



# Catering for older vegetarians and vegans



A practical guide for care homes, retirement schemes, and others catering for older people

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**Rose Elliot, the UK's leading vegetarian cook and writer, has led the way in revolutionising**

**vegetarian cooking and has played a key role in transforming the image, taste and popularity of vegetarian food.**

It is an honour and a joy to be a patron of Vegetarian for Life (VfL). This charity was created to give help to anyone catering for older people who are vegetarians or vegans. I know what a valuable source of inspiration and advice it has proved to be, with a valuable and growing range of publications. It has a continually growing list of establishments signed-up to cater ethically for older vegetarians. List membership is increasing all the time, topping 700 in 2013, and with a good geographical spread throughout the UK.

As a vegetarian myself from the age of five (my own choice!) I know how strongly a vegetarian or vegan feels towards the way of life they have chosen. It is more than a choice of food; it is frequently a deeply-felt moral commitment, too. It therefore means so much to a vegetarian or vegan to be able to continue to eat in this way when, for whatever reason, they can no longer look after themselves.

A survey commissioned for VfL found that around a quarter of care homes have vegetarian or vegan residents. If this is problematic for residents, then it is also challenging for busy carers because, with the best will in the world, they do not always know how to set about catering for vegetarians or vegans.

This is where the information, support, and inspiration that VfL provides is so valuable,

## Introduction

helping – even transforming – the lives of both the vegetarian or vegans being cared for, and the carers themselves. Although vegetarian and vegan food is not difficult to make, it is so much easier when you have the extra know-how.

It's good to know too that providing a few veggie options on the menu can be better for everyone – and could even save money. Soya mince and pulses tend to cost much less, and go much further, weight-for-weight, than even the cheapest cuts of meat. It's also interesting to note that as our ability to chew and digest certain foods can deteriorate with age, vegetarian and vegan foods can really come into their own, being easier to swallow and digest.

In fact, a study of older adults in a care setting found that they preferred fruits, vegetables and beans to red meat, milk and dairy products – so taking the time and care to provide a plant-based diet for the vegetarians and vegans could prove to have wide appeal, with other residents benefiting too.

So I would like to extend my warmest gratitude to VfL for their wonderful work, and also to all the caterers and carers who are making such a difference to the lives of so many people with the vegetarian and vegan food that they provide.

Cooking a meal that respects and honours a person's food choices, particularly when they are as heart-felt as being vegetarian or vegan, is one of the greatest ways to express – and convey – love to them.

So on their behalf, I send you, the caterer, my gratitude and my love.

*Rose*

# Older Vegetarians & Vegans

**This guide provides information and advice for those providing meals for older people who are vegetarians and vegans.**

## **It is particularly aimed at:**

- Care homes
- Retirement villages and similar schemes with on-site catering
- Supported accommodation, such as very sheltered housing for frail older people
- Older vegetarians and their relatives and friends.

## **But it may also be useful for:**

- Day support and lunch clubs
- Home support – e.g. domiciliary care and community meals
- Inspection and monitoring purposes
- Councils who commission social care services for older people
- Hospitals and hospices.

There are over 5,000 vegetarians in care homes throughout the UK. Our 2009 survey found that around a quarter of care homes have vegetarian or vegan residents. Many other older vegetarians have community meals, attend lunch clubs, or have carers providing home catering.

So, providers of support to older people will definitely encounter service users who are interested in the vegetarian option.

Those catering for older people will be familiar with trying to serve meals reflecting preferences, choice, and individual needs. This guide aims to give care homes and

others catering for older people useful guidance to help them respond to the specific needs of vegetarians and vegans.

There is a growing recognition of the importance of nutrition in care settings. In November 2006 the Government launched its Dignity in Care campaign and this states:

“High quality health and social care services should be delivered in a person-centered way that respects the dignity of the individual receiving them. Unfortunately, older people are not always treated with the respect they deserve.”

The findings of the Care Quality Commission's Dignity and Nutrition for Older People inspection program echoed this. Its first review of NHS hospitals took place in 2011. When looking at whether older people are treated with respect and get food and drink that meets their needs, only 45 out of 100 hospitals were fully compliant.

Being vegetarian can mean receiving a monotonous and unbalanced diet of omelettes and macaroni cheese. Use of this guide should prevent that happening. Vegetarian for Life is committed to ensuring that older vegetarians and vegans receive a nutritionally balanced and enjoyable diet of their choice.

*Oh, by the way, the new arrival's a vegetarian...*

**If you're in charge of catering, and despite your best intentions, these words are likely to cause an immediate response: one that is quite possibly negative!**

This publication is aimed primarily at residential settings, but most of the guidance is transferable to settings where older people receive just one meal a day, such as lunch clubs.

But, don't despair. With a little thought and planning, vegetarians and vegans need not create a lot of extra work. This guide makes it easier to make meals an enjoyable experience for your vegetarian or vegan diners. Perhaps you'll get a few tips to help in catering for your non-vegetarians too?

### **Why does anyone become vegetarian or vegan?**

The main reasons why someone chooses to be vegetarian or vegan are:

- Animal welfare
- The environment
- Health
- Religious, spiritual and moral beliefs.

Intensive farming methods can be very cruel; there is no doubt that a vegetarian

diet is kinder to the environment; and there's mounting evidence that vegetarians and vegans are healthier than meat-eaters, therefore making less call on the health service. Any principle that is central to a person's belief-system should be respected. Vegetarianism is particularly important in the Hindu, Buddhist, Rastafarian and Jain faiths. Also, considerable numbers of Quakers are vegetarian.

Older vegetarians and vegans have chosen their lifestyle for good reasons. They decided to live a life that is kinder: kinder to animals, kinder to the planet and kinder to themselves.

If you are interested in finding out more, including the research background supporting the vegetarian choice, please contact The Vegetarian Society, The Vegan Society or Viva! Health, who will be very pleased to help you. Contact information is given at the end of the guide.

# Catering for Older Vegetarians

**Vegetarians do not eat fish! People who eat fish but not meat make a reasonable choice, but they are not vegetarians – even if that's how they describe themselves.**

## The Basics

### *Vegetarians don't eat*

Meat, fish, shellfish, products derived from dead animals, (e.g. gelatine, suet and aspic)

### *Vegans don't eat*

Everything on the vegetarian list or anything else from an animal source, including: milk, cheese and other dairy products. Eggs and honey

**OK – so this is what vegetarians and vegans don't eat – but it leaves plenty of choice.**

Variety – in food – really is the spice of life. That's true for all of us, including vegetarians. When it comes to catering for older veggies the same sensible considerations apply as when catering for older meat-eaters:

- 🍴 Acceptance that our bodies, tastes and appetite change as we grow older
- 🍴 Following the national standards of quality and safety set for care providers
- 🍴 Communication
- 🍴 Presentation
- 🍴 Balance and planning.

This guide expands on these subjects, with specifics relevant to older vegetarians and vegans.

## The ageing body

Our bodies change as we age.

### **Appetite**

Older people tend to be less active and have smaller appetites. There is often a gradual decline in smell and taste. But these senses trigger the body for food – so hunger isn't experienced so acutely. This makes good presentation really important.

### **Teeth**

Many older people have dentures or missing teeth, so please establish the areas of difficulty for individuals, such as 'al dente' vegetables or seeds.

### **Digestion**

Some foods become more difficult to digest as we get older e.g. radish, raw cabbage, beans and cucumber skin. Go easy with the known culprits. But talk to those you cater for and be aware of their individual needs.

### **Fibre**

Constipation tends to be a problem for older people generally, but, on the plus side, veggies tend to suffer less than meat-eaters. A balanced vegetarian diet contains plenty of fibre. Wholemeal bread, brown

rice and pasta are better health-wise, but if an older veggie prefers the 'white' variety, you don't have to worry too much about fibre intake. Alongside a high fibre diet it is important to ensure a plentiful intake of fluid.

### **Regulation**

By law all care homes in the United Kingdom must meet certain regulations. These vary throughout the UK but the requirements are that nutritional needs and reasonable requirements relating to religious and cultural backgrounds must be met.

The national standards are extensive, but include:

#### **England**

Support to eat and drink, where necessary.

#### **Scotland**

Catering and care staff get to know your food choices and preferences, including ethnic, cultural and faith ones. Any special diet (for example, vegetarian, low fat or high protein) is recorded in your personal plan.

You are offered a daily menu that reflects your preferences. The menu varies regularly according to your comments and will always contain fresh fruit and vegetables.

Your meals are well prepared and presented.

#### **Wales**

Religious or cultural dietary needs are catered for as agreed at admission and recorded in the care plan; food for special occasions is available.

Special therapeutic diets/feeds are provided when advised by health care and dietetic staff, including adequate provision of calcium and vitamin D.

The aim of this guide is to build on these standards, with particular reference to older vegetarians and vegans.

### **Communication**

Good communication makes everyone's life easier.

- 🍌 A vegetarian does not automatically like all vegetables and fruit.
- 🍌 It's a simple matter of respect to discuss individual preferences.
- 🍌 Food intolerances and medical restrictions should be recorded in the individual's care plan.
- 🍌 A blackboard or printed menu giving notice of meals is important – so that potential problems can be sorted out in advance.
- 🍌 If service users are no longer able to communicate clearly, it is important to take advice from relatives or friends and to try to respect principles held in healthier times – without over-riding the service-user's right of choice.

### **Presentation**

It is essential that meals look appetising to counter reduced appetites.

### **Portions**

To someone with a small appetite a huge pile of food can be off-putting – so don't overfill plates.



## Colour

Macaroni cheese, potato and cauliflower may taste delicious, but, on the same plate, it's a visual disaster. A mix of colour tells the body to be hungry. Using the 'Rainbow Plate' idea not only adds colour, but also increases valuable nutrients – think of parsley, tomatoes, strawberries, blackberries, or mint leaves, for example. And not all vegetables are green. People with certain types of dementia can more easily see food on red or yellow plates.

## Surroundings

Fresh flowers, pretty table mats, fruit on the side are little touches that can make such a difference to a dining room.

## Relaxation

Why not serve coffee and teas after the meal, and encourage your diners to linger and socialise over mints and chocolates (checking they are vegetarian or vegan)?

## Highlight of the day?

In the best-run homes mealtimes can be the highlight of the day – with relatively easy attention to detail.

## Balance & Planning

It is important for all of us – including vegetarians or vegans – to be given a well-balanced diet. Following the advice in this guide will help, and genuine variety should achieve a reasonable balance of protein, carbohydrate, fat and fibre, with good vitamin and mineral content.

It is important that older people eat enough to cover their energy and nutritional requirements. So, in view of reduced appetite, a nutrient-dense diet is

the caterer's challenge. Fortunately this is one which is probably easier to rise to for older vegetarians than for meat-eaters.

It's a good idea to have a written plan of menus for, say, the week ahead. For really good variety you can work to a 4-week plan – repeated over 3 months. (Not longer, as you should make seasonal changes.)

*In a typical week's menu try to ensure that you include a good mixture of:*

Root vegetables

Pulses (peas, beans, lentils)

Green vegetables Meat substitutes (soya protein, tofu & Quorn\*)

Salads & other vegetables

Nuts & seeds

Fruit – fresh & dried

Cheese\*, milk\* & other dairy products\* or vegan versions of these products

Bread

Eggs\*

Rice & pasta

\*not for vegans

It's worth remembering that dairy and soya products provide complete protein, whereas nuts, seeds and pulses don't. These need to be combined with grains to complete the necessary amino acid profiles. This can be done over a period of 24 hours, however, so porridge or toast in the morning and



chickpeas or lentils in the evening count as making up complete protein.

The Vegetarian Society publishes *The Plate of Good Health* showing how much food should come from each food group for a well-balanced vegetarian diet. A vegan version is available from Viva! Health.



### Tips for busy cooks

- Keep it simple, and avoid dishes that have to be served instantly.
- Some vegetarian dishes require soaking of pulses. Forget them. (But remember – most beans are readily available in cans.)
- A vegetarian recipe may be enjoyed by your meat-eaters. Variety is good for everybody.
- There are many ready-made vegetarian meals available. But a lot of these do include eggs or dairy, so are not suitable for vegans.
- Vegan ready meals are also available – they just require more careful sourcing.
- If serving meat pie and veg, why not put a vegetarian pie in the oven at the same time (on a separate baking tray). The list of veggie alternatives is endless, and can often tie in with your meat-eaters' choice, using the same accompaniments. Even Sunday lunch can be easy, using vegetarian substitutes for roast meats.
- Some older vegetarians and vegans try to avoid vegetarian 'alternatives'

to meat – preferring food that does not 'pretend' to be something else. So, again, please communicate.

- Many recipes can be modified to produce a vegetarian alternative with little extra work. Substitute mushrooms for ham in quiche lorraine; use soya mince, Quorn or lentils in cottage pie; use vegan fats or vegetarian mincemeat.
- Make full use of your freezer. Make larger quantities and freeze extra portions to save time on another day.
- Check out vegetarian and vegan alternatives from wholesalers, such as food suppliers on our UK List. The range is increasing and improving by the day. You can search for up-to-date supermarket vegetarian and vegan lines via:

[www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegetarian](http://www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegetarian)

[www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegan](http://www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegan)

Says Carol Gilligan, who has three decades experience of running a care home:

“My residents like a good Quorn roast dinner and all the trimmings at least once a week, and sometimes twice. We can get the roast chicken-style Quorn joint easily from Asda and Tesco. Some residents who don't like the joint will have a meatless roast dinner. The veg is baked in the oven, which brings out stronger flavours.”

### Useful additions to the vegetarian or vegan pantry:

- 🌱 Veggie mince (frozen and dried)
- 🌱 Vegetarian/vegan sausages and other ready-made meat alternatives, e.g. bean/vegetable quarter pounders, meat-free sausage rolls, chicken-style pieces, nut cutlets, Quorn, deep-fried or marinated tofu pieces. See Viva!'s *L-Plate Vegetarian* and *L-Plate Vegan* guides, or the mysupermarket links on page 9, for an idea of the range (contact details on back page)
- 🌱 Tinned pulses, frozen peas and broad beans
- 🌱 Nutritional yeast flakes
- 🌱 Vegan margarine, e.g. Tesco or Sainsbury's Free-From; Pure; Vitalite
- 🌱 Veggie stock, e.g. Marigold red tub OR Green Oxo cubes
- 🌱 Gravy granules e.g. Bisto Original (red tub)
- 🌱 Nut and seed butter for spreads, sauces and adding creaminess to soups and stews, e.g. peanut, tahini, cashew
- 🌱 Wholegrains, e.g. brown rice, millet, couscous, bulgur, quinoa.

### Fresh and seasonal

Even when serving a ready-made dish, the vegetable or salad accompaniment can be fresh. Try to use seasonal produce, especially if it's local. The bonus is that it's cheaper, and tastes better. Of course,

seasonality in produce relates to what the body wants: salads when it's hot, and mashed potato and swedes when it's cold.

### Dairy over-load

A problem vegetarians often face is the caterer's tendency to see cheese as the obvious source of protein in a meal with no meat or fish.

There are so many alternative sources of protein – including nuts, pulses, tofu and Quorn\* – that the omnipresent cheese shows a lack of imagination as well as discrimination against vegans!

\*not suitable for vegans.

Dairy products should not be eaten to excess: while they have nutritional value many dairy products have a high degree of saturated fat (although using skimmed or semi-skimmed milk reduces fat intake). For practical advice, product lists and recipes, see Viva!'s *Everyone's Going Dairy-Free* guide (contact details on back page).

### World cuisine

When vegetarians in their 80s or 90s are asked what sort of food they like, the answer often includes 'nice, plain food'. People whose formative years were in the UK before the 1970s had little exposure to the international influences that now enrich our diet.

Many vegetarians tend to be adventurous in their food; but some older vegetarians, like older people generally, can view more exotic foods with suspicion. Hot spices can be difficult for some older people – so it's worth finding out the preferences of those you are cooking for.

The Asian community traditionally cares for its older generation within the extended family, but, in the UK, this community is making increasing use of care facilities. A higher proportion of Asians are vegetarian,

so this will lead to a growing demand for ethnic vegetarian meals. And over the next few decades more care service-users generally are likely to want ethnic food regularly. VFL has 'world cuisine' choices within its recipe service. Please see our website for further details.

### **Tofu – it's wonderful**

Tofu is top of the class for protein value and digestibility and is readily available. It's made from soya beans and absorbs flavours around it. It can take on 'meaty' qualities or 'creamy', dairy-like qualities and can be added to vegetable dishes to boost protein intake or liquidised into soups. It's a brilliant ingredient when catering for vegans – and well worth getting to know.

### **Drinks**

The effects of too much caffeine from tea or coffee are well known, and many older people find sleeping difficult. Decaffeinated alternatives are readily available and many vegetarians like fruit and herbal teas.

Please, always have water available. Liquid intake is very important for older people who may become dehydrated even though not feeling thirsty.

Remember, vegans do not have cows' milk in their hot drinks. Soya milk is a wonderful alternative, and there are others, like rice and oat milks. Choose brands with added calcium and vitamin B12, which are especially good for older vegans. A little care is needed in adding soya milk to hot drinks as it may curdle.

### **Puddings**

A common misconception is that veggies are such health freaks that they turn up their noses at sticky toffee pudding. Not so! Generally food with high nutritional content is preferable – so stewed fruits, fruit salad, yoghurt are good regular puddings. But

'a little of what you fancy does you good' – occasionally. It's a case of a sensible balance.

Eggs in sponges can be replaced with a branded egg replacer, such as Orgran, made up in accordance with the directions on the packet. Alternatively use 1 tbsp of flax meal (finely ground linseeds) mixed with 4 tbsp of hot water.

A cautionary note: jellies are often made with gelatine, which is derived from bones or hooves. Excellent veggie jellies and gelatine alternatives (for mousses etc) are readily available.

### **Please don't cheat!**

Please, please, please – don't ever think 'Oh, they'll never know I made this pastry with lard' or 'I'll use this tasty meat stock for the tomato soup'. It is much better to be honest, and if the mince pies have animal suet in them, please say so. It is a betrayal of trust to slip in an ingredient that you know would cause upset.

### **Diversity & inclusivity – The 'world party'**

The vegan diet is the most universally acceptable. If you hosted a party with a representative from each of the world's religions and cultures, you could be fairly sure of not offending any dietary codes by offering vegan food. So why not feed everyone a vegan meal once in a while? It's genuinely healthy; you'll add to variety and you'll be well within budget.

### **In conclusion**

Vegetarians and vegans are a lot easier to cater for now than 20 years ago. There are so many products widely available and easy to prepare. Vegetarianism is now much more mainstream, and the health benefits of a good veggie diet are well recognised. So, expect to see more and more relatively healthy, older vegetarians and vegans – and please do your best to keep them that way!

# Vegetarian for Life – UK List

**If you cater for older people and have not yet joined the VfL – UK List we hope you'll consider it now.**

The list is a geographical listing of our 'veggie friendly' members. It includes care homes, retirement complexes, food suppliers and other services that cater for older people. We have veggie-friendly UK List members in most parts of the United Kingdom.

Membership is free, and all you have to do is to follow the VfL Code of Good Practice, which ensures that you cater well for older vegetarians, and in an ethical way.

The Code is shown below. An application form may have been sent with this guide, but can also be downloaded from our website or mailed on request.

Remember: a lot of people want vegetarian food. And if they need a care home, a retirement community or catering service, they will be attracted to those on the list.

## *Catering for older vegetarians and vegans can be:*

- 🍷 good for 'business' (higher occupancy/user levels)
- 🍷 good for improving your 'diversity'
- 🍷 good for health
- 🍷 good for the environment
- 🍷 good for animal well-being.

That can't be bad.

## Vegetarian for Life – UK List

### Code Of Good Practice

**This advice is provided as a best practice guide. Members of the Vegetarian for Life – UK List undertake to operate within its spirit, in order to provide ethical catering for older vegetarians. They may also choose to include provision for older vegans.**

### Vegetarian dishes must not contain:

- 🍷 animal flesh (meat, fish or shellfish)
- 🍷 meat, fish, or bone stock, or stock cubes containing same
- 🍷 animal carcass fats (including suet, lard or dripping)
- 🍷 gelatine, gelatine-based jelly, or aspic (jelly made from meat stock)
- 🍷 products with ingredients derived from slaughterhouse e.g. calf rennet in cheese
- 🍷 battery or intensively produced eggs should be avoided wherever possible. Please consult individual residents regarding their opinion about eggs.

### Vegan dishes must not contain:

- 🍷 anything on the vegetarian list above
- 🍷 dairy products including cheese, milk, butter, cream, yoghurt and whey
- 🍷 eggs
- 🍷 products with ingredients derived from eggs or dairy, e.g. albumen, casein, ghee, lactose or whey
- 🍷 honey
- 🍷 shellac.

## Common stumbling blocks

### Cheese

Traditionally cheese was made using rennet, an enzyme extracted from the stomach of slaughtered calves. But today most UK cheese is vegetarian. If in doubt, please ask your supplier. Cheese products are never suitable for vegans. Vegan cheese-alternatives are available in some stores.

### Fats, oils and margarine

Butter is suitable for vegetarians, but not for vegans. Other animal fats and fish oils, and products containing them, are unsuitable for either. There are many margarines suitable for both vegetarians and vegans – usually clearly indicated on the container.

### Gravies and stock

Cubes or powders containing meat, poultry or fish extract are not acceptable. Please use vegetable stocks and stock cubes.

### Honey

Royal jelly is not vegetarian. Honey is acceptable to vegetarians but not vegans. Agave syrup can be a useful replacement.

### Milk and cream

Milk and cream are acceptable to vegetarians, but not to vegans. Soya milk is readily available and is good for most vegans. Rice, nut and oat milks are also available for those who do not like soya.

### Worcester sauce

Usually contains anchovies, but vegetarian and vegan versions are available.

### Toiletries

The majority of vegetarians and vegans have adopted their lifestyle because of concern for animal suffering. If you provide soap, shampoo and similar products, please try to ensure that they are animal-free and have not been tested on animals.





## Kitchen hygiene

Work surfaces, chopping boards, utensils and other equipment should either be kept separate from those used for non-vegetarian food preparation, or cleaned thoroughly beforehand. Cross contamination should also be avoided between vegetarian and vegan foods. Please ensure that fryers, grills and griddles used for meat and fish are thoroughly cleaned. Fryers must be filled with fresh, uncontaminated oil before vegetarian or vegan food is cooked.

## Providing choice

- For each meal you should offer at least one vegetarian option.
- Good communication with your vegetarian residents or service-users should ensure that individual preferences are observed. (If necessary – for frail or vulnerable vegetarians – family or friends should be consulted to ascertain preferences.)
- Menu planning should ensure a good variety of food of high nutritional

value with an appropriate mix of carbohydrate, protein, fat and fibre providing at least 5 portions a day of fruit or vegetables. 'Dairy overload' should be avoided. More guidance is contained elsewhere in this guide.

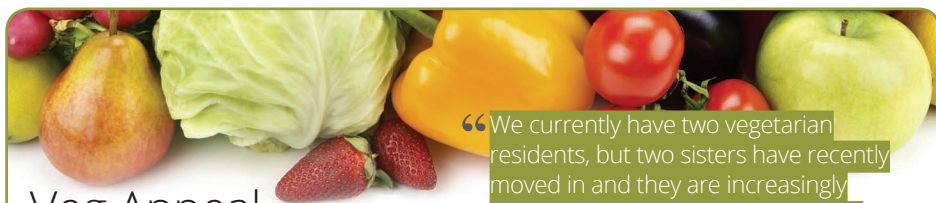
- We would encourage you to offer your meat-eaters the vegetarian options – which will be good for the variety and nutritional needs of their diet.

## Listing options

There are two listing options for members of the UK List. All members of the list accept our guidelines for basic vegetarian provision. We would encourage members to add either or both of the following categories to their listing including the following symbols:

**(Vg)** Vegan: members agree to adhere to the guidelines for vegan provision.

**(F)** Free range: all eggs used are free range and, wherever possible, any ready-made products used contain free-range eggs.



## Veg Appeal

A study of older adults in a care setting found that they preferred fruits, vegetables and beans to red meat, milk and dairy products. This suggests that a plant-based diet could have wide appeal, and not just to vegetarian residents.

Says care home manager, Carol Gilligan:

“We currently have two vegetarian residents, but two sisters have recently moved in and they are increasingly avoiding meat and eating vegetarian food. Many of the other residents are also regularly having the vegetarian option. They love the extra choice – particularly Italian dishes.

I recently held a vegetarian week with the agreement of residents. It was very popular and there wasn't a single complaint!”

# Menu Planner

Vegetarian menu ideas for a 4-week cycle are shown in the tables on the following pages. Please note:

- 🌱 We are not suggesting that you follow this planner specifically. It is simply intended to show how easy it is to cater for vegetarians, with variety and nutrition taken into account.
- 🌱 The menus are examples only, and cover a mixture of seasons.
- 🌱 A good daily nutritional balance, and great food variety over each week, is aimed for.
- 🌱 Many alternatives can be substituted, including ready-made foods.
- 🌱 All the meals can be served to non-vegetarians – and many are designed so they can be prepared alongside similar non-veggie meals.
- 🌱 Items such as shepherd's pie, sausage, bolognese etc – mean the vegetarian versions!
- 🌱 **The meals marked # are featured in the recipes section of this guide.**

If the evening meal is the main one of the day, the menus can be reversed.

## Breakfast ideas

If you offer cooked breakfasts – even the 'full British' – vegetarian and vegan alternatives are not a problem. Veggie sausages and bacon are available and combine perfectly with mushrooms, beans, hash browns, grilled tomatoes and eggs or tofu scramble#.

More likely you normally serve a cereal-based breakfast, perhaps with toast and fruit juice. It's easy to have soya milk and vegan margarine available for vegans. Breakfast can be made more interesting by including:

- 🌱 **Instead of 'regular' branded cereals** – granola, good quality mueslis, 'soaked' (overnight) oat flake and fruit mixes, porridge.
- 🌱 **Instead of fruit juice** – grapefruit, prunes, fruit salads, dried fruit compote.

## Salads

So often, in Britain, a mixture of lettuce, tomato and cucumber is served as 'salad' and is thrown away because it is bland and boring. The possibilities for salad are endless, and many combinations are tasty, nutritious and interesting. Salads can be varied and attractive, and should be a regular feature of good catering. They should always include raw foods, but can also include cooked vegetables, pasta and grains. Salad 'recipes' are a little prescriptive and restrictive. Just vary salads endlessly – no two need be the same.

**The following planner is for vegetarians, not vegans. Nevertheless, many of the meals mentioned are vegan, or have vegan versions, and a number of the foods mentioned, like yoghurt and cheese have vegan alternatives. Cakes and baked desserts can easily be made vegan, and custard can be made with plant milks such as soya, coconut, rice or almond. A 100% vegan version of the planner is available on VFL's website.**



The meals marked # are featured in the recipes section of this guide.

If not listed, all meals should be served with a starchy carbohydrate e.g. bread, rice, pasta and potatoes, together with cooked or salad vegetables.

## Week 1

	Lunch	Evening Meal
<b>Monday</b>	Mushroom stroganoff with herb crumb topping#, rice, peas. Chocolate éclairs.	Baked potato, cottage cheese, date & orange salad. Fresh fruit.
<b>Tuesday</b>	Rainbow frittata#, chips, mixed salad. Stewed apples & raisins.	Tomato & basil soup, croutons. Date & walnut slice.
<b>Wednesday</b>	Cheese & parsnip roast#, new pots, broccoli. Jam sponge & custard.	Hummus, pitta bread, raw veg strips. Lemon meringue pie.
<b>Thursday</b>	Country garden cottage pie#, cabbage. Yoghurt & mixed berries.	Scrambled egg & baked tomatoes, or tofu scramble#, toast. Fruit pie.
<b>Friday</b>	Baked bean omelette, chips, green salad. Rice pudding.	Macaroni soup, bread roll. Banana split, ice cream.
<b>Saturday</b>	Stuffed peppers, green bean salad. Pear & cinnamon crumble, custard.	Vegetable pasty. Melon boats, fruit cocktail.
<b>Sunday</b>	Nut roast, roast pots, carrots, sprouts. Apple pie, ice cream.	'Ham' & salad sandwiches. Victoria sponge.

## Week 2

	Lunch	Evening Meal
<b>Monday</b>	Vegetarian pizza, side salad. Fruit yoghurt.	Carrot & coriander soup, crusty bread. Orange, lemon & pistachio cake#.
<b>Tuesday</b>	Pasta 'bolognese', sweetcorn & beetroot salad. Ginger cake.	Avocado & egg salad. Fruit trifle.
<b>Wednesday</b>	Bean burgers, chips, green salad. Fresh fruit salad.	Macaroni cheese. Eccles cake.
<b>Thursday</b>	Vegetable and bean lattice, potatoes, broccoli. Strawberries & cream.	Lentil & vegetable soup#, bread roll. Cheese & biscuits.
<b>Friday</b>	Cauliflower cheese, baked pot, peas. Apricot & blueberry crumble.	Vegetable samosas, coleslaw. Carrot cake.
<b>Saturday</b>	Tofu loaf#, ratatouille. Stewed rhubarb, yoghurt.	Potato salad#, garlic bread. Egg custard.
<b>Sunday</b>	Artichoke heart butterbean & olive filo pie#, veg or salad. Chocolate sponge.	Egg & cress sandwiches. Fruit tart.

## Week 3

	Lunch	Evening Meal
<b>Monday</b>	Florida cocktail. Mushroom goulash, rice, peas.	Potato wedges, hummus & salad. Toasted teacake and jam.
<b>Tuesday</b>	Toad in the hole, mash, carrots, peas. Stewed apple & blackberry, custard.	Bean salad Niçoise with mustard dressing#. Fruit cake.
<b>Wednesday</b>	Vegetable & chickpea korma with spicy rice#. Chocolate chip ice cream.	Mushroom pasties#, carrot & cabbage salad. Fruit pancakes.
<b>Thursday</b>	Lasagne, mixed salad. Spiced apple cake.	Baked potato, baked beans. Apple flapjack.
<b>Friday</b>	Roasted Mediterranean vegetables & cashews, oven chips. Kiwi fruit salad.	Cheese & onion pasty, tomato salad. Apricot fool.
<b>Saturday</b>	Herby sunflower pudding, chips, baked tomato. Poached figs.	Salad stuffed ciabattas. Pecan pie.
<b>Sunday</b>	Roast 'turkey', roast pots, carrots, peas. Fresh fruit.	Cheddar ploughman's, celery, tomatoes. Apricot mousse.

## Week 4

	Lunch	Evening Meal
<b>Monday</b>	Shepherd's pie#, cabbage, butter beans. Nice but naughty fruit compote#.	Tangy leek & ginger soup#, bread roll. Parkin.
<b>Tuesday</b>	Moussaka, broccoli, baked tomatoes. Strawberry shortcake.	Nutty carrot soup# with savoury biscuits. Fruit loaf.
<b>Wednesday</b>	'Big' salad with egg/cheese or nuts, new potatoes. Sultana sponge.	Falafel, hummus and salad wraps. Meringue nest with raspberries.
<b>Thursday</b>	Bean 'potato' cakes#, broccoli, carrots. Chocolate mousse.	Veggie sausages, mash and red onion gravy. Fresh fruit.
<b>Friday</b>	Spaghetti with roast veg & lentils#, sweet pepper salad. Grilled grapefruit.	Poached egg, baked beans, toast. Fruit scone & jam.
<b>Saturday</b>	Easy nut roast#, courgettes. Baked apple with dates & marmalade.	Vegetable ravioli. Banana yoghurt#.
<b>Sunday</b>	Veg & bean crumble with ground nut topping, roast parsnips, peas, carrots. Fruit flan.	Cheese & tomato toasted sandwich. Strawberry tarts#.

# Recipes

We only have space in this guide to give a few recipe ideas. More recipes are available from VFL's website, including a range of recipes suitable for one person.

We also have a range of free recipe publications. These include a 32-page *Cooking on a Budget* guide and recipes suitable for different festive occasions, such as Burns Night, Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Contact us or visit our website for copies.

Special thanks go to Rose Elliot and her publishers BBC Books for permission to reproduce the recipes taken from Rose's *Low-GI Vegetarian Cookbook*. Other useful recipes and details of Rose's books can be found at [www.roseelliot.com](http://www.roseelliot.com) Thanks also to Kyle Books, publishers of the *Meat Free Monday Cookbook*, for permission to reproduce their Potato Salad recipe.

## Tofu Scramble

### Serves 4, Vegan

Serve on toast by itself, as a light meal, or as part of a cooked breakfast.

### Ingredients

- 1 pack firm tofu, about 350g
- 1 onion – chopped
- 2 peppers, diced (mixed colours)
- Handful of chopped mixed vegetables.
- A recommended selection is: mushrooms, tomatoes, diced cooked potato and sweetcorn.*
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh herbs (parsley, basil or coriander)
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes (optional)\*
- Pinch of turmeric

\* Nutritional yeast flakes is a vegan food with cheesy, nutty flavour, rich in vitamins and minerals. It is very versatile and can be added to liquids such as milk, fruit and vegetable juices. It's useful for making vegan 'cheese' sauces and to add to soups, casseroles and salads.

### Method

1. Sauté onion in a little oil, add peppers and other vegetables and continue until lightly cooked.
2. Crumble tofu through hands into pan. Add soy sauce, turmeric and yeast flakes. Cook for about 5 minutes until water from tofu has largely cooked off and consistency is like scrambled eggs.
3. Add herbs and season to taste.



*Orange, Lemon & Pistachio Cake (left)*  
See page 27

Vegetarian Society's

## Rainbow Frittata



### Serves 4–6

An Italian omelette containing vegetables, seasonings and cheese.

### Ingredients

200g new potatoes, cubed  
 1–2 tbsp olive oil, plus a bit extra for  
 oiling the flan dish  
 75g red onion, finely sliced  
 1 tsp dried mixed herbs  
 1 orange pepper, diced  
 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped  
 1 medium tomato, chopped  
 100g vegetarian feta cheese, crumbled  
 5 free-range eggs  
 Pepper, to taste

### Method

#### Stage one

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/  
gas mark 5.
2. Boil the potatoes in a small saucepan  
for 10 minutes, then drain thoroughly.
3. While the potatoes are boiling, prepare  
the onion, pepper, tomato and cheese.

#### Stage two

1. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan,  
then fry the onion and mixed herbs for  
5 minutes until the onion starts to  
become clear.
2. Add the orange pepper and cook for  
2 minutes more.
3. Add the garlic and potatoes and cook  
for a further 5 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and mix in the  
tomato and feta cheese.

#### Stage three

1. In the small mixing bowl lightly beat the  
eggs, adding pepper to taste.
2. Lightly oil the flan dish then pop it into  
the oven for a few minutes to heat.
3. Carefully remove the dish from the oven,  
pour in the vegetable and cheese mixture  
and spread it evenly around the dish.
4. Pour the beaten eggs over the  
vegetable mixture then press the  
vegetable mixture down with a fork or  
spoon so it is mostly covered with egg.
5. Bake for 25 – 30 minutes until set  
and golden.
6. Allow to cool for a few minutes, slice  
into wedges and serve.

### Notes

To prevent shards of shell from breaking off, crack  
eggs on a flat surface then pull them apart, rather than  
cracking them on the side of a bowl!

Rose Elliot's

## Lentil & Vegetable Soup

**Serves 10, Vegan**

Here, for a change, is an English-style lentil soup and very comforting it is too. This makes a huge pot so you can keep some in the fridge or freeze it. But by all means reduce the quantities if you wish.

### Ingredients

2 onions, chopped  
2–3 carrots cut into small dice  
2 celery sticks, cut into small dice  
1 small leek, chopped  
2 tbsp olive oil  
500g (1lb 2oz) split red lentils  
250ml can sweetcorn (no added sugar)  
2 tbsp tamari or soy sauce  
1–2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

### Method

1. Fry the onion, carrots, celery and leek in the oil in a large saucepan, covered, for 10 minutes, until beginning to soften, stirring often.
2. Add the lentils and 2.5 litres (4 pints) of water. Bring to the boil, then leave to simmer gently for 15 – 20 minutes until the lentils are pale and soft.
3. Remove 2–3 cupfuls of the soup and blend the rest, roughly, in a food processor or with a stick blender. Put the reserved cupfuls of soup back.
4. Add the sweetcorn, tamari or soy sauce and lemon juice, salt and pepper – white pepper is nice in this – to taste.

Vegetarian Society's

## Tangy Leek & Ginger Soup

**Serves 4, Vegan**

### Ingredients

450g leeks (about 2 medium)  
25g vegan margarine  
2 small cloves garlic, peeled and crushed  
100g potato, peeled and diced  
600ml light coloured vegetable stock  
5–7 tbsp ginger wine, according to taste  
6 tbsp soya cream  
Salt and pepper to taste, paprika to garnish

### Method

1. Remove any tough outer leaves from the leeks and top and tail. Leave as much dark green as possible. Cut horizontally into thin slices, rinse well.
2. Melt the margarine and gently sauté the leeks for 5 minutes until soft, then add the garlic and sauté for a further 30 seconds. Add the potato and stock. Bring to the boil then simmer for about 10 minutes.
3. Remove from the heat and add 4 tbsp ginger wine and the soya cream. Liquidise until smooth, adding more ginger wine and seasoning if needed at the end.
4. Return to the saucepan and gently heat without boiling, stirring all the time. Serve garnished with a sprinkling of paprika.

Vegan Society's

## Nutty Carrot Soup

**Serves 10, Vegan**

### Ingredients

2.8 litres/5 pints vegetable stock  
400g/14oz chopped onion  
1.25kg/2.5lb chopped carrot  
285g/10oz peanut butter  
5+ tbsp lemon juice  
Salt and pepper – to taste

**Method**

1. Bring vegetable stock to the boil in a pan.
2. Add onion and carrot and bring back to boil.
3. Simmer for 20 minutes or until carrot is very soft.
4. Stir in peanut butter until dissolved.
5. Liquidise, then add lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

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Meat Free Monday's

**Potato Salad**

© Tara Fisher

**Serves 4, Vegan****Ingredients**

750g small potatoes  
 Bunch of spring onions  
 6 radishes  
 6 cornichons (gherkins)  
 1 tbsp capers  
 2 tbsp wholegrain mustard  
 1 tbsp white wine vinegar  
 3 tbsp olive oil  
 salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 2 tbsp roughly chopped chives  
 2 tbsp freshly chopped flat leaf parsley

**Method**

1. Cook potatoes in salted boiling water until tender, drain and cool slightly, then cut into bite-size pieces and tip into a large bowl. Trim and finely slice spring onions.
2. Cut radishes into fine matchsticks. Roughly chop cornichons and capers.
3. In a small bowl whisk together mustard, white wine vinegar and olive oil, and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
4. Pour the dressing over the potatoes, add the spring onions, radishes, cornichons, capers, chives and parsley and gently mix together. Serve at room temperature.

*The Meat Free Monday Cookbook* by Paul, Stella and Mary McCartney is published by Kyle Books, priced £19.99.

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Viva!s

**Bean Salad Niçoise with Mustard Dressing****Serves 12, Vegan****Ingredients**

750g thin French beans, fresh or frozen  
 1kg cooked, mixed beans (e.g. about 4 assorted tins of haricot, flageolet, borlotti, kidney, all rinsed and drained – OR 400g dried beans, cooked)  
 750g fresh tomatoes, plum if available  
 Small bunch fresh basil  
 3 handfuls of black and green pitted olives  
 Salt and coarsely-ground black pepper

**Mustard dressing**

3 tsp Dijon mustard  
 1 large garlic clove, cut into 3 pieces  
 3 tbsp cider vinegar  
 9 tbsp olive oil

### Serving options

Warm bread: white/wholemeal/flat bread such as pitta

Hot pasta, tossed in olive oil

Marinated fried tofu pieces

Smoked tofu cubes

### Method

1. If using fresh beans, trim them – just remove tops and leave the tails.
2. Cook them in boiling water to cover for 4 – 6 minutes until al dente. Drain in a colander and cool under the cold tap. Drain again.
3. Meanwhile, drain and rinse the other beans, cut the tomatoes into chunky pieces, tear the basil and put them all into a bowl, along with the olives.
4. Season with salt and a little pepper.
5. Make the dressing: put the mustard, crushed garlic, vinegar and a little salt into a bowl and mix with a fork or small whisk, then gradually whisk in the oil. Season.
6. Add half the dressing to the salad and toss so that it's all glossy, then heap onto plates or a serving dish.
7. Drizzle the rest of the dressing over and around, and grind some more pepper coarsely over the salad.

The *Viva! Catering Guide* by Jane Easton is available as a free download from Viva!'s website or you can buy a hard copy for £6.99.

Viva!'s

## Mushroom Pasties

**Makes 2 large or 3 medium pasties,  
Vegan**

### Ingredients

2 tbsp oil

1 onion, chopped

Half a red or other coloured pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

200g/7oz mushrooms, chopped

1 tsp dried tarragon or mixed herbs

1 – 2 tbsp soya sauce

Black pepper

1 sheet of puff pastry – Jus Rol is vegan

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
2. Heat the oil and fry the onion until soft. Add the chopped red pepper and cook for another few minutes.
3. Add the mushrooms and garlic and fry until the mushrooms are cooked.
4. Add the soya sauce and pepper.
5. Roll out the puff pastry and cut into two 17 cm/7 inch squares. Place half the mushroom filling in the middle of each square and fold into a parcel.
6. Seal with a little soya milk and brush the top of the pastry with a little of the same.
7. Place on an oiled tray with the fold facing down and cook for approximately 10 – 15 minutes, or until golden brown.

Rose Elliot's

## Bean 'Potato' Cakes

**Serves 4, Vegan**

### Ingredients

1 large can of white beans  
(without added sugar)

1 chopped onion

1 tbsp of olive oil

1 tbsp of water or soya milk

Seasoning



**Method**

1. Make some bean 'mash' as described below. Vary the mixture as you wish with chopped parsley, drained canned sweetcorn (without added sugar) or even chopped cooked cabbage for a beany bubble and squeak.
2. Form into 'cakes': you will get about three from one can. They hold together best if you bake them.
3. Place them on an oiled baking sheet, and then turn them over so that the tops are coated with oil.
4. Bake at 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6 – for about 25 minutes, turning them after about 15 minutes.

**Bean mash method:**

1. Drain can of beans well, butter beans work particularly well.
2. Fry chopped onion in olive oil and purée with beans in food processor or simply mash.
3. Add one tbsp of water or soya milk for each can of beans (quantities can be easily varied to suit numbers served).
4. Add salt, pepper, herbs etc to taste and whiz or beat again until thick and creamy.

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Vegetarian Society's

## Mushroom Stroganoff with Herb Crumb Topping

**Serves 4–6, Can be vegan\***

**Ingredients**

675g/1½lb potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks  
 150ml/¼ pint full fat milk OR unsweetened plant milk, e.g. soya, almond, rice\*  
 15ml/1 tbsp fresh herbs of your choice, e.g. parsley, sage, thyme  
 15g/½oz butter or vegan margarine\*

450g/1lb assorted mushrooms, roughly chopped  
 2 cloves garlic, crushed  
 150ml/¼ pint double cream or soya alternative to cream\*  
 Seasoning to taste  
 25g/1oz butter or vegan margarine\*  
 50g/2oz fresh white breadcrumbs  
 30ml/2 tbsp fresh parsley

**Method**

1. Boil or steam the potatoes.
2. For the filling, melt butter or margarine in a frying pan, add the mushrooms and garlic and cook gently for 5 minutes. Stir in the cream and season to taste. Keep covered, on a gentle heat.
3. For the topping, melt butter or margarine in a frying pan and stir in the breadcrumbs, herbs and seasoning. Stir continuously for 5 minutes until breadcrumbs are golden brown.
4. When the potatoes are cooked, drain and return to the pan. Heat the milk, pour over the potatoes and mash well. Season to taste and stir in the herbs.
5. Serve individually by placing equal mounds of mash on each plate, spoon the mushroom stroganoff on top and finish by sprinkling over the golden herbed breadcrumbs.

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Vegetarian Society's

## Country Garden Cottage Pie

**Serves 4, Can be vegan\***

**Ingredients**

900g/2lb potato, mashed  
 2 tbsp vegetable oil  
 1 medium onion, chopped  
 175g/6oz green lentils  
 1 clove garlic, crushed

110g/4oz grated vegetarian cheddar cheese or vegan cheese\*  
 2 carrots, diced  
 1 tbsp tomato purée  
 1 medium green pepper, diced  
 110g/4oz mushrooms, sliced  
 1 tsp dried basil  
 pinch cayenne pepper (optional)  
 salt and pepper

### Method

1. Cook the lentils in plenty of water until just soft, drain, but save ½ pint of the cooking liquid.
2. While the lentils are cooking sauté the onion, garlic, basil and cayenne in the oil until soft but not brown.
3. Add the carrot, pepper and mushrooms. Cover and cook over a low heat for 10 minutes or until the carrot has softened.
4. Add the cooked lentils, tomato purée and seasoning. If the mixture is very thick add a little of the reserved cooking liquid from the lentils.
5. Cook for a further 5 minutes, transfer to an ovenproof dish, cover with mashed potato and sprinkle the grated cheese on top.
6. Bake for 30 minutes at 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5, until the top is golden brown.

## Cheese & Parsnip Roast

**Serves 2, Can be vegan\***

### Ingredients

750g/1.5lb parsnips  
 110g/4oz vegetarian or vegan cheese\*  
 1 egg (optional, omit for vegan option\*)  
 40g/1.5oz (vegan\*) margarine  
 1 tsp mixed herbs

### Method

1. Cook parsnips in boiling water for approximately 10 minutes.

2. Mash with margarine, egg (if using), cheese and herbs.
3. Place in greased dish and bake for approx 30 minutes at 150°C/300°F/gas mark 2 until brown.

Viva!s

## Artichoke Heart, Butterbean & Olive Filo Pie



### Serves 20, Vegan

A creamy, rich pie with a distinctive, delicious taste.

### Ingredients

3 large red onions, chopped fine plus a little olive oil  
 8 x 400g tins of butterbeans, rinsed and drained OR 1.9kg cooked beans  
 170ml olive oil  
 120ml lemon juice  
 1 large bunch of flat leaf parsley, finely chopped  
 2 tsp salt plus a very light sprinkling on each layer of the pie  
 ½ tsp black pepper plus a very light sprinkling on each layer of the pie  
 ½ tsp cayenne pepper  
 1kg frozen or tinned artichoke hearts and/or bottoms, chopped into smallish chunks  
 300g black or mixed olives, chopped quite fine – enough to enhance the flavours of the other ingredients without taking over  
 12 large sundried tomatoes, chopped very small with scissors  
 Filo pastry – enough to cover base, middle layer and lid several times

Olive oil or a mixture of olive and plain oil for basting the filo pastry

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
2. Heat a little olive oil and sauté the onion until tender.
3. In a separate container, part-blend some of the butterbeans until smooth. Mash the rest with a hand blender – aim for some texture amongst the creamed beans.
4. Add the olive oil, lemon juice, parsley, salt and cayenne. Mix in well.
5. Add the chopped artichoke hearts, olives and sundried tomatoes. Mix in gently. Taste and add more lemon juice/salt/pepper if necessary.
6. Oil a large metal baking dish (about 35cm x 30cm and 3–4 cm deep). Line it with overlapping layers of filo sheets, oiling each layer well. Make sure the sheets overhang the tray so they can be folded back on top of the bake.
7. Spoon half the filling smoothly and evenly on top of the filo base. Sprinkle with a little salt and black pepper. Fold over some of the filo layers, add more oiled filo and repeat the process with the second part of the filling. Finish the pie with more layers of oiled filo.
8. Bake for 20 – 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oven. Allow to cool a little before slicing into portions.

## Tofu Loaf

### Serves 6–8, Vegan

An attractive loaf that is good hot with vegetables or cold the next day in sandwiches.

### Ingredients

400g/14oz tofu, mashed  
50g/2oz wheat germ

3 tbsp of chopped parsley  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 tbsp soy sauce  
2 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes (optional)  
½ tbsp Dijon mustard  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
¼ tsp black pepper

### Method

1. Oil a loaf tin. Mix all the ingredients together and press into the tin.
2. Bake at 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4 for 1 hour.
3. Cool for about 10 minutes before removing from the pan.
4. Garnish with tomatoes and parsley. Serve with mashed potatoes and green leafy vegetables.

Adapted from *Tofu Cookery* by Louise Hagler with kind permission of The Book Publishing Company, Summertown, Tennessee.

Vegetarian Society's

## Vegetable & Chickpea Korma with Spicy Rice

Serves 4, Can be vegan\*



A mellow spiced and vibrantly coloured dish.

### Ingredients

#### For the curry

2 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 red onion, finely chopped  
3 garlic cloves, crushed

1 tsp turmeric  
 1 tsp paprika  
 1 tsp grated ginger  
 ½ tsp mild chilli powder  
 1 sweet potato peeled, cut into 2 cm cubes  
 1 small cauliflower cut into florets  
 1 red pepper, cut into pieces  
 1 yellow pepper, cut into pieces  
 400g can chickpeas, drained  
 100g roasted cashew nuts  
 1½ stock cubes diluted in 1 litre boiling water  
 100ml coconut milk  
 150g frozen peas  
 30g fresh coriander  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 1 tsp of cornflour to thicken the sauce  
 if preferred  
 200ml low fat natural yoghurt or  
 vegan yoghurt\*

#### For the spicy rice:

1 tbsp vegetable oil  
 1 onion, finely chopped  
 1 cinnamon stick  
 ½ tsp cumin powder  
 ½ tsp coriander powder  
 250g brown rice  
 1½ litres of water  
 50g peas

#### Method

1. Gently fry the onion in a large pan. After 5 mins add the garlic and continue to cook for another 2 minutes. Add the turmeric, paprika, ginger and chilli and cook for another 2 minutes.
2. Add sweet potato, cauliflower, peppers, chickpeas, cashew nuts, stock and coconut milk then bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. If you would like a thicker sauce mix 1 tsp of cornflour with a little water to make a paste. Add this to the Korma and gently stir for 5 minutes.

3. Finally add the peas and most of the coriander, retaining a little for garnish. Adjust the seasoning and serve with a spoonful of yoghurt and coriander to garnish.
4. To make the rice: Gently fry the onion in a large pan. After 5 minutes add the spices and continue to fry for 2 minutes. Add the rice and cover with water. Bring to the boil, and then simmer for 20 minutes until the water has been absorbed. Finally add the peas and cook for another 5 minutes. Depending on the size of pan used, you may need to add a little more water.
5. Drain off any excess water and serve.

## Shepherd's Pie

**Serves 4, Vegan**

#### Ingredients

700g/1.5lb floury potatoes  
 100g/4oz brown lentils  
 100g/4oz soya mince  
 1 onion, diced  
 2 carrots, diced  
 ½ swede, diced  
 100g/4oz peas  
 200ml/0.35 pint vegetable stock  
 2 tbsp tomato ketchup  
 1 tbsp soy sauce  
 1 bay leaf  
 2 tsp thyme  
 1 tsp sage  
 1 tsp dried parsley or 2 tbsp fresh parsley  
 1 heaped tbsp vegan margarine  
 100ml/0.175 pint soya milk

#### Method

1. Boil chopped, peeled potatoes until well done. Mash with margarine and milk, adding enough milk to achieve a fairly soft consistency. Season to taste.
2. Rinse lentils, cover with cold water, and

add bay leaf. Bring to boil and simmer until cooked – 20 – 25 minutes.

3. Sauté onion in a little oil. Add dried herbs, carrots and swede. Cook on a low heat for 5 minutes.
4. Add soya mince and stock, ketchup and soy sauce. Cook further 10 mins, then add peas and lentils (drained of any excess cooking liquid) and cook another 5 mins.
5. Check vegetables cooked through and taste to adjust seasoning.
6. Place mix into oven dish and top with the potato. Bake at 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6 for 35 – 45 mins, until potato browned.

Vegan Society's

## Spaghetti with Roast Vegetables & Lentils

**Serves 10, Vegan**

### Ingredients

285g/10oz green lentils  
 1.15 litres/2 pints light vegetable stock  
 285g/10oz sliced onion  
 680g/1.5lb cubed courgette  
 680g/1.5lb chopped tomatoes  
 4 tbsp rapeseed or other vegetable oil  
 5 crushed garlic cloves  
 2 tsp dried rosemary  
 565g/1.25lb spaghetti (preferably brown)

### Method

1. Boil lentils with vegetable stock until they are just cooked: about 30 minutes. If extra water is required add just enough to cover lentils. Once cooked drain off any excess water.
2. Meanwhile place onion, courgette, tomatoes, rosemary, vegetable oil and garlic in an ovenproof dish. Mix well and bake in preheated oven at 220°C/425°F/gas mark 7 for 20 minutes. Turn halfway through with a spatula.

3. Mix the roasted vegetables in with the lentils and cook gently for 5 – 10 minutes.
4. Serve over cooked spaghetti.

## Easy Nut Roast

**Serves 4, Vegan**

### Ingredients

150g/5oz chopped mixed nuts  
 75g/3oz wholemeal bread crumbs  
 Small onion – chopped  
 1 tbsp soy sauce  
 ½ tsp dried thyme  
 2 tbsp vegan margarine  
 1 tsp olive oil  
 1 tsp yeast extract  
 150ml/¼ pint hot water

### Method

1. Grind the nuts finely and mix in a bowl with crumbs, onion, soy sauce, thyme, margarine and oil.
2. Dissolve the yeast extract in the water and add to the mixture.
3. Mix well and press into a greased loaf tin.
4. Bake at 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5 for 30 – 40 minutes.

Cordon Vert's

## Orange, Lemon & Pistachio Cake

**Makes a 20 cm/8 inch cake, Vegan**

### Ingredients

#### Cake

175g self-raising flour  
 110g caster sugar  
 1 tsp baking powder  
 pinch salt  
 100g pistachios, very finely chopped (use grinder if possible)  
 125ml light vegetable oil  
 1 tsp lemon juice

125ml water  
 1 lemon, grated zest only  
 1 orange, grated zest only  
 4½ tbsp maple syrup

### Icing

75g icing sugar  
 1 tbsp lemon juice

### Decoration

25g pistachios, roughly chopped  
 1 orange, segmented

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Grease and line a 20cm/8 inch cake tin.
2. Mix flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and finely chopped pistachios together.
3. Mix vegetable oil, lemon juice and water together and stir in the lemon and orange zest.
4. Mix the wet and dry ingredients together.
5. Pour into the cake tin and bake for 35 – 40 minutes until golden and well risen.
6. Remove cake from oven, puncture with a skewer and drizzle with maple syrup. Leave in tin for 15 minutes, then turn out onto a cooling rack.
7. Make the icing by mixing the lemon juice into the icing sugar little by little until smooth. Pipe or drizzle over the cake and decorate with orange segments and chopped pistachios.

Viva!s

## Strawberry Tarts

**Serves 6, Vegan**

### Ingredients

#### Pastry

110g/scant 4oz vegan margarine  
 125g/4½oz icing or caster sugar  
 125g/4½oz plain flour

### Vanilla custard filling

65g/generous 2oz caster sugar  
 2 tbsp plain flour  
 4 tbsp cornflour  
 4 tbsp water  
 315ml/11fl oz soya milk  
 2 tsp vanilla extract  
 1 large punnet of strawberries

### Method

1. Make the custard filling. Mix the flour and cornflour together, beating vigorously with a hand or electric whisk until creamy.
2. Gently heat sugar and soya milk in a medium saucepan. Add cornflour/flour mixture and bring to boil, whisking thoroughly.
3. Cook sauce for one minute, stirring continuously and then add vanilla essence. Remove from heat, place in a bowl and set aside in fridge or cool place.
4. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Grease your tin or tins using low-cal oil spray or a light coating of plain cooking oil.
5. Make the pastry. In a medium-large bowl, cream the sugar and margarine together until smooth. Sieve the weighed flour over the bowl and mix in thoroughly.
6. If using individual tartlet tins, divide the pastry into six pieces. Otherwise place all the pastry into one 23cm/9 – 10 inch loose-bottomed tart tin. Roll it out between two sheets of greaseproof paper if it is too sticky.
7. Press the pastry in so that the bottom and sides are completely covered.
8. Put the tartlet tins/whole tin in the oven and bake for 15 – 20 minutes, or until a light golden brown.
9. Remove and allow to cool for a minute or two. Carefully remove the pastry case(s) from the tins and place on a rack.

10. Just before you are ready to serve, hull the strawberries and slice them thinly
11. Spoon the vanilla custard carefully into the tartlet case(s), making sure they are evenly filled.
12. Arrange the sliced strawberries neatly on top. Serve.

## Banana Yoghurt

**Serves 1, Can be vegan\***

This is delicious, nutritious and very easy to eat, making it excellent for someone who is under the weather or disinterested in food.

### Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 3 tbsp live yoghurt or soya yoghurt\*
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup\*
- 1 tbsp soft fruit (e.g. strawberries, peaches, or plums) or soaked dried fruit (e.g. apricots or prunes)

### Method

1. Mash the banana thoroughly, add the yoghurt and honey/syrup and mix well.
2. Mash the other soft fruit, or chop the dried fruit, and add this to the yoghurt.

Vegetarian Society's

## Nice but Naughty Fruit Compote *(pictured right)*

**Serves 4, Can be vegan\***

### Ingredients

#### Compote

- 2 apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- 200g ready to eat prunes, sliced
- 30g sultanas
- 200ml apple juice

#### Yoghurt mixture

- 50g blueberries or blackberries (reserve a few for the topping)
- 200g zero fat Greek yoghurt (or soya yoghurt for vegan option\*)

### Topping

- 75g oats
- 50g chopped hazelnuts
- Pinch of nutmeg or cinnamon

### Method

1. Place the compote ingredients into a large pan and gently simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Fold the blueberries into the yoghurt and set aside.
3. Place the oats, nuts and nutmeg or cinnamon into a non-stick pan. Gently heat for 5 minutes, stirring from time to time.
4. To serve, share out the fruit into four dishes, add a little yoghurt then top with the oat mixture and the reserved berries.





# Appendix – Health & Nutrition

## Health benefits of a vegetarian diet

We hope this catering booklet has provided you with all the steps needed to give your residents real food choices and realistic menus. Perhaps it has also introduced you to new foods. This section is aimed at providing you with some more reassurance to demonstrate the many health benefits of a vegetarian diet and a little nutrition know-how.

In the past, the case for a vegetarian or vegan diet may have appeared problematic but, over time, it has proved to be good for all stages of life (1) and evidence is now convincing in support of a plant based diet. Indeed, over recent years research has demonstrated that vegetarian and vegan diets may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases (1).

Plant based diets are generally rich in fruits and vegetables, high in fibre and low in saturated fat (2), a diet encouraged by the Department of Health. In contrast, surveys show the general population consumes too much saturated fat, added sugar and not enough fibre, with only 1/3 eating the recommended 5 a day of fruit and vegetables (3). The Department of Health '5 a day' recommendation is where one portion is equivalent to approximately 80 grams.

Studies have shown that, overall, people who follow a vegetarian diet have a lower risk of a number of chronic diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer and lower blood cholesterol levels (4). And vegetarians have lower mortality rates than the general population (5).

Typical older vegetarians have a more nutrient-dense diet than meat eaters, i.e. more nutrients per portion (6); benefit from being leaner than omnivores; and have good bowel regularity due to a high fibre diet (7). In short, a plant-based diet offers potential health benefits and may help to slow the aging process (8).

Although energy (calorie) needs fall with advancing age, the basic nutrient requirements are the same as for younger adults (9). Therefore, whether meat-eater or vegetarian, care needs to be taken to make sure that the food eaten, although lower in calories, contains all the nutrients needed for good health. For those wishing to look at nutritional standards in more detail, these have been set by the Food Standards Agency (10) and the British Dietetic Association has produced a digest (11).

The risk of dehydration is more common in older people, especially those dependent on others or where there is mental impairment, so it is important to ensure adequate fluid intake. A daily intake of 1,500–2,000ml is recommended – around 6–8 mugs (1 mug = 250ml). Soups, sauces, custards and gravies can be included in this recommendation.

Vitamin D is the only nutrient where dietary requirement increases. This is because some older people will have less exposure to sunlight (the main source of vitamin D). The Department of Health recommends regular sunlight exposure during May to September and a vitamin D supplement of 10 micrograms per day during winter months.

The other vitamin supplement that may be required is vitamin B12. Absorption of vitamin B12 decreases with age, so whether a meat-eater or vegetarian, a reliable B12 source is important. Examples are eggs and milk products, fortified non-dairy milks, yeast extracts and fortified cereals.

The Department of Health recommends 1.5 micrograms per day. For vegans, the Vegan Society recommends a daily intake of 3 micrograms from food, or a supplement of 10 micrograms once a day, or a 2,000 microgram supplement once a week.

For those caterers who are new to vegetarian diets, we hope this information has shown you that a vegetarian diet is safe and healthy, and doesn't mean that meals have to be uninteresting. With better food and more information, and an appreciation of the vegetarian way of living, such a diet can benefit people, the planet and animals.

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## Useful Contacts

### **Age UK**

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

### **Age Cymru**

[www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/)

### **Age NI (Northern Ireland)**

[www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland/)

### **Age Scotland**

[www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/)

### **Care Inspectorate**

[www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

### **Care Quality Commission**

[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

### **Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales**

[www.cssiw.wales.gov.uk](http://www.cssiw.wales.gov.uk)

### **The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority**

[www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

### **Cordon Vert Cookery School**

*Address as Vegetarian Society UK*

### **Demuths Vegetarian Cookery School**

6 Terrace Walk, Bath BA1 1LN

01225 427938

[www.demuths.co.uk](http://www.demuths.co.uk)

### **International Vegetarian Union**

[www.ivu.org](http://www.ivu.org)

### **The Vegan Society**

Donald Watson House, 21 Hylton Street

Hockley, Birmingham B18 6HJ

0121 523 1730 / 0845 4588244

[www.vegansociety.com](http://www.vegansociety.com)

### **The Vegetarian Society UK**

Parkdale, Dunham Road

Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4QB

0161 925 2000

[www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)

### **Viva! Health**

8 York Court, Wilder Street, Bristol BS2 8QH

0117 970 5190

[www.vegetarian.org.uk](http://www.vegetarian.org.uk)

[www.veganrecipeclub.org.uk](http://www.veganrecipeclub.org.uk)



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