

Cooking **FOR ONE**



Simply inspiring recipes and tips
for senior vegetarians and vegans,
or those who cater for them

CONTENTS

Introduction

"I don't know where to begin..."	3
About Vegetarian for Life	5
Recipes	6
Menu planner	24
Nutrition – what your body needs	26
Useful equipment	28
Trying something new	29
Useful resources	31

RECIPE INDEX

Breakfasts

- Herby tofu scramble	6
- Peanut butter smoothie	7
- Berry sunrise smoothie	8

Simple soups

- Simple vegetable soup	9
- Tomato and leek soup	9

Sandwiches and toast

- Quick walnut pâté	10
- Banana spread	11
- Vegan sandwich ideas	11

Simple, satisfying salads

- Fruity bean salad	12
- Veggie burger salad	13

Light lunches

- Curried courgette fritters	14
- Spinach and sweet potato pancakes	15

Vegetable heroes

- Baked sweet potatoes with avocado salsa	16
- Jacket potato fillings	16
- Quick ginger and miso stir-fry	17

Family favourites

- Vegan mac & cheez	18
- Mushroom and ale pot pies	19

Meat replacements

- Shepherdess pie	20
- Stuffed peppers with vegetarian haggis	21

Desserts that do you good

- Cranachan	22
- Aebleskage (Apple Charlotte)	23

INTRODUCTION

"Cooking for one is often the reality for many older people. So we have developed this recipe booklet especially for senior vegetarians and vegans who cook for themselves."

Most of these 'no-fuss' recipes are easy to make. The ingredient quantities are mostly for one or two servings. But it's easy to double the quantities if you are cooking for more people.

And of course there is no need to restrict yourself to 'recipes for one'. Many recipes can be adapted by reducing quantities in the correct proportions. Plus sensible use of the fridge and freezer usually means that you can avoid waste.

Allow hot dishes to cool before chilling them, and make sure the food is piping hot if you reheat it the following day.

The majority of dishes are suitable for freezing, and this may be the better approach if you don't like to eat the same meal two days running. Remember to label freezer containers with contents and date; to use within, say, a month; and to take food out of the freezer in plenty of time to thaw before heating.

As well as recipes, we've included a sample menu planner (see page 24) and a section on ingredients that might be unfamiliar to some readers (page 29). There's also a refresher on nutrition (page 26), a guide to useful equipment (page 28), and some useful resources, including details of our grants scheme (page 31).

We hope you'll enjoy reading this guide. Perhaps you will send us some of your own recipes for us to share with other senior vegetarians who enjoy cooking for themselves.

You might have been a vegetarian for years, or perhaps you're just starting to eat more meals without meat. We'd love to hear your stories. Do drop us a line by email or post. Contact details are on the back of this booklet.

"I don't know where to begin..."

If you are a novice, cookery may seem daunting. But the basic techniques are easy to master, no matter what your age. There are thousands of simple vegetarian and vegan recipes available.

Why not consider a cookery course? It's possible for Vegetarian for Life to organise cookery courses for groups of older people, in conjunction with the Vegetarian Society Cookery School or Demuths Cookery School, in Altrincham, Bath or out in the community. Please contact us if you're interested.

Convenience foods

It's good to be involved in preparing our own food for as long as we can. But as we get older we may need to rely more on convenience foods, community meals (also known as 'meals on wheels') or home-delivered meals that are chilled or frozen.

If you have access to a large supermarket you will find a range of vegetarian, and often vegan, convenience foods. For a quick way to find out what vegetarian and vegan items your local supermarket stocks, try the website My Supermarket: **www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegetarian** or **www.mysupermarket.co.uk/shelf/vegan**. Home delivery is available and with some supermarkets you can order by phone.

Of course, with internet access you can also find the websites for more specialised home delivery services. Just search for 'vegetarian food' on the internet and you'll come up with a range of suppliers.

If you live in a rural location or do not have access to the internet your choice may be more restricted. Smaller convenience stores usually have a limited veggie choice; and delis and health food shops usually stock some vegetarian and vegan ready-made foods. Perhaps you can get a friend, family member, or carer to venture further afield to a big store and stock your freezer up once in a while?



*“Vegetarian for Life has produced a meal service guide entitled **Dinners to your Door**. Available free of charge, it features many of the leading companies that produce meals for home delivery. Vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options are available. Contact us for details.*”

About Vegetarian for Life (VfL)

Vegetarian for Life (VfL) is a young and dynamic charity, which launched in 2008. Our vision is to improve the quality of life of older vegetarians and vegans.

We produce guides on catering for older vegetarians and vegans, with relevant nutrition, recipes, and healthy living advice. The range includes catering and healthy living handbooks, tips on cooking on a budget, nutrition for older vegetarians and vegans and more. Contact us for free copies.

And we have lots of vegetarian and vegan recipe ideas, from easy recipes for one through to budget cookery and recipes with a festive twist. We have great ideas for Burns Night and Valentine's Day through to Easter, Halloween and Christmas.

The Blog on our website hosts an online community for older vegetarians and vegans. It's a place to share comments, useful information and recipes, and ask any questions about a vegetarian diet. It also contains regular updates on our work.

For older vegetarians who want to continue living independently, we offer grants to assist with financial hardship. Find out more on page 31 or by contacting us.

Since there are currently no fully vegetarian care homes in the UK, one of our major goals is to improve the standard of vegetarian and vegan catering in existing homes. Members of the VfL UK List follow our Code of Good Practice by providing good vegetarian catering (and often vegan too). By the end of 2014, membership topped 800, with a good geographical spread through the UK. You can search the UK List on our website, or contact us for more information.

**Vegetarian
for Life** 



BREAKFASTS

“Everybody knows that breakfast is important. You need food to provide energy for the day ahead. It's easy to swap to dairy-free milks for use on cereals or in porridge, and you might enjoy some meat substitute products as part of a 'full English'. Vegetarian versions of bacon, sausages and even black pudding are now available.”

Herby tofu scramble

© Vegan Recipe Club www.veganrecipeclub.org.uk

*If you're avoiding eggs, try this clever trick with tofu.
This easy dish is packed with protein.*

1 tbsp olive oil
½ onion
1 garlic clove
1 tbsp white flour
120ml soya milk
1 block tofu (200–250g), crumbled
½ tsp dried mixed herbs
½ tsp turmeric
3 medium vine tomatoes, finely chopped
1 dsp Dijon mustard (or to taste)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
6 basil leaves chopped with scissors
Optional: 2 handfuls of spinach leaves (add at stage 3 below)

Vegan

Serves 1

1. Fry the onion and garlic on a low heat until soft.
2. Stir in the flour, followed by the soya milk. Stir well to get rid of lumps and cook for a minute or two.
3. Add the tofu, tomatoes, herbs, turmeric and mustard (and spinach, if using) and stir for 5 minutes.
4. Serve on toast, with fresh basil leaves and salt and pepper to taste.



SMOOTHIES

“Breakfast smoothies are a great way to start your day, especially if you don't have the appetite for toast or cereal. Both these recipes contain good sources of protein.”

Peanut butter smoothie

Can be
vegan

Serves 1

Perfect if you don't want to start measuring ingredients first thing in the morning! Try using flavoured yoghurts, different nut butters or tahini to create your own signature smoothie.

1 ripe banana
1 individual plain or vanilla yoghurt (can be vegan)
1 yoghurt-tub of milk or non-dairy milk
½ yoghurt-tub of rolled oats
½ yoghurt-tub of peanut butter
1 tsp ground cinnamon

1. Roughly chop the banana and put into a food processor or blender with the yoghurt.
2. Use the empty yoghurt tub to measure the milk, the oats and the peanut butter, and add to the mixture with the cinnamon.
3. Blend until smooth and serve immediately.



Berry sunrise smoothie

© Vegan 100 Everyday Recipes by Love Food Editors, Parragon Books

Vegan

Serves 1

“A great way to start using tofu. Be sure to get the silken type, not firm tofu. You can use the frozen berries straight from the freezer and your smoothie will be ice-cold and refreshing.”

1 banana
55g silken tofu, drained
(about 1/6 block – see page
29 for tips on using up
leftover tofu)
175ml orange juice
200g frozen mixed berries

1. Roughly chop the banana and the tofu into smaller pieces.
2. Place all of the ingredients into a food processor or blender, or place into a large, deep bowl and use a hand-held blender. Blend gently until thoroughly combined.
3. Serve immediately in a tall drinking glass.



SIMPLE SOUPS

“Soups are super easy to make once you know how. They can be a great way to use up spare vegetables and garden produce. It makes sense to cook soup in larger quantities and freeze it in individual portions – so that you can always have a warming, nutritious meal without much work!”

Simple vegetable soup

© The Vegetarian Society Cookery School www.vegsoocookeryschool.org

Vegan

Serves 2

1 tbsp vegetable oil
½ onion, peeled and
chopped
1 leek, washed, trimmed
and chopped
500ml light vegetable stock
1 small baking potato,
peeled and cut into cubes
1 handful frozen peas

1. Heat the oil in a medium-sized saucepan and fry the onion and leeks until soft.
2. Add the stock and potato and bring to the boil. Simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add the peas and bring back to the boil, then simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Cool slightly and blend with a food processor. Season to taste.



Tomato and leek soup

This simple, flavourful soup is just as good cold, and perfect on a hot day. Make it into a heartier meal by stirring in some drained, rinsed canned beans and serving with bread or toast.

1 leek
½ tin of peeled, chopped
tomatoes
1 tbsp olive oil
½ litre vegetable stock
1 tsp fresh or dried oregano
or thyme

Vegan

Serves
1–2



1. Trim the leek and chop it finely. Fry it in the oil until soft.
2. Stir in the tomatoes, stock and herbs and simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Allow to cool a little, then liquidise and reheat.

SANDWICHES AND TOAST

“There’s no reason why a sandwich can’t make a meal, but many vegetarians get stuck in a rut with the same old cheese or egg mayo. If you’re avoiding animal products, don’t make the mistake of eating plain salad sandwiches. Add a smear of nutritious nut butter or yeast extract to make sure you get some useful vitamins and minerals with every meal.”

Quick walnut pâté

© Vegan 100 Everyday Recipes by Love Food Editors, Parragon Books

Vegan

Makes
4 small
portions

125g walnuts, roughly chopped
125g fresh brown breadcrumbs (see tip)
1 small red onion, roughly chopped
1 tbsp fresh chopped tarragon
1 tbsp fresh chopped chives
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp tomato purée
1 tsp soya sauce
1 tbsp vegan red wine (optional)
2 tsp walnut oil

1. Place all the ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and blend to a smooth pâté. If the breadcrumbs are quite dry you may need to add a little more oil or red wine.
2. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and chill before serving with crackers or crusty bread.



“Make stale bread a thing of the past by keeping your loaves in the freezer. Most toasters these days have a special setting that makes it easy to defrost on demand. If you don’t like crusts, blitz them in a blender and turn them into breadcrumbs for this recipe!”

Banana spread

Vegan

Makes 1
portion

“A sweet treat on crunchy brown toast, this is just the thing for a late supper. Tahini is a nutritious, nutty-tasting paste made from sesame seeds, which is rich in calcium (see page 29).”

1 ripe banana
1 tbsp tahini
1 tbsp maple syrup
A squeeze of lemon juice
A pinch of ground cinnamon

1. Mash the banana in a bowl using a fork, then stir in the rest of the ingredients.
2. Serve right away.

“We love the 60 vegan sandwich ideas developed by Tony Bishop Weston of Foods for Life. You can find the whole list online at www.foodsforlife.org.uk. Our favourites include:

- **Peanut Butter and Jelly** – organic peanut butter and organic no-sugar jam
- **Ploughman** – vegan cheddar Cheezly, pickle, radishes and lettuce
- **Bagpipe Bun** – vegan haggis, piccalilli and salad
- **My Mate** – yeast extract, soft dairy-free cream cheese and slivers of Granny Smith apple
- **Miso You Madly** – miso, walnuts or beansprouts and crisp salad
- **For Alfalfa’s Sake** – alfalfa sprouts and red roasted pepper hummus
- **Bloody Mary** – tomatoes, black pepper, sun-dried tomato paste on olive ciabatta
- **Monster Munch** – nut loaf, salad and pickle
- **Tzatziki Tingler** – cucumber, vegan yoghurt, tahini, mint, garlic with watercress
- **Chocoholic** – organic fair-trade hazelnut and chocolate spread with bananas
- **Wimbledon** – vegan dairy-free cream cheese and freeze-dried strawberries or sugar-free strawberry jam
- **Totally Tropical** – vegan cream cheese with dried apricots, pineapple and sunflower seeds
- **Wonderful Waldorf** – vegan mayo, apple, celery, walnuts and sultanas
- **Sunday Roast** – ‘Cheatin beef’, horseradish, alfalfa and red onion
- **Spotted Dick** – vegan cream cheese with raisins and sultanas
- **Squish and Chips** – fishless fingers and chips with vegan mayo and lettuce

© Tony Bishop-Weston, Foods for Life www.foodsforlife.org.uk



SIMPLE, SATISFYING SALADS

The sky's the limit when it comes to salads. Think up combinations of roots, shoots and fruits, add nuts, seeds or cooked grains, and pieces of cheese or boiled egg if you like. Make a dressing by whisking any sort of vinegar or fruit juice with any sort of vegetable oil. A rough ratio is three parts oil to one part acid (vinegar or juice), but do have a taste once you've mixed it up.

Fruity bean salad

This is a handy store-cupboard salad with colours that are guaranteed to brighten up a dull day!

Half a can of mixed beans,
drained and rinsed
Half a can of sweetcorn with
peppers, drained
75g cherry tomatoes, halved
Half a can of pineapple
pieces in juice
3 tbsp olive oil
Salt and pepper

1. Drain the pineapple juice into a bowl and whisk in the olive oil, salt and pepper, to make a fruity dressing.
2. Mix all the salad ingredients together and stir in the dressing. If you plan to make the salad again with the reserved ingredients, don't forget to save some of the dressing in a jar in the fridge.
3. Serve on a bed of lettuce or with a baked potato (see page 17 for tips).

Vegan

Serves
1-2



Veggie burger salad

© Nadia Render www.facebook.com/NadsNorfolk

Here's an idea to change the way you look at salads – it's nutritious and satisfying too.

Can be
vegan

Serves 1

Two of your favourite veggie
burgers

A handful of unsalted
cashew nuts

Half an avocado

1 small carrot

A handful of fresh basil
leaves, roughly torn

A generous handful of mixed
green salad leaves

For the dressing:

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 tbsp balsamic vinegar

1 tsp soya sauce

2 tsp lemon juice

Dried chilli flakes (optional)

½ tsp dried oregano

1. To make the dressing, put the ingredients into a screw-top jar, shake well and then set aside in the fridge while you make the salad.
2. Cook the burgers in your favourite way (oven-bake, grill, fry or barbecue!) and chop into bite-sized pieces. You can assemble the salad while they are still warm or wait until they have cooled.
3. Chop the cashews roughly.
4. Peel and chop the avocado half.
5. Scrub or peel the carrot and grate it.
6. Give the salad dressing another shake and toss all the salad ingredients together. Serve immediately.



LIGHT LUNCHES

“These quick and easy cooker-top dishes are ideal for a light lunch. Try frying with coconut oil if you can get it – it has a lovely flavour and lots of people like to use it as a moisturiser on their hair and skin.”

Curried courgette fritters

© The Adventurous Vegetarian: Around the World in 30 Meals
by Jane Hughes, New Internationalist Publications Ltd

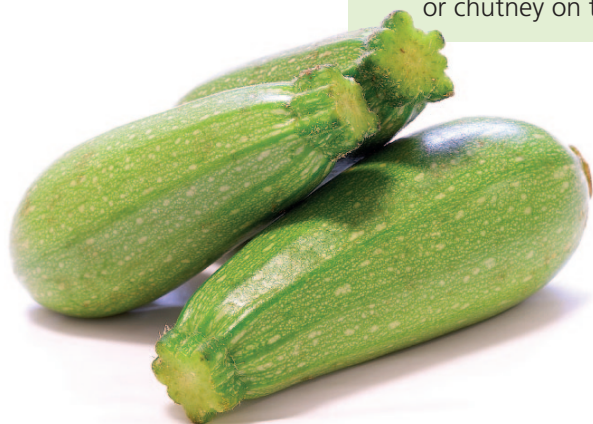
Black sesame seeds have a lovely crunch and they're rich in calcium, but it's fine to leave them out or use white sesame seeds in this recipe.

1 medium onion, finely diced
3 small courgettes, coarsely
grated
100g chickpea (Gram) flour
or wholemeal flour
1 tsp salt
1 tbsp sweet chili sauce
1 tbsp black sesame seeds
1 tsp mild curry powder
Vegetable oil or coconut oil,
for frying

1. Fry the onion in a little oil until soft and translucent.
2. Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl. The moisture from the courgettes should make everything the right consistency – add a splash of water if it seems too dry to hold together.
3. Let the mixture sit for around 20 minutes in the fridge, then stir again. (If you are in a rush, this is not absolutely necessary, but if you do it you will end up with a more consistent mix that will stick together better.)
4. Heat a little oil in a non-stick pan and fry small spoonfuls of the mixture for around 4–5 minutes each side or until golden brown and cooked right through.
5. Serve immediately with sweet chili sauce, salsa or chutney on the side.

Vegan

Makes about
8 – enough
for 2–3
servings



Spinach and sweet potato pancakes

Vegan

Makes 4
pancakes,
enough for
2 servings

© Vegan 100 Everyday Recipes by Love Food Editors, Parragon Books

“These clever pancakes are made without eggs or dairy milk, but contain chickpea flour which is rich in protein.”

For the pancakes:

100g sweet potato, peeled
and grated
1 small red onion, finely
chopped
50g plain flour
50g chickpea (Gram) flour
200ml soya milk
Vegetable oil or coconut oil,
for frying

For the filling:

150g fresh baby spinach
leaves, shredded
20g currants
1 tbsp olive oil
30g pine nuts
Salt and pepper



1. Cook the spinach in a medium saucepan with a splash of water until wilted (2–3 minutes).
2. Turn it onto a plate, allow to cool slightly and blot with kitchen towel to remove as much water as possible.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the soya milk, flour and chickpea flour.
4. Stir in the grated sweet potato and onion, and mix thoroughly.
5. Warm the vegetable oil in a large frying pan and pour a quarter of the pancake mixture into the pan, using the back of a spoon to spread the mixture out to the edges of the pan.
6. Fry for 2–3 minutes on each side, turning carefully once or twice, until browning and crisp.
7. Transfer to a warmed plate lined with kitchen towel and make three more pancakes.
8. Return the spinach to the saucepan with the currants, olive oil and pine nuts, season with salt and pepper and stir fry for a minute or two to heat through.
9. Fill each pancake with the warm spinach mixture and serve immediately.



VEGETABLE HEROES

You'll get more than your 5-a-day with these vegetable dishes!

Baked sweet potatoes with avocado salsa

© Nadia Render www.facebook.com/NadsNorfolk

Can be
vegan*

Makes 2
servings

“Sweet potatoes make a nice change from the usual spuds. Seasoning the skins is a good trick to make them crisp and tasty.”

For the salsa:

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and cut into rough cubes
- ½ large white onion, diced roughly
- 1 small red pepper, cut into rough cubes
- 2 corn on the cobs (steamed and then corn removed from cob) – or use tinned sweetcorn
- Fresh thyme
- 1 tsp curry powder
- Cracked black pepper
- Sea salt
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1–2 tsp lemon juice

For the potatoes:

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- Olive oil
- Paprika and/or chilli powder
- Salt and pepper
- Grated chive cheddar*

For the salsa:

1. Put all the ingredients into a bowl and mix thoroughly. Leave to marinate in the fridge for at least half hour before serving.

For the potatoes:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Rub the potato skins with a little olive oil, sprinkle with paprika or chilli powder (or both if you love a bit of spice!) and season with salt and pepper.
3. Wrap up in tin foil and bake for about an hour or until soft.
4. Split, top with grated cheese and pop under the grill for a minute or two before serving.

“VfL supporter Gill Gibbs sent us these ideas for jacket potato fillings to make a nice change from cheese and beans!”

- Vegetable curry, yoghurt and banana
- Ratatouille and kidney beans
- Vegetable chilli and salsa
- Fried crispy mushrooms
- Mushy peas, mayo, fried onion
- Sweetcorn, celery and mayo
- Cream cheese, walnut and sultana
- Curried baked beans and chutney



Quick ginger and miso stir-fry

Vegan

Serves 2

© Vegan 100 Everyday Recipes by Love Food Editors, Parragon Books

“Miso is a savoury paste made from fermented soya beans (see page 30). It's a good source of B vitamins and you can also make a hot drink from it by stirring a teaspoon into a mug of boiling water.”

- 1 tsp miso paste dissolved in 2 tbsp boiling water
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 2½ cm root ginger (approx 30g)
- 1 green pepper, chopped into matchsticks
- 1 red pepper, chopped into matchsticks
- ¼ white cabbage, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, peeled and cut into matchsticks
- 1 red chilli, finely chopped
- 6 spring onions, finely chopped
- 50g fresh or frozen green soya (edamame) beans
- 50g cashews, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp toasted sesame oil

1. Mix the tomato purée into the warm miso.
2. Grate the ginger coarsely, gather up the grated ginger and squeeze the juice into the miso mixture.
3. Heat the vegetable oil and sesame oil in a large wok and stir fry the vegetables, beans and nuts for 5 minutes.
4. Stir in the miso ginger mixture and cook for a further minute.
5. Serve on a bed of rice or noodles.

Microwaved jacket potatoes

A time- and money-saving way of preparing jacket potatoes is to cook them in a microwave. Scrub the potatoes and prick them with a fork. Set the microwave to 6 minutes on high and cook the potatoes until tender. You may need a more or less time depending on the size of your potatoes and your microwave.



*TRY A VEGAN CHEESE – THERE ARE LOTS LISTED AT WWW.VEGANCHEESE.CO.UK, AND YOU CAN BUY ONLINE OR IN HEALTH FOOD SHOPS.

Vegan mac & cheez

© The Adventurous Vegetarian: Around the World in 30 Meals
by Jane Hughes, New Internationalist Publications Ltd

Vegan

Serves 4

“It’s possible to have comforting macaroni cheese without dairy products. The key ingredient here is nutritional yeast (see page 30) which has an amazing cheesy flavour and is rich in B vitamins.”

300g dried macaroni
125g vegan margarine
60g plain flour
1 litre boiling water
½ tsp salt
2 tbsp soya sauce
2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
A pinch of turmeric
60ml/4 tbsp vegetable oil
50g nutritional yeast flakes
A dusting of smoked paprika

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5.
2. Cook the macaroni in boiling water until just tender, drain and set aside (see tip below).
3. Melt the margarine in a saucepan, stir in the flour and cook for a minute, stirring constantly.
4. Whisk in the boiling water, salt, garlic and turmeric, and continue to stir until the mixture thickens.
5. Then add the oil and nutritional yeast flakes, mix thoroughly and remove from the heat.
6. Stir around ¾ of the sauce into the macaroni and transfer to a deep ovenproof dish.
7. Pour the remaining sauce over the top and sprinkle with a little smoked paprika.
8. Place the dish in the oven to warm through (around 15 minutes), and, if you like, pop it under a hot grill to brown the top just before serving.

“Cooking pasta”

Once you’ve tried this simple energy and money-saving trick you’ll never go back. Boil the water for pasta in a kettle. Place the water and pasta in a pan, cover with a well-fitting lid, and bring back to the boil. Then turn the electricity/gas off. When the cooking time specified on the packet is up, you’ll find that it’s cooked as normal!



Mushroom and ale pot pies

© Vegan 100 Everyday Recipes by Love Food Editors, Parragon Books

Vegan

Serves 2

“More comfort food, this is ideal for an autumn evening. You’ll need two small ovenproof pie dishes (about 350ml capacity each). Use a vegetable stock cube to make the stock.”

200g button mushrooms, wiped and sliced
1 onion, roughly chopped
1 leek, sliced
1 tbsp olive oil
3 tbsp plain white flour
250ml vegan stock
250ml dark vegan beer
1 tsp chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp soya sauce
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 sheet ready-rolled puff pastry

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5.
2. In a large saucepan, fry the mushrooms, onion and leek in the olive oil for 10 minutes until the mushrooms have softened.
3. Stir in the flour and cook for a further minute, then gradually whisk in the stock and ale.
4. Stir in the parsley and soya sauce and cook for a further 10 minutes, then remove from the heat, check and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper, and allow to cool.
5. Place the pastry sheet on a floured board and cut two pie tops to fit the bowls you are using. Divide the cooled pie filling between the bowls, place the pastry lids on top and transfer to the oven.
6. Bake for 15–20 minutes until the pastry is puffy and browned. Serve immediately.



MEAT REPLACEMENTS

“If you’re hungry for something ‘meaty’, there are lots of satisfying vegetarian and vegan alternatives. Experiment with veggie mince and Quorn, or use lentils and mushroom chunks.”

Shepherdess pie

© The Adventurous Vegetarian: Around the World in 30 Meals
by Jane Hughes, New Internationalist Publications Ltd

This meat-free Shepherd’s Pie has a tasty topping of mash with mustard and chilli sauce. If you prefer, it’s fine to keep it plain.

For the base:

150g brown lentils (or use tinned, drained green lentils)
720ml water
1 large onion, finely diced
1 tsp dried sage
1 tsp salt
450g passata (or liquidised canned tomatoes)

For the topping:

3 large potatoes, steamed and mashed
1 tbsp sweet chili sauce
1 tsp wholegrain mustard
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp salt
1,240ml soya or rice milk

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C/300°F/gas mark 2. If using tinned lentils, omit stage 2.
2. Cook the lentils in the water for around 30 minutes or until soft. Drain, if there is any water left.
3. Transfer the lentils to a mixing bowl and mix with the remaining base ingredients.
4. In another bowl, mix all topping ingredients together.
5. Put the base mixture into a shallow ovenproof dish, smooth out and top with the potato mixture.
6. Bake for 30 minutes until browning and crisp

Vegan

Serves 4



Stuffed peppers with vegetarian haggis

Can be
vegan

Serves 4

© Macsween www.macsween.co.uk

“It might sound strange, but vegetarian haggis is a handy meat substitute and a time-saving ingredient too (see page 29). If you don’t want four stuffed peppers, cook the haggis, use half of it and save the rest in a covered container in the fridge for a few days. It’s good on toast too!”

454g Macsween Delicious
Every Day Vegetarian
Haggis
4 red or yellow peppers,
halved and deseeded (leave
stalks on)
50g grated cheddar,
crumbled feta or halloumi –
*or use a vegan cheese

1. Cook the vegetarian haggis according to the instructions on the pack.
2. Meanwhile, place the pepper halves under a medium grill, with the outside facing up, for a few minutes, until they have softened and are beginning to char.
3. Remove the peppers from the grill, turn over and fill with the hot vegetarian haggis.
4. Sprinkle the cheese on top and place back under the grill for a further 5 minutes until the cheese is bubbling.



DESSERTS THAT DO YOU GOOD

“Desserts aren’t just a treat – they can top up your intake of nutrients in a fun and flavourful way.”

Cranachan

© Vegan Recipe Club www.veganrecipeclub.org.uk

Get your oats the Scottish way with this lovely fruity, creamy vegan dessert. A simplified, healthy and vegan version of Cranachan, a traditional Scottish dessert.

60g/2oz porridge oats
1 tub Alpro or Granose dairy-free cream (approximately 250ml)
3 tbsp agave syrup – from large supermarkets/health food shops. Use 2 tbsp caster sugar dissolved in the whisky and some of the berry juice if you can’t get it
1 tbsp whisky
175g/6oz raspberries OR loganberries if you can get them! If frozen, defrost in the fridge beforehand

1. Lightly toast the oats in a frying pan, stirring constantly to avoid burning.
2. Remove from heat and pour in the ‘cream’ slowly.
3. Stir well. Add the agave syrup and whisky, mixing in well.
4. Add most of the raspberries, keeping a few back for garnish. It looks best served in tall glasses – portion out each ingredient in layers then refrigerate until needed.



Vegan

Serves
1-2

Aeblekage (Apple Charlotte)

© The Adventurous Vegetarian: Around the World in 30 Meals
by Jane Hughes, New Internationalist Publications Ltd

“Try customising this traditional Danish dessert by adding some raisins, orange zest or chopped dates. This makes enough for up to four servings, so keep the apples and breadcrumbs in separate containers in the fridge and assemble just before eating.”

450g cooking apples
1 lemon
4-5 tbsp honey (or use maple syrup to make it vegan)
75g fresh white breadcrumbs
100g caster sugar
75g hazelnuts, chopped



1. Peel, core and chop the apples. Put them into a large, heavy-bottomed pan.
2. Add the zest and juice of the lemon and cook gently for 10 minutes until the apples begin to break down.
3. Mash them up with a wooden spoon and, while they are still warm, mix in as much honey or maple syrup as you like – some people like their apples quite tart.
4. Set the apple mixture aside to cool – or chill if you want to enjoy the dish really cold.
5. Put the breadcrumbs into a frying pan and stir in the sugar. Heat the mixture gently, stirring continually, until the sugar melts and the breadcrumbs become crisp and golden – take care not to let the mixture burn.
6. When you judge that it is perfectly crisp and not too brown, tip it onto a plate to stop it from cooking further.
7. Divide half of the apple mixture between four glass serving dishes. Cover each with a layer of the sweet, crispy crumbs. Divide the rest of the apple mixture between the dishes and finish with the rest of the breadcrumbs and the chopped nuts.
8. Serve immediately, while the crumbs are still crisp!

Can be
vegan

Makes
up to 4
servings

Menu planners

In our Catering for Older Vegetarians and Vegans guide we give menu ideas to caterers for a 4 week cycle of meals. But the ideas are equally good for individual vegetarians or vegans. We have reproduced the vegan version here.

Please note:

- We are not suggesting that you follow these planners specifically. They are simply intended to show how easy it is to cater for vegetarians or vegans, with variety and nutrition taken into account.
- The menus are examples only, and cover a mixture of seasons
- The planners aim for a good daily nutritional balance, and great food variety over each week
- 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 cottage pie, toad in the hole, bolognese, cream etc – mean the vegan/vegetarian versions!

Vegan 4-week planner

WEEK 1

DAY	LUNCH	DINNER
Mon	Mushroom stroganoff with herb topping, rice, peas. Chocolate cake	Baked potato, baked beans, date & orange salad. Fresh fruit
Tue	Lentil & spinach quiche, chips, mixed salad. Stewed apples & raisins	Tomato & basil soup, croutons. Amy's vegan lemon meringue pie
Wed	Savoury roast, potatoes, broccoli. Jam sponge and custard	Hummus, pitta bread, raw vegetable strips. Date & walnut slice
Thu	Country cottage pie, cabbage. Yoghurt & mixed berries	Tofu scramble & baked tomatoes, toast Fruit pie
Fri	Chick pea croquettes, chips, green salad. Rice pudding	Macaroni soup, bread roll. Banana split, ice cream
Sat	Stuffed pepper, green bean salad. Pear/cinnamon crumble, custard	Vegetable Pasty Melon Boats, Fruit cocktail
Sun	Nut roast, roast pots, carrots, sprouts. Apple pie, ice cream	'Ham' and salad sandwiches. Victoria sponge

WEEK 2

DAY	LUNCH	DINNER
Mon	Vegan pizza, side salad. Fruit yoghurt	Carrot & coriander soup, crusty bread. Banana, apricot & walnut muffins
Tue	Pasta Bolognese, sweetcorn & beetroot salad. Ginger cake	Avocado & hummus salad. Fruit trifle
Wed	Bean burgers, chips, green salad. Fresh fruit salad	Savoury pudding. Eccles cakes
Thu	Vegetable lattice, potatoes, broccoli. Strawberries & cream	Lentil & vegetable soup, bread roll. Cheese & biscuits
Fri	Cauliflower cheese, baked potato, peas. Apricot & blueberry crumble	Vegetable samosas, coleslaw Carrot cake
Sat	Tofu loaf, ratatouille. Stewed rhubarb, yoghurt	Pasta salad, garlic bread. Jelly & ice cream
Sun	Mushroom pate en crouete, potatoes, beans, carrots. Chocolate sponge	Marmite, peanut butter & cress sandwiches. Fruit tart

WEEK 3

DAY	LUNCH	DINNER
Mon	Florida cocktail. Mushroom goulash rice, peas. Baked fruit pudding/custard	Potato wedges, hummus and salad. Toasted teacake and jam
Tue	Toad in the hole, mash, carrots, peas. Stewed apple/blackberry, custard	Mixed berry & fennel salad. Fruit cake
Wed	Almond & vegetable korma, rice. Chocolate chip ice cream	Nut rissoles with carrot & cabbage salad. Fruit pancakes
Thu	Lasagne, mixed salad. Spiced apple cake	Baked potato, baked beans. Apple flapjack
Fri	Roasted Mediterranean veg & cashews, oven chips. Kiwi fruit salad	Lentil slices, tomato salad. Apricot fool
Sat	Herby sunflower pudding, chips, baked tomato. Poached figs	Salad stuffed ciabattas. Pecan pie
Sun	Roast 'turkey', roast potatoes, carrots, peas. Fresh fruit	Vegan ploughman's, celery, tomatoes. Apricot & almond crumble

WEEK 4

DAY	LUNCH	DINNER
Mon	Shepherds pie, butter beans, cabbage Dried fruit compote	Sweetcorn chowder, bread roll. Parkin
Tue	Moussaka, broccoli, baked tomatoes. Strawberry shortcake	Nutty carrot soup with savoury biscuits. Fruit loaf
Wed	Big salad with nuts, new potatoes Sultana sponge	Garlic mushrooms on toast Vegan cheesecake with mango
Thu	Bean potato cakes, broccoli, carrots. Chocolate mousse	Baked sweet potato with natural yoghurt & cinnamon. Fresh fruit
Fri	Spaghetti with roast vegetables & lentils, sweet pepper salad. Grilled grapefruit	Vegan cheese or baked beans on toast. Fruit scone and jam
Sat	Nut roast, courgettes. Baked apple with dates & marmalade	Vegetable ravioli. Banana yoghurt
Sun	Vegetable crumble, roast parsnips, peas, carrots. Fruit flan	Soya cheese and tomato sandwich. Cherry cake

Nutrition – what your body needs

Nutrition is important. You may no longer be growing, but the old saying ‘you are what you eat’ still holds true. You need good food to keep your body in good repair and to provide you with the energy to do all the things you want to do. One of the most important things to check is that you’re eating enough food to meet your energy (calorie) requirements. You can gauge this by checking that you’re not losing weight.

A good way to make sure you’re getting everything you need is to avoid eating the same old things all the time. Make sure that your diet is varied and take advantage of fresh produce that is in season.

Protein

Important for tissue repair and energy. Good sources of protein include:

- pulses (peas, all types of beans, tofu and lentils)
- nuts and seeds, and their butters
- eggs and dairy products (not suitable for vegans).

Mock meats and grains provide useful amounts of protein, too.

These foods can be ground, puréed, mashed or grated and added to other foods. For example, pulses work well in soups, stews and curries. Silken tofu, ground nuts and nut butters can be added to soups and smoothies.

Vitamin D

Important for bone health, vitamin D is a nutrient that we need to take particular care over in our later years. That’s partly because our bodies make much of the vitamin D we need when we get sunshine on our skin. If you don’t go out much, you might not be able to make the vitamin D that you need. The Department of Health recommends regular sunlight exposure from May to September, and a vitamin D supplement of 10 micrograms per day during the winter months.

Iron

Important for energy. Iron is found in wholegrains, green vegetables, pulses and eggs. Dried figs are an excellent source. Just three can give you 29% of your recommended daily intake. And fortified breakfast cereals, especially bran flakes, are another rich source of iron. Having a glass of orange juice with your meal can help your body to absorb iron from your food.

Vitamin B12

Important for the nervous system. Our ability to absorb vitamin B12 from our food decreases as we age. Good sources are dairy products and eggs, yeast extracts and foods with added vitamins, such as breakfast cereals and non-dairy milks. The Vegan Society recommends a daily intake of 3 micrograms from food or a supplement of 10 micrograms per day, or a supplement of 2,000 micrograms once a week.

For more money- and waste-saving tips, please order our free Cooking on a Budget guide



Boosting your immune system

The important nutrients for fighting infection are zinc, vitamin B6 and vitamin E.

Sources of zinc: Pulses (peas, beans and lentils), green vegetables, sesame and pumpkin seeds, sourdough bread.

Sources of vitamin B6: Wholegrains, soya beans, peanuts, walnuts, hazelnuts, raisins, bananas and yeast extract.

Sources of vitamin E: Plant oils such as soya, corn and olive oil, nuts and seeds, and wheatgerm (found in cereals and cereal products).

For more information about getting the balance right, please order our free guide, Nutrition for Older Vegetarians and Vegans.

Useful equipment

Some kitchen gadgets are inexpensive and can make the cook's job much easier!

Food processor

Food processors make quick work of grinding nuts, making bread into crumbs, chopping or grating vegetables and liquidising soups. Try making pastry by whizzing the flour and butter or margarine together, and then adding cold water, a little at a time, with the motor running. The pastry will soon clump together and can be used right away.

Goblet (jug) liquidiser

Goblet liquidisers don't offer the multiple functions of food processors but cost less, and take up less space in the kitchen. You can make smooth soups and sauces, fruit smoothies and milk shakes, beany pâtés and hummus. Rinse the goblet out as soon as you have finished using it, so that you don't have to get too close to the blades with a dishcloth.

Stick blender

A cheaper option is the hand-held electric stick blender, which you can use to liquidise soups while they're still in the saucepan. Keep the end of the blender submerged to prevent splashing and stay away from the edges of the pan. Stick blenders can damage non-stick surfaces.

Microwave

Microwaves are really useful for quickly defrosting frozen food and warming up plated left-overs. Vegetables can be cooked very quickly in a little water, and they're also good for speedy baked apples, jacket potatoes (see page 17), and scrambled eggs. Many come with their own cookbooks which can be useful if you haven't used a microwave before.

A type of microwave called a combination microwave uses convection heating (fanned hot air) and comes with a grill. While they tend to be a little more expensive than basic microwaves, they use microwaves, grilling and convection heating to both cook and brown food. This produces good results, even on complicated meals, and may save you space in the kitchen.

Freezer

You can save money by freezing portions of food. As well as saving leftovers, you can take advantage of cheap deals in the shops and freeze the extra for another day. Blitz stale bread into crumbs and freeze for future use in crumbles, pâtés and 'burgers'. You can also grate and freeze oddments of cheese, portions of soaked and cooked beans, pancakes interleaved with baking parchment and even cartons of milk!



Trying something new

Trying new foods can be a good way to make sure your diet is varied. If you prefer light meals, using small amounts of foods that are nutritionally rich will help you get all the nutrients you need. We present here some foods that can save you cooking time and others that might be a vital nutrient boost.

Couscous

Couscous looks like a grain but is in fact made from wheat flour rolled into tiny balls. You can get wholegrain couscous and you may also be able to find couscous made from other grains such as spelt. Couscous is wonderfully easy to prepare. Simply spread it onto a dinner plate and add some boiling water. It will quickly absorb the water. Leave it to sit for a few minutes, then fluff it up with a fork and it's ready to use. It can be used like rice with a variety of hot meals. Or add some chopped salad vegetables, fresh herbs or dried fruits and a dash of lemon juice or olive oil to make a salad.

Bulgur wheat

Like couscous, bulgur wheat is another grain that doesn't need cooking. Just spread it out on a dinner plate, add some boiling water and let it absorb the moisture for 10 minutes. It can also be used to add texture and bulk to soups and stews – just stir it in.

Quorn

Frozen and chilled Quorn products are widely available in supermarkets. Their range of ready meals changes all the time and if you enjoy meat substitutes they are well worth a try. Quorn is a good source of protein and lots of people prefer it to meat because it is much lower in saturated fat. Quorn pieces and mince are easy to use in cooking and there are some useful recipes on the Quorn website. Quorn is not made from soya, but from a relative of the mushroom. Quorn contains free-range egg and is therefore not suitable for vegans.

Haggis

Macsween make a vegetarian haggis, which is a tasty and versatile ingredient. It's made from oats and vegetables seasoned with herbs and spices. You can shape it into burgers or sausages, or make your own vegetarian sausage rolls. It is suitable for both vegetarians and vegans.

Tofu

Tofu is a bland-tasting white soya product, which is an excellent source of protein, suitable for both vegetarians and vegans. There are two main types. Firm tofu is generally sold chilled. To use it, drain off the water in which it is packaged, pat it dry with kitchen paper and cut into slices or cubes. Fry in a little vegetable oil to give it a firmer texture and a crisp crust (take care, it tends to spit!) Serve with a sauce or stir gently into a stew. Silken tofu is generally sold in vacuum packs and has a texture a bit like blancmange. It's a useful addition to smoothies and fruit desserts – for best results use a liquidiser to turn it into a smooth liquid before using.



Tahini

Tahini is a thick paste made from ground sesame seeds. It's a good source of calcium and relatively easy to digest. It has a distinctive nutty flavour and is often used as an ingredient in hummus. You may enjoy it spread on bread or crackers – try sweetening it with a little honey – or with agave syrup, if vegan.

Miso

Miso is a thick dark paste made from fermented soya beans. It's rich in B vitamins and has a very strong taste a bit like yeast extract. Try adding a little to soups, stews and sauces. You can also make a hot drink with it. A little goes a long way and it will last for a long time.

Yeast extract

Marmite contains B vitamins including vitamin B12, and can add savoury flavour to soups, casseroles and pies. It is quite salty, so if you're looking to reduce your salt intake, shop around for a low-salt alternative. There are lots of other brands of yeast extract available.

Yeast flakes

Yeast flakes have a texture a bit like fish food! They're made from dehydrated yeast and have a surprising cheesy taste. They're rich in B vitamins and you can buy one variety that contains added vitamin B12, which is useful if you are avoiding dairy products. They add savoury flavour to all sorts of dishes and work particularly well with pastry, breads and dumplings. Try making a 'cheese' sauce by stirring them into a simple white sauce. You can use dairy milk, or make a vegan version with unsweetened non-dairy milk.



Nut butters

We're all familiar with peanut butter, but it's also possible to buy jars of 'butter' made from other types of nuts, such as almonds and hazelnuts. These are rich in protein and can be easier to digest than whole nuts. Try them spread on toast or stirred into smoothies. You might also like to try adding finely ground nuts to crumble mixes or pastry, to provide some extra protein.

Non-dairy milks

The range of non-dairy milks available has grown tremendously in recent years, with products made from oats, almonds, hemp seeds, hazelnuts... and some interesting flavoured options too. Soya milk got a bad reputation because it didn't work well in hot drinks. But this problem has been sorted out and you shouldn't have any problems using most non-dairy milks in tea or coffee. Many non-dairy milks contain added vitamins and calcium.



Useful resources

Meat-free meal planners and food waste tips

For ideas about using up leftovers, visit the Love Food Hate Waste website (www.lovefoodhatewaste.com). There are some surprising ideas to help you use all the food you buy, and tips about storing food safely.

Grants for older vegetarians and vegans

There may come a time when an older person finds it increasingly difficult to stay in their own home. This may be because of health problems such as arthritis, or general mobility problems. Financial assistance can be difficult to access due to a great deal of demand. Vegetarian for Life (VfL) may be able to help.

VfL administers charitable funds to assist older vegetarians and vegans with independent living or respite care. Examples of grants that have been awarded include providing a stairlift, bath hoist, cooker and washing machine, and help with installing a downstairs shower room.

Please contact us for full details and an application pack.

Other publications available from Vegetarian for Life

Burns Night/Valentine's Day

Easter Treats

A Taste of South Asia

Festive Delights

Catering for Older Vegetarians and Vegans

Nutrition for Older Vegetarians and Vegans

Cooking on a Budget

Dinners to your Door

Please contact us or visit our website for your free copy.





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vegetarians and vegans?
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