

Vegan Catering

An Information Guide for Caterers

by The Vegan Society

There are an estimated 250,000 vegans in the UK. The three main reasons for being vegan are concern for animals, people and the environment. Other people adopt a vegan diet to help improve their health.

It's not just vegans who can have the vegan dish, by catering for vegans you are catering for the following groups of people as well:

People on a **meat-based** diet, **vegetarians**, the growing number of people with a **lactose intolerance or milk or egg allergy** (several million in Britain), people who have cut down on animal products **for health reasons**; and people whose **religion** intimates that they should forgo all meat, certain types of meat and/or eggs. E.g. Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Hindus.

Add all these groups together and you are looking at millions of people who would be delighted with a vegan option. It often takes just a few small changes to make vegan food available; though the more you invest into it the more likely you are to end up with some fantastic vegan choices.

If you can cater for vegans you also stand to gain when a vegan comes in with a group of friends because you will be able to keep everybody happy. If you can not cater for them you risk losing the custom of the whole group.

As we show below, there is a vast range of vegan products available, and endless variations in the ways that you can use them.

Definition of a vegan

A vegan will not eat any animal products, for example:

- No meat, fish or other products that come directly from killing an animal, like animal fats and gelatine.
- No dairy products like cow's milk, cheese and yogurt; or goat's milk.
- No eggs or foods containing eggs such as Quorn
- No honey
- No hidden ingredients like certain non-vegan E numbers

It is vital, but easy, to check the ingredients in ready-made food. Many are labelled, and The Vegan Society can help if required, please do not hesitate to contact us with any query.

Many vegan foods are listed in the Vegan Society's *Animal Free Shopper* - a pocket-sized shopping guide to all things vegan, from ready meals to suntan lotion. Copies are available directly from us for £4.99 (plus p&p) or visit the online version at www.animalfreeshopper.com

For more details of what vegans avoid eating please see our Criteria for Vegan Food at <http://www.vegansociety.com/html/food/criteria.php>

So what do vegans eat?

A great variety of tasty foods! Vegans eat foods which – roughly – fall into the following categories:

1. Cereals and grains

Basic cereals and grains are wheat, rice, oats, rye, maize and barley. Also experiment with cous-cous, a cracked wheat that can be used in salads. Millet and quinoa are two other tasty and nutritious grains that can be used in a similar way to rice.

2. Pulses

Pulses include kidney beans, butter beans, chick peas, red and green lentils. They are used in dips, casseroles, soups, shepherd's pie, curries and chillis. Chick peas have a lovely nutty flavour and are used in houmous, falafel, stews and curry. Red lentils can be used to thicken soups and casserole, and are well known for their use in lentil dahl.

3. Nuts & seeds

Perhaps the most popular seeds are sunflower, sesame and pumpkin; and examples of nuts are cashews and brazil.

4. Vegetables and Fruit

5. Other things

A rapidly-expanding range of processed vegan foods is available from wholesalers (e.g. Suma - tel. 0845 458 2291, www.suma.coop), health-food stores and supermarkets. Margarine, 'milks', 'cheeses', 'cream', 'ice cream', 'yoghurt', convenience meals and fake meat are all available and explained in more detail below. These are very popular with some vegans, though a number of vegans may prefer not to eat too much of the more highly-processed alternatives.

Adapting your menu

Lots of dishes are already vegan e.g. many Chinese, African, Asian, W. Indian and Mediterranean vegetarian dishes. It is easy to make many more dishes suitable for vegans simply by replacing a few basic ingredients:

Animal Product	Vegan Alternative
Meat	Make use of the many 'Cheatin meats' available Chestnuts and nuts give a rich flavour to dishes, while green lentils can also be used in place of mince for dishes such as spaghetti bolognese, chilli non carne and shepherds pie. Tofu can be used in stir-fry, pies, scramble and salad, you may like to marinade it first Important note. Quorn is NOT suitable for vegans as it contains egg
Meat stock	Vegan vegetable stock
Animal fats	Vegetable oil, hard vegetable fat or vegetable suet. Do not fry vegan food in oil that has previously been used to cook animal products
Butter	Vegetable margarine. Ensure it is suitable for vegans as many are not
Cow's milk	Soya, rice or oat milk. The various brands of soya milk are quite different in taste so it is worth experimenting. Practically all are suitable for vegans. It is not advisable to use rice milk in drinks.
Cheese	Vegan cheese. This is available from health food shops and from Suma (address above).
Chocolate	Vegan chocolate is now widely available from supermarkets and health food shops and is usually marked on the back if suitable for vegans
Eggs	Experiment with egg-free cakes. Contact The Vegan Society for recipes or look at http://www.vegansociety.com/html/food/recipes/ Use vegan egg-free mayonnaise in potato salad, coleslaw and anywhere you would use egg mayonnaise. It is available from health food shops and Suma (address above)
Egg glaze	Glaze pastries and breads with soya milk
Egg pasta	Egg-free pasta
Gelatine	Agar agar or gellozone can be used to make jellies and moulds
Honey	Maple syrup, agave syrup, date syrup, molasses, dried fruit or fruit jams
Honey bread	Bread that is free from milk and/or honey
Milky muesli	Muesli that is free from dairy products and honey

Vegan menu ideas

Breakfast

Cereal

Muesli, porridge oats or some packaged brands e.g. Kelloggs Cornflakes, Frosties, Coco Pops or Weetabix [confirmed 11/10/06].

Toast

Most breads are vegan, but some brands, especially those sold in wholefood/healthfood shops, may contain milk or honey (used to activate the yeast instead of sugar). Hovis mark which of their breads are vegan. Some bagels are also suitable e.g. the New York Bagel Company range [confirmed 12/10/06].

Toast Toppings

Here are a few substantial toppings:

mushroom yeast pate with tomato and red onion
marmite, dairy free cream cheese and slithers of granny smith apple
baked beans
garlic mushrooms
peanut butter or almond butter and jam
bananas with vegan chocolate spread

Fruit Smoothie

Delicious and nutritious, most of these are suitable for vegans. If you produce your own, try using banana as a base as it will help thicken the smoothie.

Other ideas – Vegan rashers or sausages, grilled nuttolen, fried mushrooms & green tomatoes, baked beans (avoid HP as they contain skimmed milk powder), potato wedges, scrambled tofu, houmous, fresh fruit salad, freshly sliced tomatoes or tempeh slices.

Lunch/Dinner

Starter

Melon, tofu or vegetable pate, soup (made with vegan stock), vegetable sticks with dips, rice or beany salad, corn on the cob (with vegan marg), deep fried vegetables (using vegetable oil) or marinated vegetables.

Main Course

Almost any dish can be made into a vegan version e.g. spaghetti bolognese, lasagne, pizza, casserole, curry, shepherd's pie, burgers, pies, risotto, flans or quiches. A huge selection of vegetables is available and can be presented in a variety of ways. Soya products - e.g. tofu, milk and cream - can be used instead of meat, cow's milk and cream. Other processed foods include gravy, sauce, pickle, mayonnaise, hard & soft 'cheese' and the Cheatin' range of vegan 'meats'.

Desserts

As with main courses, almost any dish can be made vegan e.g. custard, trifle, ice cream, jelly, cake, steamed pudding, biscuits, mince pie, fruit pie, doughnuts, cheesecake, flans or sweet pastries. Pastry can be made with vegetable margarine and custard can be made with soya milk.

Fruit salad is acceptable but should not be the only vegan dessert on the menu.

Snacks

Fresh fruit, dried fruit, nuts, baked sweet potato with vegetable chilli or baked beans, baked potato with grated vegan cheese, falafel with houmous and salad, vegetable sticks with dips, crackers, crisps, oatcakes, crispbreads (e.g. Ryvita); biscuits; sandwiches or rolls with a variety of fillings; vegan sausage rolls, samosas or spring rolls. However not all crackers, crisps and oatcakes are vegan, so read the label!

Sandwich Suggestions

1. Med Veg - roasted Mediterranean vegetables and houmous on sun dried tomato bread
2. In a Pickle - Redwood Cheddar Cheezly, pickle, radishes and lettuce
3. Cinderella surprise - grated carrot, red peppers, red onions, zest of orange with toasted pumpkin and coriander seeds, posh raisins and chillis
4. Mock Duck - mock duck (or crispy smoked tofu) with vegan black bean sauce, spring onion, shredded Chinese leaves and sprouts
5. Pizza de action - Redwood Nacho Cheese, red peppers, onions, olives, sun dried tomato paste, oregano, veggie pepperoni
6. Mole in the Hole - guacamole with smoked garlic and lollo rosso
7. Monster Munch - nut loaf with sauerkraut

8. Salsa Switch - red kidney beans, sweetcorn, jalapeno peppers, tomato paste, onion, gherkins
9. Peanut Butty - peanut butter with dairy free coleslaw, beansprouts and lettuce
10. Wimbledon - dairy free cream cheese and strawberries or strawberry jam

And lastly . . . a few important points

- Do not use the same utensils for serving vegan and non-vegan foods
- Do not serve 'just the vegetables' from a non-vegan meal
- Consult your customers for ideas
- Vegans who have had a good meal out will tell many others. So will those who haven't!
- Ensure that vegan dishes are clearly marked on the menu
- Have only one menu, not a separate vegan menu that customers have to make a special request to see. Many will not ask and will simply walk out
- Ensure that all kitchen and waiting staff understand the concept of veganism

Don't forget that vegan food is suitable for everyone to enjoy!

The Vegan Society's website has a great selection of recipes at www.vegansociety.com/html/food/recipes/, making animal-free cooking as easy as pie!

Also see www.ivu.org/recipes where you can choose browse through thousands of vegan recipes from all over the world.

If you prefer to cook from a book then browse through the best in vegan recipes books at our online shop: www.vegansociety.com/shop

Please do not hesitate to ask if you require advice, extra information or recipes – it's what we're here for. Just give us a ring, or email us at info@vegansociety.com

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Recipes

Basic Pastry

200g (7oz) plain wholemeal or white flour
100g (3½oz) very cold vegan margarine
pinch salt
cold water

1. Cut the margarine into small bits then rub it into the flour until the mix resembles fine breadcrumbs.
2. Add enough water to make a dough which is soft, but not sticky.

Basic Vinaigrette Dressing

200ml (7froz) cold pressed olive oil
100ml (4froz) cider vinegar
1 tsp mustard powder
1 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar

1. Mix thoroughly in a screw top jar.

Tomato Sauce

2 tbsp rapeseed or other vegetable oil
2 onions, chopped finely
1kg (2lb3oz) tinned tomatoes
1 green pepper, chopped - optional
1 tbsp tomato purée
bay leaf, parsley, oregano, basil, garlic powder, salt and black pepper
yeast extract or soya sauce to taste

1. Saute onions in the oil.
2. Blend or liquidize the tomatoes and green pepper until smooth and add to the pan.
3. Add tomato purée, herbs of choice, plus salt and pepper.
4. Bring to the boil and cook until the sauce thickens. Add yeast extract or soya sauce to taste.
5. Remove bay leaf before using sauce.

Garlic Mushrooms

2 tbsp vegetable oil
4 handfuls of mushrooms, quartered
4 cloves garlic, crushed
salt to taste
2 heaped tsp tomato puree

1. Heat oil in a wok, add mushrooms and cook for a few minutes. Add garlic, cook for a minute. Add the salt, tomato puree and cook for a further minute or two.
Serves 4

Gravy

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped small
1 heaped tbsp plain flour
430ml (¾pt) water
1 heaped tbsp yeast extract
dash tamari

1. Heat the oil in a saucepan. When hot, add the onions and fry at a very low heat for about 20 minutes until golden. Add the flour and fry gently for 1 minute.
2. Add the water and yeast extract, whisking constantly. Bring to the boil, stirring occasionally. Simmer until it starts to thicken, add more water if required.
3. Add a few shakes of tamari and then liquidise.

White Sauce

30g (1oz) plain flour
300ml (½ pint) soya milk
15-30g (½-1oz) vegan margarine

1. Mix flour with ¼ of the soya milk to a smooth paste. Place the rest of the milk into a pan and bring to the boil.
2. Pour the boiling milk over the flour mixture, stirring all the time. Add the margarine and season if required.

Mushroom Sauce

Cook 55g (2oz) of chopped mushrooms in soya milk, then use this mixture to make a white sauce.

Mustard Sauce

Blend ½-1 tablespoons of dry mustard with the flour and proceed as for white sauce.

Onion Sauce

Boil 3 onions, chop and add to white sauce.

Parsley Sauce

Add 1-2 tsp of fresh chopped parsley and a squeeze of lemon juice to the white sauce mixture.

Pancakes

170g (6oz) wholemeal flour
85g (3oz) soya flour
380ml (14froz) soya milk
3 tsp vegetable oil plus oil for frying

1. Sieve the flours into a bowl. Gradually whisk in the soya milk to make a smooth sauce. Add the oil and place in fridge for 30 minutes.
2. Drop 1-3 tbsp of the mixture into a frying pan containing hot oil. When one side is cooked, flip over and cook the other side. Remove from pan and serve.
Serves 6

Pancake Toppings

- Stir fry vegetables dribbled with a peanut sauce
- Vegan cream cheese and herbs
- Marinated tofu and lightly fried onions or leeks
- Watercress and Mushroom with soya cream sauce
- Sugar and lemon juice
- Maple syrup
- Chocolate Sauce
- Soya ice cream

Potato Salad

750g (1lb11oz) cooked potatoes
small bunch of parsley
5-6 spring onions
6 tbsps vegan mayonnaise e.g. Plamil
salt and pepper

1. Chop the cooked potatoes into 2½ cm (1 inch) cubes.
2. Finely chop the parsley and spring onions and add them to the potatoes.
3. Add the mayonnaise and season with salt and pepper. Serves 8

Coleslaw

½ medium white cabbage, shredded
1-2 large carrots, shredded
250g (9oz) vegan mayonnaise

1. Mix together the cabbage and carrot.
2. Add the mayonnaise, mix well and serve. Serves 8

Cream of Mushroom Soup

55g (2oz) vegan margarine
2 onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
400g (14oz) mushrooms, chopped
1140ml (2pts) soya milk
salt and pepper to season

1. Melt the margarine in a saucepan, then add the onion and garlic. Cook for a few minutes then add the mushrooms and cook until just soft.
2. Add the soya milk and seasoning and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
3. Serve with crusty bread and vegan margarine. Serves 6-8

Carrot and Coriander Soup

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
450g (1lb) carrots, chopped
1 or 2 sweet potatoes, chopped
700mls (1¼ pints) water
1 tbsp vegetable bouillon
½ bunch fresh coriander
ground nutmeg
salt

1. Heat the oil in a pan and add the onions. Saute for about ten minutes or until the onions are translucent. Add the garlic and saute for one minute.
2. Add the carrots, sweet potatoes and water to the pan.
3. Bring to the boil and simmer for about 30/35 minutes, until the carrots and sweet potatoes are very soft and you can easily mash them with a spoon.
4. Add the bouillon and ¾ of the coriander, roughly chopped. Remove from the heat and blend to a smooth creamy soup.
5. Put back on the heat, add the nutmeg and salt to taste.
6. Reheat and then serve with some of the remaining fresh coriander as a garnish. Serves 6-8

Quick Lasagne

55g (2oz) dried soya mince - optional
1 tbsp vegetable oil for frying
1 onion, finely chopped
1 courgette, finely chopped
1 small tin kidney beans, drained
1 x 400g tin tomatoes
1-2 x 455g jars of pasta sauce
9-12 sheets pasta
300g (10½ oz) plain firm tofu
1-2 tsp mustard powder
1 tsp salt
300ml (11 floz) soya milk
2 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes
large oblong casserole dish (approx 33cm x 25cm, 15cm deep).

1. Cook the soya mince in a little water for about 20 minutes and drain. Set aside.
2. Fry the onion and courgette in vegetable oil until just cooked. Add kidney beans, tomatoes and soya mince. Heat gently. Mix in the pasta sauce.
2. Place 3-4 slices of pasta in the bottom of a greased dish. Add half of the filling. Repeat and finish with pasta.
3. Place the tofu, mustard powder, salt and soya milk in a liquidiser. Liquidise until smooth. Check taste and add extra flavouring if necessary. Pour on top of the pasta.
4. Sprinkle with nutritional yeast flakes and bake for 35-40 minutes at 400°F/200°C/Gas 6 until brown on top. Serve with green salad. Serves 6-8

Cashew Nut Roast

450g (1lb) cashew nuts
340g (12oz) breadcrumbs
1 tsp basil
1 dssp thyme
generous pinch black pepper
vegetable oil to cover the bottom of the pan
4 large onions, very finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 cup plain flour
430ml (15floz) water
2 dssp soya sauce
2 dssp lemon juice
3 dssp marmite
enough sesame seeds to sprinkle on top

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6.
2. Chop nuts in blender. Turn bread into breadcrumbs in blender. Mix together in mixing bowl with the herbs and black pepper.
3. Heat the oil in a large pan then add the onions and garlic. Fry gently for 10-15 minutes. Add the flour and mix, then cook gently for a minute. Add the water, mix and bring to the boil. Add soya sauce, lemon juice and marmite.
4. Take the pan off the heat and then add the dry mix. Thoroughly mix the two together.
5. Place the mix in a baking tin and sprinkle sesame seeds on top. Place in the oven for 45-60 minutes. Serves 6-8. From www.pogocafe.co.uk

Sponge Cake

This recipe is for chocolate cake. For other flavours just use, for example, lemon juice and rind or vanilla instead of cocoa.

175g (6oz) self raising flour
2 heaped tsp baking powder
30g (1oz) cocoa
85g (3oz) sugar
125ml (4½floz) melted vegan margarine
325ml (11floz) cold water

1. Place all ingredients in a bowl and stir. Divide the mixture between two well greased round tins.
2. Bake at 190°C/375°F/Gas 5 for 30 mins or until a cocktail stick inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.
3. Make chocolate or coffee flavour "butter" icing using 170g (6oz) of sieved icing sugar to 115g (4oz) vegan margarine, plus flavouring.
4. Use some of this to sandwich the cakes together, and the rest to decorate the top. Add plain chocolate drops, grated chocolate, chocolate covered coffee beans, vegan "cream", alcohol etc as desired! Makes 8 servings

Whipped Cream

9 oz (250g) tofu
4 tbsp oil
1½ oz (40g) icing sugar
1 tsp vanilla essence
pinch salt
½ tsp lemon juice
2 tbsp soya milk as required (may not need)

1. Blend the ingredients in the order given, adding the soya milk last only as needed to blend the mixture into a thick cream. Chill.
2. Whip the cream with a spoon or whisk before serving.

Gourmet Recipes

Festive Feast

455g (1lb) puff pastry
sprinkling of flour for rolling pastry
Mushroom Ragout recipe x 1
Chestnut Pâté recipe x 1
Potato & Chive Quenelles recipe x 1
Sweet Pepper Marmalade recipe x 1
sesame seeds

1. Pre-heat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6.
2. Sprinkle surface with flour and roll out puff pastry into a rough rectangle, saving some of the pastry to cut out leaves for decoration.
3. Place mushroom ragout on centre of pastry.
4. Place chestnut pâté on top.
5. Place row of whole chestnuts onto the pâté.
6. Fold pastry over, cutting off the extra edges, seal by brushing edges with soya milk, decorate with pastry leaves and sprinkle with sesame seeds, place on well oiled tray.
7. Put in oven for 40 minutes (30 minutes in a fan assisted oven).
8. Slice and serve on bed of mixed leaves. Serve with Potato & Chive Quenelles, Sweet Pepper Marmalade and Redcurrant & Red Wine Sauce. Serves 6.

Mushroom Ragout

455g (1lb) mushrooms, chopped
285ml (½ pt) vegan red wine

1. Place mushrooms in pan with the wine and simmer until most of the liquid is gone.

Chestnut Pâté

115g (4oz) dried chestnuts
1½ litres (2½ pints) water, enough to cover the chestnuts by 2 inches
90ml (3floz) vegetable oil
170g (6oz) onions, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp sage
1 tsp thyme
1 tsp parsley
salt and pepper
30ml (1floz) soya sauce
15ml (½floz) vegan brandy
115g (4oz) fresh breadcrumbs
55g (2oz) ground hazelnuts
soya cream

1. Soak chestnuts in water overnight.
2. Place in pot and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until tender.
3. Remove liquid. Saute onions and garlic in oil until soft.
4. Stir in herbs, season and add soya sauce and brandy. Bring to boil.
5. Stir in breadcrumbs, hazelnuts and chestnuts (saving 12 whole chestnuts).
6. Cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
7. Blend to a rough purée and add cream to taste. Work into rectangular block.

Watercress and Potato Soup

30g (1oz) vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1 medium potato, chopped
430-570ml (¾-1pt) vegetable stock
115g (4oz) watercress
75ml (3floz) coconut milk
salt and pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a large pan and fry the onions and garlic until the onions are translucent. Add the potato and cook with the lid on for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to ensure they don't stick.
2. Add stock and bring to boil. Simmer for 10 minutes or so until potatoes become soft. Add watercress and simmer for about 5 minutes. Add coconut milk, then blend. Re-heat gently, but don't boil. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serves 4

Potato & Chive Quenelles

900g (2lb) potatoes
A handful of chives, chopped
Vegan margarine and milk to taste

1. Add potatoes to cold water and salt, bring to boil and cook until soft.
2. Drain and mash adding margarine and milk to taste. Add chives and mix.
3. Shape into quenelles (shell shapes) using 2 dessertspoons.

Sweet Pepper Marmalade

2 red peppers
2 green peppers
2 yellow peppers
2 tbsp vegan margarine
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp tomato purée
salt and pepper
1 tsp sugar to taste

1. Finely slice peppers and saute in margarine with garlic until soft.
2. Add tomato puree, salt, pepper and sugar.

All the recipes on this page (except the soup) were created by Karen Samuel Head Chef - Food For Friends, 18, Prince Albert St Brighton BN1 1HF. 01273 202310.

Ginger Snap Basket Dessert

Basket recipe x 1

scoops of vegan sorbet and/or vegan ice cream

Sugar Spun Net recipe x 1

Fruit

1. Place each basket on centre of plate, fill with sorbet/ice-cream, cover with net and arrange fruit around basket. Serves 10

Basket

285g (10oz) vegan margarine

455g (1lb) white sugar

225g (8oz) plain flour

225g (8oz) golden syrup

¼ tbsp ground ginger

1. Soften margarine and sugar, mix with rest of ingredients in a bowl.
2. Rest for as long as possible (until cold).
3. Roll into little balls and squash down onto greased baking sheet.
4. Bake in pre-heated oven at 180°C/375°F/Gas 6 until dark or golden brown.
5. Remove from oven, allow to cool slightly until firm enough to handle.
6. Mould over back of small greased bowl/jar/bottle.
7. Remove and allow to cool. Store in an airtight container until ready to serve.

Sugar Spun Net

455g (1lb) sugar

¼ cup sugar water

1. Boil ingredients in saucepan until hard ball consistency and slightly golden in colour.
2. To test when ready, drop small amount into iced water. When ready caramel will turn brittle.
3. Allow to cool slightly.
4. Grease back of appropriately sized ladle using a spoon, remove caramel from saucepan and drizzle in opposite directions over ladle (be careful of splashing as caramel is still hot). Allow to cool.
5. When brittle, knock off gently and place in airtight container until ready to serve, making sure the nets do not touch each other.

Fruit

assortment of fruit to taste

Icing sugar

1. Place assorted, cut fruit on oven tray and sprinkle with icing sugar. Grill or roast until golden brown.

Ginger Snap Basket Dessert created by Karen Samuel Head Chef, Food For Friends, 18, Prince Albert St, Brighton BN1 1HF.

Baba Ghanoush with Sun Dried Tomato

Polenta

3 large aubergines

2 tablespoons tahini

2 cloves garlic

juice & zest of 1 lemon

1 tsp freshly ground cumin

1 dssp fresh coriander, chopped

1. Pierce the aubergine in a couple of places then grill, turning twice, until the skins are black and blistered and the flesh is soft. Don't be tempted to cook in the oven, grilling gives a much better smoky flavour.
2. Cool, split in half and scoop out the flesh. Leave to drain in a colander. Puree the flesh in a blender with the remaining ingredients. Serves 6.

Sun Dried Polenta

2 tbsp olive oil & extra for oiling the tin

2 onions, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

1 litre (1¾ pints) vegetable stock

6 sun-dried tomatoes, finely diced

170g (6oz) polenta

1. Make the polenta first. Gently cook the onion and garlic in the olive oil until soft. Add the stock and sun-dried tomatoes and bring to the boil.
2. Slowly, in a continuous stream, pour in the polenta beating all the time. Cook gently for 1 minute, cool slightly then pour into a well-oiled tin and allow to cool. At this stage you can cover the polenta and keep it in the fridge for up to 2 days.
3. Turn out and cut into triangles. Place the triangles on an oiled baking sheet and roast in a hot oven 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 for about 10 minutes.
4. Put a spoonful of Baba Ghanoush on each plate with a couple of hot polenta triangles and serve.

Millet & Tofu Cakes with Citrus Salad

115g (4oz) millet

430g (¾ pint) vegetables stock

175g (6oz) firm tofu

1 tsp grated ginger

2 tbsp tamari

55g (2oz) chopped toasted hazelnuts

55g (2oz) breadcrumbs

1 tbsp chopped parsley

115g (4oz) oats

olive oil

1. Cook the millet in the stock for 20 minutes or until the millet is soft. Leave until cool.
2. Blend all the ingredients together except the oats. Shape into eight flat cakes. Dip each one into the seasoned oats. Heat a little olive oil in a pan and cook the cakes gently on each side.

Citrus Salad

1 cos lettuce

1 small head radicchio

1 handful rocket

1 handful watercress

1 large ruby grapefruit

2 oranges (blood, if in season)

Salt & pepper

Dressing

1 lime

2 tablespoons fresh orange juice

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1 chilli pepper, seeded & chopped

6 fl oz olive oil

1. Wash and pick over salad ingredients, pop in a container in 'fridge until needed.
2. Peel the citrus fruit and cut out the segments.
3. Whizz all the dressing ingredients together. Place the salad in a bowl and toss with half the dressing. Divide the salad between four bowls, pile on the citrus segments, drizzle over remaining dressing.
4. Place 2 hot millet cakes to the side of each salad. Serves 4

Based on Daphne Lambert's Green Cuisine: Favourite restaurant dishes

Butternut Squash Soup with Coconut Cream

60ml (2froz) olive oil
2 onions, peeled & chopped
700g (1½lb) butternut squash, peeled & diced
½ tsp ground coriander
½ tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ginger, grated
1.2 litre (2 pints) vegetable stock salt & pepper
45g (1½oz) creamed coconut

1. Gently cook the onion in the olive oil, add the butternut squash and cook until just turning. Brown, add the spices, cook for a further minute stirring all the time, pour on the stock. Bring to the boil and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes.
2. Cool slightly, then blend until smooth, return to pan, season if required. Dissolve coconut in a little hot water. Divide soup between 4 bowls & decorate with a swirl of coconut. Serves 4

Pears in White Wine with Chocolate Sauce

6 large pears, peeled and left whole
75cl (1¼ pints) vegan white wine
115g (4oz) sugar
4 cloves
1 cardamom, seeds removed
pared lemon peel
1 vanilla pod

1. Put the pears in a pan with the remaining ingredients. Add water if necessary, to cover, bring to boil and simmer uncovered for an hour or until tender but still hold their shape.
2. Lift out and put in a bowl. Reduce the syrup, then pour over the pears.

Chocolate Sauce

115g (4oz) plain chocolate
2 tbsp golden syrup
110ml (4froz) water

1. Melt all ingredients gently together.
2. Place a pear in individual bowls, drizzle over chocolate sauce and serve. Serves 6.

Coconut Mousse

6 lemons
200g (7 oz) creamed coconut
430ml (¼ pint) orange juice
2 sheets of nori seaweed (sushi seaweed)
lollo rosso lettuce
olives
18 oatcakes
pinch salt
sprig of herbs

1. Cut a small slice off the bottom of the lemons so they will stand up. Throw away the bottoms.
2. Cut a larger slice off the top of the lemon, enough so the lemon can be scraped out. Keep the tops.
3. Scrape out all the lemon from the inside, so that just the shell of the lemon remains. keep the lemon you have removed.
4. Chop up the creamed coconut and add the orange juice, melt in a microwave or in a saucepan (take care not to burn) for a few minutes until soft then blend together with a spoon.
5. Add 60ml (2froz) lemon juice from the inside of the lemons.
6. Put creamed coconut in the freezer or fridge to chill for about an hour until it stiffens, stir vigorously.
7. When coconut is thoroughly chilled it should be the consistency of cream cheese or hummus. Add more lemon juice if too stiff.
8. Toast seaweed on hob or over a flame, for a few seconds each side until green and translucent. then crumble up into the creamed coconut and mix thoroughly.
9. Fill each lemon 'shell' with mousse until overflowing, put lemon top back on top of mousse.
10. Serve on bed of lettuce with olives, oatcakes and a sprig of herbs. Serves 6

Coconut Mousse and Bonnie Prince Pudding from "Rainbows and Wellies" - The Taigh Na Mara Cookbook.

Also see www.foodsforlife.org.uk

Bonnie Prince Pudding

2 tsp oil
375g (13oz) oyster mushrooms
1 tsp mustard seeds
1 dssp soya sauce
1 onion, chopped
1 large carrot, finely chopped
125g (4½oz) walnuts
1 red pepper, chopped
125g (4½oz) fresh tomatoes
3 tpsps cornflour
1 dssp tomato puree
1/3 pint orange juice
1 dssp yeast extract
4 dates, chopped
1 tsp pepper
285g (10oz) self-raising pastry flour
125g (4½oz) very cold vegan margarine
125ml (4½froz) soya yoghurt
½ tsp salt
125ml (4½froz) soya milk
6 x 5cm metal pudding tins or ramekins

1. In a deep frying pan or wok fry sliced oyster mushrooms in oil with the mustard seeds and a splash of soya sauce.
2. After a couple of minutes add onions and continue frying.
3. Then add carrots, walnuts and red peppers, Put the lid on the pan and simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile chop the tomatoes and add to the pan.
5. Mix the cornflour with the tomato puree. Blend with 1/3 pint orange juice then whilst continually stirring add to mix to thicken. Add yeast extract, dates & pepper and slowly simmer on a low heat.
6. Make pastry - rub in flour, cold margarine and salt until evenly distributed. Blend in soya yoghurt and a few tablespoons of soya milk until pliable.
7. Roll out pastry onto a floured surface. Cut rounds double the size of pots for base and same size as pots for top.
8. Press pastry bases into the oiled pots or ramekins, fill with mushroom mixture. Cap with pastry top. Cover tops with squares of foil.
9. Put on a tray and fill tray with boiling water about a 1/3 up the side. Broil in oven for 30-45 minutes at 200°C/400°C/Gas 6 until risen. Serves 6

Vegetables

Mashed Potato with Rosemary

6 potatoes
8 sprigs rosemary, 2 finely chopped and 6 to decorate
salt and pepper
2 tbsp vegan margarine
3 tbsp soya cream

1. Wash and finely chop potatoes (with skins). Boil in minimum amount of water (not enough to submerge, just enough to prevent burning) for 20 minutes until soft.
2. Add rosemary, salt, pepper, margarine and soya cream then mash. Serves 6

Carrots in Orange Juice

6 medium carrots
140ml (½ pint) orange juice
6 chives

1. Cut carrots into thin strips. Simmer in orange juice for a few minutes. Tie up in bundles with the chives. Serves 6

Lemon Broccoli

6 sprigs broccoli
juice of 1 lemon
dash of olive oil

1. Break off 6 large florets of broccoli. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, lemon juice and olive oil. Steam for 7 minutes. Serves 6

All recipes on this page from "Rainbows and Wellies" - The Taigh Na Mara Cookbook. Also see www.foodsforlife.org.uk

Chocolate Mousse

175g (6oz) plain chocolate
60ml (2 fl oz) orange juice
225g (8oz) tofu
55g (2oz) muscovado sugar
115g (4oz) vegan margarine
30g (1oz) dates or apricots, chopped
1/5 gill (1 fl oz) whisky
1 shot Cointreau

1. Melt chocolate in the orange juice.
2. Blend all other ingredients together then add the melted chocolate whilst blending.
3. Chill for at least 3 hours or overnight.
Serves 6

Eighth Day Sweet Potato and Quinoa Chilli

3 tbsp sunflower oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 fresh chilli, de-seeded and chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 large onion, finely chopped
1kg (2lb3oz) sweet potato, peeled and cut into 25mm dice
1 x 400g tin tomatoes
½ litre (18 fl oz) vegetable stock
100g (4½ oz) quinoa, soaked for 20 minutes in cold water then rinsed well
salt and pepper to taste
1 red pepper, finely sliced
1 x 400g tin red kidney beans, strained
1 handful of chopped fresh coriander
1 tbsp creamed basil

1. In a heavy based pan heat up the oil and when smoking hot put in the seeds to pop, cover immediately to stop them jumping out of the pan and turn down the heat. Add the chilli and garlic.
2. Add the onions and cook until translucent.
3. Add the sweet potato, turn up the heat again and stir fry for a few minutes.
4. Add the tinned tomato, stock and quinoa, season with salt and pepper, stir well then turn down the heat, cover and leave to simmer.
5. When the sweet potato and quinoa are cooked (the quinoa will burst open and become tender) add the red pepper and kidney beans. Stir well, adjust the seasoning to taste then stir in the fresh coriander and basil.
6. Serve with a green salad. Serves 6

Hector's Haggis Boats

(Courgette sailing ships loaded with haggis on a high sea of lollo rosso)

6 courgettes
2 tbsp tamari
2 tbsp oil
55g (2oz) vegan margarine
115g (4oz) organic oats
4 tbsp walnut oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
55g (2oz) chopped mixed nuts
200g tin red kidney beans (no juice)
115g (4oz) mushrooms, finely chopped
1 medium to large carrot, finely chopped
3 tps yeast extract
1 tsp black pepper
sprinkle of cayenne pepper
small sprigs of thyme, parsley and sage, finely chopped
small scraping of nutmeg
juice of ½ lime
nip of whisky
12 slices cucumber (for sails)
12 triangles of red pepper (for flags)
1 Lollo Rosso lettuce

1. Take a sliver off the bottom of the courgettes to make firm.
2. Hollow out to make boats but leave about a ¼ at the front to stick the sails into. Paint insides with a little tamari and oil.
3. Meanwhile toast the oats in a saucepan with 1 oz of margarine until golden brown - be careful not to burn them, keep stirring with your spurtle (porridge stick) or wooden spoon.
4. Fry the onions in the walnut oil and 1oz of margarine. Add the nuts, kidney beans, mushrooms, carrots, yeast extract, peppers, herbs, nutmeg, lime juice and whisky. Mix thoroughly for five minutes to ensure flavours combine. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Stuff mixture into courgettes. Cook for about 30 minutes in a medium/hot oven until courgettes are hot but not too soft.
6. Make sails and flags with cucumber and red pepper on cocktail sticks and place at each end of courgettes.
7. Serve on sea of lollo rosso lettuce. Serves 6