

eBites

Winter 2018

Published by **Vegetarian for Life**, the advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans

Festive delights

Hearty, warming
recipes for
Christmas cheer



PLUS: [Rewarding excellence in care catering](#) | [Care homes' exciting New Year's pledge](#)

**An audience with
Dame Esther Rantzen**

The trailblazing broadcaster tells
vegans to stand up for their rights

Welcome

The colder and darker months are upon us, which can only mean that Christmas and New Year are just a few weeks away. This issue is bursting with hearty and warming recipes, as well as celebrating the inspirational people in the care sector.

We are excited to announce the launch of our new seasonal recipe guide, Festive Delights, which shares some of the most mouth-watering Christmas dishes a vegan or vegetarian could ever want. In the guide are perfect options for Christmas dinner including smokey aubergine soup, stuffed cauliflower, and some angelic mince pies (see page 3).

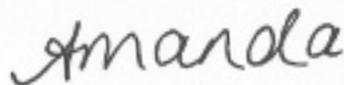
This issue reviews our 2018 Awards for Excellence in Vegetarian and Vegan Catering. The event took place at the Houses of Parliament recently. It showcased some incredible people who are going the extra mile to ensure that older vegans and vegetarians are catered for in incredible ways (page 4).

Dame Esther Rantzen has spoken to us about her work with The Silver Line, which helps older men and women in times of loneliness. She also opened up to us about how she is eating more vegetarian food as she gets older. (See page 6.)

Finally, we have launched a new Memory Care Pledge that so many UK care homes are already proud to be part of. This is a way of offering more reassurance to residents and their family members. Read more about what it is, or how you can be part of it, on page 8.

From all at V for Life, we wish you a very merry Christmas!

Amanda Woodvine, Editor



Vegetarian for Life is an advocacy and educational charity working on behalf of older vegetarians and vegans throughout the UK.



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Inclusive, enjoyable mealtimes that align with residents' beliefs and wishes

Reader exclusive

Tasty, vegan, gluten-free and made from '100% real food'. The Primal Pantry create all of their products here in the UK and have kindly offered three lucky readers a taster pack of five flavours including Brazil Nut and Cherry, Apple and Pecan, Coconut and Macadamia, Almond and Cashew and Hazelnut and Cocoa. Each of the bars contains just five ingredients – including foods such as dates, figs, papaya, and sunflower seeds.

The Primal Pantry pride themselves on keeping their bars 'simple without compromising on taste or quality'.

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For your chance to win, answer this question: How many flavours are included in The Primal Pantry taster pack?
A) 2 B) 5 C) 9

Email info@vegetarianforlife.org.uk with your answer by midday on 07/01/2019.

Terms and conditions: To view the Primal Pantry range and for all enquiries visit www.primalpantry.com or call 01628 947440. Three winners will be drawn at random from all entries received. One entry per household only. UK addresses only. There is no cash alternative.

WIN!



Festive delights

It can sometimes seem daunting trying to prepare meals for vegans or vegetarians at Christmas. And every now and then you might want to mix up your regular festive recipes. With this in mind, Vegetarian for Life's roving chefs, Ollie Bragg and Maggie Lister, have come up with some simple but tasty recipes that even the non-vegetarians are going to enjoy during the festive season.

The charity's brand new Festive Delights recipe guide has nine delicious festive-friendly recipes to choose from, including a warming carrot, ginger and orange soup, angelic mince pies that everyone will love, and also a Snickers pie. There are also some great tips on how to prepare vegan- and vegetarian-friendly dishes.

Roving chef Maggie Lister said: "We know it can seem a daunting task to prepare vegan and vegetarian food for residents but it really is simple and straightforward.

"There are so many products that are already vegan, such as Jus-Rol pastry, and a lot of gravy granules. But check there are no meat-, fish-, dairy-, or egg-derivatives in there, and no honey. If you do want to create something from scratch from ingredients you're likely to already have in your kitchen then the guide will provide lots of inspiration.

"We have created these recipes with care caterers in mind and know that even non-vegetarians enjoy them just as much. We are confident they will become firm favourites."

Visit vegetarianforlife.org.uk/resources/publications to check out the whole guide.

Alternatively if you would prefer a physical copy please get in touch with Vegetarian for Life on 0161 257 0887.



Snickers pie

Serves 12, Vegan

A take on the classic chocolate bar, but this is completely vegan and contains only fruit sugars!

For the base

- 2 tbsp peanut butter (doesn't matter if it's smooth or crunchy)
- 2 tbsp desiccated coconut
- ½ cup/85g shelled peanuts
- 5 dried dates, stones removed
- ½ cup/75g raw cashews

For the middle

- 10 dried dates soaked in 100ml hot water until soft
- 3 large ripe avocados
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp maple syrup

For the caramel layer

- 10 dried dates
- 1 tin chilled full-fat coconut milk – using the solid coconut mass and small amounts of water

- 1 Grease a 20cm (8 inch) spring-form pan with coconut oil.
- 2 In a high-powered blender, blend all the base ingredients to a sticky dough. Tip into a prepared spring-form tin and press down to an even layer. Chill in the fridge.
- 3 For the middle, drain the dates. Using a high-powered blender or hand blender blend all ingredients until smooth. Taste the mixture because you may wish to add more cocoa or sugar. Scrape from the sides and pour onto the nut layer. Return to the fridge.
- 4 Next make the caramel layer. In a small saucepan add the dried dates, coconut solid and around 3 tbsp coconut water.
- 5 Over a low heat, warm the dates in the coconut milk for 5 minutes or until soft. Using a hand blender, blitz until smooth. Once cooled slightly, add to the chocolate later and return to the fridge.

This can be frozen for up to 6 months or chilled in a fridge for up to 4 days. Best served chilled; slices perfectly when it's been out of the freezer for an hour. Serve with a tangy fruit coulis or ice cream/vegan ice cream, and decorate with chopped dates and peanuts.



Care industry trailblazers honoured in lavish Parliament ceremony

Hard-working staff have been recognised for their dedication to ensuring older vegetarians and vegans are able to access great food independently and in care homes.

Winners were revealed at a lavish ceremony held at the Houses of Parliament in October – where four winners were rewarded for going the extra mile in care catering.

The event hosted by Vegetarian for Life and compered by vegan comedian Matt Adlington was well received by all those who attended.

The winners for each of the categories are as follows:

- **MOST INNOVATIVE VEGGIE DISH:** Phil Jay, head chef of Gracewell at Sutton Coldfield. His incredibly detailed vegan dysphagic chocolate cake wowed the judges.
- **VEGGIE CARE CHEF OF THE YEAR:** Jacek Binienda, Badgeworth Court Care Centre. Jacek's plant-based cakes have

been described as 'exquisite' and he has trained other chefs in how to cook all of the vegan and vegetarian dishes on their menu.

- **VEGGIE WHOLESALER OF THE YEAR:** Bidfood's creation of 200 plus vegan options impressed the judges. The wholesaler also created a vegan-specific catalogue and a vegan cookbook alongside it.
- **SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD:** Primrose Dawn Mist, resident at Highland House, Kent. Primrose has been vegetarian for a number of years and was influential in encouraging more vegetarian and vegan dishes at the care home. She also ensured that more fresh vegetables were offered, as opposed to frozen. Primrose sadly wasn't able to attend the awards but manager at Highland House, Susan Johnson, and relative, Chris Elliott collected the award on her behalf.





in Vegetarian
Care Catering
2018

After the events the winners spoke about the honour of being recognised for their efforts.

Speaking about the award for Most Innovative Dish for his vegan chocolate cake, Phil Jay, head chef at Gracewell of Sutton Coldfield, said: "It was fantastic to win the award. I have been a head chef for 14 years and have won awards in the past but this award makes me even more proud. I'm not vegetarian or vegan so to win an award based on that is really important to me and made me look more closely into different diets.

"It has really opened my eyes to it."

Jacek Binienda, head chef at Badgeworth Court Care Centre, Barchester, where 21 plant-based dishes which are offered on a daily basis said: "I was honoured and truly privileged to win the award. It's very nice to be rewarded for hard work but it was a team effort; I couldn't have done this without my incredible team. It's an achievement for us all."

The reason for the extensive number of vegetarian options Jacek said is so that residents don't get bored with the same foods.

He added: "It's important that the residents have a lot of choice, which is why there are so many dishes that are cooked to order daily."

Jacek joined the care industry 14 years ago after moving careers from working in a bank. He then worked his way up to being head chef.

He added: "I love the job so much and it's so rewarding."

Amanda Woodvine, Chief Executive of Vegetarian for Life, said: "The awards have been an incredible way to celebrate the charity's 10-year anniversary and to

The awards have been an incredible way to celebrate the charity's 10-year anniversary

recognise the fantastic achievements of trailblazers in the care industry. The winners, and also the runners-up, are all making a huge difference to the care and choices offered to older vegetarians and vegans."

During the awards, those who attended made personal pledges on how they could further improve the options for older vegetarians and vegans living out their later lives in care. These were individual

to each organisation.

Amanda added: "The pledges have been incredible to read. They show the dedication that so many in the care industry are willing to give so that older vegetarians and vegans get the food options they truly deserve. I am optimistic that if we all work on our own pledges then collectively we can achieve total inclusivity for older vegetarians and vegans in the years to come."

An audience with Dame Esther Rantzen

Dame Esther Rantzen has spoken candidly about abuse as a child and loneliness as she has grown older. But she has used those difficult circumstances to create support and lifelines to many who find themselves in similar situations.

In 1986 she helped launch Childline – a counselling service for children and young people. And her most recent venture, The Silver Line, was set up to provide telephone and letter communication to those in later life who are feeling lonely. The service runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. It is funded solely through the public's donations.

The 78-year-old has achieved many things in her life and has been a trailblazer in many instances. But what is left for her to achieve?

She spoke openly with Vegetarian for Life Chief Executive Amanda Woodvine about what's next for her, eating more of a vegetarian diet as she gets older, and also her thoughts on the difficulties facing men and women as they get older.

WHY DID YOU SET UP THE SILVER LINE?

It was really because I downsized about 7 years ago and found myself living alone for the first time and wasn't enjoying it. I define loneliness as having plenty of people to do things with but nobody to do nothing with.

That's what I found at the end of even a busy day that I would come home to an empty flat and there was no one to have a cup of tea with and talk through the laughs and challenges of the day, or shout at the television next to you on the sofa.

So I wrote about it. I did what I always do when I need therapy so I rang *The Daily Mail*. They said loneliness is a very good topic so write about it. So I did. I was then

inundated with responses. Some people said it was brave of me to be so honest as it appears there is a real stigma about admitting to loneliness, people don't want to be a burden or for people to feel that you feel unwanted.

Some people said how lucky I was that I have my health and strength and therefore get out and about as many people can't. Loads of people said there were plenty of organisations reaching out to people but lonely and isolated people are very hard to find. Their confidence drops and they don't feel that they can venture across their own threshold and see what the world outside would be like.

Anyway, I talked at a conference and took all of my letters with me. It was a conference run by the Campaign to End Loneliness and I had one of those lightbulb moments where I found myself talking about 25 years ago about a different type of stigma. Then it was abuse and now it's loneliness. Then it was happening to children and now it's happening to older people.

Then the answer was a helpline, Childline. Could it be the answer now for older people? And then they all said yes, do it.

So I did the thing you have to do, which was finding the perfect CEO, Sophie Andrews, who is running it and running it brilliantly well. We have now taken our two millionth call in just over 4 years. There was a real need for it.

November was our 5-year anniversary. If anyone wanted to hold a vegan tea party for us to spread awareness and perhaps raise a few pennies for us –



because we do need to be able to pay for the service and we do rely on the generosity of the public – then that would be very kind.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE CHARITY GOING FORWARD?

We have to meet the demand. At the moment we can only answer four out of five of the calls we receive so we have to expand to meet the demands. And we have to continue to offer a service that people want and need. So if things change technologically or in any other way we need to be able to keep up with the older people who ring us.

CHILDLINE WAS SET UP IN 1986 AND THE SILVER LINE IN 2013. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE, PROFESSIONALLY OR PERSONALLY?

Well, I want to attend my grandchildren's weddings; they range in age between 1 and 16. So perhaps I should take some exercise to prolong my life. Things come along which I don't anticipate and don't plan for and if they seem exciting, or fun or rewarding, or important, I tend to say yes to them.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR CAREER IS THERE ANYTHING THAT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT FOR YOU?

I think life is a series of challenges but fortunately I enjoy them. I like an adventure. And if a thing is worth doing, it's even worth doing badly. I do my best but I am aware that I don't always do it as well as it should be done but I enjoy the challenge.

YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL FOR MANY PEOPLE. WHO INSPIRES YOU?

I think one of my heroes is a man I met through That's Life called Sir Nicholas Winton, who some people call the British Schindler because he rescued a generation of children from the Holocaust by arranging for families for them to go to and trains to get them out of Prague just before the Nazis moved in. He is an amazing example of one person making a huge difference. His legacy lives on. Lord Alfred Dubs initiated an amendment in Parliament enabling unaccompanied Syrian children, refugee children, to come to Britain. Not enough have come but that's not his fault. Lord Alfred Dubs was one of Nicky Winton's children, so his legacy lives on. So he is a tremendous inspiration.

DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS OF YOUR OWN ABOUT AGEING WELL AND HEALTHILY?

Well, I don't do all the things I ought to do like take exercise and that sort of thing so any minute I may drop off my perch. But I think if you stay connected to the people you care about and ideas that are important to you, that keeps you alive and refreshed and a feeling of still being of value, which is one of the most important things.

The awful thing about a lot of people who ring The Silver Line is that many of them don't talk to anybody else because of all kinds of life's circumstances that have isolated them. It can be disability, it can be loss of family and friends, and it can be because of where



“I think diversity is crucial with care and it certainly applies to vegetarians and vegans”

they live there isn't a community there. It could be to do with loss of a job, or driving licence or mobility.

But whatever the reason they are isolated what we do is not only reassure them that they are of value and that we do enjoy our conversations with them, but we also have befrienders, Silver Line Friends, who ring them on a regular basis, which is good. We have other things like Silver Circle, which are conference calls and we have Silver Letters for people with hearing impairment. So we have a very well developed service even though we are just 5 years old. If anyone would like to give it a try to see if they like it, and if to think it can be improved I would say to get in touch with me via the website with your ideas and we can see if we can include it. We want to make it better and better. And if you do enjoy it, please keep ringing us because we want to hear from you.

AT VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE WE AIM TO SUPPORT OLDER VEGETARIANS AND VEGANS WHO MAY BE LIVING INDEPENDENTLY OR IN CARE HOMES. DO YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ON THE WORK WE ARE DOING?

I think the work that Vegetarian for Life is doing is very important. It applies to all kinds of individual needs as we get older. I'm sure it

also applies to people who belong to a religious group or maybe people who have talked to me about the difficulties gay people find when they are in care. They feel reluctant to talk about themselves in fear of being judged a certain way. So I think diversity is crucial with care and it certainly applies to vegetarians and vegans. I have found myself getting more vegetarian as I get older. Partly because I am very concerned about animal welfare and partly I feel one's tastes change. I find myself enjoying vegetables and that type of diet much more. So stand up for your rights, I say!

DO YOU HAVE ANY FINAL THOUGHTS FOR OUR READERS?

I would like people to give The Silver Line a go. If you find at 3am or on a Sunday afternoon that you would really like a chat and a laugh then give us a ring. It's free, it's confidential and it's open 24/7. The person who answers will be really interested in your views, your opinions, your life experiences and your memories. Don't be reluctant; give it a go. If you enjoy it ring us back, and if you don't enjoy it for any reason then get in touch with me via the website and complain.

To contact The Silver Line, call 0800 4 70 80 90.

Care homes' exciting New Year's pledge



Imagine that you have been vegetarian or vegan for a number of years or even decades. Sadly, you are no longer able to live independently and have to receive extra care, so move into a care home.

Your family and yourself make clear your food preferences. But what happens 6 months or a year down the line if you no longer remember that you were vegan or vegetarian? How would you feel if you were then offered and served meat, or if you unknowingly started to choose meat dishes?

Vegetarian for Life is proud to announce the launch of a Memory Care Pledge that will be taken by care homes up and down the UK.

This is to help ensure that vegetarians or vegans who have capacity issues, or cognitive losses, will be offered a choice of meals, drinks and snacks that uphold their ethical beliefs.

At Vegetarian for Life it is incredibly important to us that residents can live the rest of their lives the way that they intended.

So, we are asking care homes to make a Memory Care Pledge.

Many care homes have already signed up, including Gracewell of Sutton Coldfield.

Jody Sedgwick, manager at the home in the West Midlands, said it was paramount that they made a care pledge.

She said: "The memory care pledge is an incredibly important campaign and I think everyone who has affiliated with Vegetarian for Life needs to truly get behind this."

Jody, who has been vegetarian for a number of years was given meat in a meal while out in a restaurant and only realised part way through eating the meal.

She said: "I was horrified, in fact I felt heartbroken. Actually I felt every negative emotion going. What struck the deepest chord of all was that not

only had I eaten meat, I had eaten it without consent, without my knowing or my say so, I felt nothing short of violated, it made me physically ill and mentally scarred.

"My point is I am someone with full capacity, fit and well and able to rationalise (mostly) and what got me 'over' this was the fact it was isolated and will never happen to me again. This awful experience has been so profound for me and has helped me to understand how incredibly important it is for us to support and uphold this dietary need and requirement for our residents who lack capacity. Vegetarianism and veganism is a belief system, thus we absolutely have a duty to our residents that we advocate this and ensure that they too have a healthy, variety of vegetarian and vegan food.

"The experience I had earlier this year reinforces to me why the Memory Care Pledge is of the absolute utmost importance to those living in care homes."

Long-term vegan Richard Horsfield, who is 79, is also backing the pledge.

He has been vegan since his 20s

and has been a keen activist throughout his life.

Richard is fit and well, but said that if and when he has to move into a home he would want the reassurance of ensuring he would only be fed plant-based meals.

He said: "I'm trying to postpone going into a care home with lots of swimming but there's only so much you can do when you were born in 1939.

"I know it's likely to be my future so being reminded of my choices if I have memory issues is paramount to me.

"I couldn't bear the idea now of being given meat.

"So the Memory Care Pledge is a fantastic idea that shows that being vegetarian and vegan is being taken seriously.

"Being vegan may not be a religion but we are as passionate about our pathway through life. We need to keep being given plant-based meals and be reminded of that as we grow older."

Visit vegetarianforlife.org.uk/pages/pledge to find out more.



Watch Care Establishment of the Year, Primrose Bank Residential Care Home's, video [pledge here](#)