

South American Soups • Vegan Persian Cuisine

VOLUME XXXI, NO 1

VEGETARIAN

JOURNAL HEALTH ECOLOGY ETHICS

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to Be Vegetarian
in the Military?**

**Read What Some
Service Members
Have to Say!**

**Finding Soy-Free
Egg Substitutes
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NUTRITION HOTLINE

REED MANGELS, PhD, RD



This issue's Nutrition Hotline addresses concerns about the USDA's new Food Plate graphic, which implies that certain vegan foods provide adequate calcium but may not supply some other nutrients found in cow's milk.

QUESTION: *"The text that accompanies the USDA's new Food Plate graphic says, 'Calcium-fortified foods and beverages such as cereals, orange juice, rice milk, or almond milk may provide calcium, but may not provide the other nutrients found in dairy products.'*

"We wondered what the missing nutrients were and how easy it would be to obtain them."

ANSWER: Most foods that can replace milk as a calcium source have more fiber, iron, folate, and niacin than cow's milk. Many of the nutrients that are lower in non-dairy sources of calcium—such as potassium, phosphorus, protein, thiamin, riboflavin, vitamin B₆, zinc, and vitamin A—are found in a variety of foods in a vegan diet. These include whole grains, dried beans, potatoes, and deep orange vegetables. Other nutrients, such as vitamin B₁₂ and vitamin D, are best obtained from fortified foods or supplements.

A food is identified as 'similar' if it has at least 80 percent of the amount of the nutrient compared to a serving of skim milk.

Thanks to VRG volunteer Sarah Alper, who looked into high-calcium foods and helped us find foods that have as much (or more) calcium as cow's milk does.

Note: The *foods mentioned below* are part of what you would be eating in your diet anyway, *not additional*.

The following servings of items each provide the same amount (or more) of calcium as a cup of dairy milk:

- **8 ounces of calcium-fortified orange juice** have a similar amount or more of fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, thiamin, niacin, and folate as cow's milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, zinc, riboflavin, vitamin A, vitamin B₆, vitamin B₁₂, and vitamin D as you'd get from a cup of milk, you can consume 1/2 cup cooked beans, 1 teaspoon Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast, and a small carrot.

- **3/4 cup of calcium-fortified cereal** has the same or more fiber, iron, magnesium, zinc, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin A, vitamin B₆, and vitamin B₁₂ as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, and potassium as is in a cup of dairy milk, eat the cereal with a cup of soymilk.

- **8 ounces of calcium-fortified rice milk** have a similar amount or more of fiber, iron, magnesium, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin A, vitamin B₁₂, and vitamin D as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, thiamin, vitamin B₆, and folate as is in a cup of dairy milk, eat a couple of Tablespoons of peanut butter and a medium banana.

- **1 3/4 cups of cooked soybeans** have a similar amount or more of protein, fiber, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B₆, and folate as milk.

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The *Vegetarian Journal* is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit organization that educates the public about vegetarianism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegetarian Journal* in the USA, send \$25 to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS

VEGAN TRENDS



As in all American trends, there appear to be signs both toward and away from a more vegan world. Our outreach booth at the American Dietetic Association Annual Meeting in San Diego was mobbed, though we were situated between a fish vendor and a fast food marketer.

Megan, a nutrition intern helping at the booth, said, “What was even more encouraging were the registered dietitians or other nutrition professionals who came by just to comment that they always pointed their patients, clients, and friends in the direction of the VRG website for information on becoming a vegetarian. They know that the information is invaluable with regard to beginning a vegetarian diet, or even improving upon a current lifestyle.” Thanks to Reed Mangels, PhD, RD; Catherine Conway, MS, RD; Bill Conway, MD; and Sarah Ellis, MS, RD, for staffing VRG’s booth.

We were pleased to see that the Corcoran Museum Restaurant in Washington, DC, had on their menu vegan items such as tomato and watermelon gazpacho, a warm spinach wrap with grilled veggies, and even vegan brownies. In a recent ad, Target offered coupons for (cruelty-free) Dr. Bronner’s peppermint liquid soap and Tom’s of Maine deodorant. And we greatly appreciate the scoutmaster who works for a butcher but went out of his way to buy Tofurky sausages for a vegan scout.

On the other hand, we were leading a discussion after a vegetarian movie with a somewhat pro-vegetarian audience, and it was intriguing to see how many people felt comfortable using animal products because of the promotion of locally grown and ‘humanely raised’ cattle and chickens. Whether you could really feed the whole country this way or why we choose to kill at all are still questions up for discussion. It will be interesting to see which choices people make in the long run.

When we printed our first typewritten newsletter in 1982, we never imagined that, 30 years later, more than 160,000 people would be coming to us for information each month (via our website). Though change can be hard sometimes, this change allowing us to reach so many more people was thrilling. With numerous questions about the future of the post office and increasing postage, as well as the common use of online communications, we’d appreciate it if you would answer this short survey. This is not for immediate action, but we are strategically preparing for the future.

- If information in *Vegetarian Journal* was only published online, I would continue to financially support the group and be a member.
- I would pay membership dues only if I continued to receive a print version of *Vegetarian Journal*.

Please send your answer to vrg@vrg.org or to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. Thanks so much for your ongoing support.

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stahler

Handwritten signatures of Debra Wasserman and Charles Stahler in blue ink.

Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

VRG's MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

How often have you wanted to make a gift in honor of a loved one or friend but weren't sure which charities are vegetarian-friendly, pro-environmental, or pro-animal rights? Please remember The Vegetarian Resource Group. You can make a gift in memory of a loved one or as a living tribute to honor someone you care about on a special occasion, such as a wedding or birth. We'll send an acknowledgement to you and to the recipient(s) you choose. Your gift will support educational outreach programs and help promote vegetarianism.

Memorials & Honorary Gifts

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

My name and address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Make checks payable to The Vegetarian Resource Group and mail to P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

Special thanks to two anonymous individuals for each giving \$5,000 and enrolling in VRG's Circle of Compassion. Thanks also to Bart Potenza and friends at Candle 79 for their ongoing support.

We would like to extend special thanks to the following interns and volunteers who have helped us with updating our restaurant guide: Colleen Hala, Deva Holub, Eric Kantor, Rita Pruzansky, Yasmin Radbod, Lindsey Siferd, Sheila Vaswani, and Michelle Wade.

Facebook Follower Remembers Early VRG Web Outreach

In response to this recent VRG Facebook wall posting:

A big thank you to Bobbi Pasternak, who has been sending out VRG's e-mail newsletter and assisting with outreach for over 15 years!

Wow, I remember when I got my first computer back in 1996 or 1997, and the first thing I did was search for vegetarian sites. Bobbi chaired a vegetarian chat ... I wouldn't miss that chat for anything! I think it was on Wednesday nights ... so long ago! I used to record the chats because there was so much useful information shared. ;-) **Lynn, via Facebook**

***Note:** Anyone can view The VRG's Facebook page at <www.facebook.com/thevegetarianresourcegroup>.*

VRG Materials Enrich Florida Veg Meetings

Our monthly events have been wonderful! Each month, 40-75 people who are interested in learning more about vegetarianism come out. They love all the magazines and brochures from you all! I set them out each month, and

they gobble them up. Any chance I can get some more?
Jacqueline, via e-mail

***Note:** You can also request VRG brochures, handouts, and copies of Vegetarian Journal to use at your events, school, or workplace. See the list of available publications at <www.vrg.org/nutshell/index.htm>. Then, you may either call VRG at (410) 366-8343 or send an e-mail to vrg@vrg.org with your request. A donation to cover production and shipping costs is appreciated.*

Non-Leather Saddles Now Available

I had been looking for a good treeless saddle without leather for years. I asked Barefoot Saddles (<www.barefootsaddlesusa.com>) to modify its synthetic Cheyenne Drytex, which was mostly synthetic but had leather girth straps. They did accept, and now, this saddle is available in a 'completely synthetic' version, without any leather. I thought you might be able to let vegan riders know.
Stéphanie, via e-mail

***Note:** Substituting biothane billets for the standard leather billets on this saddle costs an additional fee.*

Letters to the Editors can be sent to: Vegetarian Journal, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. You may also e-mail letters to vrg@vrg.org.

Coming in the Next Issue:

USING VEGAN YOGURT

Plus: Ways to Promote World Vegetarian Day, Tips for Running a College Vegetarian Club, and more!

Soy-Free Egg Substitutes

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD

THERE ARE WAYS TO REPLACE EGGS IN MANY recipes, ranging from baked goods to veggie burgers. You can even make egg- and soy-free 'omelets!' Before we discuss egg substitutes, though, we need to explore what the original ingredient brings to recipes. Egg yolks provide fat, moisture, and color, while egg whites bring protein and moisture into play. Eggs help with thickening and leavening in baked products. Thickening, in addition to creating the texture we want, creates binding. Leavening gives baked goods their 'rise,' and creates fluffy and 'light' products.

Identifying which function eggs serve in a particular recipe will help to determine how to replace them. Different ingredients can serve as egg replacers, if we know what 'job' we are looking to replace.

For example, cookie dough and muffin batters don't need too much thickening, but they do need the moisture that eggs supply. In custard pies, like pumpkin pie, eggs are used mainly for thickening. Quick breads, such as carrot cake, corn or zucchini bread, and cakes, need both the thickening and leavening qualities. Keep in mind that we can't produce super-light desserts that call for lots of eggs with egg substitutes, though. In general, we can use different ingredients when recipes call for no more than four eggs.

If a goal for egg replacement is to reduce fat, use one-quarter cup of applesauce, a puréed ripe banana, or cooked, puréed squash or pumpkin to replace one large egg. These lowfat items can add moisture to recipes, but they also add color and flavor. This means you'll need to consider your final product's appearance and

taste. Puréed pumpkin could work with carrot cake or oatmeal cookies, but it won't work with a lightly colored or flavored product such as sugar cookies.

If replacing eggs in non-baking recipes, we'll assume that the eggs are being used for moisture and binding. Leftover mashed potatoes; hummus; cooked, puréed beans or cooked, mashed beans; or cooked, puréed mushrooms can provide binding for items such as burgers, croquettes, patties, and loaves. You'll need to adjust the moisture content, using water, broth, or juice, as appropriate for your menu item.

If you plan to replace eggs with different ingredients, be ready to experiment a bit with all recipes. The rule of thumb for changing ingredients is to test the new recipe at least three times to ensure the results can be reproduced.

Here are some ingredients used to replace eggs, with some basic measurements and directions.

AGAR AGAR

Agar agar is produced from seaweed but does not have any flavor. Agar agar should not be used to replace whole eggs or egg yolks, but it is a good substitute for recipes calling for egg whites. Some patient vegan cooks have been able to create an almost meringue-like topping using agar agar.

CHIA SEEDS

Chia seeds are becoming more and more available. They are similar to flaxseeds in texture but perhaps a bit more 'gel'-like. However, chia seeds have an



advantage over flaxseeds in that they are almost flavorless, a good attribute when it comes to baking.

Chia seeds can be ground and used in baking recipes like flaxseeds are. (See below.) They can also be used to make a pudding-like gel (such as vegan Jell-O or chocolate pudding) with a cornstarch base.

CHICKPEA FLOUR

Chickpea or garbanzo bean flour has a slight 'bean' flavor, so you should consider this before selecting this ingredient for recipes. Chickpea flour produces 'chewy,' not 'fluffy,' results. Mix it with enough water or non-dairy milk to moisten, and use it in 'tougher' baking recipes, such as oatmeal cookies or zucchini bread.

Chickpea flour makes great homemade pasta or noodles. If you have patience, and are willing to practice, chickpea flour can be used instead of eggs or tofu to create thin pancakes or 'stuffed' omelets. When making 'omelets,' add a bit of mustard powder and nutritional yeast to give chickpea flour an 'eggy' flavor. Very small amounts of turmeric or mustard powder can be used to create a yellow color.

Chickpea flour is sold as 'besan' or 'gram dal' in South Asian shops. If you can't find chickpea flour in local markets, you can search for it online.

CORNSTARCH

When making heavier cakes, such as pound cake and quick breads, add two Tablespoons of cornstarch to the dry ingredients for each large egg to be replaced. The cornstarch helps to bind (thicken) the cake batter and provides a soft texture.

GROUND FLAXSEEDS

One Tablespoon of ground flaxseeds mixed with three Tablespoons

of liquid (such as water or rice or almond milk) is equivalent to approximately one large egg. The flaxseeds and liquid can be whipped by hand, with an electric mixer, or in a blender until they have a thick, eggy consistency.

If you can't find ground flaxseeds, you can grind whole flaxseeds in a spice or coffee grinder. Don't grind more than you need, as the mixture does not hold for very long. This flaxseed combo may be used as an egg substitute in baking recipes.

POTATOES OR INSTANT POTATO MIX

Sometimes, unflavored mashed potatoes or instant potato mix can be used instead of eggs in cookie or quick bread recipes. Potatoes have other uses beyond baking, though. They are good binding agents and can serve as the 'glue' that holds veggie burgers, patties, or loaves together.

PSYLLIUM

Psyllium husks have been available as a 'health food' for a long time. Psyllium, along with its cousins flax and chia, is gluten-free. Brands of psyllium husks differ in texture, but the guidelines for using psyllium in baking should follow fairly closely those of flaxseeds.

XANTHAN GUM

Xanthan gum is similar to psyllium in that it is gluten-free and fairly neutral in flavor. The commercial food industry has used xanthan to produce a creamy, smooth mouthfeel, such as is desired in vegan pudding or ice cream. Xanthan gum is available at some natural foods markets and from many online retailers.

OATMEAL COOKIES

(Makes 36 cookies)

These cookies are very sensitive to heat, so be certain to watch carefully when you are baking them!

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups quick oats (Be certain these are not 'long-cooking'.)
- 1 cup nonhydrogenated vegan margarine, at room temperature
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1/2 cup almond or lowfat coconut milk
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 Tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup chocolate chips or raisins

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine the flours, baking soda, salt, and oats. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, mash the margarine with the sugar until fluffy. Whisk the milk, lemon juice, and vanilla into the margarine mixture and mix until well-combined. Whisk the dry ingredients into the margarine mixture. Fold in the coconut and the chocolate chips or raisins and mix until just combined.

Drop the batter by the Tablespoon, approximately 2 Tablespoons per cookie, onto a non-stick baking sheet. Bake for 5-10 minutes, only until the cookies are browned around the edges. Remove cookies from oven and allow to cool on the baking sheet for 2-3 minutes before transferring them to a wire rack.

Total calories per cookie: 145 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 17 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 126 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

(Makes 36 cookies)

These cookies are soy-free. If they come out a bit too dry the first time you make them, add an extra Tablespoon or two of oil during your next attempt.

- 1 3/4 cups oat flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon ground flaxseeds
- 1/4 cup plain or vanilla rice or almond milk
- 1/4 cup brown sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1/2 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup vegan chocolate or carob chips
- 1/4 cup shredded coconut
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Sift flour, baking soda, and salt into a large bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, whisk the flaxseeds and milk until well-combined. Add sugars to flaxseed mixture, stirring until combined. Add oil and vanilla and mix until well-combined. Mix the wet and

dry ingredients together until just mixed. Fold in chocolate or carob chips, coconut, and cinnamon.

Drop the batter by the Tablespoon onto a non-stick baking sheet. Bake for 5-10 minutes, until cookies are golden. Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring them to a wire rack.

Total calories per cookie: 75 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 10 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 36 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

FROSTED CHOCOLATE CUPCAKES

(Makes approximately 10 cupcakes or 18 'mini' cupcakes)

Bake these cupcakes fresh and serve within a day or two.

CUPCAKES

- Vegetable oil spray
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 3/4 cup plain or vanilla rice or almond milk

1/2 cup very ripe, peeled, pitted, and puréed avocado (Using a blender or food processor works well.)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray cupcake or muffin tins with vegetable oil and set aside.

In a large bowl, mix together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together the maple syrup, rice or almond milk, avocado, and vanilla. You can also blend these ingredients in a blender or food processor or use an electric mixer. Combine the avocado mixture into flour mixture. Mix until smooth.

Pour batter into prepared tins, approximately 2-3 Tablespoons for regular-sized tins. Bake for 20 minutes for regular-sized cupcakes and 15 minutes for mini-cupcakes or until a toothpick inserted into cupcake center comes out with some crumbs attached. Cool on a wire rack.

CUPCAKE FROSTING

- 2/3 cup lowfat coconut milk
- 1/3 cup pitted and chopped dates
- 1 cup shelled, raw or roasted cashews
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Place all ingredients in the canister of a food processor or blender, and blend together until very smooth. If too thick, add a small amount of coconut milk to thin it slightly. Store in the refrigerator until cupcakes have cooled.

Frost each cupcake with approximately 1 Tablespoon of frosting. If there are leftover frosted cupcakes, refrigerate.

Total calories per frosted cupcake: 297
Fat: 10 grams Carbohydrates: 51 grams
Protein: 6 grams Sodium: 203 milligrams
Fiber: 4 grams

Vegan Meringue

Angel Food, a company in New Zealand, claims to have created a successful vegan meringue! The product is a combination of rice starch, emulsifiers 475 and 471 (the company's 'secret' vegan ingredients), tapioca starch, methylcellulose, and xanthan gum. According to the label, all of the product's ingredients are plant-derived.

Once the consumers purchase the product, they add sugar and water to it and vigorously stir or whip until a soft meringue is formed. Then, the meringue can be shaped and baked for meringue cups or placed on top of a pie and broiled quickly. The truly brave can cover very frozen scoops of soy ice cream (not sorbet) with meringue and quickly broil for a vegan Baked Alaska.

Visit www.angelfood.co.nz/238895/html/page.html for details.

Total calories per frosted 'mini' cupcake: 165
Fat: 5 grams Carbohydrates: 28 grams
Protein: 3 grams Sodium: 113 milligrams
Fiber: 2 grams

FROSTED BROWNIES

(Makes one 9 x 9-inch pan or approximately 16 brownies)

**Pictured on the cover.*

BROWNIES

Vegetable oil spray

8 ounces unsweetened vegan chocolate

1 cup nonhydrogenated vegan margarine

2½ cups sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)

2½ Tablespoons cornstarch

⅔ cup almond milk

½ Tablespoon vanilla extract

2½ cups all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Spray a 9 x 9-inch baking pan with oil. Set aside.

In a small saucepan, melt chocolate and margarine over low heat, stirring until just melted. Remove from heat and set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, milk, and vanilla. In a separate bowl, combine flour, salt, and baking soda. Add dry ingredients to the sugar mixture and combine until just mixed. Stir in nuts. Add in the chocolate mixture and mix until just combined.

Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the brownies comes out almost clean. Remove from oven and allow brownies to cool.

FROSTING

1 cup vegan chocolate chips

½ cup nonhydrogenated vegan margarine

Melt chocolate chips on the stove or in the microwave. Allow chocolate to cool slightly and then mash the margarine into the chocolate with a fork. Mix until smooth. Spread over cooled brownies. Allow to set for approximately 15 minutes before serving.

Total calories per brownie: 450 Fat: 26 grams
Carbohydrates: 55 grams Protein: 4 grams
Sodium: 342 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

NO-EGG OMELET

(Makes 1 generous, filled omelet)

This recipe will not stand on its own as an omelet, so have some fillings in mind!

½ cup whole wheat flour

1½ Tablespoons nutritional yeast

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

¾ teaspoon baking powder

¾ cup rice milk

3 teaspoons olive oil, divided

¼ cup chopped scallions

¼ cup chopped fresh mushrooms

¼ cup chopped bell peppers

In a medium bowl, combine the flour, yeast, turmeric, and baking powder. Add the milk and 1 teaspoon oil. Stir well to create a smooth batter and set aside.

In a large skillet (approximately 9 inches), heat the remaining oil. Add the scallions, mushrooms, and peppers. Cook over medium heat, stirring, for approximately 3 minutes until the vegetables are nicely wilted and soft. Remove from pan and set aside.

Pour the omelet batter into the hot pan in an even layer. Tilt and turn the pan to create an evenly cooked omelet. The omelet should set in approximately 3 minutes. When set, add the vegetables into the center, fold, and allow to cook for 1 more minute or until the

edges start to brown. If you are feeling brave, you can try flipping the omelet to allow browning on both sides.

Total calories per serving: 494 Fat: 18 grams
Carbohydrates: 73 grams Protein: 18 grams
Sodium: 347 milligrams Fiber: 13 grams

CHICKPEA FLOUR OMELET

(Serves 2)

This is a very flavorful omelet.

This recipe makes two servings, so cut the omelet in half and share!

½ cup chickpea flour

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Up to ½ cup water

2 Tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro or Italian flat-leafed parsley

1 Tablespoon deseeded, chopped fresh chilies (You choose the heat!)

Vegetable oil spray

In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and black pepper. Slowly add water until the thickness of pancake batter is reached. Mix well and add in the cilantro or parsley and fresh chilies. Cover the mixture and allow to set (stand) for 10 minutes.

Spray a large frying pan with oil and allow to heat over medium heat. Pour in the mixture and spread out evenly. Cook for 1 minute or until the edges begin to brown. Flip the omelet over. After the other side is lightly browned, remove from the pan, cut in half, and serve hot!

Total calories per serving: 92 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 14 grams Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 106 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

Nancy Berkoff is The Vegetarian Resource Group's Food Service Advisor and the author of many cookbooks.

Marvelous Mock Meats



Vegetarian Plus has introduced one of the most diverse families of meat-free entrées yet! Their gourmet, soy-based, frozen products line features some true originals, like Vegan Black Pepper Steaks, Vegan Half Chickens, Vegan Shrimp, and Vegan Tuna Rolls. In addition, the VRG staff became instant fans of the aromatic Vegan Chicken Tikka Masala, the spicy Vegan Kung Pao Chicken, and the Vegan Lamb Vindaloo, which would complement any cooked grain perfectly.

Contact Vegetarian Plus' parent company, Vege USA, LLC, at 1425 South Myrtle Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016. You can also call (888) 772-8343 or visit Vegetarian Plus online at <www.vegeusa.com>.

Looking for a Great Snack for When You're on the Go?

Try Bobo's Oat Bars! These vegan, organic, and non-GMO snack bars each contain 6 to 9 grams of protein for that extra energy boost you need for a long school day, that mid-afternoon slump, or an all-day hike. Bobo's Oat Bars are only around 180 calories and come in 14 flavors, including Cinnamon-Raisin, Chocolate, Cranberry-Orange, gluten-free Peach, and Peanut Butter. They are available from Nordstrom, Smoothie King, Whole Foods, and other retailers. Happy snacking!

Write to Bobo's Oat Bars at 4725 Nautilus Court, Suite 1, Boulder, CO 80301, or call the company at (303) 938-1977. For more info, visit <www.bobos oatbars.com>. *Written by Jessica Friend, VRG Intern.*

Get Ready to Garden!

Amateur and professional horticulturists alike can bid farewell to conventional chemicals and animal manure! The Happy Gardener makes easy-to-use, vegan, and often organic garden care products that don't harm insects, birds, or the environment. Among their offerings are soils, plant foods, fertilizers, weed and pest control formulas, lawn care items, and garden containers. Additionally, they carry unique items such as plant root solutions made solely from organic sea vegetables and birdhouses created from recycled plastic bottles.

Contact The Happy Gardener at 11030 Richardson Road, Suite B-1, Ashland, VA 23005, or at (804) 798-9280. Their website is <www.thehappygardener.info>.

Coconut Beverages, Creamer, Ice Cream, and Much More ...

Turtle Mountain Foods has a 'So Delicious' brand that offers a wide variety of dairy-free coconut milk products, including beverages, coffee creamer, ice cream, sorbet, and other mouth-watering desserts. For example, the So Delicious Coconut Milk has a unique, fruity flavor. Available in Original, Vanilla, and Unsweetened varieties, it is delightful as a beverage or with your favorite cereal. I highly recommend blending it with the So Delicious Cookies 'N Cream coconut milk ice cream to create a dairy-free milkshake with just the right amount of sweetness. Check out the Chocolate Peanut Butter Swirl coconut milk ice cream, which tastes similar to—if not better than—dairy ice cream. Also, make sure to try the So Delicious Hazelnut Coconut Milk Creamer in your morning coffee.

To find a store that sells So Delicious products near you, go to <www.turtle mountain.com>. You can also write to Turtle Mountain, LLC, P.O. Box 21938, Eugene, OR 97402, or call (866) 388-7853. *Written by Rita Pruzansky, VRG Intern.*



All About the Lip Service

Sprout is a small, Brooklyn-based, all-natural skin care company, and one of its premier products is Vegan Lip Balm! This chap reliever is made from only organic cocoa butter, organic coconut and essential oils, and candelilla wax. You can buy the Cinnamon, Citrus, Cocoa, or Peppermint varieties individually or order the Vegan Lip Balm Flight, which has all four.

To learn more, call Sprout Skin Care at (347) 719-1848 or visit <www.sproutskincare.com>.

Help VRG With Every Purchase!

The VRG is introducing a new Visa® Platinum Rewards Card! This credit card comes in four attractive, vegan-friendly designs and helps the user earn points for free airline tickets and merchandise. In addition, the bank sponsoring this credit card will make ongoing contributions to The VRG that help support the organization's outreach, scholarships, and more! Visit <www.cardpartner.com/app/vrg> to learn more about this opportunity and to apply!



Edward & Sons Debuts More Organic Canned Produce

Edward & Sons is always making it easier to get organic fruits and vegetables year-round. Recent additions to its Native Forest brand of organic canned vegetables include Mushroom Pieces & Stems, Sliced Crimini Mushrooms, and Sliced Portobello Mushrooms. There are also tempting new varieties of Native Forest canned fruit, such as Organic Grapefruit, Organic Sliced Peaches, and a luscious Organic Peach & Apricot Diced Medley.

Write to Edward & Sons Trading Company, Inc., at P.O. Box 1326, Carpinteria, CA 93014, or call the company at (805) 684-8500. Their website is <www.edwardandsons.com>.



Delicious Organic Cookies Delivered to Your Door!

Ope's Cookies offers vegan, kosher, and organic cookies that will appeal to anyone with a sweet tooth. These treats are available in 10 yummy varieties, including Classic Oatmeal Applesauce, Chocolate Chip Walnut, Ginger, and Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip. Enjoy these cookies for dessert, or try the Banana Nut or Raisin flavors as tasty additions to breakfast. If you order online, Ope's will ship your cookies for free, and you can even personalize the labels on the packages of cookies!

For more information, go to <www.OpesCookies.com>. You can also write to Ope's Cookies, LLC, 2192 West Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49006, or call (269) 217-2474. *Written by Rita Pruzansky, VRG Intern.*

Camp Kitchen Staff Needed

The Global Youth Village, a residential, international leadership camp in Virginia's Blue Ridge foothills, is seeking seasonal food service staff in their vegetarian kitchen. Sixty youths and 30 staff enjoy their sugar- and meat-free meals family style. Housing, meals, and salary are provided. Seeking both experienced cooks and those who want to learn! In addition, the Global Youth Village welcomes teen applicants for its summer programs.

For further details, contact Leila Baz at Global Youth Village, 1020 Legacy Drive, Bedford, VA 24523, via phone at (540) 297-5982, or through e-mail at staff@legacyintl.org. You can also visit <www.globalyouthvillage.org> to learn more.

The First Almond Milk Yogurt!

Family-owned dairy company Cascade Fresh has introduced the first almond milk yogurt to reach market shelves.



Amande Cultured Almond Milk Yogurt is a dairy-, gluten-, and GMO-free 'custard-style' yogurt and is a perfect alternative for anyone with a soy allergy. These 6-ounce, fruit juice-sweetened yogurts come in eight flavors, including Cherry, Coconut, Peach, Raspberry, and Vanilla. Amande's can be found in Wegman's, Whole Foods, and many other natural markets.

Contact Amande's parent company, Cascade Fresh, at P.O. Box 33576, Seattle, WA 98133, or at (800) 511-0057. Visit their website at <www.cascadefresh.com/amande>. *Written by Jessica Friend, VRG Intern.*

Tandoor Chef Continues to Expand Vegan Product Line

Tandoor Chef's latest additions to its family of Indian cuisine will have you sprinting to the closest frozen foods section. The gluten-free Masala Dosas rival the fresh versions available at many Indian restaurants and were a huge hit at the VRG offices. The Kofta Curry features hearty dumplings in an intriguing, spicy sauce with sides of chickpeas and basmati pilaf, while the Vegetable Pad Thai provides a generous portion of rice noodles, ground peanuts, tender tofu strips, and veggies. Plus, there are those robust Masala Burgers, laden with potatoes, corn, green beans, and bell peppers.

Write to Tandoor Chef's parent company, Deep Foods, Inc., at 1090 Springfield Road, Union, NJ 07083, or call the company at (800) 468-6499. Also, you can visit them online at <www.tandoorchef.com>.



VRG's Online Restaurant Guide

The next time you find yourself on vacation or attending a business conference out of town, take a look at VRG's Online Restaurant Guide. Thanks to VRG staff member Sonja Helman's dedicated work, you can search for vegetarian and vegan restaurants throughout the United States and Canada at <www.vrg.org/restaurant/index.php>. Also, don't forget to let VRG know when a new veggie restaurant opens in your community or if one has closed its doors!

The Ghetto Vegetarian

By Holly Green

SINCE I BECAME A VEGETARIAN IN 2003, I'VE been creating and inventing cheap and easy-to-make vegetarian recipes. First living on an average middle-class budget and then on a college student budget, I've found it very difficult to maintain a healthful diet while only having a very small amount of money. Living in Detroit, many grocery stores don't even carry vegetarian-friendly foods. On top of that, most recipes call for expensive ingredients, are difficult to make, or just take too long!

That's why I've developed a collection of recipes for the budget-conscious vegetarian. My unique blog, *The Ghetto Vegetarian*, has inexpensive, easy-to-make, and healthful meal ideas that you can eat everyday. One key to healthful and inexpensive vegetarian eating is to find products that are combined when packaged. For example, you will see ingredients like broc-slaw (a mixture of shredded broccoli, carrots, and cabbage)

"I've developed a collection of recipes for the budget-conscious vegetarian."

in my recipes. Not only can you use this combo to make broccoli coleslaw, but it's a great filler for eggrolls—and much cheaper than buying all the ingredients separately! Search around your grocery store for unique and inexpensive items that you can reinvent!

I'm sharing five of my favorite recipes here with you. Feel free to change them up, add new ingredients, substitute cheaper ingredients, or anything you'd like! Healthful eating doesn't have to be expensive.

VEGETARIAN CHILI

(Serves 3)

The total cost for this recipe is \$5 (or \$1.67 per serving).

One 14-ounce can petite diced tomatoes with onions

One 14-ounce can diced tomatoes with hot or mild green chilies

One 14-ounce can black beans

One 14-ounce can kidney beans

2 Tablespoons chili powder

1/4 cup frozen corn

In a large soup pot, combine both cans of tomatoes and simmer over medium heat for 2 minutes. Drain and rinse both cans of beans and then add them to the tomatoes. Simmer for approximately 5 more minutes.

Add the chili powder and corn to the pot and simmer for at least 30 minutes. The longer you simmer the chili, the more flavor it will have. Suggested time would be approximately an hour, if you have the time!

Total calories per serving: 335

Carbohydrates: 64 grams

Sodium: 1,513 milligrams

Fat: 2 grams

Protein: 19 grams

Fiber: 20 grams

"My unique blog, *The Ghetto Vegetarian*, has inexpensive, easy-to-make, and healthful meal ideas that you can eat everyday."



Vegetarian Chili



Spring Rolls



Vegetarian Chickpea Curry

SPRING ROLLS

(Makes 10-12 spring rolls)

The total cost for this recipe is \$5 (or \$.50 per spring roll).

SPRING ROLL FILLING

2 Tablespoons oil of your choice

One 12-ounce package broc-slaw

(a mixture of shredded broccoli, cabbage, and carrots usually found near the packaged salad kits in grocery stores)

1-2 Tablespoons grated fresh ginger

2 Tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce

Add oil to a frying pan or wok and heat. Once hot, add in the broc-slaw mixture and cook for approximately 1 minute. Add the ginger and soy sauce and cook over high heat for approximately 7 minutes or until the mixture reaches the desired softness. If the pan or wok seems too dry, add a little water rather than more oil. Do a taste test and add more soy sauce, 1 teaspoon at a time, until the desired taste is reached.

MAKING AND SERVING SPRING ROLLS

Ten to twelve 7-inch spring roll wrappers

Vegetable oil to fill your deep-sided frying pan or wok approximately 1/2-1 inch

Duck sauce or other dipping sauce of your choice (optional)

Once the mixture is cooked, you are ready to wrap. Place a spring roll wrapper on a clean working surface. Have the wrapper in a diamond shape towards your body. Start by adding approximately 1 Tablespoon filling to the middle of the wrapper. Fold the top and bottom corners of the wrapper over the filling. Then, fold in the left corner while rolling the spring roll all the way over to the right side. Dip your fingers in water and wet the end to 'paste' the wrapper shut.

Pour oil into a frying pan or wok and heat over medium-high heat. When bubbles rise or the oil begins to form lines across the bottom of the pan, the oil should be hot enough. To test, carefully dip one corner of a spring roll into the oil. If it sizzles and cooks, the oil is ready. If not, wait another 30 seconds and try again.

Using tongs or a spatula, place the spring rolls into the oil, allowing them to fry for approximately 1 minute on each side. The spring rolls are done when they turn light to medium golden-brown. (See photo, opposite.) Place spring rolls on paper towels (or a clean dish towel) to drain while you finish frying the rest. Serve hot with dipping sauce of your choice.

Total calories per spring roll: 169 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 21 grams Protein: 4 grams
Sodium: 313 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

VEGETARIAN CHICKPEA CURRY

(Serves 3)

The total cost for this recipe is \$5 (or \$1.67 per serving).

Two 15-ounce cans chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed

2 Tablespoons olive or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon curry powder

1 teaspoon coriander

1 teaspoon cumin powder

One 14-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, not drained

One 14-ounce can diced tomatoes with hot or mild green chilies, not drained

In a medium-sized skillet, sauté the chickpeas in oil for 5 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and stir to combine. Cover and cook for at least 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until heated through.

Note: This recipe goes well with instant or regular brown rice that has had 2 Tablespoons lemon or lime juice added for flavor.

Total calories per serving: 458 Fat: 12 grams
Carbohydrates: 74 grams Protein: 16 grams
Sodium: 1,046 milligrams Fiber: 14 grams

VEGETARIAN LASAGNA ROLLS

(Serves 8)

The total cost for this recipe is \$13 (or \$1.60 per serving).

One 24-ounce jar marinara sauce

One 14-ounce box egg-free lasagna noodles

One 12-ounce bag shredded vegan mozzarella cheese

1 small zucchini, cut into thin slices

1 small yellow squash, cut into thin slices

1 cup finely chopped broccoli

Pour a thin layer of marinara sauce on the bottom of an 11 x 7-inch oven-safe baking pan. Set aside.

Cook the lasagna noodles according to the package instructions. Drain and lay flat on a plate. Spread a thin layer of cheese on top of each noodle. Top cheese with squash and zucchini slices, followed by the broccoli. Carefully roll the noodles from one end to the other.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place each roll in the baking pan with the end of the roll on the bottom. Cover the rolls with additional sauce. Cover the pan with foil and cook for 45 minutes. Uncover, sprinkle rolls with additional cheese, and allow to cook another 5 minutes until melted.

Total calories per serving: 392 Fat: 12 grams
Carbohydrates: 59 grams Protein: 10 grams
Sodium: 840 milligrams Fiber: 4 grams

MEXICAN-STYLE STUFFED PEPPERS

(Makes 4 large peppers)

The total cost for this recipe is \$10
(or \$2.50 per serving).

4 bell peppers (any color)

Water to steam peppers

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup water

One 1.25-ounce low-sodium taco seasoning
packet (available in the Mexican foods
section or possibly the spices section
in many grocery stores)

1 teaspoon cumin powder

2 cups cooked rice

One 14-ounce can no-salt-added diced
tomatoes, drained

One 14-ounce can black beans, drained
and rinsed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup shredded vegan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cut off the tops of the peppers
and scoop out the seeds. Steam
peppers in a shallow pan of water
for approximately 5 minutes.

While the peppers steam, place
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water in a pot and bring to
a boil. Add three-quarters of the
taco seasoning and all of the cumin
to the water and allow to dissolve.
Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.

Stand the peppers up in a bak-
ing dish with a lip on it (to catch
drips). Fill each pepper with layers
of rice, tomatoes, beans, and cheese.
Repeat until full. Once the peppers
are filled, pour a quarter of the taco
seasoning liquid over the filling in
each of them. Cover the dish and
bake for 25 minutes or until the
peppers are medium soft.

Total calories per pepper: 339 Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 60 grams Protein: 11 grams
Sodium: 852 milligrams Fiber: 13 grams

For more information or recipes,
visit <www.theghettovegetarian.com>.

VRG Celebrates 30 Years of Changing Society

Support Continued Education, Outreach, and Activism!

The Vegetarian Resource Group celebrates 30 years of activism in 2012. For those who would like to support continued research and outreach, we will be listing donors in *Vegetarian Journal*.

Donations can be sent to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or call (410) 366-8343. You can also donate online at <<https://www.givedirect.org/give/givefrm.asp?CID=1565>>.

Please list my name in the *Vegetarian Journal's* 30th Anniversary issue as a:

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VEGETARIAN IN THE MILITARY

BY ANN MARIE BROKMEIER

IN A POLL THAT THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP conducted in 2009, it was estimated that three percent of Americans are vegetarian. If this is also true of the military, that would mean approximately 40,000 servicemen and women are following meatless diets. This is much too large a number to ignore.

Decisions about what to eat on a daily basis generally may not be a problem for most military members, as there are many varieties of food available on each military base. However, for vegetarian and vegan troops, getting a meal can be a bigger ordeal than it should be. Being aware of the U.S. military's regulations and options (at all levels), as well as what is practical and realistic, is vital for these troops' nutritional well-being.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

In one release from a medical center on Fort Hood, Texas, it states that "the Army didn't promise to meet all your dietary desires" and then goes on to describe vegetarian diets from "most-restrictive" to "less-restrictive." This is an unfortunate example of the military's lack of support for vegetarians and vegans. I have found no written rules or regulations that specifically protect or deny the vegetarian lifestyle. There are regulations protecting religious preference, and some of these such as Seventh-day Adventist are vegetarian, which is why the military has implemented meals to reflect these choices. The military considers the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines when creating a meal plan in the dining facility.

DINING FACILITIES

The dining halls in which most on-duty military members and all trainees eat have an effect on vegetarian troops. Although there are many vegetarian options (such as vegetable soup, sizable salad bars, and various meatless entrées) in most dining facilities, it has been said that these meatless dishes are carelessly littered with chicken stock, bacon to flavor, dairy products, and eggs. Most of the time, the servers and even the

chefs who are asked about meat products in food have little knowledge about the actual ingredients.

Recently, the military's dining facilities have become more aware of the vegan movement. Darles Bayless, a 19-year Navy veteran who served in Afghanistan, states, "The service seems to understand that not everyone wants a slice of pig in everything that is green."

Most on-duty troops are able to eat outside the dining hall (i.e. off-base, in the Post Exchange/Base Exchange food court, or food from home). However, trainees (enrolled in basic training/boot camp or in technical training) are expected to eat in the dining hall. This can pose a serious problem for vegan recruits.

COMMISSARY

When troops head out to the grocery store on base, there are usually many different options readily available. Commissaries sometimes carry even more food options than civilian grocery stores. Most commissaries offer international foods (such as German, Japanese,

"Recently, the military's dining facilities have become more aware of the vegan movement."

Korean, and Latino) to cater to the diverse military community. In addition, they also stock vegetarian and vegan foods. Most commissaries (even the smaller ones) have a fairly large produce section and sell vegetarian-specific products, such as tofu, soymilk, and various meat alternatives.

As far as the average vegan consumer goes, there is no difference between the items that can be carried in a military commissary and in a standard civilian grocery store. The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA)

even has a program in which you can request a special order of products that cannot be found in your personal commissary.

MREs – MEALS READY-TO-EAT

In all branches of the United States military, there are instances in which participating in a field training exercise or deployment is mandatory and non-negotiable. During these situations, troops consume Meals Ready-to-Eat (MREs). If kept at no more than 80 degrees, these meals have a shelf life of up to three years. (If kept at 100 degrees, they have a shelf life of six months.) Although the MRE was developed in 1980, it wasn't until 1993 that the Force Sustainment Systems Development Group in Natick, Massachusetts, began researching and producing lacto-ovo vegetarian meals (as well as kosher and halal meals). Vegan troops will have a more difficult time eating MREs since most of the entrées, and even some of the side items, involve eggs and/or milk products. There are four meatless options out of the 24 MREs that are available each year. There have been mixed reviews about the quality of the MREs, with several people saying they are flavorless whether they are meatless or not.

DINING FACILITIES OVERSEAS

On most major bases, there are restaurant kiosks, such as Orange Julius, Pizza Hut, Subway, and Taco Bell, and most troops (vegetarian or not) have been happy to have them. These chains provide a taste of home, as well as better meals than MREs or makeshift dining facilities. However, according to one CNN article, these restaurants are being shut down in certain areas.

PRACTICAL AND REALISTIC

There are some resources that military members can utilize, one of the most helpful being a dietitian at the base's medical center. Most medical centers will have a



dietitian on site; if they do not, they will refer you to another base or to a civilian dietitian.

It is important to realize that fresh produce is not always practical in some places, such as in an overseas war zone. In these dining facilities, most vegetables and fruits are canned. This is most common during basic training and deployment.

APPAREL

Army Regulation (AR)670-1 section 27-3 states, "The issue boot is made of black leather." It continues, "As an option, soldiers may wear commercial boots of a design similar to that of a standard issue boot," but that boot "must be made of black leather ... Boots made of patent leather or poromeric are not authorized."

"There are four meatless options out of the 24 Meals Ready-to-Eat that are available each year."

This can be an issue for vegans who do not wear animal products. After scouring the web and contacting various combat boot companies, the only response was from Altama, one of the military's largest boot suppliers. The company stated that they only make full-grain leather boots, with no response regarding a plan to make vegan-friendly boots.

For the vegan troops, one compromise is to purchase used leather boots.

VEGETARIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEIR EXPERIENCES

Jim McGuire, who has been vegetarian for 42 years and completely vegan for 12, became vegetarian while stationed with the U.S. Army at Fort Benning on the Alabama-Georgia border. During that time, there were few meatless options in the dining facilities, as "the Army mess sergeant prided himself on ways in which he could include a certain amount of meat ... in virtually every so-called vegetable preparation." Most days, McGuire drank only milk for his nutrition. Not only were there a lack of vegetarian food options, but there was a lack of fellow vegetarians with which to empathize. For example, during a deployment with the First Cavalry Division in An Khe during Vietnam, McGuire says that he was "the only vegetarian on the entire base."

Senior Airman Randy Silber, currently stationed at Petersen Air Force Base in Colorado, has been in the U.S. Air Force for more than three years and recently enlisted for another four years. Priding himself on maintaining his health, he says that “the military should incorporate more vegetarian options” to promote a healthful lifestyle. The food offerings are not terrible, but he says that Air Force dining facilities “mainly cater

“Being vegan can be done effectively during daily activities and even during technical school.”

to the carnivorous airmen.” Even though he only went through basic training less than four years ago, SrA Silber says that the lack of available vegetarian options during that time could sometimes leave one feeling malnourished. However, once he was out of basic training and into technical training, it was easy to “resume a steady vegetarian (lifestyle) again.”

Heather and Brandon Niles, a married U.S. Air Force veteran couple, both became vegan in 2007. Heather, who served from 2002 until 2008, said that her biggest challenge was her fellow troops. She states,

“Most of them really didn’t understand. Since it’s a macho kind of atmosphere anyway, they just didn’t get why I was doing it.” She says that, as far as dining options, vegans are limited only during basic training and deployment, when the food is less readily available.

Her husband, Brandon, served in the Air Force from 2002 until 2006. During basic training, he recommends that new recruits “simply do the best they can” and that it is important to not stand out in that strict training environment. The rushed in-and-out dining process during basic training can prove to be difficult for trainees, as there is “very little time and choice in what’s given to you.” However, Brandon said that being vegan can be done effectively during daily activities and even during technical school, as “there are many options available for both vegans and vegetarians to get a healthy meal” in most dining facilities.

The Nileses do have high hopes for vegans in the military. As Heather puts it, “You have control over your life and choices,” and that is empowering.

If you would like to share your experience of being a vegetarian in the military or have advice for others, please e-mail vrg@vrg.org. We would love to share your stories in future issues of *Vegetarian Journal*.

Ann Marie Brokmeier grew up in a military family and has worked at a military PX. Thank you, Ann Marie, for coordinating our VRG booth at the Hampden Fair in Baltimore.

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Persian Cuisine: Veganized

By Yasmin Radbod

TYPICALLY, VEGETARIANS AND VEGANS LOVE Middle Eastern cuisine. There are so many options, such as baba ghanoush, falafel, hummus, grape leaves, lentils, and pita bread. Of course, there are many Middle Eastern dishes that are off limits to herbivores like me (and you). Persian cuisine, in my experience, is especially heavy on meats: chicken, lamb, steak, and seafood. This article is meant to shatter some of those meat barriers and allow us vegetarians to dive into a much unexplored world of Persian delights.

I am part Iranian and part European-American. My favorite food as a child was saffron basmati rice with plain yogurt. I loved chicken kabobs, *dahl*, buttered rice, and *gormeh sabzi*. When I moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, I was exposed to vegetarianism. Shortly thereafter, I went vegetarian and quickly vegan. I was 15 at the time and did not think I would ever eat most Persian foods again. (It did not bother me at the time because I was just starting to dabble in Indian food!) Once I entered college, however, I became much more nostalgic for Persian cuisine. My mom is an incredible cook, and when I come home from college, she veganizes Persian food for me.

GROUND RULES AND IDEAS

Here are some ground rules for veganizing Persian dishes that require meat. A great replacement for meat in any recipe is seitan. Seitan is derived from the protein portion of wheat. It is an especially great choice if you do not wish to use more processed mock meats, such as

mock sausage or meatball products. If you have a gluten sensitivity, however, a completely soy-based product may be best. Textured soy protein (TSP) works great as a meat substitute as well.

You can never go wrong with rice. Rice is so versatile, and it is a staple in Persian cuisine. Rice can be added to any dish, and a little flavoring goes a long way. As aforementioned, rice with yogurt was my favorite food as a child. Today, there are many types of vegan yogurts you can add to rice. Some rice served with yogurt, a

“Rice can be added to any dish, and a little flavoring goes a long way.”

little salt, a little oil, and a dash of lemon is delicious. Also, try brown rice instead of pita bread to accompany your dishes. Falafel or chickpea balls served with rice and yogurt is great. I often eat hummus and rice together for a quick snack, too.

For an extra treat, serve *tadic*. It is super easy to make, not to mention delicious! There are two ways to cook *tadic*. First, if you are using a rice cooker, drizzle olive oil (at your discretion) or margarine (any vegan alternative to butter) on the bottom of the rice cooker. The resulting layer of fried rice at the bottom of the rice cooker is called *tadic*. The second option is to fry cooked rice in a pan using olive oil or vegan margarine.

Classic Middle Eastern dishes such as falafel, hummus, and grape leaves are versatile as well. If you are tired of eating the traditional versions of these dishes, try substituting a different bean for the chickpeas or change the spices you use. Instead of making falafel with chickpea flour, use lentils, black beans, or kidney beans, and change the spices according to your preference. You don't have to stuff grape leaves with rice. Try substituting lentils, TVP, or pine nuts with vegetables.

That brings me to my last tip. Pine nuts are an easy way to add a lot of flavor to any dish. They have a crunchy texture and provide a nutty flavor as well. Sauté pine nuts in a little olive oil before adding them to any dish (or adding them to some plain rice for a



snack). They will be even more delicious. After sautéing, sprinkle the nuts on top of your dish.

GORMEH SABZI

(Serves 6)

I am extremely lucky that my mom went vegan and has adapted many dishes to make them both vegan and much more healthful than before. Her first veganized-Persian-dish experiment was with gormeh sabzi. Traditionally, gormeh sabzi calls for steak, but my mom used seitan instead. I could not tell the difference! Gormeh sabzi is stew-like and is best served with rice and some plain vegan yogurt.

Approximately 4 Tablespoons olive oil
8 ounces seitan
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 cup chopped scallions
1 cup chopped leeks (optional)
1 cup chopped fresh parsley or 1/4 cup dried parsley
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
Salt and pepper to taste
Water to boil vegetables
2 cups chopped fresh or thawed frozen spinach
One 15-ounce can dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
4 Tablespoons lemon juice or to taste

In a large pan, heat the oil and sauté the seitan, onions, scallions, leeks, parsley, and spices until heated. Place the seitan mixture into a pot, add a little water, and bring it to a boil. Add the spinach and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the beans and lemon juice and heat for another 10 minutes. Serve over brown rice and plain vegan yogurt.

Total calories per serving: 217 Fat: 10 grams
Carbohydrates: 18 grams Protein: 14 grams
Sodium: 314 milligrams Fiber: 7 grams

TRADITIONAL DOLMEH

(Serves 10)

Dolmeh are simply stuffed grape leaves. They are quite simple—and fun!—to make. These make a great appetizer or party dish, or they can be eaten as a snack anytime.

50 grape leaves
1/4 cup olive oil
3 1/2 cups finely chopped onions
1 1/2 cups cooked brown rice
1 cup chopped fresh dill
1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
1/2 cup pine nuts
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
4 Tablespoons lemon juice
2 1/2 cups water

Place grape leaves in a colander, wash with cold water, and drain. Put the oil into a skillet and heat. Add onions and cook for 10 minutes. Add the rice, dill, parsley, pine nuts, salt, pepper, and cinnamon, and then cook for 5 more minutes. Allow to cool.

Place the grape leaves vein side up on a cutting board and nip off the stems. Place a Tablespoon of the rice mixture onto a leaf. Fold the stem end up over the rice, fold the two sides of the leaf toward the center over the mixture, and then roll the leaf up. Repeat until you have used all of the grape leaves. Filling amounts will vary based on the size of each leaf.

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. In a large baking dish, arrange the rolled *dolmeh* in layers. Pour lemon juice and water over them, cover, and bake for 1 hour or until tender. Serve cold or warm.

Total calories per serving: 167 Fat: 10 grams
Carbohydrates: 19 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 179 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

ASHE RESHTE (NOODLE SOUP)

(Serves 5-6)

One of my mom's favorite Persian cookbooks is In a Persian Kitchen by Maideh Mazda. When she and I became vegetarian, she started to veganize some of the dishes from this cookbook. One of those dishes was ashe reshte, which is a traditional Persian noodle soup that calls for ground beef. You can use textured vegetable protein (TVP) in place of the meat.

5 cups water
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup presoaked black-eyed peas
8 ounces textured vegetable protein (TVP)
1/4 cup uncooked lentils
1 small onion, grated
1 cup uncooked whole-grain linguine noodles
1/2 teaspoon pepper, divided
1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley or spinach
1 Tablespoon dried mint
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Put water in a 3-quart pot and add the salt and black-eyed peas. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the TVP, lentils, onions, noodles, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, and parsley or spinach. Allow to simmer for 35 minutes.

Rub the dried mint in your palm until it becomes powdery. Combine mint with the cinnamon and remaining pepper. Just before removing the soup from the heat, add all of the spices to the soup.

Total calories per serving: 274 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 43 grams Protein: 28 grams
Sodium: 133 milligrams Fiber: 12 grams

Yasmin Radbod wrote this article during a summer internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group.

2011 Essay Contest Winners

THE LITTLE THINGS

By Colin Herndon, 9 yrs
Virginia



EVERY MORNING, I GET UP early, and I make my bed. I play with my little brother, and I go to school. I come home and finish my homework. I play soccer in the yard, and make sure the big kids let my brother play, too. My mom makes dinner and we say grace. I clear my dishes and play with my brother in our rooms. We read stories, put our pajamas on, brush our teeth, and go to bed. It may not sound like much, but my mother says it's the little things that make us who we are, and make our world a better place.

My stepfather taught me a concept in the Jewish faith called *tikkun olam*. It's about knowing that we are just small people, and that the best we can do is make our own little corner of the world better during our lives. I think that, since I'm only 9 years old, I can't really do big things. But all the little things I do can add up.

When I make my bed, my mom doesn't have to do it. My mom is happy. When I play with my brother, it makes him happy, and he and I will always be friends. When I do my best at school and do my homework, I make myself a better person a little bit at a time. When I help my brother play outside and make sure the big kids are nice to him, I make him feel included, and I make sure other people play fair. When we say grace at dinner, we remember every day that we feel thankful for what we have. When we clear our dishes, we make mom's life a little easier. When we read stories, we feel like a family. And when we brush our teeth, we keep them healthy every day.

For me, being a vegetarian is one of the little things I can do to make the world a better place. I lived in Bangladesh for a year with my mother, and I saw other children who were really poor. When I watch the news with my parents, I see how many people are shot and killed. When we drive down the road and see all the crosses people put up because people died in car

accidents, I know how many people out there are sad and grieving. I know the world is filled with enough pain already, enough pain that we can almost feel it.

But I don't have to be a part of it. I don't have to put any more pain into the world, and even if it's just a little thing like not eating a hamburger or a chicken nugget, I know that just that is another little thing I can do to make the world better. It all adds up, and I want my life to be the sum of everything I do each day. Each kindness, each hug, and each time my brother wants to play cards and I don't want to. Each time I finish my homework when I'd rather be playing video games. Each time I put my toys away so my mom doesn't have to. Each plastic bottle I put in the blue container instead of the trash can and each piece of broccoli instead of a piece of bacon. It all adds up.

“Each plastic bottle I put in the blue container instead of the trash can and each piece of broccoli instead of a piece of bacon. It all adds up.”

I want the world to be a place where people are nice enough to help each other out. I want the world to be a place that's not full of trash. I want the world to be a place where we choose the kind thing over the easy thing. And I want to live in a world where animals are not just another example of the hurt we put into the world.

So every day, I will still get up early, make my bed, play with my brother, go to school, come home and finish my homework, play soccer in the yard, make sure the big kids let my brother play, say grace, clear my dishes and play with my brother in our rooms, read stories, put my pajamas on, brush my teeth, and go to bed. And I will be a vegetarian. It is all I can do, and it is small, but who could do more?

BEING A VEGETARIAN

By Cecelia Colchico, 10 yrs
California



H! MY NAME IS CECELIA Colchico and I am a vegetarian. I have been a vegetarian all my life and I plan to stick with it! My mom, dad, and little brother Maxx are also vegetarians. I like being a vegetarian because I want to make a difference. Even if kids at school are making fun of me, I am going to stick to the things I think are right. I hope that someday people will look up to vegetarians and say, "Wow! They are right! Killing animals for food is not right!" I think the best part about being a vegetarian is that I don't eat meat!

Some people think you have to eat meat to get protein. But in the truth, vegetarians get protein from other foods. Tofu, for example, is a good substitute for meat. You get protein from it. Stuff like veggie burgers and tempeh are made out of soybeans, too. Beans and salad are also good substitutes.

Animals give us other things besides meat. Cows, for instance, give us milk that we turn into butter, cheese, and yogurt. Some people don't eat those things. Chickens also give us eggs. I don't eat eggs because of the flavor.

There are some things that most people wouldn't know that have meat in them. Some Spanish rice has chicken broth in it. You can't taste the broth; it just adds flavor to the rice. There are also marshmallows. Marshmallows have cow bone in them. The cow bone makes it fluffy. I never knew! Then finally, the last thing I know that has meat in it is Jell-O. Jell-O has cow and pig hooves in it.

People have different opinions about why they don't eat meat. I don't eat meat because the animals don't deserve being killed. They have just as many rights as

we do. Animals are living creatures, too. When they get killed, it's like saying someone is going to kill YOU for food.

If you take it from an animal's point of view, they are happy until they get killed for food. If a cow could talk, it would say, "I was born a few weeks ago. This pasture is very nice." Then four weeks later, the cow gets killed. A pig would say, "I love the mud here at this farm." Then a month later, it is dead. Those are some things animals would say.

My brother Maxx is also vegetarian. He has his own opinions for why he is a vegetarian. He doesn't like killing animals for food. He thinks animals deserve to live. Maxx is also vegan. He is allergic to dairy. He sometimes likes being vegan because he likes being different from other people. Other times he doesn't like being vegan because he wants to know what dairy products taste like. Maxx likes the way he is.

My dad is also a vegetarian. He has opinions about being a vegetarian. He became vegetarian over 21 years ago. He wanted to be healthier so he became vegetarian. When he first started being a vegetarian, the most difficult part was the lack of acceptance from friends and family. They all thought it was weird. Since becoming a vegetarian, he has become more concerned and supportive of animals and their treatment within our food system. My dad is happy being a vegetarian.

The last person in my family who is a vegetarian is my mom. She became a vegetarian over 12 years ago. She says, "I like eating a diet of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables." She feels healthy and doesn't feel guilty about enjoying her meals because no animals have died so she could eat. She loves animals and when she ate meat she felt really awful.

So in concluding, I am a vegetarian and I am proud of it. My family is proud to be vegetarians, too. They know how I feel and they understand. I hope someday vegetarians will make a difference in all life.

ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST RULES

To enter VRG's annual essay contest, just write a 2-3 page essay on any aspect of vegetarianism or veganism. There are three entry categories: age 14-18, age 9-13, and age 8 and younger. A \$50 savings bond may be awarded in each category.

All entries must be postmarked by Tuesday, May 1, 2012, for the year 2012 contest. Entrants should base their entries on interviews, personal experience, research, and/or personal opinion. You need not be vegetarian to enter. All essays become property of The Vegetarian Resource Group. Only winners will be notified.

Send entries to: The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203

Please make sure to include your name, age, address, phone number, school, and teacher's name.

Cabbage Concepts

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE

GREEN CABBAGE, RED CABBAGE, NAPA, BOK choy, radicchio, treviso, Belgian endive, ... So many varieties of cabbage to select from! Here's an introduction to types of these leafy vegetables, preparation tips, and some creative uses.

CABBAGE VARIETIES

Green and red cabbage are usually available at most markets, can be eaten fresh or cooked, and have a relatively long storage span. **Napa cabbage** is a pale green cabbage that resembles a large Romaine lettuce, while **bok choy** is Asian cabbage with a sweet-tasting stalk and leaves that resemble spinach. Napa and bok choy are usually best when cooked. They have short storage spans, as they have a fairly high water content.

Purplish-red radicchio and treviso are cousins of head cabbage that you may want to save for special occasions, as they can be fairly expensive. **Radicchio** is round, has brightly colored striped leaves, and has a bit of a bite to it. (Think 'radish.') **Treviso** is also brightly colored and resembles miniature Romaine lettuce. Both radicchio and treviso can be eaten fresh or cooked. In the United States, we tend to shred them and add them to salads. In Europe, they are generally added to soups or served in either steamed or sautéed



vegetable combinations. No matter how they are prepared, they add color and flavor.

Belgian endive is quite delicate in color and does not store for more than three or four days in the refrigerator. It can be quite expensive. If you are having a party-to-impress, indulge in individual Belgian endive leaves arranged on a serving plate, dressed with a very small amount of raisin chutney, orange marmalade or your favorite salad dressing, chopped walnuts, and chopped dried fruit.

FRESH CABBAGE

Fresh cabbage makes for great wrappers. Use green and Napa cabbage or leafy bok choy as a wrapper for sweet or savory rice, chopped pasta, chopped steamed or grilled vegetables, roasted or steamed potatoes, or cornmeal (like tamales). Wrapped foods can be steamed, baked, microwaved, or roasted in a barbecue pit.

A chef's tip for getting crisp cabbage leaves to fold—freeze them! When you bring your cabbage home from the market, take off some of the larger leaves, wash and pat them dry, put them into a bag or container, and place them in the freezer. Remove them from the freezer and allow them to thaw. Now, the leaves can be shaped easily.

If you're not wrapping your food, you can use the whole, large leaves to cover casseroles or baked entrées to hold in the heat and assist in even cooking. For example, save the tough outer leaves from a green cabbage. When your vegetable stew is ready to go into the oven or your vegetable soup is ready to simmer, place the leaves over the stew or soup, cover, and bake or simmer.

PRESERVED CABBAGE

We should speak about preserved cabbage—that is, **sauerkraut** and **kimchi**. Sauerkraut and kimchi are available refrigerated or canned. Keep some of the canned variety to toss into soups, last-minute casseroles, or steamed veggies or grains, or just to have on the table to spice up lunch or dinner entrées.

SHORTCUTS

If you don't have time to chop or you don't need an entire head of cabbage, look for the pre-shredded format available in many stores. Pre-shredded cabbage can have an added bonus of vegetable combinations. We have seen pre-shredded green and/or red cabbage as well as green cabbage-and-carrot mixtures. Some Asian markets offer pre-chopped bags of Napa cabbage, bok choy, or cabbage combos.

Steaming is a fast way to get cabbage on the plate. In addition to green and red cabbage, you can steam Napa cabbage, bok choy, radicchio, or treviso. If you have the time to finely shred these before steaming, they can be added to soups, wraps, vegetable medleys, and cooked grains.

UNIQUE CABBAGE DISHES

Colcannon is a versatile Irish dish made with sautéed onions and cabbage mixed into mashed potatoes. The cabbage adds texture and nutrients to the mashed potatoes and can be served as is or shaped into potato cakes, coated with bread crumbs, and baked. The addition of puréed silken tofu or vegan sour cream makes a colcannon croquette, which can be formed into triangles and baked in the oven. This can be quickly prepared with mashed potato mix and pre-shredded cabbage.

If you have the time, plan a **New England boiled dinner** featuring steamed cabbage (traditionally cut into quarter heads, not chopped or diced), steamed potatoes, steamed onions, and steamed carrots. Serve with smoked tofu or steamed tempeh.

LOOKING FOR PASSOVER RECIPES?

The Vegetarian Resource Group offers a 48-page booklet called *Vegan Passover Recipes* by Nancy Berkoff, RD. It gives instructions for more than 35 creative dairy- and egg-free recipes, such as soups, salads, entrées, side dishes, sauces, desserts, and even several microwave recipes, including Pizza Casserole and Spinach/Mushroom Kugel. All recipes follow Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and are pareve. To order a copy of *Vegan Passover Recipes*, send \$10 (includes postage and handling) to VRG, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or call (410) 366-8343. Here's just one example of the delicious recipes within the book's pages:



CARROT PANCAKES

(Serves 4)

This entrée is colorful, tasty, and good for you.

1 1/2 pounds coarsely grated carrots
1/4 cup coarsely grated onions
2 Tablespoons carrot juice or finely grated carrots
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley
4 Tablespoons matzah meal
Vegetable oil spray

In a large bowl, mix together the carrots, onions, carrot juice, pepper, and parsley. Add matzah meal

slowly, mixing well. If mixture is not stiff (think lumpy cookie dough), add a bit more of the matzah meal.

Spray a large frying pan liberally with oil. Drop about 2 Tablespoons of the carrot mixture at a time into the pan. Flatten and allow the pancakes to cook over medium heat until golden, about 3 minutes. Turn and allow other side to become golden.

Remove pancakes from the pan and place on a plate or tray that is lined with paper towels (to absorb oil). Serve immediately or place on an oil-sprayed baking sheet and hold in a 275-degree oven for 15-20 minutes.

A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

Metabolic Syndrome Less Likely in Those Eating a Mostly Vegetarian Diet

Metabolic syndrome is a group of conditions that include high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and too much body fat. Someone who has metabolic syndrome is at higher risk for heart disease and diabetes.

Recently, researchers from Loma Linda University used data from a large study of Seventh-day Adventists to examine the relationship between dietary patterns and metabolic syndrome. Approximately half of their subjects ate meat regularly, a sixth ate fish regularly, and a third ate a mostly vegetarian diet (meat, poultry, and fish less than once a month). The group eating a mostly vegetarian diet had the lowest Body Mass Index (BMI) and had lower blood pressure, blood sugar, and waist circumference than meat-eaters. Compared to meat-eaters, those consuming a mostly vegetarian diet had approximately a 56 percent lower risk of metabolic syndrome. Once again, a vegetarian dietary pattern was associated with a lower risk of health problems.

Rizzo NS, Sabate J, Jaceldo-Siegl K, et al. 2011.

Vegetarian dietary patterns are associated with a lower risk of the metabolic syndrome. *Diabetes Care* 34:1225-27.

High-Fiber, Vegetarian Diets Associated with a Reduced Risk of Diverticular Disease

If you have either diverticulosis or diverticulitis, you are considered to have diverticular disease, which affects the large intestine. In diverticulosis, pouches called diverticula form in your large intestine. Diverticulitis occurs when the pouches become inflamed. Approximately half of adults between 60 and 80 years of age in the U.S. have diverticular disease.

A low-fiber diet is believed to be a major cause of this disease because it often leads to constipation and to bowel muscles having to strain to pass stool. This straining can lead to diverticula forming.

British researchers studied more than 47,000 men and women, approximately a third of whom reported that they ate a vegetarian diet. Over a follow-up period of nearly 12 years, vegetarians (including vegans) had a 30 percent lower risk of developing diverticular disease compared to non-vegetarians who ate either meat or some fish but no meat. If vegans are examined separately, their risk of diverticular disease is even lower, with a 62 percent lower risk compared to non-vegetarians. (Note that these results are based on a small number of vegans.) Higher amounts of dietary fiber, as might be expected, were also associated with a lower risk of diverticular disease, but only in meat-eaters. The vegetarians' lower incidence of diverticular disease could not be explained by their higher fiber intake; perhaps other components of a vegetarian diet are protective or something in a diet containing meat and fish increases diverticular disease risk.

Crowe FL, Appleby PN, Allen NE, Key TJ. Diet and risk of diverticular disease in Oxford cohort of European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC): prospective study of British vegetarians and non-vegetarians. *BMJ* 2011 Jul 19; 343:d4131.

Vegans Should Be Aware of Good Sources of Iodine

Iodine is necessary for the thyroid gland to function normally. Studies have reported that the iodine intakes of vegans in several countries are lower than those of non-vegetarians. Staples of a vegan diet—including most fruits, vegetables, and nuts—are low in iodine, even though their iodine content varies depending on the soil in which they're grown and irrigation and fertilization practices.

A recent study examined the iodine intake and status of 78 vegetarians and 63 vegans in the Boston area. Most subjects did not use a vitamin-mineral supplement containing iodine and had not used iodized salt recently. Urine levels of iodine were significantly lower in the vegans, suggesting that this group is at risk for inadequate iodine intake.

Pregnant women should be especially careful to have adequate iodine because this nutrient plays a role in fetal brain development. The American Thyroid Association recommends that pregnant and breastfeeding women take a prenatal supplement that contains at least 150 micrograms of iodine daily.

Vegans can get iodine from iodized salt, iodine supplements, and sea vegetables, although the amount of iodine in sea vegetables varies. More information about iodine in the vegan diet can be found at <www.vrg.org/journal/vj2006issue2/vj2006issue2iodine.htm>.

Leung AM, LaMar A, He X, et al. 2011. Iodine status and thyroid function of Boston-area vegetarians and vegans. *J Clin Endocrin Metab* 96: E1303-7.

What's New with WIC?

Established in 1972, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) was developed to protect the health of low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5. The program provides vouchers to purchase specific foods that are identified as being nutritious. More than 9 million people receive WIC benefits each year. Although the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers the program, state agencies make decisions about which foods are included in their state's program.

In 2007, the USDA markedly revised the foods that can be included in the WIC food package. One key change for vegans and others who do not use dairy products was that soy beverages and calcium-set tofu with specific levels of certain nutrients can be substituted for cow's milk. Medical documentation is required for this substitution to be allowed for children. Currently, 71 percent of state agencies allow soymilk to replace cow's milk, and 40 percent allow tofu to replace cow's milk. Of those state agencies that allow soy beverages, approximately half permit refrigerated soymilk, while the other half allow either refrigerated or shelf-stable soymilk.

Another change was that WIC vouchers for fruits and vegetables can be used at farmers' markets. So far, thirteen states and the District of Columbia have adopted this policy.

Also, states can allow brown rice, corn or whole wheat tortillas, bulgur, barley, or oatmeal to replace whole wheat bread. This allows for more culturally diverse foods. Ninety percent of state agencies allow

brown rice, while 82 percent allow tortillas. Bulgur, barley, and oatmeal are less commonly authorized.

VRG submitted comments to the USDA supporting the revisions to the WIC food packages. Not only would the proposed changes improve the nutritional quality of the program's food, but we believe that the program should add more foods acceptable to vegetarians and vegans. It's gratifying to see these changes being implemented in many states, although we're concerned that tofu and soymilk are not available in every state.

To learn more about the WIC program in your state, see the full text of the report at <www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/published/wic/wic.htm>.

Cole N, Jacobson J, Nichols-Barrer I, Fox MK. Robare JF, Project Officer. *U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis, WIC Food Packages Policy Options Study*. USDA: Alexandria, VA: June 2011.

And Yet Another Strike Against Red Meat

It's almost become old hat. Study after study reports that red meat is associated with an increased risk of colon cancer and heart disease, and now there's more. Higher intakes of red and processed meat are associated with an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

A study of more than 200,000 people found a strong and consistent relationship between the intake of red and processed meat and the risk of developing diabetes. The researchers estimated that, if one serving of red meat per day was replaced with a serving of nuts, the risk of type 2 diabetes would be 21 percent lower. Replacing one serving of red meat per day with a serving of whole grains was estimated to reduce the risk by 23 percent. However, substituting a serving of red meat with a serving of fish or poultry had less of an effect on type 2 diabetes risk reduction than did replacing red meat with either nuts or whole grains.

Nearly 2 million new cases of diabetes occur each year in the United States; some of these could be prevented by replacing red and processed meats with plant foods, including nuts and whole grains.

Pan A, Sun Q, Bernstein AM, et al. 2011. Red meat consumption and risk of type 2 diabetes: 3 cohorts of U.S. adults and an updated meta-analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr* 94:1088-96.

Soups of South America

By Debra Daniels-Zeller

SOUTH AMERICANS LOVE SOUP! RANGING FROM delicate consommés to hearty stews and comprising breakfast, lunch, dinner, and even dessert, soup has played an important role in daily fare since pre-Columbian times. Most soups are simply flavored, drawing inspiration from the foods of indigenous populations and evolving over time as Europeans, Asians, and Africans contributed flavors and ingredients.

Soups thickened with grains, dried maize (corn) or beans, quinoa, amaranth, potatoes, or squash have ties to pre-Columbian times. One ancient soup called *sanco* comes from the Andean highlands, where wild greens are frequently added to the soup pot. According to Maria Baez Kijac in *The South American Table*, these old-fashioned thick-as-polenta soups were mostly all meatless before the Spaniards arrived. Another thickened pre-Columbian soup, found only in Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador, uses corn or barley and is sweetened with fruit. These sweet soups are served as dessert drinks and are favorites on special holidays, such as Carnival and Day of the Dead.

“When it comes to seasonings, South American soups are fairly simple, and they have been that way since pre-Columbian times.”

Other soups incorporated European recipes, spices, and Old World ingredients with New World foods. Early Spaniards and Portuguese added meats, milk, and cheeses and adapted their recipes to include locally grown fruits and vegetables, such as yucca.

Feijoada is a popular Brazilian black bean soup that originated in the clay pot bean-and-vegetable stews of Portugal. This hearty stew is sometimes enhanced by tropical fruits, and *feijoada* is now one of the most popular dishes in Brazil.

Main dish soups are popular all over South America. One soup, called *locro* in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile,

Paraguay, and Uruguay, is porridge-like with hominy (dried corn), beans, squash, or sweet potatoes. Another soup, called *chupé* in Chile, Ecuador, and Peru, is more like a stew and includes potatoes, cheese, vegetables, and occasionally eggs. In Bolivia, *chupés* are dairy-free and usually served for lunch, the main meal of the day.

A thick soup, called *sancocho* in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, is made with chunks of boiled meat, potatoes, or yucca in a broth and is served with a side dish of rice. *Sancochos* can be simple or elaborate, depending on ingredients and flavorings.



When it comes to seasonings, South American soups are fairly simple, and they have been that way since pre-Columbian times. One or two herbs or spices listed in recipes may, at first glance, seem bland, but South Americans typically rely on a hot pepper purée (made with dried or fresh peppers) to season soups at the table. It's as common as salt and pepper, and just a spoonful of this fiery red pepper sauce is enough to flavor a bowl of soup. Another sauce, the onion-based *sofrito*, is also served on the side and stirred into soup at the table.

MAZAMORRA (CORN SOUP)

(Serves 4)

A traditional Indian comfort food, this soup has been served throughout time with few changes. It can be served for breakfast or late in the evening for dessert.

Look for dried corn in Latin American markets, farmers' markets, or specialty foods stores. Look for dry hominy at specialty foods stores or check websites like <www.ranchogordo.com/html/rg_varieties.htm>.

- 1 cup cracked dried corn or hominy
- Cold water to cover corn or hominy
- 6 cups water
- 1 Tablespoon polenta blended with 2 Tablespoons water
- Salt to taste
- 3 Tablespoons coconut milk
- 2 Tablespoons Rapadura or dark brown Florida Crystals (vegan sugar)

Rinse the corn and soak overnight, covered with plenty of cold water. If you need the corn the same day, place it in a heavy casserole with water to cover, bring to a boil, turn off the heat, cover, and allow to stand for 1 hour.

Drain corn and place in a heavy soup pot. Add 6 cups water, bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until corn is soft, approximately 1 hour. Stir in the polenta-water paste and the salt. Continue to cook, uncovered and

stirring frequently, for approximately 30 minutes. Stir in coconut milk and sprinkle with sugar.

Total calories per serving: 178 Fat: 3 grams
 Carbohydrates: 37 grams Protein: 3 grams
 Sodium: 2 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

QUINOA CHOWDER

(Serves 6)

In the highlands of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, quinoa is queen. Quinoa grows best at high altitudes, and it provides perfect protein for this tasty recipe. This soup thickens as it cools; simply add water when reheating.

- 1 Tablespoon canola or olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks

- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jalapeño, chopped (If you don't want too much heat, remove seeds and veins.)
- 1 Tablespoon oregano
- 1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable stock or water
- 1 1/2 cups soymilk or one 14-ounce can lite coconut milk
- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- 1/4 cup cilantro

Heat oil in a stock pot, add onions, and cook until wilted. Add the quinoa, carrots, potatoes, garlic, and jalapeños. Stir and cook for a few minutes. Then, add oregano, tomatoes, and stock or water.

Simmer for approximately 20 minutes. Add milk and peas and cook for 5 more minutes. Garnish with cilantro and serve.

Total calories per serving: 319 Fat: 5 grams
 Carbohydrates: 57 grams Protein: 11 grams
 Sodium: 211 milligrams Fiber: 8 grams

Common South American Ingredients

- **Annatto** – This ingredient comes from a pod on the achiote tree. The reddish pulp around the pod's seeds is scraped off, dried, and ground into a powder. The flavor is slightly peppery with hints of nutmeg. Look for annatto in Latin markets or specialty foods stores.
- **Hearts of Palm** – Slender, ivory buds on a cabbage palm tree, hearts of palm are abundant in tropical climates, where they are grown as commodity crops, canned, and exported. Look for hearts of palm in the international aisle at grocery stores. Once the can is opened, remove the hearts of palm to a non-reactive container, cover, and refrigerate for up to a week.
- **Hominy** – This is dried yellow or white corn that has been separated from the hull. To remove the hull from dried corn, soak it in lye or lime. (This step is not for children or careless adults.) Look for hominy in cans or buy the dried version.
- **Plantain** – This large, firm banana has a mild taste and is used in ways similar to potatoes. When selecting, keep in mind that plantains ripen like bananas. Unripe specimens are green; the ripe versions are yellow with black spots that become more prominent as they ripen. Typically, recipes call for either the 'green' variety or the 'ripe' variety.
- **Yucca** – Yucca (also known as cassava or manioc) is a staple root vegetable that is native to South America and has been cultivated for centuries. It is highly perishable and should be eaten within four days of harvest. Look for yucca in specialty foods stores. Check the produce section, and look for the big brown root with a thick, liberally waxed brown skin. (The wax preserves the yucca.) Remove the skin with a sharp knife, cutting carefully. If you can't find yucca, use peeled white or red potatoes—not starchy russets—or you can use sweet potatoes or yams.

FEIJOADA (BRAZILIAN BLACK BEAN SOUP)

(Serves 4-6)

There are many versions of Brazilian black bean soup, some with and some without tomatoes. Many versions also incorporate orange juice. Oranges grow abundantly in Brazil, one of the world's leading producers of the fruit.

- 1 cup black beans, sorted, rinsed, and soaked overnight
- 4 cups water
- 1 head garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon liquid smoke
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- Juice and zest of 1 orange
- 1 medium or large tomato, chopped

- 2 cups shredded collard greens
- 1 1/4 cups chopped cilantro

Add the black beans, water, garlic, cumin, coriander, and liquid smoke to a large soup pot. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat and simmer on low for 1 hour or until the beans are done.

Add the salt, pepper, orange juice and zest, tomatoes, and collard greens. Simmer until greens are soft. Adjust salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with chopped cilantro.

Note: Liquid smoke is available at many grocery stores, usually in the condiment section near the ketchups and barbecue sauces.

Total calories per serving: 201 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 38 grams Protein: 12 grams
Sodium: 303 milligrams Fiber: 9 grams

PORTUGUESE POTATO AND KALE SOUP

(Serves 6)

The Portuguese influence is everywhere in South America. This recipe, borrowed from Portugal and popular in Brazil, is one example. It incorporates the sweet potato, a South American native.

This soup is usually served with sausage on the side, and the meat is added like a condiment at the table. I used a vegan substitute for the sausage; the chipotle-infused Field Roast sausage worked so well that my meat-loving friends couldn't taste the difference.

- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 5 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
- 1 medium yellow or red potato, cut into bite-sized chunks
- 1 sweet potato, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 6 cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 bunch kale (approximately 16 ounces)
- 2 or 3 vegan sausages like Field Roast, cut into bite-sized pieces

Heat a soup pot over medium heat. Add the onions and oil. Stir and cook until onions are soft. Add garlic and potatoes and stir to coat with oil.

Add 6 cups water and bring to a boil over medium heat. Add salt and pepper, cover, reduce heat to low, and cook 20 minutes or until the potatoes are fork-tender.

While the potatoes cook, wash the kale and remove the stems. Cut the kale into thin strips and then chop into very tiny pieces.

Drain the potatoes, but reserve the cooking liquid. Mash the potatoes and then return them to the pot with the cooking liquid.

Vegan Recipe Substitutions

To substitute meat and dairy products in your favorite South American recipes, here are a few ideas:

- Dry-fry sliced button, crimini, or portobello mushrooms to capture that 'meaty' texture. Add the mushrooms to a hot pan over medium heat, and stir them until they lose their juices. Set the mushrooms aside, and then, add them to the soup during the final minutes of cooking.
- Slice or dice seitan, a wheat-gluten meat substitute with origins in ancient China, to replace beef, chicken, pork, and even sausage. Look for seitan in the cold or frozen food section of natural foods stores.
- For a great substitute for ground meats, crumble or cube tempeh and fry with a little oil until browned. Tempeh, a fermented soybean cake, can be found in the refrigerated section at natural foods stores.
- Spices and herbs can add a spicy meat or sausage flavor to soups. Add a few spices that are typically used to make sausage, such as coriander, garlic, pepper, and sage, to enhance the soup's flavor.
- Replace dairy with soy, rice, almond, and even coconut milk in recipes. Also, check natural foods stores for vegan versions of a wide variety of cheese.

Add the kale, stir, and cook for approximately 3 minutes or until the kale turns bright green and is barely cooked. Remove soup from heat. The soup thickens as it cools; add boiling water if a thinner soup is desired.

In a medium skillet, lightly brown the vegan sausage substitute. Serve on the side so people can add the amount that suits their tastes.

Total calories per serving: 199 Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 25 grams Protein: 12 grams
Sodium: 625 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

SANCOCHO (COLOMBIAN YUCCA STEW) (Serves 6)

A sancocho is a thick stew, popular in Colombia and Ecuador and traditionally based on chicken or fish. This vegan version incorporates chunks of Field Roast, a brand of seitan (a wheat-gluten protein substitute). You could also try various soy-based meat replacements.

This soup has a thick base made with yucca and green plantains. Recipes for sancocho vary, but most versions include cilantro, corn, garlic, onions, and peppers. The yellow color comes from Mexican saffron or annatto seeds, but you could try real saffron at home.

A sancocho is often served with a side dish of white rice. The rice is spooned into the soup, or you can ladle the soup over the rice.

1 onion, diced
1 hot pepper (habanero or jalapeño), chopped
1 sweet pepper, deseeded and sliced
1½ Tablespoons olive oil
1 head garlic, minced or pressed
1 teaspoon Mexican saffron
1 teaspoon cumin

6 cups low-sodium vegetable stock or water
1 small yucca, peeled and sliced
2 green plantains, peeled and sliced
5 medium potatoes, cut into bite-sized chunks
6 ounces Field Roast or seitan, cut into 8 pieces
1 cup fresh or frozen corn (optional)
1 can lite coconut milk (optional)
Juice of 1 lime (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat a heavy soup pot over medium heat. Add the onions, peppers, and oil and sauté until peppers are soft. Add the garlic, saffron, and cumin. Stir and continue to cook for a few minutes.

Add the stock or water, yucca, plantains, and potatoes. Simmer for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are soft. Add the Field Roast or seitan, corn, and coconut milk, and stir until the Field Roast or seitan and corn are heated. Add lime juice and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Total calories per serving: 443 Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 88 grams Protein: 14 grams
Sodium: 320 milligrams Fiber: 9 grams

HEARTS OF PALM SOUP (Serves 4)

A favorite of many South Americans, this creamy soup usually contains milk, but you can easily replace the dairy with soy, rice, or coconut milk. Here is a version with coconut milk.

1 Tablespoon olive oil
½ cup sliced scallions
2 cups low-sodium vegetarian stock
One 14-ounce can lite coconut milk
One 14-ounce can hearts of palm
1 Tablespoon rice flour
Paprika or cayenne
Salt to taste

Heat a saucepan over medium heat. Add oil and scallions. Stir and cook until soft, and then add stock, milk, and hearts of palm. Stir and cook until well-blended.

Place one cup of the mixture into a blender and purée until smooth. Repeat with the remaining mixture, puréeing one cup at a time. Return the puréed mixture to the pan. Sprinkle rice flour over the top, stir, and heat until mixture thickens to desired consistency. Sprinkle with paprika or cayenne, and add salt to taste.

Total calories per serving: 196 Fat: 14 grams
Carbohydrates: 11 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 506 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

FRESH HOT PEPPER PURÉE (Makes ¼ cup or 8 servings)

This is a common condiment that is spooned into individual portions of soup at the table. The closest chile relative of the South American manzano chiles are habaneros, so use these if you can't find manzanos.

10 manzanos or habanero peppers, washed, cut in half, deseeded, and chopped
2-4 Tablespoons water
Pinch salt

Place peppers, a few Tablespoons of water, and salt into a blender. Purée until smooth, adding more water as needed. Transfer to a small container and refrigerate for up to a week.

Total calories per serving: 23 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 5 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 23 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

Debra Daniels-Zeller is a frequent contributor to *Vegetarian Journal*. She wrote "Doing the Vegan Tango: Recipes from Argentina" for Issue 4, 2011.

NUTRITION HOTLINE

(Continued from page 2)

To also obtain a similar amount of vitamin A and vitamin B₁₂ as is in a cup of milk, eat a large wedge of cantaloupe and 1 teaspoon Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

- **½ cup of firm tofu prepared with calcium sulfate** has a similar amount or more of protein, fiber, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, thiamin, niacin, and folate as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of potassium, riboflavin, vitamin B₆, vitamin B₁₂, and vitamin A as is in a cup of milk, eat a cup of cooked spinach and 1 teaspoon of Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

- **1 cup of cooked collard greens** has a similar amount or more of fiber, iron, magnesium, niacin, vitamin B₆, folate, and vitamin A as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, riboflavin, thiamin, and vitamin B₁₂ as is in a cup of milk, eat a cup of whole-wheat pasta, ½ cup of sautéed mushrooms, and 1 teaspoon of Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

- **1½ cups of cooked turnip greens** have a similar amount or more of fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B₆, folate, and vitamin A as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, zinc, riboflavin, and vitamin B₁₂ as is in a cup of milk, eat ½ cup pinto beans, ½ cup

brown rice, and 1 teaspoon of Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

- **2 cups of cooked Chinese cabbage** have a similar amount or more of fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B₆, folate, and vitamin A as milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of protein, phosphorus, zinc, riboflavin, and vitamin B₁₂ as is in a cup of milk, eat two slices of whole-wheat bread, a Tablespoon of almond butter, and 1 teaspoon of Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

- **2 cups of Great Northern beans** have a similar amount or more of protein, fiber, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B₆, and folate as cow's milk.

To also obtain a similar amount of riboflavin, vitamin B₁₂, and vitamin A as is in a cup of milk, eat a cup of kale and 1 teaspoon of Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.

To replace the vitamin D often found in dairy milk, spend a few minutes in the sun (if it's summer) or take a vitamin D supplement.

And in case you were wondering about which vegan foods to eat to obtain what is *missing* from cow's milk:

- You can choose beans, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables to provide fiber. (There's none in milk.)
- Beans, grains, and green leafy vegetables provide iron. (There is almost no iron in cow's milk.)
- Citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes, and broccoli provide vitamin C. (There is none in cow's milk.)

NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

VRG IN THE NEWS

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, spoke to *Today's Diet & Nutrition* about vegetarian pregnancy and to *Maryland Family Magazine* about vegan and vegetarian families. In addition, she is writing columns about iodine in a vegan diet, vegan pregnancy, finding a health care provider that works for you, and other topics for onegreenplanet.org.

VRG OUTREACH

Vegetarian Resource Group Food Service Advisor Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE, is working with a local Meals on Wheels in Long Beach, CA, to add some vegetarian options for their set menus, which are delivered daily to seniors and homebound clients.

BIG VEGAN

By Robin Asbell
with photographs
by Kate Sears



Big Vegan contains more than 350

recipes and a wealth of helpful information! In the first chapter, you can learn how to make pantry staples such as Mock Beef (home-made seitan), Smoky Red Lentil ‘Sausages,’ Pine Nut ‘Cheese,’ and vegetable stocks.

Chapter 2 includes breakfast items like Mocha Frappé, Maple-Barley Granola, Buckwheat Silver Dollar Cakes, Red Flannel Hash, and Coconut-Mango Muffins. The next chapter includes breads such as Savory Hazelnut Bread, Herb and Onion Whole-Wheat Rolls, Teff Breadsticks, and Whole-Wheat Pita Bread.

The section on condiments and sauces features Basil Pesto, Romesco Sauce, Chinese Sesame Sauce, and Bengali Curry Simmer Sauce. Chapter 5 concentrates on appetizers and snacks, including Green Apple and Cashew Spring Rolls, Caramel-Nut Popcorn, Porcini-Pecan Mushroom Pâté, Edamame Dumplings, and Cauliflower-Coconut Puffs.

The Salads chapter serves up many creative recipes, as does the Soups chapter. And your mouth will water for the wide range of entrées and side dishes offered. Try Asparagus-Quinoa Risotto, Indonesian Fried Rice, Squash Quesadillas with Tempeh Slaw Wraps, Cranberry-Jícama Salsa, Korean ‘Tacos,’ Kale and White Bean Pizza, Green Bean and Potato Stomboli, Sweet Moroccan-Glazed Tofu, and more!

If you like to grill, there’s a Grilling chapter. And of course, the book ends with dessert selections, such as recipes for Banana Cream Pie, Chocolate Toffee Bars, Pumpkin-Cherry Bundt Cake, and Peanut Butter-Chocolate Chip Cupcakes.

Nutritional analyses are not provided; however, most recipes do not appear to be high in fat. Color photos are also featured.

***Big Vegan* (ISBN 978-0-8118-7467-0) is 544 pages and published by Chronicle Books. It retails for \$29.95. Look for this fantastic book in your favorite bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

THE BEST VEGGIE BURGERS ON THE PLANET

By Joni Marie Newman



The Best Veggie Burgers on the Planet includes recipes for 101 vegan patties. You’ll even find unusual options like the Log Cabin Burger, which is meant to be served for breakfast!

Most of the recipes give veggie burgers an international twist. The Far East inspired the Chow Mein Burger and the Edamame Burger, which is also wheat-free. Middle Eastern options include a Potato Samosa Burger, a Tabbouleh Burger, and of course, a Falafel Burger. From Italy, you can sample a Sun-Dried Tomato and Artichoke Burger, a Ravioli Burger, or a Pizza Burger.

American burgers include a Basic Black Bean BBQ Burger, ‘Crab’ Cakes, and the BLT and Avocado Burger. Then, there are

burgers with Latin flair, such as a Jalapeño Cornbread Burger and a Chipotle Sweet Potato Burger.

You’ll also find recipes for specific holidays, such as the Savory Noodle Kugel Burger, the Cinco de Mayo Burger made with soy chorizo, and the Oktoberfest Kraut Burger. In addition, this book features recipes for bun and bread options, side dishes to go with the burgers, and even a few recipes for cookies and cakes.

***The Best Veggie Burgers on the Planet* (ISBN 978-1-59233-476-6) is published by Fair Winds Press. It is 239 pages and retails for \$19.99. Look for it in your favorite bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

THE EVERYTHING VEGAN COOKBOOK

By Jolinda Hackett
with Lorena Novak Bull, RD



The Everything Vegan Cookbook features 300 vegan recipes, such as Fresh Mint Spring Rolls, Cream of Carrot Soup with Coconut, Cajun Collard Greens, Ginger and Pralined Sweet Potatoes, and Pumpkin Cream Pasta Sauce. Also included are Massaman Curried Seitan, Mexican Spice-Crusted Tofu, Rosemary Tempeh Hash, Foolproof Vegan Fudge, and more. Nutritional analyses are provided, and helpful tips appear throughout the cookbook.

***The Everything Vegan Cookbook* (ISBN 978-1-4405-0216-3) is published by Adams Media and retails for \$15.95. Look for it in your favorite bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

reviews

WELCOMING KITCHEN

By Kim Lutz



Welcoming Kitchen is the kind of cookbook that many have been waiting for! Every recipe is allergen-free, gluten-free, *and* vegan. In addition, nutritional analyses—including calories, fat, carbs, fiber, and protein—are provided.

The cookbook starts off with a number of interesting sandwich spreads, such as a Roasted Fennel Spread and an Italian Hummus. Then, the Salads & Soups section features Ruby Coleslaw with carrots and purple cabbage and Kitchen Sink Soup, which works for any vegetable you like.

The Lunches & Dinners chapter allows readers to try Tacos made with roasted buckwheat (kasha), Quinoa-Stuffed Peppers, Artichoke-Portabella Risotto, or Pizza with a Polenta Pizza Crust.

The Muffins & Breads section serves up Peach Raspberry Muffins, Coconut Chocolate Chip Mini Muffins, Oat-Cornmeal Bread, and Sweet Potato Biscuits.

Of course, breakfast is the most important meal of the day! You can prepare Mixed Berry Crêpes, Doughnut Bites, Brunch Hash, Sunday Morning Pancakes, and numerous smoothies.

Last but not least, the Desserts section has Cinnamon Coffee Cake, Caramel Brownie Sundaes, Coconut Rice Pudding, and Chocolate Peppermint Cups.

***Welcoming Kitchen* (ISBN 978-1-4027-7185-9) is published by Sterling Publishing and retails for \$17.95. Look for this book in your favorite bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

WORLD VEGAN FEAST

By Bryanna Clark Grogan



World Vegan Feast serves up a wide variety of gourmet international dishes, complete with vivid color photos. Starting with brunch, you can try recipes for Korean Potato Pancakes, Creole French Toast with Hot Brown Sugar Sauce, or Crostoni Benedict with Vegan Pesto Hollandaise.

If you're looking for interesting munchies, there are Vietnamese-Style BBQ Subs and Baja-Style Tempeh Tacos. Then, add on a soup, such as Peruvian-Inspired Sweet Potato Chowder or Golden Cauliflower Dal Soup.

This book has tempting pasta dishes, such as Greek-Style Lasagne and Singapore Noodles. Some bean/legume-based recipes include French Cassoulette, Persian Eggplant Stew with Yellow Split Peas and Lime, and Lentil and Rapini Stew with Spicy Vegan Sausage.

World Vegan Feast also features entrées using soy products or seitan. These include Vegan Scottish Pot Haggis, Vegan Salmon, Seitan Wellington, and Vegan Coq au Vin. You can pair these dishes with sides like Green and Gold Quinoa Pilaf or Sicilian Winter Squash with Mint and Garlic.

And of course, there are delicious desserts. Sample Swedish Ginger Balls, Russian Chocolate Torte, Almond Café Latte Cake, Ukrainian Cherry Dumplings, or Mexican Bread Pudding.

These are not quick-and-easy recipes. Also, nutritional analyses are not provided, even though most dishes do not appear to be

high in fat. Helpful icons indicating whether a recipe is gluten-free, is soy-free, or can be prepared in 30 minutes or less are included.

***World Vegan Feast* (ISBN 978-0-9800131-4-6) is published by Vegan Heritage Press and retails for \$19.95. Look for it in your favorite bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

THE VEGAN SOULFOOD GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

By Afya Ibomu



The Vegan Souffood Guide to the Galaxy begins with fundamentals about veganism. Then, the author addresses health and nutrition issues, discusses how to read food labels, and provides a basic guide for dining out.

The majority of the book, however, is devoted to unique recipes from a range of cultural traditions. Try Satisfy My Soul Grits and Tempeh Sausage for breakfast, or consider Buffalo Tofu, Creole Red Beans and Rice, or Chimichangas for dinner. Serve these entrées with Al Greens, Coconut Collards, Hush Pups, or Sweet Baked Beans.

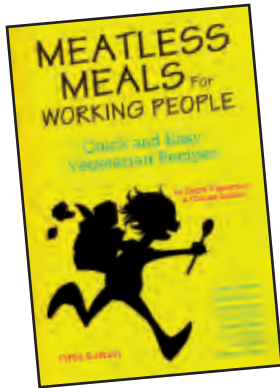
As for desserts, be sure to try the Hood Rich Brownies, Rice Nut Krispies, and Karamu Corn.

Color photos are included. Nutritional analyses are not provided. Please note that some dishes are high in fat, and honey is an option in a few recipes.

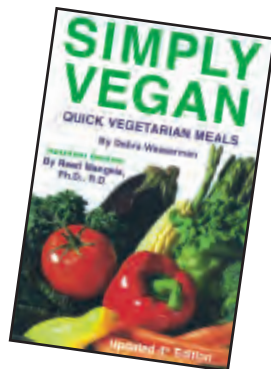
***The Vegan Souffood Guide to the Galaxy* (ISBN 978-0-9770092-2-0) is published by Natrall Unlimited. Order this book online at <www.natrall.com>. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

VRG Catalog

Books



Meatless Meals for Working People—Quick and Easy Vegetarian Recipes (\$12) by Debra Wasserman. We recommend using whole grains and fresh vegetables. However, for the busy working person, this isn't always possible. This 192-page book contains over 100 fast and easy recipes and tells you how to be a vegetarian within your hectic schedule using common, convenient foods. Spice chart, low-cost meal plans, party ideas, information on fast food restaurants, soy dishes, and more. Over 100,000 copies in print.



Simply Vegan (\$14.95) by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. These 224 pages contain over 160 quick and easy vegan recipes, a complete vegan nutrition section, and a list of where to mail order vegan food, clothing, cosmetics, and household products. Vegan menus and meal plans. Over 90,000 copies sold.

Conveniently Vegan (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Prepare meals with all the natural foods products found in stores today, including soymilk, tempeh, tofu, veggie hot dogs, ... You'll find 150 recipes using convenience foods (including canned beans) along with grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Menu ideas, product sources, and food definitions included. (208 pp.)



Vegan Meals for One or Two—Your Own Personal Recipes (\$15) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. Whether you live alone, are a couple, or are the only one in your household who is vegetarian, this 216-page book is for you. Each recipe is written to serve one or two people and is designed so that you can realistically use ingredients the way they come packaged from the store. Information on meal planning and shopping is included, as well as breakfast ideas, one-pot wonders, recipes that can be frozen for later use, grab-and-go suggestions, everyday and special occasion entrées, plus desserts and snacks. A glossary is also provided.

Vegan in Volume (\$20) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 272-page quantity cookbook is loaded with terrific recipes serving 25. Suitable for catered events, college food services, restaurants, parties in your own home, weddings, and much more.

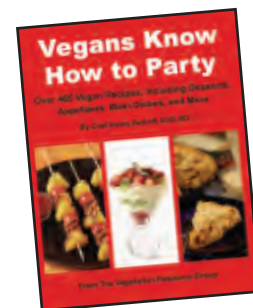
No Cholesterol Passover Recipes (\$9) by Debra Wasserman. Includes 100 eggless and dairyless recipes. Seder plate ideas. (96 pp.)

The Lowfat Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook—Healthy Traditions

From Around the World (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Over 150 lowfat international vegan recipes with nutritional breakdowns, including Romanian Apricot Dumplings, Pumpernickel Bread, Russian Flat Bread, Potato Knishes, North African Barley Pudding, and much more. Menu suggestions and holiday recipes. (224 pp.)

Vegan Passover Recipes (\$6) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 48-page booklet features vegan soups and salads, side dishes and sauces, entrées, desserts, and dishes you can prepare in a microwave during Passover. All the recipes follow Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and are pareve.

Vegan Handbook (\$20) edited by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. Over 200 vegan recipes and vegetarian resources. Includes sports nutrition, seniors' guide, feeding vegan children, recipes for egg-free cakes and vegan pancakes, Thanksgiving ideas, vegetarian history, menus, and more. (256 pp.)

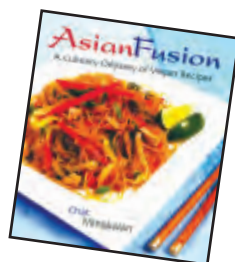


Vegans Know How to Party (\$25) by Chef Nancy Berkoff. This 384-page book teaches you how to put on a soiree for vegans and all who enjoy great food! It features over 465 recipes, including appetizers, soups, salads, ethnic cuisine, sandwiches, and—of course—desserts like pies, cakes, and cookies! Also inside are tips for basic party planning, kids' parties, cooking for a crowd, working with a caterer, and more!

Vegan Menu for People with Diabetes (\$10) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. This 96-page book gives people with (or at risk for) diabetes a four-week meal plan, exchange listings for meat substitutes and soy products, and recipes for enjoyable dishes, such as Creamy Carrot Soup, Tangy Tofu Salad, Baked Bean Quesadillas, and French Toast.



Appetite for Reduction (\$20) by Isa Chandra Moskowitz. In this 290-page book, you will find 125 delectable 'diet' vegan recipes that are low in calories but rank high for substance and creativity. Symbols indicate if a dish is gluten- and/or soy-free and whether it can be prepared in fewer than 30 minutes. Recipes include salads, sides, entrées with tofu or tempeh, noodle dishes, and more. The book also has nutritional analyses and gorgeous color photos.



Asian Fusion (\$15) by Chat Mingkwan. This author serves up an array of fascinating vegan dishes, each capitalizing on the often subtle but distinct differences among Asia's many cuisines. Learn to create Green Papaya Salad from Laos, Split Pea Cakes from Burma, Indonesian Corn Fritters, and Malaysian Baked Spiced Mousse. (183 pp.)

Vegan Seafood: Beyond the Fish Shtick for Vegetarians (\$12) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. Chef Nancy Berkoff has created unique and good-tasting vegan fish and seafood dishes. Inside these 96 pages you will learn about cooking with vegan 'fish,' websites offering vegan 'seafood' products, and info about omega-3 fatty acids. Avoid fish but still enjoy the taste of the sea with 'Fish' Sticks, 'Tuna' Salad, and much more!

Free Children's Handouts

I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book

A coloring book that promotes healthful eating and vegetarianism for children ages 3-7.

Vegetarian Nutrition for Teenagers Brochure with all of the basics about veggie nutrition.

(For these items, a donation to cover printing and postage would be appreciated.)

Bumper Stickers

Bumper Stickers (\$1 each, 10+ \$.50 each)

"Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them"
"Vegetarians Are Sprouting Up All Over"

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Vegetarian Action

Through the Eyes of a Refugee Vegan Spring Break Trip *By Yasmin Radbod*

I AM SURE YOU HAVE HEARD WHAT THE STEREOTYPICAL college spring break consists of, right? It is a time for partying and fun. There are some college students, however, who spend their spring breaks doing something very meaningful while also having a good time. My first week of freshman year at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), I stumbled upon Alternative Spring Breaks (ASB). I became interested in attending one of the many trips offered, everything from an environmental trip to a homeless plunge. At the same time, I also began volunteering at the Refugee Youth Project (RYP) in Baltimore, which connects college students with high school refugee students; the high school students receive tutoring and attend trips and outings.

I put two and two together and decided to create an ASB trip specifically about refugees in Baltimore. I created a five-day trip in which 10 UMBC students would have the opportunity to volunteer with refugees in Baltimore and live in a mock refugee camp I designed myself called Through the Eyes of a Refugee (TEAR). The twist is that I made the entire trip vegan, for a couple reasons. One, I have been vegan for more than four years, and since I created and led the trip, I wanted to make it vegan. That way everyone could eat the food. Secondly, in many refugee camps, meat is a commodity that is sparse and expensive. Refugee camps that receive international aid from organizations such as the Human Refugee Agency of the United Nations (UNHCR), UNICEF, or Oxfam International are stocked with packaged foods, and meat is hard to come by. The same goes for animal byproducts. Dairy is usually given in the form of powdered milk. Lastly, living in a refugee camp means sacrifice, so I wanted the students on the trip to have to sacrifice something as part of the experience. I decided, what better experience than having to be vegan for five days?



Through the Eyes of a Refugee (TEAR) Participants

The first two days of the trip consisted of living in the mock refugee camp at Gwynns Falls Park near UMBC. No electronics were allowed, and there was no running water or electricity. We heated lentil soup over an open fire and ate it out of the can. No one was happy with the food selection, but that was part of the immersion. The next day, we had oatmeal for breakfast, and we took a hike through the park and ate trail mix. At the camp, I did various refugee simulations using different manuals I found through organizations that serve refugees. We also read through some actual refugee cases from the UNHCR's website.

The rest of TEAR consisted of actual volunteering. We spent one day volunteering with adult refugees at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Baltimore, helping them with their résumés. Another day was spent inviting approximately 30 high school refugee students to UMBC, giving them a tour, teaching them about college, cooking tofu stir-fry with Bragg seasoning for lunch, and playing soccer with them. Other meals during the week consisted

of vegan black bean burritos, spaghetti with mock meatballs, Tofurky sandwiches, PB&Js, and much more.

TEAR is now in its third year, and stronger than ever. Last year, I extended the trip and added more volunteering. Now, we spend an extra day organizing and cleaning the IRC donation shop; we also spend a day volunteering at RYP with high school students from Patterson High School in Baltimore. The trip is still all vegan, and I will be leading it again this year. If you have any questions or suggestions or if you are interested in starting a similar spring break trip at your university, do not hesitate to e-mail me at radbod1@umbc.edu.

Yasmin Radbod wrote this article during a summer internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

VRG Outreach Booths

Kudos to our volunteers who have staffed VRG outreach booths at various fairs, festivals, and meetings around the country over the past year. These are just a few of those events!

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting in San Diego
- Charlottesville Vegetarian Festival in Virginia
- Chicago Vegan Mania
- HampdenFest Street Festival in Maryland
- Natural Products Expo
- School Health Interdisciplinary Program (SHIP) Conference
- Towson University Health Fair
- World Veg Festival in San Francisco



VRG Interns Jessica Friend, Lindsey Siferd, and Yasmin Radbod staffing the VRG booth at the School Health Interdisciplinary Program Conference in Towson, MD.

If you would like to volunteer at VRG booths or would like handouts or books for your own outreach activities, please e-mail vrg@vrg.org or call the office at (410) 366-8343.



And Don't Forget About Our Scholarships!

Each year, The Vegetarian Resource Group awards two \$5,000 college scholarships to graduating U.S. high school students who have championed vegetarianism in their schools and/or communities. This year's application deadline is Monday, February 20, 2012. Please visit www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm to learn more!