

PLUGGING IN TO **PLANT** **POWER**

MAKING THE MOVE TO MORE PLANT BASED EATING



CHEF
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I LIVE TO
FEED



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MORE PLANT-BASED EATING

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*S*ince you've cracked the cover here, I will presume you know that this book isn't about getting a clock to run on a potato battery. So, what is it about?

This book is about getting you charged up to take better care of yourself by shifting to a more plant-based diet. It's about helping you to enjoy all the perks of plant-based eating — plant power!

I don't know anyone who didn't feel better after eating better.

We all know we have to be more in charge of what we eat, especially these days. And you know what that means. We have to cook more. There, I said it! Part of my overall mission is to help others see the natural beauty of food, as well as the creative process that is cooking. If you say you don't have time to cook, then I'm going to say you're doing too much. If you "hate to cook," ask yourself, why?

You are worth it. In particular, because how we feel defines our whole life.

Don't fall for the appearance of convenience at the grocery store, because prepared foods carry a huge layer of deception. Heart disease, diabetes, and the illnesses caused by chronic inflammation are pretty inconvenient, and prepared and packaged foods have too many unwanted ingredients that contribute to these unsavory conditions. Beyond added sugars, sodium, and preservatives, packaged foods also tend to be nutritionally inferior to fresh, whole foods. Without the fuel of quality, wholesome food for our body, we will lack energy. It's just that simple.

Having low energy can keep us from moving our body and make cooking seem like hard work. Which is to say, it can affect the ol' "diet and exercise" equation — the closest we'll ever get to a magic bullet. Although science confirms the efficacy of diet and exercise, they still tend to get dismissed prematurely in the pursuit of health, and off we go with a prescription. Unfortunately, it comes with way too many side orders (also known as "side effects") and the promise of a quick fix. Once again we are choosing the perception of convenience.

If you want to make taking better care of yourself a priority, now is the time to plug into plant power.

HOW?

Old joke: How do you get to Carnegie Hall?


New answer: Familiarity!

Generally, we aren't all that good at things that are unfamiliar to us. Remember learning to drive a car? In the beginning it was challenging to switch between speed, mirrors, and steering. With time and familiarity though, you could eat a burrito, change songs, and put on mascara relatively safely, without a lot of thinking. Even for me (you know, a pro), it's not always effortless to cook in someone else's kitchen because I lack familiarity. That is, until I don't.

The style of cooking presented here may not be natural for you, at first, but the more you cook the easier it gets. Really and truly. Lifelong learning is also ideal exercise for the brain, a not-unimportant organ (if you need any more incentive).

PROTEIN PROBLEM?



This is the big one, and leaves plant-based purists shaking their heads when people ask. There is plenty of confusion and misinformation about protein. I know of more than a few purely vegan bodybuilders who are super ripped, blowing a lot of theories out of the water. It's not that hard to get your protein — I promise. To make it easier for you to recognize this fact, ingredients that are a source of protein are indicated with a . That's a few more keystrokes for me, but I love you, so...

How quickly or fully you embrace plant-based eating is up to you. Personally, I didn't go cold turkey on turkey, or any other animal products. Rather, I eased into eating differently after having been well indoctrinated in cooking school and many years in professional kitchens. On the other hand, there are some, who make an on-the-spot decision to change their eating habits and stick to it from day one.

The wish to eat a more plant-based diet often comes with a realization that status quo eating isn't working. The stronger your desire to take care of yourself and the planet, the easier it will be to change. It's your decision. My intention is to help you make the transition. Truly, if I can do it, anyone can.

While it may seem daunting or altogether foreign at first, I promise you'll be rewarded with more energy and improved health through familiarity. There are also the warm fuzzies that come from treading more gently on natural resources.

This book is meant to be a guide for making the first move towards plant based eating, rather than a definitive compendium of perfect plant-based nutrition. I think you'll find that the more you start paying attention to what you are eating and how you are feeling, the easier it will be to eat right. As always, a little common sense goes a long way.

NOTES ON RECIPES

Since you may be new to plant based eating, there are a few basics I should mention.

Back in the day, the word “substitute” was code for an overly processed mishmash of too many ingredients. Fortunately, these days there are a number of genuinely wholesome products out there that make plant-based eating easier, both because they really are yummy, and because they only have a few ingredients. That said, we still want to cook and eat as many whole foods as possible.

I seldom use meat analogs, but they can have their place from time to time. Personally, I think it’s best to go easy on them in the beginning, and you won’t find many here. I have never had tofurky, and hope to never have it — although if someone were to kindly make one for me, I would tuck into it with gusto. Be forewarned, going plant-based does guarantee suffering tofurky jokes come the holidays.

Yields are ever tricky for me. I have a brother who will consume “4 servings” in a single sitting. Manufacturers change the weights of things to suit themselves, so a 15 oz. can may suddenly become 14.5 oz. — but such changes are not a catastrophe. As I like to say, measure-smeasure! In general, the recipes here are pretty forgiving — my favorite kind, as I don’t condone white knuckle recipe following.

I’m a recovering New Yorker, meaning efficiency obsessed, and prefer to use as few words as possible. Butter, cheeze, or milk all mean a dairy-free product of your choosing. Because so many of my friendly editors got hung up on it, I will clarify that in the plant-based/vegan vernacular “cheeze” indicates a dairy-free cheese of some kind. For the record, I can’t bear to call for “margarine” due to residual negative connotations from back when it was purported to be healthier for the heart, but was actually a killer trans-fat.

In an effort to streamline recipes and keep them from being intimidatingly long, I rarely call for salt or incidental amounts of oil in ingredient lists. If you don’t have any salt or oil in your kitchen, then you may not be ready to cook yet. I won’t tell you to use pepper, but feel free to grind away. Please know that ground pepper can lose its charm very quickly, so use a pepper mill.

When in doubt, use your noodle. A lot of people can become kinda dumb in the kitchen, believing that they don’t know what they’re doing. They are capable of launching a satellite or predicting stock performance, yet become a deer in the headlights when faced with a cooktop. Don’t take your “I don’t know nothin’ about cookin” self into the kitchen — I mean it!

Many recipes will tell you to taste and adjust seasoning. Since you never ask the waiter to taste your food, trust yourself. Add some salt or that other teaspoon of cumin, it’s your dinner. The only rule here is that you can always add more, but once it’s in, it’s in.

FINALLY

Like a computer that can accomplish wondrous things only when properly charged, we need power. If we begin to charge our body with wholesome fuel, extraordinary things can happen. I know a 60 year old woman who says she has more energy than when she was 25 due to changing her diet.

As I have said to many a busy New Yorker who was stymied in their wish to cook more, “Give yourself a promotion!” We need to prioritize how we eat, and fit the rest in around that, not the other way around.

Breakfast Cookies

These were a game changer for me. They're so easy to make, just dump and stir, and will stay with you because of the protein. Feel free to add ginger, flaked coconut, nuts, or a few grates of nutmeg. Cacao nibs are good here, and I love them in mine. These don't really change shape like a traditional cookie, so what you put in the oven is what you'll get out. I have over and under cooked them, no problem

About 12 cookies

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 ripe banana | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| P ½ cup peanut or other nut butter | ¼ cup brown sugar |
| P 1¼ cups rolled oats | ¼ cup dried cranberries |
| 3 Tbsp. butter or coconut oil | 1 tsp. cinnamon |

Preheat oven to 350°.

Mash everything together until well combined. Form cookies on a sheet pan (parchment lined, is nice).

Bake about 25 minutes or until golden brown. Store in container in the fridge.

Basic Overnight Oats

The usual response to overnight oats is that they are revolutionary, because there's no cooking involved, yet oatmeal appears. It's stupid-easy to make these and infinitely better than instant. Use "rolled oats," also known as old fashioned. The ratio given is a starting place. You can make yours thicker or thinner as you like. I like mine thinner when I am going to drink it in the car, and make it in jars that are easy to drink from. Add dried fruit the night before if you'd like it to plump, or just before serving. Add fresh fruit in the morning.

- P** 1/3 cup rolled oats
 - P** 2/3 cup nut milk of choice
- Add-ins of choice

Place ingredients in a small container with a secure lid and shake well. Refrigerate overnight. In the morning, give a little shake, top with any extra ingredients, and enjoy.



SUNDAY MEAL PREP TIP

You can save a bit of time by staging a few jars with your oats, dried fruit, nuts, and cinnamon etc. Then just before bed, add your nut milk to one, give a shake, refrigerate, and sleep well.



Flaming Overnight Oats

This was nothing short of a miracle to me the first time I made it. I was loving my basic overnight oats for quite some time, but then saw a post for them made with apple juice. I'm not crazy about apple juice, but beet juice I love. I gave it a whirl, and whoa! New favorite thing.

If you fear beet juice you can mix it with something you find more palatable, like grape juice, but even a little beet juice will give you pink oats with little or no beet flavor. Adjust the liquid ratio to your liking, as well as the fruit. Mango would be pretty and tasty. The chia seeds are technically optional, but they affect the amount of liquid absorbed, so reduce juice by an ounce if omitting.

For each serving:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 🍷 1/3 cup rolled oats | 6 oz. beet juice |
| 1/4 cup blueberries | 🍷 A few nuts |
| 🍷 1 Tbsp. chia seeds | 4 orange slices |

Place ingredients in a container with a secure lid and shake well. Refrigerate overnight.

In the morning give a little shake (adding more juice if desired), top with remaining ingredients, and enjoy while sitting in the sunshine. I garnished mine with flaked coconut for contrast.



Autumn Breakfast Bake

This was simply amazing right out of the oven, and still deeply satisfying at room temperature the next day...and the next day too. Any gluten-free flour can be substituted and you could use cooked quinoa in place of oats. For guests, assemble the night before, then place in a cold oven in the morning to warm gently with the oven. It will double easily.

About 4 servings

- P** 1 sweet potato, cut into ½” pieces
- 2 pears, cut into ½” pieces
- ½ cup fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 Tbsp. Tapioca, optional
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- A few grates of nutmeg
- Pinch salt
- ¾ cup brown sugar, divided
- P** ½ cup oatmeal
- ½ cup flour
- 4 Tbsp. cold butter
- P** Nut milk of choice, as needed

Preheat the oven to 350° and butter a small baking dish.




Toss the fruit and sweet potatoes with the spices, ½ cup of sugar, and the tapioca, then place in the prepared dish.

Combine the oatmeal, remaining sugar, and flour, then cut the butter into the mixture with a fork. Strew over the top of the fruit and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until golden on top and just bubbly at the edges. Serve in bowls with a splash of milk.



Quinoa Porridge

Making a batch of quinoa (keen-wa) on Sunday means you will have high quality protein at the ready for any meal during the week. You can also make porridge out of just about any grain, by the way, and most also have some protein. "Recipe" is a strong word for this.

-  ½ to 1 cup cooked quinoa
-  About ¼ cup nut milk
-  2 Tbsp. nuts
- 2 Tbsp. dried fruit (or more if using fresh)
- Maple syrup, as needed

For warm porridge, gently heat the milk, or just stir everything together if you don't care if it's warm or room temperature.



QUINOA COOKERY

A little bit of kitchen wisdom for your quinoa. First, always rinse before cooking, which removes a naturally occurring residue left from the harvesting process. This residue is what can give a bitter or soapy flavor to your quinoa, and may even bother your digestion. Then, to add flavor when time permits, let your rinsed quinoa "toast" in the pot a little over medium flame before adding your liquid.

To get your quinoa ready in just minutes for dinner, in the morning, after rinsing, put it in your pot with the cooking water or broth and pop it in the fridge. When you come home, put it on the stove and it will cook in about 5 minutes. You can't toast it, but it will be quick. You can tell that quinoa is done when the "endosperm" emerges as a ring around the grains, and it's tender.

Prepping a good amount on Sunday means you'll have good protein all week long. To use for both the porridge and savory applications, cook with water not broth.



The Smoothie

Smoothies are perhaps the best way to pack a lot of nutrients into one meal. By doing a little prep ahead, you can have breakfast ready in 30 seconds in the morning.

People are always asking me for smoothie recipes, and I think this speaks volumes about how far we are from both the kitchen and whole, real food these days. I throw vegetables, fruit and a nutritious liquid into a blender with a few more nutritious things and blam it up. If it tastes like I did a faceplant in a lawn, I add a little more fruit. I don't like them icy cold (and they aren't really good for you that way either), so I usually defrost frozen fruit a bit if possible.

You can occasionally end up with an "unfortunate" color combination, but no matter the how icky the color, a splash of beet juice will transform it into a palatable hue. I am not a fan of juice in general, because without the fiber of the whole fruit a lot of benefit is lost, but if you need some help getting to like green smoothies juice will do it, or try a little maple syrup. Taper off the sweet stuff with time. Most leafy greens have a bit of protein, believe it or not.

Here is a ratio to start with:

A nutritious liquid:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup nut milk, beet juice, orange juice, coconut water




Fruit:

Banana, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup berries, mango or pineapple chunks

Greens:

Kale, spinach, flat leaf parsley, watercress, avocado, cucumber, celery

Nutritional add-ins:

Chia seed , hemp seeds , high quality cocoa or cacao nibs, flax seeds/meal/oil, acai (powder or puree), cooked oatmeal or quinoa . There are protein powders, but I am a proponent of real, whole food.




HEAT WAVE SMOOTHIE

As mentioned, icy-cold smoothies are really not good for us, but I know you don't want to hear that when the mercury is spiking. There are, however, several foods that are naturally cooling, and delicious! Cucumber and its cousin watermelon top the list, and kiwi, celery, and mint are others that will go nicely in any smoothie when the dog days of summer are upon us.

Beet and Walnut Pâté

This one is easy, but may seem a wee bit exotic. It was inspired by Muhamara, a middle eastern dip/spread that is outta this world. You can use it as a dip or put it in a wrap. Pomegranate molasses can be found in most ethnic markets, but pomegranate juice will also work, although it's thinner. I roasted my beets, but you could probably get away with making this with raw beets or look for the pre-cooked sous vide beets in many produce sections.

Makes about 2 cups

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 2-3 beets, roasted | 1-2 Tbsp. pomegranate molasses |
|  ¾ cup walnuts, toasted | 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil |
| 1 tsp. coriander | Chile powder, to taste |
| ½ clove garlic | |
| ½ -1 tsp. smoked paprika | |

Put everything in a food processor and puree until smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve with pepper spears, crackers, or cuke "chips."

Lemony White Bean Dip

Technically, you can chop the garlic and herbs by hand and then mash everything in a bowl if pulling out the food processor feels like a chore.

- 1, 15 oz. can white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 clove of garlic, coarsely chopped
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- Flat leaf parsley, several sprigs
- 1 – 2 sprigs of fresh thyme, leaves only

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Season with salt, then taste. Can be made the day before, and the flavor will deepen over-night.

Mediterranean “Salsa”

This is officially beautiful. I like mine on cucumber “chips” for a snack, but it also works as a dip or a sauce, and is great on top of grilled mushrooms.

- 1 roasted red pepper or 4 oz. jar (pimientos)
- ¼ cup capers
- ¼ cup good black olives
- 1 Tbsp. good olive oil
- 2 tsp. red wine vinegar or lemon juice

Coarsely chop peppers, capers and olives, then toss with oil and vinegar or lemon juice.

Roasted Chickpeas

This is a Spanish tapa that may sound odd... until you taste them! They would go well in a salad, or can even be turned into “Chickpea Tuna Salad” page 66.

- 1, 15 oz. can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained
- 1-2 Tbsps. olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 4 sprigs of thyme, leaves removed from stems
- Pinch or two crushed red pepper

Preheat oven to 450°.



Toss chickpeas together with all of the ingredients, then place in a small baking dish. Season with salt and roast for about 15 minutes. Place in a bowl and serve with toothpicks.



Easy Cheeze Sauce for Nachos

I really couldn't believe how good this was, really. The longer you soak the cashews, the smoother the sauce, up to 12 hours. Use this to make "Cashew Carbonara" on pg 62. You may also use it on broccoli.

Makes about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup

-  $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cashews, soaked in water at least 1 hour
-  4 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
- Healthy squeeze of lemon juice
- Pinch smoked paprika (Pimenton)

Drain and rinse the cashews, then place in blender with other ingredients. Puree until smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning, adding a little water if desired.



NUTRITIONAL YEAST: YOUR FLAKY NEW BEST FRIEND

Sometimes called nooch or Hippie Dust, it's one of those things I don't know how I lived without. Although tricky to describe, it's essentially "plant-based parmesan cheese," and is a complete protein full of B vitamins — how about that? Sprinkle it on your veggies, or add it to the pot of whatever you are making. My favorite may be on popcorn, but I also sometimes mix it into salsa for a nacho like experience. Anywhere parm goes, nooch will too, although it doesn't melt. The name can be misleading, but it's inactive yeast, so even if you are avoiding yeast it's ok because science says it doesn't promote candida.



Thai Eggplant Saté with Peanut Sauce



There's sort of a lot of ingredients here, but it comes together easily. The only tricky part is reserving a portion of the marinade to go into the peanut sauce. I sometimes cut my peanut butter with tahini for a less obvious peanut flavor. I have this recipe in snack land, but it makes a nice main course with rice and a salad.

About 4 - 6 servings

3-4 Japanese eggplants, sliced on the bias

For the Marinade

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard | 2 cloves garlic |
| ¼ cup Tamari or soy sauce | 2 inch piece fresh ginger, sliced thinly |
| 🌱 ¼ cup coconut milk | 2 Tbsp. cumin |
| 3 Tbsp. rice vinegar | 2 Tbsp. coriander |
| 3 Tbsp. brown sugar | Pinch crushed red pepper |
| Juice of 1-2 limes | |

Combine everything in a blender until smooth, reserving 1/4 cup of marinade for peanut sauce.

Peanut Sauce

- 🌱 3 Tbsp. peanut butter
- ¼ cup marinade from above
- 🌱 ¼ cup coconut milk

Whisk ingredients together until smooth, adding soy sauce to taste. Serve alongside saté. Can be made ahead, and is best after a few hours.

Saté

Marinate eggplant for at least 15 minutes. Soak wooden skewers in water for 15 minutes if grilling over fire. Thread eggplant onto skewers and grill about 1 minute per side. A stove top grill pan is fine or you can even just sauté them. Serve warm with peanut sauce.

Any Bean Hummus

My favorite question ever asked in a cooking class was while doing a quick demo of this hummus. She asked, "What bean do I use?" I politely responded, "Why, any bean you like!" I like my hummus rather zippy, so adjust the recipe to your liking.

- P** 1, 15 oz. can beans, mostly drained
- P** 3 Tbsp. Tahini, optional
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1-2 Tbsp. cumin
- 3 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Or 1-2 Tbsp rice vinegar
- Crushed red pepper, optional

Combine all of the ingredients in food processor and puree until smooth. Best made at least a few hours ahead.



PARTY TIME!

Make festive "hummus poppers" by removing the tops and seeds of mini peppers, then filling them with your hummus. Garnish with a leaf of parsley or cilantro. To serve, stand them up in a bowl with rice or lentils.



Farro Pilaf

Farro takes a little longer to cook, but it's pretty hard to overcook, so be brave. Like most whole grains, soaking in the morning allows them to cook quickly at dinner time. You can find it in the bulk section at most natural markets, and it's sometimes labeled emmer wheat or emmer farro. You can absolutely use any vegetables you prefer. These were real purdy, though!

2 hearty servings

- P** 1 cup farro
- P** 2 shallots, chopped
- 1-2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 ½ cups water or vegetable broth
- 3 sprigs of fresh thyme
- P** ½ cup chopped butternut squash
- ½ bunch Swiss chard, chopped
- ½ yellow or red bell pepper, chopped
- P** A few shakes of nutritional yeast

Heat a large skillet over medium-high and add just enough oil to coat the pan. Add the shallot and cook about a minute, then add garlic and cook another 30 seconds. Add broth, farro, thyme and a little salt, then stir. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cover, then let cook for 20 minutes. Add a little more water if needed, and throw in the butternut squash. Let cook another 10 minutes, then check for doneness. When nearly tender, add the chard. Just before serving add the bell pepper, and nutritional yeast, then taste and adjust seasoning.



Riced Cauliflower

Cauliflower isn't all that glamorous, but this is easy to make and yumola! Feel free to jazz it up, if you like. Combining it with quinoa will make it an official superfood dish with protein. I used mild chili powder, but paprika is fine too. Turmeric would also be lovely, as would finishing with nutritional yeast. You can steam the cauliflower, but roasting is much tastier.

- P** ½ head of cauliflower, cut into large florets
- Olive oil**
- Paprika, a few shakes**

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Toss the cauliflower in olive oil and salt, then spread out on a sheet pan. Roast until golden and tender. When cool enough to handle, grate on the large holes of the grater. Top with pasta sauce, curry, stew, or whatever you are having. If serving on the side, you may want to reheat slightly. Add a little butter if you need to convince children that they like cauliflower.

Roasted Tomato Rice

This is so easy, and so good. For the best flavor you do want to use fire roasted tomatoes, but I have also made it with a jar of salsa. I love my rice cooker for set-it-and-forget-it ease, but you could also bake this in the oven after mixing the ingredients together, well covered, for about 45 minutes. Heat the water to shorten oven time.

- P** 1 cup long grain rice (I like jasmine)
- 1 (15 oz.) can fire roasted tomatoes
- 1 cup water

Put everything in the rice cooker, then season with salt and stir. Press cook and work on the rest of your meal.



Roasted New Potato Salad

You can serve this hearty side warm or room temperature. If you make it ahead you may want to give it a little dose of olive oil just before serving. Grainy mustard is especially pretty, but Dijon mustard is fine.

2-4 servings

- P** 2 handfuls new or baby potatoes
- 4-6 Tbsp. olive oil, or as needed
- 1-2 Tbsp. grainy mustard
- 2 Tbsp. orange juice
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Quarter the potatoes (or cut bite-sized) and toss with olive oil. Place them on a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment, and season with salt. Bake for 10 minutes, then turn potato pieces to brown on another side. Return to oven for about 7 minutes, or until just tender.

While potatoes are cooking, mix together grainy mustard, orange juice and a pinch of salt in a medium bowl. Whisk in 2-4 Tbsp. olive oil, then taste and adjust seasoning. Let potatoes cool a bit, then toss gently with dressing. Add the scallions and serve.

Kohlrabi Slaw

Kohlrabi has been hiding in your produce section all this time, patiently waiting for you to notice it, and bring some home. If you don't know it, ask the produce person to introduce you, and you will live happily ever after. These measurements are not exact, but this is easy to adjust as you go. I promise. If you aren't familiar with the term, "julienne" means thinly cut strips.

2-4 servings

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 medium kohlrabi,
peeled and julienne | 2 scallions, thinly sliced |
| 1 medium carrot, julienne | 2-4 Tbsp. rice vinegar |
| Small hunk of red cabbage,
julienne | 2-4 Tbsp. olive oil |
| ½ yellow bell pepper,
julienne | 🌱 2 Tbsp. pumpkin seeds,
optional |
| | 🌱 1 Tbsp. sesame seeds, optional |

Toss everything together and season with salt, then taste and adjust seasoning. Serve immediately for a crispy slaw, or let rest for a more wilted slaw.



Mediterranean Quinoa

Consider this a master recipe for a quinoa side dish. You have complete freedom here to be as creative or simple as you like. It could technically be a main course, and you can bump up the hearty-ness with some beans or sautéed tofu.

About 4 hearty servings

- P** 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups veggie broth
- Olive oil, as needed
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pint grape tomatoes, halved
- P** 1 cup broccoli florets, about
- About 12 leaves fresh basil, chopped or 2 Tbsp. pesto

Place quinoa in a saucepan and toast until it begins to pop. Add broth and season with salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer about 12-15 minutes or until cooked. Drop the broccoli into the cooking quinoa when it is nearly done.

While quinoa is cooking, heat a skillet over medium heat, then add just enough oil to coat the pan. Add the shallot and sauté until just beginning to brown. Add the garlic and let cook about 30 seconds. Add tomatoes and season with salt. Let cook about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add cooked quinoa and broccoli to the skillet with basil leaves, and toss well. Taste and adjust seasoning.



A WORD ON PESTO

Tucked near the fresh pasta in the refrigerated section is fresh pesto. It most likely has parmesan cheese in it, however, so it isn't truly plant-based. Maybe you care, maybe it's too soon for you to care. If you happen to find basil in a tube (usually in the produce section near herbs), that should be dairy-free. You can add nutritional yeast to it for extra flavor that's very close to pesto. If you're feeling energetic and the basil is cheap, you can always make your own pesto and freeze portions in ice cube trays, then pop into a zipper bag at the ready in the freezer.

Barley Toss

This beautiful salad can be adjusted to include any seasonal veggies you like. Barley has soluble fiber that helps escort cholesterol from the body, just like oatmeal. In fact, "rolled barley" can be found in bulk sections near oatmeal and makes a great morning porridge too.

2-4 servings

- P** 1 cup barley
- P** 1 cup frozen peas, defrosted
- P** Purple cabbage (maybe a 3 inch hunk), shredded
- P** 1/2 yellow pepper, chopped
- P** 1/2 cup almonds
- 1/2 bunch scallions, finely chopped
- Red wine vinegar, healthy splash
- Olive oil, one glug

Cook the barley according to the package instructions and then place in a medium bowl with peas. Add remaining ingredients and toss, seasoning with salt. Taste and fiddle with it until you love it.



Sautéed Asparagus

I already knew that asper-grass was chalk full of good stuff since it was in the "live for ever" lily family, but it turns out to have a surprising amount of protein too (3.08 grams in 8 spears, give er take). Since they cook in under a minute, this is a no excuses dish. You can add some sliced mushrooms if you like, they just need to go in first with a little salt and a minute or 2 of cooking.

2-4 servings (I can eat a whole bunch myself)

- P** 1 bunch asparagus
- 1-2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Cut asparagus into 1" pieces on the bias (jaunty angle). Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add a little butter or oil, then add asparagus and garlic, and toss. Season with salt and toss again. Let cook about 30 seconds to a minute, then serve.



Roasted Red Pepper and Chickpea Soup

This is one of my most requested recipes. It's super quick, yet really flavorful. You can dress it up as a fancy first course with cooked pasta or leafy greens, or dress it down with a grilled cheese sandwich on a winter's day.

About 4 servings

- 2 roasted red peppers or 2 little jars of pimentos, drained**
- P 1, 15 oz. can chickpeas, drained**
- 10 leaves of fresh basil or 1-2 Tbsp. pesto**
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped**
- 4 cups vegetable broth, divided**
- 1 tsp. sugar, optional**

Place peppers, drained beans (reserve a few of each for garnish) and basil or pesto in blender with half of the vegetable broth and puree until smooth. Heat a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add a little oil and sauté garlic until just golden. Add remaining broth and chickpea mixture to the pan and bring to a simmer. Add sugar and season with salt. Let simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Taste and adjust seasoning. Garnish with reserved beans, chopped peppers or fresh basil.

Tahini Dressing

Tahini, or sesame paste, is basically sesame seed butter, and those little seeds are nutritional powerhouses! Protein, calcium and essential trace nutrients are packed into them, so make sure you have some in your cupboard. This dressing is a bit hearty, and therefore better on salads that are also on the heartier side, or in a wrap. Maple syrup or agave will work in place of the orange juice, and sweetening is technically optional. The garlic will become stronger with time, so go easy.

Makes about ½ cup

- 1-2 Tbsp. olive oil
- P** 3 Tbsp. Tahini
- 3-4 Tbsp. rice vinegar or lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. orange juice
- 1 small garlic clove, finely chopped (optional)

In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, tahini, rice vinegar, juice, and garlic. Add a little salt or Tamari and taste, adjusting seasoning as needed.



Spring-y Salad

Pea shoots only make a brief appearance in spring, but you can make this with watercress or good ol' cabbage.


- P** 1 bunch pea shoots
- 3 radishes, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 2 Tbsp. orange or lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. good olive oil
- Salt, to taste

Cut pea shoots in half or thirds and toss with remaining ingredients. Et voila!






Quick Vietnamese Pho

(noodle soup)

You can add extra firm tofu  to this if you like — simply brown in the pot first, then remove to a bowl. Return to the pot after broth is yummy and ready to serve. You can make this with any type of noodle (follow cooking instructions on the package) and add different veggies, such as broccoli or cabbage, but it might not technically be Pho any mo' — not that anybody will know!

4 servings

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 medium onion, sliced |  2 fistfuls of bean sprouts |
| 5 cups vegetable broth | ½ bunch scallions, chopped |
| 1 pinch cinnamon | ½ bunch cilantro, chopped |
| 2 star anise | 1 lime, cut into wedges |
| 3 inch piece ginger, thinly sliced |  2-4 tbsp. Tamari or soy sauce |
| 2 carrots, sliced | Sriracha or hot sauce, as needed |
| 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped | |
|  8 oz. rice stick noodles | |

To make the broth, heat a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Add the onions and let brown, stirring occasionally, until golden. Add the broth and stir up any brown bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the cinnamon, star anise, ginger, carrots, and garlic. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and let cook 15 minutes. Add soy sauce, then taste and adjust seasoning.

While the broth is simmering, soak noodles in warm water for 15 minutes. Divide noodles between bowls and ladle broth over, then serve with remaining ingredients.



Lentil and Butternut Squash Stew

You can find butternut squash chunks in the freezer section, and I prefer them to what you might find already chopped in your produce section. Canned lentils can also be found, but regular brown lentils cook up in 15 minutes. I use Swiss chard, spinach, or kale

2 Servings

- P 1 cup of lentils, cooked
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cups broth
- 1 cup butternut squash chunks
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme, or pinch dried
- P 2 fistfuls of leafy greens

Heat a soup pot over medium heat. Add just enough oil to coat the pan, then add the onion. Sauté until just golden, then add the garlic and cook another minute. Add broth and stir up any brown bits on the bottom, then add squash, thyme and a little salt. Let cook until squash is just tender, then taste and adjust seasoning. Add lentils and greens and let cook another 5 minutes. Serve in cute bowls.

Red Lentil Soupy Stew

I was thrilled when lots of people started telling me that they had been making, and loving, this. It's really quick, and full of flavor, and the orange color is just so cheerful! Since it's traditionally made with ghee, you could finish it with a little "butter" for added richness.

About 2 servings

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. cumin
- 1 Tbsp. coriander
- 1 inch piece fresh ginger, grated
- 2 cups broth or water
- 1 tsp. turmeric, optional
- P 1 cup red lentils (Massor Dal)

Heat a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan, then add the onion. Let brown slightly, then add the garlic and spices, and cook for 30 seconds. Add water and lentils, then season with salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer for about 20 minutes. Check lentils, and when cooked through, partially mash if desired. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Sabaneh: Egyptian Spinach Stew

This recipe has fed me (and others) well at the last minute on countless occasions because it can also be made with only pantry items, such as canned diced tomatoes. The lemon juice is nice, but not “make or break” if you are lemon-less. Like most “peasant” dishes it’s immensely satisfying. I often serve it over rice for a complete meal.

2 - 4 servings

1 medium onion, chopped

½ pint cherry tomatoes, halved

2 tsp. coriander

2 cloves garlic, chopped

P 10 oz. (about) spinach, defrosted if possible

About ½ cup water or broth


P 1, 15oz. can chickpeas (garbanzos)

Juice of ½ lemon, optional


Heat a saucepan over medium high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the pan, then add onions and sauté until golden, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and let cook 30 seconds, then add tomato and coriander. Sauté until tomato is well softened (if using fresh), then add spinach and broth. When heated through, season with salt and taste. Add chickpeas and let simmer 5 minutes. Just before serving add lemon juice.



Moroccan Veggie Tagine (stew)

This is as beautiful as it is tasty, and only slightly exotic. You can use just about any veggie you like, just mind your cook time. Serve with couscous, quinoa , or rice, as you prefer.

4 - 6 servings





1 large onion, chopped	1 Tbsp. ginger
2 stalks celery, chopped	½ tsp. cinnamon
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped	1 zucchini, sliced thickly
½ pint cherry tomatoes, halved	 1, 15 oz. can chickpeas, drained
About 4 cups vegetable broth	½ bunch Italian parsley, chopped
1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces	Juice of 1 lemon
1 cup chopped dried fruit (apricots, cranberries, or prunes)	½ bunch scallions, finely chopped
1 Tbsp. coriander	½ bunch cilantro, finely chopped
2 Tbsp. cumin	

Heat a large pot over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom, and sauté the onion and celery for 5 minutes or until golden. Add garlic and cook another minute. Add the tomatoes, then stir and let cook another 2 minutes. Add 3 cups vegetable broth, sweet potato, fruit, and spices. Season with salt, then stir well. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. Add the zucchini and chickpeas, and stir. Replace cover and let simmer another 2 minutes or until the vegetables are just tender, adding a little more broth if needed. Add chopped parsley and lemon juice, then taste and adjust seasonings. Serve with scallions and cilantro.

Two-Tone Tempeh Chili

Grated tempeh looks so much like ground beef and because of the big flavor here, this is a great place to try it. The avocado is taking the place of sour cream and you could just use guacamole if you like. Look for diced green chiles without calcium chloride, if possible.

4-6 servings

2 onions, chopped	 1, 15 oz. can black beans, drained
1-2 Tbsp. cumin	 1, 15 oz. can pinto or kidney beans, drained
 8 oz. tempeh, grated	1 bunch scallions, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped	1 bunch cilantro, finely chopped
Chile powder, to taste	 1 avocado, diced
1, 15 oz. can diced tomatoes	
2, 4 oz. cans diced green chilies	
1 Tbsp. sugar, optional	
1 cup water	

Heat a soup pot over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan, then add onions and sauté for about 2 minutes. Add cumin, tempeh, garlic, and a little salt, then sauté another minute. Add chile powder, tomatoes, green chilies, sugar, and water then stir well. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and let cook 10 minutes. Add beans and gently stir again, then let cook another 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. More cumin? More chile powder? When yummy, serve garnished with scallions, cilantro, and avocado. It's even better the next day, of course, and freezes well.

Soupy Beans

Canned beans are a few twists of the wrist away from being ready, but cooking your own will always be infinitely better, and this is a simple preparation. My first roommate in my first apartment was from New Mexico, and she explained that her mother and grandmother first made “soupy beans,” and then the next day would “refry” them. This recipe will work with most any bean, but black or pinto would be a solid choice.

- P** 2 cups dried beans
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 4 sprigs of thyme
- Chile powder, to taste

Either soak the beans for several hours (overnight is fine) or place in a pot, cover with water by 2 inches, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and let stand for an hour, then drain.

Heat the slow cooker and add the soaked beans and remaining ingredients. Cover with water by 2 inches, and season with about ½ tsp. of salt. Using boiling water will speed the cooking process...in your slow cooker.

I have a cheap crock pot, so the “high” setting just barely breaks a boil. If you have a better cooker, then medium may be fine. Let cook 2-3 hours, or until beans are tender. I garnish mine with radish leaves and more chile powder, but scallions are tasty too.



Tex-Mex Sweet Potato Boats

These are so good, and good for you! Nutrient dense sweet potatoes make eating well easy. If for some reason you don't care for sweet potatoes, you can use a regular baking potato. I like these with nice crunchy corn chips on the side, which I highly recommend.

2 servings

- P** 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 cup black beans, rinsed
- ½ cup cabbage, chopped
- 4 scallions, chopped
- Cilantro, chopped
- 2 dollops sour cream, optional

Preheat oven to 350°. Wash potatoes and rub with oil. Roast until tender, about 50 minutes depending on size. Split open and slightly mash flesh. Top with remaining ingredients and enjoy.

Thai Peanut Noodles in Cabbage Cups

You don't have to serve these in cabbage cups, but boy are they cute! You can simply chop the cabbage and mix it in with the other ingredients. Rice noodles are usually packaged in portions, hence the reference below. Cellophane or glass noodles will also work here. Garnish with peanuts, cashews or sesame seeds if desired.

2 servings

For the Sauce:

- P** ½ cup peanut butter
- ¼ cup orange juice
- Juice of ½ lime
- P** 2-3 Tbsp. Tamari or soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 inch piece of fresh ginger, grated

Combine everything together in a small bowl, taste and adjust seasoning, then reserve.

For the Noodles:

- P** 2 portions rice noodles
- ½ purple cabbage
- ½ red bell pepper, julienne
- ½ yellow bell pepper, julienne
- ¼ English cucumber, julienne
- ½ bunch scallions, chopped
- ½ bunch cilantro, chopped

Pour boiling water over the noodles and let stand covered 15 minutes, or until softened. Separate leaves of cabbage into "bowls" and place on plate. Drain the noodles, toss with about half of the dressing, and portion into bowls. Top noodles with remaining ingredients. Drizzle with a little more sauce, garnish and serve.



Cashew Carbonara

This is so satisfying, if not exactly like the original — pretty dang close! Cashews are one of your new best friends. I was slow to play with them because it seemed somehow complicated — it isn't! A few drops of Liquid Smoke can be added to the mushroom marinade for deeper flavor.

- P** 1 recipe Easy Cashew Cheeze Sauce (pg. 27)
- P** 8-10 cremini mushrooms, sliced
- P** 2 Tbsp. Tamari or soy sauce
 - 1/2 tsp. smoked paprika
 - 2 tsp. maple syrup
 - Fresh cracked black pepper
 - 1/2 pound spaghetti of choice
- P** 1 cup green peas (frozen)
 - 1 large shallot, chopped
 - 2 cloves garlic, chopped
 - 2-3 Tbsp. broth

Place mushrooms in a bowl with the Tamari, paprika, maple syrup, and pepper. Let marinate 15 - 20 minutes.

Get your pasta going and place peas in the colander in the sink.

Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add a little oil and the shallot, and let cook until beginning to brown. Add the garlic and let cook another 30 seconds. Add the mushrooms, reserving the liquid. Let cook about 5 minutes.

Mix half of the broth with the cheeze sauce.



When the pasta is done, drain over the peas in the colander. Transfer the pasta and peas to the pan with mushrooms, add the cheeze sauce and toss together. Add remaining broth as needed. Leftover mushroom marinade can also be added if desired. Serve immediately.



Not-So-Classic Sloppy Joes

Sometimes you need a treat! This actually tastes even better the next day (like a lot of things), so you can make it ahead for a party or even freeze it. In a pinch, crumbled veggie burgers work fine.

4 servings



- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
-  8-10 oz. "beef" crumbles
- 1, 15 oz. can fire roasted tomatoes
- 1 medium carrot, finely chopped
-  2 Tbsp. Tamari or soy sauce
- 3 Tbsp. ketchup
- 3 Tbsp. vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 1-2 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 4 buns

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add just enough oil to coat the pan, then add the onion and let brown well. Add the garlic and let cook another 30 seconds. Add the crumbles and let cook until you like the way it looks. Add the tomatoes and stir up any brown bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the remaining ingredients (except the buns) and stir together. Season with salt, and let simmer 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. When yummy, serve on buns.

Pappardelle with Portobellos, Winter Greens, and Artichokes

This is a "too tired to cook" recipe in that you don't have to think too much, just chop and drop. You'll be thrilled you went to a little bit of effort when you sit down at the table, though. Linguini or any wide noodle will work if you can't find pappardelle. There is a little bit of protein in mushrooms and Swiss chard, but if you are worried, you can add some white beans.

About 2 servings

- ½ pound pappardelle
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 medium Portobellos, thinly sliced
- 1 bunch Swiss chard, chiffonade
-  1 small jar marinated artichokes
- Olive oil, as needed
-  Nutritional yeast, as needed

Cook the pasta according to the package for "al dente." Drain the artichokes, reserving the liquid, and chop.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high. Add enough oil to coat the bottom, then add shallots and sauté until golden. Add the garlic and cook another 30 seconds. Add the mushrooms and season with salt. Cook about 5 minutes, then add chard and let cook another 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the artichokes and let heat through.

Lightly drain the pasta and add to the skillet with the reserved artichoke "juice," tossing everything together. Taste and adjust seasoning, then finish with olive oil and nutritional yeast.

Mock Tuna Salad

(Chickpea Tuna Salad)

The idea here is to doctor the chickpeas about the same way you would tuna, so add what you like. If you never put relish in your tuna salad, leave it out. The dill makes a nice addition, but you could use another herb if you prefer. This can be made in a food processor by pulsing the chickpeas, but don't over-process or you'll just end up with hummus. I use a pastry cutter, but then, I have one. A potato masher would also work.

- P** 1, 15 oz. can chickpeas, drained and mashed
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp. sweet pickle relish
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 2 tsp. Dijon Mustard
- 1 tsp. Dill

In a bowl, combine all the ingredients well, then taste and adjust to your preference. Serve with crackers or on bread with lettuce and tomato — yum, yum!



Shroomies St. Jacques

I can't tell you how happy I was to figure this one out. It is truly elegant, and can be done mostly ahead making entertaining easier, yay! Just like the original dish with scallops, it's a treat, so buy good vegan butter. I like this atop angel hair pasta, a classic presentation, but it would be nice on greens or in a soup. If you want extra sauce for pasta, add 1/4 cup broth after the cognac. For extra browning, dust the "scallops" with some paprika or mild chile powder before searing.

About 2 servings

- P** 3 King Oyster Mushrooms
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- About 4 Tbsp. butter
- Glug of cognac or brandy
- Squeeze of lemon
- Scallions or chives, chopped

Slice off the bottom bit of each mushroom to make the end flat, then slice 1/2 inch "scallops" up to the where the fins begin. Reserve mushroom heads for another dish. Brush the scallops with oil and season with salt.

Heat a skillet over medium-high heat, add some butter and heat until just golden. Add the scallops and let brown well, then turn and brown the other side. Remove from pan and reserve.



In the same pan, add the shallots and let sauté until golden, then add the garlic and cook another 30 seconds. Everything can be held here off heat, if desired.

When ready to serve, reheat the pan, then carefully add the cognac or brandy, stirring up any brown bits on the bottom of the pan. Let simmer until the alcohol has cooked out (give a sniff), then stir in remaining butter, lemon juice, and the scallops. Let heat through, then taste and adjust seasoning. Garnish with scallions or chives, and serve.

Thai Yellow Curry

Your local Asian market will have curry paste, and the “Mae Ploy” brand is my favorite. It’s chalk full of flavor and was made in Thailand with authentic ingredients. Remember, you can always add more, so start with just 1 Tbsp. If you can find lemongrass it does give a little extra something, but will still be good without.

About 4 servings

- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsps. soy sauce, or to taste
- 📌 1, 15 oz. can coconut milk
- 3 inch piece ginger, sliced into 1/2 inch coins
- 2 stalks lemongrass, cut into 1 inch pieces, *optional*
- 1 to 2 Tbsps. Thai yellow curry paste
- 1 Tbsps. brown sugar
- Juice of 1-2 limes
- 1 red pepper cut into 1 inch pieces
- 📌 1-2 broccoli crowns, cut into florets
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped finely on the bias
- 1 bunch of cilantro, chopped finely
- 📌 Cooked Jasmine rice

Heat a deep skillet over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the pan, then add the garlic. Let cook about 30 seconds, then add coconut milk, ginger, and lemongrass, if using. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Stir in half the curry paste and simmer another 2 minutes, then taste, adding more curry paste if desired. Strain out ginger and lemongrass (or warn guests that they’re in there).

Add sugar and lime juice, and let simmer 5 minutes. Taste, adding more soy sauce, lime juice, or sugar as needed to balance flavors. When yummy, remove from heat (can be held up to 1 hour here) and add peppers, scallions, and cilantro, and serve. Out of kindness to those with cilantro ‘issues’, you may serve the cilantro on the table for guests to add themselves.

BBQ Jackfruit “Pulled pork”

Jackfruit is another miracle I’ve discovered along the way. Jackfruit is quickly becoming the hottest plant-based meat substitute out there, and can be found more easily everyday. It looks and acts like shredded meat, and doused in good BBQ sauce is just as satisfying as any sammy you’ve had. Add coleslaw on top if you roll that way.

4 sandwiches

- 📌 1 ½ cups BBQ sauce
- 📌 1, 20 oz. can jackfruit, drained
- 4 buns







In a medium saucepan over medium heat add the BBQ sauce and jackfruit. When starting to bubble, lower temperature and let heat through. Fill your buns and serve.



Delightful Delicata Boats

These adorable, striped squash are named for their delicate, edible skin. You can swap the quinoa for rice or any other grain you like. They are nice on a holiday table or a potluck.

6 servings

-  3 delicata squash
-  2 cups quinoa
-  3½ cups veggie broth
-  1 bunch arugula (or a box of “baby”)
-  ½ cup dried cranberries
-  ½ cup roasted pumpkin seeds
- Cilantro or parsley for garnish

Preheat oven to 350°. Split and seed the squashes. Rub with oil inside and out, and lightly salt. Place cut side down on a sheet pan. Roast for 30-40 minutes or until just tender.

While the squash is roasting, rinse the quinoa in a sieve. Place in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir quinoa to dry out and slightly toast. Add broth and a little salt, then cover, reduce heat, and let cook for about 15 minutes. Check for doneness and remove from heat. Stir in arugula and cranberries, and a little butter if desired, let stand.


When ready to serve, taste quinoa and adjust seasoning as needed. Fill squash boats with quinoa. Place extra quinoa on a platter or plates, nestle the squash on top, then garnish.



Quick Mediterranean Grilled Eggplant

I have a strong preference for Japanese or Asian eggplant, but you may be happy with any variety. Use a stovetop grill pan, or simply sauté these. Pomegranate molasses is found at Asian and Mediterranean markets, but the juice can stand in if you can't find it.

2 - 4 servings

-  2 Asian eggplants, sliced on the bias
- 1 Tbsp. cumin
- 2 Tbsp. Tamari or soy sauce
- 2-3 Tbsp. pomegranate molasses
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Scallions or cilantro for garnish
- Pomegranate seeds for garnish, optional

Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Brush or drizzle the slices of eggplant with Tamari and sprinkle with cumin. Place eggplant slices in the pan at a 45-degree angle to the ridges. Let cook 1-2 minutes, then turn and cook another minute.

Remove to a plate, drizzle with pomegranate molasses and olive oil, then garnish. Best served warm, but many will enjoy this at room temperature as well.






GREAT GRILL MARKS

To get those picture perfect grill marks, place items in the pan at a 45° angle to the ridges and do not shift them in the pan. When you flip them, again place them at a 45° angle to the ridges without shifting. Peek carefully when trying to decide it's time to turn or remove from the pan to ensure crisp grill marks.

Very Veggie Fried Rice

You make fried rice with leftover over rice, and freshly cooked rice just doesn't work. I put veggies in on the late side so they're still crunchy, but you can put them in just after the garlic if you prefer. If you aren't soy averse, you can "scramble" some silken tofu with nutritional yeast and add near the end for an egg-like addition.

2 servings

-  1 cup cooked rice
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 inch piece of ginger, grated or sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
-  ¼ cup tamari or soy sauce, or as needed
- 2 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 carrots, sliced on the bias
-  ½ cup shredded purple cabbage
- ¼ cup frozen peas
- 3 scallions, chopped

Heat a deep sauté pan or a wok over medium-high heat. Add enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan, then add the onions and let cook until beginning to brown. Add the garlic and ginger, and let cook briefly. If the pan seems dry you can add a bit more oil, then add the rice, stirring everything together in the pan. Add about half of the soy sauce and mix into the rice.

Cook, stirring occasionally, until the rice is hot. Add in the remaining ingredients, except scallions, and toss well. Taste, adding more soy sauce if desired. When yummy, garnish with scallions and serve.

Cauliflower Steak

These are hearty and do a good job of making you feel like you're really eating something, if you know what I mean. You can dust the "steaks" with turmeric for some killer color, or cumin for a bit of earthy flavor. I served mine over a bed of arugula, which wilted nicely from the heat. If you need a little help liking them, finish with a bit of butter and nutritional yeast.

- P** 1 head cauliflower
- Olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder

Remove the leaves and stem from the cauliflower. Slice the head into scant 1" slices. Brush slices with olive oil and season with chili powder and salt. Save any pieces that fall off for your soup pot.

Heat a stovetop grill pan or a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Cook each steak for about 2-3 minutes per side. If the pan is too small, cook in batches and hold steaks in a warm oven until ready to serve.



Nice Cream

There are tasty commercial products, but they still come with extra ingredients that I try to not eat too much. Nobody is as shocked as I am that I'm crazy about non-ice-cream, but there's great satisfaction in creating something so simple and tasty in the blink of an eye, that's also easy on the environment and my health. Nice! Make a fruitier version if you prefer that to peanut butter, and for more fruit "identity" reserve a little to go in at the end with just a few pulses.

1 large or 2 small servings

1 banana, frozen

P ½ cup coconut milk

P ½ cup peanut butter

Place everything in a food processor or good blender and puree until smooth. Eat immediately, or freeze again for later.

Coconut and Mango Sweet Rice

This is not overly sweet. If you lean to the sweet you might add a little sugar to the reserved coconut milk for the drizzle. You can halve this recipe easily if you don't need 4 servings. Best served warm.

4 servings

- P** 1 cup jasmine rice
- P** 1 ¼ cup water
- P** 1 cup coconut milk, plus some for drizzling
- 2-3 Tbsp. sugar
- 2 mangoes

Cook the rice with the water, coconut milk, and sugar. While rice is cooking, peel and dice the mangoes. Hold the rice warm until ready to serve. Portion rice into dessert bowls, top with mango, and drizzle a little coconut milk over just before serving.



Strawberry Rhubarb Oat Bars

You can up the fruit by half a cup or so, if you like, but cut smaller squares. The parchment is optional, but I like the insurance.

Makes 9 to 12 bars

- P** 1 cup flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- Pinch salt
- 8 Tbsp. coconut oil or butter
- 1 cup chopped fresh rhubarb
- 1 cup chopped strawberries
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch

Preheat the oven to 375° and oil an 8X8 pan, then line with parchment.

In a mixing bowl, combine the flour, oats, brown sugar, baking soda and salt, and mix together. Melt the oil or butter and mix in well — mixture should be crumbly and stick together when pinched. Place half the mixture in the pan, spread evenly, and press into pan.

In another bowl, combine the rhubarb, strawberries, lemon juice, sugar, and cornstarch. Spread over mixture in pan, then top with remaining crumb mixture, and gently pat down.

Bake 30-40 minutes, or until top is slightly browned and fruit is softened or bubbly. Let cool before cutting into squares.





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