Vegetarian for Life

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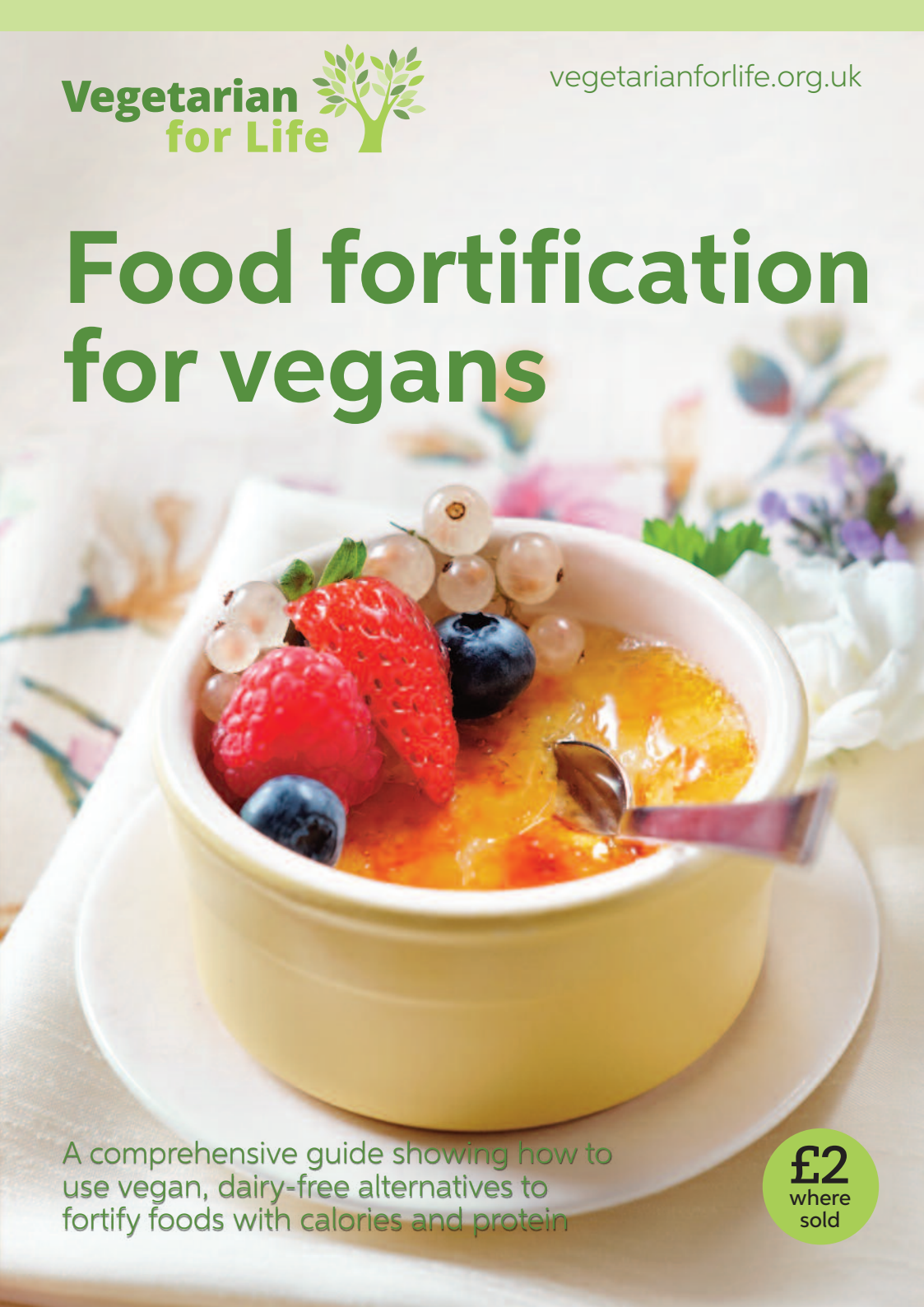
Food fortification for vegans



A comprehensive guide showing how to use vegan, dairy-free alternatives to fortify foods with calories and protein

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Nutritional information calculated using Nutracheck v.8.9.1

Introduction

Most care chefs will be familiar with fortifying foods. Often dairy products and whey protein powder are used. But fortifying foods for someone who is vegan, or with a milk allergy or lactose intolerance, may be a bit more challenging, leaving chefs, and even dietitians stuck for alternatives. As the leading authority on nutrition and health advice for older vegans and vegetarians, Vegetarian for Life is here to help.

This guide suggests a number of vegan alternatives that can be used to fortify meals, as well as various fortified recipes, drink, and snack ideas. For each recipe, we've included the calorie and protein content per serving.

Vegetarian for Life

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How to fortify foods

- Dairy-free products such as vegan butter, vegan cheese, plant milks, such as soya, and soya cream or coconut cream are readily available from wholesalers. Use as you would dairy products, such as in mashed potato, porridge, milky drinks, topping veg with butter, or cheese sauces.
- Stir gram flour into dishes; use it to make high protein pancakes; quiches; or even a Spanish tortilla or omelette.
- Use silken tofu in various puddings, scrambled tofu, or to make a quiche/flan filling.
- Add protein powder to milkshakes, smoothies or soups to increase protein. Many varieties are available such as soya, pea or hemp protein powder. Just ensure that it doesn't contain whey protein.
- Use peanut butter in milkshakes, flapjacks, or stir it into curries or soups (but it will affect flavour).
- Use cashew nuts to make a white or cheese sauce or a cashew nut cream, packed with calories and protein.
- Use vegan milk powder to fortify plant milk.

FOODS TO FORTIFY VEGAN MEALS AND DRINKS

Food	Measure	Energy (kcal)	Protein (g)
Soya protein powder	30g	116	27
Pea protein powder	30g	107	23
Gram (chickpea) flour	30g	106	7
Almond nut butter	25g	163	6
Peanut butter	25g	152	6
Cashew nut butter	25g	165	5
Higher protein soya yoghurt	125g	89	8
Soya yoghurt	125g	63	5
Creamed coconut	15g	105	1
Oat cream	15ml	22	0.1
Vegan cheese	30g	91	0
Vegan mayonnaise	15g	66	0
Cream cheese alternative	20g	48	0
Syrup	15g	45	0
Vegetable oil	Teaspoon	25	0
Dairy-free spread	5g	25	0
Soya cream	15g	23	0

Adapted from Heather Russell, Dietitian, The Vegan Society

Snack ideas

- Peanut butter on toast.
- Vegan cheese and crackers, or vegan cheese on toast.
- Hummus/bean dips.
- Accidentally vegan biscuits (see veganwomble.com to check for vegan-friendly brands).
- Fortified flapjacks with peanut butter.
- Scone, jam, and soya, coconut or cashew nut cream.
- Cakes and other sweet treats. Check out Vegetarian for Life's Vegan Baking guide for more ideas or check what ready-made products your wholesaler supplies.
- Bird's custard powder is 'accidentally vegan'. Make up with plant milk and serve with a pudding, or as a snack on its own.
- Vegan ice cream. Lots of vegan brands will be available from your wholesaler.

Drinks

- Hot chocolate – check that the powder is suitable for vegans. Cadbury drinking chocolate is 'accidentally vegan'. Just make with soya milk and it's a great way to add those extra calories. Please note that Cadbury hot chocolate instant is not suitable for vegans because it contains milk. Always remember to double check the label. Galaxy also has a vegan hot chocolate powder.
- Vegan Horlicks – again just follow the instructions and make using a plant milk, such as soya.
- Milkshakes/smoothies – peanut butter works well to add extra calories and protein. Or try adding some vegan protein powder. Check out the recipe on page 23 for a quick and easy fortified milkshake option. Try adding vegan ice cream, too, for those extra calories.
- Fruit juice.





Photo © Vegan Recipe Club

Scrambled tofu

A quick and easy protein-rich breakfast. Add extra calories by fortifying with vegan cream.

326 kcal, 17.2g protein per serving.

Serves 2

Time to prepare 10 minutes

Time to cook 20 minutes

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tbsp white or gram flour
- 120ml soya cream
- 1 block tofu 200g/7oz, crumbled
- Vegetables of choice such as peppers, mushroom or tomatoes, finely chopped
- ½ tsp dried mixed herbs
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard (or to taste)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 Fry the onion and garlic on a low heat until soft.

2 Stir in the flour, followed by the soya cream. Stir well to get rid of lumps and cook for a minute or two.

3 Add the tofu, vegetables of choice, herbs, turmeric and mustard and stir for 5 minutes.

4 Serve on vegan buttered toast, topped with fresh or dried herbs, and salt and pepper to taste.



Seitan wraps

Indulgent, vegan shawarma wraps, served with vegan mayo. For a quicker option seitan can be bought ready-made. Seitan is a great, high-protein option.

421 kcal, 26.8g protein per serving (with vegan mayo).

Serves 6
Time to prepare 25 minutes
Time to cook 10 minutes

For the seitan strips

- 55g/scant 2oz tinned chickpeas
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- Pinch of cumin powder
- Pinch of coriander powder
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 85ml/5¾ tbsp vegetable stock
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp liquid smoke (optional)
- 150g/scant 5½oz vital wheat gluten

For the marinade

- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp olive oil

For the shawarma

- 6 pitta breads, flatbreads, or wraps
- Lettuce, shredded
- Tomato, sliced
- Cucumber, sliced

To serve

- Vegan mayo, hummus or tzatziki

1 Add the chickpeas, nutritional yeast, powders, oregano, soy sauce, tomato paste, paprika, pepper, vegetable stock, mustard and liquid smoke (if using) to a food processor and process until well mixed.
2 Transfer to a mixing bowl and add the vital wheat gluten. Stir in, and then knead with your hands until it goes from soft and sticky, to just starting to get firm.
3 Flatten it on a work surface and pat it down into the shape of a steak. Wrap it loosely in tin foil and place into a steamer, over boiling water, to steam for around 20 minutes.
4 After steaming, remove from the foil and cut into thin strips (about 5mm thick).
5 Mix the marinade ingredients. Put in a frying pan set over medium heat. Add the seitan strips and coat well in the marinade.
6 Fry the seitan in the marinade, turning it regularly, until all the pieces are nicely charred and crispy on the outside. This will be a quick process – just a couple of minutes.
7 Spread mayo or hummus onto the flatbreads, pittas or wraps. Add shredded lettuce and sliced cucumber and tomato, a few seitan strips, and finish with a good dollop of the vegan tzatziki (if using).



Pea super soup

A great soup for spring, fortified with pea protein powder with added soy. You could add calories with more soya cream.
509 kcal, 15.6g protein per serving.
Serves 1
Time to prepare 10 minutes
Time to cook 15 minutes

- 2 shallots (feel free to use white, red or spring onions instead)
- 1–2 tbsp fresh mint
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 150g/5oz peas (fresh or frozen)
- 2 tbsp pea protein powder
- 220ml/scant ½ pint vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp soya cream

1 Finely chop the shallots, mint and garlic.
2 Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over a low heat. Add the shallot and garlic mix.
3 Cook gently for about 2–3 minutes until the shallots turn translucent.
4 Add the mint and cook for a minute or so.
5 Add the peas, pea protein powder and broth. Stir and let it simmer for about 15 minutes, then turn off the heat.
6 Blend in a food processor or with a hand blender.
7 Return to the pan and heat.
8 Season to taste. Serve with a drizzle of olive oil and soya cream.

Gram flour pancakes

Easy, versatile high-protein pancake recipe fortified with gram flour. Great snack topped with a simple sauce or vegan cheese, or works well with VfL's Mushroom Medley filling for a main meal*.
298 kcal, 8.8g protein per pancake.
Serves 4–6 pancakes
Time to prepare 5 minutes, plus 30 minutes for batter to rest
Time to cook 3 minutes per pancake

- 100g/3½oz plain flour
- 100g/3½oz gram flour
- 400ml/generous ⅓ pint soya or oat milk
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- Pinch salt
- A little extra oil for frying

1 In a large bowl, thoroughly mix all the ingredients together. Set to one side for 30 minutes.
2 In a non-stick frying pan, heat a little vegetable oil. Add a ladle of batter, tilting the pan to get an even distribution.
3 After 2 minutes gently turn and continue to cook for another minute.
4 Transfer to a plate and keep warm while cooking the remaining pancakes.
5 To serve, place desired topping in each pancake and fold over.

*Recipe at vegetarianforlife.org.uk/recipes/main-meals/mushroom-medley



Lentil lasagne

A satisfying take on a classic, fortified with cashew nuts and tofu.
622 kcal, 21.7g protein per serving.
Serves 6
Time to prepare 20 minutes
Time to cook 1 hour 30 minutes

- 190g/scant 7oz dried red lentils
- 700ml/1½ pints marinara sauce (see recipe below)
- 150g/5½oz raw cashews
- 450g/16oz firm tofu, patted dry with paper towels
- 30g/1oz nutritional yeast
- 3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 6–8 lasagne sheets
- 70g/2½oz baby spinach
- 200g/7oz vegan mozzarella cheese

For the marinara sauce

- 2 medium yellow onions, peeled and halved
- 4 x 400g/14oz can chopped tomatoes
- 4 large cloves garlic, peeled but left whole
- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- Salt, to taste

Marinara sauce

1 In a medium, heavy-bottomed saucepan, add the onion combined with the tomatoes (with their juices), garlic, olive oil and oregano.
2 Bring the sauce to a simmer over a medium-high heat, then lower the heat to keep the sauce at a slow, steady simmer for about 30–40 minutes. Stir occasionally.
3 Remove the pan from the heat and discard the onion.
4 Smash the garlic cloves into the sauce. Use a wooden spoon to crush the tomatoes to your liking (you can blend this sauce smooth with a blender).
5 Add salt to taste.
6 This recipe makes a larger quantity than needed. Any extra can be frozen and used in various dishes.

Lasagne

1 First, cook the red lentils. Add the dried red lentils and about 700ml/1½ pints of water to a medium pot. Bring to a boil, and then simmer for about 20 minutes.
2 Drain the lentils and then add to a large bowl. Add the marinara to the bowl with the lentils and mix to combine. Set aside.
3 Preheat the oven to 175°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
4 Make the cashew-tofu ricotta: Add the cashews to a food processor and process until fine and crumbly.



5 Add the tofu in chunks, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, salt, herbs, and garlic powder to a food processor. Pulse until well combined and fairly smooth.
6 Assemble the lasagne: Add about 200g/7oz of the sauce/lentil mix to the bottom of a large 9 x 13 inch casserole dish or lasagne pan. Spread it around evenly.
7 Add enough lasagne sheets to create an even layer. Spread half of the cashew-tofu ricotta on top of the pasta. Top with half of the spinach. Add another portion of the marinara sauce over the spinach, then place another layer of lasagne sheets.
8 Spread the rest of the ricotta over, then the rest of the spinach. Place another layer of lasagne sheets on top of the spinach, and then pour the rest of the sauce over the top, evenly.
9 Cover tightly with foil. Bake for 1 hour, but remove the lasagne after 40 minutes of cooking, to spread an even layer of mozzarella on top. Return to the oven for another 20 minutes.
10 Remove from the oven and serve.

Crustless stuffing quiche

A light meal or snack that can be served hot or cold. A great addition to a buffet or picnic, fortified with gram flour.
200 kcal, 10g protein per serving
Serves: 6
Time to prepare: 20 minutes
Time to cook: 35 minutes

- 400g/14oz tin chopped tomatoes, drained (juice retained)
- 75g/2½oz stuffing mixture
- 100g/3½oz vegan cheese
- Oil for frying
- 1 large white onion, finely chopped
- 1 large red pepper, diced
- 120g/generous 4oz gram (chickpea) flour
- 600ml/1 pint vegetable stock, hot
- 3 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp basil

1 Preheat oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5. Line and grease a shallow roasting dish.
2 Mix drained tomatoes with the stuffing, then add half the cheese and keep to one side. Keep the tomato juice for step 4.
3 Fry the onion and pepper until tender, then add to the stuffing mixture.
4 In a bowl, add the gram flour, one cup of the stock and the tomato juice. Whisk this together well and cook on a medium heat.
5 When the mixture begins to thicken, add the remaining stock. Then add the nutritional yeast and basil.
6 Once all the mixture has been combined, lower the heat and stir continuously for 2–3 minutes until the mixture becomes quite thick and glossy. Then add to the stuffing mixture.
7 Pour into the prepared roasting dish, levelling with a spatula, and top with the remaining cheese. Bake in the oven for 30–40 minutes.
8 Allow to cool fully before serving. If the dish is chilled for at least 2–4 hours before serving it will become denser.



Satay tofu

Delicious, simple and flavoursome tofu dish, packed with protein and calories from the peanut butter.
565 kcal, 35.2g protein per serving
Serves 4
Time to prepare 5–10 minutes
Time to cook 20 minutes



- 800g/1lb 12oz tofu, drained and cut into 2cm (scant 1 inch) cubes
- Cornflour for dusting
- 100ml/generous ⅙ pint rapeseed oil
- 128g/4½oz salted peanut butter
- 30–45ml/2–3 tbsp soy sauce
- 1–2 tbsp maple syrup (or other sweetener of choice)
- ½–1 tsp chilli flakes
- 3 tbsp lime juice
- 60ml/4 tbsp water (to thin)

1 Spread the tofu cubes on a large plate or shallow bowl and dust with cornflour, shaking and turning them to coat.
2 Add the oil to a deep frying pan or wok and heat over a medium flame. Prepare some kitchen roll on a plate.
3 Shake off the excess cornflour from the tofu cubes and add the tofu to the pan/wok once the oil is hot.
4 Fry until golden and crisp before transferring to the kitchen roll lined plate.

For the satay sauce
1 Add all the remaining ingredients to a large mixing bowl and whisk to combine. You could also use an electric hand blender. Add more water if it is too thick.
2 Add to a saucepan and gently heat. You could also serve cold.
3 Serve over the crispy tofu with an Asian style salad or stir-fried veg.

Ginger cake

Great with that afternoon cuppa. Fortified with cashews and coconut milk. Serve with custard or soya cream to add those extra calories.
375 kcal, 5.6g protein per serving.
Serves 8
Time to prepare 25 minutes
Time to cook 35 minutes

Dry cake ingredients
- 160g/6oz white flour
- 90g/3oz oat flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ⅓ tsp salt
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg

Wet cake ingredients
- 180g/generous 6oz applesauce
- 120g/generous 4oz canned coconut milk
- 130g/4½oz maple syrup or any other liquid sweetener
- 80g/scant 3oz dark molasses (or more of another liquid sweetener)

Icing (optional)
- 180ml/scant ½ pint plant-based milk, such as almond
- 2 tbsp cornstarch
- 5½ tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 125g/4½oz cashews (soaked in boiling water for about 30 minutes, or overnight)

Cake
1 Preheat the oven to 175°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Line a small loaf tin, approximately 15 × 23 cm (6 x 9 inch) with parchment paper.
2 Add all dry ingredients to a large bowl and mix with a whisk.
3 Now add all wet ingredients and mix again with a whisk until just combined. Don't over-mix.
4 Add to the loaf tin and bake in the oven for 30–35 minutes or until a toothpick or sharp knife comes out clean.
5 Let the cake cool completely.

Icing
1 Add all the icing ingredients (except the cashews) to a saucepan. Whisk vigorously until there are no clumps. Once the mixture is completely smooth, turn on the heat and bring the mixture to a boil.
2 Let simmer for 1–2 minutes – it will thicken – then turn off the heat.
3 Add the mixture and the softened cashews to a blender or food processor and mix on high until the cream is smooth.
4 Pour the cream onto the cooled cake and spread it evenly. Place in the refrigerator overnight to set.
5 Serve with Bird's custard made to the packet instructions using a plant-based milk.



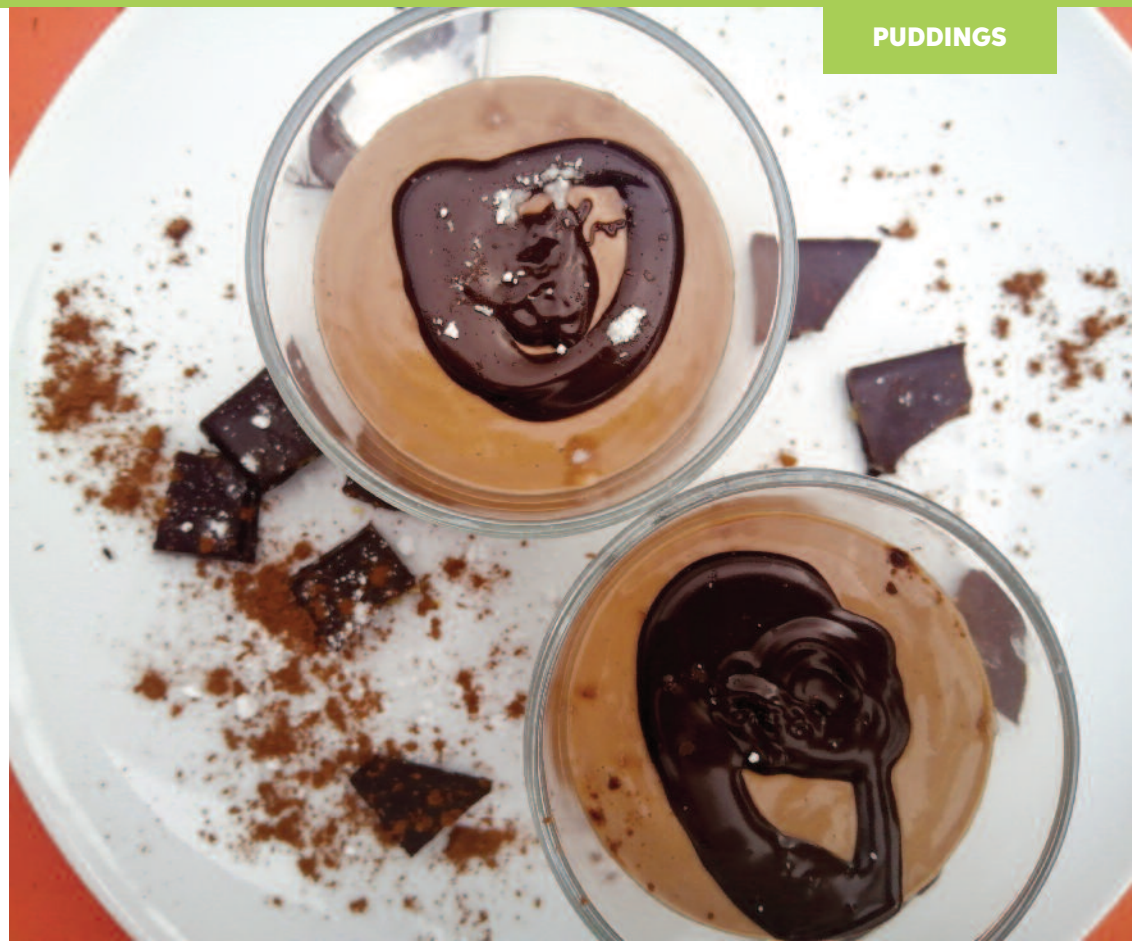
Cashew nut cream

This dairy-free 'cream' is packed with protein from the nuts and tofu. It's a great way to try tofu for the first time. Be sure to buy the silken variety not firm tofu. This is delicious with fresh fruit or cooked fruit puddings.
221 kcal, 3.4g protein per serving.
Serves 2
Time to prepare 5 minutes

- 50g/scant 2oz cashew nuts
- 75g/2½oz silken tofu, drained
- 2 tbsp soya milk
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

1 Put the cashews into a food processor or blender and process to a fine powder.
2 Add the rest of the ingredients and whizz into a thick cream.
3 Store in a covered container in the fridge for up to 3 days.





Chocolate pots

Super quick and tasty dessert. Fortified with silken tofu for a protein-packed pud.
125 kcal, 8g protein per serving.
Serves 2
Time to prepare 5 minutes

- 170g/6oz firm silken tofu
- 2–3 tsp cocoa powder
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp vegan milk of choice
- Pinch salt
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- Juice of ½ a lime

Toppings (optional)
- Selection of your favourite chopped nuts
- Vegan dark chocolate shards

1 Blend all the ingredients together (except the optional toppings).
2 Pour mixture into a bowl and store in fridge.
3 When serving, sprinkle over chopped nuts or shards of dark chocolate.

Eggless, creamless crème brûlée

A vegan dessert to impress. Fortified with silken tofu and cashews.
194 kcal, 6.6g protein per serving.
Serves 4
Time to prepare 5 minutes
Time to cook 15 minutes

- 75g/2½oz cashews
- 1 tbsp agar agar
- Pinch salt
- 350ml/generous ½ pint boiling water
- 180g/6oz silken tofu (firm)
- 65ml/4⅓ tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of turmeric
- Granulated sugar for caramelising

1 Blend the cashews, agar agar and salt into a powder.
2 Put in a saucepan, add ⅓ of the boiling water and blend with a hand blender for 1 minute, over a gentle heat.
3 Gradually add the remaining boiling water. Continue blending for 2 minutes.
4 Add tofu, maple syrup, vanilla extract and turmeric.
5 Process for another couple of minutes or until smooth.
6 Pass the mixture through a fine sieve. Heat in a saucepan gently for 10 minutes. DO NOT BOIL.
7 Divide among four ramekins and let cool.
8 Cover with cling film and chill in the fridge for a few hours.
9 Remove from fridge, sprinkle each ramekin with enough sugar to cover the top and caramelise with a chef torch or under a grill.
10 Serve immediately.





Giant peanut butter cups

An incredible, rich combination of thick creamy peanut butter and chocolate. Fortified with coconut oil and peanut butter.
475 kcal, 8.6g protein per cup.
Serves 10
Time to prepare 5 minutes
Time to cook 20 minutes

- 290g/generous 10oz granola (a nutty one without fruit)
- 50g/scant 2oz coconut oil, melted
- 210g/7½oz smooth peanut butter
- 50g/scant 2oz granulated sugar
- 1 tsp cornflour
- 300g/10½oz dark chocolate

1 Blitz the granola and melted coconut oil together in a food processor until well combined and fairly smooth. Spoon the mixture into 10 cupcake cases and press down. Place in the fridge.
2 Place the peanut butter, sugar and cornflour in a pan over a medium heat. Heat for 5 minutes while stirring to combine. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 5–10 minutes.
3 Remove granola mix from the fridge after around 10 minutes.
4 Place a tablespoon of the peanut butter mixture on top of the chilled base layer, leaving a small gap around the edge.
5 Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of water on the hob. Once melted leave to cool for 5 minutes.
6 Pour the melted chocolate into each case, filling it to the top. Place in the fridge for 1–2 hours until set.



Protein balls

Simple, no cook peanut and chocolate protein balls. Fortified with dates and peanut butter.
300 kcal, 6.7g protein per 2 balls.
Serves makes 14 balls
Time to prepare 5 minutes

- 300g/10½oz pitted dates, such as medjool
- 70g/2½oz peanut butter
- 65g/generous 2oz oats
- 3 tbsp dark vegan chocolate chips
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- Pinch of sea salt
- 3 tbsp cocoa powder

1 If the dates are on the dry side, add a little boiling water to them first.
2 Blend all ingredients together in a food processor.
3 Roll into small balls – you should get about 14 from this recipe.
4 Store in the fridge until ready to serve.



Flapjacks

This traditional treat needs no introduction. Many versions exist, but the basic recipe is oats, fat and sugar. This recipe contains chopped dried apricots and is fortified with peanut butter. You could also top with melted chocolate for extra calories.
159 kcal, 0.7g protein per flapjack.
Serves 15 slices
Time to prepare 5 minutes
Time to cook 25 minutes

- 125g/4½oz vegan margarine
- 125g/4½oz light brown sugar
- 3 tbsp golden syrup or caramel sauce
- 2 tbsp peanut butter
- 225g/8oz oats
- 50g/scant 2oz dried apricots, chopped
- Very small pinch salt

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2 Line a baking tray approximately 20 x 20 cm (8 inch) with greaseproof paper.
3 In a medium saucepan, gently melt the margarine, sugar and golden syrup over low heat.
4 Stir in the peanut butter
5 Add the oats, apricots and salt, then mix well.
6 Press your mixture evenly into the baking tray and bake for 20 minutes.
7 Allow to cool slightly before partially slicing (still in the tray).
8 Allow to cool completely before slicing fully and serving.



Black bean dip

A tasty snack – great on crackers, toast or as a sandwich filling. Fortified with beans and tahini.
263 kcal, 9g protein per serving.
Serves 4
Time to prepare 5–10 minutes

- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 60ml/4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling if desired
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tsp ground coriander seed
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp chopped coriander

1 Blend all the ingredients, except chopped coriander.
2 Process until smooth.
3 Scrape the sides, add coriander and process to combine.
4 Serve drizzled with additional oil if desired.



Banana and peanut butter milkshake

This simple, fortified milkshake can be made with any plant-based milk. Smooth peanut butter adds protein and calories. For a sweeter taste, add a little extra maple syrup, and for a richer flavour add a few drops of vanilla extract.
100 kcal, 6g protein per serving.
Serves 4
Time to prepare 5 minutes
Time to cook 5 minutes

- 500ml/generous ¾ pint chilled sweetened soya milk, or unsweetened with a little dash of maple syrup
- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp smooth peanut butter
- 1 tbsp cocoa powder

1 Simply blend all the ingredients together until smooth.

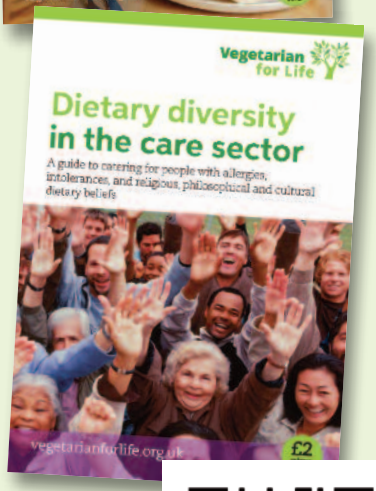
Vegetarian for Life (VfL) is the leading authority on diet and healthy living advice for older vegans and vegetarians. We work with care establishments and other organisations supporting older people, to ensure that they cater well and ethically for vegans and vegetarians.

We hope that you've found this fortification guide helpful. For further information on fortification – including practical demonstrations – VfL's Meat-free 101 training is the perfect solution, with online or in-person options. Contact us for details.

VfL has produced several other useful publications packed with recipes, nutrition information, and menu planners. Find free PDF copies on our website or get in touch for paper copies.







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