

Vegan Journal

Health, Ethics & Environment since 1982

Healthy Indulgence

page 16

Ghanaian
Cuisine
page 6

Hotels Offering Vegan Food • page 23

VRG Video Contest Winners • page 28

Perennial Vegetables: A Climate Solution • page 30

Nutrition Hotline

Food Safety Concerns During Pregnancy

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD



QUESTION: I'm vegan, pregnant, and concerned about food safety. What can I do to stay safe?

S.C., via email

ANSWER: While no one wants to get sick, foodborne illnesses are an especial concern during pregnancy. Changes in the immune system in pregnancy result in an increased risk for illness. Listeria, a foodborne illness, can cause miscarriage, premature delivery, stillbirth, and serious sickness for a newborn baby. Listeria outbreaks are often associated with deli meats and soft cheeses, but have also been caused by fruits and vegetables.¹ Toxoplasma gondii can cause hearing loss, blindness, and brain damage in babies. Toxoplasma gondii is associated with undercooked meat but has also been found in unwashed fruits or vegetables. Salmonella, Campylobacter, and E. Coli may also lead to complications in pregnancy.

Several vegan foods that should be avoided in pregnancy to reduce the risk of food poisoning include unpasteurized juice, such as fresh-squeezed juice and cider; raw or undercooked sprouts, such as alfalfa, clover, mung bean, and radish sprouts; unbaked (raw) dough or batter²; and commercially prepared

deli sides like potato salad and coleslaw.³ Some recommend avoiding raw tofu.⁴ Leftover food that has been in the refrigerator more than 2-3 days should be avoided. Freeze food that will not be eaten within a few days. Pasteurized juices and cider, sprouts cooked until steaming, baked goods, and homemade deli salads can still be enjoyed.³

Safe food handling practices are also important. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies Four Basic Steps to Food Safety⁵:

- 1. Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often. Rinse fruits and vegetables, scrubbing with a brush under running water. Even produce where the skin or rind will not be eaten, such as citrus and melons, should be washed before peeling or slicing.
- 2. Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Be aware if others prepare raw meat or poultry products in your house and keep cutting boards used for these products separate.
- 3. Cook:** Cook to safe temperatures. Leftovers and casseroles should be heated to at least 165 degrees.
- 4. Chill:** Refrigerate foods promptly discard foods left

at room temperature for over 2 hours, or for more than 1 hour if the air temperature is above 90 degrees. Refrigerator temperatures must be 40 degrees or lower and the freezer is 0 degrees or below.

Sign up to receive email notifications of food recalls at public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFDA/subscriber/new (Select Recalls, Market Withdrawals, and Safety Alerts to let you know if a product has been recalled.)

REFERENCES:

- ¹ CDC. Listeria outbreaks. cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/index.html. 2024.
- ² Foodsafety.gov. People at risk: Pregnant women. foodsafety.gov/people-at-risk/pregnant-women. 2020.
- ³ CDC. Safer food choices for pregnant people. cdc.gov/food-safety/foods/pregnant-people.html. 2024.
- ⁴ Australian Institute of Food Safety. Can vegans get food poisoning? blog. foodsafety.com.au/can-vegans-get-food-poisoning. 2019.
- ⁵ CDC. About four steps to food safety. cdc.gov/food-safety/prevention/index.html. 2024.

Vegan Journal

MANAGING EDITOR: Debra Wasserman

SENIOR EDITOR: Hannah Kaminsky

EDITORS: Keryl Cryer,

Carole Hamlin, Charles Stahler

NUTRITION EDITOR: Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

NUTRITIONAL ANALYSES: Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY: Hannah Kaminsky

WEB DEVELOPMENT: Jason Goretzki

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: Whitney McVerry

RESEARCH DIRECTOR: Jeanne Yacoubou, MS

VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP ADVISORS:

Arnold Alper, MD; Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD;

Catherine Conway, MS, RD; Heather Gorn, MPhil;

Enette Larson-Meyer, PhD, RD;

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD; Jerome Marcus, MD;

Virginia Messina, MPH, RD; Odette Olivares, MSN;

Brad Scott, MBA; Wayne Smeltz, PhD

COPYRIGHT 2025 by The Vegetarian

Resource Group, Incorporated

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Vegan Journal (ISSN 2770-5676) is published quarterly. The contents of *Vegan Journal* and our other publications, including web information, are not intended to provide personal medical advice. Medical advice should be obtained from a qualified health professional.

We often depend on company statements for product and ingredient information. It is impossible to be 100% sure about a statement, info can change, people have different views, and mistakes can be made. Please use your own best judgment about whether a product is suitable for you. To be sure, do further research or confirm on your own.

ADVERTISING: *Vegan Journal* does not accept paid advertising. We do review vegan products.

EMAIL: Contact The VRG via email at vrg@vrg.org
The VRG's website is vrg.org

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please send change of address to P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203 or to vrg@vrg.org

FOR INFORMATION, CALL (410) 366-8343
Also, if you do not want your name traded to other organizations, please let us know.

2025 Issue 2
Features

16 • Healthy Indulgence

6 • Ghanaian Recipes & Meal Plan

23 • Hotels with Vegan Food

22 • 25 Ideas for Hot Weather Meals 28 • The VRG's 2024 Video Contest Winners 30 • Perennial Vegetables: A Climate Solution

Departments

2 • *Nutrition Hotline*: Food Safety Concerns During Pregnancy

4 • *Note from the Coordinators*: Positive Activism

5 • *Letters to the Editor*

24 • *Scientific Update*: Vegan Diets and Type 2 Diabetes and more

26 • *Veggie Bits*: Sourdough Pasta, Vegan Cat Food, and more

32 • *Join VRG and Notes from The VRG Scientific Department*

33 • *Book Reviews*

34 • *Vegan Cooking Tips*: Cooking with Berries by Chef Nancy Berkoff

35 • *Vegan Action*: Dr. Joycelyn Peterson by Akua Oppong

Back Cover • *VRG Blog Updates* and *The VRG Online Restaurant Guide*

Vegan Journal is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit that educates the public about veganism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, environment, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegan Journal* in the USA, send \$25 to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or go to vrg.org/member. Additional donations support our outreach and research. Go to vrg.org/donate



Note from the Coordinators



Positive Activism

We recently received a heartwarming note from a longtime member who went fully vegetarian 35 years ago. Though his relative, who was a dietitian, was concerned, she didn't say much. By coincidence, she found our booth at the next American Dietetic Association annual meeting. With more information from us, and his influence, she ended up being more supportive.

It's valuable to attend VegFests and vegan conferences. However, by also being in mainstream arenas, we are able to have wide-ranging and long-term influence with many ripple effects. Though we stick by our beliefs, we accomplish goals by educating and not proselytizing or cherry picking studies to prove our point. Thus we can interact with nonvegans in a productive manner outside the vegan bubble.

Social media often highlights negativity and complaints. While those voices may express legitimate concerns, they often fail to provide concrete ways to make the world better or safer for everyone. That's why we're especially grateful to all our members and supporters who, while standing up for what they believe in, also take meaningful, positive actions.

We're thrilled to hear about VRG intern Akua Oppong's plans to connect with the West African community. Check out her vegan meal plan and recipes on page 6. Senior Editor Hannah Kaminsky, who has been sharing the vegan message since their teenage years, continues to inspire with their stunning photos throughout this issue. You'll also find a letter from Callie, a former VRG scholarship winner, whose high school projects included working on a vegan food truck and getting vegan options into her school cafeteria. If you'd like to volunteer as a judge for our scholarship contest, please email Whitney at vrg@vrg.org

A special shout-out goes to members who mentor young people, as well as those who support our internship program. We're particularly thankful for Heather, a former intern who has been doing booths for The Vegetarian Resource Group in New England. If you're interested in helping her at a table, let us know!

On pages 23 and 26, you'll meet inspiring entrepreneurs who are using their talents to run vegan hotels and create vegan products. Anyone who has owned a business knows how challenging it can be. If you discover a vegan product or service you love, consider spreading the word to support it.

What better way to promote plant-based living than by starting a garden? Be sure to read Jeanne Yacoubou's article about perennial vegetables as a climate solution on page 30. And don't miss the uplifting story of Joycelyn Peterson on page 35, who has taught more than 1,000 students about healthy nutrition.

Thank you to all our members for your ongoing support, your positive actions, and your commitment to making the world a better place.

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stahler
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 vegan-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 veganism.

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, or donate at vrg.org/donate

Special thanks to Phil Becker for staffing VRG's booth at the San Francisco, California World VegFest and to Arnie Alper, MD, and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, for staffing VRG's booth at the Food is Medicine Health Conference in Santa Cruz, California.

We greatly appreciate the generous donations from Ann Berwald and Michael Blankenheim.

Update from Former VRG Scholarship Winner and Intern

School is going very well. I'm in my third year at Smith College now and an environmental science major. I'm preparing to research and write a senior thesis next year about the environmental and social impacts of factory farming in the U.S. I also live in a vegetarian/vegan food co-op on Smith's campus and we cook completely vegan dinners every night of the week. This past summer, I completed a research internship at North Carolina State University and researched some of the environmental impacts of animal farming (i.e., how manure impacts groundwater quality). I am still so grateful for my time with The Vegetarian Resource Group and the scholarship I got from the VRG as well! Hopefully my pursuits resonate with you and your continued work.

Callie S., via email

Editor's Note: Learn more about VRG's scholarship program at www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm. Read more about VRG internships at www.vrg.org/student/index.php. Support of VRG scholarships and internships can be made at vrg.org/donate

VRG's Booth at Dietitian Conference Supported My Being Vegetarian

Roughly 35 years ago, I moved to a fully vegetarian diet. My mother-in-law was concerned, but did not say much. She was a registered dietitian and worked at a regional hospital in the Midwest. She found VRG's booth at the next national dietitian's conference.

With more information, and likely a personal connection, she became fully supportive. She provided me with information and I have been a *Journal* subscriber since then.

Jeff Z., via email

Soft Diet Article Helpful After Dental Surgery

I recently had dental surgery and had to be on a soft diet for several days. I started with vegan chocolate pudding from *Simply Vegan*, applesauce, and blended pea soup. Thank you to VRG, Nancy Berkoff, and Reed Mangels for your helpful ideas.

C.T., via email

Editor's Note: Find more ideas for soft foods at: vrg.org/journal/vj2009issue2/texture.htm and vrg.org/teen/braces.php

Letters to the Editors can be sent to: Vegan Journal, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. You may also e-mail letters to vrg@vrg.org or send a message to us on Facebook: facebook.com/thevegetarianresourcegroup

Coming in the next issue...

SUMMERTIME DISHES

Plus: *Pressure Cooking, VRG 2025 National Poll Results, Cooking with Plant Milks, and More!*

Ghanaian Recipes & Meal Plan

by Akua Oppong

Boldly seasoned and highly spiced, Ghanaian food is as diverse as it is delicious. Traditional meals are already vegetable-centric, with animal products added as desired, and not required in dishes. This makes veganizing Ghanaian dishes effortless!

Although meat is eaten a lot in Ghana, fruits and vegetables can be found in abundance in grocery stores, markets, and food stands. Meat can easily be replaced with tofu, tempeh, or other soy products. Beans are traditionally eaten and can also be used to replace meat.

What's most enticing about Ghanaian food is how it can be eaten in many different ways, mixing and matching components for unique culinary experiences every time. While some dishes are typically paired with specific foods, these combinations are flexible, allowing for limitless variety. An example of this is *Red Red*.* The most common and well-known combination is eating *Red Red** with fried plantains, but it can also be eaten with *gari**, rice, or even *dokonolkenkey**, with *shito** on the side for extra spice. The versatility of Ghanaian food is what makes it exciting. Another example is *waakye*.* It is a rice and bean dish dyed purple/burgundy by *waakye** leaves. It can be mixed and matched with many sides such as avocado, *gari**, *shito**, spaghetti, and stew.

To create a basic Ghanaian meal, pick a stew or soup, then a starchy vegetable/tuber or rice. Starchy

vegetables/tubers include cassava, plantains, and yams. Soups and stews include *Red Red**, *kontomire**, and *abenkwan*.* You can then add your protein of choice, such as beans, tofu, or other prepared meat alternatives, and sides such as *gari** or *shito** for extra spice or texture.

In Ghana, an emphasis is placed on eating well-rounded, filling meals. Snacks may be eaten as fillers when meals are not available at the time or are being prepared. Mealtimes are the same as mealtimes in the United States, with breakfast served at about 7-9 a.m., lunch around 12-1 p.m., and dinner around 5-7 p.m. All meals are about the same size: large! Breakfast usually consists of bread with butter (can be replaced by vegan butter), eggs (can be replaced by vegan eggs or tofu scramble), and tea; *waakye** if one is on the go; or porridges like oatmeal or *hausa koko**, typically eaten with *koose*.* These are common options for breakfast, but Ghanaians don't discriminate. Food is food, and anything from leftovers or roadside food stand offerings in Ghana is a fine choice for breakfast. Lunch and dinner are also open in this way, with any dish being fair game for all meals. Options include *Red Red** and fried plantains, *dokonolkenkey** with various protein and side options, and rice dishes such as *jollof** or fried rice. Common snacks include fruit, roasted corn, peanuts, and *kelewele*.*

When it comes to food preparation, one thing my mom told me that I always remember is that once you learn how to make a basic stew or soup base, you can make any Ghanaian dish. Stews usually consist of tomatoes, onions, garlic, chili peppers, and spices, and soups are the same but with more water added. To make specific dishes, different ingredients are added such as spinach or *kontomire** leaves for *kontomire** stew, or peanut butter for *nkatenkwan** (peanut soup). Different elements are added according to the dish, but the underlying basic structure remains the same.



* indicates that the word is included in the glossary on pages 8-9.



Meals have a community aspect to them, both in preparation and consumption. One example of this is how *fufu**, a starchy dough/*swallow** made of cassava, plantains, yams, or a combination of these foods, is made. *Fufu** requires an intense kneading process that involves two people. One person sits and the other stands, holding a long stick. In a synchronized, rhythmic fashion, the person sitting turns the *fufu** while the person standing raises the stick and pounds it against the dough repeatedly. A mere fraction of a second out of sync could easily result in a painful injury! This shows how much trust and confidence the two people must have in each other. Cooking is usually a family endeavor, with several people collaborating on different parts. Many Ghanaian meals are eaten with the hands (utensils may be used as well) and may be placed in a large bowl or plate for several people to share and enjoy together.

The meal plan that follows reflects both what is traditionally eaten in Ghana and what a Ghanaian family eats in the United States, modified to be vegan. Some foods, such as *waakye** and *kontomire**, are easier to get in Ghana. Food stands make *waakye** a more convenient grab-and-go breakfast in Ghana compared to a home-cooked meal in the United States. *Kontomire** leaves aren't found in the United States, so spinach is used instead. American/Western options may occasionally be incorporated or replace meals, snacks, desserts, and drinks, but most meals stay traditional. Less common ingredients for Ghanaian meals can be found in African and other international grocery stores or online.

In the meal plan I compiled, I tried to incorporate as many different Ghanaian dishes as I could, with options to mix and match. I enjoyed all of these foods while growing up and hope you will too, while gaining deeper appreciation and understanding of Ghanaian culture and cuisine!

GHANAIAN GROCERY LIST

- ☐ Bofrot* mix
- ☐ Coconut water
- ☐ Dokono/kenkey*
- ☐ Fufu* mix
- ☐ Gari*
- ☐ Hausa koko* flour
- ☐ Kelewele* spice
- ☐ Malt drinks
- ☐ Palm nut cream concentrate
(concentrated palm nut fruit/seed)
- ☐ Palm oil (sustainably sourced)
- ☐ Pineapple ginger drink
- ☐ Sobolo* (spiced hibiscus drink)
- ☐ Suya* spice mix
- ☐ Waakye* leaves
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐



Ghanaian Glossary

- **Abenkwan:** Palm nut soup—a spicy, flavorful soup made using the palm fruit.
- **Achomo:** Fried dough eaten as a sweet, crunchy snack.
- **Ampesi with kontomire:** Stew eaten with a combination of boiled starches of choice, including cassava, plantains, and yams. May also be eaten with avocado.
- **Asanka and tapoli:** The Ghanaian version of a mortar and pestle. *Asanka* is the mortar (a wide bowl with ridges in it) and *tapoli* is the pestle (an hourglass-shaped wooden utensil).
- **Banku:** Cornmeal and cassava dough/*swallow** similar in texture to *dokonol/kenkey** often eaten with *meko*,* *shito*,* and a protein.
- **Bofrot:** Round Ghanaian donuts.
- **Cassava:** A starchy root vegetable that is a staple in Ghanaian cuisine.
- **Dokonol/kenkey:** Fermented corn sour dough/*swallow** paired with stews or *meko*,* *shito*,* and a protein. Two Ghanaian names are listed because different Ghanaian languages have different names for it, which can be used interchangeably. *Dokono* is the Akan name; *kormi* is the Ga name; *kenkey* is the English name. *Dokonol/kenkey* is eaten with the hands.
- **Fried yam:** Yams cut in wedges and fried in oil. Often served with *meko** or stew with *shito** and a protein. Eaten with the hands.
- **Fufu:** A pounded starchy dough/*swallow** that is made of plantains and/or cassava.
- **Garden egg:** Similar to eggplants sold in the USA but white and egg-shaped, hence the name.
- **Gari:** Ground/grated cassava that can be eaten in several different ways, such as adding to dishes for extra texture and flavor, or mixed with water, vegan milk, and sweeteners to eat as a type of porridge



(*gari* soakings). A small amount of water may be added to make the *gari* stick together and be eaten as a side for stews such as *Red Red*.*

- **Ghanaian pancakes:** Thin, crepe-like pancakes often spiced with nutmeg. Use vegan milk and omit eggs to make these pancakes vegan.
- **Hausa koko:** A spiced millet porridge sometimes eaten with *koose*.*
- **Hwentia:** A small, bitter, and earthy-tasting black pepper.
- **Jollof rice:** A popular orange, tomato-pepper rice dish in West Africa, originating in Senegal. The spread of the dish throughout West Africa has caused friendly competition as different countries claim their version is the best.
- **Kelewele:** Cut and spiced fried plantains often eaten with *Red Red** as a meal, or with peanuts or by itself as a snack. Can be served with any meal as a side.
- **Kontomire:** The leaves of the *cocoyam* plant. *Kontomire* is not commonly found in stores in the United States, so spinach can be used instead.
- **Koose:** A spiced and fried black-eyed pea pastry.
- **Meko:** A sauce made of coarsely blended tomatoes, onions, pepper, and ginger (optional). Eaten with fried yams or *dokonol/kenkey*.*
- **Nkatenkwan:** Peanut/groundnut soup.
- **Ofam:** A spiced plantain cake that uses overripe plantains, so it is perfect for avoiding plantain waste or for using extra plantains.
- **Okro (okra):** A green vegetable often eaten in stews or soups. The seeds in the vegetable makes stews or soups thick and sometimes slimy when cooked.



- **Omu tuo** (rice balls): Cooked, sticky rice formed into balls typically eaten with *nkatenkwan* (peanut soup).

- **Plantains:** A starchy, tropical fruit similar to bananas but cooked (boiled, fried, baked, or grilled) to eat.

- **Red Red:** Black-eyed pea stew. Both the palm oil and tomatoes in the stew create a red color, hence the double name *Red Red*¹.



- **Rice water/rice pudding:**

Rice boiled in water and eaten as porridge with vegan milk/cream and sugar.

- **Shito:** A spicy pepper sauce eaten as a condiment with the majority of Ghanaian dishes.

- **Sobolo:** A spiced ginger hibiscus drink.

- **Suya:** A seasoning blend made of peanuts and various spices that originated in Nigeria.² Traditionally, it is sprinkled on meats and grilled, often as kebabs on skewers. Tofu or meat alternatives can be used.

- **Swallow:** A general term for soft food eaten with the hands like *banku*, *dokono/kenkey*, and *fufu*. Since the food is soft, it is very easy to swallow and requires minimal chewing.



- **Vegan Ghanaian bread:** Sweet, fluffy, and thick bread. A simple staple often paired with butter (can use vegan butter), eggs (can replace with vegan eggs or tofu scramble), and/or tea. It can be also enjoyed by itself. The dough can be prepared with vegan milk.

- **Waakye:** A rice and bean (black-eyed peas) dish dyed purple/burgundy by *waakye* (sorghum) leaves and eaten with many sides. Vegan options include avocado, *gari*,* *shito*,* spaghetti, and stew.



- **Yam:** Also known as African yam, it is a starchy, tropical root vegetable/tuber that is a staple in Ghanaian cuisine.

Reference

¹ Adjonyoh Z. *Red Red (Vegan bean stew)*. McBride Sisters Wine Company. mcbridesisters.com/blogs/eat-drink/red-red-vegan-bean-stew

² Knelly C. *Suya: The classic Nigerian street food you should know*. *Tasting Table*. tastingtable.com/1004134/suya-the-classic-nigerian-street-food-you-should-know

Additional Source

Learning Cards. *TheGaDangme*. thegadangme.com/category/language/learning-cards



Ghanaian 7-Day Meal Plan

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	<i>Koose*</i> <i>Hausa koko*</i> with soymilk Nuts and fruits	Bean stew (<i>Red Red</i>)* Rice or <i>gari*</i> and fried plantains,* and vegetables or mixed greens	<i>Dokonol/kenkey*</i> with <i>meko,* shito,*</i> tofu, or vegan tuna	<i>Bofrot*</i>
Tuesday	Ghanaian-style oatmeal with soymilk Nuts and fruits	<i>Kontomire*</i> stew and chickpeas Rice or boiled yam*	Okro* Stew (page 13) with tofu or fish substitute <i>Banku,* dokono/kenkey,*</i> rice, or boiled yam	Meat pie (can use roasted and spiced chickpeas or meat substitute)
Wednesday	<i>Gari*</i> soakings/soaked <i>gari*</i> with soymilk Nuts and fruits	Nkatenkwan* (page 11) with tofu and kale, spinach, or bok choy <i>Omu tuo,*</i> rice, or <i>fufu*</i>	Vegan Egg Stew (page 13) Rice or boiled yam with mixed greens	<i>Ofam*</i>
Thursday	Rice water/rice pudding with soymilk Nuts and fruits	Cabbage Stew (page 13) Rice or yam	<i>Ampesi*</i> with <i>kontomire*</i> and chickpeas	<i>Achomo*</i>
Friday	Vegan Ghanaian bread* with vegan butter Egg substitute (JUST Egg or tofu scramble) Tea and fruit	Fried yam* with <i>meko,*</i> <i>shito,*</i> tofu, or vegan tuna Spinach or other greens	Nkatenkwan* (page 11) <i>Fufu*</i> or rice balls	Roasted plantain or <i>kelewele*</i> with peanuts
Saturday	<i>Waakye*</i> with Basic Stew (page 12), spaghetti, crumbled tofu, avocado, Vegan Shito* (page 14), and greens or vegetables	Garden egg* stew with crumbled tofu Rice or boiled yam	<i>Abenkwan*</i> with mushrooms and tofu <i>Fufu*</i> or rice	<i>Suya*</i> kebab (tofu or meat substitute)
Sunday	Ghanaian pancakes* Egg substitute (JUST Egg or tofu scramble) Fruit	<i>Abenkwan*</i> with mushrooms and tofu <i>Fufu*</i> or rice	Jollof Rice (page 15) with any protein (tofu or meat replacement), vegetables, and Vegan Shito* (page 14) Basic Stew (page 12) (optional)	Plantain chips

* indicates that the word is included in the glossary on pages 8-9.
Bold text indicates that a recipe is provided on the following pages.

Nkatenkwan (Peanut Soup)

(Serves 8)

2 medium tomatoes, diced
½ medium red onion, diced
½ habanero pepper, minced
12 cups water, divided
1 cup dried mushrooms
½-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and minced
1 cup unsalted creamy peanut butter
Half 14-ounce package firm tofu, diced into
1-inch cubes
½ cup chopped bok choy, kale, and/or spinach

Place tomatoes, onions, habanero, and ½ cup water in a saucepan on high heat. Bring to a boil and cook for about 15 minutes. Transfer to a blender and purée with mushrooms and ginger. Return the mixture to pan over medium-low heat.

In a separate pot, combine 1½ cups water and peanut butter, stir, and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat to low and simmer until the oil from the peanut butter rises to the top. Add the peanut mixture to the tomato mixture and add the remaining 10 cups of water. Simmer for 20-30 minutes. Add tofu and greens, cooking for 5 more minutes. Serve with *omu tuo*,* *fufu*,* cooked white rice, or boiled yam.

Total calories per serving: 259

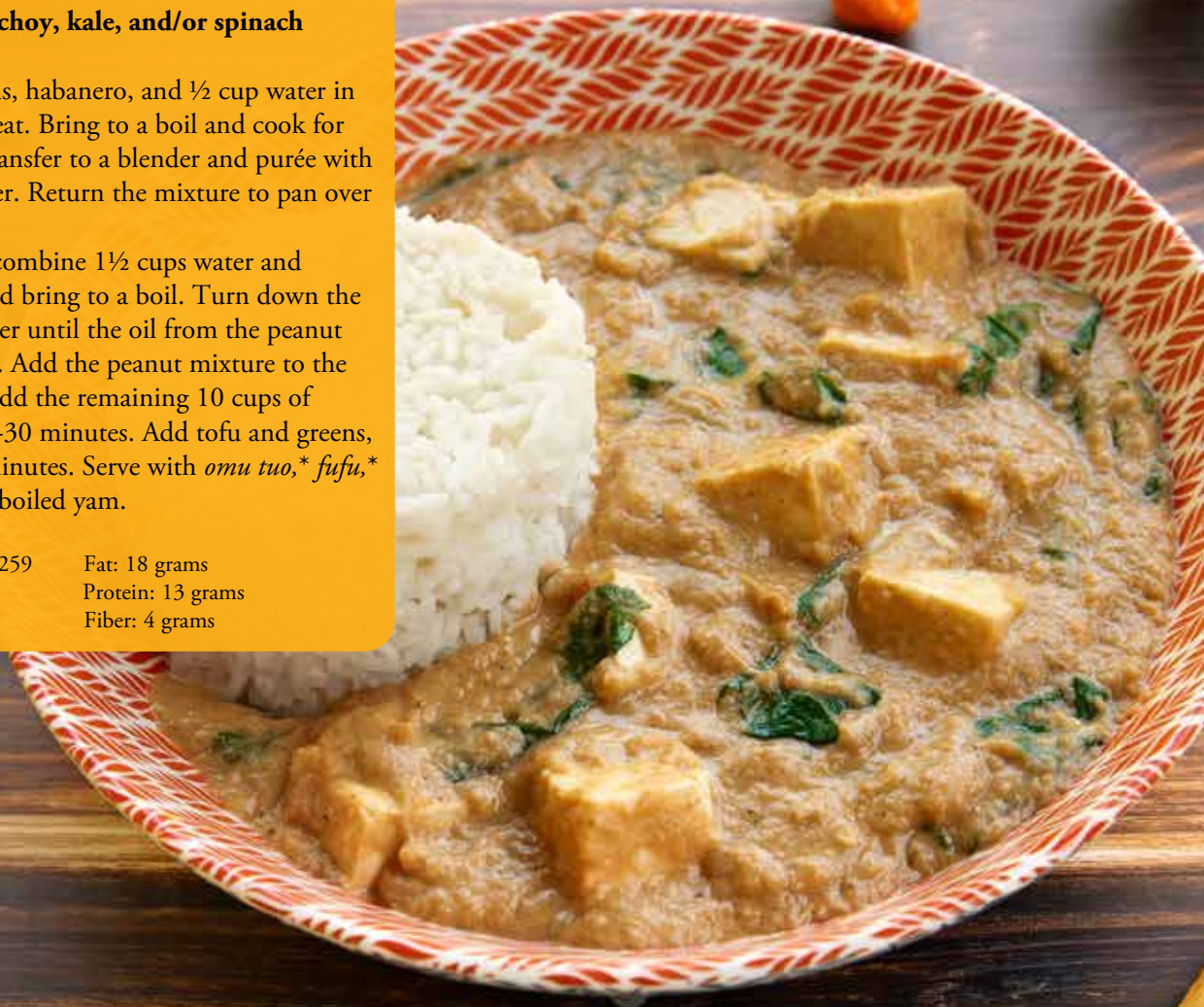
Carbohydrates: 10 grams

Sodium: 13 milligrams

Fat: 18 grams

Protein: 13 grams

Fiber: 4 grams



Basic Stew

(Serves 6)

Two 14.5-ounce cans no-salt-added diced tomatoes, undrained
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ habanero pepper
½ large red onion
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic and herb seasoning
½ teaspoon Adobo light all-purpose seasoning without pepper
½ teaspoon yellow curry powder
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
Salt to taste

In a blender, coarsely grind the tomatoes, garlic, habanero, and onions, or pound in a mortar and pestle (known as *asanka* and *tapoli** in Ghana).

Place a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add olive oil and tomato mixture. Mix in garlic and herb seasoning, Adobo, curry powder, turmeric, and salt, to taste. Cook for 20-30 minutes, until thickened.

Cook's Notes: Many Ghanaian recipes are traditionally measured by eye and results will vary depending on one's preference. Looking at images or videos online may help for a visual reference.

Adobo all-purpose seasoning without pepper is a blend of garlic, oregano, cumin, and other spices used to enhance the flavor of various dishes without adding heat. Typically used in Latin cuisine, it can be found in the baking or ethnic aisle.

Total calories per serving: 44
Carbohydrates: 6 grams
Sodium: 109 milligrams

Fat: 2 grams
Protein: 1 gram
Fiber: 1 gram





Basic Stew Variations

Vegan Egg Stew

(Serves 8)

One 14-ounce package firm tofu, drained, or one container liquid JUST Egg, or 4 pieces of folded JUST Egg, or other vegan egg replacement

Crumble tofu or add vegan egg into the **Basic Stew** (page 12). Simmer on low heat for 10 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 114	Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 7 grams	Protein: 9 grams
Sodium: 116 milligrams	Fiber: 2 grams

Cabbage Stew

(Serves 10)

1 small or ½ large green cabbage
1 cup shredded or chopped carrots (optional)
One 14-ounce package firm tofu, drained

Core and roughly chop the cabbage. Add to cooked **Basic Stew** (page 12) along with carrots, if desired. Crumble and add tofu, simmering on low heat for about 15 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 112	Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 10 grams	Protein: 8 grams
Sodium: 104 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams

Okro (Okra) Stew

(Serves 10)

One 24-ounce bag cut frozen okra
1 cup chopped bok choy, kale, and/or spinach

Add okra and greens to **Basic Stew** (page 12). Simmer on low heat for about 15 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 57	Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 9 grams	Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 95 milligrams	Fiber: 2 grams



Vegan Shito

(Makes 3½ cups; serves 10)

1 cup dried mushrooms
½ medium red onion, divided
1½-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled
1 clove garlic
5-6 habanero peppers
¼ cup water
1½ cups olive oil
Half 6-ounce can tomato paste
1½ teaspoons curry powder
1½ teaspoons ground turmeric
1½ teaspoons Adobo light all-purpose seasoning
without pepper
1½ teaspoons garlic and herb seasoning
Salt to taste

In a blender or food processor, grind mushrooms into a coarse powder. Set aside.

Separately, blend half the red onion with ginger, garlic, habaneros, and water.

Dice the remaining onion. Add to a saucepan over medium heat with the olive oil. Sauté for 5 minutes, then add tomato paste. Simmer for 5 minutes. Pour the blended mixture into the saucepan, followed by curry powder, turmeric, Adobo, garlic and herb seasoning, and salt to taste.

Simmer on low heat until the water evaporates, about 30 minutes. Add ground mushrooms and mix to combine. Keep on low and simmer, stirring occasionally, for another 30 minutes. Let cool completely, then store in an airtight jar in the fridge.

Total calories per serving: 314
Carbohydrates: 4 grams
Sodium: 174 milligrams

Fat: 33 grams
Protein: 1 gram
Fiber: 1 gram

Jollof Rice

(Serves 8)

1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 medium red onion, diced
One 6-ounce can tomato paste
1 habanero pepper
Two 14.5-ounce cans no-salt-added diced tomatoes, undrained
1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled
1 clove garlic
4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
1 Tablespoon Adobo light all-purpose seasoning without pepper
1 Tablespoon yellow curry powder
1 Tablespoon ground turmeric
1 Tablespoon garlic and herb seasoning
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
Salt to taste
4 cups uncooked white rice

In a saucepan over low heat, combine oil, onions, and tomato paste. Sauté for 15 minutes on low heat.

In a blender, combine habanero, tomatoes, ginger, and garlic. Add the mixture to the pan along with the vegetable broth. Add Adobo, curry powder, turmeric, garlic and herb seasoning, nutmeg, and salt to taste. Simmer for 30 minutes.

Add rice and cook for 45 minutes on low heat, until the rice has absorbed all the liquid. Stir every 10-15 minutes to prevent burning.

Total calories per serving: 403

Fat: 3 grams

Carbohydrates: 86 grams

Protein: 9 grams

Sodium: 509 milligrams

Fiber: 3 grams

Recipe photos by Hannah Kaminsky

Vegan Journal Vol. 44, Issue 2, 2025

Akua Oppong wrote this piece while interning with The Vegetarian Resource Group. She is studying public health at the University of Maryland College Park.



Healthy Indulgence

by Chef AJ

Dessert lovers, rejoice! You no longer have to sacrifice taste for health. While most sweet treats are intentionally designed to leave you wanting more, these recipes use only whole grains, no refined sugars, and no oil and will genuinely satisfy your sweet tooth.

From tender Lemon Poppyseed Cookies, bursting with zesty citrus, to moist Sweet Potato Muffins that capture the essence of autumn, every possible craving is covered. Discover the surprising sweetness of hearty Cranberry Orange Muffins or indulge in a classic reimagined with the World's Healthiest Apple Pie. For a refreshing summer escape, try the creamy and dreamy Peach Nice Cream, and finish (or start) your day with the perfectly balanced blend of textures and fresh flavors in the Creamy Blueberry Millet Parfait.

Most of the ingredients you'll need for making more wholesome sweets are widely available in stores. One of the most commonly used specialty items is vanilla bean powder, but you can substitute vanilla extract if you'd prefer. Date paste, another staple, is made simply by blending dates with a splash of water until smooth.

By harnessing the natural sweetness of fruits, we can revolutionize the concept of dessert itself, proving that a bit of everyday indulgence can be both delicious and nutritious.

Peach Nice Cream

(Serves 2)

16 ounces frozen sliced peaches (about 2 cups)
2 large, very ripe bananas, frozen (about 1 cup)
½ cup unsweetened vegan milk
1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder

Place all ingredients in a high-speed blender and blend until thick and creamy. Enjoy immediately.

Chef's Note: Try a mix of peaches and apricots.

Total calories per serving: 252
Carbohydrates: 56 grams
Sodium: 55 milligrams

Fat: 2 grams
Protein: 5 grams
Fiber: 7 grams



Creamy Blueberry Millet Parfait

(Serves 5)

Millet Pudding

3 cups unsweetened vegan milk

1 cup dry millet

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder

½ teaspoon ground cardamom

Place all ingredients in an electric pressure cooker and cook on high for 10 minutes. Quick release pressure after 10 minutes.

Alternately, combine all ingredients in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook for 18-20 minutes, or until liquid is absorbed.

This can be enjoyed warm or cold. The millet will continue to thicken as it cools.

Fruit Layers

2 Tablespoons date paste

2 cups unsweetened pomegranate juice

4 Tablespoons cornstarch dissolved in

4 Tablespoons water

1 cup frozen wild blueberries

In a medium saucepan, dissolve the date paste into the pomegranate juice and simmer over low heat. Reduce until you have ½ a cup. Slowly stir in the cornstarch slurry and continue to cook until the mixture thickens. Gently stir in blueberries. Remove from heat.

To assemble, divide pudding mixture equally into five glasses. I like to use long stem wine glasses or martini glasses for an elegant presentation. Evenly distribute the fruit topping on each of the parfaits. You can make 2 layers and alternate if you wish. Chill for a few hours until set.

Chef's Note: For a delicious variation, stir lemon or orange zest into the pudding mixture. You can lightly toast the millet first if you prefer a nuttier flavor.

Total calories per serving: 305

Carbohydrates: 60 grams

Sodium: 50 milligrams

Fat: 4 grams

Protein: 9 grams

Fiber: 6 grams



Sweet Potato Muffins

(Serves 12)

2 cups roasted orange sweet potatoes
2 large, very ripe bananas (about 1 cup)
¼ cup date paste
1 Tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder
3 cups rolled oats
1 cup golden raisins

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a food processor fitted with the “S” blade, process sweet potatoes, bananas, date paste, pumpkin pie spice, and vanilla bean powder until smooth and creamy. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in oats and raisins.

Evenly distribute the batter into a 12-cavity silicone muffin pan or muffin tin lined with cupcake liners.

Bake for 40-45 minutes until a toothpick inserted into the centers comes out clean.

Chef's Note: Canned sweet potato purée is often available in stores and can be used in place of fresh sweet potatoes.

Total calories per serving: 185
Carbohydrates: 41 grams
Sodium: 5 milligrams

Fat: 2 grams
Protein: 4 grams
Fiber: 7 grams



Lemon Poppyseed Cookies

(Serves 6)

1 cup rolled oats

1 Tablespoon poppyseeds

½ teaspoon vanilla bean powder

6 ounces pitted dates (about 1 cup)

2 Tablespoons lemon juice

Zest of 1 lemon

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Place the oats, poppyseeds, and vanilla bean powder in a food processor fitted with the “S” blade and process into a flour-like consistency. Add dates, lemon juice, and zest and process until a ball forms, adding a few more dates if necessary, to bring the dough together in a cohesive ball.

Divide into 6 pieces, roll into balls, and flatten with your hand. Bake for 4 minutes on a cookie sheet lined

with parchment paper or a nonstick silicone baking mat. Flip and bake for 4 minutes more, until very lightly browned. Remove from oven and let cool.

Chef's Notes: I prefer using Meyer lemons as they are sweeter than other varieties. Fresh lemon juice is essential in this recipe.

Total calories per serving: 128

Carbohydrates: 28 grams

Sodium: 1 milligram

Fat: 2 grams

Protein: 3 grams

Fiber: 5 grams



World's Healthiest Apple Pie

(Serves 12)

Crust

- 1¼ cups rolled oats**
- ¼ cup ground flaxseeds**
- 4 ounces unsweetened, sulfite-free dried apples**
(about 2 cups)
- 1 Tablespoon apple pie spice**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder**
- 8 ounces pitted dates (about 1½ cups)**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a high-speed blender, grind the oats and flaxseeds. Transfer to a food processor fitted with the “S” blade. Add apples, apple pie spice, and vanilla bean powder, and process until they are finely ground. Add dates, a few at a time, until mixture starts to stick together and you can clump it together easily into a ball. Evenly press mixture into a 9-inch springform pan.

Filling

- 4 Tablespoons chia seeds**
- 4 Tablespoons lemon juice**
- 1 Tablespoon lemon zest**
- 3 pounds apples (about 9 cups cored and chopped)**
- 1 cup date paste**
- 1 Tablespoon apple pie spice**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder**
- ¼ cup unsweetened, reduced-fat shredded coconut**

In a small bowl, mix the chia seeds, lemon juice, and zest. In a separate bowl, combine apples, date paste, spices, and vanilla bean powder. Add the chia mixture and stir well.

Pour evenly over crust, then sprinkle with coconut. Bake for 50-55 minutes, until coconut starts to brown. Served at any temperature.

Chef's Notes: To finely chop the apples, you can briefly pulse in the food processor fitted with the “S” blade.

Instead of apple pie spice, you can use 2½ teaspoons ground cinnamon plus ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg.

Total calories per serving: 281

Carbohydrates: 57 grams

Sodium: 13 milligrams

Fat: 4 grams

Protein: 3 grams

Fiber: 9 grams



Orange Cranberry Muffins

(Serves 12)

2 large, very ripe bananas (about 1 cup, mashed)
½ cup orange juice
One 15-ounce can pumpkin purée
½ cup date paste
1 Tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder
1 Tablespoon orange zest
3 cups rolled oats
1 cup unsweetened dried cranberries
1 ounce finely chopped raw walnuts (about ¼ cup)
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a food processor fitted with the “S” blade, purée bananas and orange juice until smooth. Add pumpkin purée, date paste, pumpkin pie spice, vanilla bean powder, and zest. Continue processing until smooth and creamy. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in oats and dried cranberries. Evenly distribute the batter into a 12-cavity silicone muffin pan or muffin tin lined with cupcake liners.

In a separate bowl, combine the nuts and cinnamon. Sprinkle these evenly on each of the 12 muffins and bake for 40-45 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the centers comes out clean.

Total calories per serving: 204

Fat: 3 grams

Carbohydrates: 39 grams

Protein: 4 grams

Sodium: 2 milligrams

Fiber: 7 grams

Chef AJ is a chef, culinary instructor, and speaker advocating for a whole foods, sugar-, oil-, and salt-free plant-based diet. Her latest cookbook, *Sweet Indulgence*, features over 150 recipes to treat your sweet tooth and nourish your body. Find more recipes and videos at chefaj.com



Too Hot to Cook!

25 Ideas For Hot Weather Meals

by Reed Mangels, Ph.D., RD

As it gets hotter outside, and maybe even inside, the warming soups and hearty casseroles we crave in cooler weather don't sound so appealing anymore. Besides, no one wants to have the oven heat up their kitchen or to spend time over a hot stove on a steamy day! To beat the heat, these dishes can be prepared in the morning when it's cooler, and some don't require any cooking at all.

Hummus or other bean spreads

1. Dip cut vegetables, crisp fruits, and crackers or tortilla chips into homemade or store-bought hummus.
2. Roll hummus and chopped vegetables in a whole-grain tortilla.
3. Spread white bean dip on a sliced baguette and top with strips of roasted red peppers.
4. Warm corn tortillas in a skillet and top with refried beans, salsa, and shredded lettuce.
5. Top a microwaved potato or sweet potato with bean spread. Try a garlicky hummus on a white potato or roasted red pepper hummus on a sweet potato.

Sandwiches—*Serve with fresh fruit and a side salad.*

6. Stuff tofu salad with sliced tomatoes into a pita.
7. Make not-tuna salad (mashed chickpeas, vegan mayo, chopped celery, and spices to taste) and serve on toasted rye bread.
8. Marinate tofu and wrap with sprouts or lettuce, shredded carrots, and peanut sauce in a whole-grain tortilla. Prepared tofu and peanut sauce can be purchased instead of homemade.
9. Slice a bagel and spread with nut butter and fresh fruit, such as nectarines, peaches, or anything in season.
10. Layer vegan deli slices on a sub roll with vinaigrette dressing, tomatoes, and lettuce.

Salads—*Make ahead and chill until dinner, can serve with a fruit salad and bread.*

11. Mix up potato salad with black beans, corn, and a salsa dressing.
12. Toss pasta with chickpeas, cherry tomatoes, fresh basil, and Italian dressing for an easy pasta salad.
13. Combine spaghetti with a sesame dressing, with cubed baked tofu, and steamed or microwaved broccoli.
14. Make rice salad with adzuki beans, diced carrots and cucumbers, and a sweet chili sauce.
15. Prep peanut noodles with water chestnuts and red bell pepper strips.
16. Toss tabbouleh (bulgur wheat, parsley, scallions, mint, tomatoes, and cucumbers in a lemon-olive oil dressing) with chickpeas.
17. Combine kidney beans, cannellini beans, and chickpeas to make a three-bean salad with vinaigrette.
18. Shred cabbage and add a soy-sesame dressing with baked tofu or seitan strips.
19. Mix quinoa and bean salad with shredded kale and a cumin-lime vinaigrette.
20. Try a chef's salad with strips of vegan deli slices and cubed or shredded vegan cheese.

Miscellaneous

21. Roll veggie sushi at home or purchase ready-made.
22. Blend a smoothie made from non-dairy milk, silken tofu, and fresh and/or frozen fruit. Add nut butter and leafy greens to turn it into a meal in a glass.
23. Top a toasted waffle with vegan yogurt, berries, and chopped nuts.
24. Spoon into gazpacho garnished with croutons, chopped tomatoes, cucumbers, and sliced avocado.
25. Wrap rice paper around noodles, shredded cabbage, baked tofu, cubed mango, and chopped peanuts.

Photo by Hannah Kaminsky
Recipe for Watermelon
Shirazi Salad at
bit.ly/watermelonshirazi

Vegan Voyage

Hotels Offering Vegan Food Around the World

Are you hungry for better plant-based options on your next trip, starting with the meals being served where you're staying? Here's a sampling of hotels around the world offering superlative vegan food and drinks.

Acai Plant Based Hotel: They are located in Greece and have a plant-based restaurant on their premises. They offer cooking classes and yoga classes and are near a beach. Note they are opening in summer 2025. See: acairhodes.com/the-acai-hotel

Fivelements Retreat: Located in Bali, Fivelements offers vegan meals, a wellness program and spa, plus more. See: fivelementsbari.com



Photo by Djuna Ivereigh

Koukoui Hotel: Situated in Greece, this hotel offers vegan cuisine, a spa, and fitness center. See: koukoumihotel.com

La Vimea: Located in Italy, offers organic vegan meals, yoga sessions, and more. See: lavimea.com

Mother Earth Vegan Hotel: Located in Costa Rica, this hotel offers a poolside vegan restaurant (room rates include breakfast for two), yoga studio, and more. Please note that neither children under 12 nor pets are allowed. See: meveganhotel.com



Photo by booking.com

Palmaia, The House of AïA: This Mexican establishment offers vegan cuisine, a spa and wellness program, activities for kids, and more. See: thehouseofaia.com

Stanford Inn & Resort: Located in Mendocino, California, offers a variety of room accommodations including family suites. Ravens Restaurant on their property serves organic vegan meals. They offer spa services and are pet-friendly. See: stanfordinn.com



Photo by Hannah Kaminsky

Vegan Agrivilla I Pini: Located in Tuscany, Italy, near vineyards, olive groves, and gardens. They offer vegan cuisine, a saltwater pool, and more. See: ipinitoscana.com

Villa Vegana: Situated in Spain in a designated conservation area, you can enjoy vegan meals, yoga classes, plus more. Breakfast is served every day for guests and included in the booking fee. See: villavegana.com



Photo by villavegana.com

Background photo by Hannah Kaminsky

SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

by Reed Mangels,
PhD, RD, FADA

A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

The Vegetarian Dietary Pattern in Dietary Guidelines for Americans Could Be Adapted as Nutritionally Adequate for Pregnant Vegans

Dietary Guidelines for Americans is a document that is produced every five years by the U.S. government. *Dietary Guidelines, 2020-2025* endorses “a healthy vegetarian dietary pattern” as one of three recommended dietary patterns. This vegetarian pattern includes eggs and is not a vegan plan.

As a part of updates to *Dietary Guidelines*, computer modeling is being used to determine if the “healthy vegetarian pattern” could be modified to meet vegans’ needs. A recent study used these modeling techniques to evaluate the adequacy of a vegan diet, along with a prenatal supplement, in pregnancy.

In this study, the “dairy food group” was replaced with fortified soymilk and fortified soy yogurt. Eggs were replaced with a combination of beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy foods. Vegan patterns that supplied 1,800 to 2,600 calories per day were created. These patterns were evaluated with and without a prenatal multi-vitamin/multi-mineral supplement.

Vegan diets at all calorie levels were found to provide adequate protein. Most vitamin and mineral levels were adequate even without the use of supplements. When a prenatal supplement was added, only vitamin D, choline, and sodium were below recommendations. These were also low in diets containing animal foods, since the supplement used in this study did not provide these nutrients. The researchers didn’t consider salt (sodium) added to food.

This study suggests that vegan diets, along with a prenatal supplement, can meet needs for most nutrients in pregnancy. The results of this study and similar studies support the inclusion of vegan dietary patterns in the 2025-2030 edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Hess JM, Comeau ME, Smith JL, et al. Vegetarian diets during pregnancy: With supplementation, ovo-vegetarian, lacto-vegetarian, vegan, and pescatarian adaptations of US Department of Agriculture Food Patterns can be nutritionally adequate. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. Published online August 10, 2024.

Vegan Diets Offer Benefits for Those with Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is a common health problem in the United States, affecting about 1 in 10 Americans. Treatment usually involves lifestyle changes and possibly medications. A recent study evaluated and summarized seven previously published studies of the use of vegetarian, including vegan, diets in treatment of type 2 diabetes. Adults with type 2 diabetes who were placed on a vegan diet had a greater decrease in their hemoglobin A1C than did adults with type 2 diabetes who were on a nonvegetarian diet. Hemoglobin A1C is determined by a blood test and provides an indication of average blood glucose levels. A vegan diet was also associated with a decrease in Body Mass Index (BMI). Use of vegetarian, including vegan, diets appeared to result in a lower requirement for diabetes medications. This study suggests that a vegan diet should be presented as a treatment option for adults with type 2 diabetes.

Guest NS, Raj S, Landry MJ, et al. Vegetarian and vegan dietary patterns to treat adult type 2 diabetes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Adv Nutr*. 2024;15:100294.

Vegans in Italy

According to a survey conducted in 2023, 9.5% of Italians say that they are vegetarian; about a quarter of these, or 2.3% of the Italian population, reports that they follow a vegan diet.¹ Researchers in Italy examined the diets of 116 meat eaters, 49 fish eaters,

116 lacto-ovo vegetarians, and 189 vegans aged 18 years and older.² Vegans ate only plant-based foods. The study subjects kept records of the foods that they ate for three days. Protein intakes were similar among the groups. Vegans had lower intakes of saturated fat and higher intakes of fiber than meat eaters and lacto-ovo vegetarians. Vegans had higher intakes of iron and folate compared to meat eaters and lacto-ovo vegetarians and consumed less sodium. Vegans had lower dietary vitamin B12 intakes. Many study participants, including 82% of vegans, were taking vitamin B12 supplements. Supplements were not included in estimates of intake of nutrients. If vitamin B12 from supplements was included, it is likely that many vegans would be getting adequate vitamin B12. Intakes of other nutrients were similar in all groups and were generally close to recommendations with the exception of calcium. The calcium intakes of all four groups was below recommendations. This report suggests that Italian vegans are meeting their needs for most nutrients from a combination of food and supplements.

¹ Eurispes. *Risultati Del Rapporto Italia*. 2024. eurispes.eu/news/risultati-del-rapporto-italia-2024

² Baroni L, Bonetto C, Rizzo G, et al. Nutrient composition of four dietary patterns in Italy: Results from an online survey (the INVITA Study). *Foods*. 2024;13:2103.

Modeling Study Finds Increased Longevity with a Change to a Vegan Diet

Vegan diets are often recommended for health, environmental, and ethical reasons. What would be the effect on life expectancy of shifting from the typical dietary pattern in a country to an optimized vegan diet? Life expectancy is defined as the number of additional years of life an individual is expected to have. An optimized vegan diet includes whole grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, and a limited amount of oil and does not include sugary drinks or other foods with added sugar. Researchers used computer modeling to address this question in China, France, Germany, Iran, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In all scenarios, changing from the typical dietary pattern of a country to an optimized vegan diet

resulted in a greater life expectancy. The extent of this increased life expectancy ranged from an additional 3.7 years in a 60-year-old male in China to an additional 9.1 years in a 20-year-old male in the United States. This means that the 60-year-old man in China would be expected to live to age 78.6 on a typical diet and to age 82.3 on an optimized vegan diet. A 20-year-old man in the United States would be expected to live to age 76.1 on a typical diet and to age 85.2 on an optimized vegan diet. Even without changing to a vegan diet, eating less red and processed meat and sugar-sweetened beverages and eating more legumes, whole grains, and nuts were associated with increased life expectancy.

Fadnes LT, Javadi Arjmand E, Økland JM, et al. Life expectancy gains from dietary modifications: a comparative modeling study in 7 countries. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2024;120:170-177.

Plant-Based Eating in the United States

A recently published study examined trends in use of “plant-based” diets in the United States between 1999 and March 2020. The study used information collected by asking more than 50,000 adult subjects to describe what they had eaten over the past 24 hours. Those who got 50% or more of their protein from plants were said to be consuming a “plant-based diet.” Those who did not report eating meat, poultry, or seafood over a 24-hour period were categorized as “vegetarian.” The researchers acknowledge that their group of “plant-based diet consumers” includes both people who usually eat a more plant-based diet and people who simply ate fewer animal products on the day of the survey. Similarly, the “vegetarian” group includes people who consistently follow a vegetarian diet and people who didn’t eat animal products on the day of the survey. In 1999-2000, about 4.4% of U.S. adults ate a “plant-based diet” and 6.4% ate a “vegetarian diet” on a given day. In 2017-2020, 17.2% of U.S. adults ate a “plant-based diet” and 8.2% ate a “vegetarian” diet on a given day. The largest increase in consumption of a “plant-based diet” was seen in non-Hispanic Black adults.

Sullivan VK, Martínez-Steele E, Garcia-Larsen V, et al. Trends in plant-based diets among U.S. adults, 1999-March 2020. *J Nutr*. 2024;154::3575-3584.

Masala Mama Ready-to-Eat Legumes

Love your legumes again with Masala Mama's heat-and-eat Indian-inspired beans. Convenience is paramount when it comes to prepared meals, but thanks to bold seasonings and a rich culinary heritage, it's far from the only thing these pouches bring to the table. With cheeky names like Cha Cha Chickpeas, La Bamba Black Beans, Ooh La La Lentils, and Rah-Rah Red Beans, even deciding which flavor to eat makes dinner time more fun. Robust, tender, and decadent in ways the average bean could never hope to achieve, each offering makes a strong standalone staple as an entrée or equally powerful side. Serve with rice, over baked potatoes, as a dip with chips, wrapped up in burritos, piled on top of tacos, and so much more. Naturally gluten-free and certified non-GMO. Available at Earth Fare, Fresh Direct, Sprouts, The Fresh Market, and Vitacost, and masalamamafoods.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Wild Earth Unicorn Pate Cat Food

Cats have long been considered "obligate carnivores," unable to thrive on a solely plant-based diet. That theory didn't sit well with Wild Earth, who had developed a highly successful vegan dog food five years earlier. Unicorn Pate, which is one of the first nutritionally complete vegan cat food options, according to the company, only sounds like a mythical creation. Made primarily of lentils, peas, and sweet potatoes, it's especially well-suited for felines with food allergies, particularly to chicken. For compassionate consumers the impact of this switch could be astronomical. Pet food accounts for 25% to 30% of the meat consumed in the U.S., regardless of quality. Cat parents who want the best for their four-legged companions no longer need to compromise on ethics. Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) approved. Available online at wildearth.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Atoria's Family Bakery Mini Upcycled Naan

Reduce, reuse, recycle, and... Upcycle? For those not familiar with the term, upcycling takes items otherwise destined for the trash and transforms them into something new, of even higher value than the original object. In the case of Atoria's Mini Upcycled Naan, that means using flour from spent grains left over from breweries to create soft, small-scale flatbreads. Barley, wheat, and rye are responsible for the hearty, wholesome blend that imparts a satisfying, subtly earthy and nutty flavor. They're the perfect size to toss into the toaster and dip into hummus, curries, or stews or to transform into quick mini pizzas. Certified non-GMO and kosher. Available at select Albertsons, Clark's Nutrition, Misfit Market, Plum Market, and atoriasfamilybakery.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Bionaturae Sourdough Pasta

Ignited during the height of pandemic lockdowns, the spark for all things sourdough is as hot as ever.

Bionaturae has taken the opportunity to take it in a new direction by boiling instead of baking their starter. Their sourdough pasta—shaped into fusilli, penne, and spaghetti—keeps it simple, employing only durum wheat semolina and sourdough starter made from emmer flour, and of course water. Unlike many other trends spawned by the sourdough craze, the inclusion of wild yeast isn't just for clout. Bearing the distinctive sourdough tang of a freshly baked loaf, with the *al dente* bite of bronze-cut pasta, it's the ideal fusion of bread and pantry staples. It's a novel and incredibly satisfying new way to use your noodle. Certified organic and 100% plastic-free packaging. Available at Thrive Market, Whole Foods, and bionaturae.jovialfoods.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Nature's Path Regenerative Oatmeal

Instant oatmeal just got a big upgrade, though it's not one you can see on your spoon. Leading the way towards a more sustainable cereal, Nature's Path Regenerative Organic Certified Oatmeal has benefits that go beyond the bowl. These humble single-serve packets tackle huge climate concerns, supporting farmers who actively restore soil health and promote biodiversity through more holistic means. Quality and flavor are still paramount, clearly apparent in the large, toothsome flakes and creamy texture. Every time you buy a box of fruity Berries & Cream or rich Dark Chocolate Cacao oatmeal, you can make a difference without making compromises to your taste buds. Certified organic and gluten-free. Available at Amazon, Sprouts, Whole Foods, and naturespath.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Red Plate Foods Cookies

When those with dietary restrictions want a thick, soft, chewy cookie they can really sink their teeth into, the options are limited. Red Plate Foods is changing that by baking up a dizzying array of allergen-free sweets to satiate every craving. Chocolate Chip, Double Chocolate, Ginger, Lemon, and Snickerdoodle are just the beginning of the flavorful options, each bite as comforting as the sweet memories that harken back to a simpler childhood. For an experience that tastes truly homemade, pop them in the microwave for a few seconds to get that fresh-from-the-oven warm, gooey sensation. Certified free of the top nine food allergens (dairy, eggs, fish, gluten/wheat, peanuts, sesame, shellfish, soy, and tree nuts) and made in a dedicated allergen-free facility. Available nationwide at Meijer, Natural Grocers, Sprouts Farmers Market, Whole Foods, and more, plus online at redplatefoods.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Mori-Nu Super Soft Tofu

What could be softer than silken? Super Soft Tofu now takes the crown for the most velvety, custard-like bean curd on the market, pouring straight from the shelf-stable carton like unsweetened pudding. Such a delicate texture naturally lends itself to blended desserts, smoothies, sauces, and soups, while its neutral, subtly beany flavor easily disappears into the mix. Served in both sweet and savory settings, this delicate style of tofu has been popular in Japan, China, and Korea for centuries, and is finally making inroads in mainstream U.S. markets. If you're not sure where to start, try using it in *mapo tofu* (Sichuan braised soft tofu), *soondubu jjigae* (Korean kimchi hot pot), and miso soup. The compact, rectangular packages contain no preservatives, yet keep at room temperature for more than one year after they were made. Certified non-GMO, kosher, and gluten-free. Available through Amazon, Natural Grocers, and Whole Foods. Find more information at morinu.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



Simply Chocolate Date Bars

Decadent and rich as gooey caramel, dates are known as nature's candy for good reason. The beloved dried fruits pull double duty both as sweetener and featured flavor in Simply's Chocolate Date Bars. Living up to the brand's name, they sport simple ingredient lists comprised only of whole foods you might find in your own kitchen. Salted Peanut evokes the nutty, crunchy charm of Snickers bars, while Fudge Brownie is more like unbaked chocolate cookie dough. Each two-bite morsel offers an ideal balance of nostalgia with more mature nutritional needs. Certified organic, gluten-free, soy-free, and palm oil-free. Available at Whole Foods Market and simplygum.com

Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor



The VRG's 2024 Video Contest Winners

Unethical Inequalities



Veganism, Ideals, Ethics, Culture, Sexism by Elisabeth Scott-Paul

Elisabeth from Indiana said: "The reason I will always be interested in vegetarianism is for the culture and ideals it has put into me."

See: bit.ly/ethicsculturesexism

Run for Your Life



The Race Against the Vegan by Alexandra Hoke

Alexandra from Pennsylvania said: "After completing an animal welfare project for my English class, I was pained to learn of the horrible treatment animals endure in the meat industry. This, coupled with my lifelong passion for wildlife and environmentalism, inspired my journey towards veganism. However, as a high-level gymnast, I was confronted with the common myth that vegan athletes are inferior to meat eaters, and feared my performance would suffer. Looking back on this experience and my newfound gymnastics success, I want to inspire other athletes to consider vegetarian and vegan diets, proving to them that you can eat ethically and still achieve your athletic dreams."

See: bit.ly/raceagainstvegan

Video scholarships have been given in honor of W.M. Zahn, who was a great mentor.

View winners of the video contest at vrg.org/veg_videos.php

The deadline for the next VRG video contest is July 15, 2025.

See: vrg.org/videoscholarship.php

Cultivating Community Through Compassion

The Gentle Giant

by Lilly Matthias

Lilly from New Jersey said: “I am a recent high school graduate, and when I first saw this video scholarship contest, I immediately became excited. Throughout my entire life, I have loved making videos and short films. Incidentally, I have also been vegetarian for years and try to spread the plant-based message as much as possible. To have the opportunity to potentially influence others with a video is a dream come true! I chose to highlight a local small business which is the only 100% vegan restaurant in the county I live in. The message is that veganism is more than just a diet. It is the culture, the compassion for animals, and caring for other people.”



See: vrg.org/veg_videos.php#thegentlegiant

Eat Better, Feel Better

Plant-Based Diet

by Ava Muehlbauer

Ava from Minnesota said: “Did you know, if humans were killed at the same rate as animals, we’d be extinct within 17 days? This was the startling fact that influenced me to go vegan four years ago, and I haven’t looked back since. I have been vegetarian my whole life, and I am extremely grateful for being raised with this compassionate lifestyle. I can’t help but feel compelled to spread the word to as many people as possible.”



See: vrg.org/veg_videos.php#ava-muehlbauer-plant-based-diet

BEQUESTS

The VRG depends on the generous contributions of our members and supporters to continue our educational projects. Though the world may not become vegan in our lifetimes, we realize that we are planning and working for future generations.

- Your will and life insurance policies enable you to protect your family and also to provide a way to give long-lasting support to causes in which you believe. Naming The Vegetarian Resource Group in your will or life insurance policy will enable us to increase our work for vegetarianism.
- One suggested form of bequest is: *I give and bequeath to The Vegetarian Resource Group, Baltimore, Maryland, the sum of _____ dollars (or if stock, property, or insurance policy, please describe).*
- To be sure your wishes are carried out, please speak with your attorney specifically about writing the correct information in your will.

Perennial Vegetables as a Climate Solution

by Jeanne Yacoubou, MS

As the climate crisis unfurls wildfires and floods all over the world, traditional agriculture is under threat. People everywhere are already feeling the sting of higher prices for several popular foods, including coffee and chocolate. Increasingly low crop yields in numerous countries mean food security about basic dietary staples such as wheat, rice, and corn is becoming a major concern.

One way to alleviate these worries, as well as mitigate your reliance on grocery stores, is to grow at least some of your own food. The article on veganic farming in *Vegan Journal* Issue 1, 2025, offered lots of helpful tips for both new and experienced gardeners. Here, we focus on perennial vegetables as an undiscovered, nutritional treasure that can expand your culinary horizons while they sequester carbon continually for years—if not decades—and produce abundant yields.

Perennial Vegetables That Are Best at Sequestering Carbon

One strategy to lessen the climate crisis is to draw down greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, from the atmosphere and sequester them in soil. Growing perennial vegetables in your garden for food is one way to accomplish this.

All plants do not sequester carbon equally. Perennial plants—those that regrow each year instead of dying off after the first frost—sequester carbon longer than annual plants because their roots that store it continually grow deeper and wider for years, if not for decades, to come.

Edible perennial plants are known as *perennial foods*. Here, we'll focus on growing perennial vegetables and which might be best for you.

Long-Rooted Perennial Vegetables

Generally, the nonprofit *Plants for a Future* writes that perennial plants with long, wide roots store more carbon, for longer, in deeper carbon pools in soil. So, we looked for perennial plants that are edible and have the deepest roots. Here are a few promising options:

1. **Cardoon.** According to Oregon State University, “The young tender leaf mid-ribs and immature flower stalks are used. The plant hearts are sometimes blanched like celery stalks (maturing in September).”
2. **Stinging Nettle.** According to the Oregon State University Extension Service, “Roots, seeds, stems, and young, tender leaves are all edible.”
3. **Dandelion.** According to the Michigan State University Extension Service, “Nearly the entire plant can be consumed in one way or another. The only inedible part is the stem, which contains a very bitter, milky substance.”
4. **Moringa.** According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization: “All parts of the moringa tree—bark, pods, leaves, nuts, seeds, tubers, roots, and flowers—are edible.”

Perennial Vegetables

You're probably familiar with asparagus, rhubarb, and artichokes. Did you know that they are all perennial vegetables, too?

If these vegetables already have a place in your garden, then introducing more perennials will further complement the annuals—such as tomatoes, zucchinis, and cucumbers—that last only one season. You can easily extend your harvest to all four seasons without replanting even once.

Unlike most garden annuals that require full sun and well-drained soil to thrive, the majority of perennials grow well in full shade, water-logged soil, or without fertilizer or irrigation (except under extremely arid conditions). Perennials are low-maintenance; however, years-long neglect would likely result in excess weeds, and so it's important to harvest frequently.

Although many perennials are most suited to warmer regions, several do well in cold areas as annuals.

Types of Perennial Vegetables

By way of a general introduction to the wide variety of perennial vegetables hailing from all corners of the globe, here are some of the most interesting, highlighting their edible parts as described in Eric Toensmeier's classic book titled *Perennial Vegetables*.

Edible leaves

Most perennial vegetables, including those from trees, shrubs, and woody vines, have edible leaves, stems, and leafstalks.

Example: water celery. Thriving in a water garden or on land (sunny or shady), water celery is a leafy green that really tastes like celery.

Edible shoots

Perennial vegetables with tender, new growth emerging in spring as shoots are edible.

Example: asparagus. Considered the classic harbinger of spring, asparagus is served as a fine delicacy the world over.

Edible fruits eaten like vegetables

Tomatoes and eggplants are annual fruits prepared and eaten like vegetables. Some perennials fit into this category as well.

Example: chayote. Fruits grown on a vine, chayote are used like zucchini.

Edible pods and beans

Perennial legumes often yield edible pods and beans.

Example: scarlet runner bean. Easily yielding for two decades, these beans succeed in a number of North American regions.

Edible flowers and buds

Perennial vegetables could be the flowers or flower buds of plants, analogous to broccoli and cauliflower.

Example: globe artichoke. Like asparagus, globe artichoke is gourmet but can grow in your garden.

Edible roots

Some perennials are root crops that form vast, underground colonies that persist for decades.

Example: sunchoke (Jerusalem artichoke). With a name similar to its sunflower relative, sunchoke have sweet and crispy roots.

Airborne roots

Perennial vegetables may be tubers (like yams) growing above ground on vines.

Example: air potato. No digging required to get to this root crop! Sized like a medium potato, air potatoes grow on climbing vines and can be picked just like apples or pears.

Perennial Plant Seed Companies

There are not too many places that sell perennial vegetable plants and seeds. Many listings are outdated. Here are a few that are currently operational and have online sales:

- Education Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECH): echobooks.net/bookstore/seeds
- Fedco Seeds: fedcoseeds.com/seeds
- Triple Brook Farm: triplebrookfarm.com/shop

A longer version of this article including links to references can be found here: www.vrg.org/blog/2024/11/04/perennial-vegetables-as-a-climate-solution-part-1-in-a-series-on-climate-foods



Join The VRG and Receive Vegan Journal!



Inside each issue:

Nutrition Hotline & Answers to your veg health questions
Vegan Recipes & Quick dishes & delicious entertaining
Veggie Bits & Vegan product reviews
Scientific Updates & Vegetarian research summaries
Vegan Action & People promoting veganism

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

☐ Payment enclosed (check or money order)

☐ Please charge my credit card: # _____ Expires: ____ / ____

Send \$25 and receive the Vegan Journal quarterly

\$35 in Canada and Mexico; other foreign subscribers, \$45 in U.S. funds by credit card

Email: vrg@vrg.org & Online: vrg.org/member

Postal Mail: VRG, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203 & Phone: (410) 366-8343, M-F 9-5 ET

NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

VEGAN EDUCATION

VRG Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was a speaker at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' annual meeting held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, about Exploring the Reward and Challenges of Vegetarian Diets: A Fresh Look at the Academy's Position. She was also a panelist at the Food as Medicine Conference in Santa Cruz, California, on the topic of Food for Thought: Improving Patient Health and Nutrition Through Collaboration.

Reed is co-author of *Vegetarian dietary patterns and cardiovascular risk factors and disease prevention: An umbrella review of systematic reviews* that was published in the *American Journal of Preventive Cardiology*. In addition, Reed co-authored *Vegetarian and vegan dietary patterns to treat adult type 2 diabetes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trial* published in *Advances in Nutrition*.

Book Reviews

Vegan Japan by Julia Boucachard

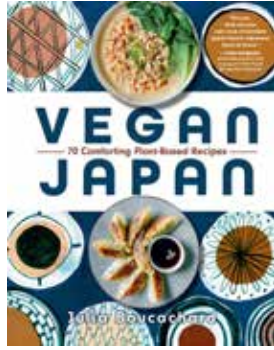
Julia Boucachard moved back and forth between France and Tokyo throughout her childhood. When she became vegetarian and then eventually vegan, she started to veganize the dishes her Japanese mother prepared at home. Her mom had always expressed the importance of cooking meals with seasonal produce. The author eventually opened a restaurant in France and offered food that changed with the seasons.

Julia's new cookbook contains 70 recipes, covering the basics, side and main dishes, as well as street food and desserts. First, you'll find a list defining essential ingredients. Many of these are foods and products you will be familiar with already, but some items may be new to you. Japanese staples include *Kombu Dashi* and *Shiitake Dashi*. Traditionally these contain fish (*bonito* flakes); however, these alternatives provide naturally vegan versions. Other essentials touch on several sauces, Udon Noodles, Japanese Mayonnaise, and *Anko* (sweet red bean paste).

Notable main dishes feature Curry Rice, *Mizore Nabe* (winter stew), Miso Butter Ramen, Bento, *Oinari-San* (sushi), *Soboro Don* (rice bowl with toppings), Miso *Nasu Donburi* (miso eggplant), Kabocha Stew, Teriyaki Tofu Don, and more. A few must-try side dishes are Miso Soup, Pickled Lotus Root, Kimchi, Japanese Potato Salad, Green Bean *Shiraae* (vegetable salad), among many others.

The street food section is quite interesting, featuring dishes less frequently seen in the U.S., such as *Yaki Onigiri* (rice balls), Hiroshima-Style *Okonomiyaki* (savory pancakes), *Yaki Tomorokoshi* (grilled corn), *Gyoza* (dumplings), *Kabocha Korokke* (pumpkin croquettes), and beyond. Finally, the dessert section includes *Daigaku Imo* (caramelized sweet potato), *Ichigo Daifuku* (strawberry rice cakes), Black Sesame Ice Cream, and other treats.

The beautiful photography brings these dishes to life in stunning visuals that will inspire and encourage you to prepare some of these traditional delicacies. If you happen to visit Paris, you may want to see Julia's vegan restaurant: moricafeparis.com/en



Vegan Japan (ISBN 979-8-893-03006-8) is a 160-page hardcover book. It is published by The Experiment, LLC and retails for \$24.95. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman/VRG Coordinator

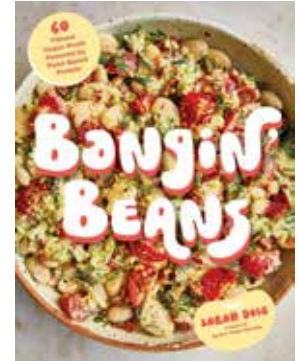
Bangin' Beans by Sarah Doig

Sarah Doig's love for beans shines in this new cookbook. She has been vegan over five years and has been sharing her recipes online in various formats for some time. She not only develops recipes, but she also is a professional food photographer, which you'll immediately appreciate through all the gorgeous photography found within these pages.

As Sarah states, beans are both economical and versatile. The recipes are divided into four themes. The first is Soups, Stews, & Cozy Beans, which includes Pulled Eggplant & Cannellini Bean Stew, Roasted Tomato & Butter Bean Soup, Thai Green Coconut Beans, and other comforting choices. The next section encompasses Plant-Powered Mains, such as Stroganoff Beans with Mushrooms & Garlic Rice, Miso Mac & Beans with Chile Crumb, Sticky Harissa Butter Beans with Pomegranate & Pistachio Quinoa, One-Pan Bean Lasagna, and more.

Fresh, Flavorful Salads & Bowls serves up Caesar-Style Crispy Butter Bean Salad, Miso & Lime Noodle Salad with Edamame, Smoky Bean Burrito Bowl with Chipotle Dressing, Spiced Squash Salad with Herby Beans & Tahini-Orange Dressing, and other lighter fare. The final collection's theme is Beany Snacks, Dips, & Sides. You'll find recipes for Beany "Sausage" Rolls, Smoky Barbecue Beans on Toast, Herby Zucchini & Bean Fritters with Garlic Yogurt, White Bean Hash Browns with Jammy Tomatoes, plus other creative choices ideal for serving at parties and quick bites on the go.

Bangin' Beans (ISBN 979-8-890-03023-8) is a 160-page book. It is published by Page Street Publishing Co. and retails for \$22.99. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman/VRG Coordinator



Vegan Cooking Tips

Berry Tasty: Cooking with Berries

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD



Berries aren't just a flash in the pan; they predate written history! Strawberries were cultivated in ancient Rome, as both food and decoration. The berries and leaves of berry plants were used as a medicinal herb in the 13th century. Today, a dizzying array of different berry varieties are grown for an equally extensive number of uses, including fresh-for-sale, frozen, and dried versions, juices, and as natural food coloring. Berries are also available canned, primarily as pie filling or jam, but can be very high in sugar and lacking in texture.

One serving of most berries contains folic acid, vitamin C, and fiber. They are sodium- and fat-free, as well as low in calories. If you are trying to estimate your berry needs, here is an approximate guide:

- 1 quart of fresh berries weighs about 1¼ to 1½ pounds, about 4-5 servings.
- 1½ quarts (6 cups) of fresh berries is needed for a 9-inch pie.
- 2 cups sliced fresh berries equals one 10-ounce package of frozen, sweetened berries.

Since fresh berries are highly perishable, they should not be washed until right before eating or using in a recipe. Store in the fridge in a container lined with paper towels for up to one day. Gently rinse berries under cold running water and then pat them dry.

You can eat your fresh berries as a succulent snack. If you have enough to spare, you can throw them in a blender with a banana and some orange juice for a fast breakfast smoothie. Alternately, you can purée them on their own and pour the resulting sauce over vegan frozen yogurt, ice cream, and pound cake.

A small spoonful of fresh berry purée can liven up homemade vinaigrette, cooked rice, or hot cereal. Leftover berry purée can be frozen for later use or frozen into cubes to use in cold beverages.

If you want to save the bounty for later, wash them and pat them dry, then spread them out in a single layer on a sheet pan to freeze them whole. Frozen berries can be eaten as a grab-and-go snack, placed into travel cups or water bottles to slowly thaw and flavor beverages, or blended with a small amount of silken tofu or vegan yogurt for a creamy dessert. Frozen berries can also be used as a pie filling or as part of a smoothie.

If fresh berries are not available, stock up on frozen berries and use as described above. It's best to keep frozen berries in the freezer until ready to use; as when they thaw, they can lose texture and bleed into batter.

When purchasing dried berries, be certain to read the label to ensure that little to no sugar has been added. Dried berries can be added while cooking hot cereal, rice, and grains. The berries will "plump up" in liquid, contributing texture and flavor. Dried berries can be added to salads, muffins and breads, and granola. Make your own trail mix by combining dried berries with seeds or nuts and cold cereal. You can also sprinkle dried berries over nut butter sandwiches or toast for a timeless treat.



Photos by Hannah Kaminsky

Dr. Joycelyn Peterson

Vegan Dietitian and Professor

by Akua Oppong



Dr. Joycelyn Peterson is a vegan Trinbagonian dietitian, professor, and Director of Nutritional Sciences in the School of Community Health and Policy at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. She founded the Vegetarian Institute of Nutrition and Culinary Arts (nonprofit) and Dimensions in Food and Nutrition, Inc. (for profit) and serves as the Nominating Committee Chair of the Adventist Nutrition and Dietetics International Association (ANDIA). Her published works include *Joy of Living Plant-Based Cuisine*, and *Effect of consumption of dried California mission figs on lipid concentrations*. She conducts international nutrition, health, and cooking seminars.

Dr. Peterson's fascination with vegan nutrition began in childhood, sparked by a distaste for meat. Her doctors suggested incorporating beans into her diet, which evolved into a lifelong passion for showing people they too can thrive without meat. She has been vegan for over 50 years, witnessing its evolution from niche lifestyle to mainstream movement.

Featured in *Morgan Magazine*, Dr. Peterson has highlighted the importance of including people of color in dietetics to reduce health disparities. "I want to see it continue on... want other people [to be part of it]," she says. She taught over 1,000 students, working to improve curricula so that more people can enter and succeed in the field. Given that only 3% of Registered Dietitians are Black, according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Dr. Peterson emphasizes the need for more mentoring and tutoring. Collaborating with the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND), the National Association for Blacks in Dietetics and Nutrition (NOBIDAN), and Diversify Dietetics, she helps to better prepare students for the Registered Dietitian exam.

Dr. Peterson believes going vegan at an early stage was the most impactful part of her life. Her passion for veganism and spreading the gospel as a Seventh-day Adventist Christian led her to meet a mentor who encouraged her to preach health and nutrition in churches and other venues.

To promote veganism, Dr. Peterson recommends encouraging simple changes. Focus on positive dietary additions rather than restrictions. Introduce people to different plant-based foods, including beans, nuts, and whole grains. Keeping the message simple and positive can make the transition more appealing.

For activists who may feel discouraged, Dr. Peterson encourages taking time for self-care. Rest, exercise, drink water, and enjoy nourishing, vegan foods. Follow your purpose and listen to the inner voice that guides you.

See: www.morgan.edu/school-of-community-health-and-policy/about/joycelyn-peterson

Akua Oppong wrote this piece while interning with The VRG. She is a senior at the University of Maryland College Park.





THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP
Publishers of **Vegan Journal**
P.O. BOX 1463
BALTIMORE, MD 21203
vrg.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALTIMORE, MD
PERMIT NO. 9169

FROM THE VRG BLOG

Plant Omega-3s May Reduce Risk of Atrial Fibrillation for Some

www.vrg.org/blog/2024/10/21/plant-omega-3s-may-reduce-risk-of-atrial-fibrillation-for-some

Covid-19 and Vegan/Vegetarian Diets

www.vrg.org/blog/2024/11/15/covid-19-and-vegan-vegetarian-diets

Tips for Success in Perennial Vegetable Gardening

www.vrg.org/blog/2024/11/14/perennial-vegetable-gardening-tips-part-2-of-a-series-on-climate-foods

What Does "Dairy-Free" Mean on a Food Label?

www.vrg.org/blog/2024/10/08/what-does-dairy-free-mean-on-a-food-label



CHECK OUT THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP'S ONLINE GUIDE TO VEGGIE RESTAURANTS IN THE USA AND CANADA



Photos by Hannah Kaminsky

VRG's online restaurant guide offers diners a chance to enjoy a wide variety of vegan cuisine throughout the United States and Canada. You'll find vegan Chinese, Ethiopian, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, Thai, Vietnamese, and other restaurants. Also, check out vegan bakeries, bars, burger joints, coffeehouses, delis, donut shops, food trucks, ice cream shops, juice bars, pizzerias, and more. Special thanks to the many VRG volunteers and interns who help to maintain this valuable guide!

Visit: vrg.org/restaurant

Printed on recycled paper!