

GoVegGuide

5

*easy steps to your
new veg life!*



By the Editors of
VegNews
magazine



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Welcome to Your New Veg Life!

News flash: Vegetarianism’s moment has arrived. Finally! No longer a counterculture movement synonymous with “hippie” and “treehugger,” this healthy, compassionate lifestyle is being embraced by the mainstream as a smart, thoughtful, and sensitive step toward a sustainable future—for humans, animals, and the environment. And never has cruelty-free living been as easy as it is right now. Foodies who hanker for the taste of meat but cringe at the thought of eating dead flesh, rejoice! The quantity, quality, and variety of faux meat now available is unprecedented. Want some dairy-free ice cream with a side of soy yogurt? Chances are good they can be found at your local grocery chain. Supermarket shelves are also brimming with organic fruits and vegetables, newly discovered plant-based antioxidant powerhouses, and countless other foods that taste amazing but don’t include cruelty in their production.

The editors at VegNews Magazine live and breathe all things vegetarian, and understand that eliminating animal products from our lives definitely doesn’t mean deprivation. We’ve each found that exchanging cholesterol-laden foods for tasty plant-based versions not only makes us feel good inside, but makes us look great on the outside, too. As professional vegetarians, we’ve got the inside scoop on how to maximize the pluses of this vibrant, peaceful lifestyle—especially when it comes to spotting the latest products, travel destinations, restaurants, books, clothing, and accessories. And guess what? We’re ready to share the details. This we can say with conviction: Living veg is easy. It’s also fun, compassionate, and earth-friendly.

Now is the time to go veg. For your health, the animals, and the environment—and we’re here to help! Read on to discover how satisfying, joyful, and enriching life in the veg lane *really* is.

—The Editors of VegNews

“Now, almost every decent-sized city has health-food stores and vegetarian restaurants; people do seem a lot more receptive to the notion of someone being a vegan now than they were 20 years ago.”

—Moby

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Go Veg for Your Health

The first question vegetarians were once predictably asked by curious omnivores was, “Where do you get your protein?” Thankfully, it’s widely acknowledged that meeting your optimal health needs on a veg diet is easy as pie and that, in fact, most Americans consume *too much* protein. So many plant foods in regular circulation at your local grocery store or farmers’ market are loaded with protein, including corn, potatoes, bananas, avocados, rice, and peanuts. Other popular veg-nutrition-related myths have been laid to rest by leading health experts, so we no longer need fear such things as calcium, iron, B12, or Omega 3 deficiencies. With a balanced diet rich in vegetables, grains, fruit, nuts, and seeds, vegetarianism is a healthy lifestyle choice for everyone.

It’s a fact that vegetarians have a lower risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, certain cancers, kidney disease, and gallstones than their carnivorous counterparts, and because animal products are the only sources of dietary cholesterol, plant-based diets are naturally heart-healthy. Vegans’ blood cholesterol levels are typically 35 percent lower than those of omnivores, and by eschewing animal protein, you won’t need to worry about calcium loss that’s attributable to high-protein diets.

Weight watchers will be glad to learn that vegetarians have a lower body-mass index (BMI) than omnivores, and a common experience among people transitioning to vegetarianism is that they immediately shed a few pounds, have more energy and stamina, and generally feel better having made the leap from meaty to meat-free. Best of all, perhaps, is that vegetarians live, on average, six to 10 years longer than meat-eaters, which gives us more time to have fun with our friends and families, eat amazing food, and continue work that’s important to us. And did we mention we’ll have more time for enjoying dairy-free ice cream?

“My motivation for going veg was athletic performance. I was simply searching for the best diet to fuel a high-performance lifestyle. I found it in the form of a plant-based diet.”

—*Brendan Brazier, Ironman Triathlete*

HOW I WENT VEG



GROWING UP in a “healthy” home meant whole-wheat bread, squash from the garden, and Mom’s homemade granola were regular features on the family menu. So, what’s a kid with an independent streak and a ravenous appetite to do? Rebel, of course, and eat every non-healthy thing she can get her hands on: Bologna on Wonder Bread, Vienna Sausages, frozen chicken pot pies ... just thinking about it makes me queasy. At 22, I hit the junk-food saturation point and sorted my ethics out, too, and I’ve been vegan since 2000. I still like meat analogs, but really hope they never come up with a vegan version of Vienna Sausage!

—*VN Editorial Director Aurelia d’Andrea*

VegHealth101

Meeting your nutritional needs on a veg diet is easy-peasy, but if you need a nutritional refresher course, read on.

- ❖ **What you need:** Iron
- ❖ **Where to get it:** Whole-wheat bread, kidney beans, broccoli

- ❖ **What you need:** Calcium
- ❖ **Where to get it:** Collard greens, dried figs, molasses

- ❖ **What you need:** Vitamin D
- ❖ **Where to get it:** 15 minutes of sunshine a day, fortified soy milk

- ❖ **What you need:** B12
- ❖ **Where to get it:** Nutritional yeast, soy milk, fortified cereals

- ❖ **What you need:** Omega 3s
- ❖ **Where to get it:** Flaxseed, flax oil, walnuts



Go Veg for the Environment

Carbon offsetting is *de rigueur* among today's eco set, but if you're already veg, there's no need to buy into the notion of extenuating your personal greenhouse gas emissions by paying for pricy carbon credits. By merely eliminating meat and dairy from your diet, you're already doing more for the environment than if you were to exchange your gas-guzzling SUV for an eco-friendly hybrid.

When the UN released its 2007 environmental report, many were shocked to learn that industrialized animal-agriculture, commonly referred to as factory farming, is responsible for more greenhouse-gas pollution than all the world's automobile emissions. Livestock production also accounts for more than eight percent of global water use, and is the number one cause of water pollution worldwide. When you consider that 64 percent of the world is expected to feel the stress of water shortages by 2025, going veg just makes sense.

As countries around the globe continue to industrialize and develop, the demand for meat increases. Sadly, 70 percent of what was once Amazon rainforest is now used for grazing animals, and with each tree that disappears, the earth's ability to absorb carbon dioxide from the air diminishes, placing a higher environmental toll on our already-burdened planet. A close examination of the big environmental picture and the role that animal agriculture plays in global warming will have you swapping that hamburger for a soy dog in no time.

“I would definitely choose a vegetarian diet for my family, because I believe it's the healthiest.”

—Daryl Hannah, Actress/Activist

Reason #223 to go veg:

37% of human-caused methane comes from animal production.

fact

It takes 27 times more petroleum to produce a hamburger than it does a soy burger.

HOW I WENT VEG

AS SOMEONE who's spent the majority of her life in the decidedly un-cool crowd, (Star Trek fan? Yes. Scrabble addict? Indeed.) I was thrilled to discover at 17 that veganism gave me an instant connection with the coolest kids around—activists who cared about the condition of our planet and its creatures. Finding common ground with intelligent, interesting, and compassionate people makes veganism its own extraordinary reward. —VN Senior Editor Elizabeth Castoria



Go Veg for the Animals

If you love animals, adopting a veg lifestyle is the most profound way to align your actions with your ethics. Just like dogs and cats, the 10 billion pigs, chickens, turkeys, sheep, cows, goats, and other animals slaughtered for food each year in the United States are sentient beings who deserve to live their lives free from pain and suffering. Today's factory-farming methods, however, don't allow them even these basic rights.

In the United States, the federal Humane Slaughter Act stipulates that cows should be killed humanely by being stunned by a mechanical blow to the head to render them unconscious before being strung up, yet assembly lines often process 400 cows per hour, resulting in live cows being dismembered, which is definitely *not* humane. The grim trend continues for chickens.

Ninety-eight percent of egg-laying hens in the United States exist in overcrowded wire battery cages, where they can't preen themselves, perch, flap their wings, or even walk. New legislation is being introduced in several US states to allow our feathered friends some basic rights, but there really is no such thing as a "cruelty-free" egg or "humanely-raised" chicken.

The road to vegetarianism is often taken in baby steps, and eliminating fish from your diet might be the final phase before going flesh-free for good. Fish feel pain, too, and deserve our consideration. They have complex social structures and can even recognize specific shoal mates. Some fish will eavesdrop on their neighbors, and others employ tools—such as the South African fish who carry their eggs to a safe spot using leaves. If saying goodbye to your beloved tuna-salad sandwiches brings a tear to your eye, cry no more: faux fish—yes, even tuna—awaits you at the nearest well-stocked natural-foods store.

“In a perfect world, we should all be without leather, wool, silk, and any other animal products or byproducts.”

—Emily Deschanel,
Actress

HOW I WENT VEG



GROWING UP, I never liked the taste of meat. There was no political, ethical, environmental, or health motivation—I simply avoided meat and ate the side dishes. It wasn't until I went away to college that I discovered vegetarianism as a concept and began to identify as one, but I still loved my skim milk and non-fat yogurt. After graduating, I spent nearly two years traveling through Asia and rarely consumed dairy. I felt better than ever and began reading about the atrocities of the meat and dairy industry. I immediately went vegan and have never looked back. —VN Associate Publisher Colleen Holland

Veg in the USA

Veg curious? Check these scintillating stats to see where you fit in.

- 2.3 percent of US adults never eat meat, poultry, fish, or seafood
- Women are twice as likely to give up meat-eating than men, though the gender gap closes as more animal products are removed from the diet. For vegetarians and vegans, there are nearly equal numbers of men and women
- The North East of the US is home to the greatest percentage of people who never eat meat, whereas the South and North Central regions tie for last place
- Only six percent of Caucasian adults never eat meat, compared with seven percent of African Americans and eight percent of Hispanics



Tasty Transitional Recipes

4

Here's one feel-good excuse for taking the veg plunge: the food! Once you give animal products the heave-ho, a whole new world of culinary wonder reveals itself. When cooking at home, don't be afraid to experiment. Almost any dish can be made veg, so grab that apron and head to the kitchen! Delicious surprises await.

❖❖❖ The Comfort Food Favorite

Baked Macaroni & Cheese

Mmmm ... macaroni and cheese. Everyone's favorite comfort food is traditionally loaded with butter, cheese, cream, and more butter. This transformed version with a super-rich vegan cheese sauce makes this mac 'n' cheese the ultimate comfort food.

Serves 6

- 4 quarts water
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 8 ounces macaroni
- 4 slices of bread, torn into large pieces
- 2 tablespoons + $\frac{1}{3}$ cup margarine, divided
- 2 tablespoons shallots, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup red or yellow potatoes, peeled and chopped

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup carrots, peeled and chopped
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raw cashews
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic, minced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice, freshly squeezed
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cayenne
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon paprika

1. In a large pot, bring the water and salt to a boil. Add macaroni and cook until *al dente*. In a colander, drain pasta and rinse with cold water. Set aside.
2. In a food processor, make breadcrumbs by pulverizing the bread and 2 tablespoons

margarine to a medium-fine texture. Set aside.

3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a saucepan, add shallots, potatoes, carrots, onion, and water, and bring to a boil. Cover the pan and simmer for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are very soft.

4. In a blender, process the cashews, salt, garlic, $\frac{1}{3}$ -cup margarine, mustard, lemon juice, black pepper, and cayenne. Add softened vegetables and cooking water to the blender and process until perfectly smooth.

5. In a large bowl, toss the cooked pasta and blended cheese sauce until completely coated. Spread mixture into a 9 x 12 casserole dish, sprinkle with prepared breadcrumbs, and dust with paprika. Bake for 30 minutes or until the cheese sauce is bubbling and the top has turned golden brown.

❖❖❖ The Healthy Main Course

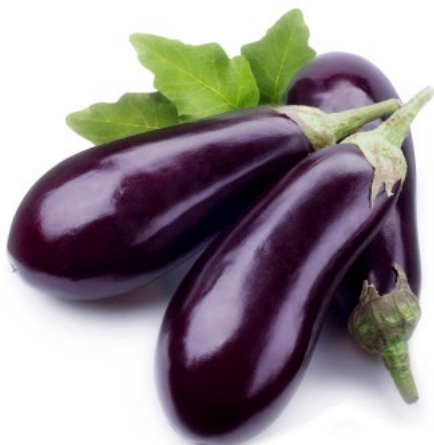
GardenFresh Ratatouille

Ratatouille, a rustic Mediterranean dish teeming with the seasonal flavors of eggplant, tomatoes, and zucchini, tastes even better served over polenta or couscous. Enjoy with a simple green salad for a light evening meal.

Serves 4

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium eggplant ($\frac{3}{4}$ pound), diced
- 1 medium zucchini, quartered and diced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 6 tomatoes (2 pounds), diced
- 1 teaspoon fresh oregano, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, roughly chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained and roughly chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh basil, thinly sliced

1. In a large pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Add the eggplant and bell pepper and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in tomatoes and cook for 5 more minutes. All vegetables should be tender.
2. Stir in the oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper, and cook for one additional minute. Remove from heat and add balsamic vinegar and capers. Garnish with basil when serving.



❖❖❖ The Decadent Dessert

ChocolatePeanut ButterCheesecake

Peanut butter and chocolate have long been a winning combination, but when they're joined in a cheesecake, the result is pure bliss. One taste and you'll forget that old artery-clogging version forever.

Serves 8

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups vegan chocolate cookie crumbs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegan margarine, melted
- 2 8-ounce packages vegan cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup soymilk, at room temperature
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup creamy peanut butter, at room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup semisweet dark chocolate chips, melted

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly oil an 8-inch springform pan. In a bowl or

food processor, combine the crumbs with the margarine and mix well. Place the crumb mixture in the bottom of the prepared pan and press it against the bottom and sides. Refrigerate until chilled.

2. In a large bowl, combine 1 package of cream cheese, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the soymilk, and the peanut butter and beat until smooth. Pour into the prepared crust and set aside.
3. In the same bowl, combine the remaining 1 package cream cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup soymilk and beat until smooth. Fold in the melted chocolate and mix until well blended.
4. Using a circular motion, pour the chocolate mixture into the peanut butter mixture. With a thin metal spatula or knife, swirl the different colored mixtures to create a marbled pattern.
5. Bake until firm for 45 to 50 minutes. Remove the cake from the oven and let cool completely at room temperature. Refrigerate for several hours before serving.

HOW I WENT VEG

IN COLLEGE I read Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, and something clicked—I realized that vegetarianism was the only choice I could make. And when I did, the vague sense of guilt I'd felt my entire life disappeared. I transitioned gradually, ordering fish when there was no veg option (which was all too common 23 years ago). I stopped eating dairy eight years later under the advice of my acupuncturist. Although I loved cheese, I felt much better after giving it up and lost 10 pounds right away! —VN Editor at Large Jennifer Pickens



Let's Eat!

Dining in or eating out, it's never been easier to enjoy savory, satisfying meals minus the meat.

Shopping for your veg staples should be a fun adventure. Take the time to enjoy the color and aroma of your purchases, and relish the opportunity to broaden your culinary repertoire. Next time you head to your local farmers' market, natural-foods store, or neighborhood grocery chain, take this handy list and rest assured you'll always have something on hand to whip up a tasty plant-based meal.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avocados | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortified non-dairy milk | <input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bananas | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortified cereal | <input type="checkbox"/> Raw almonds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown rice | <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Raw walnuts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned black beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Hummus | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal fruits and veggies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned chickpeas | <input type="checkbox"/> Nut butters | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamari |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Nutritional yeast | <input type="checkbox"/> Tofu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark leafy greens | <input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal | <input type="checkbox"/> Tortillas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dried pasta | <input type="checkbox"/> Olive oil | <input type="checkbox"/> Veggie burgers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flaxseed oil | <input type="checkbox"/> Pita bread | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole-wheat bread |

Restaurant Survival Tips

Gone are the sad dining-out days when the only option was an iceberg lettuce salad with low-cal dressing. When dining out, head for Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Mexican, and Japanese restaurants for a bounty of veg options. Some of the VN editors' favorite mainstream restaurant options include:

- Chinese: Tofu-veggie stir-fry over rice; fried noodles with mushrooms and baby corn; egg rolls
- Italian: Cheeseless pizza with capers and eggplant; pasta puttanesca (hold the anchovies!); grilled vegetables on focaccia
- Japanese: Avocado sushi rolls; shiitake mushroom rolls; rice-stuffed inari (marinated tofu)
- Mexican: Bean, rice, and salsa burritos; tostadas with pinto beans, lettuce, and guacamole
- Vietnamese: Fresh spring rolls with peanut sauce; Vietnamese crêpes served with fresh greens and dipping sauce

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