

IN THIS ISSUE: *Sustainable* CELEBRATIONS

VeganLife

December 2020 | issue 66 | £5.99

The lifestyle magazine written by vegans for vegans

Festive FEASTING

Delicious
Christmas
recipes

46

new vegan
recipes

Goodbye 2020

Maria Slough
looks over
the year

Wild Cities

How are animals
adapting to
urban living?

HAPPY VEGAN Christmas

How to thrive, not just survive the holiday



Edgy Veg



Candice Hutchings

3 animal charities to support | Saving dogs in the Middle East

Violife

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Christmas!*



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PRIMEIMPACT
EVENTS & MEDIA


Hello,

Happy Christmas! Can you believe that it is actually here? After the year we've had — with constantly saddening news of the Coronavirus pandemic, jobs being lost and businesses closing — it doesn't seem like we should be celebrating. But, more than ever, I think we have a right and a lot to celebrate now. There has been so much loss this year, but throughout it all, we have shown how strong we are as a community — of vegans, and of humans on this beautiful planet we call Earth. We have stayed home to keep the vulnerable safe, and we have raised money to help people and animals throughout welfare, health and financial struggles.

On page 48, Maria Slough reminds us of the wonderful people she has met this year — activists, business owners and animal saviours. All are absolutely deserving of celebration — for all they do for the movement and for improving the lives of innocent creatures.

This month, we had the pleasure of meeting Lynda Free from Freedom Farm Animal Sanctuary. Lynda works so hard to save animals, recently rescuing Holly the turkey from becoming Christmas dinner. Lynda even fundraised to help Holly to get a life-saving prosthetic beak — showing kindness to a bird who was previously not shown any. Read all about Lynda and Holly on page 40.

As I write, working from home on my sofa-come-desk, another national lockdown is set to begin, and the future of many incredible vegan companies is uncertain. On page 44, Sean O'Callaghan reminds us of the importance of remembering and supporting the plant-based pioneers who paved the way for what veganism is today. Make sure to bear these businesses in mind when buying gifts and food this Christmas.

And, since it's Christmas... we couldn't go without sharing a gigantic assortment of festive recipes and advice with you! Throughout this issue, you'll find delicious vegan showstoppers, sumptuous sides and decadent desserts, as well as gift guides and top tips galore.

Yes, 2020 has been a tough year (to put it lightly!), but amongst the hardship we have shown strength in our choices and in our actions, and we have continued to be the best vegans that we can be. Continue with all of the good you are doing for animals, people and planet. Celebrate who you are and what you've done, and the progression of veganism (there are so many plant-based items on the shelves now!). And, have the best vegan Christmas ever.

See you next year,

Gemma Tadman

Editor



@veganlife_mag



@veganlifemagazine



@veganlife_mag



Cover Image:

Christmas Doughnuts, p98

Recipes from **The Little Blog of Vegan**,

thelittleblogofvegan.com, @thelittleblogofvegan



18



40



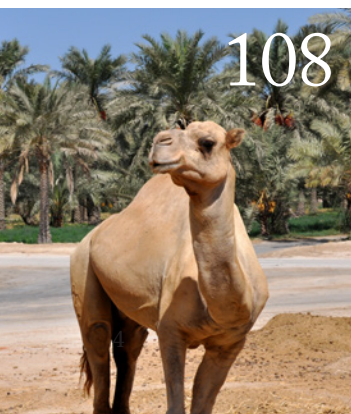
90



62



48



108



104



98

Contents

On The Cover

18	Interview: Edgy Veg
29	Festive recipes
46	Animal lovers, unite
48	Looking back over 2020
66	How to have a Vegan Christmas
90	Wild cities
98	Cover recipe: Christmas Doughnuts
108	Swapping bright lights for Bahrain

Food & Drink

29	Oat Milk Eggnog
30	Warm-Your-Heart Whisky & Lime Sour
31	Pumpkin Spice Latte Smoothie
32	Carrot Smoked 'Salmon' & Cream
33	Smoked Applewood Welsh Rarebit
33	Not Avocado on Toast: Broad Bean Guacamole, Coriander and Chilli
34	Caramelised Onion & Arugula Toastie
34	Blueberry Banana Muffins
36	Kale, Tomato & Quinoa Soup
36	Roast Potatoes, Seasonal Salad with a Cranberry Sauce
36	Cranberry Sauce
37	Moroccan Spiced Chickpea Salad
38	Kale, Butternut Squash, Pomegranate & Quinoa Salad
51	Asparagus with Chilli Hollandaise
52	Creamy Mushroom & Thyme Canapés
53	Tofoo & Fig Canapés
53	Mini Tofoo 'Sausage' Rolls
54	Avocado Bruschetta
54	Cranberry & Cream Cheese Crostini
56	Olive Tapenade Bites

57

Bite-sized Hassle Backs

57	Pesto Pinwheels
58	Charred Red Pepper & Herb Festive Bites
59	French Onion Soup with Cheesy Croutons
59	Broccoli & 'Blue Cheese' Soup
60	Rustic Squash & Hazelnut Pesto Tarts
76	Roasted Seitan & Vegetables
77	Onion Gravy
77	Roast Potatoes
78	Squeaky Bean Stuffed Mini Yorkshire Puddings
80	Spiced Maple Roast Carrots & Parsnips, with Mustard Polenta Mash
81	Lentil Wellington
82	Tofu Cranberry Balls
83	Jewelled Red Cabbage
83	Maple Roasted Brussel Sprouts & Chestnuts
84	Lentil Roast Wreath
97	Easy Vegan Jaffa Cake Dessert
98	Christmas Doughnuts
99	Flourless Mince Pie Brownies
100	Christmas Brandy Truffles
100	Vegan Apple Pockets with Marzipan
101	Christmas Brownie Boot
102	Chestnut, Chocolate & Almond Cake with Spiced Pears
103	Mummy Meagz Snowman Caramel Cake

Special Features

46	When Lynda met Holly Holly the turkey was given a second chance at a joyful life
66	Vegan Christmas Our ultimate guide to the festive season
70	Swapping bright lights for Bahrain A vegan Scottish pop star is saving animals in the Middle East

Regulars

06	Over to you Your letters, emails and musings
08	Vegan news All the latest stories
22	Ask the experts The team at Veganuary answer your questions
24	Vegan spotlight Our favourites this month
26	The beauty edit The vegan products you need on your radar this month
42	What I eat in a week Annie Connolly shares with us her food diary
44	Vegan consumers fight back Sean O'Callaghan on supporting independent vegan businesses
48	Maria Slough Our columnist revisits a few of 2020's inspiring interviews
62	Good tidings we... drink Oliver Coningham shares festive tipples for December
86	Laura Gaga Our columnist reminds us of what is important
88	Vegan diet & heart disease Yvonne O'Halloran looks at what foods to eat and avoid if you have heart disease
92	Subscriptions Subscribe today for only £3.95
106	Grow your own Piers Warren helps us grow cherries
110	Vegan art We meet artist Emma Van Looy
112	Vegan pages
114	Happy Holidays Jake Yapp enjoys a simple Christmas

Over to you

Your letters, emails and musings

WORTH £80
IN TOTAL!



Next Month's Star Letter Prize

Send your letters or poems to Gemma.Tadman@primeimpact.co.uk to be in with a chance of winning a copy of *Vegans in Iceland*, by Jonathan Straight. Vegan photographer Jonathan wanted to visit Reykjavík to take street shots of the locals, but he had no idea whether he would be able to find any vegan food there. Finding some local resources on Facebook led to an invitation to photograph the Cube of Truth, and that in turn led to a series of black and white portraits of members of the vegan community in Iceland. This beautiful case-bound book will look great on your coffee table and helps to fund the work of marine conservation charity Sea Shepherd. As they say in Icelandic, "njóttu!" (enjoy!). There are two copies up for grabs, each worth £40.



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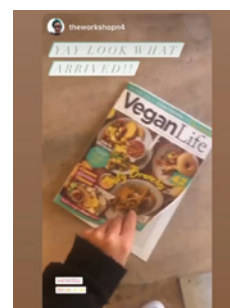
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@gingerdays



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STAR LETTER PRIZE

Dear *Vegan Life*,

I thought I would share my journey to veganism — it's important to hear real vegan stories and how far people can come. I was brought up in a meat and two veg household, and my second job after leaving school was in the office of a wholesale butchers, so I was in and out of the slaughterhouse often. After other jobs came and went, I worked as a meat inspector.

I gave up eating meat in 2001 and became veggie after a few years, as did my partner. One day, she told me she wanted to go vegan and so we did the Vegan November (Veganuary wasn't about then), which was easy. My partner stuck to it without

problems (I occasionally forgot things like milk in a drink) and will tell you that she has now been vegan for nearly eight years. Nowadays, neither of us have any problems.

I think we need to try to engage more with food producers — rather than demonising farmers we should try to reach a consensus on what's best for non-humans and humans, including farmers. My other half subscribes to the magazine, which we both enjoy reading — particularly Jake Yapp's musings!

Kind regards,
Neil Fishlock

Neil wins delicious vegan food from Good Life, worth over £50!

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Vegan news

All things vegan from the worlds of entertainment, politics, sports, animal advocacy and more. Got news for us? Email vegannews@primeimpact.co.uk

Northern Bloc launches vegan ice cream to support theatre industry

Eat good, do great, with popular vegan ice cream brand, Northern Bloc. The artisan company has launched a delicious new ice cream flavour in support of its partners in the struggling theatre industry.

The decadent vegan ice cream is called The Show Must Go On!, and is available exclusively in Waitrose. The indulgent, plant-based ice cream is white chocolate and honeycomb flavour, an exclusive combination, brand new to Northern Bloc.

Profits from the product will be donated to Theatre Support Fund+, an organisation founded by two employees of the West End. It supports charities responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on out-of-work employees of the theatre industry, raising awareness of their increasingly difficult situation.

Josh Lee, co-founder and director at Leeds-based Northern Bloc, told us: "At Northern Bloc we're so passionate about the arts. Whilst we've got strong distribution within the grocery sector, our heritage is in food service. Our individual tubs are available in arts venues and tourist attractions across the country and some of our very first customers were theatres. We'll be forever grateful for the platform those venues gave us. At this time when the industry faces such an uncertain future, we wanted to show our support in the way we know best, so created these tubs to generate awareness and donations for the Theatre Support Fund+. Whilst restrictions on large gatherings remain, the industry continues to be in danger and we'll do everything we can to help. We're so pleased to be working with Waitrose on the initiative, giving its customers an opportunity to support these charities at the time of year when the theatre plays such an important role in our culture and traditions."

Visit northern-bloc.com

Product of the month



OGGS Mince Pies

OGGS' fantastically festive mince pies are back! Each little pie is lovingly handmade without any eggs or butter, making them vegan-friendly. Encased with melt-in-the-mouth pastry, holding together a centre bursting with sultanas, currants, raisins, Bramley apple purée, vegetable suet, mixed spices and brandy. The moreish mince pies are also packaged in sustainable, recycled and recyclable materials.

£2.50, loveoggs.com



VEGAN ENTREPRENEUR

Palace Culture

Palace Culture began in the Parmigiani family kitchen in Crystal Palace, London. Due to his four-year-old son's intolerances, Mirko Parmigiani had made it his mission to create a delicious dairy-free cheese that his whole family could enjoy. Combining his love for flavour with a deep passion for sustainability and health, he began making nut-based cheeses using raw and local ingredients. The resulting product was a huge success! Soon enough, word of Mirko's nutty cheeses spread throughout Crystal Palace, leading to Palace Culture's first stall at Crystal Palace's farmers' market.

The business quickly grew to additional shops and markets, and Mirko recognised that nuts could not continue to be fermented all throughout his family flat... So, he took production out of his home to a railway arch in the food hub of Bermondsey, and this is where Palace Culture lives today!

From tasty cream cheese spreads, to soft and hard cheeses that have been aged over months, Palace Culture have products for every plant-based cheese board. All their products are 100 per cent vegan and contain no artificial flavours, colours or preservatives.

For more info, head to palaceculture.co.uk



For an Eco Friendly Christmas Shop at EarthwiseGirls.co.uk



When out shopping, it can be difficult for us to quickly locate ready-made food that doesn't contain animal products. It's especially tricky when it comes to 'cuisine convenience' products, like condiments and sauces. This is where Middle Eastern Kitchen comes in — they make a delicious selection of plant-based sauces for a variety of Middle Eastern dishes (the first of their kind!), to make it easier for vegans to enjoy the broad cuisine at home. Founder and owner, Riyonn Farsad tells us more.

Hey, Riyonn! Tell us about Middle Eastern Kitchen (MEK).

Growing up in a Middle Eastern household, I was surrounded by amazing food packed full of flavour and spices. When I grew up, I wanted to recreate these dishes, but I realised there was nothing on the shelves for us vegans. I decided to make this food accessible for everyone and to encourage people to try a whole new range of foods. Middle Eastern Kitchen presents a range of traditional yet modern cooking sauces which are packed full of flavour, using only traditional ingredients and spices. Not only are they delicious they are all vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, low in calories and they have absolutely no additives! I am extremely proud of them.

What makes MEK unique?

There is currently nothing like us in the shops. There are no ready-made vegan sauces like ours for people to add to food to make these delicious types of meals. When you think of the Middle East you think of the delicious food, which is so diverse and different. Different flavours and spices are used and every dish is made with love. When you go down the aisles you will find Indian, Chinese, Thai, Italian, Latin and many others but you don't see anything from the Middle East — let alone options that are vegan, but you do now!

Why do you think veganism has grown so much over the last few years?

Year on year, more people want to eat in a cleaner, more ethically minded way. Plus, people have become more aware about what vegan food actually encompasses. Nowadays, we have a massive variety of vegan goodies available. I remember when I turned vegan all those years ago, and the only thing on most menus in restaurants was stuffed peppers. There's only a certain amount of times you can order that before you are bored!

For more from Riyonn, visit middleeasternkitchen.com

Kindness Catchup:

Middle Eastern Kitchen



THE NOMEAT COMPANY

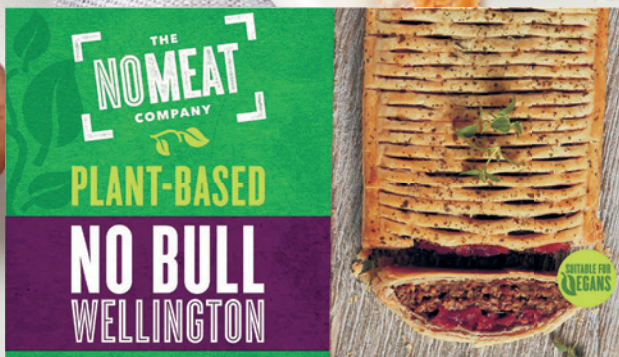
No Meat Range Available at

ASDA

the food
WAREHOUSE

 **ocado**

Iceland



New book, *Vegan Interior Design* to help catch-up vegan decor

Vegan food is becoming mainstream. Vegan fashion is rapidly catching up. But what about vegan homes, workplaces and hotels?

The new book, *Vegan Interior Design* by Aline Dürr builds a bridge between current interior design trends, and an increased awareness about sustainable and healthy home design — with a focus on replacing animals-based products with cruelty-free options. The informative book explains how to implement a vegan lifestyle in homes, offices or any other interior space — at no extra cost and with no compromises in quality.

It asks and answers questions like: do you know if the production of your wall paint caused pain to animals? Do you know that the leather on your couch may not actually come from cows, but cats or dogs? Do you know that your fluffy pillow is actually posing a health risk to you? Do you know why towels are not vegan? The book provides answers to all the above questions and many more.

‘Even the strictest vegan will find products in this

book, he or she never even realised were non-vegan,’ says Aline Dürr, author, and founder and director of Vegan Interior Design. ‘Animal-derived products sneak into everything and are found where you would least expect them.’

PETA senior outreach and partnerships manager, Emily Rice, comments: ‘PETA congratulates Aline Dürr on her cutting-edge book. By showcasing stylish, comfortable, and practical vegan homeware and decorating solutions, this guide will help spare terrified animals abuse for their fur, wool, skin or feathers. We can all rid our homes of items whose production harms the planet and its animal inhabitants, so we urge everyone to create a kind home adorned with vegan decor — from cruelty-free paints to feather-free pillows.’

For more info, visit, veganinteriordesign.com



3 ways to eat... Indian



BUY:

Glorious Goan Stew, Vibrant Vegan, from £5, vibrantvegan.co.uk



DINE:

Hungry Beast Vegan Indian Kitchen, Kingsland Rd, London, hungry-beast.co.uk



MAKE:

Aubergine Madras, veganlifemag.com/aubergine-madras

V-EAT OUT...

The Veg Box Café

This independently run veggie and vegan café is based in the heart of Canterbury, right near the city's famous cathedral. The colourful establishment's owners say that making simple, vegetarian and vegan food special is their passion, and they aim to use the best local, organic and Fairtrade products available.

The team cook delicious breakfasts and lunches on the premises every day, with everything from pancakes to Buddha bowls, and they also provide an exceptional assortment of teas, coffees and homemade cakes. Everything is readily available to take away in their handy compostable boxes.

Recently, they have also started selling delicious pre-made meal and fresh produce boxes, available to order across Canterbury and Kent.

Visit thevegboxcafe.co.uk



Horlicks launch first-ever vegan-friendly malted drink in Europe

British brand Horlicks has been around for nearly 150 years, and has finally launched a vegan-friendly version of their popular malted drink — Horlicks Vegan. The new product is the first of its kind, marking the first vegan-friendly malted drink brand to enter the European market.

The dairy-free malted beverage can be enjoyed with any type of plant-milk, and uses a vegan recipe based on the brand's signature creamy and malty characteristics.

Registered by The Vegan Society, the new formulation contains 14 key vitamins and minerals, making it great for kids and adults alike, and can be enjoyed hot or cold.

Ericka Durgahee at the Vegan Society said: "We're proud to register Horlicks' first-ever free-from formulation with the Vegan Trademark. It's brilliant to see a household brand demonstrating that dairy is not necessary to make a great tasting hot drink and that people can still enjoy their favourites without the use of dairy milk. We expect the vegan community to be as excited as we are!"

Horlicks Vegan will be available exclusively with Asda for £3.49.

For more information, visit horlicks.co.uk



Editor's Choice

Mindful Bites Classic Vegan Hamper Box

This MASSIVE hamper is exactly what we need during the festive season — to enjoy with our families and friends, or to gift to others. It contains an assortment of tasty treats, including an Organic Classic Veganettone, a box of Cantucci Biscotti Almond, a jar of Dark Chocolate and Hazelnut Spread and more. Everything is vegan, organic, palm oil free and non-GMO. It's the epitome of festive enjoyment packed neatly into a recyclable box!
£39.99, mindfulbites.co.uk

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CORAL REEF

Scientists have found a coral reef taller than America's Empire State Building at the northern tip of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. It was discovered by underwater robot, SuBastian, controlled by non-profit Schmidt Ocean Institute.

APPLEWOOD VEGAN

Applewood Vegan Slices are a finalist in the highly acclaimed Grocer Awards. The sell-out plant-based cheese slices debuted in The Grocer New Product Awards 2020's Dairy-Free Category.

PLANT-BASED TESCO

Tesco has responded to demand for vegan on-the-go options, adding two Christmas plant-based wraps to their range. Back from 2019, is the Wicked Kitchen Festive Feast Wrap and new, is the Tesco Plant Chef Root Veg and Chestnut Wrap.

HERO to ZERO

What's going up and down this month

UK ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

There are fears of a weakening of the UK's 'green watchdog' — Office for Environmental Protection (OEP). Ministers agreed that after Brexit, regulations on air, waste and water would be controlled by an independent OEP, but they now want to possess advisory powers ([bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk)).

LIGHT POLLUTION

A picture-study of night-time Earth has revealed that many countries are losing darkness. The images show that artificial light is growing brighter and more extensive each year. Scientists say a 'loss of night' is devastating for 'flora, fauna and human well-being'.

'SLEEPING GIANTS'

Frozen methane deposits in the Arctic Ocean — the 'sleeping giants of the carbon cycle' — have begun to be released across the continental slope off Russia's East Siberian coast. There are concerns that a new climate feedback loop has been sparked, accelerating the speed of global heating ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com)).



Follow me socially



Torre Washington

Vegan for 22 years — embracing his ITAL Rastafarian roots (ITAL: natural living off the land for food and life), Torre Washington is a man to admire. Back when he started bodybuilding, it wasn't common to be vegan, but he didn't let that discourage him and used it to give him more fire to fuel his dream. His Instagram page is packed with motivational and passionate images that will inspire you to chase your goals.

Follow [@torre.washington](https://www.instagram.com/torre.washington)

What's happening?

Vegan events for your diary

Saturday 5th December

Live Online Festive Vegan Cooking Class, Tickets from £20, [eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

Sunday 20th December

Mission Spice School Online Vegan Cooking Night, Tickets from £14, [eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

Wednesday 30th December

Online Cacao Ceremony for the New Moon, Tickets from £15, [eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

SWEDISH DESIGN WITH A GREEN SOUL

Crinkled "Pimpinella" dress
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organic-cotton voile, £79.

AUTUMN 2020

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House of Bakes launch vegan cookies the size of your fist

Popular London-based bakery, House of Bakes, has the answer to late-night snack-attacks, with their newest range of vegan treats — the likes and size of which will impress even the toughest cookie critic. Very few giant, American-style vegan cookies exist in bakeries or shops currently, and with this in mind, House of Bakes made it their mission to add a vegan collection to their offerings.

Weighing in at 5oz, the cookies are huge and indulgent as can be. Flavours change monthly, but at time of writing, included Bourbon and Oreo, White Chocolate and Biscoff, Chocolate, Peanuts and Peanut Butter, Rocky Road and Dark Choc and Walnut.

Soft and gooey on the inside and with the perfect crispy edge, the vegan cookies can be eaten cold or heated up as a dessert. They can be delivered anywhere in the UK, so also make for a perfect gift or treat.

From £4, houseofbakesuk.com



3 of the best... Hazelnut chocolate bars



Rhythm 108

Rhythm 108 create the tastiest vegan treats by hand using the expertise of generations of Swiss pâtissiers. Filled with a delicious creamy hazelnut praline and coated in velvety Swiss Chocolate.

£3.59, rhythm108.com



Fellow Creatures

Fellow Creatures' Creamy Milkless Hazelnut Chocolate features hidden crunchy bits of roast hazelnut in a dreamy creamy vegan chocolate bar. It's dairy-, gluten- and palm oil-free.

£3.45, fellowcreatures.co.uk

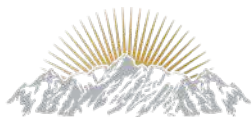


Ombar

Ombar's Centres Hazelnut Truffle comprises of delicious hazelnut truffle encased in a rich and smooth 60% chocolate shell. The entire range is certified organic, fair trade and vegan, as well as being free from refined sugar.

£2.99, ombar.co.uk

WIN: a case of award-winning, vegan-friendly wines from El Tesoro de las Montañas (6 bottles) worth over £40



EL TESORO DE LAS MONTAÑAS



To celebrate the launch of its new Chilean Chardonnay, El Tesoro de las Montañas is delighted to offer five lucky readers the chance to win a mixed case of its award-winning, vegan-friendly South American wines.

Literally translated, El Tesoro de las Montañas means "The Treasure of the Mountains", reflecting the stunning landscape in the shadow of the Andes where the wines are grown and produced.

This outstanding selection of wines truly showcases what Argentina and Chile, two great wine growing nations that are separated by the Andean mountains — the "backbone" of South America — can produce.

The unique range includes a crisp Chardonnay, refreshing Sauvignon Blanc

and elegant Merlot hailing from Chile's Valle Central, as well as a robust Malbec, fruity Chardonnay, delicious Red Blend and full-bodied Malbec Reserve from Mendoza, Argentina.

From decadent dinner parties to barbecues and picnics, El Tesoro de las Montañas offers an ideal option for every dining experience.

To find out more, visit broadlanddrinks.com/brands/el-tesoro-de-las-montanas

Enter online at veganlifemag.com/el-tesoro

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“With the abolishment of animal agriculture, we could end world hunger”

We chat to Candice Hutchings, the incredible vegan chef and owner-CEO of Edgy Veg

Candice Hutchings is a powerful role model for vegans. With wit, humour and kindness the Canada-based blogger, author and chef uses her brand, Edgy Veg, to share delicious plant-based recipes. Not only that, but Candice makes sure to use her voice to urge feminist and mental health issues, too, and the community she has created is one that is welcoming and accessible to all. We catch up with the wonder woman about cooking, Christmas and the future of veganism.

Hi, Candice! Talk us through your journey to veganism.

I grew up in a mainly vegetarian household. My mum was very into health and natural living because of her Seventh Day Adventist religion. She was making seitan and had us drinking soya milk in the 90s before any conversation around veganism was happening. As a child and throughout my teens I would get frequent debilitating headaches, and my battle with acne began. I was travelling to Germany a lot at this time with my family, and it was suggested to me by my Omi's (grandma's) homeopathic doctor to try cutting out dairy. That's probably what started making me aware of the connection between food and my body.

Since then, my love and connection with animals has fuelled this lifestyle

for me. I began my vegan journey and I felt fantastic on a plant-based diet. I've now been happily vegan for 10 years.

When did you first get into cooking?

Being vegan in 2010 was much less accessible than it is today. Without access to vegan meat, egg and dairy alternatives (or vegan restaurants), I was left feeling very bored and missed the meals I loved. So, I took it upon myself to figure out this vegan diet thing, through teaching myself how to cook. I started keeping an online diary of my recipes (early days of blogging) and found that there were people like me who wanted more than just grains and veg. I got creative, failed a lot, and eventually became quite good not only at cooking but also recipe development.

How would you describe your cooking style?

I like to call my cooking style 'carnivore approved'. I want my recipes to show people that all of your favourite foods can be made without animal products. Anything you can cook, I can cook vegan, and make it mouth-wateringly delicious.

I want to show people (vegan or not) that all of our favourite foods can be made without animals, and that cooking with plants is delicious! I also find that adding more vegan meals into your life is made a lot easier when you know how to cook the foods that bring you comfort, joy, stability, and feelings of nostalgia.

How did Edgy Veg come to be?

When I first went vegan and started to experiment, my mum and a couple of friends were curious about how things were going and, of course, the recipes I was creating. I found myself constantly emailing them around, and thought an online blog-type platform would make it easier for me to share. Once people outside of my social circle started following the blog, I realised it was something that was needed in the food space, and something I wanted to commit to building.

If you could only eat the same dish for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Burgers, definitely vegan burgers, with a side of curly fries.

As well as vegan recipe inspiration, you often use your YouTube and Insta platforms to explore mental health and female empowerment. How do these incredibly important topics link to veganism?

Unfortunately, female human and non-human animals are treated unfairly in our world. As a feminist, I cannot support any industry that takes babies away from mothers and treats them as solely milk machines (and much worse). I cannot imagine something like that happening to any female human in my life, and the trauma it would inflict. >



Like human females, non-human female animals experience the same range of emotions — fear, loss, love, respect, pleasure, compassion, rage. Education is the number one way to create awareness. It is our job to share these things with those in our community, to live a life of compassion and lead by example, to be inclusive, and kind to those that are not vegan but are open to listening.

The mental health of animal agriculture workers is also an aspect of the industry that is completely swept under the rug. These horrible jobs usually fall to marginalised groups that are easily taken advantage of. These groups desperately need advocacy for their mental health (imagine having to hear screaming all day long — no one should have to do this) and the strain that these jobs put on underpaid individuals, often with no rights.

“Share great plant-based food with people around you and start a conversation, make it approachable”

What will you be eating on Christmas day?

Traditionally we enjoy our Christmas Dinner on the 24th (Christmas Eve) to align with my German upbringing. We usually cook veganised traditional German dishes like spaetzle and gravy, a stuffed seitan roast, and lots of veggie sides. For dessert, it's always Black Forest cake.

Do you have any festive traditions?

My family and I celebrate according to the German Christmas Traditions, so we have a large dinner on the 24th, which is followed by games, and then opening gifts. The evening is ended with dessert and watching *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* together (it's my mother's favourite Holiday movie). In the morning, my mother wakes us up nice and early, blasting the house with music, and tossing stockings at us, usually accompanied by a little jig.

“Like human females, non-human female animals experience the same range of emotions – fear, loss, love, respect, pleasure, compassion, rage”

In your opinion, what are the best ways to advocate veganism?

There are so many wonderful ways, but personally, I like to advocate with food. I call it leading with a fork — share great plant-based food with people around you and start a conversation, make it approachable. No gatekeeping, no judgement.

What do you predict for the next five years of veganism?

I think veganism is only going to continue to grow. It is showing no signs of stopping, especially with the environmental benefits of a plant-based diet. I think we will see it become a more normalised diet, and not

bold or counter-culture. I also think there will be a lot more in terms of food technology, and disruptive vegan products.

What is one of the most important stats that people need to hear, to call them into action to help the environment?

Seventy per cent of grain and cereals grown in the United States are fed to farmed animals, and more than 260 million acres of United States forests have been cleared to create that cropland. Imagine if we used those crops to feed the needy and

hungry. With the abolishment of animal agriculture, we could end world hunger.

Any more exciting projects on the horizon for 2021? Any more cookbooks planned?

We have a lot of exciting stuff going on at the Edgy Veg! We have tonnes of recipes and brand relationships coming soon. Our team is thriving and growing. I wish there was more I could talk about but as you know, some of the best news comes as a surprise! 🍷

For more from Candice, visit her Youtube channel or theedgyveg.com, or follow [@edgyveg](https://www.instagram.com/theedgyveg) on Instagram



Ask the experts

The team from Veganuary answer your questions about veganism

Each month, send us your questions and we'll pitch them to those in the know. Whether you're unsure about the best way to cook tofu, or you need some vegan dating advice, we've got your back.



Q

What should I do if someone gifts me something that isn't vegan this Christmas?

Aren't we lucky to have people in our lives who love us enough to buy us gifts? That doesn't mean, of course, that they always buy us the things we would like... or even things we approve of.

If there is time to drop some gentle hints about the kinds of gifts you'd welcome, that could prevent wasted money, unwanted items and the propping up of an industry you would rather see made obsolete, then do so. Be tactful though, as the person in question may already have bought your present, and they may not be able to afford another.

If a hint is not hard-hitting enough, consider sending a link to the exact item you would like, to avoid confusion, or play it safe and ask for vouchers. Yes, you lose the surprise, but you also remove the doubt.

Despite your best efforts, you may still receive a non-vegan gift this year, and our advice is to be gracious. Not everyone understands, and mistakes do happen. There is nothing to be gained from making someone feel bad. If you are unable to return it, simply pass on the present, donate it to a charity shop or sell it and give the funds to a cause close to your heart.

Our star buy

Odylique

Organic Mineral Eye Shadow in Gold

Instead of using glitter, why not opt for a shimmery golden eye shadow?

Odylique produce beautiful mineral eye shadows using natural and organic pigments, so you can sparkle all day and all night, whilst feeling happy in the knowledge that you are not harming the environment.

£8.50, odylique.co.uk



Q

Is glitter bad for the environment? I want to sparkle this festive season!

We hate to party-poop your plans but since you are asking the question, we feel you may already know the answer. Brace yourself.

Glitter is made from a type of plastic known as PET. Environmental research has indicated these types of microplastics can have a negative impact on our sea-dwelling friends, including starfish and sea urchins (sciencedirect.com). A 2020 study also found that microplastic pollution can significantly reduce the number of certain animals vital to the ecosystem at the bottom of lakes, rivers and canals (newscientist.com).

In response to these concerns, biodegradable 'eco glitters' have been marketed. These are made from cellulose from Eucalyptus trees, covered in aluminium and coated with a thin layer of plastic. Cambridge University tested their impact recently and found they cause the same ecological damage to rivers and lakes as regular glitter.

Sigh.

There is a make of eco-friendly glitters called Bioglitter, which comes in two kinds — but even this is not straightforward. Bioglitter SPARKLE is vegan but contains some plastic; Bioglitter PURE is plastic-free but not vegan. As yet, the vegan version has not been certified to degrade fully and harmlessly in fresh water, although its makers say it is close to achieving this (discoverbioglitter.com).

Glitter is problematic, and you may feel the real choice is between your skin shimmering and your halo shining.

For more from Veganuary, visit veganuary.com.

Email Gemma.Tadman@primeimpact.co.uk with your questions about veganism.

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Find it at your local health food store



Vitamin C contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied and balanced diet



Wonky But Tasty

ODDBOX

'Odd' & Surplus Fruit & Veg Box Delivery

Tired of hearing about endless food waste? The ODDBOX founders were, too. After visiting a food market, they wondered why we only see perfectly shaped fruit and veg in supermarkets — why was there no variety? And what happened to all that produce that didn't qualify in the supermarket beauty stakes? The pair were horrified to discover it got wasted. Determined to battle food waste they visited farms, talked to producers and came up with ODDBOX. Farm-fresh, delicious 'odd' and surplus fruit and veg delivered straight to your door. From £10.99, oddbox.co.uk

Vegan Spotlight

Our favourites this month

Gin, Gin

Ramsbury

Single Estate Gin, 40% ABV

Picking up a luxury, sustainable spirit is soon to become easy — multi award-winning Ramsbury Single Estate Gin will shortly be available in Waitrose. The gin features floral tones and crisp quince which fades into more savoury juniper, with a refreshing finish and a touch of spice. The beautiful bottle features a cork closure with a plant cellulose wrap — used to secure the top instead of plastic. Plus, the 100 per cent recyclable tinted glass means that you can enjoy the spirit knowing it's kind to the planet.

£35, ramsburys.com



Get Cultured

LosBros

Blueberry Lemonade CBD Kombucha

LosBros is the living beverage brand on a mission to bring drinks to life with its unique range of innovative and vegan soft drinks. Its newest brew — Blueberry Lemonade CBD Kombucha — delivers the dual well-being benefits of kombucha and calm-promoting CBD, and it is delicious to boot! From £2.75, lobros.co.uk



Treat Yourself

Buttermilk

Vegan Confectionery Collection

Family-run British confectioner, Buttermilk, has launched a new range of indulgent vegan delights. The collection features: Dairy Free Salted Caramel Cups, oozing with indulgently creamy dark caramel; Dairy Free Vanilla Fudgy Bites, a Cornish classic in bite-sized morsels encased in chocolate; Dairy Free Peanut Butter Crunch, peanut butter and crunchy cereal coated in a delicious choccy shell and Vegan Hazelnut Duos, dark salted caramel and hazelnut butter encased in deliciously decadent chocolate shells. From £2.99, buttermilk.co.uk

Home Sweet-Smelling Home

Ava May Aromas

Wax Melts Sampler Box

Ava May Aromas create beautiful scents based on luxury fragrances — only they are cruelty-free and vegan! Containing the brand's top 10 best-selling fragrances, these soya wax melts will help to make any house a home, and a relaxing and delightfully smelling one, at that.

£20, avamayaromas.com



Cookie Monster

Doughlicious

Ready-To-Bake Vegan

Double Chocolate

Cookie dough brand, Doughlicious has unveiled a delicious new vegan flavour, launching exclusively into M&S. The indulgent Vegan Double Chocolate is ready-to-bake, gluten-free and stress-free! Simply pop the dough into the oven from chilled or frozen, and your treats will be ready in 14-16 minutes. Every batch is made in the UK and shaped into individual balls — designed to promote portion control and fight food waste — so you only bake what you need.

From £3, doughlicious.co.uk

Seasonal Nutrition

Purition

Vegan Pecan & Cinnamon

Purition's newest vegan powder combines complete nutrition with delicious seasonal flavours. It's perfect for adding natural nourishment, protein and fibre to pre- and post-workout shakes, smoothie bowls and protein pancakes. Pecan and Cinnamon has a nutty, buttery flavour profile combined with warming and woody spice.

From £2.50, purition.co.uk



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Send a Friendly smile!

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Friendly SOAP



FRIENDLYSOAP.CO.UK

the Beauty edit

The vegan products you need on your radar this month



Olew
Curl Cream
£14.50, olew.cymru



CER'IOUS
CBD Muscle Relief Balm
£43, greenbox.co.uk

Yardley London
English Daisy Eau de Toilette
– 50ml
£20, yardleylondon.co.uk



Dr Bronner's
Pure-Castile Liquid Soap
– in Lavender
From £2.39, shop.drbronner.co.uk



Conscious House
Fresh-Faced Cleansing Milk
£18, conscioushouselondon.com



INIKA
Sahara Sand Dunes Colour
Set – with Eyeshadow Quad
and x2 Lipsticks
£59, inikaorganic.com

NAIL.KIND
Lounge Lizard Nail Polish
£9.50, nailkind.com



In The Wild
Socorro Vanilla Rose CBD
Moisturiser
£79, inthewild-beauty.com



Kings
Evolution Eau de Toilette – 50ml
£44.99, kings-grooming.com

INIKA Organic

Polly Roderick, global senior brand manager of INIKA Organic chats to us about the beautiful brand

How and why did INIKA start?

Before INIKA Organic, there was not much on the market when it came to 100 per cent natural, certified organic beauty, that is vegan, cruelty-free, healthy for your skin and good for the environment, too. Thus, INIKA began life in Sydney in 2006 with the goal of creating beautifully pure and natural formulations, with ethics, ingredient transparency and product performance at

the forefront of our ethos. These values remain unwavering to this day, and we believe this has contributed to our year-on-year growth and expanding our committed, conscious fan base.

What are your hero products?

Our hero products include the new INIKA Organic Radiant Glow priming veil — a three-in-one handbag hero that acts as a nutritive moisturiser, finishing highlighter, and a visibly illuminating primer under makeup. Meanwhile, our award-winning Long Lash Mascara creates an incredible panoramic effect, rivalling designer alternatives. However, our proudest launch of recent times has to be the Phytofuse Renew skincare range — the world's first natural, organic, vegan and cruelty-free skincare range with five per cent botanical active extracts. This is more than double other skincare brands and is a testament to the skincare's performance. The range has been studied in an independent lab and clinically proven to physiologically improve the

skin's appearance. For Christmas, The INIKA Organic Moroccan Holiday Collection embodies exotic travel and luxurious ethical gifting, housed in beautiful reusable boxes.

What are your top three beauty tips?

1. Always work with what you've got and enhance your natural beauty, starting with matching your foundation perfectly to your skin tone.
2. Look after your complexion with a 100 per cent natural skincare routine morning and night! Beauty starts with a great base. Check out the INIKA Organic Skincare Quiz as your starting point.
3. Read up on the ingredients of your products. Avoid synthetics, toxins, parabens, and sulphates — and go for organic or 100 per cent natural where possible.

Visit inikaorganic.com





The 6 Tips of Christmas Cooking

We're here to help you have a stress-free Christmas Day

Cooking can be stressful on even the most 'normal' of days, but it shouldn't be, and especially at Christmas time. If you're in charge of making the big festive dinner, we want to make sure you find the experience as enjoyable as possible. So, here are our six Christmas cooking tips to help you to have a chilled time cooking

1. Get organised

Make sure that in the weeks and days running up to the 25th December, you have got absolutely everything that you need — nibbles, main dishes, sides, trimmings, condiments, desserts and drinks. You don't want to have to make a last-minute trolley dash, so try to get all food and drink before the 22nd December. Write down a comprehensive list of everything you need and tick off what you have, so that you know for sure that you are not missing anything vital.

2. Have the right equipment

This one is important — have you got all the kitchen equipment to cook and serve whatever is on your Christmas menu? Do you have enough pots and pans? Have you got a big enough tray to fit on your spectacular nut roast? Are there enough dishes to plate up all the veg? Also, make sure that you have enough tinfoil or vegan food wrap, to keep dishes warm for until it's time to serve.

3. Prep the night before

Time saved on cooking is more time spent with loved ones. So, peel and chop potatoes, carrots, parsnips and any other veg the night before. Leave them in pans of cold water to keep them fresh for when it's time to cook. Not only does it save faff on Christmas Day, it also saves mess! If your fridge is large enough, you could even pre-cook things on Christmas Eve, saving even more time.

4. Plan your timings

Make a to-do list of timings before the big day. Know how long each food item will take to cook, when it needs to go into the oven/on the hob, when it needs to come out or have the temperature lowered. That way, you won't be running around checking things every five minutes, but only when you need to.

5. Invite people to bring food

By asking people to bring a dish with them, you won't have to do absolutely all of the prep work yourself. Ask one person to bring the veg — pre-chopped and ready to cook, another to bring a main dish, like a vegan wellington or a tasty seitan roast, and someone else dessert! That way, you will only need to oversee timings, cooking and serving; without all the prep work, your job of putting everything together will be a whole lot easier.

6. Wash as you go

Don't let the dirty dishes and utensils pile up high on the countertop — wash up and clean as you go, where possible. Even if this means putting things to soak in the sink before serving up your nut roast; you'll get to spend a bit more time with your loved ones after eating, rather than spending hours scrubbing dishes! 🍷



Festive extras

A selection of breakfast, light lunch and drink ideas for the festive season

Oat Milk Eggnog

Serves 1

This tasty oat milk eggnog is vegan and alcohol-free, so all of the family can enjoy the taste of Christmas-in-a-cup!

- 50g (1.7oz) **raw cashews**
- 400ml (1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup) **oat milk**
- 3 tbsp **maple syrup**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp **nutmeg**
- 1–2 tsp **cinnamon**
- A pinch of **vanilla powder** (about $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp)
- A pinch of **ground clove** (about $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp)
- 50ml (scant $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) **non-alcoholic rum** (optional)

1 In a small bowl, cover the cashews with boiling water and set them aside to soak for 20 minutes.

2 Add all ingredients (apart from the non-alcoholic rum) to a high-speed blender — alongside the fast-soaked cashews — and blend on high for about 5 minutes until the cashews are completely incorporated.

3 Use a fine mesh (or ideally a nut-milk bag) to strain the nut pulp from the smooth and creamy eggnog.

4 Stir in the non-alcoholic rum last.

5 Serve hot or cold, with a sprinkle of cinnamon over the top or keep refrigerated for up to a week.

Recipe by RomyLondonuk,
@romylondonuk,
romylondonuk.com

Warm-Your-Heart Whisky & Lime Sour

Serves 2

A classic winter cocktail, Whisky and Lime Sour is made delicious with a coin of fresh ginger and a good squeeze of lime. The aquafaba gives it the all-important frothy texture.

- 25g (1oz) **golden caster sugar**
- 25ml (1 tbsp + 2 tsp) **water**
- ½ cm round piece of **fresh root ginger**, chopped — no need to peel
- Juice of ½ large or 1 **small ripe lime** — about 1 ½ tbsp juice, plus 2 thin lime slices
- 50-75ml (scant ¼- ⅓ cup) **whisky**
- 25ml (1 tbsp + 2 tsp) **OGGS Aquafaba**
- Lots of **ice**

1 Put the sugar into a small pan and pour in the water, then add the chopped ginger. Bring to the boil while giving it a stir to help the sugar dissolve and simmer for 1 minute. Pour into a large jar and add the lime juice and set aside to cool for 10-15 minutes.

2 Pour the whisky into the jar, followed by the Aquafaba and 5-6 cubes of ice. Screw on the lid — make it tight as you don't want any to leak out — then shake hard for around 30 seconds.

3 Fill two small tumblers with a couple of cubes of ice each then strain the sour evenly between each glass.

4 Pop a slice of lime into each one and sit back, sip and enjoy.



Recipe by **OGGS**, loveoggs.com



Pumpkin Spice Latte Smoothie

Makes 1 serving

Instead of watering down your coffee with ice, freeze extra coffee in clean ice cube trays. Transfer the coffee ice cubes to a freezer-safe container, and you can use them whenever you like to make a delicious frozen coffee drink.

- 4 **coffee ice cubes** (standard size ice cube tray)
- 1 cup **oat milk**
- 1 tsp **agave nectar**
- 2 tbsp **pumpkin purée**
- ¼ tsp **pumpkin pie spice**

1 Place all the ingredients in a blender and process until the mixture is smooth.

2 Serve the smoothie in a chilled glass.



Recipe from *The Oat Milk Cookbook* by Kim Lutz (£16.99, Sterling Epicure — available online and from all good bookshops)

Carrot Smoked 'Salmon' & Cream Cheese Bagels

Now, THIS is how to wake up on Christmas morning. Treat yourself to some tasty carrot 'salmon' atop a vegan cream cheese bagel... you'll never want cereal again.

For the carrot smoked 'salmon':

- 3 **large carrots** (not peeled)

For the marinade:

- 2 tbsp **blended Nori Sheets**
- 3 tbsp **soy sauce**
- 1 tbsp **white miso paste**
- 1 tbsp **liquid smoke**
- 3 tbsp **caper brine**
- Juice of 1 **lemon**
- 2 tbsp **rice vinegar**
- 2 tbsp **garlic powder**

- 60ml (¼ cup) **olive oil**

To serve:

- 4 **bagels**
- **Vegan cream cheese**
- **Capers**
- **Dill**
- **Chives**
- **Olives** (optional)
- **Sun dried tomato** (optional)
- **Avocado** (optional)
- **Fresh lemon**
- **Salt and pepper**

1 Boil 180ml of water in a saucepan and add salt. Chop ends off carrots then chop in half and boil for 5-10 mins. You don't want the carrots to go soft and mushy, they need to be still quite tender with a fork.

2 Whilst these are boiling add the rest of the carrot marinade ingredients and whisk together in a bowl.

3 Once the carrots are slightly cooked, add

them to some ice-cold water until cool enough to handle and so they don't carry on cooking.

4 Once cooled (about 5 mins) grab a very sharp knife and start slicing the carrots lengthways. You can differ between thin strips and thicker strips of 'salmon'-like carrot pieces.

5 Place these pieces into the marinade you made earlier and make sure all the pieces are covered. Let this sit in the fridge for as long as you can. We let ours sit for 2 hours, but it's better overnight.

6 Once they have soaked up the marinade for long enough bring to room temp and then start toasting your bagels.

7 Start with the vegan cream cheese, then the 'salmon', then you can add what you want on top of that.

Recipe by Sam Jones of **No Meat Disco**,
[@nomeatdisco](#)



Recipe by *Vegan Life* in-house chefs

Not Avocado on Toast: Broad Bean Guacamole, Coriander & Chilli

Makes 4 toasts

Who needs avo on toast when you've got broad beans? When blended, they become creamy, unctuous and vivid green, just like avocado but with a fraction of the carbon footprint. Avocado on toast is delicious, but the popularity of avocados has put a strain on the supply chain, impacting the countries of origin like Mexico and Kenya where the increased prices have made this staple food unaffordable to some local people. Eat avos as a treat and try experimenting making guacamole with different locally grown alternatives.

- 360g (12.7oz) fresh or frozen **broad beans** — shelled weight
- Glug of **extra virgin olive oil**, plus extra to serve
- 6 **fresh coriander sprigs**, leaves picked, stalks finely chopped

- 1 **unwaxed lime**, zest and juice

To serve:

- ½ **red onion**, finely diced
- 4 slices of **toast**
- Pinch of **dried chilli flakes** or some sliced **fresh red chilli**
- Light dusting of **sumac**, optional

1 Blanch the whole broad beans in a large pan of boiling water for 3 minutes, then drain and refresh under cold running water.

2 Transfer the beans to a food processor, add the extra virgin olive oil, coriander stalks, half of the coriander leaves and the lime zest and juice and blitz to a smooth purée. Season to taste with salt.

3 Spread the guacamole generously onto the toast and dress with the remaining coriander leaves, red onion, some chilli, a dusting of sumac, if using, and a drizzle of olive oil.

Recipe from *Eating for Pleasure, People & Planet* by Tom Hunt (Kyle Books).
Photography by Jenny Zarins.

Smoked Applewood Welsh Rarebit

Makes 6 slices

Vegan Smoked Applewood Cheese melts brilliantly, giving a similar stretch to traditional Welsh rarebit in this delicious recipe.

- 30g (1oz) **dairy-free butter**
- 30g (1oz) **plain flour**
- 80ml (⅓ cup) **Guinness**
- 120ml (½ cup) **soya milk**
- 2 tsp **English mustard**
- 2 tsp **vegan Worcester sauce**
- 180g (6oz) **Applewood Vegan Smoked Cheese**, grated
- 6 slices **thick-cut bread**

1 Add the dairy-free butter and plain flour to a saucepan over a medium heat and cook for 3-4 minutes to make a roux. Then, slowly add the Guinness and milk whilst mixing and cook for 4-5 minutes until a smooth, thick sauce is formed.

2 Next, add the mustard, Worcester sauce and cheese and whisk until smooth. Season to taste.

3 To serve, toast one side of the bread under the grill, then spread some of the mixture onto the untoasted side and place back under the grill for 3-4 minutes until the sauce has coloured and set.





Caramelised Onion & Arugula Toastie

Bored of roasted veg? Treat yourself to a super cheesy toastie with Follow Your Heart Smoked Gouda, to take a break from all of the festive food this December.

- Sourdough bread, sliced
- Follow Your Heart Original Vegenaise
- Follow Your Heart Smoked Gouda Cheese Slices
- 3 large yellow onions, sliced into thin half-moons
- Smooth Dijon mustard
- Arugula
- 4 tbsp vegan butter
- Salt & crushed red pepper, to taste

1 Slice your onion and add it to a skillet over low heat with your vegan butter, salt, and crushed red pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring every 5-7 minutes, for about 45 minutes until the onions are jammy and fully caramelised. Transfer them to a paper towel-lined plated to absorb any excess grease once finished.

2 Take your sourdough bread and coat one side of each slice with some mayo. Place the mayo side down in a skillet over medium-low heat, and place 2 slices of smoked gouda on each slice of bread. Cover with the lid and allow to cook until the cheese is nice and melty.

3 Once the cheese is melted and the bread is browned, add a generous amount of caramelised onions, some arugula, and some Dijon mustard. Close up the sandwich and press down to seal it together.

4 Cut in half and serve!

Recipe and images by Plvnt Food for Follow Your Heart, followyourheart.com

Blueberry Banana Muffins

Yields 6 muffins

Whip up a batch of these fruity muffins over the weekend and enjoy them throughout the week leading up to Christmas, to get you in the treat-yourself mood!

- 450g (1½ cups) **mashed ripe bananas** (about 4 medium bananas)
- 55g (¼ cup) **granulated sugar**
- 80ml (⅓ cup) **canola** or **vegetable oil**, plus more for greasing
- 1 tsp **baking powder**
- 1 tsp **bicarbonate of soda**
- ½ tsp **salt**
- 225g (1½ cups) **whole wheat** or **plain flour**
- 100g (1 cup) fresh or frozen **blueberries**

Optional additions:

- 1 tsp **cinnamon**
- 1 tsp **flaxseed meal**

1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/Gas 5, and lightly grease a muffin tin.

2 Place the mashed bananas in a large bowl.

3 Add the sugar, oil, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, salt, and flour, and if using, the flaxseeds and cinnamon. Gently mix together until well combined.

4 Fold the blueberries into the batter.

5 Spoon the batter into the muffin tin, filling each cup to the top.

6 Bake for 25 minutes or until the muffins are golden brown.

7 These muffins will keep in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Pack them in an airtight container

Recipe from *Plant-Based on a Budget* by Toni Okamoto, plantbasedonabudget.com

Top Tip:

For a healthier (but less sweet) muffin, omit the sugar.



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MADE IN THE UK

Kale, Tomato & Quinoa Soup

Rustic, tasty and full of goodness! This soup is ideal for making a big batch to feed a crowd or freezing in portions for speedy lunches and dinners following Christmas when you no longer want to cook!

- **Olive oil**
- 2 **red onions**, finely chopped
- 4 cloves of **garlic**, finely minced
- **Sea salt**
- 2 heaped tsp **smoked paprika**
- 1 tsp **dried thyme** or 2 sprigs of **fresh thyme**
- 450g (16oz) **tomatoes**, diced
- 2 tbsp **tomato purée**
- 3 tbsp **dried quinoa** or **rice**
- 1 good quality **vegetable stock cube** diluted in 1 litre of **boiling water**
- 2 400g (14oz) tin of **lentils**
- **Freshly ground black pepper**
- 4-6 **sticks of kale**, leaves removed from the stalks and finely shredded

1 Warm a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat.

2 Add the onions, garlic and a pinch of salt to the pan and allow them to gently sizzle until they soften and turn translucent.

3 Add the paprika and thyme followed by the tomatoes and tomato purée then mix everything together and allow to cook for a further minute or so.

4 Sprinkle in the quinoa or rice and pour in the stock then bring to the boil before reducing the heat to simmer for 15 minutes.

5 Add the cooked lentils and if needed, add enough boiling water to cover the ingredients by an inch. Season to your liking and add the shredded kale.

6 Simmer for a further couple of minutes and it's ready to get stuck in!

Recipe by **Boxxfresh**, boxxfresh.com



Roast Potatoes, Seasonal Salad with a Cranberry Sauce

This dish pairs hearty potatoes with a fresh salad and a festive cranberry dressing. What more could you want?

- 500g (17.6oz) **potatoes**, chopped in random shapes or **leftover roast potatoes**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 tsp **garlic powder**
- ½ **sea salt**

Cranberry dressing:

- 3 tbsp **shop-bought cranberry sauce** or **fresh** (see below)
- 2 tbsp **apple cider vinegar**
- 2 tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**
- Pinch **sea salt**

For the salad:

- 2 big handfuls **mixed salad**
- 3 tbsp **hazelnuts**, toasted
- 2 tsp **capers**

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.

2 Add the potatoes to a roasting tray, then toss to coat them in olive oil, garlic powder and salt. Roast for approx. 40 -50 minutes until crispy on the outside and soft inside.

3 To make the cranberry dressing, add all the ingredients to a jar and shake to combine.

4 To serve, add the leaves and roasted potatoes to a serving bowl, dress with the cranberry dressing, toasted hazelnuts and capers.

Cranberry Sauce

- 75g (2.6oz) **coconut sugar**
- 100ml (scant ½ cup) **fresh orange juice**
- 250g (8.8oz) pack fresh or frozen **cranberries**

1 Add the orange juice and sugar to a saucepan and bring to the boil.

2 Now stir in the cranberries, simmer for approx. 5-6 minutes.

3 Spoon into a mason jar to allow to cool and thicken.



Moroccan Spiced Chickpea Salad

Serves 2

This simple salad is quick and cheap to make. It's great for when you're bored of traditional Christmas food, or, in smaller portions, it could even be served as an exotic starter!

- 1 tbsp **vegetable oil**
- 1 tbsp **ras el hanout**
- 1 400g (14oz) **chickpeas**, drained
- 1 **red onion**, cut into 8 wedges
- 1 **red pepper**, diced
- 8 **cherry tomatoes**, halved
- 1 **carrot**, shredded
- 60g (2oz) **sultanas**
- 60g (2oz) **pickled red cabbage**
- 100g (3.5oz) **spinach**

For the dressing:

- 1 tbsp **tahini**
- 2 tbsp **water**
- Dash of **maple syrup** (optional for sweetness)

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/350°F/ Gas 4. Mix the vegetable oil, ras el hanout, chickpeas, red onion, red pepper and cherry tomatoes in a bowl until well coated, season to taste, then spread this on to an oven tray and roast for 20-30 minutes until the veg and chickpeas are nicely roasted.

2 To make the dressing, whisk together the tahini and water, and maple syrup if using.

3 Finally, to assemble the salad, mix together the roasted vegetables and chickpeas, carrot, sultanas and pickled cabbage, put this onto a bed of spinach and then drizzle with the dressing.





Kale, Butternut Squash, Pomegranate & Quinoa Salad

Serves 4

This simple and healthy salad is great for a light lunch following days of heavy festive eating. Quinoa is a very nutritious grain with a high fibre content and a low GI.

For the salad:

- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- ½ **butternut squash**, peeled and chopped
- 100g (3.5oz) **kale**
- ½ **pomegranate**, seeds only
- 100g (3.5oz) **quinoa**, cooked as per packet instructions

For the dressing:

- ½ tbsp **lemon juice**
- ½ tsp **Dijon mustard**
- ½ tsp **caster sugar**
- 2 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 tsp **chopped fresh mint**

1 Firstly, preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/ Gas 4 then toss the butternut squash in the olive oil and place on a tray and roast for 25-30 minutes until cooked. Then, bring a pan of water to the boil and add the kale and blanch for 2-3 minutes, then drain.

2 For the dressing, whisk together the lemon juice, Dijon mustard and caster sugar then slowly pour in the olive oil whilst whisking until all the oil is used and the sauce is emulsified. Stir in the chopped mint and season to taste.

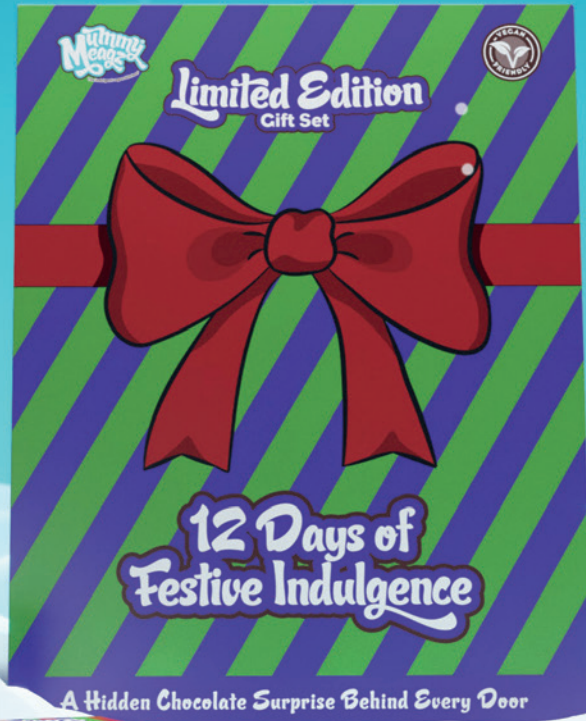
3 To assemble the salad, mix together the squash, kale, pomegranate, quinoa and dressing, season to taste.



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When Lynda met *Holly*

Back in 2019, Holly the turkey was
given a second chance at a joyful life



“People who meet turkeys are enthralled by their personalities, curiosity and loving ways”

As happy a time as Christmas can be, there is a distressing side to it, too, that is often overlooked: the celebratory consumption of animals and their derivatives, particularly, turkeys. Luckily, there are some amazing people in the world who are working hard to keep turkey off the table during the festive season — Lynda Free, is one of these incredible people.

Lynda lives in a rural area of the UK; back in the day, she used to breed Arabian horses — until she had an awakening and went vegan at the age of 64. Lynda stopped breeding horses and decided to open an animal rescue and sanctuary at her home in Kent. Now, the admirable woman has many animals in her care including cows, geese, turkeys, chickens, goats and pigs, all of which came to her from poor circumstances or were saved from slaughter. This sanctuary, named Freedom Farm, is run and funded almost single-handedly by Lynda, with a little help and income from occasional volunteers and sponsors.

In 2019, Lynda met Holly — a Christmas turkey who was rescued by vegan activists. They immediately knew that Lynda would take in Holly and her sisters, who were also saved. Not many people are aware that it is common practice for farmers to cut the beaks of chickens and turkeys who are kept in close quarters — the practice is said to be done to prevent the unfortunate birds damaging each other when they become stressed in their cramped conditions, which would then reduce farmers' profit margins.

Even when done 'correctly', debeaking birds causes stress, pain, injury and long-term discomfort, as well as permanent loss of integrity and normal sensory interactions. Although the other birds who came with Holly had cut beaks, Holly's beak had been mutilated beyond use. She couldn't eat or preen herself with just a bottom beak and was sometimes picked on by other birds. Poor Holly had to be hand-fed by Lynda for almost a year.

Lynda was determined to try and improve Holly's quality of life, so she started a fundraiser on GoFundMe, and

found a vet willing to try and make a prosthetic beak for her new friend. Lynda managed to get over £2,000 in donations for Holly's life-changing prosthetic. Gianluca Deli, a local veterinarian took on Holly's case and the challenge of creating and fitting a never-before-seen prosthetic beak. On the 4th August 2020, Holly had the operation to be fitted with the innovative prosthetic, and she has been recovering well. Gianluca regularly visits Holly at the sanctuary to keep up to date with how she's finding life with her brand-new beak.

Turkeys are naturally extremely curious birds, and upon arrival home at Freedom Farm, all the other birds at the sanctuary had to have a good look at Holly's new prosthetic. Happily, Holly is coping very well with her new prosthetic beak and is a very determined bird. Despite a few expected problems initially, Holly's quality of life is 100 per cent better than it was, and she is now able to feed and preen herself, and also maintain better relationships with the

other animals at the sanctuary.

In the UK alone, 10 million turkeys will be slaughtered for Christmas — a time that is supposed to represent life, togetherness and family. People who meet turkeys are enthralled by their personalities, curiosity and loving ways, and once met, most could never again eat them. Lynda has around 100 rescued animals in her care, with more frequently arriving to live at the sanctuary. It is truly a sanctuary — once the animals come, they are not rehomed — this is their home for life. Even at the age of 75, Lynda cleans, feeds and cares for the animals almost solely on her own, with some volunteers from time to time.

Holly's story is one of great inspiration, and just goes to show how EVERY life matters — even a single turkey has as much right to freedom and quality of life as anyone else. 

For more info on how Holly is doing, or to donate to Lynda's sanctuary, head to freedomfarmanimalsanctuary.com



What I eat in a week...

The personal trainer and founder of Cherry Horse Welfare International shares her food diary



Monday

This morning, I enjoyed two large coffees with oat milk, followed by two tasty kiwi fruits. Mid-morning, I munched on a delicious Vego chocolate bar.

In the evening, I made vegan spaghetti Bolognese. I made it from scratch, using pea mince, lazy garlic, tinned tomatoes, red onions, celery, red wine, a bay leaf and balsamic vinegar. My boyfriend (who is not vegan) absolutely loves this meal. It's one of his favourites!

Tuesday

To get the day going, I went on a 40-minute walk, before enjoying two large oat milk coffees.

For supper, I had a Thai takeaway — all vegan, with my favourite coconut rice. I followed this with two Calippo ice lollies — yum! Sadly, I didn't have much time to train today, so my walk was my main form of exercise.

Wednesday

I started the morning with a 40-minute power walk, followed by three, one-hour Zoom PT sessions. I was also interviewed by Robert Meader for *Integrity* magazine and TV about my foundation, Cherry Horse Welfare International. For breakfast, I had my usual two large coffees with oat milk.

For supper, I enjoyed a large mezze board of homemade flat bread, houmous, tomato, red onion and fresh basil salad, olives, fried salt and pepper tofu and tortilla crisps.

Thursday

For breakfast, I ate a bagel with vegan spread, and drank my two oat milk coffees. I took two Zoom PT sessions, and then a lifestyle Zoom meeting with a new client. This was an exciting call, as I am helping her to transition to a fully vegan life — I love this part of my job. To see someone thrive on a vegan diet and products really gets me excited. It's one of the things that makes me jump out of bed in the morning.

For dinner, I had two Beyond Burgers and a bagel, (only one in a bagel) with a homemade side salad. Today's snacks included tortilla chips and two Fruit Pastel lollies.

Friday

I started the day off with 75 minutes on the bike — lowish resistance, high cadence. I also took a 30-min walk to clear my mind, listening to a podcast before a meeting. Breakfast was two large coffees with oat milk, as per.

For lunch I had another oat milk coffee, and a gooey vegan chocolate brownie!

I met with Nikki Tibbles today, from The Wild at Heart Foundation, to talk about potential future projects. Nikki is one of my heroes. She has a fully functioning charity making real difference all over the world. She is certainly someone to learn from.

Dinner was vegetable stew with stuffed roasted whole peppers and vegan cheese.

Saturday

Breakfast was two large coffees with oat milk, and I enjoyed a 20-minute easy spin-out on the bike, comprising of hills and sprints.

I went out for a meal this evening — I had a couple of glasses of wine, bread dipped in olive oil, a delicious starter of oyster mushrooms, and a veg tartlet with pea purée for my main dish.

For dessert, I had the most delightful vegan choc mousse.

I had a tough email today at Cherry Horse Welfare International. Due to COVID-19, the outreach programme cannot run — the charity we are teamed with out in Romania have to comply with government regulations. This means that, yes, there is the human suffering, but also now the animals will really be suffering. I cannot get this out of my head, so I was feeling a little sad about this and wondering what to do.

Sunday

For breakfast, I simply had large coffees with oat milk, before a fast 40-min walk with my boyfriend around our village.

I didn't have lunch, but had a later supper of BBQ cauliflower steaks, corn on the cob, peppers, a large Portobello mushroom with garlic, asparagus and broccoli. All of the veg was chargrilled on the BBQ, along with two What The Heck vegan sausages. For dessert, I enjoyed some vegan Ben and Jerry's Peanut Butter ice-cream. 🍪

For more from Annie, visit cherryhorsewelfareinternational.org or follow @annieofwonderland

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How vegan consumers can lead the fight back

Sean O'Callaghan urges us to continue to support independent vegan businesses

Recovery from the current crisis is going to be a long and difficult road, especially for independent business owners. As society has struggled to deal with the fallout of COVID-19, too many plant-based pioneers and groundbreaking vegan businesses have been lost. People who fought for years and poured their savings into raising awareness of veganism have lost everything they worked for, while many more are at risk. As vegan activists and consumers, the end of the year can be a time for us to reflect on how we are going to reverse this trend and keep independent vegan businesses going.

2020 has seen veganism everywhere, with everything from fast food pizza chains to mainstream supermarkets falling over themselves to get a piece of the plant-based consumer pie. However, this overwhelming wave of vegan products would not have happened without our independent vegan businesses creating a loyal vegan customer base over decades.

And now, these same businesses that worked hard to build veganism don't have the resources to ride out the pandemic and subsequent financial crisis. They did all the work and now, the mainstream shops and multinationals get to come and scoop up our vegan dollars while these family-owned pioneers disappear. The financial challenges of the past year are almost unimaginable if you don't work in hospitality or retail, so let's study the experience of Make No Bones as an example.

Make No Bones is a gourmet comfort food outlet established in Sheffield in 2013, and also my current place of employment. Since my main source of income has been vegan food markets

and events over the past few years, I have needed to diversify as society shut down, so I jumped at the chance to move to Sheffield to work alongside my friends.

I have always known Dave Shaw and Lauren Hird (founders of Make No Bones) to be hard workers who have dedicated themselves to improving outcomes for animals. They have been instrumental in steering people towards veganism through the creation of delicious plant-based cuisine, while also using their platform as a local business to support animal-focused charities and campaign groups. Having a glimpse behind the scenes of this independent vegan food business during a global financial crisis has been eye-opening.

Dave and Lauren have struggled against all odds to keep their business viable in order to employ local people, keep their community strong, remain active as vegan outreach, and raise awareness in order to improve outcomes for animals. Dave and Lauren watched customer numbers slip away and their dining room close due to government directives. Customer numbers have been a fraction of what they would normally be.

Make No Bones has transitioned to serving their cuisine through delivery apps, however, this brings its own unique challenges and isn't the secret to surviving that it might first appear to be. Delivery apps and companies can take up to 42 per cent of an order amount, leaving independent food businesses with a sliver of the takings they would regularly expect.

Fewer customers and, in turn, less profit has meant disaster for many businesses and the ones who have survived until now (such as Make No Bones) have also had to cover expenses of extra sanitation and PPE equipment, as well as the upfront costs of furloughed

wages alongside regular expenses of rent, insurance, equipment maintenance, training and utility bills. Make No Bones has kept almost 100 per cent of its staff on during the crisis, with Dave and Lauren taking many financial hits.

As the world gets back to what we consider normal and you hopefully have more money to spend on dining out, grocery shopping, and gift buying, please consider the independent vegan businesses that have been on the frontline for years and decades. If they have survived 2020, they will need our support more than ever. Most of these businesses will be shouldering debt and bills that will be prohibiting their owners from taking a wage. Many will have forfeited taking any personal pay for the foreseeable future, in order to keep their doors open and staff paid.

This column might sound like doom and gloom, so I'll end it with an upbeat yet familiar message. We CAN help turn things around. Shop with vegan stores, order from vegan artisans, and dine out with vegan cafes and restaurants.

They have done a lot for us and the animals. Now, it's our turn to lead the fight back. 

Follow Sean's vegan adventures on Instagram [@fatgayvegan](https://www.instagram.com/fatgayvegan)



Animal lovers, *unite*

Three amazing animal charities chat to us about who they are and how we can support them this Christmas

All over the world, wonderful charities and sanctuaries help non-human animals. Many of these organisations and the creatures that depend upon them rely solely on the public — through employment, voluntary work, sponsorship, fundraisers or donations. Here, three of these organisations tell us who they are and help us to understand how we can get involved.



1. The Brooke

“Brooke is a global charity helping working horses, donkeys and mules in developing countries. Perhaps you’ve seen them whilst travelling; pulling carts with people, food and materials or working in farms. Over 100 million of them support the lives of around 600 million people around the world.”

“You can make a difference to their lives this Christmas. At our website (thebrookeshop.org/vegan-life) you’ll find cute horse and donkey-themed Christmas cards, and virtual gifts for your loved ones. The gifts range from a first aid kit or water troughs for animals, to training for a vet, who can go on to help animals across their community.”

thebrooke.org



2. Lotus Heart Animal Sanctuary

“At Lotus Heart Animal Sanctuary, we provide a safe space for a variety of non-human animals to come together and simply ‘be’! The sanctuary is a safe haven and forever home to animals in need of rescue, love, care and shelter.

“We can only rescue, transport, feed, bed and medically care for these beautiful animals with the amazing help and support of volunteers and patrons. You can take part in our Sponsor an Animal scheme – a one-off or automatic monthly donation.”

“Or, if Lotus Animal Sanctuary has won your heart and you think you can help by donating something other than money, for example your time, your expertise, specialist skills or equipment, we’d love to hear from you!”

lotusheartsanctuary.com



3. Caged Nationwide

“Caged Nationwide is a registered not-for-profit greyhound protection group. Our core team is vegan as we believe that all animals should have the right to live free from fear and unnecessary pain and suffering.”

“We carry out our own investigations and exposures involving mistreated greyhounds and we do not hesitate to carry out private prosecutions where necessary. We urge people to support a phase out of cruel greyhound racing. A massive 83 per cent of British raced greyhounds are bred in Ireland where over-breeding and culling of dogs is necessary to maintain the demand for British and Irish dog racing. In 2019, RTE Investigates *Running for Their Lives* was broadcast in Ireland and showed greyhounds being shot in the head by captive bolt gun at Irish knackeries.”

“Our work is dependent solely on public funding. If you would like to become a volunteer, please contact us on info@cagednw.co.uk. Or please consider any size contribution to help us continue our work. To donate, please visit our website.”

cagednw.co.uk



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Buy virtual gifts and Christmas cards from Brooke to help working horses, donkeys and mules across the world.

GO TO [THEBROOKESHOP.ORG/VEGAN-LIFE](https://thebrookeshop.org/vegan-life)



Looking back over 2020

This month, Maria Slough revisits a few of the inspiring interviews she took this year, and shares some conscious Christmas gift ideas

As I reflect on who we have met here in these pages this year, there are two rescue dogs at my feet and a Downing Street COVID-19 pandemic briefing is due to start. Wherever you are in the world, this virus has ripped through all our lives and presented us with changes that we have to carry with us moving forward. This 'look back' was always going to be different from any I have written before; not just because the world stopped for three months but because everyone's experience of everyday life this year has changed — how we react, how we process and how we spend our time has all been altered. What is evident is that veganism continues to grow, and of the estimated 7.8 billion of us inhabiting this planet Earth, some 78 million are vegan.

Actor and animal advocate, Peter

Egan, who featured in *Vegan Life's* digital issue in May, says: "The way we humans treat animals has delivered the worst modern-day pandemic our planet has ever had to deal with! I hope we learn from it and do not, like lemmings, rush back to the status quo. If we do not change, we will destroy our planet and ourselves. The simplest and most inspired choice is to follow a plant-based lifestyle. It is creative, compassionate and healing."

Wherever things land, there is no

doubt that the year has proved so tough for so many. Has the exposure of live meat markets helped to challenge people to look into what they eat? Could that be a positive element of such a devastating virus?

Nicky Stephens, founder of International Aid for the Protection and Welfare of Animals (IAPWA), interviewed in March, told me: "All of our plans for the future will incorporate so much learning from this year. Our team have shown such flexibility and resilience working with

“Has the exposure of live meat markets helped to challenge people to look into what they eat?”

reduced funds and strict movement control. In 2021, we will launch a vegan campaign on Facebook (facebook.com/iapwa) to encourage as many people as possible to experience the benefits of a vegan lifestyle for themselves.”

“As 2021 beckons, I hope we can all come together with compassion for all living beings”

From my three-part online feature on vegan shopping (veganlifemag.com), comes the most positive resurgence of hope. Supermarket Asda announced the launch of a new Vegan Aisle which will include Clearspring Silken Tofu (clearspring.co.uk). In October, Maria Dawson, director at Clearspring told me: “This year has been truly unique. Clearspring has been around for 27 years and we have not seen anything quite like it. The Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns around the world led to unprecedented demand for our products and we have had to adapt very quickly to ensure we continued to meet the needs of our customers. Through a joint effort with our suppliers, we were able to continue providing our products and keeping our customers shelves stocked.”

In line with the surge in demand for organic plant-based products, Clearspring recently added two new items to their best-selling organic miso range and the Great Taste Award-winning Organic Yuzu Ponzu seasoning.

For the shopping feature, I also met Panda (mypandalife.com), who create and sell bespoke bamboo lifestyle products with remarkable style (including an eye mask that will soothe you into a restful sleep!). Panda have this year become a fully vegan brand.

“We want to lead, not follow,” says Tamir Teitelbaum, Panda’s director and co-founder. “Sustainability is key to our future. And when I say ‘our’ future, I’m not just talking about Panda, I mean all life on this planet. That’s why it’s always been priority number one in everything we do and produce. We want to be an example to other brands that being ethical is not an obstacle to being successful.”



“Quite the opposite in fact,” adds fellow director and co-founder, Matan Gilan. “I’d say being ethical is a measure of success — there’s no real success if you stand for nothing. That’s why it’s long been our ambition to be a 100 per cent vegan brand. With the pandemic this year, many of us are spending more time at home than ever before. As well as relating to our own space in new ways we are finding ourselves reconsidering our relationship to the world around us. If 2020 has shown us anything, it’s that our choices, large and small, can have a big impact on the world around us. We want that impact to be positive.”

It seems an age since I was in the stands at Forest Green Rovers (FGR, fgr.co.uk), cheering the team on and eating the most incredible vegan food prepared by their chef, Jade Crawford — all in the name of research for the April issue.

“I’d say life at FGR has been pretty much the same as for all football clubs,” says Dale Vince, owner of FGR. “Our season ended suddenly and then we were in limbo for months, it’s started again and though we were close to having fans back, that changed quite suddenly. So, we play without fans, which is novel, though in many ways quite normal now. In other respects, we’ve been working to support local front-line workers with our facilities and local vulnerable people with food and other support. We will still be here and have a plan to ride through the disruption, and, with any luck, gain our next promotion while we do so. We look forward to having fans back as soon as possible. I’d also thank all fans that supported the club by buying season tickets, despite the inability to attend games.” >

“If 2020 has shown us anything, it’s that our choices, large and small, can have a big impact on the world around us”

Support in our communities has helped us all these past months. It has been a year like no other; a year that kept us away from our loved ones but made us appreciate them all the more; that brought heartache and loss and challenged us all to look at our own mortality. Yet, it was also a year that taught us that we all share the same vulnerabilities and gave us the gift of time.

As 2021 beckons, I hope we can all come together with compassion for all living beings and with a better understanding of how our life choices can ripple across this fragile planet. See you all next year! ♡

Follow Maria’s photography journey at mariasloughphotography.com and Instagram at [@mariasloughphotography](https://www.instagram.com/mariasloughphotography)



Conscious Christmas

With time suspended this year I caught up with friends, some known to *Vegan Life* and some new, all with fantastic gift ideas for Christmas. Here are a few of them:

Vegan tattoos

You might remember vegan tattoo artiste Kat Michme (@katharinamichme) from the October 2018 issue. Kat is offering tattoo vouchers for Christmas gifts and if you request a tattoo of your pet, 100 per cent of the proceeds goes to the dog charity Saving Suffering Strays ([savingsufferingstrays.com](https://www.savingsufferingstrays.com)).

A brilliant book

In September this year I met Ursu, a special dog rescued from certain death in Romania. New book, *Ursu — Never Give Up On A Dog*, written by his Mum, Sara Napier, is an extraordinary read. Their incredible journey together is one of blind love and determination, something that in these times we all need to hold on to (£7.99, book2look.com/book/RN8wj4kS8N).



Support a rescue

I recently caught up with Dogs4Rescue Manchester, who I interviewed for September. “This has been the year of the kennel-free rescue,” says Emma. “Even in the hardest lockdown times our model came into its own and our pack rehabilitation program saw us help many dogs from UK rescues who were not coping in kennels. We have successfully turned some of these dogs around and now they have loving homes.”

Becoming known for their model to transform the lives of dogs from around the world who cannot cope in traditional kennels, Dogs4Rescue Manchester are inundated with requests for help and have just embarked on an enormous, ground-breaking mission to open a specific large site in the New Year dedicated to rehab and rehabilitation. You can support their new venture at dogs4rescue.co.uk. Friends and family will love you making a donating in their name.

Festive fudge

The Fabulous Free From factory (fabulousfreefromfactory.co.uk) has two special fudges in their range this December — Dairy Free Christmas Spiced Orange and Mince Pie Fudge that sees their traditional creamy fudge infused with vanilla and mixed spice (from £3.65).



Starters and Canapés

Kick off Christmas dinner with a classy array of nibbles and small eats

Asparagus with Chilli Hollandaise

Serves 2

Asparagus drizzled with a spicy hollandaise sauce is the perfect way to ready your taste buds for Christmas dinner.

For the hollandaise:

- 200g (7oz) **silken tofu**
- 2 tbsp **vegan butter**, melted
- 4 tbsp **soya milk**
- ¼ tsp **turmeric**
- ¼ tsp **kala namak**
- ½ tsp **Dijon mustard**

- 1 tbsp **lemon juice**
- 1 tbsp **nutritional yeast**
- ½ tsp **dried chilli flakes**

For the asparagus:

- 1 tbsp **vegan butter**
- 200g (7oz) **asparagus**

1 To make the hollandaise, add all of the hollandaise ingredients to a blender, then blend until smooth, season to taste.

2 To cook the asparagus, add the butter to a frying pan over a medium heat, then add the asparagus and fry for 2-3 minutes until cooked but still al dente.

3 Spoon the hollandaise over the asparagus to serve.



Creamy Mushroom & Thyme Canapés

Makes 7

Perfect for parties and wrapped-up winter picnics alike, these bite-sized treats are easy to eat and delicious. Feel free to add some fresh garlic when you cook the mushrooms and thyme, or scatter with flat-leaf parsley before serving, but we enjoy the simplicity of these canapés, especially served with a chilled aperitif.

- 1 sheet of **ready-rolled puff pastry** (ensure dairy-free), at room temperature
- 2 tsp **soya milk**, to glaze
- 1 tbsp **sunflower oil**
- 10 **button mushrooms**, halved
- 1 **sprig of fresh thyme**, leaves finely chopped
- 5 tbsp **soya single (light) cream**
- Generous pinch of **sea salt** and **black pepper**

1 Preheat the oven to 220°C/425°F/Gas 7 and line a baking tray with baking parchment.

2 Lay the puff pastry sheet on a flat surface and use a round 5cm (2in) cutter to press out pastry circles. Place them on the baking tray. Using a smaller 4cm (1 1/2 in) cutter, press gently into the centre of each pastry disc to leave a light indentation — this shouldn't cut through the pastry. Lay each round on the lined baking tray and brush the outer area with a soya milk. Bake in the oven for 10–12 minutes until risen and golden.

3 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the mushrooms and thyme for 4–5 minutes until softened and fragrant. Spoon in the soya cream and stir. Season to taste with sea salt and plenty of black pepper.

4 Carefully remove the baking tray from the oven. Push down the centres of the pastry cups, then spoon teaspoon-sized amounts of the creamy mushrooms into each. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Top Tip:

To avoid the pastry going soggy, it's best to assemble the canapés just before serving. The pastry cups and the creamy mushrooms can both be made up to a day in advance.



Recipe from *Easy Vegan Bible*
by Katy Beskow (£22, Quadrille).
Photography ©Luke Albert.

Tofoo & Fig Canapés

Makes 12

Whether it's enjoying roast dinner with all the trimmings or cooking something new, Christmas gives us the opportunity to indulge and enjoy our favourite foods. These festive Tofoo and fig bites are sure to become a new favourite.

- 1 pack **Naked Tofoo**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- ½ tsp **cayenne pepper**
- 1 tsp **paprika**
- **Salt** and **pepper**, to season
- 12 **small figs**
- 50g (1.7oz) **walnuts**
- 2 tbsp **maple syrup**
- **Fresh basil leaves**

To serve:

- Toothpicks

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.
- 2 Cut the Tofoo into 12 cubes — approx. 2cm squares. Place in a bowl and mix with the olive oil, cayenne pepper and paprika. Season with salt and pepper.
- 3 Cut a cross into the top of each fig, cutting halfway down.
- 4 Take a piece of marinated Tofoo and place inside the cut of the fig. Secure by skewering a toothpick through the side of the fig.
- 5 Once all the figs are filled, place on a baking tray, and place a walnut half on top of each. Drizzle with the maple syrup then bake in the oven for 15-20 mins until softened and caramelised.
- 6 Place on a serving plate and scatter with basil leaves. Serve warm.



Recipes by The Tofoo Co., tofoo.co.uk



Recipes by The Tofoo Co., tofoo.co.uk

Mini Tofoo 'Sausage' Rolls

Makes 12

Whether you've got fussy eaters over at Christmas or those who love eating everything, these vegan sausage rolls will definitely be a hit.

- 1 pack **Naked Tofoo**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 **onion** (diced)
- 3 tsp **dried sage**
- 1 tsp **dried thyme**
- 120g (4.2oz) **white breadcrumbs**
- 100ml (scant ½ cup) **sherry**
- 1 tbsp **arrowroot powder**
- 75g (2.6oz) **dried cranberries**
- 500g (17.6oz) **vegan puff pastry**
- 2 tbsp **soya cream**
- 1 tbsp **maple syrup**

To serve:

- **Tomato chutney/cranberry sauce**

- 1 Heat a frying pan and fry the onion in the olive oil until softened.
- 2 In a food processor, place the Tofoo, sage, thyme, breadcrumbs, sherry, cooked onions and arrowroot powder. Stir in the dried cranberries.
- 3 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/ Gas 4.
- 4 Roll out your puff pastry on a clean surface dusted with flour. Roll out into a rectangle approx. 40cm x 20cm and to the thickness of a pound coin.
- 5 Take your Tofoo filling and place in a line down the middle of the pastry longways, moulding the filling into a long sausage shape.
- 6 Mix the maple syrup and soya cream. Brush onto the long edges of the pastry then fold one side over the filling pressing down, then fold over the other side, sealing over the pastry. Roll your long sausage over so that the seam of the pastry is on the bottom.
- 7 Cut your roll into 12 pieces, and make two slashes into the top of each roll with a knife.
- 8 Place on a baking tray then brush the top of each roll with the glaze and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until golden brown.
- 9 Place onto a serving plate, and serve with tomato chutney or cranberry sauce dip.

Avocado & Pomegranate Bruschetta

Makes about 8

Creamy avocado and punchy pomegranate go so well together, and make a fun spin on traditional tomato-based bruschetta.

- 2 **avocados**, peeled, de-stoned
- 1 **ciabatta**, sliced (about ¾ cm thick)
- **Pomegranate**, seeds removed
- **Salt** and **pepper** to season
- Zest of 1 **orange**
- **Chives**, roughly chopped

1 Mash the avocado and season with salt and pepper.

2 Lightly toast your baguette slices under the grill.

3 Spread the mashed avocado over the sliced toast.

4 Sprinkle the pomegranate seeds over the toasts.

5 Sprinkle the orange zest and parsley over the toasts.

Cranberry & Cream Cheese Crostini

Makes about 13

The combination of fruity cranberry and the cream cheese is a match made in Christmas food heaven, in these crostini.

- 1 **baguette**, sliced (about ¾ cm thick)
- 250g (8.8oz) pack **vegan cream cheese**
- 4 tbsp **dried cranberries**
- 50g (1.7oz) **pecans**, chopped
- **Chives**, to decorate

1 Lightly toast your baguette slices under the grill.

2 Once toasted, spread with the cream cheese.

3 Sprinkle with the cranberries and pecans.

4 Garnish with the chives.





Olive Tapenade Bites

Makes 16

The rich and salty flavour from the black kalamata olives gives these polenta bites an intense and tasty flavour and will get your guests excited for what else is to come!

- 2 blocks of **ready-made polenta** (or homemade)

For the tapenade:

- 160g (5.6oz) **pitted kalamata black olives**, drained
- 1 tbsp **capers**
- 50ml (scant ¼ cup) **olive oil**
- 1 tsp **red wine vinegar**
- ½ tsp **black pepper**

Top Tip:

These can be made in advance as they are served cold.

To garnish:

- **Sun-dried tomatoes**, chopped
- **Parsley**, chopped

1 Begin by making the tapenade by blitzing all the tapenade ingredients in a small food processor, or with a stick blender.

2 Next, slice your polenta into 2 cm cubes, then slice through the cubes to make square slices.

3 Griddle these slices to char them, then top with the tapenade, followed by the sun-dried tomatoes and sprinkle with parsley.



Bite-sized Hassle Backs

Serves 16 approx.

You can't beat the humble potato, except when it is flavoured with salt and garlic and dipped into tasty crème fraîche.

- 1kg **new potatoes**
- **Olive oil**
- 2 **garlic cloves**, chopped
- **Course sea salt**

For the topping:

- **Oatly crème fraîche**
- **Chives**
- **Chilli**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Line a large baking sheet with aluminium foil.

2 Using a sharp knife, make several cuts through each potato, but do not cut all the way through.

3 Place potatoes on baking sheet. Toss in the garlic, olive oil and sprinkle each potato with a pinch of salt, then roast for 40 minutes, until potatoes are tender.

4 Let cool 10 minutes before topping with the cream fraiche, a sprinkle of chilli powder and the chives.

Top Tip:

Hassel backs are best served warm, so prep your potatoes before hand and then keep in fridge until ready to roast.

Pesto Pinwheels

Makes 12

These festive pinwheels are a real treat to make, serve and eat. The combo of sun-dried tomatoes and pesto is delicious!

- 1 **sheet frozen puff pastry**, thawed
- 60ml (¼ cup) **dairy-free basil pesto**
- 80g **sun-dried tomatoes**, chopped
- **Salt and pepper**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6.

2 On a lightly floured surface, unfold puff pastry.

3 Spread the pesto on the pastry then sprinkle with the chopped sun-dried tomatoes and season with salt and pepper.

4 Roll the pastry width ways, up into a sausage shape.

5 With a sharp knife, slice in half then slice each half into 6 slices, making 12 slices in total.

6 Place slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake until puffed and golden on edges, about 15 minutes. Let cool on sheet for 10 minutes before serving.



Top Tip:

Add an extra kick to the drop scones by stirring a pinch of dried chilli flakes into the batter mix.



Charred Red Pepper & Herb Festive Bites

Makes 16

Little drop scones flavoured with rosemary, topped with roasted red pepper slices and crispy, crunchy sage leaves, are tempting bite-size morsels for easy entertaining.

- 1 **red pepper**, halve it and cut out the inside core and white seeds, then cut into small, thin slices
- 16 **whole sage leaves**, not too big
- 1 **tbsp olive oil**

For the drop scones:

- 115g (4oz) **self-raising flour**
- ½ tsp **baking powder**
- 2½ tsp finely chopped **fresh rosemary leaves**
- ½ tsp **sea salt**
- Generous grinding of **black pepper**
- 50ml (scant ¼ cup) **OGGS Aquafaba**
- 100ml (scant ½ cup) **dairy-free milk**, plus extra if needed

To serve:

- 150g (5.3oz) **dairy-free cream cheese**

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Put the red pepper slices at one end of a baking tray and the sage leaves the other.

2 Drizzle over the oil and toss them to coat well, then spread out so they are in a single layer. Season the pepper slices with a little salt and pepper then roast for 4-5 minutes and when the sage leaves are crisp but not too dark, remove them from the tray and set aside. Let the peppers roast for another 10-15 minutes, until they are starting to char around the edges. Remove and set aside.

3 While the pepper and sage cook, mix the flour, baking powder, rosemary and seasoning together in a large bowl. Measure the OGGS Aquafaba into a sturdy measuring jug.

4 Using a stick blender, whizz it in the jug for about 1 minute until the Aquafaba looks paler in colour, light and bubbly, and has doubled in volume. Use a rubber spatula to make a bit of a hollow in the middle of the flour, pour in the frothy Aquafaba and half of the milk and begin to stir and fold everything together. Slowly pour in the rest of the milk, folding and stirring again as before, until you have a thickish batter. Don't worry if it has a few small lumps.

5 Heat a non-stick frying pan over a

medium-high heat. When nice and hot, lower the heat to medium, very lightly oil the pan, then carefully drop in a tablespoon of the batter, encouraging it as it slowly falls from the spoon into a neat round shape. Cook a few in your pan at one time, but don't overcrowd them. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until the scones start to set. They will look less glossy on top and golden-brown underneath. Flip them over and cook for 1½-2 more minutes, until cooked and browned.

6 Have a board or baking sheet ready to put each cooked drop scone on while you fry the rest. Do the frying in about 4 batches, lightly oiling the pan each time, until you have no more batter left.

7 Mash the vegan cream cheese in a bowl using the back of a fork, and if you want it softer and creamier, beat in a few teaspoonfuls of dairy-free milk.

8 When ready to serve, put a little dollop of the cream cheese onto each drop scone, stack up a pile of red pepper slices and top each bite with a crisp sage leaf. Serve immediately while still slightly warm.

Recipe by OGGS, loveoggs.com

French Onion Soup with Cheesy Croutons

Serves 2

This is a delicious alternative to a classic French dish. It has such a deep, rich flavour and goes really well with just a stick of crusty bread.

- 3 tbsp **dairy-free butter**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil** (or preferred cooking oil)
- 4 **medium onions**, sliced
- 3 **cloves of garlic**, minced
- 1 ½ tsp **fresh thyme**
- 1 tbsp **brown sugar**
- 1 ½ tsp **salt** (more if needed)
- Pinch of **black pepper**, to taste
- 3 tbsp **cornflour**
- 1 litre **vegetable stock** (we used Kallo mushroom stock cubes)
- 1 tbsp **yeast extract**
- 2 **bay leaves**

To serve:

- 1 **baguette**, sliced and toasted
- **Vegan cheese**, grated (for croutons — optional)

- 1 In a large saucepan, heat the vegan butter and oil over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, thyme, sugar, salt, and pepper. Sauté until the onions are very tender and caramelised, about 40-50 minutes. Stir often to avoid the onions sticking to the pot. If they start to stick, you can add a few splashes of vegetable stock and turn heat a little lower. Keep pot uncovered.
- 2 Stir the cornflour into the onions. Turn the heat down to low and cook for another 1-2 minutes. Stir often, so the flour doesn't burn.
- 3 Add the vegetable stock, yeast extract and bay leaves. Turn heat back to medium and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Taste the soup to see if it needs any more salt or pepper and add if needed.
- 4 Remove bay leaves from the soup and serve in bowl of choice.
- 5 If you want croutons on your soup, then place 2 slices of toasted baguette onto each bowl with grated cheese on top of crouton and grill until the cheese is bubbling and melted, but not burnt. Serve as a starter or light main meal with more French stick.



Recipes by *Vegan Life*
in-house chefs



Recipes by *Vegan Life*
in-house chefs

Broccoli & 'Blue Cheese' Soup

Serves 6

This broccoli soup replicates the flavours of blue cheese without the high fat content. The nutritional yeast adds a cheesy flavour, the miso adds the intensity and the vinegar adds the acidity.

- 1 tbsp **vegetable oil**
- 1 **onion**, chopped
- 2 **garlic clove**, puréed
- 1 head **broccoli**, chopped
- 100g (3.5oz) **potato**, peeled and chopped
- 1 tsp **onion granules**
- 1 tsp **garlic granules**
- 1 tbsp **white miso paste**
- 4 tbsp **nutritional yeast**
- 3 tbsp **cider vinegar**
- 3 tsp **tahini**
- 2 tsp **maple syrup**
- 2 tsp **Dijon mustard**
- 1.2l (5 cups) **vegetable stock**

To serve:

- **Croutons**

- 1 In a saucepan, over medium heat, add the vegetable oil. To this, add the onion, garlic clove and broccoli and cook for 3-4 minutes.
- 2 To this, add the potato, onion granules, garlic granules, white miso paste, nutritional yeast, cider vinegar, tahini, maple syrup, Dijon mustard and vegetable stock. Bring to the boil, then allow to simmer for 20 minutes until the potato and broccoli is soft.
- 3 Using a stick blender, blend till smooth, then season to taste.
- 4 Garnish with croutons.



Recipe by Niki Webster Rebel Recipes
by Niki Webster (Bloomsbury),
rebelrecipes.com

Rustic Squash & Hazelnut Pesto Tarts

Serves 4

These little tarts make fantastic canapés for eating before dinner, or, when served with oodles of tasty veg, they make a great centrepiece!

For the squash:

- ½ **butternut squash**, chopped into slices
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- **Sea salt**
- **Black pepper**

For the tart base:

- 2 tbsp **ground flaxseed**
- 6 tbsp **filtered water**
- 3 tbsp **ground almonds**
- 50g (1.7oz) **toasted sunflower seeds**, blitzed in food processor

- 165g (5.8oz) **buckwheat flour**
- 100g (3.5oz) **gluten-free white flour**
- ½ tsp **baking powder**
- Pinch **sea salt**
- 1 tsp **fennel seeds**
- 3 tbsp **olive oil**
- 7 tbsp **almond milk**

To make the pesto:

- 3 tbsp **hazelnuts**, toasted
- 3 tbsp **pine nuts**, toasted
- 3 big handfuls **basil**
- 3 tbsp **nutritional yeast**
- ½ tsp **sea salt**
- 3 tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**
- ½ **lemon juice**
- 1 clove **garlic**
- 50ml (scant ¼ cup) **water**

Toppings:

- Drizzle **extra virgin olive oil**
- Pinch **sea salt**
- **Fresh thyme**
- **Pomegranate seeds**

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.
- 2 Line a large baking tray with baking paper then layer the squash and toss in the oil and season.
- 3 Roast for about 20 minutes then set aside.
- 4 To make the tart base, mix the ground flaxseeds with water in a bowl and set aside to thicken.
- 5 Add all the dry ingredients to a large bowl and mix to combine. Then add in the oil, almond milk and flax-egg. Mix thoroughly to form a dough. Carefully roll out.
- 6 Transfer the dough onto a lightly greased baking tray then press into and up the sides. Bake for 20 minutes, then set aside while you make the pesto.
- 7 To make the pesto, add all the ingredients to a food processor or high-speed blender and blitz until you get a chunky paste.
- 8 To assemble your tart, top the base with the pesto, then the sliced squash.
- 9 Return to the oven and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven to cool a little. Top with olive oil, thyme, pomegranate and salt.

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Good tidings we... drink



Oliver Coningham shares festive tipples for December

Fairy lights twinkling? Threadbare Christmas jumper on? Slade playing loud on the smart speaker? Then put another log on the fire and enjoy this month's selection of seasonal drinks.

2020 without a doubt has been one of the strangest years many of us will have experienced so far in our lifetimes. Whether you've been fortunate enough to have thrived throughout various lockdowns and restrictions or maybe you've just about survived, now is the time to try and put some closure to this bizarre year.

Christmas and our associated celebrations will look very different with restraints on our ability to travel and socialise with friends and family. So, if your Christmas is going to consist of festive-themed quizzes on Zoom or broken phone calls to distant relatives, then let us suggest some appropriately-themed drinks to accompany your festivities in whatever format they may be. Cheers! 🍷

Find out more about vegan food and drink on the **forkandcarrot.com** website or follow Oliver Coningham on Instagram and Twitter **@forkandcarrot**.



River Cottage Organic Kombucha Hedge
— Equinox Kombucha
£2.20 for 275ml, [waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com)

Equinox Kombucha have partnered with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall to create an eclectic range of four new flavours for the River Cottage brand. All of their kombuchas are 100 per cent organic, raw, vegan and gluten-free. Hedge is fermented with organic green tea and blended with sloes, rosehips and juniper berries to capture an autumn hedgerow.

Equinox Kombucha drinks are all suitable for vegans. making their ciders all suitable for vegans.



Æcorn Aromatic
— Æcorn Drinks
£19.99 for 50cl, [waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com)

If you're a designated driver over the festive period or just prefer not to drink, Æcorn Drinks have you covered with their range of non-alcoholic aperitifs. Full-bodied and silky smooth, Æcorn Aromatic has notes of smoked cherrywood, vanilla and kola nut finishing with hints of warming clove, cassia and oak.

Æcorn Aperitifs do not use any animal derivatives in their production and distillation processes.



Marmalade Porter (5%)
— Wold Top Brewery
£1.50 for 500ml, [groceries.morrisons.com](https://www.groceries.morrisons.com)

Wold Top Brewery's Marmalade Porter has multiple awards, from the Guild of Fine Foods Great Taste Awards 2018 to World Gluten-Free Beers 2018. Marmalade Porter is a rich and complex porter with hints of coffee, chocolate and bitter orange carried across a sweet malty base.

Wold Top Brewery bottled and kegged beers are vegan, but cask beer is still fined with isinglass.



Storm Shadow Imperial Stout (8.5%)
— Buxton Brewery
£3.50 for 440ml, [tesco.com](https://www.tesco.com)

Buxton Brewery's first-ever beer was brewed in a cold, dark family garage on January 1st 2009 with a batch size of about 40 litres. The brewery is now producing around 3,500 litres of beer, three times a week in a modern 7,000 square foot brewery. Storm Shadow is an unapologetic, heavyweight stout full of rich, roasted malt and dark chocolate flavours. One to be sipped slowly beside a roaring yuletide fire.

The majority of beers produced by Buxton Brewery are vegan-friendly (including cask) except for any made with lactose.



Sainsbury's Mulled Wine (5.5%)
— Sainsbury's
£3 for 750ml, [sainsburys.co.uk](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)

We couldn't offer a range of vegan-friendly drinks to enjoy this Christmas without featuring a mulled wine... Sainsbury's offering captures the essence of Christmas with its aroma and flavour of seasonal spices. Enjoy by the fireside with a warm mince pie in hand for the ultimate festive experience.

Suitable for vegans.



Nitro Espresso Martini (5%)
— Funkin Cocktails
£2 for 200ml, [tesco.com](https://www.tesco.com)

If you're looking for something a little fancy for your festive celebrations which require minimal effort, then enjoy a can of Funkin Cocktails Nitro Espresso Martini. Experience the vibrant flavours and velvety smooth cocktail in the comfort of your own home this Christmas. It's the perfect blend of cold brew coffee, vanilla and premium vodka.

Funkin Cocktails ready-made and pre-mixed cocktails are all suitable for vegans.

It's party time!

Decorate and celebrate in style, but don't harm the planet

It's December — the season of Christmas parties and dinners, and New Year's Eve celebrations. But a large percentage of the decorations we adorn our houses with do zero favours for people, animals or the environment. So why not do things a little differently this year, and eliminate plastic decorations, or purchase partyware that helps people or planet? Whether you want paper baubles or eco-friendly placemats, our roundup is sure to have something to get you on your way.



Fine Cell Work

Set of 4 Pomegranate Linen Table Napkins

This set of four Pomegranate Linen Table Napkins were made by recipients of Fine Cell Work's charitable social enterprise. The goal is to help inmates to foster hope, discipline and self-esteem.

£48, finecellwork.co.uk



Paper Tree

Paper Baubles

Instead of purchasing plastic decorations to adorn your home, choose those that don't harm the planet. These recyclable paper baubles from Paper Tree come in a variety of different colours and will give a rustic look to your party décor.

£6.95, papertree.co.uk



Pebble Toys

Fairtrade Cotton Santa Decoration

This gorgeous Fairtrade cotton crochet Santa Christmas decoration is handmade by artisans of Hathay Bunano in Bangla, giving you a unique, festive and ethical touch to your tree and home this Christmas.

£6.25, pebblechild.com



Circular & Co.

Set of 4 Eco-Friendly Cork Placemats

Simple, tasteful and sustainable, this set of FSC-certified cork placemats by Circular and Co. are the perfect addition to a party table. They will enable you to celebrate in style, but without harming the planet.

£12.95, circularandco.com



Ecotinsel

Ecotinsel garland in Festive Red

Ecotinsel was developed by a husband and wife team on a mission to rid the world of non-recyclable PVC tinsel, which ends up on landfill. The wonder-product is made from 100 per cent recycled paper and is completely recyclable.

£9.50, ecotinsel.com



My Green Christmas

Seed Christmas Crackers — Box of 6

Love the fun of Christmas crackers, but hate the pointless plastic toys? We do, too. My Green Christmas' crackers allow you the best of both worlds. Instead of a toy, they contain seeds and are fully recyclable.

£20, mygreenchristmas.com

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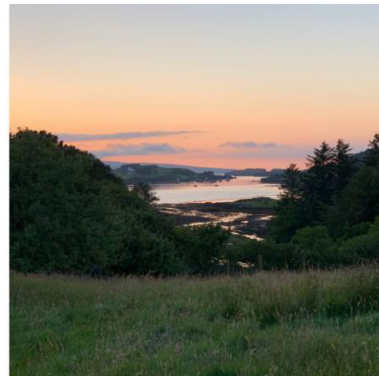


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Have a happy vegan Christmas

Our ultimate guide to the festive season

As the song goes — it's the most wonderful time of the year! And that doesn't change because we are vegan. If anything, we can have an even more brilliant Christmas — a kind, conscientious and sustainable one, with just as many festive treats, if not, more! But not everyone finds this time of year easy, so, our very vegan Christmas guide is here to help you out. Whether you need some evening-before inspiration, tips for hosting or visiting non-vegans, or you want to reduce your festive footprint to get onto Santa's Good List, we've got plenty of suggestions.

Christmas Eve

The 24th of December is so exciting — and it's easy to make it extra special for your loved ones. Christmas Eve boxes are a fantastic way to kick off the magic, so curate mini hampers tailored to your children, friends or family, which can be opened the evening before the 'big day'. Fill children's boxes with cosy pyjamas to wear that night, from brands like Frugi (Snuggle Suits from £36, welovefrugi.com) and Little Green Radicals (pjs from £29, littlegreenradicals.co.uk). Pop in some tasty treats, such as Mummy Meagz The Bursting Bauble Vegan Hot Chocolate (£2.99, mummymeagz.com) and delicious cookies from House of Bakes' new vegan range (from £4, houseofbakesuk.com). You can include similar items in boxes for grownups, like bamboo pjs from Ettitude (from £28, ettitude.com) and decadent chocolates from Booja-Booja (from £1.29, boojabooja.com). Games and puzzles also make great additions — and can be started that evening to begin the festive fun. Zazzle sell plenty of comical animal and veganism-themed jigsaws, for both children and adults (zazzle.co.uk).

Alternative gift ideas

Tired of giving people the same kinds of presents that contribute to Christmas waste? Get creative! Instead of gifting material possessions or food, give an experience. Online or in-real-life cooking classes are fantastic options, or perhaps your loved one is into crafting. There are plenty of culinary and artsy classes out there — try looking on Eventbrite (eventbrite.co.uk) for ideas. If you want to be even more personal, you could hand make your presents. Try crafting festive wreaths from foraged holly; cook up jars of tomato chutney (fantastic if you've got unripe tomatoes left over from your garden) or knit wool-free warmers to keep your family and friends toasty.

Visiting a non-vegan home during the festive period

If you will be visiting a non-vegan household on Christmas Day, make sure to think ahead. Offer to bring food, even if your host has said they are making you something. Not only will it mean that you have more choice (especially if your host isn't very vegan-savvy), but having extra to share around will mean that you will feel more included in the meal, and that others get to try tasty vegan food! You never know, if your loved ones see that vegans can also enjoy festive treats,



it could encourage them to eat more plant-based foods.

It is likely that you will see animals on the table (and we don't mean happy companion dogs jumping up to snaffle the roasted carrots) — so it's vital to mentally prepare. It can be difficult to face the fact that the consumption of animals is being enjoyed by your company. If you feel overwhelmed at any point, excuse yourself to the toilet or a spare room, take deep breaths and remember that the people you are with are not bad, they are your nearest and dearest.

Discussing eating habits might not be the best thing to do during a Christmas meal, so try to think about how great the Brussels are and return to such conversations another time. Focus on the fact that your presence and vegan goodies might help your company to rethink their lifestyle.

Welcoming non-vegans during the festive period

If you've got non-vegan guests coming round, it's probable that they will be apprehensive about how much they will enjoy a meat- and dairy-less dinner. So, ease any scepticism and show everyone how amazing plant-based food and drink is. To leave a lasting impression, go further. Greet loved ones with festive-themed drinks (turn to page 62 for ideas) and canapés (try making our selection on pages 51-60). There are lots of pre-prepared options, like Sainsbury's Sweet

& Smoky BBQ Jackfruit Bao Bun Bites (£3.30, [sainsburys.co.uk](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)) and Wicked Kitchen's No-Prawn Firecracker Dippers (£4, [tesco.com](https://www.wickedkitchen.com)). If guests are staying over (COVID-19 permitting...) you could even place vegan chocolate truffles on their pillows.

Why not also ask your visitors to give you a hand with cooking? If they are keen! This will help to remove any curtains they've put up around vegan food and it'll take away some of the stresses of cooking, plus, it could be lots of fun!

Remember that it's your house, your rules. So, if you want an animal-free zone, remind attendees in advance. If guests want to bring food, ask if they need help with

a vegan recipe or recommendations for pre-bought products, or request a specific dish. Ask for something simple though — you don't want to put them off!

Christmas Day

Now, we come to the important bit — the main festive feast. If you want to home make everything, head to our recipes on pages 75–85. There are also tonnes of Christmas cookbooks, like Gaz Oakley's *Vegan Christmas* or Karoline Joensson's *Happy Vegan Christmas*.

Can't cook, won't cook? Make things easier, with ready-made showstoppers you can pop into the oven. Year after year, supermarkets have been stocking more vegan Christmas centrepieces — so you won't be lacking in choice. Tesco's Wicked Kitchen have created a new No-Turkey Roast Crown (£5, [tesco.com](https://www.tesco.com)), which is tender, juicy and easy-to-carve. Made with savoury soya and wheat protein and topped with a coconut melt and a sage and onion stuffing crumb. Marks and Spencer's Plant Kitchen Festive Wreath (£10, [marksandspencer.com](https://www.marksandspencer.com)) will also impress — it's rich with roasted mushrooms, chestnuts and pumpkin seeds, and topped with a cranberry and orange glaze. And it tastes as good as it looks!

Christmas meal trimmings are generally all vegan, so go to town with Brussels sprouts, crispy roast potatoes, peas, red cabbage, maple-roasted parsnips and stuffing (head to page 83). You could even make vegan Yorkshire puddings, or failing that, Mabel's sells deliciously crispy vegan Yorkies that are ready from frozen in 20 minutes (£5, [mabelsveganyorkshires.co.uk](https://www.mabelsveganyorkshires.co.uk)). 🍷



Making a list. checking it twice

Our complete Christmas gift guide

Are your loved ones' foodies? Do they enjoy a festive tippie? Or, perhaps they are into fashion? Maybe your nearest and dearest love a good scented candle to lighten up wintry nights. Whoever you are buying for and whatever they enjoy, there's sure to be something in our gift selection. Don't forget to treat yourself, too! Even though it's known as the season of giving, self-care is just as important at Christmas time.



The Universal Soul Company
Positive Energy Candle — in 'STILL'
£30, theuniversalsoulcompany.com

Give the gift of good vibes, with this beautiful soya blend candle. With calming base notes of patchouli, relaxing middle notes of lavender and uplifting delicate top notes to create the ultimate place of positivity. It's also non-toxic and contains zero parabens.



Miomojo
The 'Gemma' Clutch Bag — in Cactus Green
£185, store.miomojo.com

For eco-conscious fashionistas — 'Gemma', from Italian brand Miomojo, will become a firm bag favourite. Made from vegan, cruelty-free and organic cactus leather. Plus, the lining is also entirely made from recycled plastic bottles.



Vegan & Friendly
Vegan Vibes Water Bottle — 500ml
£18, veganandfriendly.com

Eco-warriors will love this bottle from Vegan & Friendly — it's made from stainless steel and printed using eco-friendly ink. We adore the retro inspired Vegan Vibes graphic! The double-walled bottle is great for both hot and cold drinks.



Wild Strings
Personalised Embroidery Hoop
From £35, wearwildstrings.co.uk

A personalised gift is the perfect way to treat someone special, and to tell them you care. Made to order, using fabric remnants, Wild Strings create hand-embroidered floral wreaths onto which they will embroider your own message.



Signature Brew
Core Beer Mixed Box
£12 pack £25, signaturebrew.co.uk

Surprise someone with a pub in a box — in the shape of Signature Brew's mixed box of their award-winning beers. All the beers are vegan and can be delivered straight to the door of whoever you gift it to! (Or your own door...)



Lamazuna
Organic Solid Conditioner
£11.35, lamazuna.co.uk

Help eco-warriors to cut down on their plastic waste, with a plastic-free conditioner bar from Lamazuna. It will help hair to shine, feel softer and smell great, and even better — it won't cost the Earth.



Vegetarian Shoes
Vegan Runner — in Black
£84.95, vegetarian-shoes.co.uk

These unisex trainers are perfect for avid treadmill runners — made from fake suede, they are durable, lightweight and breathable and have a grippy dual-density sole. They feature simple, but classic old-school styling that will suit anyone.



Abel & Cole
The Organic Festive Pantry Hamper
£75, abelandcole.co.uk

Abel & Cole's fully vegan hamper has everything loved ones could need. Jam-packed with goodies like English breakfast tea, goji and cranberry muesli, Seville orange and mandarin marmalade and mince pies, it's a real treat.



Votch
Classic Collection Vegan Leather watch
£120, votch.co.uk

This simple but striking watch has a contemporary feel, with an all-black face and dark grey strap made from PVC-free vegan leather. Votch also donate 10 per cent of profits to charity and are PETA-approved.



Yogamatters
Eco Cork Yoga Mat
£65, yogamatters.com

Help a yogi take their practice up a notch — with this eco-friendly cork mat from Yogamatters. It's both recyclable and biodegradable, free from toxic chemicals and dyes and comes at a comfortable thickness of 4mm.

Have yourself a waste-less little Christmas...

Lily Woods shows us how easy it is to
be more sustainable this festive season

Christmas is upon us! As hard as it is to believe (particularly after the year we have had), the time has arrived for mince pies, glittering trees, festive music, and crispy, golden roast potatoes. However, as 2020 has so readily taught us, the Earth is crying out for us to do more to help it. While striving to take care of the environment applies year-round, the festive period sees an increase in waste and carbon dioxide emissions. Luckily, some of the ways we can help the planet this time of year couldn't be easier!

The gift guide continues...

Little vegans

Gifts for Santa's little helpers



CHOCK Chick
Chocolate Making Kit for Kids
£9.99, thevegankindsupermarket.com

This fun kit encourages children to indulge in healthy, raw chocolate goodness and also learn about the origins of cocoa.



VEGAN Happy
Mini-Me Onesie
£18, veganhappyclothing.co.uk

Treat tots to a super soft onesie from VEGAN Happy. They are WRAP-Certified and come in three vibrant colours.



Robin Raven
Santa's First Vegan Christmas
£9.62, blackwells.co.uk

This unique storybook tells a unique Christmas tale, which emphasises care and compassion for animals.

Christmas trees

By mid-December (or, in some cases, the day after Halloween!), most people celebrating Christmas have their trees up. Adorned in twinkling lights and glittery festive decorations, they're probably looking fantastic. However, whether real or artificial, the multi-billion-pound Christmas tree business has quite an impact on levels of waste and emissions.

Fir trees

Real Christmas trees both look and smell fantastic, but they can be damaging if not recycled properly. An average 6.5-foot fir tree can release up to 16kg of CO₂, if left in landfill. And, if left to decompose in this way (as six million trees are each year), they release methane gas — 25 times more potent than CO₂. What's more, around £3 million-worth of Christmas trees are imported into the UK each year, travelling hundreds more miles than British-grown trees.

Together with a lack of appropriate disposal, this has a huge impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Indeed, in a study conducted in the US, it was estimated that each person produces an additional 635kg of CO₂ over the festive period. This is equivalent to three weeks of driving! While this is obviously created by more than just our purchasing of trees, it is nevertheless contributory.

Artificial trees

Over the past decade, there has been a surge in people buying artificial Christmas trees in an attempt to 'go green'. In some ways, this makes sense: they do last longer, and it does save a tree from being chopped down simply for the month of December.

But, while they will eventually wither and die, if disposed of properly, real Christmas trees can help the environment and reduce emission levels. A real pine or fir tree naturally absorbs CO₂ and releases oxygen, so the best thing you can do at Christmas is keep a tree alive and breathing (carbontrust.com). Indeed, with the 100 million trees growing at any one time in the UK for the sole purpose of Christmas, we receive all the benefits that come with growing more trees. Although it is true that many are cut down, the ultimate benefits of having those trees for most of the year is exponential.

Alternately, artificial trees are made from PVC plastic, a type of plastic that is particularly difficult — if not impossible — to recycle, as it requires special equipment. While artificial trees may last far longer, the ultimate damage of both their production and their improper disposal is far more detrimental to our planet.

What should we do?

When it comes to trees, there are many improvements we can make to reduce

waste and cut emissions. For one: buy a real fir or pine tree, but make sure it is grown locally — buying an imported tree ultimately increases emissions. Equally, potted trees are becoming more popular. While some may come with a heftier price tag, you can also plant them out into your garden come January and watch them grow or reuse them the following festive season!

Festive food

It is not only trees that fall victim to Christmas waste. Each year, over 230,000 tonnes of festive food is thrown away — this is the same amount of food that could feed all of Germany for a day, or all of Lithuania for a month. According to Love Food Hate Waste (lovefoodhatewaste.com), this is equivalent to four million meals or 17.2 million sprouts, almost 12 million carrots, and somewhere around 7.4 million mince pies.

What should we do?

For a start, planning and shopping only for the food you need can make a huge impact. Obviously, splash out on the odd, additional packet of mince pies (it IS Christmas!), but make sure that you're not taking more than you, or your household could realistically consume.

Secondly, pop leftovers in the freezer. Whether veggies or portions of dinner, most foods can be frozen. >

Merry woofmas

Presents for our animal friends



Beco
Beco Bowl
From £4.99, becopets.com

Coming in an array of colours, this eco-friendly bowl is made from waste plant fibres, making it sustainable and biodegradable.



Benevo
Organic Dog Cake Mix
£3.99, veggiepets.com

Benevo's dog cake is vegan, easy to make, and free-from soya, GMO's, wheat-gluten, sugar and added salt.



Beco
Catnip Fish
£3.99, becopets.com

Containing whisker tingling catnip, this little fish toy is made entirely from a 100 per cent recycled plastic cloth.



Thirdly, get creative in the kitchen! Utilise those veggies; there are so many recipes, simple or fancy, that use an abundance of vegetables that also appear at a Christmas feast. From curries to pasta dishes, all food is versatile when you use your imagination!

Still got leftovers? Consider giving them to a neighbour or friend. Equally, if you have unopened packets of dried goods or tins, why not donate to a food bank? As a result of this year's COVID-19 crisis, the use of food banks in the UK is expected to rise by 61 per cent, with over 670,000 new people expected to be requiring help from food charities. This is equivalent to a

year-on-year increase of 300,000 parcels. If every able household gave a parcel to a food bank this Christmas, we could really make a difference to many people's lives.

Wrapping paper and cards

Each year, equivalent to over 108 million rolls of wrapping paper is thrown away (much of which cannot be recycled and ends up on landfill), together with one billion Christmas cards. But eliminating this waste is easy!

What should we do?

If you receive gifts in wrapping paper, keep it and reuse it the following year. If it's crinkled, use the age-old trick of gently

ironing it to remove creases. Also, why not try using biodegradable twine or string when wrapping gifts this year, rather than tape? This only serves as another way to cut down on plastic.

Instead of buying rolls of wrapping paper, try using canvas bags, patterned fabric offcuts, pretty scarves or tea towels to pop presents in. These are a gift in themselves! Similarly, reuse old cardboard boxes, brown paper bags or even glass jars — you could decorate them using potato stamps, markers or paints, giving a personal touch.

Rather than throwing away all your Christmas cards, hang onto favourites and use these to create festive bunting for the following year. If you don't want to keep them at all, they can be recycled as part of your household collection or at your local depot. It is also worth keeping your eyes peeled at your local supermarket, as some offer collection boxes for old cards. 📄

Words by **Lily Woods**

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How do vegans celebrate Christmas?

This month, Karin Ridgers asks her vegan friends what Christmas involves for them

I think this may be around my 25th non-stuffed-bird Christmas, and, of course, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Our day is fairly traditional — family, pressies, crackers and lots of chocolate, mock-meats and nut roasts.

If you are nosey like me, you might like to hear what some of my friends get up to during this festive time! For your and my own curiosity, I asked a bunch of vegans what Christmas involves for them.

Henry Firth and Ian Theasby — BOSH!

“For Christmas, we both usually go back up to Sheffield to spend time with our families. We're always buzzing to see them, because living in London means we don't get to see them half as much as we'd like. There's always loads of catching up and even more eating! Christmas dinner would have to be our Mushroom Wellington from *BOSH!*. We've cooked it for both our parents at Christmas before, and it was an absolute crowd-pleaser. And, of course, it's not Christmas without tonnes of gravy and our Crispy, Fluffy, Perfect Roast Potatoes — heaven on a plate.”

“To get in the festive mood, we have to be on-brand and say we use *FOOD!* We love cooking up a big vegan fry-up for our families on Christmas morning.”
@bosh.tv

Adamski — DJ, musician, singer and record producer

“In recent years, a typical Christmas Day for my family has been spent working at the Crisis at Christmas Homeless Initiative in East London, with maybe a Christmas lunch or dinner before or after, depending on our shifts. This year, we will be in our cuckoo clock house in the Vienna Woods, so I'm not sure really...”

“On the day, we have typical English Christmas dinner, just minus cruelty. Something textured like a nut roast is nice, but I smother everything in cranberry sauce anyway! I love Brussels sprouts and roast parsnips — I always have. My wife spends at least five hours (the day before) making amazing gravy. It makes everything taste of Christmas! It feels wonderful, but also a bit sad, to think of the many,

many Christmases that used to revolve around the misery and death of others for my selfish little taste buds.”

@Adamski.Music.Official

Wendy Turner Webster — TV presenter, and Gary Webster — actor

Gary: “A typical Christmas Day for us would be to wake up around mid-morning and have a light breakfast, in anticipation of the gluttony to follow later. Usually, we just chill out until the preparation of dinner has to start. Then, it's time to get highly stressed whilst cooking, and keep going back for seconds and thirds until Boxing Day!”

Wendy: “First off, I have had a long-held rule that I never get out of my pyjamas on Christmas Day — which rather sets the ‘lounging about’ tone of the day! In fact, I usually treat myself to a new set of pjs, which I can put on before going downstairs on Christmas morning. When are we going to shake off this rock'n'roll lifestyle, ha?! Prosecco and lunch prep begin around noon (I don't get stressed cooking the lunch, which must be down to the Prosecco!) and we proceed to get through a wheelbarrow full of roast potatoes. Presents are then opened and I usually fall asleep... very early! I can never think why...”

@RealGaryWebster and **@turnerwebster**

Peter Egan — actor and voice for the animals

“A typical Christmas day for me is much like any other. I don't mean to make it sound boring, because I find most days fascinating anyway. Christmas, as we know it, is very much a time for young children in terms of the element of wonderment, anticipation and surprise, but when that innocent energy has been outgrown, it becomes a day of warmth, kindness and communication. So, I would say that a typical Christmas day for me is avoiding all of the commercial hype and concentrating on spending time with those I really care about — family, friends and, of course, our dogs.”

“My go-to Christmas day menu is one that I now look forward to every day of the week. It is one that celebrates life in its most complete sense. When you take death off your plate, every day is a celebration. My transition to a plant-based lifestyle is something I celebrate on a daily basis. So, I eat food every day which makes me happy.”

@PeterEganAnimalAdvocate

Victoria Summer — English actress, model and singer

“We absolutely love Christmas in my family and celebrate it with lots of traditions. My mother makes her famous vegan, gluten-free mince pies, which we start to have regularly for breakfast from Christmas Eve and make last throughout New Year!”

“My mother is a super chef. I have been spoiled for years. Last year, she created a pistachio and pomegranate nut roast which was absolutely delicious. This was served with roast potatoes, vegan gravy and a colourful array of vegetables — from roasted parsnips to swede mash to regular peas and carrots. For dessert we always have traditional Christmas pudding, which I love served warm with vegan brandy sauce.”

@VictoriaSummer 🍷

For more from Karin, visit **veggievision.tv** and **mad-promotions.com**



Mains and Sides

Add some 'wow'-factor to your
Christmas table with our showstoppers
and accompaniments

Recipe
p84

Lentil Roast Wreath



Roasted Seitan & Vegetables

Serves 8

Make seitan the main event of your Christmas meal, with this delectable roast — it'll have you going back for seconds and thirds! Served with the vegetables, it makes quite the dish.

- 12 **baby carrots**, trimmed
- 400g (14oz) **potatoes**, peeled and cut into wedges
- 400g (14oz) **shallots**, peeled and halved
- 2 tbsp **olive oil**, plus extra for drizzling
- 2 tbsp **plain flour**
- 1 tsp **salt**
- 1 tsp **pepper**
- 1 tsp **paprika**
- 1 900g (2lb) piece **seitan**
- 1 **onion**, chopped
- 125ml (½ cup) **red wine**
- 2 tbsp **red wine vinegar**
- 1 tbsp **soy sauce**
- 800g (12oz) tinned **crushed tomatoes**
- 1 tsp **chopped fresh parsley**
- 1 tsp **dried rosemary**

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4

2 Arrange the carrots, potatoes and shallots in a large baking dish and drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 30 minutes.

3 While the vegetables are roasting, combine the flour, salt, pepper and paprika in a large shallow bowl. Roll the seitan in the flour mixture, ensuring it is completely covered.

4 Heat 1 tbsp of the olive oil in a large frying pan over high heat. Add the seitan and brown on all sides. Remove from the pan and set aside.

5 Heat the remaining oil in the pan over medium heat, add the onion and sauté for 10 minutes. Add the wine, vinegar and soy sauce and cook for 5 minutes. Add the crushed tomatoes, parsley and rosemary, reduce the heat to low and cook, stirring frequently, for 20 minutes.

6 Remove the roasted vegetables from the oven and place the seitan on top. Pour the tomato sauce over the seitan, then return to the oven and roast for 40 minutes.

7 Transfer the vegetables and seitan to a serving plate and serve immediately.



Recipes from *Vegan Christmas* by Audrey Fitzjohn (£12.99, Smith Street Books).
Photography by Audrey Fitzjohn.



Onion Gravy

Serves 4

By caramelising the onions it adds a real richness to the gravy, that mixed with the marmite, soy sauce and red wine make a rich, silky gravy that's perfect for a roast dinner.

- 1 tbsp **vegetable oil**
- 2 **red onions**, sliced
- 1 tbsp **dried thyme**
- 1 tbsp **Marmite**
- 2 tbsp **soy sauce**
- 120ml (½ cup) **red wine**
- 480ml (2 cups) **vegetable stock**
- 1 tbsp **cornflour**, mixed with 1 tbsp **water**

1 Firstly, heat the vegetable oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, then add the onions and cook for 10-12 minutes until they are really soft and caramelising.

2 Add the thyme, Marmite and soy sauce and stir.

3 Add the red wine and vegetable stock and bring to the boil.

4 Once boiling, whisk in the cornflour mix to thicken the sauce, season to taste.

Recipe by *Vegan Life* in-house chefs

Roast Potatoes

Serves 8

Maris Pipers make the perfect roast potatoes — they have a low sugar content meaning they don't darken too quickly when cooking and crisp up well. They also have a light and fluffy texture, which give the roast potatoes the perfect contrast of textures.

- 2kg **Maris Piper potatoes**, peeled
- 1 tbsp **chopped fresh rosemary**
- 1 tbsp **chopped fresh thyme**
- 4 **cloves of garlic**, crushed
- 80ml (⅓ cup) **vegetable oil**

1 Begin by preheating the oven to

230°C/450°F/Gas 8, then chop the potatoes into even pieces roughly 2 inches in size.

2 Add the potatoes into a pan of water and bring to the boil, boil for 3-4 minutes until the potatoes are still hard but the outsides become fluffy, then drain the potatoes in a colander and give them a good shake to create fluffy edges.

3 Add the potatoes to a bowl with the rosemary, thyme, garlic and oil and mix them about to ensure they are fully covered, season to taste.

4 Then, place the contents of the bowl into a roasting tray and roast in the oven for 40-50 minutes until the potatoes have a golden, crisp exterior and a fluffy centre.

Recipe by *Vegan Life* in-house chefs



Top Tip

We used:



Squeaky Bean Stuffed Mini Yorkshire Puddings

Serves 4 (makes 4 large Yorkshire's or 6-8 small ones)

Christmas roast dinner wouldn't be the same without Yorkshire puddings, and we vegans can certainly enjoy them, too! This tasty recipe takes the classic Yorkshire pud' a step further, combining them with a creamy Russian dressing and Squeaky Bean deli meat alternatives.

For the Yorkshire puddings:

- 100g (3.5oz) **plain flour**
- 130g (4.5oz) **cornflour**
- 3 tsp **baking powder**
- ½ tsp **salt**
- ½ tsp **turmeric powder** (for colour, optional)
- 320ml (11 fl oz) **plant milk**
- 4-8 tbsp **vegetable oil**

For the Russian dressing:

- 60g (4 tbsp) **vegan mayo**

- ½ tsp **garlic powder**
- 1 tsp **sweet paprika powder**
- 2 tbsp **red wine vinegar**
- 1 tbsp **agave syrup**
- 30g (1oz) **chilli sauce**
- ¼ tsp **black pepper**
- ½ tsp **vegan Worcestershire sauce** (optional)
- **Salt**, to taste

For the toppings:

- 1 pack of **Squeaky Bean Pastrami Style Slices** and/or **Squeaky Bean Roast Chicken Flavour Slices**

1 Prepare your vegan Yorkshire puddings by filling 1 tbsp of vegetable oil into each muffin tin hole. Preheat your oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6 and place the muffin tin inside for 20 minutes to get the oil smoking hot.

2 In the meantime, whisk up the rest of your Yorkshire pudding ingredients. First, combine the dry ingredients then carefully pour in the plant milk and stir until well combined and no lumps are left in the batter. Transfer to a jug, so you can more easily pour it in the next step.

3 Once the oil is hot enough, you have to work carefully, but quickly! Remove the muffin tin from the oven (close the door again as soon as you can) and pour batter into the hot oil of each hole, filling it up until about 1cm below the top. You should hear it sizzle at this point.

4 As quickly as you carefully can, transfer the muffin tin back into the hot oven and shut the door.

5 Allow your puddings to cook for 20-25 minutes, not opening the oven door during the cooking process until they look crisp and golden. In the meantime, whisk up your Russian dressing in a small bowl.

6 Once ready, take the puddings out of the oven and allow them to rest for 5 minutes before removing them from the muffin tin.

7 Stuff your puddings with the Squeaky Bean Pastrami Style and Roast Chicken Flavour Slices and drizzle the Russian dressing on top before serving.

8 Tuck in and enjoy!

Recipe by Romy London for **Squeaky Bean**, squeakybean.co.uk



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Spiced Maple Roast Carrots & Parsnips, with Mustard Polenta Mash & Caramelised Onions

Serves 4-6

This dish gives you two festive dinner options; you can either serve the roasted maple veg on its own or take things up a notch and serve it with the polenta — a great alternative to mash potato!

- 6 **carrots**
- 4 **parsnips**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 tbsp **maple syrup**
- Pinch **sea salt**
- **Black pepper**

For the caramelised onions:

- 2 **red onions** sliced into rings
- 2 tbsp **olive oil**
- Pinch **sea salt**

For the polenta:

- 100g (3.5oz) **instant polenta**
- 400ml (1 ⅔ cup) **water**
- 1 tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**
- 1 ½ tsp **sea salt**
- 100ml (scant ½ cup) **plant-based milk**
- **Black pepper**
- Squeeze **lemon**
- Lots of **fresh thyme**
- 1 tbsp **whole grain mustard**

1 Preheat your oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4, then place the veg on a baking tray and coat in olive oil, maple syrup, salt and pepper.

2 Bake for 50-60 minutes until soft in the middle and caramelised on the outside. Keep your eye on them as they will cook at varying times.

3 For the caramelised onion, add the oil and sliced onion to a small pan and fry very slowly on a low heat for 30-40 minutes until caramelised. Then, add the salt and pepper and set aside.

4 For the quick polenta, add the water to a saucepan, bring to the boil. Slowly add in the polenta in a steady stream. Stir continuously for 1 minute. Turn off the heat and allow to cool a little.

5 Add the polenta and all the other ingredients to a food processor and blitz smooth and creamy consistency.

6 Serve the roast veg on top of the fluffy polenta and finish off with the caramelised onions.

Recipes from *Niki Webster Rebel Recipes* by Niki Webster (Bloomsbury), rebelrecipes.com

Lentil Wellington

Serves 8

A deliciously filling and protein-packed wellington filled with lentils and tasty butternut squash. Served with onion gravy, it's a real Christmas treat.

For the filling:

- ½ **butternut squash**, peeled and cubed
- 1 **yellow onion**, finely sliced
- 2 tbsp **extra virgin olive oil**
- 2 tbsp **pine nuts**
- 2 tbsp **pumpkin seeds**
- 1 tin **lentils**, drained
- A handful of **fresh parsley**, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 **lemon**
- 8 **dried apricots**, finely chopped
- A handful of **dried cranberries**

To assemble the wellington:

- 2 rolls **puff pastry sheets**
- A splash of **almond milk**, to brush and glaze pastry
- **Salt** and **pepper**, to taste

1 Add squash and onion to an ovenproof dish alongside olive oil, salt and pepper and roast in the oven at 190°C/375°F/Gas 5 for about 20 minutes. To this, add the pine nuts and pumpkin seeds, and place back in the oven for the last 3 minutes of the roasting process.

2 Combine the remaining filling ingredients in a large bowl, add in the cooked squash, seeds and lentil mix and set aside to cool down completely.

3 Unroll a puff pastry sheet and place your filling onto the sheet in a log shape. Place the second, unrolled pastry sheet on the top and gently press it onto the filling.

4 Take a pizza cutter or a knife to carefully cut out your wellington, leaving about 1-2 cm on the outer edges. Use a fork or your fingers to pinch the edges together.

5 With the leftover pastry, create any decorations for the top of your wellington.

6 Brush the log with a little almond milk, then place in the oven at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20-25 minutes or until your pastry is golden.

7 Remove from the oven, slice and serve with vegan gravy, roast potatoes and all your favourite trimmings (see page 77).



Tofu Cranberry Balls

Makes about 15

These little tofu balls are packed with flavour, and go perfectly served with rich cranberry sauce or thick gravy.

For the filling:

- 2 280g **packs of tofu** (try using Tofoo)
- ½ tsp **sea salt**
- 2 tbsp **nutritional yeast**
- Juice of ½ **lemon**
- ½ tsp **black pepper**
- 4 tbsp **plant milk**
- ½ tsp **turmeric**
- 2 tbsp chopped **parsley**
- 2 tbsp **dried cranberries**, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp **breadcrumbs**

For the breadcrumb coating:

- 5 tbsp **breadcrumbs**
- 1 tsp **chilli powder**
- 1 tsp **smoked paprika**
- ½ tsp **fine sea salt**

1 Add the filling for the tofu balls to a food processor apart from the parsley, dried cranberries and breadcrumbs. Pulse until you get a smooth tofu paste.

2 In a medium size bowl combine the tofu mix with the chopped cranberries, parsley and 2 tbsp of breadcrumbs. Stir until combined, then use your hands to form little tofu balls from the mix.

3 In a small bowl combine the coating ingredients. Roll each tofu ball in the breadcrumb mix to coat, then place them on a baking tray and bake at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 20 minutes or until golden

4 Serve with gravy and/or cranberry sauce.



Recipe by RomyLondonuk, @romylondonuk,
romylondonuk.com

Jewelled Red Cabbage

Serves 6

Braised red cabbage takes a little while to cook, but it's worth the wait, and soon your entire home will smell like mulled wine. When it's served, scatter over pomegranate seeds, which add a juicy crunch.

- 1 large **red cabbage**
- 100g (3.5oz) **soft light brown sugar**
- 75ml (scant ⅓ cup) **cider vinegar**
- 200ml (¾ cup + 4 tsp) **red wine**
- The **juice of 2 oranges**
- 1 **cinnamon stick**
- **Salt** and **pepper**
- A grating of **fresh nutmeg**
- 1 **pomegranate**

1 Quarter the red cabbage and remove the core, then finely shred. Tip into a large pan with brown sugar, cider vinegar, red wine, orange juice and the cinnamon stick and season well, then grate over the nutmeg.

2 Bring to a simmer, then cover with a lid, lower the heat and cook for 1.5 hours, stirring every so often.

3 Remove the cinnamon stick, then cut the pomegranate in half, bash to remove the seeds and scatter over the red cabbage.

4 This will keep for a few days or can be frozen for two months. Reheat until piping hot.

Recipe from *The Seasonal Vegan* by Sarah Philpott

(Seren, serenbooks.com).

Photography by Manon Houston (manonhouston.com)



Maple Roasted Brussel Sprouts & Chestnuts

Serves 4

The bitterness of the sprouts works well with the sweetness from the maple syrup and chestnuts, making these perfect for your Christmas Day roast.

- 1 tbsp **vegetable oil**
- 1 tbsp **dairy-free butter**
- 1 tbsp **maple syrup**
- 400g (14oz) **Brussels sprouts**, halved
- 150g (5oz) **chestnuts**, chopped

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6, then add all the ingredients to a bowl and mix well until the sprouts and chestnuts are well coated. Season to taste.

2 Place on a roasting tray and roast in the oven for 30-35 minutes until the sprouts are nicely coloured and cooked through.

Recipe by *Vegan Life* in-house chefs



Lentil Roast Wreath

Serves 10

This lentil roast is simple to make but looks an impressive centre piece for Christmas dinner. It is a great nut-free alternative to a nut roast and can be made gluten-free simply by using gluten-free oats and tamari instead of soy sauce.

- 1 tbs vegetable oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, pureed
- 2 carrots, grated
- 2 parsnips, grated
- 2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tsp chopped fresh sage
- 2 400g (14oz) tins lentils, drained
- 1 tbs soy sauce
- 150g (5oz) rolled oats

To garnish:

- Cranberry sauce
- Redcurrants
- Fresh rosemary sprigs
- Fresh thyme sprigs

1 Begin by preheating your oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.

2 Add the vegetable oil to a frying pan over a medium heat, then add the onion, garlic, carrots, parsnips, thyme, rosemary and sage and fry for 4-5 minutes until the vegetables are cooked through.

3 Add the vegetables to a bowl, along with the lentils, soy sauce and oats. Use a potato masher to mash the ingredients together to form a thick paste and season to taste.

4 Press this mixture into a bundt tin and place in the oven to bake for 30-40 minutes until crisp and firm. Once cooked through, remove from the oven and turn the lentil roast out of the tin.

5 To garnish, spread cranberry sauce over the top and decorate with redcurrants, rosemary and thyme.





COVID-19 clears aisle 4

This month, our columnist reminds us of
what is important



Laura Gago

As we went into a national lockdown in March, I drafted a piece on the panic shopping that seemed to be spreading throughout our supermarket aisles. Dried pasta selling like hot cakes, and sold out flour meant that many of us couldn't bake said hot cakes. I now write this, seven months later, amongst fears of another lockdown; if not national, then at least on localised levels. Whilst it feels like my life has returned to somewhat of a pre-COVID normality — I'm back at the gym, I've dined out, clinked glasses, jetted off on holiday, and no longer take part in online quizzes, much is still the same. I continue to work from home, struggle to make definitive plans one month to the next, and the future still feels so uncertain. I worry how my mood will fare if more restrictions are imposed, and as we enter the winter months. I'm afraid of how those close to me will manage, their well-being and livelihoods. How will we respond as a nation — will we see the return of panic-buying as we hunker down and take shelter?

Despite spikes in food shopping, empty shelves and queues outside stores, food was the least of my concerns back in March, and that remains the case now. I've not shopped any more than usual this year; in fact, probably less so. I've continued to buy reduced foods, use food sharing app Olio — picking up food left outside by stores, making use of what I already have at home. It's ironic that given the panicked stockpiling, there continued to be an abundance of food waste. Despite any hysteria that stores would close, households would run out of food, edible food was, and still is being left to rot; stores send food to landfill, and instead of looking to our cupboards to see what we can use, we often turn to stores to see what more we can buy. This makes me wonder how much any of this is even about food.

I'm in a comfortable position whereby I can choose to eat foods which would otherwise be wasted. I have access to the internet and can use food waste apps, I drive and am able to pick and choose which supermarkets to go to, and when. The stark reality is that those who suffer the most when there is an outbreak such as the Coronavirus are our most vulnerable in society, those who go hungry on any given day; virus or no virus. People who consistently go without substantial food and regular meals, who have poor nutrition, are more likely to have weakened immune systems and could suffer with additional stressors such as mental health difficulties, depression and anxiety. Considering this, we'd be inclined to share our surplus with the needier, right?

Indeed, some of us may well do, yet, The Lincoln Food Bank (lincoln.foodbank.org.uk) was featured in the news through fears that panic buying and self-isolation, could place their users at risk. Unfortunately, I'm not convinced that a virus which affects the country, scrap that — countries, necessarily prompts us to consider the value of food and/or promotes equal access. I'm not sure that the panic buying of food is even about food per se. I think it helps us to feel in control, to manage the anxiety that can come with the unknown, what the future holds. I think that there is a tendency for us to retreat into self-survival mode, that we can be less thoughtful of others; be it whoever else is in aisle four, or the homeless person that we passed as we entered the store. Sadly, it can reinforce our prejudices, fear, perceptions of 'others' as being dangerous, risky, a potential threat.

If we are not careful, there is a risk that we will overlook just how resourceful and resilient we are as individuals, but more importantly as a collective. Let's not lose sight that food unites us, brings us together, allows us to communicate care to ourselves and others,

that we all share the same basic needs, and are only ever a few pay cheques away from being on the street, and knowing real hunger. There is ample food in the western world, so let's waste less and share a little more. Whether we continue to relish newfound freedoms or must adjust to the return of tighter restrictions, let us not allow the past seven or so months be in vain. It offered many of us the opportunity to reconnect with food as fuel, the space and time to be versatile in our kitchens, forced us to adapt to changes, uncertainty — both internally and externally. It taught us that stockpiling may offer an illusion that we have greater control, but that the reality is that by utilising what we already have and sharing with others, we increase our resources and our sense of well-being. Whatever happens over the coming months, let us remember that it is this sense of belonging that will provide far more contentment than 40 bags of dried pasta. 🍝

For more from Laura, follow
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The vegan diet and heart disease



Dietitian Yvonne O'Halloran looks at what foods to eat and avoid if you have heart disease

Cardiovascular heart disease is one of the UK's leading causes of death and the most common cause of premature death. It is responsible for around 64,000 deaths in the UK each year, which works out as 180 people each day, or one death every eight minutes. It is also the leading cause of death worldwide (British Heart Foundation, 2020). Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, killing over 370,000 annually.

How do people get heart disease?

Coronary heart disease starts to take form as a waxy substance called plaque that builds up inside the coronary arteries. These arteries supply oxygen-rich blood to the heart. When plaque accumulates in the arteries, it causes a condition known as atherosclerosis and this typically occurs over many years. If the plaque in the arteries ruptures, a blood clot can form on the surface and a large blood clot can completely block the blood flow through the coronary artery leading to a heart attack. Ruptured plaque can also harden and narrow the arteries.

Only five per cent of heart disease cases are purely due to genetics,

the other 95 per cent is lifestyle related (CDC, 2017). Heart disease doesn't only affect the elderly — autopsies conducted on young Americans who died from accidents unrelated to heart disease (suicide, accidents, homicides), showed that the early signs of heart disease are even evident in 17 to 34-year-olds.

How does a plant-based diet help with heart disease?

According to a US-based doctor — Doctor Caldwell B Esselstyn, heart disease is preventable, and you can make yourself heart attack-proof simply through eating a healthy whole food plant-based diet and exercising. Dr Esselstyn had remarkable results from his patients and believes heart disease can not only be prevented and halted, but even reversed with the correct nutrition (Esselstyn, 2017).

A whole food plant-based diet increases the amount of nitric oxide our bodies can produce. But what is nitric oxide and how can it help with this disease?

Nitric oxide (NO) is one of the most important molecules in the body and is involved in almost every organ system. It has many functions, but its most

important function is that it is the body's strongest vasodilator (dilates blood vessels). This ensures healthy and increased blood flow throughout the body, therefore preventing blockages. Insufficient NO in the body can cause or contribute to multiple diseases.

How do I get NO into my body?

NO is produced by an enzyme for an amino acid called L-Arginine. L-Arginine is found in many plant proteins containing foods (legumes and nuts). However, the enzyme does not always work well and is easily affected by smoking and ageing. Supplementing with L-Arginine is not the answer either — it has been demonstrated to be ineffective after long-term use and associated with less NO and increased risk of death if given to patients after they have had a heart attack (Wilson et al, 2007).

The main foods that can assist the body in producing more NO (through the production of nitrites via saliva) are nitrate plant foods (*you must chew these foods, blending or puréeing them will not work as the saliva won't product nitrites).

Nitrate plant foods to consume daily:

Bok choy
Swiss chard
Kale
Collard greens
Beet greens
Mustard greens
Turnip greens
Napa cabbage
Brussels sprouts
Cauliflower
Coriander
Parsley
Spinach
Arugula
Asparagus

Most plant foods contain phytochemicals and antioxidants, and NO can be produced from the nitrates ingested from plants. Vegetables are the main source of nitrates contributing to about 85 per cent of our daily intake. The highest levels are found to be in green leafy vegetables.

What else should I eat if I have heart disease?

Wholegrains — oats, quinoa, brown rice, millet, rye, barley, buckwheat, corn.

Legumes — Eat plenty of legumes, like baked beans, soybeans, lentils and tofu.

Potatoes — particularly sweet potatoes.

Fresh fruit and vegetables — include all colours daily for rich antioxidants.

High ORAC foods (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) – chewing green leafy vegetables the size of a fist, after being boiled in water for 5-6 minutes with balsamic vinegar, helps the body make NO. Other high ORAC foods are raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, blackberries.

Omega-3 fats — include 1-2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds or chia seeds daily for omega-3 fats.

High-fibre foods — wholegrain cereals, fruits and vegetables.

Tea — tea can help prevent the buildup of fatty deposits in the arteries due to the antioxidants it contains.

Garlic — consuming garlic has been found in some studies to lower cholesterol due to a compound called allicin.

Foods containing vitamin E — these help to protect against the bad cholesterol, as vitamin E is a strong antioxidant. Sources include dark green vegetables and wholegrain products.

It's also important to exercise. Walking 30-40 minutes each day reduces your risk of heart disease by up to 30 per cent, as regular exercise can lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels. Combining both aerobic and resistance training has been found to be effective approaches to lowering blood pressure.

What should I avoid if I have heart disease?

Oils — oils are damaging to the endothelium and should be avoided. Oils harm the inner most lining of the blood vessels called endothelium. Avocados and nuts should be used minimally to those who already have heart disease as they contain fats — to everyone else (if not overweight) these are fine. Avoid eating out as much as you can. Most restaurants add oils to their dish, which will be extremely damaging to already-damaged cells.

Fish and animal protein — oily fish contains mercury, lead, PCBs, and saturated fats, and both this and high intakes of animal protein has been linked in studies to a higher risk of heart failure (animal protein increased risk by 43 per cent!). Traditional recommendations are to trim all visible fat from meats, but even when you trim fat you are still consuming it as it runs through most of the animal flesh. Therefore, avoiding all meat is preferable.

Nuts — a handful of a variety of raw unsalted nuts most days of the week is a general recommendation, but even though these are healthy foods, for someone with heart disease, nuts should be limited due to their fat content (with the exception of chestnuts, which are very low in fat).

Added salt and cooking with table salt

— less than 1 teaspoon of salt or less per day is advised, and if you do consume a packaged food, aim for less than 120mg of sodium per 100g.

Alcohol — small intakes of red wine may be protective due to its antioxidant content, coming from its red pigment known as anthocyanins. But alcohol is a toxin to our brain, heart and liver so should be limited as much as possible. Limit to two servings per week (red wine).

High Glycemic Index (GI) foods — reduce intake of high GI foods and choose lower GI options. High GI foods quickly raise blood glucose levels.

Honey, maple syrup, agave syrup and similar foods — limit these items as much as possible.

Caffeine — reduce your intake of caffeine, especially caffeinated coffee (decaf seems to be okay).

Dairy — switching to low-fat or non-fat dairy products is not enough (you are still consuming the fat, cholesterol, IGF-1 (insulin like growth factor) and hormones). Recent studies have indicated that dairy protein increases the risk of heart failure by 49 per cent. 

Find Yvonne on Facebook at
@livingveganofficial



“Many of our city-based species display real ingenuity and resilience just to survive”

Wild Cities

Ben Lerwill, author of children's book *Wild Cities*, explores our changing, urbanised world and how animals can be affected



Animals don't do town planning. For centuries, the world we live in has been becoming more urban. City limits creep outwards, buildings rise taller and metropolitan populations grow ever larger. But of the millions of species on the planet, only one is responsible for this ongoing development: namely, us. Foxes, fish and peregrine falcons don't get much of a say.

The hitch — or one of many — is that there's only so much space to go around. For animals, our land and waterways are also their land and waterways. And as our cities get bigger, so too do the numbers of creatures who make their homes in or around urban environments. In my newest children's book, *Wild Cities*, I've looked at the wildlife found in 14 cities around the world, and the variety is astonishing: bears in Calgary, goshawks in Berlin, penguins in Cape Town and leopards in Mumbai. Not forgetting, a global multitude of more everyday species.

Animals find themselves living in cities for any number of reasons. On a basic level, their habitats may have simply been subsumed by urban expansion. While the city has grown around them, they've stayed where they've always been. Others might gravitate to built-up areas due to the lure of easy food, while others are attracted by the heat and shelter that cities offer, or the relative safety they provide from hunters and predators.

Just as interesting are the different ways in which animals around the world have adapted to urban life. Martens have found homes in rooftop nooks that mimic the trunks and rock crevices of the countryside. Birds have learned to sing more loudly to make themselves heard above traffic noise. Owls have altered their hunting ranges, otters have found sanctuary under roads and bridges, and some raccoons have even mastered the act of turning doorknobs!

Inevitably, of course, the proximity of humans and wildlife can cause conflict. A coyote is an incredible creature, with finely honed instincts and precision-engineered physiology, but try telling that to a North American homeowner with a missing pet. And while baboons make for an impressive spectacle, swinging through town in broad-shouldered troops, South African city-dwellers tend not to look on them with neighbourly affection.

These examples, however, are in many ways the exceptions. A great number of our urban animals can live alongside us without friction, and one of the messages I try to get across in the book is how important it is that we not only notice the wildlife we encounter in our cities, but also that we understand it.



Having spent time living in three of the cities featured in the book, I'm aware how perceptions of urban animals can become distorted — and equally, how extraordinary acts of nature can be taking place under our noses, if only we'd sit up and take notice.

“There's a thrill that comes from discovering a rich diversity of life on your doorstep”

Many of our city-based species display real ingenuity and resilience just to survive, so there's a huge amount that school-age wildlife fans can learn from studying the urban fauna that they live close to. Components of nature such as food chains, territorial claims and breeding patterns can often be apparent in cities, just as they are in the countryside, and while parakeets in Richmond Park might not have the same 'wow' factor as lions in the Serengeti, there's a thrill that comes from discovering a rich diversity of life on your doorstep.

How to help these animals exist alongside us happily rather depends on the wildlife in question, but the best place to start is simply through awareness and experience, particularly where children are concerned. A family trip to a local city park takes on fresh purpose if you arrive armed with notebooks and binoculars. How many different birds, insects and mammals can you spot? Why are these animals busy doing the things they're

doing? For children, an approach like this can really help strengthen their natural sense of curiosity and compassion for the world around them.

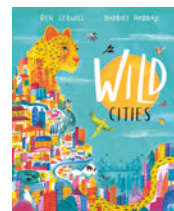
There are other practical ways in which children and parents or carers can make a difference. If you're fortunate enough to have a garden, try making it as wildlife-friendly as possible with trees, small ponds, wildflowers and log piles. Even balconies and window-boxes can attract a range of pollinators and other creatures. A 2019 report by the British Trust for Ornithology, meanwhile, found that bird-feeders were helping the number of urban bird species to diversify. Leaving out a shallow dish of water, can also help.

It doesn't stop there. Things like bat boxes, insect hotels and hedgehog highways have all become popular ways of encouraging local biodiversity, while for young naturalists with broader horizons in mind, various UK organisations help lead campaigns for retaining and developing more green space.

Ultimately, of course, we care about the things we're interested in. Sharing a city with species of various shapes and sizes can be problematic at times, but it's also genuinely exciting. And the more we choose to learn about the birds and beasts that live in our manmade environments, the better it becomes for all. 🐾

Wild Cities is out now, written by **Ben Lerwill**, illustrated by **Harriet Hobday** (£12.99, Puffin Books).

For more from Ben, read *The Puffin Book of Big Dreams*. Ben's story, 'Keep Flying Little Bird' is illustrated by **Chris Wormell**.



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Style with a conscience

Vegan writer, animal rights advocate and K9 Angels charity director, Victoria Featherstone Pearce, reveals her top five cruelty-free winter fashion picks

Winter is here! The search has begun for fashion that is warm, practical, glamorous AND cruelty-free and ethical. But, this needn't be a struggle — we all deserve beautiful clothes, shoes and accessories. To give you a helping hand, I have rounded up five beautifully ethical and sustainable winter picks, all tried and tested by myself during my own endeavours to get my wardrobe ready for the colder months. 🐾

Words by **Victoria Featherstone Pearce**, K-9 Angels co-founder, director and trustee, **k-9angels.org**. For more from Victoria Featherstone Pearce follow **@victoriapearcewriter**



Labante
The Bella Vegan Mini Crossbody Bag
£138.40, labante.com

Add some colour to your winter wardrobe with Labante's new range. The Bella Vegan Mini Crossbody Bag is part of their brand-new Weaver Believer collection, which is a micro collection focusing on versatile innovations. It is handwoven in luxurious Blue Star vegan leather in luscious Matt Gold.

This adorable bag transforms from a handheld bag to a crossbody by simply using the detachable, adjustable vegan leather strap. Featuring a red recycled plastic bottle lining interior, it is a multi-functional bag that includes inside zipper pockets and compartments for your keys and phone. Wear this to work or on a day out — it's the perfect sustainable accessory. Made with love, so you can wear it with pride.

Vegan Haven
Faux Fur Lapel Collar
£56, veganhaven.co.uk

Vegan Haven is a fabulous, ethical and cruelty-free website I found on my search for luxury vegan finds. Vegan Haven also has a flagship store, The Haven Home Interiors, nestled in the quaint village of Ledsham, Cheshire.

The name Vegan Haven is exactly what it is: a vegan haven for everything from womenswear, menswear, gifts and winter throws and home interiors. It is a store created by vegans for vegans.

I absolutely love their Faux Fur Lapel Collar, which is designed to transform coats or jackets. This stylish collar features hinged clips to attach securely to any garment for a quick transition to a glamorous and polished winter look.





Beyond Skin

The Ronnie Boot

£295, beyond-skin.com

I've praised Beyond Skin many times for their luxury ethical designs — finding stunning cruelty-free shoes and boots certainly isn't an easy task so early on in the ethical fashion revolution.

The Ronnie over-the-knee boots in faux suede are slim fit and easy-to-wear in a stretchy material. These sexy but stylish boots work with most outfits, they are smart and elegant, with a small heel for a little glamour, and will certainly be worn many times by me over this winter.

It is so important that we support smaller, independent ethical brands, like Beyond Skin, because many similar vegan companies have fallen off the radar. Some people may find Beyond Skin costly in price, but their items are made to last, do not harm animals and are most definitely less harmful to our planet — and there's no price for that. You will look good and be proud for what your shoes stand for.

Organic Basics

Underwear, tops, dresses, bottoms, accessories and activewear

Prices vary, uk.organicbasics.com

I stumbled across Organic Basics on my search for ethical clothes to layer up with this winter, and I'm so impressed by their range of underwear, activewear and everyday essentials, with sustainability as their core mission. By investing in high-quality recycled fabrics and workmanship the brand ensures that items last — which is better for our planet and our pocket, too.

Organic Basics handpick every fabric based on its environmental footprint and lifetime durability. They only ever use Class A and B fibres and only look for the most responsible fabric material and technology available. That means natural, renewable, recycled, biodegradable and/or low-impact textiles only.

You can also be assured that Organic Basics only work with trusted, certified factory partners who share the same sustainable vision. Workers are surrounded by a safe working environment and paid a good living wage.



VEGAN Happy

Women's 'Happy' Lightweight Long Sleeve Gym Top

£28, veganhappyclothing.co.uk

The VEGAN Happy brand, quite frankly, makes me very happy. With their huge range of classic and stylish pieces, with everything from puffer jackets to everyday T-shirts that are great for layering, as well as cute hats and gloves. They also do gym attire that is all ethically sourced, vegan and PETA-approved. I love the fact that the brand donates 10 per cent of their net profit to animal rescues, too.

I love my VEGAN Happy gym combo; whenever I wear it people ask me about veganism, of which I am more than happy to chat about! Any brand that inspires vegan conversations is one that I'm more than happy to get behind and wear again and again.

VEGAN Happy is a very small start-up brand, but they have big ideas. The more people wear clothes with a vegan message, the more chance there will be to ignite that spark. Be proud and fly the vegan flag.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fashion fact of the month

Whilst water is our planet's most important resource, over one billion people don't have access to safe drinking water. The fashion industry is the second largest consumer of water because it takes so much of it to grow, dye and process fabric. Let's fix that with slow, longer lasting pieces.



Fighting flu with nature's gifts

Jenny Carson, senior nutritionist at ethical supplement company, Viridian, discusses the benefits of elderberry

Mother Earth is responsible for so many health-boosting wonders — like elderberry. The black berries of elder may be small in size, but research has revealed elderberry to be a potent cold and flu remedy.

Although widespread in the UK, the elder can be found throughout Europe with common use in herbal medicine. *Sambucus nigra* — otherwise known as the black elderberry — is packed with oxidative damage-quelling nutrients and polyphenols (which are plant-specific nutrients), each are reputed to support the immune function.

Elderberries form and ripen to a deep purple-black colour around mid-September — as if Mother Nature is providing a clue as to how to protect ourselves from winter illnesses.

What is the research into supplementing elderberry?

Researchers began their fascination into the potential health benefits of elderberries in the 1940s. This volume of continued research contributed to a review of multiple scientific studies in 2018. Data collected from 180 patients reported that supplementing with elderberry extract substantially

reduced the severity and duration of upper respiratory tract infections, like the common cold, coughs, runny nose, catarrh and influenza.

Long-haul travel is associated with the increased risk of bacterial and viral infections. A study involving 312 air travellers revealed that taking an elderberry supplement prior to, during and for four days post long-haul travel was shown to reduce the severity of cold symptoms. In fact, the elderberry-treated participants experienced the cold for a duration that was two days shorter than those in the placebo group, while in terms of symptom severity, the elderberry treated group experienced 58 per cent less severe symptoms.

How does it exert the health benefits?

It is considered that the anthocyanidins and vitamin C content of elderberry are responsible for these findings. However, investigations have shown that elderberry extract increases the initial production of cytokines — inflammatory signaling messengers which are crucial for a normal immune response to a viral infection.

Further benefits were reported for participants with an active flu infection, who showed a greater antibody response

to the influenza virus when they supplemented with an elderberry extract. These results show that elderberry supports a prompt immune response to the virus and stops the further entry of the virus into surrounding cells and so overcomes the infection at a rapid rate.

What's the bottom line?

Overall, elderberry is rich in vitamin C and the plant-specific nutrient anthocyanins. It is these compounds that are considered to be so effective against viral infections when taken as a preventative, but also during an active infection.

Early use of elderberry extract can be a natural solution to treating or preventing the common cold and flu. When looking for a supplement, consider an organic version for optimum health benefits.

For more information, visit your local health food store on findahealthstore.com. 

Words by Jenny Carson, MRes, BSc (Hons), MBANT, senior nutritionist at ethical vitamin company Viridian Nutrition. Jenny has over five years' experience supporting people with nutritional health advice. For more information, visit viridian-nutrition.com

Delicious Desserts

Christmas Day wouldn't be complete without a sweet treat (or two, or three!)

Top Tip:

VegeSet is a vegan friendly setting agent and can be used in place of gelatine.

Easy Vegan Jaffa Cake Dessert

This jaffa cake dessert has very few ingredients, so is super simple to make — but that doesn't mean it isn't delicious! It's tangy and chocolatey and will have you fighting at the dinner table for another helping.

- 300ml (1¼ cups) **oat milk**
- 2 tsp **vegan chocolate spread** (or 2 large pieces of your favourite chocolate)
- 1 tbsp **raw cacao powder**
- Juice of ½ **large orange**
- ½ tsp **VegeSet** (see top tip)

To serve:

- **Dairy-free chocolate sauce**
- **Orange slices and zest**

- 1** Heat the oat milk in a medium saucepan until steaming. Add in the chocolate spread and cacao then stir to melt and combine.
- 2** Continue to heat until the liquid has gone chocolatey and all the spread is dissolved.
- 3** Add the orange juice to the mix and sprinkle the VegeSet on top. Bring to a gentle boil whilst whisking continuously. Remove from the stove as soon as it bubbles and instantly pour into round bowls (for the shape) and place in the fridge to set for at least 30 minutes.
- 4** Serve with dairy-free chocolate sauce and a sprinkle of orange zest.



Top Tip:

To make an egg-replacer, mix 1 tbsp ground flaxseed with 3 tbsp warm water. Leave for around 10 minutes to thicken. For this recipe, double the amount to make 2.

Christmas Doughnuts

Not only do these festive doughnuts look as cute as can be, but they are super tasty too, with delicious icing and a hidden chocolate filling.

- 330ml (11.5 fl oz) **plant milk**, warm
- 14g (2½ tsp) **active dry yeast**
- 75g (2.5oz) **caster sugar**
- 600g (1lb 5oz) **self-raising flour**
- ¼ tsp **salt**
- 100g (3.5oz) **dairy-free butter**, melted
- 2 **vegan egg-replacers** (see top tip)
- **Sunflower oil**, for frying

For the filling:

- **Vegan chocolate spread**

For the royal icing:

- 90ml (3 fl oz) **aquafaba**
- 1 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 500g (1lb 1oz) **icing sugar**
- **Vegan food gels**

Food gel colours and extras needed to make each character:

- Santa: **red, white** (coconut for the beard)

- Reindeer: **brown, white, black** (pretzels for the antlers)
- Snowman: **white, black**
- Polar bear: **white, black**
- Gingerbread man: **brown, white**

1 To make the doughnuts, place the warm milk into a bowl and sprinkle over the yeast and sugar. Stir, then cover with a tea towel and put into a warm place for around 10-15 minutes until frothy.

2 In a separate bowl, combine the flour and salt, and stir.

3 In another bowl, add in the melted butter and egg-replacers.

4 Combine the dry mixture, yeast mixture and egg mixture in a bowl, and stir.

5 Mix with a hand whisk or attach a dough hook to your stand mixer and begin to knead on medium until nice and smooth.

6 Pop the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a tea towel and place into a warm area. Allow to prove for around 2-3 hours, or until doubled in size.

7 Once doubled, turn the dough out onto a floured surface and roll out to around ½-inch thick.

8 Using a cookie cutter, cut out circles, and place onto a lined baking tray.

9 Place the cut-out doughnuts back into a warm area, covered with a tea towel,

for around 1 hour, until they have doubled in size.

10 Add oil to a deep pan until around half to ¾ full and bring to the boil. Allow it to heat to 160°C/320°F (check the temperature with a candy thermometer). You can use a deep fat fryer for this step.

11 Once the doughnuts have risen, gently lower them into the hot oil, and fry for around 2-3 minutes on each side, or until puffed and golden brown in colour. Carefully remove them from the oil, and place on kitchen paper towel to drain any excess oil.

12 While they are still warm, coat them in caster sugar. Allow to cool before filling.

13 Poke a hole in the side of each doughnut, and fill with chocolate spread.

14 To decorate: in a large bowl or stand mixer with balloon whisk attachment, add in the aquafaba and whisk on high until frothy. This usually takes around 5 minutes. You can use an electric/hand mixer.

15 Add in the vanilla extract and icing sugar and whisk together until it holds a stiff peak. If the royal icing is too runny, add more icing sugar, and if it's too thick, add water.

16 Dye the royal icing using the colours you require and decorate each doughnut.



Flourless Mince Pie Brownies

Makes about 12

These gooey brownies are perfect for Christmas Day dessert — made with mincemeat they combine festive flavours with delicious chocolate.

Wet ingredients:

- 125ml (½ cup) **almond milk**
- 100g (3.5oz) **vegan dark chocolate**
- 3 tbsp **almond butter**
- 2 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp **almond essence**

Dry ingredients:

- 50g (1.75oz) **coconut sugar**
- 100g (3.5oz) **ground almonds**
- 40g (1.4oz) **raw cacao powder**
- 1 tsp **baking powder**
- ½ tsp **bicarbonate of soda**
- Pinch of **sea salt flakes**
- 1 tsp **allspice**
- 150g (5.3oz) **vegan mincemeat**
- 4 tbsp **dark chocolate chips**
- Plus, more **choc chips**, to top

1 Heat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.

2 Line the base and sides of a medium baking tray with baking paper.

3 Add the wet ingredients to a saucepan and gently heat to combine. Stir gently with a whisk to combine.

4 Now add all the dry ingredients to a large bowl, mix to combine.

5 Transfer in wet mix into the dry, fold to combine. Now add the mincemeat and choc chips.

6 Now spoon everything into the baking tray. Press into the sides and sprinkle additional choc chips over the top.

7 Bake for 25 minutes, then remove from the oven and allow to cool for at least an hour to cool and set. Slice and store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.



Recipe from *Niki Webster Rebel Recipes*
by Niki Webster (Bloomsbury), rebelrecipes.com

Christmas Brandy Truffles

Makes 20-25 truffles

Chocolate truffles stuffed with a creamy brandy filling — perfect for enjoying whilst waiting for Christmas dinner to cook!

- 130g (4.5oz) **plain vegan cream cheese**
- 225g (7.9oz) **icing sugar**
- 175g (6.1oz) **dark chocolate**
- 1 tsp **brandy**
- **Cocoa** or **cacao powder**, for coating

Toppings:

- 100g (3.5oz) **icing sugar** (plus **water**, according to packet instructions)
- A few **cranberries** for decoration (1 per truffle)
- **Green ready to roll icing** or **green vegan cake decorations** to make leaf shapes (most green food colouring is vegan)

1 Spoon the vegan cream cheese into a bowl, sieve in the icing sugar and beat well until smooth.

2 Break the chocolate into a heatproof bowl and then immerse the bowl into a saucepan of simmering water. Stir with a wooden spoon as it melts. Mix in the brandy.

3 Add the melted chocolate to the cream cheese mixture. Mix well, cover and chill for 1 hour.

4 Now shape the mix into generous 1cm/½ inch balls. Put the cocoa powder into a bowl, add the truffles and then gently shake the bowl so they become coated.

5 Mix the icing sugar and water, according to the packet. Spoon onto truffles but keep a bit back if making home-made leaves. Then, decorate with the green leaves and cranberries. Store in a cool place until ready to eat.



Recipe from *Viva!'s Deliciously Vegan Christmas Guide by Viva!* (over 25 recipes including scrumptious starters, luscious mains, tempting sides and heavenly desserts)

(£2, vivashop.org.uk/christmasguide), veganrecipeclub.org.uk



Vegan Apple Pockets with Marzipan

Pockets of pastry filled with juicy apple and warming spices — serve with vegan custard or cream for a satisfying pudding.

- 2 **large apples**
- 30g **marzipan**
- 1 tsp **ground ginger**
- 1 tbsp **raisins**
- ½ tsp **ground cinnamon**
- Juice of ½ **lemon**
- 1 **vegan puff pastry sheet**
- 1-2 tbsp **plant-based milk**, for brushing

1 Preheat your oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4.

2 Start by peeling, de-coring and chopping the apples into small chunks.

3 Cut the marzipan into small cubes and add them to a large mixing bowl along with



Christmas Brownie Boot

Makes 1 boot 30 x 24 cm

This brownie boot will be a hit with children and adults alike! It's beautifully decorated and tastes divine.

For the chocolate brownie:

- 315g (11oz) **plain flour** or **gluten-free flour**
- 300g (10.5oz) **golden caster sugar**
- 65g (2.3oz) **unsweetened vegan cocoa powder**
- 250g (8.8oz) **mashed ripe banana**
- ½ tbsp **baking powder**
- ½ tbsp **bicarbonate of soda**
- 115ml (scant ½ cup) **plant-based milk alternative**
- 115ml (scant ½ cup) **rapeseed oil**

For the homemade marzipan:

- 250g (8.8oz) **ground almonds**
- 250g (8.8oz) **icing sugar**
- 80ml (⅓ cup) **water**
- 1 tsp **lemon juice**
- ½ tsp **rose water** (optional)
- **Vegan-friendly red food colouring**

1 Preheat the oven 190°C/375°F/Gas 5.

2 Mix all the brownie ingredients in a food processor until the brownie mix becomes smooth and homogeneous, with no remaining lumps.

3 Pour the brownie mix into a pre-lined baking tray 30 x 24 cm. Evenly spread with a palette knife — 2cm thick — and bake for 18-20 mins.

4 Check if a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Allow to cool down.

5 To make the marzipan, mix all the ingredients — except the colouring — together in a food processor. Keep 100g natural marzipan and mix the remaining marzipan with the red food colouring. Cling film both separately.

6 To assemble your brownie boot, on a cardboard, draw and cut a boot shape. Place on top of the brownie and cut, following the shape.

7 Slightly dust your work surface with sifted icing sugar. Roll out the red marzipan, making sure the surface will cover 4/5 of the boot. Carefully transfer onto the brownie, cut the paste along the edges.

8 Similarly roll out the white marzipan and cut into a rectangle 6cm x 25cm. Fold in half horizontally, transfer to the boot and place on top of the red paste, as the picture shows. Cut the edges.

9 Decorate with fancy, colourful little things (chocolate truffles, coconut flakes, marzipan gift boxes, Christmas decors...)



the apple chunks, ginger, raisins, cinnamon and lemon juice.

4 Unroll the pastry sheet onto the kitchen counter and cut it into 6 even rectangles

5 Fill 1-2 tbsp of the apple filling into the middle of each pastry rectangular, then fold over the edges to create a triangular shape, locking the filling in the middle. Brush a little milk on the outer edges and use a fork to press the edges together.

6 Decorate your pockets to your liking (optional). Try some light scoring across the top to create a nice pattern — but be careful not to fully cut through the pastry sheet or the apple filling will ooze out during the baking process.

7 Brush the top of the apple pockets with a little milk and place in the oven 15-20 minutes or until golden.

8 Serve hot or cold with vegan custard or cream on the side.

Recipe by RomyLondonuk, @romylondonuk, romylondonuk.com



Recipe from *Vegans deserve better than a fruit salad*
by Danielle Maupertuis, vegan executive pastry
chef (Olympia Publishers), freefromdesserts.com.

Photography by Darrin Jenkins.

Chestnut, Chocolate & Almond Cake with Spiced Pears

Serves 10

For a spin on traditional Christmas cakes, try this one made with chocolate, almonds and pears. It's sweet and lightly spiced for the full festive experience.

Wet cake ingredients:

- 3 tbsp **rapeseed oil**
- 1 tsp **apple cider vinegar**
- 200ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup +4 tsp) **almond milk**

Dry cake ingredients:

- 150g (5.3oz) **ground almonds**
- 50g (1.7oz) **buckwheat flour**
- 50g (1.7oz) **raw cacao**
- 1 tsp **baking powder**
- 1 tsp **mixed spice**
- 1 tsp **ground ginger**
- 1 tsp **cinnamon**
- Pinch of **sea salt**
- 3 tbsp **coconut sugar** or **brown sugar**
- 180g (6.3oz) **cooked chestnuts**, chopped
- 12 **pitted Medjool dates**
- 1 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 1 tsp **almond extract**
- 1 **pear**, chopped

For the pear glaze:

- 1 tsp **mixed spice**
- 1 tsp **cinnamon**
- 1 tsp **mixed spice**
- 1 tbsp **rapeseed oil**
- 2 tsp **maple syrup**
- Sliced **almonds**

- 1** Preheat your oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4
- 2** Firstly, mix the oil, vinegar and almond milk in a jug, set aside.
- 3** Now add all the dry ingredients to a large bowl. Mix to combine thoroughly.
- 4** Pop the chestnuts, dates, almond and vanilla extract and pear, into your food processor and blitz for 1-2 minutes until you get a smooth-ish paste.
- 5** Now transfer to the dry mix along with the milk mix and stir to combine everything well.
- 6** Spoon the batter into 21cm loose-bottomed cake tin (try wetting your hands and press the mix into the sides).
- 7** Slice the pears thinly then lay them on the top of the cake mix. Press down a little.
- 8** Mix the glaze ingredients together, then brush onto the pears. Bake for 45 minutes or until cooked through.

Recipe from *Niki Webster Rebel Recipes* by Niki Webster (Bloomsbury), rebelrecipes.com





Mummy Meagz Snowman Caramel Cake with Jolly Buttons

Serves 10

Complete with a magical snowman, there is no doubt that this cake will wow anyone who sees or tastes it. It makes a beautiful showpiece on the Christmas table.

For the caramel cake batter:

- 800g **self-raising flour**
- 2 tsp **baking soda**
- 1 tsp **salt**
- 400g **vegan butter**
- 500g **soft brown sugar**
- 1 tsp **vanilla extract**
- 200ml **aquafaba** (water from an unsalted tin of chickpeas)

For the caramel buttercream:

- 420g **dairy-free butter**
- 1kg **icing sugar**

- A little **plant milk** (if required)
- 3 tbsp **brown sugar**
- 6 tbsp **water**
- 3 tbsp **dairy-free cream** or **yoghurt**

To make the snowman:

- A handful of **Mummy Meagz Jolly Buttons** (available from Holland & Barrett)
- Approx 250g **white icing**
- **Black frosting** for the eyes
- **Red** or **orange frosting** for the nose
- **Vanilla pods** for the arms
- **Coconut shreds** for the coating

1 Preheat your oven to 180°C/356°F/Gas 4.

2 Start by preparing the cake layers: Sieve the flour and baking soda into a large

mixing bowl and stir in the salt.

3 In a separate bowl combine the butter and brown sugar with the vanilla extract with a whisk.

4 Whip up the aquafaba with an electric whisk for 5-10 minutes until fluffy stiff peaks are created. Gradually stir the butter/sugar mixture into the aquafaba until well combined, then gently fold the dry mix into the wet ingredients.

5 Pour the batter into 3 greased and lined round cake tins and bake for 30 minutes at 180°C or until the cake is baked all the way through (check with a skewer!).

6 Next, make the caramel buttercream. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine the brown sugar and water and bring to a simmer whilst continuously stirring. Pour in the cream or yoghurt and continue to stir over low heat until the caramel begins to thicken.

7 In a large mixing bowl, cream the dairy-free butter with an electric whisk. Gradually add in the icing sugar and mix until silky, if needed, add a little plant milk.

8 Pour in the caramel sauce and whisk for another minute to thoroughly combine.

9 Assemble the snowman. Allow for the cake bases to cool completely before creating the buttercream and assembling the cake. If needed, cut the cake bases to size, so they can comfortably sit on top of each other.

10 Layer up the cake and spread a generous amount of buttercream in between each layer.

11 Next, create the crumb coat by gently spreading buttercream around the outside of the cake. Carefully scrape off any excess — it doesn't need to be too neat at this point.

12 Transfer the cake to the fridge for the crumb coat to set for 30 minutes.

13 Once the crumb coat is set to the touch, spread another layer of buttercream around the outside, smoothing it with a spatula, then place the cake into the fridge once again.

14 Shape the head of the snowman from white icing and create the eyes, mouth and nose from coloured icing. Assemble the face of the snowman on top of the set cake and smooth out the connection between the head and the cake with leftover buttercream. If you have any leftover black icing, shape a hat and a scarf for the snowman!

15 Sprinkle coconut shreds over the cake to resemble snow, then place your Mummy Meagz Jolly Buttons onto the snowman's coat.

16 Add vanilla pods for the arms and admire your masterpiece.

Recipe and images by **Romy London**, romylondonuk.com

A very vegan vacation

Amy Blyth helps you to plan the perfect UK staycation
with her top three vegan B&Bs



Planning a staycation for 2021? You're not alone. As travelling abroad remains a COVID-19 minefield, UK getaways are on the rise and luckily for us, there's a growing number of vegan B&Bs to choose from with delicious plant-based food, cruelty-free toiletries and furnishings free from animal products. So, whether you fancy escaping to the wilds of Scotland, or hiking in the Yorkshire Dales, we've scouted out three of the UK's top vegan B&Bs for the perfect staycation. *Travel recommendations dependant on UK Coronavirus travel restrictions.*

Words by **Amy Blyth**

Goats and Oats at Garsdale

Garsdale, Yorkshire Dales

Price: from £75 – £100 per night

Website: thegarsdale.com



“We chose to move to The Yorkshire Dales for the beautiful scenery and to provide a place for vegans to visit without having to worry about what’s on the menu or what the people at the next table will be eating,” says Linda Bourke, who owns Goats and Oats with her partner Graham. The couple, formerly from London, were influenced to go vegan four years ago by Linda’s vegan activist son. Goats and Oats is set in the Yorkshire Dales National Park near Aysgarth Falls and Bolton Castle, with the Pennine Bridleway right outside the front door.

Stay in a converted barn with its own parking, entrance and three en-suite rooms — the pet-friendly Bridleway, The Pennine and the Lady Anne. All the toiletries, cleaning products and furniture is vegan and you’ll be greeted with homemade cakes. Linda says: “We’ve also installed an air source heating system to reduce our carbon footprint.” One of the best things about Goats and Oats is the choice of complimentary continental or cooked breakfast which boasts fluffy pancakes, Linda’s granola and vegan sausages.



The Field Shelter

Perthshire, Scotland

Price: from £75 per night

Website: thefieldshelter.com



The Field Shelter is a renovated cottage in Perthshire surrounded by walking trails and red squirrels. The guesthouse is owned by vegan couple Jojo and Nick Huxster, who plan to set up an animal sanctuary on site. “The B&B opened in summer 2019 and so far, we’ve been able to pay for fencing and a shelter so we’re getting close to welcoming our first rescues,” says Jojo. “All the profits from your stay go towards building the sanctuary and eventually feeding and caring for the animals who will live here.”

The self-catering cottage lies just 25 minutes from Cairngorms National Park and is on the Cateran Trail, with two nearby woodland areas. Powered by renewable energy, The Field Shelter has a bedroom with king-size bed, bathroom, kitchenette and living area with sofa bed overlooking fields that the hosts are re-wilding. Jojo says: “Everything in the guesthouse is vegan, from the duvet to the cleaning products. I also used to run a vegan bakery, so my welcome treats are pretty epic!”



Perched on the edge of the Lake District in the market town of Ulverston, Little Sansook is an ideal base for hiking the Cumbria Way Trail and exploring the area’s natural treasures. Vegan couple, Kelsey Peters and Daniel Miller, opened little Sansook in 2019 after travelling and living abroad for several years. “We went vegan while we were in Vietnam where the dog and cat meat trade is still a thing,” explains Kelsey. “That’s when the penny really dropped for us and we realised that the only way to stop animals suffering in the meat industry is to stop eating them.”

Little Sansook is a companion-animal-friendly property which has a double bedroom, en-suite bathroom, plus a private lounge with widescreen TV. “Guests typically stay for two nights and we offer a vegan continental breakfast one morning and a vegan full English on the other morning,” says Kelsey. Expect vegan artwork and magazines, homemade soap and an eco-friendly ethos. Little Sansook is working towards a zero-waste policy and has banished all single-use plastics.



Image: Lachlan1 / Shutterstock.com

Little Sansook

Ulverston, Cumbria

Price: from £55 per night

Website: facebook.com/littlesansookbnb





Grow Your Own

Piers Warren helps us to grow cherries

If you are planning on growing cherries, you need to be clear of the differences between sweet cherries and acid cherries. Sweet varieties (of *Prunus avium*) are larger, suitable for eating raw, and are often self-sterile (so two different cultivars are required to produce a crop). Acid varieties (of *Prunus cerasus*) are smaller, used for cooking and making jams, and most cultivars are self-fertile.

In general, cherries are not very acidic, so are often mixed with other fruits for jam making, or with the addition of lemon juice. Use the best for eating fresh, freezing and bottling. Black cherries are the best for bottling or freezing as white or paler coloured varieties tend to discolour.

Recommended varieties

Early Rivers: An early, sweet cherry.

Merton Glory: Mid-season, sweet variety.

Stella: A late, sweet cherry with large black fruits, self-fertile.

Morello: An acid variety with small fruits suitable for cooking or jam making.

Cherry trees should be planted in the dormant season. Acid cherries tolerate shade and can even be planted against a north-facing wall. Sweet cherries require

a sunnier position. If you plant bare-root specimens, they should be staked for their first two years. Mulch around the base of the tree regularly. If frost threatens while the tree is in flower in spring, cover it with horticultural fleece overnight. Bullfinches love the flower buds of cherries, so, if they are a problem, cover the tree with netting, taking care that small birds can't get trapped.

Pruning should be carried out in August — the main aim being to remove diseased or damaged branches/twigs, any that are crossing and rubbing each other, and to improve the shape of the tree. This summer-pruning also reduces the chance of the tree getting silver leaf disease, which is caused by fungal spores produced in the autumn and winter. Cherries can also be trained, by a combination of pruning (in spring) and tying to canes/wires, to certain shapes such as fans, often against a wall.

Pick the fruits when they are ripe and of good colour, but not too soft. Sweet cherries can be eaten straight away, frozen, dried or bottled; acid varieties can be cooked (in pies for example) or made into jams.

Storage: To freeze cherries, remove the stone then pack the fruits in plastic bags

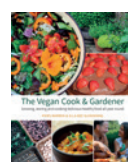
or containers in the freezer. To dry cherries, cut the fruit and remove the stones before drying them in a food dehydrator. Once the fruit feels dry and squeezing produces no juice, it can be jarred up and sealed. The product can be eaten dry as a snack or soaked for a day in water before adding to recipes. 🍷

Cherry Jam

You will need: 4kg stoned cherries, 3kg sugar, 4 lemons.

Wash and stone the cherries. Heat the fruit and stones with the juice of the lemons and simmer until tender. Cool. Remove the stones, add the sugar, stir, boil, and keep boiling hard until setting point. Jar up and seal. Note that Morello cherries are more acidic, so if you are using these, half the amount of lemon juice added.

Piers Warren is the co-author (with his daughter, Ella Bee Glendining) of *The*

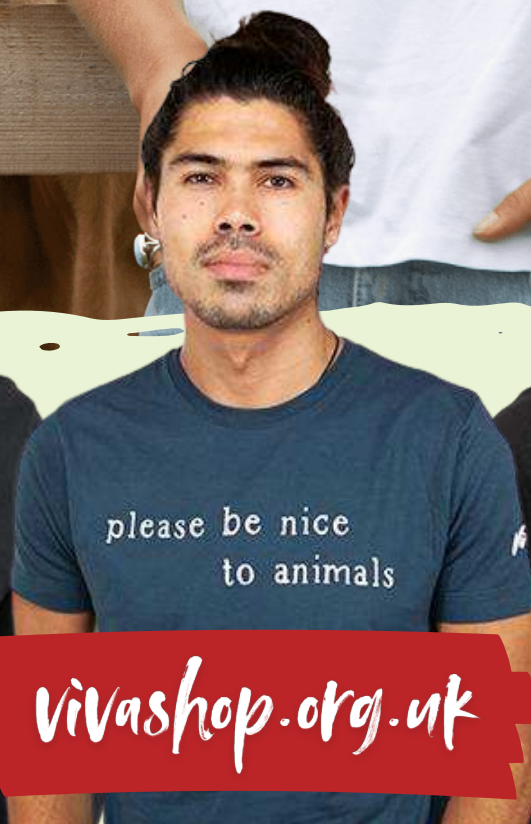


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Viva!





Swapping bright lights for *Bahrain*

Jenny Green tells us how a vegan Scottish pop star is saving animals in the Middle East

Sandi Thom is a Scottish singer-songwriter, previously enjoying international success with a number one album and chart-topping singles. Now, she's vegan, a single parent raising a young son, living in the Middle East and is dedicated to saving the abused street animals and abandoned pets of Bahrain.

There is no enforced regulation of breeding in Bahrain, and backyard breeders and pet shops do a roaring trade, selling un-spayed and un-neutered animals to anyone with no ID logging, no home check and no follow up. Animals are regularly sold to children. Similarly, wealthy people buy fashionable breeds and ship them into the country with no tracing system and no accountability. Unfortunately, many of these animals get dumped on the street when their owners lose interest, when a potential vet bill makes the animal no longer desirable, or when the owners leave the country and do not wish to pay export costs.

In these parts, this practice of dumping rather than parting with money is culturally acceptable. Once on the street, these animals, of course, breed.

These animals then face the gauntlet while looking for food and water in residential areas, as people take it upon themselves to torture, shoot or poison them — for which there is no punishment. The ministry's idea of a solution for the enormous populations of street dogs and cats is to round them up and dump them far out in the desert where they die of thirst in the arid and barren sandscapes, where temperatures reach 46°C.

In Islam, the mistreatment of an animal is considered a sin. The Quran and

many examples from the Hadith clearly forbid animal cruelty. Only relatively recently, in 2014, did Bahrain pass the Gulf Co-operation Council States of the Arabian Gulf States (the GCC) Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Law, falling in line with the other GCC member states who are similarly new to the concept of a criminal law to protect animals. Six years on, despite this criminal law and the ancient religious law, there is no enforcement of the animal protection laws in Bahrain. Indeed, the prevailing attitude is that animals are dirty and dangerous. The government's strategy for resolving the stray dog situation, for example, has been to shoot them.

“During the pandemic, BARC have been organising online music concerts to help raise funds to feed the animals”

Over the years, this has caused a public outcry from the various expat communities and a few animal-loving locals, and so authorities then switched to catching the dogs and removing them, making it look like a humane strategy, but then taking them out into the desert and abandoning them there to die where no one can see the horror.

Sandi took over the management of the only no-kill shelter in Bahrain when the founder of the original site and long-serving rescuer, British hairdresser Tony Walters, passed away in 2018. Since then, she has steadily been increasing the work that the shelter does: expanding to trap/neuter/release programmes for the dogs and cats living on the streets; setting up adoption networks in western countries and shipping rescued animals out of Bahrain to safe forever homes in the US, Canada and Europe; and she has started the mammoth task of building a new and improved shelter.

COVID-19 has, of course, had a huge impact on activities: airlines stopped shipping animals, meaning that dogs and cats that have been adopted internationally have been stuck in Bahrain for months, which has meant that there has not been the space to admit all the new cases in to the centre. Vet supplies have been held up. Funding streams and donations of animal feed from local businesses have dried up. Lockdown has meant that the invaluable team of volunteers who normally assist, have been unable to attend. But despite all that, no animal is ever turned away from the gates. The boxes of kittens that are dumped outside; the crippled dogs run over on the street; the starving cats that are picked up by volunteers — they are all helped... and all this on top of caring for the 600 animals resident at the sanctuary!

The new facility is known as BARC — the Bahrain Animal Rescue Centre. It is located away from residential areas, so that the animals are far from people who will no longer be able to complain about them. Building is underway — scheduled to be completed in 2021. This shelter will be bigger than the current one, constructed with a lot of recycled and reformed waste plastic from a local materials factory, with a live-in vet, and an organic vegetable and herb garden in order to assist the treatment of illnesses in the animals in a holistic manner through an optimal nutritional diet and veterinary applications.



“I want to offer the animals we rescue the same healthful existence”

Sandi says: ‘I was plant-based throughout pregnancy and my son, Logan, was 10 pounds when born. As a vegan kid, he is bigger, taller and stronger than others his age. This diet has long benefitted us both. People should know what they’re consuming. I have run full marathons and completed the Iron Man challenge. I want to offer the animals we rescue the same healthful existence: from adding organic home-grown vegetables to their meals, to organic herbs and flower remedies as medicines and treatments.’

During the pandemic, BARC have been organising online music concerts to help raise funds to feed the animals and continue building the new centre, with international musicians performing via live stream from their homes around the world. The concerts live stream for up to five hours, and viewers can watch live via Facebook, log in and out during the event as they wish to catch certain performers, or watch after the event.

Airlines are beginning to open up cargo to animals now, so please look on the website, Instagram and Facebook pages at all the cats and dogs who are ready for adoption and are looking for their forever homes, and share their stories!

This is all done on a shoestring budget, by a vast team of wonderful volunteers who work under Sandi’s leadership. Animals face hell on the streets of Bahrain. Please consider making a donation so that BARC’s vital work can continue. 🐾

For more info or to donate, visit barcbahrain.com or follow [@bahrainanimalrescuecentre](https://www.instagram.com/bahrainanimalrescuecentre)

Words by **Jenny Green**



P A N [D E M] I C



Creative compassion

Vegan artist Emma Van Looy talks to us about art as emotive communication

Ever since she became vegan, Emma Van Looy has been using her work as a medium for veganism and to help animals. We take a look at some of her masterpieces and talk to her about how it all began.

Hey, Emma! Tell us about your vegan journey.

My vegan journey started a few years ago when I was living in Southeast Asia, whilst visiting a market. I remember going to see what fresh fruits and vegetables they had, only to be greeted with animals in cages stacked on top of each other. Animals were also slaughtered according to the buyer's selection and seeing it really hit home to what little acknowledgement we collectively have towards non-human sentience. I remember walking out and having to sit on the pavement outside taking deep breaths and feeling physically sick. I knew that was the turning point for me as a person who has a choice. I went home and found Earthling Ed via YouTube and watched his video titled, *You Will Never Look at Your Life in the Same Way Again*. I took one look at my two adopted cats sat beside me and knew I had to make the change.

When did you decide to combine veganism with art?

Art has always played a huge part in my life. However, when I switched to a vegan lifestyle, I struggled with how to communicate my views to others. I wanted the people around me to see what I saw and when they didn't, it made me feel frustrated and sad. I also felt disappointed in myself, for I had been turning a blind eye to the cruelty embedded within the meat and dairy industries, as well as what impact they have on planet Earth. I have always been an empath — but turning to veganism really highlighted this for me upon trying to defend animals and the movement. I decided to dedicate part of my artwork to the movement as a way to try and forgive myself for what I had contributed to. Through this decision, I realised I could project what was happening and what I saw, through my illustrations.

How are veganism and art connected?

I think that art and veganism both allow perspective, change and growth. Art lets people question the reality around them, to think for themselves and to create their own opinions. Veganism does the same — it challenges the 'way of life' that has been forced upon us and questions what we have been led to believe through social conditioning and capitalism.

“From my experience, art is and always will be a form of communication”

What inspires you?

I'm inspired by the beautiful planet we are so lucky to live upon. Any documentary about animals or wildlife totally engrosses me and encourages me to start a new illustration. I get inspired when I see others making a difference as well — litter pickers, recycling advocates, cafés and restaurant owners that decide to add plant-based milks to their menus. We may not be able to change the world overnight, but little choices make all the difference and go on to inspire others as well.

What are some of the messages behind your work?

I put my work out into the world in the hope of inspiring others to question the decisions they make towards what they purchase and support. I believe one person changing can create a chain reaction. Animals are at the forefront of my work as they are the main reason I choose to be vegan. I also illustrate vegan food to show people that it doesn't have to be just salad(!). Many people thrive on a vegan diet if they have the right knowledge about what their body requires. Nobody can be a 'perfect' vegan, but we can all take steps to preserve Mother Earth,

I NEED MY FUR,
YOU DON'T.



as well as the animals and wildlife we share her with. We don't have long left to challenge the destruction taking place, due to the economic drives and systems in place and so, it's crucial to get the message as far as possible.

How useful is art in spreading awareness of the vegan message?

From my experience, art is and always will be a form of communication. With those who refuse to watch the documentaries showing animal cruelty and slaughterhouse exploitation — art can take these harsh realities to create work that help people question the system at a level they're willing to embrace. Art can challenge people on varying degrees depending on what the artist is trying to convey and have a lasting effect on people — especially if it has a message behind it — like veganism. Art is emotional and can convey what words sometimes can't.

Any exciting projects on the horizon?

I've been dedicating a large amount of my illustration work to animals and vegan activism this year. My first exhibition was displayed in Porto, Portugal titled 'We Live Here, Too'. The exhibit can also be viewed on my blog. I have just opened my online store selling wall prints and my next project will be based on ocean inhabitants and the destruction of their habitats. 🐾

For more from Emma, visit emmavanlooy.com or follow [@emmavanlooy_illustrations](https://www.instagram.com/emmavanlooy_illustrations)



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Happy Holidays

Jake Yapp enjoys a simple Christmas

Well now. It's going to be a funny sort of Christmas, I expect, for a lot of people. And a painful one, for many. A lot of lives have been taken, and changed, this year. I hope that under the circumstances you'll forgive my somewhat gallows-humour approach to this year's 'festive' — ahahahahaaaa — season.

It reminds me of when I was around 20, and still living at home with my parents. Traditionally, we would spend every Christmas with my paternal grandmother, and my uncle and aunt and cousins, but one year my grandmother died, a week before Christmas Day.

It was sad. Inasmuch as any death is sad. But um, I'm not going to lie to you, she was a pretty sadistic old curmudgeon who sucked all the joy out of the room and manipulated people and so, er, well, let's say there was a Rainbow In Our Hearts... The family (me and Mum and Dad, and his brother's family) decided to tone down the Christmas festivities, and have a quiet one in our respective homes instead.

And — you know what? It was actually, really quite jolly. We chilled out, did our own thing a bit, and our Christmas Lunch (for we were only vegetarian back then)... was Egg and Chips. We chose it because it was hard to argue that there was much that was more delicious than home-fried egg and chips. Nowadays, of course, I'd get a pack of cauldron tofu, open and drain it, freeze the tofu, defrost it, and fry it with a generous pinch of kala namak, but the principle still applies. Chips and fried tofu. Completely delicious.

When we went to my cousins' for Christmas, it would be like a Dickensian banquet. Endless dishes of incredible food would be served up, seemingly from

about 8am-midnight. My aunt and uncle worked tirelessly. I think we'd always bring stuff, too, to make sure everyone involved had the same caloric intake as someone attempting to climb K2 in their swimming shorts.

And, for all that my grandmother was Hard Work — she once opined to my father, her son, pretty horribly (and, I am pleased to say, wildly inaccurately) 'Well, I'll see YOU out' — but there were some jolly times. If you enjoy playing charades, that is. One year, my grandmother stood up out of her chair to take her turn, and, in front of us all, broke wind with such sonorous violence that the windows rattled. Obviously, we all started guessing 'Gone With The Wind' etc. My uncle won with his guess: 'The Great Escape'.

They WERE jolly times. For us children, anyway. I adored those Christmasses. And when my grandmother died, it absolutely defined the end of an era. I sincerely hope you aren't facing that sort of Christmas this year, and if you are, my heart hurts for you.

As for us... I think we'll change the paradigm a bit this year. It will inevitably be pretty low-key. This year, we sat through months and months of lockdown, an endless parade of days that felt as dead as Christmas Day does, without any of the cheer that usually occupies much of the vacuum. So how will we spend Christmas Day?

I think, for me, one thing that has definitely changed for this year is the food. We generally cook most of our meals from scratch at home (I'd love to pontificate in some smug way about how it's SO IMPORTANT etc etc, but the truth is that I'm under-employed, frankly). But this year... Well, THIS year, the supermarkets have rolled out so many astonishing and exciting new Christmas

lines for vegans that it's a genuine game-changer. Until now, few commercial vegan products looked as appetising as something you could whip up at home. BLIMMING FALAFEL etc. But this year, with chocolate orange Christmas cakes and Turkey and Stuffing-flavour crisps and main courses that are NOT FALAFEL and look like things I'd never get round to making at home... Well. This year, we're having Christmas out the packet. We'll probably eat it, raw, in the car park, if I know us.

We can definitely talk about packaging and all of that stuff, but but... For now... It's Christmas. Most vegans have a comparatively light CO₂ footprint anyway. And maybe this year, we've earned the modest reward of having someone else do all the prep for us.

However you're spending Christmas, my hope for you is that at the very least, you have the peace and curious, homely comfort that I felt on the Christmas I had egg and chips. I just hope it's as egg-free as mine will be. Merry Christmas, you. 🐣

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