

A Taste of Ecuador • Vegan Menus for Adults 51+

VOLUME XXXII, NO 3

VEGETARIAN

JOURNAL HEALTH ECOLOGY ETHICS

Chinese Cooking

A Guide to Leather Alternatives



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NUTRITION HOTLINE

REED MANGELS, PhD, RD



This issue's Nutrition Hotline discusses the stability of iodine in iodized salt over time and whether or not lack of sleep leads to weight gain.

QUESTION: "I make sure we use iodized salt a few times per week to get iodine. If it takes us over a year to go through a container of salt, is the iodine content of the salt the same a year later?" D.W., via e-mail

ANSWER: The Salt Institute estimates that nearly 70% of the table salt sold in the U.S. is iodized. Iodine is added to salt to protect people from iodine deficiency which can result in thyroid problems and poor growth and development in infants and children. Interestingly, almost none of the salt used to produce processed foods is iodized. This is believed to have led to lower intakes of iodine in the U.S. The iodine content of iodized salt is quite stable. Even under extreme conditions, which included being stored in woven polypropylene bags that allowed contact with moisture and air, the iodine content of iodized salt remained high over a six month period in one study¹. Another study found that iodine content of iodized salt was stable for more than a year².

REFERENCES

- ¹ Maramac CC, Tengco LW, Rayco-Solon P, et al. 2007. Stability of iodine in iodized fresh and aged salt exposed to simulated market conditions. *Food Nutr Bull* 28(4):412-8.
- ² Ranganathan S, Karmarkar MG, Krupadanam M, et al. 2007. Stability of iodine in salt fortified with iodine and iron. *Food Nutr Bull* 28(1):109-15.

QUESTION: "I've watched my weight creep up, little by little, over the years. I try to eat healthy and have been vegan for the past five years. Because of work and family responsibilities, I know I don't get as much sleep as I should. Somewhere I heard that a lack of sleep could lead to weight gain. Is there any truth to that?" M.R., via e-mail

ANSWER: If you're not getting enough sleep, you're not alone. Studies suggest close to a third of adults in the U.S. sleep less than 6 hours a night. At least 7 hours of sleep is recommended. Weight gain has been reported in people sleeping less than 5 or 6 hours a night. There are several possible causes of this weight gain¹. Lack of sleep can affect the levels of hormones that control hunger, leading to an increased food intake. If you're awake more, you have more time to eat which can lead to overeating. Unfortunately, that extra time awake is often not used for exercise. Physical activity is often less during periods of sleep deprivation, possibly due to fatigue. Lack of sleep seems to lead to an increased consumption of high-fat foods and to a decrease in impulse control. This decrease in impulse control makes it more likely that you'll eat, even if you're not hungry. If you are able to lose weight but aren't getting enough sleep, you're more likely to lose muscle than fat. Getting enough sleep is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

REFERENCE

- ¹ Shlisky JD, Hartman TJ, Kris-Etherton PM, et al. 2012. Partial sleep deprivation and energy balance in adults: an emerging issue for consideration by dietetics practitioners. *J Acad Nutr Diet* 112(11):1785-97.

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NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS

STRICT VEGAN STANDARDS?



The Conservative movement of Judaism Committee on Jewish Law and Standards recently discussed an official position concerning “Under what conditions may pizza from a non-Kosher establishment be considered Kosher for use by institutions.” The document, technically known as Responsa literature since it was written in answer to a Jewish legal question, was presented by the committee. In the document, a footnote quoting from the chapter on kashrut [Jewish dietary laws] from *The Observant Life*, a recently released book, states, “An excellent source of information on which restaurant chains offer vegetarian food options is The Vegetarian Resource Group....This organization also helps make vegetarian customers aware of hidden areas of concern in restaurant food, and that information can be valuable to the kosher diner in a non-kosher restaurant.” Thank you to our long-time researcher Jeanne Yacoubou, volunteers, and donors, who allow us to be of assistance to vegetarians, vegans, and other groups. They make researching restaurants, chains, and ingredients possible.

There were numerous points in the article to which we could relate and that have relevance for the vegetarian movement. First, in 1952 the Conservative movement addressed a related issue and said they would be following up, but until now, 60 years later, there has not been an attempt to present a comprehensive answer to the question. Not so tongue-in-cheek, we can certainly relate to how many projects are on the back burner due to other priorities or finding the right expert; it can take a long time to come back to and complete some projects. On the other hand, one commentator said everyone was comfortable with the old ruling, so that’s why no one has written anything about it since. We certainly identify with people having strong opinions, some thinking there should be change, and others happy with the status quo.

Issues brought up by the committee were the practicality of people following rules, being strict and rigid versus inviting to everybody, and the difference between individual choices and organizational choices. Wading into this discussion, whether for comments on kosher, vegetarian, or vegan choices, is certainly a Pandora’s Box. In the past, we have said vegetarianism shouldn’t be a religion. However, for a movement that is based on non-violence, unfortunately there can be strong statements and judgments between different factions as in all human endeavors.

In the Conservative document, Rabbi Plotkin cites Rabbi Paul Drazen, giving people in transition to a fuller observance a prioritized series of options to follow when eating out.

1. Only eat in kosher restaurants.
2. Search out vegan or vegetarian restaurants.
3. Eat only minimally processed cold foods when eating in unsupervised establishments.
4. Less preferable is strictly vegetarian hot food [in unsupervised establishments].

(Continued on page 29)

VRG’s MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

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

Memorials & Honorary Gifts

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

My name and address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

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

Thank you to Prashant Shah for a donation in honor of Narendra Shah, and Jeff Baskin for his donation in appreciation of Charles and Sam.

Thank you to Carol H. and Ted D. Barnett for their donation in honor of The Vegetarian Resource Group’s 30th Anniversary.

Special thanks to VegDining.com and Edward & Sons Trading Company, Inc. for their donations.

Leather Alternatives

I just wanted to let you know that I loved The Vegetarian Resource Group’s online Guide to Alternatives to Leather. I have been looking for hiking boots, and I now have some great leads!

I was really thrilled to see some Canadian companies listed, too. Just love it when we Canadians are not forgotten! I also wanted to send in a testimonial for my Matt and Nat wallet/purse. It is fashionable, but I thought it was going to be too big and bulky. Actually, unlike my previous wallets, I never lose this one, and it has a little handle that allows it to fit over my bicycle handlebars. It has been one terrific wallet; the best I’ve had!

Finally, as a ballroom dancer, I was required to have leather-soled shoes for many ballrooms and studios. I did a search a few months ago and there are vegan ballroom shoemakers/sellers in England and the U.S. (Sadly, I didn’t find anything in Canada.) I didn’t keep the links, but if you want to add it to the list at some point, that may be appreciated by the ballroom dancers, salsa dancers, Argentine tango dancers, etc. Melanie R, via e-mail

Editor’s Note: See pages 24-25 in this issue for hard-to-find non-leather alternatives. We also found a U.S. company that offers vegan ballroom and Latin dance shoes. Step One Dance Shoes lists various styles of custom-made vegan ballroom shoes in different colors for men and women. Visit their website at: steponedanceshoes.com or call (877) 719-8945.

Someday Farm B&B

Thank you very much for your recent posting of Someday Farm vegan bed and breakfast on your website. We are in our third year and love giving veg people a place to stay! I’ve read your magazine for many years and really appreciate what VRG accomplishes. In various ways, often inspired by you, I’ve been reaching out more.

I’ve set up a small library of cookbooks, videos, magazines, and brochures for local folk interested in changing their diet. Tonight we’re hosing a vegan potluck... The veggie road feels less lonely every year.

Thank you for all you do for the animals.
Jill Campbell
Someday Farm Vegan Bed and Breakfast
Freeland, WA

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

Coming in the Next Issue:

A THANKSGIVING MEAL

Plus: Citrus Magic, VRG Scholarship Winners, Quick and Easy Dishes for Unexpected Guests, and more!

A Vegan Taste of **ECUADOR**

by Gianna Mautone

For the past two years, I traveled to Ecuador as part of an immersion trip experience with a delegation of students from Loyola University in Baltimore, Maryland. While there, we lived and served in the economically poor communities of Duran, a city in Guayas, a coastal province of Ecuador. In addition to serving at outreach organizations and after-school programs, we spent large portions of our time in the community and neighborhood where we lived, building relationships with our neighbors, sharing in their cultural experiences, and listening to stories about the various joys and challenges of their lives.

The time we spent cooking each day with the help of Ecuadorian volunteers who taught us about the country's staple foods will always be a memorable cultural experience I will cherish. Though most Ecuadorian dishes typically include meat and seafood, we were able to enjoy well-balanced, satisfying, traditional-style vegetarian meals prepared with staple Ecuadorian fruits, vegetables, legumes, and grains throughout the duration of our trip.

Although Ecuador is quite small (no bigger than Nevada in size), the country is culturally divided into four regions: the Coast, the Andes mountains, the Amazon rainforest, and the Galapagos Islands. Varied cultural identities exist in each of these regions; thus varying ingredients are used to prepare meals. Because of the abundance of fresh vegetable crops, many traditional Ecuadorian dishes are plant-based. In the coastal region, typical vegetarian staples include lentils, beans, rice, plantains, bananas, and avocados. In the Andes mountain region, potatoes and corn grow abundantly and find their way into many of the region's common dishes. The Amazon rainforest region is where avocados, sugarcane, and cocoa are grown. The Galapagos Islands yield many exotic fruits that are enjoyed throughout the country. Across all the regions, you can be sure to find a common thread: dishes spiced up with *aji*, Ecuador's traditional hot sauce.

The Ecuadorian spice *achiote*, a beautiful red blend of ground annatto seeds and spices, is often infused with oil and sold as a flavoring for many recipes. While many traditional Ecuadorian recipes contain chicken, pork, and seafood, many can be easily transformed into delicious vegan meals with just a few substitutions.

Hearty Lentil Stew (Menestra)

(Serves 4)

A traditional, hearty dish of Ecuador, typically served over white rice. Adapt this recipe to your preference of brown, red or green lentils, noting that cooking time will vary for each type. *Aji* hot sauce, made from *aji* peppers, is often an addition to Ecuadorian meals and may be found in specialty stores or Latin American markets in the U.S. It can be easily substituted with your favorite hot sauce.

1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
1 cup water
1 cup dry red lentils, rinsed
2 Tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
1 medium red onion, diced
1 medium green bell pepper, diced
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon cumin
Salt to taste
Hot sauce to taste
1 Tablespoon fresh squeezed lime juice

Heat vegetable broth and water in a skillet over medium heat. Add lentils. Reduce heat to medium low and cover skillet. Allow to cook for 10-15 minutes, adding water, a Tablespoon at a time, if liquid level gets too low.

Meanwhile, in a separate skillet, heat oil. Sauté onions, green pepper, tomatoes, and garlic. Once softened, add vegetables to lentils and reduce heat to low. Add cumin, salt, and hot sauce. Cover skillet and let simmer for approximately 5 more minutes, until almost all liquid is evaporated.

Remove from heat and mix in fresh squeezed lime juice. Serve atop freshly prepared white or brown rice to round out the meal. If you want to kick up the flavor, top with a few drops of hot sauce.

Total calories per serving: 274 Fat: 7 grams
Carbohydrates: 39 grams Protein: 14 grams
Sodium: 39 milligrams Fiber: 10 grams

Creamy Potato Peanut Soup (Sopa Cremosa de Patata y Maní)

(Serves 4)

This satisfying soup is creamy, spicy, and sweet all at once. Enjoy the exotic mix of flavors.

1 Tablespoon peanut or vegetable oil
2 small white potatoes, peeled, diced
1 medium onion, diced
1 small red bell pepper, diced
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
Salt to taste
3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
Hot sauce to taste (optional)
1/3 cup peanut butter
Fresh cilantro for garnish

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add potatoes, onions, red bell pepper, red pepper flakes, and salt. Allow to cook for approximately 5 minutes, then add vegetable broth and optional hot sauce. Cover and simmer over low heat for 20 minutes.

Place peanut butter and soup in a blender (or use an immersion blender). Blend until smooth. Return to pot if reheating is needed. Garnish with cilantro.

Total calories per serving: 247 Fat: 14 grams
Carbohydrates: 24 grams Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 210 milligrams Fiber: 4 grams

Fresh Vegetable Bean Salad (Ensalada de Verduras Frescas con Habas)

(Serves 6)

Beans, an Ecuadorian staple, are high in nutrients and pack a satisfying punch. This simple salad highlights Ecuador's exotic flavors and fresh, crispy vegetables.

1 medium head broccoli, chopped
1 medium tomato, chopped
1 medium green bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
One 16-ounce can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 teaspoon olive oil
1 medium avocado, cut into long slices
Salt to taste
Lime juice to taste
Fresh parsley, for garnish

Add chopped broccoli to a pot with enough water to cover the bottom of the pan. Place lid on pot and heat water to a simmer, allowing the broccoli to steam for about 5 minutes, or until softened. Drain water. Let broccoli cool in the refrigerator.

Meanwhile, add tomato, green bell pepper, red onion, pinto beans, and olive oil to a serving bowl and toss to coat vegetables in olive oil. Add broccoli once cooled. Top salad with sliced avocado. Sprinkle with salt and fresh squeezed lime juice to taste. Add fresh parsley for garnish.

Total calories per serving: 146 Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 19 grams Protein: 6 grams
Sodium: 146 milligrams Fiber: 7 grams

Baked Sweet Plantains (Maduros al Horno)

(Serves 4)

Plantains, which look like larger, more angular bananas, are one of the most abundant crops in Ecuador, making them a staple food of the Ecuadorian diet. They find their way into almost every traditional dish, whether savory or sweet, grilled, baked, fried, or mashed.

Green plantains, often called *verdes* are the less-ripe, starchier plantain. They are frequently served as a savory side dish. More mature plantains, which will look like blackened, over-ripe bananas are called *maduros*, meaning ripe, yellow, and mature. These are the sweet plantains you should choose for this recipe.

2 sweet plantains, peeled and sliced
1/2 Tablespoon olive oil
Parchment paper (optional)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Chop off the ends of the plantains. Then, make a lengthwise slit along the skin of each plantain, without cutting too deep so that you don't puncture the fruit within. Remove peel. Cut the plantains on an angle into 2-inch-long chunks.

Lightly coat the plantains in oil and place them on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper (or lightly greased baking sheet). Bake for approximately 20 minutes at 375 degrees, or until golden brown. Flip halfway through baking time.

Total calories per serving: 124 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 29 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 4 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

Potato Pancakes

(Llapingachos)

(Makes four 3-inch pancakes)

Potatoes are a staple in the Ecuadorian diet because of their abundant growth in the mountain region. These lightly fried potato pancakes have a crispy outside and a warm, soft inside. They are usually prepared with *achiote*, a red seed that is ground and infused with oil for flavoring. *Achiote* may be found in specialty South American stores, though this recipe uses a mixture of easily accessible alternative spices. Serve potato pancakes as an appetizer or side dish for a fun twist on mashed potatoes.

2 medium potatoes

Water, enough to cover potatoes

1/8 teaspoon turmeric

1 teaspoon cumin

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Sea salt to taste

2 teaspoons olive oil

4 Tablespoons shredded vegan soy cheese

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil for frying

2 scallions, thinly sliced, for garnish

Fresh parsley, for garnish

Thoroughly wash potatoes, then peel and dice. Place diced potatoes in a pot with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Once water comes to a boil, reduce to medium heat and let potatoes cook until they are soft. Drain water. Mash potatoes in a mixing bowl with a fork or potato masher.

In a separate bowl, combine turmeric, cumin, cayenne pepper, and salt with 2 teaspoons olive oil. Add spice mixture to potatoes. Place potatoes in the refrigerator for up to 20 minutes to set. Form 3-inch-wide balls in your palm; flatten slightly. Make a hole in the middle of each pancake and place soy cheese inside (about 1 Tablespoon each). Cover cheese with more potato.

Heat 2 Tablespoons oil in a skillet over high heat (carefully place a drop of water into pan to test if it is heated). Once oil is hot, place potato pancakes into pan, cooking for 5 minutes on each side (or until exterior is golden brown). Be careful when flipping not to break. Garnish with thinly sliced scallions and fresh parsley, if desired.

Total calories per pancake: 185
Carbohydrates: 20 grams
Sodium: 76 milligrams
Fat: 11 grams
Protein: 2 grams
Fiber: 3 grams

Slow-Cooked Onions and Tofu

(Tofu Guisado)

(Serves 4-5)

Seco de Pollo is the name of a very traditional stewed chicken dish in Ecuadorian cuisine. The classic, savory flavors of this dish can be easily converted into an alternative vegan meal using tofu.

16 ounces extra-firm tofu

1 Tablespoon olive oil

Salt to taste

Black pepper to taste

Press tofu for 10-15 minutes to release moisture using a tofu press (or simply wrap tofu with an absorbent towel and top with a heavy book). Once pressed, cut tofu into approximately 32 cubes.

Heat olive oil in skillet. Once oil is very hot, place tofu in a single layer in the pan. Sprinkle with salt and black pepper to taste. Leave on medium-high heat for approximately 7 minutes (or until bottom is browned), then flip. Brown other side for another 7 minutes. Once tofu is crispy, remove from skillet and place in a separate bowl to the side.

1/2 Tablespoon olive oil

Small onion, sliced

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 Tablespoon cumin

1 Tablespoon oregano

1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth

1 Tablespoon cilantro for garnish

Heat oil in skillet. Place onion and garlic in the oil over medium heat for 2 minutes. Add cumin, oregano, and vegetable broth. Let simmer over medium-low heat for about 10 minutes, until onions become very soft. Mix in cooked tofu. Let simmer over medium-low heat for approximately 7 minutes, or until tofu absorbs the broth and spices. Garnish with cilantro and serve over white or brown rice, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 164
Carbohydrates: 6 grams
Sodium: 45 milligrams
Fat: 12 grams
Protein: 12 grams
Fiber: 1 gram

Gianna Mautone wrote this article while doing an internship with The Vegetarian Resource Group.

VEGAN lunchbox

Have you ever forgotten to make your child's lunch? Or perhaps you lack time to make a nutritious meal. Consider having some of these packaged vegan convenience food items on hand to toss into your child's lunchbox next time you're in a rush. *By Debra Wasserman*

Materne North America sells GoGo SqueeZ, a squeezable fruit snack in these organic flavors: Apple Cinnamon, Apple Banana, Apple Peach, Apple Strawberry, and Apple Berry. Kids have a great time squeezing the fruit into their mouths. See: www.gogosqueez.com.

Earthbound Farm produces 2-ounce packages of organic apple slices, as well as 2.5-ounce Dippin' Doubles, which are organic apples with organic peanut butter to dip the apples into. They also offer 2.25-ounce bags of Mini Peeled Carrots. Visit: www.ebfarm.com to find a list of stores carrying these products.

Sabra offers single packs of hummus in various flavors, including Roasted Garlic, Red Pepper, and Classic Hummus. These come with thin pretzels to dip into the hummus. You would have to put an ice pack into your child's lunchbox when serving hummus. Sabra is also now offering single packs of salsa with tortilla chips. See: www.sabra.com.

Naturipe offers blueberries in 1.5-ounce packages. For information, visit www.naturipefarms.com.

Reichel Foods offers Dippin' Stix, packs of hummus with carrots or pita chips, or apple/celery with peanut butter. See: www.reichelfoods.com.



Nature's Path organic bars come in several vegan varieties including Peanut Choco Crunch and Pumpkin-N-Spice Flax Plus. Visit naturespath.com and search under the word vegan.

Primal Spirit Foods produces vegan jerky in several flavors including Mesquite Lime, Teriyaki, Hickory Smoked, Hot & Spicy, Thai Peanut, and Texas BBQ. See: www.primalspiritfoods.com.

Santa Cruz Organic offers organic Applesauce, Apple Apricot Sauce, Apple Cinnamon Sauce, Tropical Fruit Sauce, and Apple Peach Sauce in 4-ounce-size cups. See: www.santacruzorganic.com.

Clif Bars offer many vegan options including White Chocolate Macadamia, Oatmeal Raisin Walnut, Carrot Cake, and more. Visit www.clifbar.com and do a search for the the word vegan.



VeganMenus

for adults 51+ by Christine Kasum Sexton, MPH

On the next pages, you will find a selection of easy-to-prepare menus designed specifically for older vegans (51+ years). Three different calorie levels – 1600, 1800, and 2000 – are presented in order to meet the needs of men and women of varying activity levels and budgets. A fourth calorie level, the 2200-calorie diet, which is appropriate for older men with active lifestyles, can be found along with a PDF version of the complete guide on our website at www.vrg.org/seniors.

In general, a 1600-calorie diet should meet the needs of an inactive older female; an 1800-calorie diet should meet the needs of an active older female; a 2000-calorie diet should meet the needs of an inactive older male; and a 2200-calorie diet should meet the needs of an active older male. These are average numbers, however. If you are more active, you may need more calories. If you find that you are losing weight unintentionally, you should add additional servings of foods. If you are gaining weight unintentionally, you may need to increase activity or choose a lower calorie level.

In addition to a range of calorie levels, we have provided one set of menus with higher food costs, and one set with lower food costs. In general, the higher food cost menus include more vegan convenience foods such as soy burgers and vegan deli slices, as well as more fresh fruits and vegetables, while the lower cost menus include more beans and rely on frozen vegetables. All of these menus were analyzed for nutritional content and meet the dietary reference intake levels for most nutrients. Some of the menus are somewhat low in vitamin D or potassium. Additional vitamin D could be obtained by using a vitamin D supplement, and/or spending time in sunlight. To learn more about vitamin D, see http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2009issue2/2009_issue2_vitamin_d.php. Additional potassium could be obtained by choosing foods that are high in potassium more often. Such foods include acorn squash, baked potatoes, lentils, spinach, kidney beans, split peas, butternut squash, watermelon, and raisins.

Use of some fortified foods can help meet recommendations for some nutrients. For example, choose soymilk fortified with calcium, and vitamins A, D, and B12, rather than unfortified soymilk; choose calcium-fortified tofu rather than unfortified tofu. We also recommend choosing low-sodium options whenever available. When using canned beans or tomatoes, for example, lower-sodium choices are increasingly available. Bread products can vary considerably in their sodium content. If sodium is of particular concern in your diet, you may want to seek out lower-sodium brands.

The following menus present one example of an eating pattern – three meals, a breakfast snack, and an afternoon snack. Meals do not need to be eaten exactly at these specified times. For example, if you prefer a larger breakfast, combine the morning snack with breakfast to make one larger meal. If you enjoy having a bedtime snack, eat the afternoon snack later in the evening instead, or eat part of a snack in the afternoon, and the other part after dinner. Swap lunch for dinner if you desire, and so on. In addition, these menus suggest spices to be used for some of the dishes, but any herbs, spices, or low-sodium seasonings that you prefer could also be used without significantly altering the calorie count. For example, you could replace the garlic and ginger in tofu stir-fry with onions and turmeric, or cayenne pepper. The parsley and black pepper used on the baked potatoes could be replaced with onion powder, dried thyme, or dill. Higher-sodium flavorings such as soy sauce, chili paste, or other prepared sauces will add a lot of sodium to the menus and should be limited or avoided. Beverages such as coffee, decaffeinated coffee, tea, herbal tea, and water can accompany all meals.

These menus can also be adapted based on seasonal food availability, for people with food allergies, or those who need softer foods. Fresh produce in the menus can be swapped for any fruits and vegetables that are seasonally available. This will not only help to provide variety and adjust for your own personal tastes, but can

also reduce cost by using items that are abundant at the time. For example, for fruit snacks, choose any fresh berries that you enjoy more often in the springtime, and apples or pears more often in the fall. Similarly, you might choose spinach or lettuce more often in the early summer, zucchini more often in the late summer, and frozen green vegetables more often during the winter months. As long as you are choosing a comparable serving size of fruits or vegetables, the menus should still be nutritionally adequate.

For older adults who may be cooking for one, the perishable foods that are used in these menus could ideally be used to prepare more than one meal. For example, the menu for one day suggests a hummus-vegetable wrap for lunch and a brown rice/tofu stir-fry for dinner. The following day, you could use the leftover vegetables and tofu to make a tofu/veggie scramble for breakfast, and the leftover rice and vegetables, along with some black beans, to make a southwestern rice salad for lunch or dinner. Leftover salad or wrap vegetables could also be used to make soups or stir-fries.

Individuals with nut allergies can replace the menu items containing nuts with other protein sources, including beans or seeds. Peanut butter could be replaced with sunflower seed butter, for example. Almonds or walnuts as a snack or in a salad could be replaced with roasted soybeans, sesame seeds, or chickpeas. The parsley-walnut sauce for pasta could be made

using sunflower seeds, or a simple parsley sauce could be used and then topped with white beans.

If softer food is needed because of difficulties chewing or swallowing, alterations or substitutions can be made to these menus to make them suitable. Fruits can be cooked, peeled, or puréed; raw vegetables can be cooked to desired softness and finely chopped; and potatoes, chili, or yogurt can be thinned to needed consistency with soymilk or fruit juice. Foods like crackers and pretzels, which may need to be avoided altogether, can be replaced with well-moistened breads, muffins, or biscuits. Nuts can be replaced with seeds, if tolerated, or with mashed and thinned beans.

For additional information on diets using softer foods, see the article ‘Texture Alterations for Vegan Diets,’ by Chef and Registered Dietitian Nancy Berkoff at <http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2009issue2/texture.htm>.

‘A Senior’s Guide to Good Nutrition’ by Registered Dietitian Suzanne Havalala Hobbs is available on our website at <http://www.vrg.org/seniors>.

Christine Kasum Sexton, MPH, is a volunteer with the VRG and a dietetic intern at Iowa State University. She is also the mother of three young girls and grows her family's food in rural Iowa.

NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

The Vegetarian Resource Group in the News

VRG Food Service Adviser Nancy Berkoff wrote an article for *Massage Magazine* on the personal and planet benefits of a vegan diet. The magazine readership consists of chiropractors, massage therapists, hospice staff, etc.

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, did a one-hour show on The Dr. Don Show, a weekday broadcast on Arizona's KZZZ 1490 AM. The topic was vegetarian diets for children.

Debra Wasserman contributed vegan Passover ideas for a *Washington Post* Blog posting.

VRG Outreach

At the sixth annual International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition (ICVN) at Loma Linda University, Reed Mangels presented a talk about bone nutrients for vegetarians and was interviewed for *VeggieChannel.com* about vegan babies. At the same event, she presented a poster session on ‘What Will Vegetarians Eat: The Acceptability of Foods and Food Production Methods to Vegans, Vegetarians, and Those Eating at Least One Vegetarian Meal Weekly,’ which she co-authored with Charles Stahler.

Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE, worked with the city of Long Beach, California to develop vegetarian menus and training materials for women and children's city shelters.

Day 1 | 1600 calories

Breakfast:

½ cup oatmeal, cooked, with an optional sprinkle of cinnamon
½ banana

Morning Snack:

4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
½ apple

Lunch:

½ cup grapes or other fruit
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Hummus wrap made with:

- Whole wheat tortilla
- ½ cup fresh spinach
- ¼ cup chopped raw red pepper
- 2 slices avocado
- ¼ cup hummus

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup sliced raw carrots
1 cup calcium-enriched soy yogurt
½ ounce no-salt dry roasted almonds

Dinner:

Tofu/veggie stir-fry made with:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice (no salt or fat added)
- ¾ cup cooked Swiss chard
- ¼ cup cooked mushrooms
- ¾ cup calcium-enriched tofu
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced and ½ teaspoon ginger, minced (or other spices or low-sodium broth)

1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 2 | 1600 calories

Breakfast:

1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
1 cup shredded wheat cereal
½ cup pineapple or other seasonal fruit
½ cup cantaloupe or other seasonal fruit

Morning Snack:

1 cup calcium-enriched soy yogurt
½ cup strawberries or other seasonal fruit

Lunch:

Sandwich made with:

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- ¼ cup alfalfa sprouts
- 4 slices avocado
- 2 meatless turkey slices

1 cup rice or soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup thin stick, hard, unsalted pretzels
6 baby carrots

Dinner:

Pasta with parsley-walnut sauce made with:

- 1¼ cups cooked whole wheat spaghetti
- ½ clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tablespoons walnuts
- 2 Tablespoons parsley
- Sautéed in 1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 cup cooked kale

Day 1 | 1600 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

½ cup oatmeal, cooked, with an optional sprinkle of cinnamon
1 small banana

Morning Snack:

4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
1 Tablespoon salt-free peanut butter
½ apple

Lunch:

Wrap made with:

- 8-inch flour tortilla
- ¼ cup chopped green pepper and ¼ cup chopped onion, cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil
- ½ cup garbanzo beans, mashed, no salt added

½ cup frozen or canned mandarin oranges, drained
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup sliced raw carrots
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Dinner:

Tofu/veggie stir-fry made with:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice (no salt or fat added)
- 1 cup mixed vegetables, cooked with vegetable oil
- ¾ cup calcium-enriched tofu
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (or other seasoning of choice)

1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 2 | 1600 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

¾ cup cooked shredded wheat cereal
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
½ cup orange juice, reconstituted from frozen

Morning Snack:

1 small apple
2 Tablespoons sunflower seeds, dry-roasted

Lunch:

Peanut butter-banana sandwich made with:

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 2 Tablespoons peanut butter
- ½ medium banana

½ cup cooked broccoli, from frozen
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

¾ cup thin stick, hard, unsalted pretzels
½ cup sliced raw carrots

Dinner:

Lentil soup made with:

- ¼ cup lentils
- ¼ cup onion and ¼ cup carrot, cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1¼ cups water
- Spices (thyme, black pepper, bay leaves)

1 medium baked or microwaved potato, with black pepper, fresh or dried parsley, or other low-sodium seasonings
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 1 | 1800 calories

Breakfast:

¾ cup oatmeal, cooked, with an optional sprinkle of cinnamon
¼ cup raisins
½ cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Morning Snack:

4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
1 medium apple

Lunch:

Hummus wrap made with:

- 1½-ounce whole wheat tortilla
- 1 cup fresh spinach
- ¼ cup chopped raw red pepper
- 3 slices avocado
- ¼ cup sliced cucumber
- 5 Tablespoons hummus

½ cup grapes or other seasonal fruit
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup sliced raw carrots
1 cup calcium-enriched soy yogurt
½ ounce dry-roasted, salt-free almonds

Dinner:

Seitan/veggie stir-fry made with:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- ¾ cup cooked Swiss chard
- ¼ cup cooked mushrooms
- ½ cup seitan strips
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 cup enriched soy or rice milk

Day 2 | 1800 calories

Breakfast:

1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
1 cup shredded wheat cereal
½ cup orange juice (freshly-squeezed, if desired)

Morning Snack:

½ cup strawberries or other seasonal fruit
1 cup calcium-enriched soy yogurt

Lunch:

Sandwich made with

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 2 meatless turkey slices
- ¼ cup alfalfa sprouts
- 4 slices avocado

½ cup snap peas, raw
½ cup diced cantaloupe or other seasonal fruit

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup thin stick, hard, unsalted pretzels
6 baby carrots

Dinner:

Pasta with parsley-walnut sauce made with:

- 1½ cups cooked whole wheat spaghetti
- ½ clove garlic, minced
- 3 Tablespoons walnuts
- 2 Tablespoons parsley
- Sautéed in 1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 cup cooked kale
1 cup rice or soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 1 | 1800 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

½ cup oatmeal, cooked, with an optional sprinkle of cinnamon
½ medium banana
¼ cup raisins
½ cup orange juice, reconstituted from frozen

Morning Snack:

4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
1 Tablespoon peanut butter, no salt
½ apple

Lunch:

Wrap made with:

- 10-inch flour tortilla
- ¼ cup green pepper, chopped and cooked
- ¼ cup chopped onion, cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil
- ½ cup garbanzo beans, mashed, no salt added

½ cup canned, low-sodium green beans
½ cup frozen or canned mandarin oranges, drained
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

½ cup sliced raw carrots
1 cup enriched soymilk (as above)

Dinner:

Tofu/veggie stir-fry made with:

- 1 cup cooked brown rice (no salt or fat added)
- 1 cup canned, low-sodium mixed vegetables, cooked with vegetable oil
- ¾ cup calcium-enriched tofu cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced and ½ teaspoon minced ginger (or other spices or low-sodium broth)

1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E and B12

Day 2 | 1800 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

1 cup shredded wheat cereal
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
½ cup orange juice, reconstituted from frozen

Morning Snack:

1 medium apple
2 Tablespoons sunflower seeds, dry-roasted

Lunch:

Peanut butter-banana sandwich made with:

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 2 Tablespoons peanut butter
- ½ large banana

1 cup broccoli, from frozen
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

8 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
½ cup sliced raw carrots

Dinner:

Lentil soup made with:

- ¼ cup lentils
- ¼ cup chopped onion and ¼ cup sliced carrot, cooked in 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1¼ cups water
- Spices (thyme, black pepper, bay leaves)
- ¼ cup oyster crackers

1 large baked or microwaved potato, with black pepper, fresh or dried parsley, or other low-sodium seasonings
1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 1 2000 calories

Breakfast:

- 1 mini (1-ounce) whole wheat bagel
- 1½ Tablespoons peanut butter, reduced-sodium and reduced-sugar
- 1 cup calcium-enriched soy yogurt

Morning Snack:

- 1 large banana
- ½ cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Lunch:

- 2-ounce whole wheat bun with:
 - 1 vegan hot dog
 - ¼ cup chopped tomatoes
- ½ cup whole strawberries or other seasonal fruit
- 1 cup broccoli
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

- 4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
- 6 baby carrots

Dinner:

- Seitan/veggie stir-fry made with:
 - 1¼ cups cooked brown rice (no salt added)
 - 1 cup spinach
 - ½ cup snow peas
 - ¼ cup sliced mushrooms
 - ⅓ cup seitan strips
 - 2 teaspoons canola oil
 - 1 Tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 large orange
- 1 cup rice or soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 2 2000 calories

Breakfast:

- Smoothie made with
 - 1 medium banana
 - ½ cup strawberries or other seasonal fruit
 - 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
 - ½ cup calcium-enriched tofu
 - 1 Tablespoon maple syrup

Morning Snack:

- 1 whole wheat English muffin
- ½ cup calcium-enriched soymilk
- 1½ Tablespoons almond butter

Lunch:

- Salad made with:
 - ½ cup vegan croutons
 - 1 cup fresh spinach
 - 1 cup red or green leaf lettuce
 - ½ cup raw red pepper slices
 - ¼ cup sliced cucumbers
 - ½ cup garbanzo beans (canned, low-sodium, drained)
- Salad dressing made with:
 - 2 teaspoons olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon vinegar
 - ½ teaspoon vegan sugar

Afternoon Snack:

- 1-ounce bag hard, no-salt pretzels
- ½ cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Dinner:

- 2 whole wheat rolls
- 2 vegan/soy burgers
- 2 slices tomato
- ½ cup cooked couscous
- 1 cup cooked broccoli
- 1 cup chopped cantaloupe or other seasonal fruit

Day 1 2000 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- 1½ Tablespoons peanut butter, no-salt added
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Morning Snack:

- 1 large banana
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Lunch:

- Black beans and rice made with:
 - 1 cup cooked brown rice
 - 1 teaspoon canola oil
 - ½ cup black beans
- 1 medium sweet potato, baked or microwaved
- ½ cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

- 4 whole wheat, low-sodium crackers
- ½ cup sliced carrots

Dinner:

- Pasta with broccoli and chickpeas made with:
 - 1 cup cooked whole wheat pasta
 - 1 cup broccoli, from frozen
 - ¾ cup pasta sauce with 2 teaspoons canola oil
 - ½ cup garbanzo beans, canned, drained
- 1 large apple
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Day 2 2000 calories lower cost

Breakfast:

- Smoothie made with
 - ½ cup frozen berries
 - ½ banana
 - 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12
 - ½ cup calcium-enriched tofu
 - 1 Tablespoon maple syrup

Morning Snack:

- 1 ounce lowfat, unsalted tortilla chips
- ½ cup pinto beans, unsalted, mashed with 1 Tablespoon salsa
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Lunch:

- Pasta with veggies, made with:
 - 1 cup cooked whole wheat pasta
 - ½ cup cooked spinach, from frozen
 - ½ cup cooked carrots, from frozen
 - 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1 cup soymilk, enriched with calcium, and vitamins A, D, E, and B12

Afternoon Snack:

- ½ cup hard, unsalted pretzels
- ½ cup raw celery
- 1 cup orange juice, reconstituted from frozen

Dinner:

- Eggless banana pancakes with:
 - 1 banana
 - ¼ cup rolled oats
 - ¼ cup whole wheat flour
 - 1½ teaspoons baking powder
 - ¾ cup water
 - 1 teaspoon oil
- 1 cup mashed sweet potato or winter squash (cooked from frozen)
- ¼ cup walnuts

Linda Valley Villa

Vegetarian Independent Living by Christine Kasum Sexton, MPH

Linda Valley Villa is an independent living facility for seniors located in Loma Linda, California. The Villa was originally started by a Seventh-day Adventist seeking to provide a suitable vegetarian living facility for older members of the large local Seventh-day Adventist community. Since that time, Linda Valley Villa has been purchased by a different company, but the lacto-ovo vegetarian meals they offer have remained.

About 100 seniors currently reside at the Villa. Dietary Supervisor Eva Ortiz and her staff prepare three meals each day for all the residents. Eva has worked at the Villa for 23 years and says she has never really encountered any problems with providing vegetarian meals. It has not been difficult for her to find vendors for vegetarian foods. These days, according to Ortiz, larger vendors like Sysco are offering more vegetarian or vegan prepared foods and ingredients. While all residents must agree to follow a vegetarian diet, most are drawn to the facility specifically because it offers vegetarian foods. Currently, four residents follow vegan diets, which Eva and her staff cater to by substituting ingredients such as oats, other grains, or nuts for dairy items when necessary. Vegetarian and vegan items

can also be adapted for those needing special meals, including low-sodium and diabetic diets.

Some of the residents' favorite dishes include Oriental Noodles, which are cold fried noodles mixed with stir-fried tofu and a variety of vegetables; 'Chicken' with Dressing, which is fried mock chicken with a vegetarian gravy dressing; and enchiladas, made with either cheese or textured vegetable protein. Eva has come up with some of her own recipes that the residents particularly enjoy, including asparagus patties and mushroom patties. Other entrées that the Villa serves include vegetable casseroles, mock chicken patties or nuggets, pizza, 'chicken' loaves, and herbed vegetable loaves. Vegetable side dishes, a salad bar, beans, sandwiches, and both fresh and canned fruits are always available as well. There are several milk options, including dairy, soy, and almond.

Eva keeps her menus fresh and her residents happy by meeting with them once a month to discuss which menu items they particularly like, and to hear suggestions they might have for changes or additions to the menu.

For more information about Linda Valley Villas, you can contact them at:

(909) 796-7501.
Linda Valley Villas
11075 Benton Street
Loma Linda, CA 92354

Readers: Do you know of any senior facilities, nursing homes, or assisted-living facilities that accommodate vegan and vegetarian diets? Please send the name and address of the facility to us at vrg@vrg.org or P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

“What’s really in this?”

Tips for Obtaining Ingredient Information from Food Companies

 Scour the Web first. Look for an ingredients statement or list for the product. Start at the company's main website. Don't overlook blogs and forums.

 Reserve judgment about what you read on the Web until you get confirmation. Even a company website may need updating. Approach contacting companies like it was a confirmation hearing for ingredients. Don't be confrontational, but be serious in your quest for company transparency about its ingredients.

 If asked why you want to know, state “I'm a vegan and don't consume x, y, and z. I want to know if the product contains x, y, or z or any ingredients derived from x, y, and z.” Be very specific about your personal dietary choices.

 If you receive information that contradicts a company's website or what you received from an email or previous call, ask about the discrepancy in a tactful, neutral manner. Be specific. Provide: URL, name of person asked, date and time. If you find the explanation questionable, ask to speak to someone else or be called back once the issue is investigated to receive the correct information.

 Ask a friend to cross-check. See if someone else gets the same exact answer you did to the same question.

 Email once. Email twice. Try contacting the company on different days of different weeks at different times, but keep wording your question exactly the same way.

 Keep it simple. State one question per call or email in as few words as possible (e.g., “Are the natural flavors in the product derived from meat, eggs, or dairy?”). If it's a packaged good, have a complete product name and, if possible, a SKU number handy.

The Vegetarian Resource Group received a request from a reader who was experiencing difficulty obtaining ingredient information from a large beverage company. He asked us to provide advice about getting accurate answers from corporations. Here are some of our suggestions.

By: VRG Research Director
Jeanne Yacoubou, MS

 Be ready with definitions from our *Guide to Food Ingredients*, which you should read and understand in advance so that you can respond with clarity. Find it online at: www.vrg.org/ingredients/index.php.

 Don't make assumptions. The terms 'vegetarian' and 'vegan' mean varying things to people, so never just ask, “Is the product vegan?” Rather, refer to your specific concern: “Do any of the product's ingredients come from meat, dairy, or eggs?”

 Call once. Call twice. Call on varying days of the week at a variety of times; speak to different people – but keep your question the same.

 Be persistent and follow through! Be empathetic and supportive to the company employee, but keep asking until you are satisfied with the response you get.

 When in doubt, rephrase the question and ask it again in a follow-up call or e-mail to the first response you received (e.g., “Is there anything from animals, including meat or enzymes, or from eggs, or from milk, such as casein or whey, in the natural flavors in the product?”). Make sure you've understood correctly. Listen for inconsistencies or vagueness. Write the responses down. Note the number called, the person asked, the date, and time.

 Go higher. Ask to speak to a supervisor or someone in the quality assurance department. They will know more.

 If you see or hear any contradictions as you conduct your vegan and vegetarian ingredients research, please do not hesitate to let us know at vrg@vrg.org.

Chinese Cooking From a Study Abroad Student by Yasmin Radbod

WHAT IS CHINESE FOOD?

You might have already read a few of my articles about my experiences as a vegan in China (See Issue One 2013 and Issue Two 2013 of *Vegetarian Journal*). One of the highlights of my travels was learning how to cook Chinese food. I traveled to many cities and provinces, tried local cuisines, learned to cook a few dishes from Nanjing and Jiangsu Provinces, explored the vegan options at food markets and street vendors, and ate with Buddhist monks. That being said, I am by no means an expert in Chinese cooking; in this article I simply hope to offer some cooking tips, pointers, and lessons learned.

It's difficult to even put all cuisine in China under one label of 'Chinese food' because there is so much variance and difference in customs and tastes depending on the location and background of the locals. China is huge, and so is its appetite for many spices, flavors, cooking methods, and specialty foods. If you go to Yunnan Province, be prepared to try Yunnan cuisine—lots of root vegetables, breads, and other traditional foods. If you go to Sichuan Province, be ready for its super spicy, oily food. Dongbei is famous for dumplings, and many regions have different types of dumpling styles and stuffing inside them. If you are going to Tibet, for instance, their dumplings are called *momos*, and are unique to Tibetan cuisine.

In addition, what we consider Chinese food is honestly not at all what authentic Chinese food truly is. As a kid, before I became vegan, I always loved to go to the corner Chinese food restaurant and order Moo Goo Gai Pan, Vegetable Lo Mein, egg rolls, dumplings, Szechuan Chicken, and (of course) General Tso's Chicken. It wasn't until I took a course in Asian American History and lived abroad in China that I realized American Chinese cuisine isn't Chinese cuisine. Just remember that if you go to a Chinese restaurant, for example in Nanjing, over half of the foods I listed above will not be on the menu. A lot of the foods on a menu at an American Chinese restaurant have invented names that don't exist in Mandarin, like Moo Goo Gai Pan or Chop Suey. For the record, fortune cookies are an American invention and do not exist in China.

One of my favorite everyday outings in Nanjing was to visit a local food market. Grocery stores similar to American supermarkets are becoming more popular, but

generally speaking, local, outdoor food markets are still the most popular means of buying fresh foods. When I had my own apartment over the winter, I spent a lot of time exploring these food markets. I learned to bargain for vegetables I wanted. I bought different types of grains and experimented when cooking them. I learned to make boiled dumplings through trial and error (and guidance from my professor), and learned how to cook over a hot plate with a wok.

Cooking is different in China. Here's a list of observations and conclusions I made living in China:

- Measurements do not exist. When you cook, you cook based on your knowledge and familiarity with spices. You haphazardly decide how much of an ingredient to use. Maybe you use a pinch of salt, a bit of cinnamon, a handful of broccoli, or a small helping of tofu.
- My pantry for Chinese cooking consists of the following ingredients: star anise, cinnamon, garlic, curry powder, organic soy sauce, sesame oil, vinegar, fresh chilies, soybean oil, cilantro, and ginger. For vegetables, I often cook broccoli, all types of mushrooms, carrots, lotus, bok choy, bamboo shoots, and cabbage.
- I always use fresh spices. I chop up garlic, shred ginger, and use fresh, whole chilies. I can't tell you how many times at a restaurant in China I ate a chunk of ginger thinking it was a vegetable. But the flavor really comes out when using fresh, wholesome spices.
- I have never used a typical non-stick pan when cooking Chinese food. Use a wok! To fry vegetables,



The author traveling to Yangshuo on a bamboo boat.

heat up the pan a little, toss in some spices and oil, and then cook the vegetables with a lid on top of the pan.

- Experiment with different types of tofu! There is such a wide variety. Give yourself a new experience and visit a nearby Asian market or grocery. Try a different type of tofu (knotted, puffed, defatted, etc.) that you have never cooked before. That is how I originally familiarized myself with different types of vegetables, tofu, and gluten. Trial and error is useful and fun.

Fried Lotus with Black Rice

(Serves 2-3)

Lotus is a big, white, eggplant-shaped, root vegetable. It helps to soak it in advance to soften it. Lotus will naturally turn brownish if left out; this is normal and does not mean it has spoiled. Slice it thinly; the inside design of slices will resemble tomato slices. You can purchase lotus root from Asian markets. Some natural foods stores also carry it. If you cannot find it in the fresh produce section, try checking the frozen section of your grocery store. Star anise can also be purchased at Asian food stores. Star anise is actually part of an evergreen tree – the pod to be exact – and is very common in Chinese cooking. It has a very distinct taste, almost like licorice. Just like with the ginger root slices or chilies, star anise is not meant to be eaten raw; it is used only to flavor dishes. Buy black rice or another heartier rice option (brown rice is fine) and either use a rice cooker or boil water to make the rice.

- 1 Tablespoon sesame oil**
- 5 star anises**
- A few slices fresh ginger root**
- 1 Tablespoon curry powder**
- 1 clove fresh garlic, minced**
- 2 dried, whole red chilies**
- 3 green onions, chopped**
- 1 lotus root, sliced**
- 1 cup black or brown rice**
- 2 cups water**
- Soy sauce (optional)**

Heat up your frying pan (or wok) with the sesame oil. Add star anise, fresh ginger slices, curry powder, fresh garlic, fresh chilies, and the green onions. Add the lotus slices, put a lid on the pan, and fry the slices on both sides. The lotus slices will be sticky; this is natural and is part of what makes lotus so unique. After about 10 min-

utes, taste the lotus. If it is not soft enough, let it cook to meet your taste. Some people prefer crunchier lotus.

In a separate pot, add two cups of water to the one cup of rice and cook according to the directions. Serve the lotus slices over the cooked rice, and add soy sauce to flavor the rice (if desired). I often have plain vegan yogurt as my side for this dish.

Note: You can certainly turn this dish into a stir-fry and add any other vegetables of your choice, change the spices, change the grain (substitute with noodles, for example), and add a protein (tofu, seitan, tempeh, etc.).

Total calories per serving: 412 Fat: 10 grams
Carbohydrates: 78 grams Protein: 10 grams
Sodium: 27 milligrams Fiber: 9 grams

Sesame Kale

(Serves 2-3)

This is a healthy and very green side dish! Edward and Sons makes a vegan miso soup mix that is sold in natural foods stores and some supermarkets.

- 1 large bunch kale**
- 1 package vegan miso soup mix**
- 1 Tablespoon low-salt soy sauce**
- 1 Tablespoon fresh sesame seeds**

Prepare the kale by washing and tearing off smaller pieces. The stem is usually hard to chew even when cooked, so don't use that part in this dish.

Boil two cups of water in a pot, then stir in the miso soup mix. Carefully place a steamer inside the pot, covering most of the water. Then add the kale. Make sure to put the lid on the pot as well. If it seems like a lot of kale at first, don't fret. The kale will cook down and become smaller as it steams. Once the kale has softened, remove the kale from the steamer. Let it cool, and after a few minutes add soy sauce to taste and top with the fresh sesame seeds.

You can also use the boiled water for a soup or stew, or even forget the steamer and turn the dish into a kale soup by adding other vegetables of your choosing. Sometimes I let the steamed kale marinate in the soy sauce and refrigerate it to eat later as a cold dish.

Total calories per serving: 131 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 21 grams Protein: 8 grams
Sodium: 388 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

B&B Stir-fry with Udon Noodles

(Serves 2-3)

B&B stands for bean sprouts and bamboo! The great thing about this recipe is that these vegetables cook quickly. Sometimes I try marinating the vegetables in soy sauce before cooking, and sometimes I don't. Marinating in advance can decrease the cooking time and increase flavor. However, if you want to reduce your sodium intake, do not marinate and use the soy sauce sparingly or not at all. Asian markets typically have great selections of hot, chili, and bean sauces that are vegan and tasty additions to this dish.

- 1 Tablespoon canola or vegetable oil**
- 1½ cups bamboo shoots (washed, cut, and drained)**
- 1½ cups bean sprouts**
- ½ cup thinly sliced carrots**
- 1 Tablespoon soy sauce (optional)**
- 1 Tablespoon curry powder**
- Juice from ½ fresh lemon**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 1 Tablespoon hot sauce (optional)**
- One package udon noodles**

Heat your frying pan or wok with the oil, then add the vegetables. The carrots can be added to the stir-fry or used at the end as a raw topping for color and crunch. Add soy sauce (if using), spices, lemon juice, and garlic. If you're on high heat, it should take only 10 minutes for the veggies to cook. Add Chinese hot sauce if you like a kick.

To prepare the udon noodles, depending on how much you want to prepare, add the correct amount of water according to the noodle package directions and bring the water to a boil. One bunch, or strand, that comes in the packages of Asian noodles (there are usually four or five bunches in total) is enough for one person. Add noodles to boiling water and cook for 10-15 minutes until the noodles are soft. Drain the noodles, and serve the stir-fry on top of them, with the carrots, too. You can also serve the hot sauce on the side to dip.

Total calories per serving: 334 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 55 grams Protein: 13 grams
Sodium: 31 milligrams Fiber: 6 grams



The author at Temple of Heaven in Beijing.

What's on the Cover?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 star anise | 5 lotus root |
| 2 bamboo | 6 curry powder |
| 3 black rice | 7 bean sprouts |
| 4 sesame seeds | 8 red chillies |



Quick & Easy Dishes for Seniors

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD

Cooking often translates into caring, especially for our seniors, whether it be yourself, relatives, friends, or neighbors. We need to think of nourishing, comforting, possibly calorie- and nutrient-dense foods, as well as texture, color, taste and temperature, and of course, personal preference!

It's best to generalize some ingredients to have prepared as a base that can then be modified for individual taste. Once the potatoes or rice are steamed, for example, we can go on to build nourishing and comforting senior meals.

Potatoes

Bake an extra white potato to keep in the refrigerator. It can be quickly reheated and cut into a favorite soup or broth or topped with some savory mushrooms (canned mushrooms tossed with a bit of vegan margarine or sour cream and chopped herbs of choice).

A pre-baked potato can be quickly heated in the microwave or oven and then mashed with several spoonfuls of broth or soup, or topped with vegan sour cream or shredded vegan cheese.

A baked yam can be a hearty breakfast, served with some sliced fruit or applesauce. Mash a baked yam with a dash of orange or pineapple juice and top with a small amount of sorbet or soy yogurt. If you have ripe bananas in the house, you can mash a yam with a banana for a hot or cold breakfast or dessert, topped with raisins, sliced prunes, or other dried fruit.

Soups

When you don't have the time to create soups from scratch, 'speed-scratch' some wonderful soup meals. Canned or frozen lentil soup mixed with a bit of tomato paste and served with a warm whole wheat roll, whole wheat toast, or a small amount of baked or mashed potato makes a cozy meal. This works with split pea soup as well; in fact, split pea soup flavored with tomato is a classic French soup, called 'Purée Mogole!'

Vegetable soups can be thickened with mashed

potatoes. If you have the time, you can tear whole wheat bread (remove the crusts) into very small pieces, stirring the bread very slowly into the soup until the bread dissolves. You'll have a thick, mild soup that is easy to swallow. This 'chef's tip' is used in many cuisines around the world.

Hot Cereals Plus

Many people like to start (or end) their day with a nice bowl of hot cereal. You can add in warmed soy or rice milk, chopped dried fruit (cooking the fruit in with the cereal helps to soften the fruit), warmed applesauce, or even stir in a small amount of apple butter.

If you have some extra cooked rice, you can turn that into a hot cereal/rice pudding by heating it with enough soymilk, vanilla soy or rice milk, or almond milk to make the rice have a soupy consistency. For extra sweetness, stir in a bit of maple syrup and/or raisins while cooking. For extra flavor, stir in ground cinnamon and vanilla extract or powdered ginger.

Some cereal grains, such as grits, cornmeal mush, barley, or kasha, lend themselves to both sweet and savory. For the morning, we can add in maple syrup; sliced raw, baked or stewed apples; canned or dried apricots; chopped nuts; or fruit preserves. In the evening, we can add in a small amount of chopped, steamed, or sautéed onions, fresh or dried parsley, melted vegan margarine, nutritional yeast, or shredded vegan cheese.



VEGAN guide to *Leather* ALTERNATIVES

The Vegetarian Resource Group has updated our *Guide to Leather Alternatives*. See: <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/leather.php> or order it online at <http://www.vrg.org/catalog>. If you're already vegan or simply trying to eliminate the use of animal products in your life, this guide will be very useful for you. Here is a sampling of items you'll find listed:

IPAD OR LAPTOP CASES

English Retreads offers sleeves for your Ipad or laptop (13- or 15-inch) made from recycled and reclaimed materials. Visit www.englishretreads.com and search under the word vegan.

TOOL BELT

Nailers Inc. offers a non-leather tool belt made from Dupont Cordura. Visit www.nailersinc.com for more information.

MOTORCYCLE GLOVES

If you ride a motorcycle and want to purchase vegan gloves, **Aerostich** offers two types of vegan gloves at www.aerostich.com. Search under the word vegan.

WEIGHTLIFTING GLOVES

If you're into weightlifting and are searching for vegan gloves visit **New Grip** at www.newgrip.com and you'll find gloves made from neoprene.

BALLET SLIPPERS

Cynthia King Dance Studio sells vegan ballet slippers for both children and adults in three colors: black, peach/pink, and pastel pink. Visit their website: www.cynthiakingdance.com or call their Brooklyn, New York location at (718) 437-0101.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING SHOES

Evolve Sports & Designs offers several non-leather climbing shoes for adults and children. Visit www.evolveports.com, navigate to climbing shoes, and then carefully read the specs for each shoe to find a pair without leather or other animal product. You can also call their California location at (714) 522-5556.



13-inch laptop sleeve made from reclaimed rubber inner tubes by English Retreads. \$49



Women's Cruiser Climbing Shoe from Evolv \$74.95



Ballet Shoes from Cynthia King Dance Studio. \$24.95



The Dennis Shoes from Novacas. \$165 at MooShoes.



Showdown Backpack by Timbuk2 \$99 from Herbivore



Stewart Stand wallet \$69.95 from Boulder for Men



Fan Belt Luxe \$34 by English Retreads



Blake Bag by Matt & Nat \$98 from MooShoes



Paz Senhora Faux Leather Gloves \$59 from Karmavore



Brooklyn Pump by Madden Girl \$45 from MooShoes



Annabelle Boot by Novacas \$229.95 from MooShoes

Visit these vegan shops in person. They sell leather alternatives to shoes, belts, bags, and more!

Alternative Outfitters Showroom in Pasadena, CA; limited hours; call (626) 396-4972 for appointment.

Boulder for Men in Clarksville, MD; www.boulder4men.com or call (443) 535-9449.

Ethique Nouveau in Minneapolis, MN; www.ethiquenouveau.com or call (612) 822-6161.

Herbivore Clothing in Portland, OR; www.herbivoreclothing.com or call (503) 281-8638.

Karmavore in New Westminster, BC, Canada; www.karmavore.ca or call (604) 527-4212.

MooShoes in New York City, NY; www.mooshoes.com or call (866) 598-3426.

Nice Shoes in Vancouver, BC, Canada; visit www.gotniceshoes.com or call (604) 558-3000.

Oly Vegan in Olympia, OR; visit <http://olyvegan.tumblr.com> or call (360) 500-0900.

Pangea in Rockville, MD; store open on weekends; visit www.veganstore.com or call (301) 816-9300.

Sudo Shoes in Cambridge, MA; visit www.sudoshoes.com or call (617) 354-1771.

Vegan Haven in Seattle, WA; www.veganhaven.org or call (206) 523-9060.

Viva La Vegan Grocery in Rancho Cucamonga, CA; www.shophumanitaire.com or call (909) 942-4495.

VShoen in Victoria, BC, Canada; visit www.vshoen.com or call (250) 590-7463.

News from the Sixth International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition

This past February, I was privileged to attend the 6th International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition at Loma Linda University. The three-day congress featured the most current scientific information related to vegetarian nutrition. More than 900 researchers, experts, and advocates of plant-based diets representing over 30 countries attended this congress. I'll be including more information from the congress in upcoming issues of *Vegetarian Journal* and on VRG's blog. Here is a sample of some of the findings that were presented:

- In a large study of Seventh-day Adventists, vegans, lacto-ovo vegetarians, and fish-eaters had a lower risk of thyroid disease than meat eaters.
- Vegetarian diets, especially vegan diets, have markedly lower carbon footprints and result in less greenhouse gas production than do non-vegetarian diets.
- Vegans in the Adventist Health Study had the lowest risk of metabolic syndrome, the name for a group of risk factors that raises risk for heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.
- Female vegetarian students at Loma Linda University did not have a higher risk of eating disorders than did non-vegetarian students.
- A vitamin B12-fortified toothpaste used daily for 5 weeks improved vitamin B12 status in vegans and vegetarians.
- A plant-based diet to combat diabetes was found to be acceptable by Navajo Nation participants.
- Fewer calories appear to be available from nuts than calorie charts indicate. There are several possible explanations for this; one may be that nuts are often incompletely chewed and therefore are not completely digested.
- India's obesity epidemic exceeds that of the U.S.; many factors were identified that have led to the high obesity rates, including rapid urbanization and a move away from traditional, faith-based vegetarian diets.

How do Health and Ethical Vegetarians Differ?

There are many reasons for choosing to be vegetarian. Some people are primarily motivated by their own health; some are vegetarian for the animals; some cite environmental concerns as their main motivation. These different motivations may affect how long people continue to follow vegetarian diets, how much they know about nutrition, and the magnitude of their conviction that vegetarianism is an important part of their life. Researchers surveyed 292 vegetarians. Those who said that their primary motivation for following a vegetarian diet was for health or weight loss were categorized as 'health vegetarians.' Those whose primary motivation was animal rights, ethics, the environment, world hunger, or spiritual or religious beliefs were categorized as 'ethical vegetarians.'

In this study, vegans and vegetarians were grouped together as 'vegetarians.' Some differences were seen between health vegetarians and ethical vegetarians. Ethical vegetarians scored higher on measures of conviction and were more likely to believe that vegetarianism is right for everyone and that vegetarianism is an important part of their personality. The groups were similar in their belief that vegetarianism is right for them as individuals. Nutrition knowledge, both of general and of vegetarian nutrition, was similar between the two groups. Study subjects who originally became vegetarian for ethical reasons had been vegetarian for significantly longer than subjects who became vegetarian for health related reasons. In contrast, The Vegetarian Resource Group found no difference in the rate of staying vegetarian for at least three years and being primarily motivated by health reasons versus being motivated by ethical reasons (http://www.vrg.org/research/retention_survey_2009.php).

Hoffman SR, Stallings SF, Bessinger RC, Brooks GT. 2013. Differences between health and ethical vegetarians. Strength of conviction, nutrition knowledge, dietary restriction, and duration of adherence. *Appetite* [Epub ahead of print]

Lower Heart Disease Risk

A recent large study from the UK examined close to 45,000 men and women; about a third were vegetarian. Subjects' diets were tracked for an average of 12 years. Some subjects also had their blood pressure and blood cholesterol measured. Over the follow-up period, there were 169 deaths from heart disease, and over 1000 hospitalizations related to heart disease (heart attack, angina, or other problems). Vegetarians had a 32% lower risk of having heart disease than those who eat meat or fish. This lower risk may be due in part to the lower blood pressure, lower BMI, and lower blood cholesterol concentrations seen in the vegetarians. This study, along with others with similar results, supports the importance of a vegetarian diet in reducing the risk of being hospitalized for or dying from heart disease.

Crowe FL, Appleby PN, Travis RC, Key TJ. 2013. Risk of hospitalization or death from ischemic heart disease among British vegetarians and nonvegetarians: results from the EPIC-Oxford cohort study. *Am J Clin Nutr* 97(3):597-603.

Vegetarians and Vitamin B12

Two recent reports have provided evidence that vegetarians need to be more aware of vitamin B12. The first report was based on identifying published studies from the last 22 years that measured vitamin B12 status in vegetarians. A total of 12 accurate studies of adults from different countries were found. Depending on who was studied and what measurements were used, from 11% to 90% of vegetarians, including vegans, lacto vegetarians and lacto-ovo vegetarians, were identified as B12 deficient¹. These results suggest that not all vegetarians are aware of the importance of fortified foods or B12 supplements to ensure adequate B12 consumption.

The second report looked at homocysteine levels in vegetarian and non-vegetarian blood. Vitamin B12 is involved in the metabolism of homocysteine. When someone lacks enough vitamin B12 for homocysteine to be properly metabolized, blood homocysteine levels are high, which means they are associated with an increased risk of heart disease. The researchers who did this study compiled data on homocysteine levels from many studies and found that vegans had the highest homocysteine levels, followed by lacto-ovo and lacto vegetarians. Non-vegetarians had the lowest homocysteine levels. Blood vitamin B12 was just the opposite – vegans were lowest, then lacto and lacto-ovo vegetarians, then non-vegetarians². Most people in these studies were not

using vitamin B12 supplements or eating fortified foods. The one study where vegans and nonvegetarians had similar levels of homocysteine and vitamin B12 was one where many vegans did use supplements and fortified foods.

1. Pawlak R, Parrott SJ, Raj S, Cullum-Dugan D, Lucus D. 2013. How prevalent is vitamin B(12) deficiency among vegetarians? *Nutr Rev* 71(2):110-17.
2. Obersby D, Chappell DC, Dunnett A, Tsiami AA. 2013. Plasma total homocysteine status of vegetarians compared with omnivores: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Br J Nutr* 109(5):785-94.

Eating Vegetables Reduces the Risk of ER- Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in U.S. women. About one out of eight women will be diagnosed. To decrease the occurrence of breast cancer, it is important to identify changeable risk factors. Estrogen receptor negative (ER-) breast cancer accounts for 15-20% of breast cancers and is more common in African American and Asian women. This type of breast cancer has few known risk factors that can be modified and has a lower 5-year survival rate than estrogen receptor positive (ER+) breast cancer. A recent study provided insight into one possible means of reducing risk of this kind of breast cancer: eating vegetables. The study included close to 100,000 women who were followed for many years. Overall, women who developed any form of breast cancer or who developed ER+ breast cancer did not seem to differ from women who did not develop breast cancer in terms of their dietary intakes of fruits and vegetables. Women who ate the most vegetables and fruits had a lower risk of ER- breast cancer when compared to women who ate the lowest amount of these foods. Vegetable consumption appeared to be more important than fruit in reducing risk of this cancer. Women who ate close to a pound of vegetables per day had about a 15% lower risk of developing ER- breast cancer compared to women eating less than 7 ounces of vegetables daily. Women cannot predict if they will get breast cancer, or what type, but eating more vegetables seems like a simple thing to do to reduce the risk of ER- breast cancer.

Jung S, Spiegelman D, Baglietto L, et al. 2013. Fruit and vegetable intake and risk of breast cancer by hormone receptor status. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 105(3):219-36.

Vegan Vietnamese Dinner in Houston, Texas

The Vegetarian Resource Group will host a vegan dinner during the annual meeting of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The restaurant is walking distance to the Convention Center. Dietitians, local VRG members, and the public are welcome. VRG's Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels and VRG staff will participate in a discussion.

Menu:

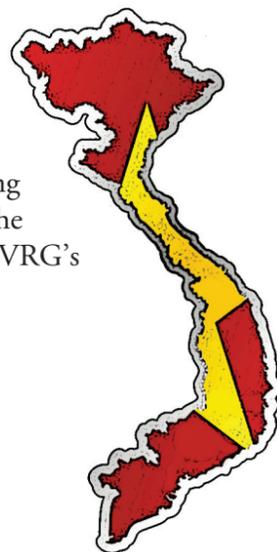
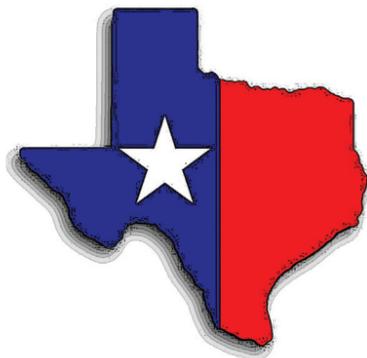
- Spring rolls with tofu
- Vegetable Noodle Soup with rice noodles, tofu, and vegetables including squash, portabella mushrooms, and bok choy
- Vermicelli with Lemongrass
- Yellow Curry with cauliflower, green beans, carrots, and potatoes
- Stir-Fried Tofu with tomatoes, onions, and bell peppers
- Rice
- Tea

Where: Cafe TH, 2108 Pease Street, Houston, TX

When: Sunday, October 20, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Cost: \$25 per person by September 1, 2013
Includes tax and tip.

Menu subject to change. Please reserve early as seating is limited. Send \$25 per person to The Vegetarian Resource Group, PO Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. Pay at www.vrg.org/donate and write in 'Th Dinner' and the attendees' names in the notes. Or call (410) 366-8343 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern time (Monday to Friday) to pay with a credit card. Refunds will be given only if we can replace your seat.



NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS (continued from page 4)

The same would apply to vegetarianism. If you want to be totally strict, of course only eat in vegan or vegetarian restaurants. You can look for these by visiting www.vrg.org/restaurant or other vegetarian websites. Thank you to Brad Scott and Heather Gorn for creating our current vegetarian restaurant online database and Sonja Helman for maintaining the information. If you are not eating in a veggie restaurant, to be the most strict, it probably makes sense to eat minimally processed foods.

In the document written by Rabbi Plotkin, it's indicated that on many questions of Jewish law, there is often a continuum ranging from the lenient position to the stringent position. While compromises may not be (lawfully) valid, "They are better than those who observe nothing or are antagonistic to the very concept... While a partial observance is better than no observance, we should never mistake the compromise as an acceptable alternative to the rules... We should encourage the practitioners to see what they are doing as being transitional on the way to a fuller observance... Our movement has an obligation to help those making compromise decisions do so as informed choices. It is hoped this paper will aid in educating them on the many issues involved, so as to make a more informed decision as they ascend the ladder of holiness," Plotkin wrote. "The same cannot be said, however, for our institutions... Since their practices will be emulated, they must always fully observe" the law.

We know that various vegetarians/vegans will practice differently and have different beliefs. For example, see our surveys at www.vrg.org/poll. If you don't eat meat, fish or poultry, and also abstain from dairy and eggs in the case of vegans, it's not another's role to judge if someone else is really vegetarian, vegan or not. However, institutions such as food manufacturers and vegan restaurants should be as strict as possible. There's a constant discussion and reassessment of what's practical and what is holding to high standards.

Rabbi Plotkin wrote, "Some have asked why we need" a discussion at all on this subject "since it is clear that no one's life will end from not having pizza, but in our communal lives there may be occasions when the ability to eat hot pizza will be of great assistance to a constituent group..."

He added that, "...in addition to the halakhic (religious law) limitations acknowledged and accepted in this paper, there is a very tangible benefit to maintaining the standard of only eating in kosher facilities. First, it has a positive sociological effect on our community by establishing yet another institution (i.e. kosher restaurants) where Jews meet each other and interact as observant Jews. Furthermore, if more Conservative Jews did not have the easy option of eating anywhere, they would form a significant consumer base that would spur the opening of many more kosher restaurants. This would have an immeasurable effect on strengthening a Conservative Jewish community."

Certainly all this applies to vegetarians. Eating only in vegetarian and vegan restaurants means more vegetarian and vegan restaurants and a place for us to gather. But on the other hand, in the United States there are very few places where businesses could survive without being patronized by non-vegetarians. Most people would not be vegetarian or vegan if they could only eat in vegan restaurants. And the more we eat in non-vegetarian restaurants, the more veggie options there will be offered, and more people will find it easier to be vegetarian or try being vegetarian. However, if you want to be 100% sure you are being pure, eating in a non-vegetarian restaurant is unlikely to work. Utensils aside, Rabbi Plotkin points out the example of three upscale pizzerias in Chicago that use lard in their dough. In Baltimore, we were highly disappointed several years ago when we learned that a local pizzeria with cheeseless pizza on the menu (so seemingly vegan) had lard in their dough. So each side has valid points, and you have to do what makes the most sense for your beliefs and lifestyle, remembering that vegetarianism is not a religion, but part of putting your other beliefs into practice on a daily basis.

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stabler

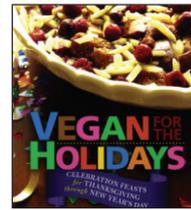
Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

Bequests

The VRG depends on the generous contributions of our members and supporters to continue our educational projects. Though the world may not become vegetarian 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, IRAs, 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.

VEGAN FOR THE HOLIDAYS
By Zel Allen



Zel Allen is a regular contributor to *Vegetarian Journal* and has written *Vegan for the Holidays*. You'll find recipes for feasts between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day and ideas that will help you entertain during this holiday season.

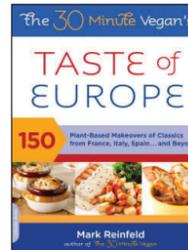
For Thanksgiving, consider serving Zel's Stuffed Tomatoes with Edamame Paté, Savory Chestnut and Fruit Stuffing, Pistachio and Sweet Pea Torte with Roasted-Tomato Aioli, or Pumpkin-Apple Nog.

During Christmas, your guests would enjoy dining on Pear and Butternut Bisque with Cranberry-Pear Compote, Wild Rice and Chestnut Pilaf, Garlicky Roasted Cauliflower, and Almond Thumb-print Cuties (cookies). If you're celebrating Chanukah, consider making these creative dishes: Horseradish Cole-slaw, Beet Latkes, and Pear Walnut compote with Choco-Wafers.

For Kwanzaa you can prepare Curried Pumpkin-Peanut Soup, Jamaican Jerk Tofu, Mustard Greens with Tempeh Bacon, and Sweet Potato Pie with Cashew-Ginger Cream. Finally, to bring in the New Year offer friends and family Barn-Burner Chili, Hot Spiced Cranberry Punch, Cinnamon-Peanut Butter Torte, and Chewy Ginger Cookies.

***Vegan for the Holidays* (ISBN 978-1-57067-284-2) is 154 pages. It is published by Book Publishing Company and retails for \$19.95. You can purchase this book from The Vegetarian Resource Group online at www.vrg.org/catalog. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

TASTE OF EUROPE
By Mark Reinfeld



Taste of Europe serves up 150 vegan makeovers of classic European dishes. Part 1 focuses on Italian cuisine, including Fire-Roasted Minestrone, Radicchio and Endive with Shaved Fennel and Italian Vinaigrette, and Broccoli Rabe with Garlic and Red Pepper.

Part 2 focuses on French cuisine. Enjoy Bouillabaisse, Pommes Frites, Asparagus Hollandaise, Quiche Monet, and Lavender-Infused Cocoa-Dusted Truffles. Part 3 highlights Spain and Portugal. You can prepare Artichoke Heart and Saffron Paella and Chocolate-Stuffed Figs.

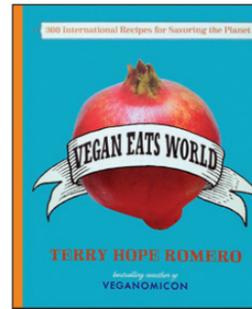
Dishes from the UK and Ireland found in Part 4 include Irish Stew, Parsnip Colcannon, Scottish Crumpets, Irish Soda Bread, Welsh Rarebit, and English Custard. Greek dishes in Part 5 include Gyros, Spanikopita Triangles, and Greek Halvah.

Part 6 features German cuisine such as Beer-Braised Greens, German Potato Salad, Tempeh Sauerbraten, and Black Forest Parfait. Finally, Part 7 is titled Europe Fusion and includes Potato Pierogi, Polish Kielbasa Soup, Finnish Aland Pancakes, and Swiss Chocolate Fondue.

A section called Vegan Wine and Beer Pairing is provided. You'll also find color photos. Nutritional analyses are not provided; however, most recipes appear not to be high in fat.

***Taste of Europe* (ISBN 978-0-7382-1433-7) is a 292-page book. It is published by Da Capo Press and retails for \$18.99. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

VEGAN EATS WORLD
By Terry Hope Romero



This book offers 300 international recipes and a wealth of information, including kitchen tips for tofu pressing and knife handling, and a chapter on how to make your own authentic spice blends. It presents quick-reference shopping lists by ethnic region, for a handy reminder of which cultures utilize which spices, oils, and vinegars the most.

Hope includes a chapter on how to turn tofu, seitan, and tempeh into wonderful meatless chameleons to fit seamlessly into a variety of ethnic cuisines.

Creative recipes include Pumpkin Seed Mole Dip, Pickled Red Onions, African Baked Tofu Marinade, Chorizo Tempeh Crumbles, Spicy Kale Coconut Relish, and Sweet and Savory Jack-fruit Carnita Tacos.

Soothing soups include Masala Potato Soup and Sauerkraut Mushroom Soup. Other hearty dishes featured are Jamaican Plantain and Pumpkin Curry, Tofu and Potato Adobo Stew, and Lebanese Mous-saka Stew.

Recipes are provided for side dishes, dumplings, breads, pancakes, noodle and rice dishes, and desserts like Walnut Spice Sticky Cake and Pumpkin Churros.

***Vegan Eats World* (ISBN 978-0-7382-1486-3) is a hardcover book published by Lifelong Books. You can purchase this book online or at your favorite local bookstore. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

FRESH FROM THE VEGAN SLOW COOKER
By Robin Robertson



If you're already an avid user of slow cookers or want to learn how to use one, this new cookbook offers over 200 creative vegan recipes. Gluten-free and soy-free dishes are included.

For breakfast, you can start your day off with Overnight Apple-Cinnamon Oatmeal or Pumpkin Breakfast Quinoa. Snacks and appetizers include Spicy Tomato Queso Dip, Seven-Spice Cashews, and Chickpea, Artichoke, and Mushroom Pâté.

Sample a wide variety of soups, including North African Chickpea Soup, Slow-Cooker Pho, Red Bean Gumbo, and Chipotle Corn Chowder. You can also prepare chili and stew, including Cornbread-Topped Chili, Seitan Stroganoff, and Creole-Style Jambalaya.

Many people have prepared beans in a slow cooker. This book offers creative bean dishes like Artichoke Risotto and Greek-Style Beans with Tomatoes or Spinach. Other entrée suggestions include Seitan Pot Roast, Mac and Cheesy, Chili-Potato Gratin, and Ethiopian-Style Tempeh and Lentils.

Try the Chestnut-and Apple-Stuffed Squash or Stuffed Collard Rolls in a slow cooker. Other vegetable dishes include Citrus-Braised Beets, Sicilian-Style Cauliflower, and Scalloped Potatoes.

Finally, you can prepare desserts in a slow cooker like Piña Colada Cake, Apricot Tapioca Pudding, and Banana Brown Betty.

***Fresh from the Vegan Slow Cooker* (ISBN 978-1-55832-790-0) is a 324-page book. It is published by The Harvard Common Press and retails for \$16.95. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

THE KARMA CHOW ULTIMATE COOKBOOK
By Melissa Costello



This vegan cookbook contains creative recipes and gorgeous color photos that will certainly entice you to begin cooking. Start your day with Tempeh Sausage Patties, Banana Chia Pancakes with Coconut Crème Sauce, or Pumpkin Pie Waffles.

The Kickin' Edamame Dip and Sunflower Seed Pâté will liven up any party. And the soup and stew recipes such as Garlicky White Bean and Kale Soup and Indian-Spiced Coconut Yam Soup will soothe your tummy on a chilly day.

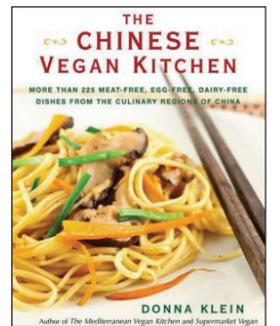
If salad is your cup of tea, try Wild Rice Salad with Balsamic Maple Dressing or Quinoa and Strawberry Salad with Lime Vinaigrette. For a main course, you can prepare Baja-Style Fajitas or Baked Ziti with Spinach. On the side you can add Maple Miso Brussels Sprouts, Creamy Tahini Kale, or Cilantro Cauliflower Mash.

Finally, end your day with one of these desserts: Cardamom-Scented Chocolate Chippers, Luscious Limey "Cheese" Cake, or Baked Coconut Ginger Millet Pudding. Please note that nutritional analyses are not

provided and some of the recipes are high in fat.

***The Karma Chow Ultimate Cookbook* (ISBN 978-0-7573-1633-3) is a 242-page book. It is published by Health Communications, Inc. and retails for \$18.95. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

THE CHINESE VEGAN KITCHEN
By Donna Klein



Donna Klein had the opportunity to live in China for one year and has compiled a collection of vegan Chinese dishes. Nutritional analyses are provided as well as a glossary of ingredients.

Readers will enjoy the 225 plus vegan recipes in this book, including Hunan-Style Spicy Pickled Chinese Cabbage, Baked Vegetable Eggless Egg Rolls, Scallion Pancakes, Spinach Wonton Soup, Cold Rice Noodles with Napa Cabbage in Sesame-Peanut Sauce, Sticky Rice with Five-Spice Tofu and Scallions, Sichuan-Style Lo Mein with Sesame and Garlic, Kung Pao Tofu with Dried Chilies, Curried Seitan with Potatoes and Onions, Grilled Baby Bok Choy with Orange Sauce, Chinese Five-Spice Fruit Salad, and Caramel Bananas.

***The Chinese Vegan Kitchen* (ISBN 978-0-399-53770-7) is a 204-page book. It is published by Penguin Group and retails for \$18.95. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

Help Create a Veggie World

SOREN, VOLUNTEER

High school VRG volunteer Soren became a vegetarian as an eight-year-old third grader due to peer pressure, as all the other kids in his classes were trying out vegetarianism. The rest of his family ate animal products, but his parents were supportive. Today, only Soren and one other girl in that third-grade class are still vegetarian. In seventh grade, in order to fulfill service learning requirements for school, Soren came on his scooter each day to volunteer at The Vegetarian Resource Group office. Then, in his senior year of high school, having already completed most of his required courses, and while taking a course at a local college, Soren volunteered during some school mornings. "Rather than unnecessary high school courses that don't interest me, I'd rather do something I'm passionate for," he said.

Some of Soren's VRG tasks have included translating articles into Spanish (he plans on volunteering as an English teacher in Mexico before going to college full time), writing a restaurant review and product description for our blog, and assisting with the thousands of clerical tasks around the office.

Thanks so much to Soren for all his help and his passion for making a better world.



HEATHER, VOLUNTEER

Heather has volunteered for The Vegetarian Resource Group through high school, college, graduate school, and beyond. She now coordinates our VRG blog. "VRG serves as not only a resource for providing reliable, fact-based information about vegetarianism, but also as a platform through which people can contribute their individual skills towards the common goal of promoting vegetarianism," she said. "The way in which this goal is accomplished is perhaps the greatest reason I have been with the group for so long; their commitment to respect and nonviolence extends to how they treat everyone, whether it's a co-worker or a nutritionist at McDonald's. VRG has chosen to work with organizations, government agencies, and individuals instead of against them, and the results, which have been tremendous, speak for themselves."

Thanks, Heather, for your dedication. See our blog at: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/TheVRGBlog>

OUTREACH TO DIETETIC STUDENTS

We exhibited at the United States Department of Agriculture Library where the University of Maryland hosted a session for 70 nutrition interns. Almost every intern came by the booth and picked up a copy of *Vegetarian Journal*. Several students from one school told us they will try going vegan for a week.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER? Please e-mail your times of availability, interests, skills, and resumé to vrg@vrg.org, or call (410) 366-8343.

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veggie bits

Yonanas

Each year when VRG exhibited at Natural Products Expo West, we looked forward to visiting The Stand in Laguna Beach, California. This casual restaurant, not too far from the ocean with only outdoor seating and takeout, featured many vegan dishes, but the highlight was always their dessert, consisting of frozen bananas put through a machine that produced a cold and creamy vegan ice cream with no added sugar or fat. We also sampled similar desserts at the Yabba Pot in Baltimore and the Bashful Banana on the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey. These frozen treats make great healthy snacks for kids. The company Yonanas has now created a home version of the machine that can turn cut up frozen bananas into a quick frozen dessert. Though you can use other frozen fruit for flavoring, bananas work best as a base. The machine is very easy to clean. It can be a little hard to take apart until the machine thaws out, but hot water helps. The manufacturer suggests not tightening it too tight. Typically, we're not into fancy devices, but we used this relatively inexpensive machine about 30 times and it still works well. Yonanas can be ordered at <http://www.yonanas.com>. *Written by Charles Stahler*



Donate Your Vehicle to Support the Vegetarian Resource Group

There's a free, convenient service for converting that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefiting The Vegetarian Resource Group. You can donate online or call (877) 999-8322 to make your donation. See: <http://www.v-dac.com/org?id=521279034>

Combined Federal Campaign

We've been approved again this year to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign, which is a way to donate to charities through federal employees' workplaces. If you are a federal or military employee, please contribute to vegetarian education and outreach by selecting The Vegetarian Resource Group for payroll deduction. You can also donate through some state and company campaigns. If you work for a private employer, many companies will match your donation to charities such as The Vegetarian Resource Group. Thanks for your support.

A Falafel in a Chip

I had the opportunity to try Flamous Brands' Falafel Chips at the Natural Products Expo East. They are vegan, gluten-free and really live up to the Middle Eastern name. I opted for the Spicy flavor, and was not hit full-force with spice like I was expecting; it was a buildable spice level. It tasted a lot like falafel, with all the same familiar seasonings and chickpea taste, though a tad saltier and spicier than normal. The cumin was the strongest flavor of the ingredients, but was played off nicely by the cayenne. The Original flavor tastes more like a traditional falafel, without the spicy burn of the cayenne.

I was pleasantly surprised by the Falafel Chips nutrition facts: all organic ingredients, four grams of fiber and protein, and even 16% of your daily iron in one serving. I was sold. Visit <http://www.falafelchips.com> or call (626) 551-3201 to find where Falafel Chips are sold near you. *Written by Valerie Shore.*



Vegan Versions, Candy Classics

If you've ever had a hankering for your non-vegan candy bars of old, crave no more: Go Max Go! makes vegan candy bars that are even better than those old favorites. Fans of peanut butter cups will love the Cleo's version, a creamy peanut butter filling encapsulated by sweet rice milk chocolate. On the tropical side, Mahalo is a toasted coconut-and-almond combination that's heaven for your taste buds, the dry roasted almonds providing the perfect crunch. Fans of nougat will enjoy the Twilight, Jokerz, or Buccaneer bars. The Jokerz bar especially takes it to the next level, combining caramel, nougat, chocolate, and peanuts to satisfy your sweet tooth. All the candy bars are dairy-free, egg-free, cholesterol-free, and contain no artificial ingredients, trans fats, or hydrogenated oils. The Mahalo, Cleo's, Thumbs Up, and SNAP! are gluten free. Find where Go Max Go! candy bars are sold on their website, www.gomaxgofoods.com, or e-mail info@gomaxgofoods.com. *Written by Valerie Shore, VRG Intern.*



Vegetarian Action

MooShoes by Rebecca Kaplan

Vegetarianism has never looked as stylish as it does at MooShoes, a store located at 78 Orchard Street, New York, NY 10002. For 11 years, sisters Erica and Sara Kubersky have been helping to clothe New Yorkers with vegan shoes, belts, and jackets. Inspired by the store Vegetarian Shoes in London, but unable to find anywhere near the quality or amount of vegetarian footwear on this side of the Atlantic, the sisters decided to help normalize ethical shoes by opening their own store, which they did in 2001. MooShoes has grown into a bustling enterprise, with hundreds of styles of shoes available for sale on its website, compared to only 25 options when they first opened.

Erica and her sister became vegetarian and later vegan at a young age after seeing a cow. Once they learned that leather came from animals, they both stopped wearing leather, and soon discovered that it was difficult to find shoes to wear. "I just made my family crazy trying to seek out things," she said. She and her sister dreamed of opening a store where New Yorkers could find a higher caliber of non-leather shoes, ones that weren't non-leather simply because they were cheaper to make, but also because it was ethical. In those days, Erica says she wore mostly canvas shoes, or cheap plastic alternatives, which "weren't very comfortable, and definitely not that stylish." She adds, "My feet were cold most winters."

The idea for turning their fantasy into a reality clicked when they discovered Vegetarian Shoes in England. "We actually got to visit it a few years before we opened MooShoes, and it was just like, ahh, to walk into a real store and not to have to look through everything just to find the one thing you could wear. Just to go into a store and not have to ask any questions." Employees at Moo Shoes are prepared to answer questions about their products, including explaining

the philosophy behind going leather-free. It's not just about animal cruelty; leather alternatives are better for the planet, too. "There's a lot of information out there that says leather is more durable, more sustainable," Erica says, "but there are so many facts against those things. Leather is one of the least sustainable products out there. [...] The whole process [of tanning leather] is terrible for the environment."

Those who don't live in close proximity to MooShoes in New York can find the same non-leather styles at MooShoes online. Or, put in a request that your local shoe store start carrying vegan products. Erica says, "There are so many brands that have opened up in the last few months. We sell lots of brands, including some more mainstream that have leather and non-leather lines." She says, "Personally, my favorite companies are the ones that are all-vegan and I think those are the ones you should go out of the way to support whenever possible."

Vegan shoe stores have been spreading across the country. "If you search it out, I think they are there," Erica says. But if you do not live near a store dedicated to non-leather footwear, she emphasized that the best way to get more vegan shoes is to spread the word and increase the demand. "When we first opened we'd go to shoe shows and we'd say, 'We want vegan shoes,' and people would look at us like we had 10 heads. But now when you go to shoe shows, everyone knows what a vegan shoe is. So I think just keep demanding it and people will provide it."

What's Erica's dream shoe? "Both my sister and I have pretty simple taste," she says. "I guess I'm always on the lookout for the perfect worn-in leather-looking boot. That's something I would like to see someday."

MooShoes is located on the Lower East Side of New York City. You can also shop online at mooshoes.com



Sara and Erica Kubersky: sisters, vegans, and co-owners of MooShoes.

Rebecca Kaplan is a Vegetarian Resource Group volunteer.



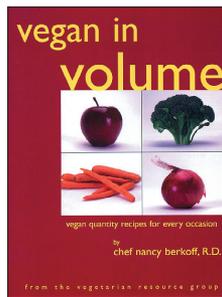
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Vegan in Volume Updated

VRG's *Vegan in Volume* (272 pages) by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, is for anybody who wants to make vegetarian food in quantity. Most recipes serve 25. Included are A Fast Course In Vegan Nutrition and Vegan Ingredients, Cooking For Kids, Elegant Dining, Holiday Hints, Menus and Recipes for Special Occasions, Cooking For College Students, Grab and Go Fast Foods, Un-Hospital Food, Menus and Recipes For Seniors, Garnishes, Food Safety, Weights and Measures, and other Food Service Resources.



Thank you to the Humane Society of the United States, which gave the book to more than 1,000 food services. If you would like to support giving *Vegan in Volume* to more food service staff, please send donations (retail cost of the book is \$20) to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203 or go to www.vrg.org/donate.



BEHIND THE SCENES: Jessica Chakraborty and Amy Longard, students at the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City assist vegan photographer Linda Long with this issue's Chinese-inspired cover photo.



New York Veggie Pride Parade

Volunteers Christina Famiglietti, Amanda Riley, and Rebecca Kaplan (from left to right) represented The Vegetarian Resource Group at the Veggie Pride Parade in New York City's Union Square Park on March 24th. "We really enjoyed meeting all the visitors to our booth," Riley said. "Because the exhibit area was in a public park, there was a good mix of non-vegetarians there, so we were able to correct misconceptions about vegetarianism and also speak with like-minded people who were really happy to be at the event."

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