water. It should measure at least 2 1/4 cups (540 ml). If less, add water to make up the difference. Add soak water to the stockpot along with marjoram, herbs, salt, pepper, Bragg Liquid Aminos, and shredded carrot.
6. Cream silken tofu and soy milk in the food processor and add to stockpot. Cook over medium high heat until soup begins to simmer. Gently simmer about 5 to 7 minutes to harmonize flavors.
7. Combine cornstarch and water in a small bowl or cup and stir to a runny paste. Add to bubbling soup a little at a time until thickened to desired consistency. Adjust seasoning, if needed, and serve. Makes 6 hearty servings.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I bought pumpkins galore for Halloween for the kids. Now what do I do with them?

Your friend,
Darlene

Darlene, you li'l darlin',

Now don't you fret none. With Halloween behind y'all, I figured there'd be some folks just a-starin' at a few o' them bright orange punkins that never got 'round to bein' carved into Jack o'lanterns--ya might jes call 'em the leftovers o' Halloween. Of course, it leaves ya puzzlin' 'bout just what ta do with them ole punkins that are takin' up space on yer kitchen counter.

My solution--why, jes make a pot o' soup! Nothin' feels more satisfyn' when them chilly autumn nights come along

I chose a pie punkin for this speshul soup. That's 'cause Farmer John, the farmer who owns the farmstand close by, recommends them cute li'l pie punkins for their meatier innards, but, actually, any punkin will do. Now, jes remember ta set out a bowl fer me--I jes love homemade soup.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie



PUMPKIN PARSNIP SOUP

1 pie pumpkin or other pumpkin, about 3 1/2 lbs
3 large parsnips, peeled and sliced
7 C. (1.75 liters) water



2 sticks cinnamon
1/4 t. ground black pepper

1/2 t. salt

1/2 C. (118 ml) quinoa

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) water

3 large carrots, peeled and diced

1 cup (237 ml) water

3/4 t. ground allspice

1/4 t. ground cinnamon

1 T. maple syrup

Salt to taste

Nutmeg

1. Cut pumpkin in half and scoop out seeds. Lay pumpkin half on cutting board cut side down, and cut 1-inch (2 1/2 cm) slices. Lay slices on their sides and remove skin cutting downward with a firm chef's knife. Cut pumpkin into 2-inch (5 cm) chunks and put them into a large stock pot.
2. Add sliced parsnips, water, cinnamon sticks, pepper, and salt to stockpot. Cover and turn heat to high. Bring to a boil, then turn heat down to simmer. Cook until softened, about 12 to 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, thoroughly rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer under running water to remove its bitter coating. Combine quinoa and water in a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 20 minutes.
4. Put carrots in a deep skillet with water and cook over high heat until softened, about 6 to 8 minutes.
5. When pumpkin and parsnips are softened, puree in a food processor. Return to stockpot and add cooked quinoa and carrots. Add more water if mixture is too thick.
6. Add allspice, cinnamon, maple syrup, and salt to taste. Cook another 5 minutes to blend flavors. Serve steaming hot with a dash of ground nutmeg. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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This month Sandy from Boston wrote to Aunt Nettie. She wants to know the difference in the taste of fresh herbs versus the dried, and when to use each kind. Once again Aunt Nettie comes to the rescue.

Well, Sandy, I kin see yer havin' a dilemma, but don'tcha worry none, child. I kin fix most everthing, in the kitchen, that is.

Fresh herbs are my favorite in the whole world, and the best kind is them you grow yerself. They're easy, really. Some are PERENNIALS, so ya plant 'em jes once, and don't give 'em a bother after that. The perennials I like ta use in the kitchen are CHIVES, ROSEMARY, LEMON THYME, ENGLISH THYME, MARJORAM, OREGANO, GREEK OREGANO, PARSLEY, MINT, DILL, an' SAGE.

When yer cookin' with fresh herbs, add 'em in the last few minutes. If ya cook 'em too long, they kick the bucket, and ya wasted yer time.

The flavors I jes' treasure most are usin' fresh herbs in recipes like salads, either grain, bean, or vegetable salads. That's when fresh herbs are jumpin' alive with flavor 'n' singin' a zesty tune. Fresh herbs make garnishing easier than puttin' on shoes. A sprinkle o' fresh chives an' basil on top a colorful salad, er a sprig o' fresh dill on top a tofu torte jes' puts a smile on this ole face. It's so purty.

Some herbs are ANNUALS. That means ya haveta plant 'em fresh every year. But I don't mind 'cause they're really no trouble. My favorites are BASIL, SUMMER SAVORY, CILANTRO, GARLIC, an' TARRAGON.



Now here's what I kin tell ya 'bout the dried herbs. They're best used for recipes that take some longer cookin' like soups, sauces, an' stews. It's also best that ya don't keep 'em too long, say 'bout six months, er they lost their zip. My favorite dried herbs are thyme, marjoram, an' dill. Don't waste yer money on dried cilantro. It doesn't hold onto its flavor once ya dry it. Cilantro is one

herb ya absolutely must use fresh er not at all. An' that's a fact.



Measurin' up yer herbs doesn't put a strain on yer mind, er take a special calculator either. Jes' figure on one-third the amount of dried herbs compared to the fresh. Fer instance, if yer recipe beckons ya to use 3 T. fresh parsley, figure on usin' jes' 1 T. dried parsley. Another example is the other way 'round. If yer recipe says use 1/2 t. dried marjoram, clip a few sprigs of fresh marjoram from yer garden, an' measure up 1 1/2 t. fer yer recipe. Now, that's all there is to it.

Now here's a recipe that jes' might appeal ta yer creative side, 'cause it's up ta you ta add the fresh herbs ya like best. This dish is good fer breakfast, lunch, er dinner:

CRUMBLED TOFU QUICK-FIX

1 lb. (453 g) extra firm tofu, crumbled

3 T. Bragg Liquid Aminos

1 T. fresh lemon juice

2 T. red bell pepper, diced

2 green onions, minced

2 T. fresh basil, tarragon, thyme, mint, marjoram, or dill or any combination of these to taste

1. Combine all ingredients except herbs in a 10" (about 25 cm.) non-stick skillet.
2. Cook over high heat for 4 minutes, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon to blend flavors.
3. Add herbs and cook 1 or 2 minutes to infuse flavors. Serve warm or cold. Serves 6.

VARIATION: For an Asian touch, add a teaspoon or two of sesame oil, 6 Chinese snowpeas, diced, and 1/2" (about 1 cm) piece of ginger, peeled and grated.

VARIATION: Instead of cooking, use the ingredients fresh and toss with 1 T. extra virgin olive oil to create a salad. Adjust flavors to taste.

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Here's a tofu specialty that has really taken off and bears quite a resemblance to real egg salad. Use as a sandwich filling, a mushroom cap stuffing, or a canape topping.

EGG SALAD LOOK-ALIKE

1 lb. (450 g) extra firm tofu

2 large cloves garlic, whole

3/4 t. ground coriander

3/4 t. dried dill weed

1 1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. onion powder

1/4 t. ground black pepper

1/2 t. turmeric

1 T. lemon juice

1 T. rice vinegar

1/4 t. dry mustard

1/2 medium, sweet onion, diced or 2 green onions, including tops, minced

1 T. fresh parsley, minced

1 stalk celery, diced

1. Drain and rinse tofu.
2. Break into chunks and put into a food processor.
3. If you don't have a food processor, break tofu into smaller chunks and put into a 3-quart (3 liter) mixing bowl.
4. Add seasonings and process until well blended, or mash with a fork until well blended.

5. If using the processor, transfer mixture to a bowl.
6. Add the vegetables to the bowl and mix well to distribute evenly.

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With beautiful, fleshy, fresh artichokes appearing in the farmers' markets, now is the time to enjoy them at their best. When shopping, select artichokes that appear moist and plump rather than those that have dried and shriveled petals. The recipe I'm sharing this month is cooked in a tangy marinade and does not need to be served with a dressing or a dipping sauce.

DRESSED-UP ARTICHOKES

12 small, 3 giant size, or 6 medium-size fresh artichokes
2 C. (480 ml) water
1/4 C. (60 ml) apple cider vinegar
5 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
1 1/2 t. salt
1/2 t. dried marjoram
2 T. extra virgin olive oil

1. If you buy the variety that has sharp stickers at the tip of each petal, use a large, serrated knife to cut off the tough top 1/2 " (1 cm) to 1" (2.5 cm) of the artichoke.
2. With a sturdy scissors, snip off the top 1/2" (1 cm) of each remaining petal to avoid getting poked. Remove the small, tough outer petals at the base of the artichoke.
3. With a small paring knife, peel the tough outer layer from the stem. Most of the time the stems are extremely tasty and quite substantial, so **don't** cut them off and discard them.
4. Cut the giant or medium-size artichokes in half. Place them in a pot large enough to hold most of them placed cut-side down. If using small artichokes, leave them whole.



5. Add the remaining ingredients to the pot.
6. Cover the pot, and bring to a boil over high heat. Turn heat down to low and steam 20 to 30 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork near the stem of the artichoke. This recipe serves 6.

That's all there is to it! Enjoy this savory treat! Be sure to include an extra plate or bowl at the table for the discarded petals.

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Kevin in Northridge asked for Aunt Nettie's suggestions on what to do with leftover baked potatoes. He's never sure he'll have enough if his guests want an extra potato, so he bakes up a few extras that invariably end up as leftovers.

Here's Aunt Nettie's handy hint for Kevin:

Dear Kevin,

Well now, I'd like to share one of my secrets with y'all. Yer a cook after my own heart. I make lots 'a extras 'cause I consider leftovers a blessin'. After the last dinner guest goes home, I wrap up those leftover potatoes in a nice little plastic bag and tuck 'em into the 'fridge.

Next mornin' I chop 'em up and add 'em to a breakfast scramble along with chopped onions, tomatoes, peppers 'n some tofu. Season up with some lemon juice, a tad 'a salt, and some fresh herbs like dill, marjoram, mint 'r basil.

I serve up my scramble with some whole grain bread, a tofu spread fer the bread, and a bowl 'a fresh fruit. Now that's a tasty start. Mind, be sure to include the skins fer extra fiber.

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This month Aunt Nettie answers Christine's request for an easy potato casserole.

Howdy Christine,

Betcha thought I fergot 'bout ya. Truth is I wanted to razzle dazzle ya with a potato casserole that was gonna git ya singin' Yankee Doodle. I'm sure yer gonna love this one. It's easy to fix, but it does take some time ta cook up in the oven. Be sure 'n' tell me how ya like it!

PARADISE SCALLOPED POTATOES

1/2 C. (118 ml) cashews



3 T. white miso (mild)

1/4 C. (59 ml) fresh lemon juice

1 1/2 C. (355 ml) unsweetened soy milk

2 T. nutritional yeast

1 t. salt

Pinch cayenne

Freshly ground black pepper

1 lb. (453 g) red or white rose potatoes, scrubbed and thinly sliced

3 green onions, chopped

1 medium tomato, diced

Paprika

2 T. coarsely ground walnuts

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees (gas mark 5). Using a small electric coffee grinder, grind cashews into a powder and put into a medium size bowl. Set aside.

2. In a small bowl combine miso and lemon juice, blending to a smooth consistency with a spoon or small wire whip. Add to cashews.
3. Add soy milk, nutritional yeast, salt, cayenne, and black pepper to bowl with the cashews, and stir until thoroughly combined. Set sauce aside.
4. Cover bottom of an 8" x 8" (about 20 cm. x 20 cm.) pyrex baking dish with a little of the sauce. Layer 1/2 the potatoes, green onions, and tomatoes in the baking dish. Cover with 1/2 the sauce. Repeat layering and finish with remaining sauce. Cover with aluminum foil (shiny side down) and bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and sprinkle paprika and ground walnuts over top before serving. Serves 4 to 5.

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Dear Aunt Nettie,

I heard that carrots were good for the eyes. Is that just a folk tale or is it for real?

Conrad

Well, Conrad child,

I got a little secret fer ya. I been hearin' that same tale since I was knee high. Funniest thing though, it's derved true. Carrots is packed with a heap o' vitamin A an' that's real good fer the eyes. Ta give y'all an idea how speshul carrots is, 1 cup o' raw chopped carrots gives ya 36,005 IU of vitamin A. If ya cook them carrots, ya gets 38,304 IU. That's 'cause when ya cook 'em down, it takes more of 'em ta make 1 cup. Here's some carrot fixin's with lots o' that good vitamin.

Yer ever lovin' Aunt Nettie

SPICED PUREE OF CARROT



6 carrots, peeled (if not organic), and sliced
1/2 C. (118 ml) water
Pinch of salt

1/4 t. ground cinnamon
1/8 t. ground nutmeg
1 t. pure maple syrup
2 T. cooking liquid

1 t. canola oil

1. Put carrot slices, water, and salt into a 2-quart (2 liter) saucepan. Cover and bring to a boil

over high heat. Turn heat to low and cook about 7 to 10 minutes or until fork tender. Transfer to a food processor, reserving any cooking liquid.

2. Add cinnamon, nutmeg, maple syrup, cooking liquid, and canola oil to processor and process until pureed to a smooth consistency, adding extra cooking liquid if needed. Adjust seasonings to taste. Serves 4.

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Recently Aunt Nettie had an amusing exchange that resulted from a question that she received by e-mail from Tim in Colorado. We thought you, too, may at some time encounter the same challenge and would be well prepared with Aunt Nettie's response.

Dear Aunt Nettie,

I have a vegetarian soup recipe that calls for 1 cup (237 ml) of dry cider. Can you please tell me what "dry cider" is?

Thanks!

Tim

Howdy Tim Darlin',

That soup recipe sounds mighty good already! I'm a'comin right over fer a taste!

That dry cider dilemma ya have on yer hands is actually good ole fashioned, imported English hard cider. Like a dry wine, it's dry, too, and has 'bout 6% alcohol. The very best brand is Blackthorn - it's the driest. Then comes Cross Bow Cider, and the sweetest of the dry ciders is Woodpecker. Ya see, I had my share o' tastin' in my day.

Findin' the dry cider might be a little hitch. Look fer a liquor store that sells lots o' imported beers - that's probably where ya kin git yer hands on some.

Now don't git talked into Wyder Cider - that's much too sweet fer yer wants, and it usually has fruit flavors like peach, pear, and maybe raspberry. Well, Tim, if that soups turns out as good as it sounds, would y'all send me some? well, the recipe, then.

Take care, sweetheart.

Love,

Aunt Nettie

Tim was so ecstatic with Aunt Nettie's information he responded with praise and appreciation.

Dear Aunt Nettie,

Thanks so much for your cooking advice. I posed this same "dry cider" question to folks at the supermarket, at high-tech Web food sites, and even to a highfalutin chef at a local cooking school. But, leave it to Aunt Nettie with her good ole fashion cooking smarts, and obvious extensive cider-tasting experience, to come through with the answer. Thanks Aunt Nettie; you are a true gem.

I visited my local liquor store and picked up some Woodchuck dark and dry cider - maybe not the best brand, but it came in a big ole bottle that afforded plenty of tasting opportunities with generous amounts left for the soup recipe. In fact, I still have some to spare, and if you are ever in the area, feel free to stop in for a belly-warming blast of this "naturally fermented draft cider."

After several cider taste tests, to assure the quality of the ingredients, I began in earnest to make my "Vegetable Medley a la Grecque" taken from the "Food Lover's Guide to Vegetarian Cooking". Mmm-mmm, I don't know if it was the cider in the soup or the cider I had before making the soup, but it sure came out to my liking. I owe you a big thanks, Aunt Nettie. One respondent to my question suggested that I try cider vinegar. I am so glad I took your advice over his - belting down several glasses of vinegar wouldn't have been nearly as much fun as the cider you suggested!

Anyway, here is the recipe and thanks again for sharing your cooking wisdom Aunt Nettie.

Tim

Our Aunt Nettie felt compelled to respond.

Tim,

You lil' sweetheart, yer a man after my own ever lovin' heart, and yer a man of good taste, too.

I'm so glad you chose the hard cider over the cider vinegar! And ya sure had more fun with that cider than a bottle o' cider vinegar! And thanks so much fer the recipe. Did that recipe have some directions attached to it. The ingredients sound mighty fine, but now I needs to ask fer yer help. What do I do with those nice veggies and the sauce?

Yer ever lovin'

Aunt Nettie

Tim provides the full recipe as follows:

Hi Aunt Nettie,

Here is the full text of the recipe you requested for "Vegetable Medley a la Grecque" from "The Food Lover's Guide to Vegetarian Cooking" (Thunder Bay Press).

Ingredients

2 small celery hearts, outer stalks removed, cut into 1 inch slices
12 oz.(340 g) carrots scraped and cut into julienne strips
1 cup (237 ml) snowpeas
4 oz. (113 g) small onions or shallots peeled and left whole
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro or mint.

Sauce

4 Tbsp. tomato paste
1 cup (237 ml) dry cider
1 cup (237 ml) water
2 cloves garlic minced
1 Tbsp. sunflower oil
1 tsp. mustard seed, lightly crushed
salt and pepper
1 bay leaf

Put all the sauce ingredients into a pan, bring to a boil, cover and simmer 20 minutes.

Add celery, carrots, snowpeas and onions, bring the sauce to a boil. Cover pan and simmer for 10 min. Remove bay leaf and stir in 1/2 chopped herbs. Serve warm or cold - Sprinkle with remaining herbs before serving.

Tim

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