

## The “Plan A” Diet™ 21-Day Meal Plan

*A well-thought-out plan will work to your advantage, but hasty actions will cost you dearly. (Proverbs 21:5, VOICE)*

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Although my husband and I have slightly different palettes, the tried-and-true recipes included in the 21-day meal plan have passed both of our taste tests. If you’re new to this style of eating, you’ll have to experiment with different recipes until you find your personal favorites, too. Chances are high you’re not going to like every recipe you make, but don’t let that derail your efforts. You may feel overwhelmed or unsure at the start—that’s totally normal. Many before you have felt the same way as they began traveling these uncharted waters. Breathe easier knowing that you don’t need to find dozens of recipes all at once; instead find six or eight recipes that you like, and repeat them as you add a new recipe in here or there. The below plan will help jumpstart such a strategy. Here are a few reminders and Tips:

- For accelerated weight loss, and in some cases disease reversal, it’s best to limit or avoid high-fat plant foods such as avocado, nuts, nut butters, coconut, olives, and soy products.
- Drink lots of good, clean water each day. Refer to the *FAQ* Chapter for more details.
- If you come across an unfamiliar ingredient in a recipe, or if you have general questions, refer to the *Foods for the Plan* Chapter for guidance. If you’re still unsure, feel free to

ask any questions in *The “Plan A” Diet* Facebook group or search one of the websites in the resource section.

- Make tossed salads using dark greens and load them up with a variety of veggies! Our favorite combo is: Spring mix lettuce/spinach combo, cherry tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, celery, carrots, sliced red grapes, red onion, and a few chopped walnuts. We often add canned chickpeas or kidney beans, as well. Other salad ingredients could include corn, peas, mandarin oranges, pineapple, broccoli, cauliflower, scallions, radishes, jicama, or whatever you have in the fridge!

- For dressings, make a simple balsamic or fruit-based dressing (just google vegan oil-free dressings), or purchase an oil-free/fat-free dressing which meets the label reading guidelines.

- To cut down on kitchen time, purchase pre-cut vegetables for your salads and soups. Frozen vegetables can be served as a side dish or for use in recipes as well. Do read the ingredient labels on any frozen vegetable packages—many contain added salt, sugars, oils, and other additives. Frozen riced cauliflower combined with finely chopped walnuts and seasonings can be used to make a great ground beef substitute for sloppy joes, stuffed peppers, or tacos.

## **Prepare and Get Organized**

Speaking from personal experience, planning and cooking for the entire week is a great way to save time and money. Selecting recipes, shopping for the ingredients, and making time to prepare food will take effort, but the more you plan it out, the more successful you’ll be with having healthy meals on hand.

Create a meal plan for the next 7 days, keeping in mind that leftovers can be eaten for lunch or for another evening’s meal. Your plan doesn’t have to be complicated or narrowed down to every bite! Choose between 4–6 main meals, a few simple side dishes, a dessert item, and make sure you have your breakfast items covered. Use the below meal plan or search for recipes online or in cookbooks; if possible, print them out so they’re handy. Consider if you’ll need snacks, such as hummus and veggies, sweet potatoes to roast and slice, salsa with home-made corn chips, or healthy instant soups. Remember to include your favorite fruits and to pick up a few ripe bananas to freeze for “ice cream” or shakes. (Note: For those weeks where life is extra hectic, have a few PlantPure Nation frozen entrees in the freezer; see the resource section for their website).

Your next step will be to write down all the needed ingredients on your grocery list. Organizing your list into categories such as “produce, canned, frozen, bulk” can be a real time-saver when you’re shopping. The quantity of ingredients you’ll need will of course depend on

your family size and if you're going to double the recipe for leftovers. Next, take inventory of what you already have on hand in your pantry or fridge and adjust your list accordingly.

### **Batch Cooking Saves Time (and Money)**

Batch cooking is a life-saver for people who don't have the time or inclination to cook every night of the week. Batch cooking simply means cooking entire meals, recipes, or single ingredients in large batches. I'm a big fan of batch cooking because I'd rather spend a few hours in the kitchen up front than to make dinner every night. I typically do my batch cooking on Thursday or Friday, which frees me from cooking again until the following week. If this idea appeals to you as well, below are a few helpful hints:

- Cook your weekly main meals at one time and store the food in the fridge so you have quick access to healthy meals each day. You may even choose to do a 3 or 4-day batch cook rather than the entire week. If possible, recruit family members to be your sous chefs and ask them to assist with the veggie chopping or other tasks. Many hands make for light work. Use the food processor for even faster chopping.
- Cook large batches of a single ingredient that you can use in several recipes. Brown rice, for instance, can be used in a stir fry, burritos, stuffed peppers, or rice pudding. Boiling a bag of Yukon gold potatoes is another good idea; serve them as cheesy broccoli potatoes, mashed with golden gravy, topped with a healthy soup, or eaten as a snack with BBQ sauce. Cook a large pot of oatmeal for the week's breakfasts.
- Double the recipe. If you're making your favorite chili, stew, or burger recipe, make a double or triple portion and freeze the extras in single serving containers for later use.
- Assemble several tossed salads at once. Using individual plastic containers, assemble greens (purchase pre-washed to save time) and your favorite salad veggies. Pre-cut peppers and other veggies are available at most stores if you don't want to chop your own. Because chopped onions can overpower the salad if it sits a few days, I store them in a sealed baggie inside of each container. Small dressing containers can be purchased at most stores; fill them with your favorite fat-free dressing and store them inside the salad containers for easy access.
- Pre-cook a batch of plant-based pancakes or waffles for the freezer. Pop them into the toaster during the week and top with a bit of all-fruit jelly for a quick breakfast on the go. You can even make a waffle or pancake sandwich using the "sausage patties" recipe as a filler.

If batch cooking doesn't fit with your schedule, however, there are plenty of easy meals that can be prepared and assembled without a lot of hassle. Several have been included in the below plan (see the "Easy Meal" section), and others are available on the websites listed in the resource section or in the McDougall Quick and Easy cookbook.

The 21-day meal plan is not set in stone—it's merely a suggested guide. You can switch meal options around to suit your schedule and taste. If you find a breakfast or a main meal that you really like, enjoy it more often! In fact, the sooner you begin to tweak the plan to your tastes and find other recipes you like, the sooner you'll adapt to your own routine. If one of the recipes in the plan doesn't appeal to you, choose a replacement from elsewhere in the plan or from the websites listed in the resource section. Just remember that your goal is to include plenty of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, and legumes while avoiding all meats, dairy products, highly-refined processed foods, and added oils.

There are a few variables to keep in mind as you're starting out. If you're cooking for a larger family, the 21-day meal plan may not provide enough food for the needed leftovers unless you double the recipes. On the other hand, the plan might provide *too much* food if you're cooking for just one or two. Again, the plan is only a suggested guide which you'll need to tweak to suit your situation. The plan provides a variety of tasty foods and includes *optional* healthy desserts—but remember what you learned in the previous chapters: *Stop* eating when you're comfortably full (not stuffed). Even when consuming a healthy diet, continuing to eat past satiety can hinder weight loss by adding extra calories and extra pounds.

The plan is divided into three weeks. Each week will list the featured recipes so those of you who are batch cookers can see at a glance how many recipes are involved. Don't be alarmed when you see the number of recipes—many of them are quite simple and take very little time. The recipes don't include other items you'll need for the week, however, such as fruit, frozen items, pizza crusts, potatoes, salad ingredients, oatmeal, whole-grain bread, veggies to cut up for dips, etc. Please examine the entire week's plan to assure you're shopping for everything needed.

## **Week One**

Featured recipes for the week: No Bother Black Bean Soup, Creamy Chili Sauce with Zucchini, Spinach and Pasta, Minestrone Soup, Mushroom Marinara with Pasta, Fat-free Vegan Cheese Sauce for potatoes and mac 'n' cheese, Cornbread, Fluffy Blueberry Pancakes, Baked Apples, Pumpkin Raisin Muffins (freeze extras), and Fat-free hummus.

Day 1: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: No Bother Black Bean Soup; cornbread

Dinner: Creamy Chili Sauce with Zucchini, Spinach, and Pasta; Salad

Dessert: Dreamsicle Shake

Day 2: Breakfast: Approved Cereal w/plant milk & berries; Whole grain toast with all-fruit jelly.

Lunch: Minestrone Soup (top over a gold potato, if desired); Pumpkin Raisin Muffin

Dinner: Leftover No Bother Black Bean Soup; Corn on the cob

Dessert: Baked Apples

Day 3: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: Leftover Creamy Chili Sauce with Zucchini, Spinach, and Pasta; Melon salad

Dinner: Salad; From “Easy Meal” Recipes: Pizza

Dessert: Yonana machine: Cherry Ice Cream

Day 4: Breakfast: Fluffy Blueberry Pancakes; Fruit

Lunch: Leftover pizza; McDougall instant soup

Dinner: Mushroom Marinara Pasta; Steamer green beans with faux parmesan

Dessert: Plain (unsweetened) plant-based yogurt with frozen berry mix

Day 5: Breakfast: Approved cereal w/plant milk & berries; Whole-grain toast w/all-fruit jelly.

Lunch: Cheesy Broccoli Potato; Hummus with veggies (peppers, cucumber, zucchini)

Dinner: Minestrone Soup; Cornbread

Dessert: Pumpkin Raisin Muffin; Tea

Day 6: Breakfast: Leftover Fluffy Blueberry Pancakes; fruit

Lunch: Mac ‘n’ Cheese; Salad

Dinner: Leftover Mushroom Marinara Pasta

Snack: Air-popped popcorn with approved toppings

Day 7: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: From Leftover Minestrone Soup w/cornbread: or use a McDougall soup

Dinner: Mac ‘n’ Cheese; Other leftovers

Dessert: Yonana machine: Banana Split

## **Week Two**

Featured recipes for the week: Veggie Sloppy Joes, Smoky BBQ Sweet Potato Chickpea Burgers, Fries, Vegan Garlic Alfredo Sauce/Pasta, Cyd’s Easy Chili, Sweet Potato and White

Bean Curry Soup, Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies, Carrot Cake, Easy Caramel Dip. Optional: Vegan Breakfast Casserole

Day 1: Breakfast: Approved cereal w/plant milk & berries; Whole-grain toast w/all-fruit jelly.

Lunch: Veggie Sloppy Joes; Salad

Dinner: Cyd's Easy Chili; Cornbread

Dessert: Carrot Cake

Day 2: Breakfast: Vegan Breakfast Casserole OR oatmeal w/flax, berries, and toppings.

Lunch: Leftover chili; Pumpkin Raisin Muffin (from week one)

Dinner: Leftover Veggie Sloppy Joes; Fries

Dessert: Easy Chocolate Caramel Shake

Day 3: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: Smoky BBQ Chickpea Burger; Salad

Dinner: Sweet Potato and White Bean Curry Soup; whole-grain rolls

Dessert: Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies

Day 4: Breakfast: Vegan Breakfast Casserole (if available) or approved cereal w/berries; toast

Lunch: Leftover Sweet Potato and White Bean Curry Soup

Dinner: Leftover Smoky BBQ Chickpea Burgers; Steamer Green Beans or Asparagus

Dessert: Carrot Cake; Tea

Day 5: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: McDougall soup over potatoes; Salad

Dinner: Vegan Garlic Alfredo Sauce/Pasta; Whole-grain rolls

Dessert: Easy Caramel Dip with Apples

Day 6: Breakfast: Approved hot cereal w/plant milk & berries; Whole-grain toast w/all-fruit jelly

Lunch: Leftover Garlic Alfredo Sauce/Pasta; Grapes or melon

Dinner: Leftover Sweet Potato and White Bean Curry Soup; Whole-grain rolls

Dessert: Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies; Tea

Day 7: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: From "Easy Meal" Recipes: Asian Bowl, or Leftovers

Dinner: Leftover Night

Dessert: Carrot Cake

### **Week Three**

Featured Recipes for the week: Pinto Bean Burritos, Oat-Free Spicy Barbecue Lentil Loaf, Potatoes & Gravy, Lazy Day Vegan Tomato Bisque, Baked “Cheese” Sandwiches, Vegan Egg Salad, Roadhouse Hash, Sausage Patties, Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges, Quinoa Salad, Oat Bran Muffins, Brownies. Optional: Chocolate Mousse Pie

Day 1: Breakfast: Roadhouse Hash with Sausage Patties; Fruit

Lunch: Lazy Day Vegan Tomato Bisque with Baked Cheese Sandwich

Dinner: Leftover Pinto Bean Burritos; Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges

Dessert: Brownie; Tea

Day 2: Breakfast: Approved hot cereal w/plant milk & berries; Oat Bran Muffins

Lunch: Leftover Pinto Bean Burrito; Quinoa Salad

Dinner: Oat-Free Spicy BBQ Lentil Loaf; Mashed Yukon gold potatoes with Gravy

Dessert: Elvis Has Left the Building Smoothie

Day 3: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: Vegan Egg Salad Sandwich with greens; Oat Bran Muffin

Dinner: Lazy Day Vegan Tomato Bisque with Baked Cheese Sandwiches

Dessert: Brownie

Day 4: Breakfast: Sausage Sandwich (use whole-grain toast, pancakes, or waffle); Mangos

Lunch: McDougall (or other healthy) soup; Colby Cheese and crackers

Dinner: Engine2 Brand Burgers on whole-grain buns; Quinoa Salad

Dessert: Oat Bran Muffin; Tea

Day 5: Breakfast: Oatmeal w/ground flax, berries, and toppings; Fruit

Lunch: Leftover Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges, or an “Easy Meal” item; Quinoa Salad

Dinner: Leftover Lentil Loaf with Mashed Potatoes & Gravy; Salad

Dessert: Yonana machine: Strawberry Ice Cream

Day 6: Breakfast: Oat Bran Muffins or Approved cereal with berries and toast

Lunch: Vegan Egg Salad Sandwich with greens; Mangos, pear, or melon

Dinner: Leftover Roadhouse Hash; Steamer Broccoli with Faux Parmesan

Dessert: Brownie; Tea

Day 7: Breakfast: Sausage Sandwich (use whole-grain toast, pancakes, or waffles); Pineapple

Lunch: Leftovers, McDougall soup, or “Easy Meal” selection; Grapes and apple slices

Dinner: Leftover Night

Dessert: Brownies; or Chocolate Mousse Pie to celebrate 3-week progress!

Substitute recipes provided in the following pages include Versatile Rice and Bean Tostadas, Acorn Squash with Beans & Greens, Fantastic Fruit Balls, and Banana Split Smoothies. Other suggestions are shown in the “Easy Meals” and “Snacks and Cooler Food” sections.

The below recipes are categorized by Breakfasts, Main Meals, Easy Meals, Desserts, and Snack & Cooler Foods; recipes are listed in alphabetical order under each category.

## **Breakfasts**

### **Approved Cereals**

Refer to the “Foods for the Plan” Chapter for a list of approved cereals. Top with fruit, ground flax seed, and a splash of plant-milk.

### **Fluffy Blueberry Pancakes**

Make a double batch and reheat them the next day (or when you want a snack).

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 TBS non-aluminum baking powder

½ tsp. cinnamon

1 cup unsweetened almond milk

2.5 TBS maple syrup

¼ - 1/2 cup blueberries (fresh or frozen) – can substitute with chopped apples

1/3 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

- 1) Mix the flour, baking powder, and cinnamon in a bowl.
- 2) Add the almond milk and maple syrup and stir.
- 3) Stir in the blueberries and walnuts (if using).



- 4) Pre-heat a non-stick skillet over medium high heat.
- 5) Pour batter into skillet (make your favorite pancake size) and flip them when they're bubbly. Cook a few minutes on the other side until golden brown.

### Oat Bran Muffins

Makes 12–15 muffins

(Adding frozen blueberries and chopped nuts is our favorite way to make these hearty muffins. They also make a nice snack in the evening with a cup of tea.)

2 cups oat bran, uncooked

¼ cup brown sugar, firmly packed

2 tsp. baking powder (non-aluminum)

2 TBS ground flax seed blended or whisked with 6 TBS water

1 cup unsweetened plant milk

¼ cup honey

2 TBS applesauce

Stir in Variations: ½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries, ½ cup mashed banana, or ½ cup chopped nuts, if desired.

- 1) Heat oven to 425. Line muffin pan with baking paper cups or use silicone muffin pans.
- 2) Combine dry ingredients and mix well.
- 3) Whisk 2 TBS ground flax seed with 6 TBS water, until frothy, or blend in a blender. Add to dry ingredients and stir.
- 4) Add remaining ingredients and mix until blended. Fill muffin cups ¾ full. Bake 15-17 minutes or until golden brown.

### Pumpkin Raisin Muffins

*(Recipe from Food for Life by Neal Barnard, M.D.; recipe by Jennifer Raymond, M.S., R.D. Reprinted with permission from PCRM)*

Here's another favorite from the PCRM Recipe of the Week blog which I've been happily making for nearly ten years! Most pumpkin muffins are made in the fall months, but this one gets made all year round.

3 cups whole wheat *pastry* flour

4 tsp. baking powder (non-aluminum)

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. cinnamon\*

½ tsp. nutmeg\*

1 cup raw sugar or another sweetener\*

4 TBS flaxseeds

1.5 cups water, divided

2.5 cups solid-pack canned pumpkin (1 28-oz. will be enough, but do measure it out)

1 cup raisins (I use currants)

- 1) Preheat oven to 350°.
- 2) Mix flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar and set aside.
- 3) Blend flaxseeds and 1 cup water in a blender for 1-2 minutes until mixture is thick and has the consistency of beaten egg white.
- 4) Add to dry ingredients along with pumpkin, remaining ½ cup water, and raisins (or currants). Stir until just mixed.
- 5) Spoon the batter into muffin tins (lined with paper holders) or silicon muffin pans.
- 6) Bake 25–30 minutes or until tops of muffins bounce back when pressed lightly.
- 7) Remove from oven and let stand 1 to 2 minutes; this facilitates removal of muffins from the pan.
- 8) Remove muffins and place on a rack to cool. Store in an airtight container.

\*(Cyd's notes: I add more cinnamon and nutmeg, about ¼ tsp. each...and sometimes I add pumpkin spice as well. You can taste mixture to get an idea of how flavorful it is, and adjust to your liking. Chopped nuts or vegan chocolate chips (Enjoy Life brand) can be added. Sucanat (SUGar CAne NATural) is a sweetener you can purchase in most health food stores, or use a different natural cane sugar. Due to the different sizes of the muffin pans, I get about 24 muffins from this recipe when using the pans with paper liners, but only 12 muffins when using my silicone pans).

### **Roadhouse Hash**

*(Recipe by Terri Edwards at [www.EatPlant-Based.com](http://www.EatPlant-Based.com). Please visit her website to see additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

This is a savory vegan breakfast will keep you from ever missing eggs or hash again. Roadhouse Hash is so versatile, it is a great dish for breakfast, lunch, or dinner!

4 servings

- 1/4 cup veggie broth
- 1/2 cup carrots, grated
- 1/2 cup red or green bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup green onions, diced
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1 cup red kidney beans
- 2 Tbsp nutritional yeast flakes
- 1/2 cup cooked bulgur
- 1 pkg tofu, firm
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp Braggs Aminos or soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp parsley flakes

1. Grate carrots (or purchase already grated), dice bell pepper and green onions.
2. If using canned kidney beans, drain and rinse them.
3. In large skillet, add veggie broth, onions, carrots, and bell peppers. Sauté for 3-4 minutes.
4. Add tofu and all seasonings. Stir to incorporate well. If needed, add a little more veggie broth to keep from sticking.
5. Add cooked bulgur and kidney beans. Mix well and continue to cook for about 5 minutes.  
NOTE: Bulgur is a wheat grain found in most grocery stores. It cooks just like rice, either on a stove top or in a rice cooker. It has a ground beef texture and natural nutty flavor. What I like about it is that it soaks up the flavors of whatever sauces you are using it in. I use bulgur in many recipes, including chili beans, tacos, lasagna, no-meat loaf, and more.
6. Serve warm! I like it spooned over bulgur or brown rice.

(Cyd's notes: I use water-packed, organic tofu and typically double this recipe to enjoy for several days! The sausage recipe is a perfect compliment.)

### **Sausage Patties**

2 cups water

2 tsp. onion powder  
1 tsp. sage  
½ tsp. garlic powder  
½ tsp. thyme  
½ tsp. rosemary  
½ tsp. Italian Seasoning  
3 tsp. maple syrup  
4 TBS soy sauce or Braggs Liquid Aminos  
2 cups Quick Oats

1. Preheat the oven to 350°.
2. Combine all ingredients (except oats) in a saucepan, and bring to a boil.
3. Add quick oats and cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring.
4. Remove from heat and allow the mixture to cool. By doing so, I found that the sausage have a better texture once they're baked.
5. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper (or use a silpat). Make small balls from the mixture and then flatten and shape them on the cookie sheet. I make mine about ¼" high.
6. Bake for 12–14 minutes until the patties firm up on one side (they won't get brown). Flip and bake an additional 10 minutes.

OPTIONAL: Pour equal amounts of Braggs Liquid Aminos and Maple syrup into a skillet, just enough to coat the pan. Bring to medium-high heat, and add the cooked sausage patties. Flip the patties after a couple minutes, until the patties absorb the liquids and add a nice brown coating. Again, this is optional. The patties are delicious without coating them, as well.

### **Sausage Sandwich:**

Toast a piece of Dave's Killer Bread and make a sausage sandwich with just a light spread of All-Fruit jelly.

### **Steel Cut Oats**

This is by far one of the easiest and healthiest breakfasts out there. And it's versatile, too, because everyone stirs in their favorite fruits and toppings. Make a big batch and enjoy it for several days!

4 cups water

1 cup steel cut oats

Bring the water to a boil, then add the oats and stir well until the mixture begins to slightly thicken. Reduce the heat and simmer uncovered for about 30–35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until most of the water is absorbed and the oats are cooked.

***Stir In Ideas:***

(My personal favorites are sliced banana, frozen organic blueberries, 1 TBS ground flax seed, cinnamon, currants, and chopped walnuts—all in one delicious bowl!)

Chopped apples, bananas, mango, berries (fresh or frozen)

Chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds)

Ground flax seed or chia seeds

Dried fruit (raisins, currants, or dates)

Cinnamon or nutmeg

A splash of unsweetened plant milk, if necessary

Oats can also be cooked in a pressure cooker, instant pot, or microwave. The directions can easily be found online.

### **Vegan Breakfast Casserole**

*(Recipe by Terri Edwards at [www.EatPlant-Based.com](http://www.EatPlant-Based.com). Please visit her website to see additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

#### **Hash Brown Casserole**

1 30 oz package frozen shredded hash browns oil-free version (or 4 cups freshly shredded)

3/4 cup onions, diced

1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced

3/4 cup fresh spinach leaves, shredded

1 cup No Cheese Sauce recipe below

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

1/2 tsp dry steak seasoning

1 Tbsp ground smoked paprika

salt & pepper to taste

### **Creamy Vegan Cheese Sauce**

1 cup potatoes, peeled and diced  
 1/4 cup carrots, diced  
 1/4 cup onions, diced  
 1 cup broth from veggies  
 1/2 cup raw cashews (or 1/2 cup white beans)  
 4 Tbsp nutritional yeast flakes  
 1 Tbsp lemon juice  
 1 tsp salt  
 1/2 tsp garlic powder  
 pinch paprika  
 1/2 pinch cayenne pepper (optional)

### **Hash Brown Casserole**

1. Dice the onion and red bell pepper into small chunks.
2. In large bowl, mix together onions, red bell peppers, frozen hash browns, cheese sauce, and spices.
3. Toss in shredded spinach leaves and lightly mix again.
4. Line a baking dish with parchment paper. This allows the casserole to be cooked without oil. You could use a silicone baking dish if desired.
5. Pour hash brown mixture into baking dish and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.
6. Remove from oven and serve warm.

### **Creamy Vegan Cheese Sauce**

1. In medium pot, bring about 3 cups of water to a boil. Place potatoes, carrots, and onion in pot and allow to cook until veggies are tender, approximately 15 minutes. Cooking time will vary based on how small the veggies are diced.
2. When veggies are tender, drain and place them in blender. NOTE: reserve 1 cup of the broth, and add to blender. Add all the remaining ingredients, and blend until smooth.
3. Now, it's ready to use in this Hash Brown recipe. Cheese Sauce is also fabulous in nacho cheese dip, veggie pizza, mac-n-cheese, topping for steamed broccoli, or anything else you need a creamy, cheesy sauce in. It makes approximately 1 quart and can be stored in the refrigerator up to 2 weeks.

(Cyd's notes: Terri sums this up perfectly on her website: This oil and dairy-free version of the traditional American hash brown casserole is delicious and hearty-healthy. With potatoes,

onions, red bell peppers, creamy vegan cheese sauce, and smoked paprika, there is no skimping on taste. No artery-clogging butter and eggs either! Vegan Breakfast Casserole is amazing!)

## Main Meals

### **Acorn Squash Stuffed with Cyd's Beans and Greens**

1 cup vegetable broth

1 15-oz can pinto beans

2 cups chopped mushrooms

½ tsp chopped garlic

½ cup chopped onion (optional)

4 cups chopped kale

Salt, pepper, and oregano to taste

Optional: Brown rice

Optional: Acorn squash, baked as shown below

Instructions

1. If stuffing acorn squash, preheat the oven to 350°. Cut squash in half and place cut-side down on a baking pan lined with parchment paper or a silpat sheet. Bake until tender, usually 50–60 minutes.
2. Combine vegetable broth, beans, mushrooms, garlic, and onion (optional) in a large saucepan.
3. Place kale on top and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat to low, cover the pan, and simmer until kale is tender (15–20 minutes).
5. Remove from heat and add desired seasonings.
6. Serve over brown rice, or inside of a baked acorn squash.

### **Baked “Cheese” Sandwiches**

(Recipe adapted from *The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook*, Jo Stepaniak, Book Publishing Co. 2003.)

If you loved grilled “cheese” sandwiches with tomato soup growing up, this recipe is for you. The below recipe makes a block of Colby Cheese which can be used as an appetizer with

crackers, or baked into sandwiches. I highly recommend *The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook*, which includes great recipes for creamed cheese, pizza cheese, Alfredo sauce, feta cheese, and much more.

### **Colby “Cheese”**

1.5 cups water

5 TBS agar flakes (found in the Asian section of health food stores)

2 TBS tomato paste

½ cup raw cashews

¼ cup nutritional yeast

2.5 TBS fresh lemon juice

2 TBS tahini

2 tsp. onion powder

1 tsp. salt

¼ tsp. garlic powder

¼ tsp. dry mustard

#### **Instructions**

- 1) Bring the water and the agar flakes to a boil in a small saucepan. Once boiling, reduce heat and continue stirring until the flakes are dissolved.
- 2) Add the remaining ingredients to a high-powered blender, and pour the agar mixture in as well.
- 3) Process in the blender until completely smooth, scraping down the sides of the blender if necessary.
- 4) Pour into glass containers (I use flat containers and pour until it's about ½" thick).
- 5) Cool uncovered in the fridge, then cover and cool for several hours. Slice as you wish.

#### *To make sandwiches:*

Preheat the oven to 350°. Slice the cheese about 1/8" to 1/4" thick and lay between two slices of whole-grain bread. For best results, place on an open mesh crisper tray and bake for 12 minutes or until they're nicely browned. Carefully flip and continue baking until the other side browns up too. If you don't have a mesh crisper tray, use a cookie sheet lined with a silpat or parchment paper. Serve with your favorite, plant-based, creamy tomato soup!



## Cornbread Vegan

*(Recipe by Terri Edwards at [www.EatPlant-Based.com](http://www.EatPlant-Based.com). Please visit her website to see additional details and notes regarding this recipe. Terri notes that this cornbread recipe can be made to be either sweet or savory!)*

2 cups of coarse yellow cornmeal

1 cup of flour – spelt, whole wheat, or your favorite

1 TBS of baking powder

2 cups almond milk, you want a pancake batter consistency

2 tsp apple cider vinegar

4 oz. can of creamed corn

1 small onion, diced

1 tsp salt

Optional: 1 small chipotle in adobe sauce

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Pour into a seasoned iron 12" iron skillet or baking pan, and bake at 400° for 30 minutes.

## Creamy Chili Sauce with Zucchini, Spinach and Pasta

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

2 cups dry elbow pasta (preferably brown rice pasta)

1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth or water (broth adds more flavor)

1 loosely filled cup of finely chopped onion

2 small zucchini, sliced into ¼" thick rounds, then quartered

1 cup cashew milk (or "lite" coconut milk or soy milk; need a creamy one)

¾ cup tomato sauce

1 TBS dried Italian spice blend (no salt or red pepper added)

½–1 TBS chili powder

4 large handfuls of fresh spinach

1¼ tsp fine sea salt

½ tsp black pepper

Optional: ½ tsp liquid smoke

#### Instructions

- 1) Make sure your veggies are chopped/prepared at the beginning, as the sauce comes together pretty quickly.
- 2) Bring a large pot of water to boil for the pasta. A lid will make it boil faster. Add salt to the water so the pasta is well seasoned.
- 3) Add the onion and broth to a large saucepan over medium heat. Once it begins to simmer, cook 5 minutes, and then add the zucchini and just ¼ tsp of salt. Stir well and cover. Turn the heat down to medium-low. It's important to cover the zucchini so it cooks through well. Cook about 8 minutes until the zucchini is tender but not mushy. Check it a few times to stir and assure there is enough broth to keep the zucchini cooking. Add a bit more broth if necessary.
- 4) Once the zucchini is tender, remove temporarily from the heat and add the cashew milk, tomato sauce, Italian spices, chili powder (start with ½ TBS), remaining 1 tsp salt, pepper, and liquid smoke (if using). Stir well and add the spinach. Return back to medium heat. The spinach will look like a lot but will decrease significantly. Stir the spinach until it wilts down, and the sauce thickens a bit. Don't overcook the sauce, you want it fairly soupy to enjoy with the pasta.
- 5) Taste the sauce and add more salt or chili powder if desired. Remove from heat.
- 6) The pasta should be done. Drain and scoop the desired amount of pasta into the sauce, leaving plenty of sauce to enjoy.

NOTE: Make cashew milk by adding 1 cup cashews to 3 cups filtered water and blend in a high-powered blender until completely smooth. Store extra in the fridge.

(Cyd's notes: This creamy recipe is mouthwatering! I make only enough cashew cream for the recipe by combining 1/3 cup raw cashews with 1 cup water in a Vitamix blender. I've also had good luck using soy milk in this recipe. An 8-oz can of tomato sauce will be enough to cover what's needed. For the spinach, one 5-oz clamshell container is a perfect amount. I coarsely chop the spinach leaves before adding them to the pan. I do add a few drops of the optional liquid smoke—not too much—which adds great flavor and does make a difference.)

### **Cyd's Easy Chili**

There are dozens of delicious plant-based chili recipes online—mushroom chilis, spicy chilis, Mexican chilis, and more. Every kitchen needs a few hearty chili recipes—explore until you find your favorites!

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 red or green pepper, diced
- 1 small zucchini, peeled and chopped
- 1 14-oz can petite, diced tomatoes
- 1 cup tomato puree (or crushed tomato)
- 3 cans kidney (or red, or pinto) beans, drained and rinsed  
(you may even want to use a can of each type of bean)
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp oregano
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- Optional: Brown rice or cooked bulgur
- Optional: Chopped green onions as a topper

#### Instructions

1. Sauté the onion and pepper in a small amount of water until soft.
2. Add the remaining ingredients (except optional rice or bulgur).
3. Cook over medium-low heat for 20–25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Taste and adjust seasonings.
4. Serve over brown rice or cooked bulgur, if desired.
5. Top with optional green onion, if desired, and serve with corn bread for an extra treat.

### **Fat-Free Hummus**

This recipe has been a life-saver on many occasions! It's not only a great dip for veggies or home-made tortilla chips, it works well as a sandwich condiment or to make delicious hummus roll-ups using tortillas. The common ingredients are almost always on hand, and it's much cheaper to make hummus than to purchase an oil-free version (assuming you can find it at the store). I'm sorry to report that the source of the recipe is unknown.

- 1 can of chickpeas or garbanzo beans, drained BUT save the liquid
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- ½ tsp cumin
- 2 tsp Bragg's liquid aminos or tamari sauce

Black pepper to taste

#### Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients (except pepper) in a food processor.
2. Blend on low speed, adding the reserved bean liquid as needed to reach a creamy consistency.
3. Taste and add pepper, if desired.

### **Fat-free Vegan “Cheese” Sauce (and Mac ‘n’ Cheese)**

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

1 small zucchini, peeled and sliced (about 1 cup sliced)

1 lightly filled cup of cooked/mashed Yukon gold potato

$\frac{3}{4}$ –1 cup water, as needed to reach desired thickness

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup nutritional yeast

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp garlic powder

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp onion powder

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp fine sea salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp smoked paprika (or regular, if you don’t like smoked)

2 tsp liquid aminos (or low-sodium soy sauce or tamari, do not omit. Do not use coconut aminos)

1 TBS lemon juice, or more to taste

Optional toppings: red pepper flakes, chopped tomatoes, sliced jalapenos

#### Instructions

- 1) First prepare the zucchini by preheating the oven to 415° and line a baking pan with parchment paper. Peel all green skin off the zucchini and slice into  $\frac{1}{4}$ ” thick slices. Salt and pepper well. It’s imperative to peel the zucchini or your sauce will be an ugly green. Bake for about 15 minutes until tender.
- 2) Meanwhile, cook your potatoes either by roasting, steaming, or microwaving. Do not boil them as they’ll get waterlogged and make the sauce more runny. Leave the skins on if you have a high-powered blender, but if you’re concerned about having a smooth sauce, peel them before cooking.

- 3) After the potatoes are cooked, mash them with a fork and measure out 1 lightly filled cup. Add them to your high-speed blender. (Note: Using a food processor will make this too gooey. Be sure to use a blender).
- 4) Once the zucchini is done, add it along with the remaining ingredients (start with  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water and add as needed, up to 1 cup) to your blender. Blend until smooth. You'll need to stop and scrape a couple times from the bottom. Don't be too eager to add extra water until you've blended a couple minutes on high to get it completely smooth. It will seem thick at first but will start to turn smooth from the water in the zucchini. If necessary, add just a TINY amount of water to blend it.
- 5) Taste and add any extra lemon juice and/or salt/spices. Add any desired toppings.
- 6) To make mac 'n' cheese, simply boil your pasta and pour as much cheese sauce over as you wish.

(Cyd's notes: This versatile, fat-free recipe is a great topper for not only macaroni, but potatoes, tostadas, nachos, or wherever you use cheese sauce! I highly recommend using smoked paprika (not regular) for the flavor it provides. If you want to kick up the heat, add red pepper flakes or jalapeno slices. Also check out Brandi's recipe for Easy Vegan Mexican Cheese Sauce on her website—only 6 ingredients and also wonderful!

### **Faux Parmesan**

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup raw cashews

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup nutritional yeast

Salt to taste (or use salt-free seasoning)

- 1) Pulse all in a blender until powdery. Use caution not to over blend. Taste and adjust salt accordingly. Add garlic powder or other spice if desired.

For a salt-free version, use your favorite Mrs. Dash product. You may want to double this recipe. Store in the fridge.

### **Fries and Sweet Potato Wedges**

What better compliment to a burger or sloppy joe than a side order of fries! These easy recipes consist of potatoes and seasonings. That's it. Tweak the seasonings to your taste!

#### Fries

2 large russet baking potatoes

Seasonings: sea salt, garlic powder, onion powder, chili powder, paprika, cumin, salt-free herbs, or taco seasoning. The world is your oyster on this one, but our favorite combo is  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp of each: garlic powder, chili powder, cumin, and salt.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°.
2. Slice the potatoes into sticks, or use a French fry slicer. My slicer isn't fancy (the white, plastic variety) but it's such a time saver! Leave the potato skins on for extra nutrition.
3. Place in a gallon-size baggie or a large bowl and toss with your favorite seasonings.
4. Arrange fries in a single layer on a baking sheet (lined with parchment paper or a silpat). A mesh baking pan which allows heat to flow around the entire surface of the fries is a bonus.
5. Bake for 15 minutes, then check to see the progress. Flip when they're beginning to brown and bake for an additional 10–15 minutes until crispy.

### Sweet Potato Wedges

2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into wedges

Seasonings: sea salt, pepper, garlic powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, cumin, paprika, onion powder, chili powder. Our favorite combo is ¼ tsp of salt, cumin, garlic powder, and cinnamon.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°.
2. Place sweet potatoes in a gallon-size baggie or large bowl and toss with your favorite seasonings.
3. Arrange wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet (lined with parchment paper or a silpat). A mesh baking pan which allows heat to flow around the wedges is a bonus.
4. Bake for 12 minutes, then flip and bake for 10 minutes until tender.

(Cyd's notes: I typically buy bags of organic potatoes, and always double or triple these recipes. Fries and wedges store well and never go to waste!)

## **Gravy**

Rich and creamy gravy is the perfect topping for mashed potatoes, “meatloaf” recipes, open-faced sandwiches, and hash browns. Here are two of our favorites.

### **Effortless Gravy**

2 cups vegetable broth

¼ cup water

1/4 cup brown rice flour

½ TBS Braggs liquid aminos or tamari (more, as needed)

¼ tsp garlic powder

¼ tsp onion powder

Freshly ground pepper to taste

#### Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a small sauce pan.
2. Cook over medium-high heat, whisking mixture until it boils and becomes thick and smooth.
3. Taste and adjust seasonings. Depending on the vegetable broth used, you may opt to add more liquid aminos or tamari for saltiness. Add freshly ground pepper to your liking.

### **Mushroom Gravy (smooth or chunky)**

½ cup chopped onion

1 cup sliced mushrooms

1.5 TBS brown rice flour

1½ cup low-sodium vegetable broth

1 - 2 tsp Braggs liquid aminos, to taste

1 tsp nutritional yeast

1/8 tsp black pepper

#### Instructions

1. Sauté the onion and mushrooms until the onion is transparent.
2. Stir in the flour.
3. Whisk in the vegetable broth, stirring well to dissolve any lumps.
4. Add liquid aminos, nutritional yeast and black pepper, and cook until thickened.
5. Puree in a blender if smooth gravy is desired, otherwise serve as is.

### **Lazy Day Vegan Tomato Bisque**

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

1 cup packed, finely chopped yellow onion

3 long carrots, peeled and thinly sliced in rounds (about 1 cup sliced)

1 TBS minced garlic

3 cups tomato puree/sauce (jar sauce recommended over canned sauce)

2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

½ TBS dried Italian herbs (make sure it's red pepper-free, or the soup will be spicy)

1 tsp fine sea salt

¼ tsp ground pepper

1 TBS pure maple syrup

¼ cup raw cashew butter\*

Optional, but recommended: bread for toasting and dipping

\*If you are allergic to cashews, see Brandi's website for possible substitutions.

#### Instructions

- 1) Add all of the ingredients except the cashew butter to a pot. Stir well and turn to high heat. Bring to a boil, then stir once more and over. Turn the heat down to medium-low. Let it cook covered on medium-low heat for 25–30 minutes, until the carrots are very soft. Stir a couple times during the process to check on the carrots.
- 2) Once the carrots are tender, turn the heat off. Very carefully pour the soup into a blender, it's HOT! Add the cashew butter. Blend on high until completely smooth and creamy. Taste and add any more salt or dried herbs. Feel free to adjust.
- 3) Pour into bowls. Top with extra dried herbs or ground pepper, if desired, and serve with toasted bread.

(Cyd's notes: This fabulous soup is the perfect companion with the Grilled Cheese Sandwiches! Be sure to visit Brandi's website for additional notes regarding this recipe.)

### Minestrone Soup

A friend brought this delicious recipe to a potluck back in 2013. Not only is it tasty and packs ten grams of protein per serving, you only have to chop *one* thing—a yellow pepper. What's not to love about that? Add warm whole-grain rolls and enjoy! The original source of the recipe is unknown.

1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes with Italian herbs

2 cups water

1 15-oz can chickpeas or garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed

1 cup vegetable broth

1 yellow pepper, chopped

2 tsp Italian seasoning

1 cup dry rigatoni or penne pasta (whole-grain or brown rice pasta)



2–3 cups fresh spinach, coarsely chopped

Optional: Faux Parmesan as a topper (see Mushroom Marinara recipe)

Optional: Fresh basil as a topper

Instructions

1. In a large pot, combine all ingredients (except spinach and optional Faux Parmesan).
2. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium.
3. Cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until pasta is barely tender.
4. Stir in spinach. Serve topped with optional Faux Parmesan and/or fresh basil, if desired.

### **Mushroom Marinara with Pasta**

*(Recipe from Food for Life by Neal Barnard, M.D.; recipe by Jennifer Raymond, M.S., R.D.  
Reprinted with permission from PCRM)*

This quick and simple recipe from the PCRM Recipe of the Week blog has been on our menu for nearly ten years. It's packed with protein and helpful nutrients from mushrooms, such as antioxidants, selenium, and even naturally synthesized vitamin D. Add a side salad and a piece of whole grain bread and you're all set!

1 medium onion, chopped

½ cup water

2 garlic cloves, minced

3-4 cups sliced mushrooms

1 15-oz. can diced tomatoes

1 28-oz. can tomato sauce

1 tsp. basil

1 tsp. oregano

1 tsp. thyme

1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper (I omit or just use a pinch)

½ tsp fennel seeds (optional)

1-pound dry pasta (I use whole wheat spaghetti, fettuccine, or a brown rice noodle)

Instructions

- 1) Braise onion for 2 minutes in water, then add garlic and mushrooms.
- 2) Continue cooking until onion is soft and mushrooms are light brown.

- 3) Stir in tomatoes, tomato sauce, basil, oregano, thyme, cayenne, and fennel seeds, if using.
- 4) Simmer 20–30 minutes.
- 5) Cook pasta according to directions. Drain and top with sauce.

(Cyd's Note: A bag of frozen "steamer" veggies is a nice, quick topper for this recipe. Asparagus works well or choose your favorites. Sprinkle a little nutritional yeast on top for a cheesy flavor, or make the Faux Parmesan recipe).

### No Bother Black Bean Soup

This is yet another one of those recipes that's been in my possession for years and for which I have no clue where it originated. The one thing I do know is that it's as versatile as it is savory. If you want more heat, throw in some cilantro or chopped jalapeno!

½ cup chopped carrots

½ cup chopped celery

½ cup chopped onion

1 14-oz. can diced tomatoes w/green chilies

3 15-oz cans black beans (DO NOT DRAIN)

Optional: Cilantro, jalapeno, or more green chilies, to taste

Optional: Top with a dollop of guacamole or vegan sour cream

#### Instructions

1. Sauté the carrots, celery, and onion in a small amount of water, just enough to prevent sticking, until tender.
2. Add remaining ingredients (except optional items). Remember, don't drain the beans.
3. Heat to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Taste and add in any options, if desired.
5. Serve with corn bread, whole-grain rolls, and/or topped with guac or sour cream.

### Oat-Free Spicy Barbecue Lentil Loaf

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

#### To make the lentils

1 cup dry green lentils (do not use red lentils)

½ tsp fine sea salt

Lentil batter remaining ingredients

½ heaping cup finely chopped white onion

1 packed TBS minced garlic

¼ tsp fine sea salt

¼ cup water (to cook veggies in)

1 cup your favorite store-bought barbecue sauce, separated, plus extra for serving. OR the homemade version shown below is highly recommended)

½ cup medium-grind, coarse cornmeal (not corn flour)

3 TBS ground flax seed

¼–½ tsp chipotle chili spice (gives a hefty kick of heat, just only ¼ tsp if sensitive)

½ cup corn (canned or frozen, drain excess water)

5-minute homemade barbecue sauce

½ cup tomato paste (not sauce)

½ cup water

1 tsp fine sea salt

1 TBS + 1 tsp garlic powder (use only ½ tsp for less intense garlic flavor)

1 TBS + 1 tsp chili powder (use less if sensitive to spicy)

1 TBS + 1 tsp yellow wet mustard

1 TBS + 1 tsp pure maple syrup

2 TBS + 2 tsp dark balsamic vinegar (use a strong quality)

2 TBS + 2 tsp unsulphered regular molasses

Instructions

- 1) Optional: To save time, cook the lentils and prepare the barbecue sauce the day before.
- 2) To make the homemade barbecue sauce, simply add all ingredients to a small bowl and whisk really well until emulsified and thickened. Set aside or store in the fridge.
- 3) For the lentils, rinse and add them with 2 cups of water and ½ tsp salt to a pot. Bring to a boil. Once boiling, cover, turn heat to simmer and cook for 35–40 minutes. The water should be evaporated. Turn off heat, return the lid and let sit for 10 minutes.
- 4) While lentils are cooking, cook the onions and garlic in ¼ cup water and ¼ tsp salt in a small frying pan. Bring to a boil, then turn heat to simmer for about 5 minutes or until water has completely evaporated. Turn off the heat.

- 5) After lentils have sat for 10 minutes, puree about ½ of the mixture with a hand immersion blender. Don't puree all of it, or it will make the loaf mushy. Just eyeball about half of it, and leave the other half full lentils. Add them to a large bowl.
  - 6) Preheat the oven to 350° and line a 9x5 metal loaf pan with parchment paper hanging slightly over the sides for easy removal later.
  - 7) Add the cooked onion/garlic mixture to the lentils. Add only ¾ cup of the barbecue sauce, the chipotle spice, and another good pinch of salt. Stir together well. Add the cornmeal and flaxseed and stir for a good minute or so until it becomes really thick and sticky. Lastly, gently stir in the corn. Note: If you taste the batter and it doesn't seem overly spicy, keep in mind it will become spicier as the chipotle spice bakes.
  - 8) Pour the batter in the loaf pan and spread out evenly. Let it sit for about 20 minutes before baking, so the cornmeal soaks up some liquid. Spread ¼ cup of the barbecue sauce evenly over the top. Bake for 55–60 minutes or until firm and a toothpick comes out clean. You definitely want to make sure the loaf is cooked through so it's firm and not mushy.
  - 9) It's crucial to let the loaf sit for at least 20 minutes to firm up. Gently lift up the loaf with the parchment paper and carefully transport to a serving platter. Spread extra barbecue sauce on top while it's warm. Add chopped fresh parsley on top for garnish, if desired.
- (Cyd's notes: We enjoy this easy loaf with mashed potatoes and gravy, or as "meatloaf" sandwiches for the cooler. It travels well!)

### **Pinto Bean Burritos**

- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 poblano pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped zucchini
- 1 cup chopped yellow squash
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- 2 15-oz. cans pinto beans, drained, rinsed, and mashed with a fork
- 1 TBS chili powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- Whole-grain, oil free tortilla shells
- Optional but recommended: 1-2 TBS fresh cilantro,
- Optional: sliced avocado, shredded lettuce, your favorite salsa

### Instructions

1. Water sauté the onion, garlic and poblano pepper 2–3 minutes, until tender.
2. Add zucchini, yellow squash, and tomato. Continue cooking until zucchini is soft.
3. Add mashed beans, chili powder, cumin, and cilantro, if using. Stir and cook until heated through.
4. Spread mixture on tortillas, top with optional lettuce, avocado, and salsa.
5. Roll up and enjoy, or serve as a great dip with baked tortilla chips.

### Quinoa Salad

1 12-oz box of quinoa, prepared according to package

1 can black beans, drained and rinsed

1 red pepper, diced

1 cup corn

½ cup chopped green onion

¼ cup chopped Italian parsley

Optional: ¾ cup currants (or raisins)

Optional: 1-pint grape tomatoes, halved

Optional: 1 avocado, chopped

Optional: ½ cup chopped cilantro

#### Dressing:

1/3 cup fresh lime juice (with ½ tsp zest, optional)

3 TBS apple cider vinegar

¼ cup pure maple syrup or agave nectar

½ tsp cumin

¼ tsp chili powder

¼ tsp salt

### Instructions

1. Prepare quinoa according to package and set aside to cool
2. Meanwhile, combine all other ingredients (except dressing) in a large bowl. Add the cooled quinoa, as well as any optional items (tomato, avocado, or cilantro).
3. Combine all dressing ingredients in a bowl and whisk well. Pour over quinoa salad and mix thoroughly.

## Smoky Barbecue Sweet Potato Chickpea Burgers

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe. Also try Brandi's Fat-free Baked Southwestern Black Bean Burgers – one of our favorites!)*

1 15-oz. can chickpeas or garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed well

1 cup cook, mashed sweet potato (either roasted or microwaved, don't steam)

½ cup + 2 TBS smoky barbecue sauce (either your favorite brand or Brandi's recommended recipe shown below)

¼ tsp. salt

1 tsp chili powder (optional, for kick of heat)

Optional: veggie add-ins: corn, green onions, chopped parsley

¼ cup coarse medium-grind cornmeal (not corn flour)

*5 Minute Smoky Barbecue Sauce (makes about 1 ¼ cups)*

1 cup tomato puree/sauce

2 TBS pure maple syrup

4 tsp apple cider vinegar

½ tsp fine sea salt

2 tsp liquid smoke (don't omit!)

1 TBS Worcestershire (vegan brand)

1 tsp garlic powder

### Instructions

- 1) If making the barbecue sauce (recommended!), then simply combine the “5 Minute Smoky Barbecue Sauce” ingredients in a small bowl until smooth. It tastes even better after sitting in the fridge overnight, so make it the day before the burgers if possible. You will only need ½ cup + 2 TBS of the sauce for the burgers; reserve the rest for topping the burgers.
- 2) Next, cook your sweet potato whole (with skin on) either by roasting it at 400° until super soft or cook it in the microwave. Steaming or boiling is not recommended, as too much water will get in the potatoes. Let it cool a bit before peeling off the skin and mash it with a fork. Measure out 1 fully filled cup of mashed sweet potato.

- 3) Drain and rinse your chickpeas and pat dry. Add them to a large bowl and mash completely with a fork so that no visible whole chickpeas remain. Add the cooled potato to the chickpeas.
- 4) Add the barbecue sauce (only  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plus 2 TBS), cornmeal, salt, and chili powder (if using) to the mix and stir until combined and thick. Taste and add any more salt or spice. Place in the fridge for 20 minutes to firm up.
- 5) Preheat oven to  $375^{\circ}$  and line a sheet pan with parchment paper. Form the mixture into patties using a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup measuring cup. You'll get 5 burgers this way. If you want them smaller, use  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup. The mixture should be fairly easy to form into patties with your hands. Flatten them to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
- 6) Bake for 30 minutes on the first side. It will take this long to cook before you'll be able to flip them. Flip them carefully with a metal spatula. They should have started to form a cooked bottom. If they're sticking too much, cook them a few minutes longer until they come up better. After flipped, cook 10–15 minutes until they have a nice golden-brown top. The longer you cook them, the crispier the exterior will be. Let them cool 10 minutes to firm up.
- 7) Layer your burgers with avocado, tomatoes, extra barbecue sauce, lettuce, or any toppings you desire!

(Cyd's notes: These burgers are great served on whole-grain buns with all the trimmings. We prefer our burgers a little thinner and crisper, so I usually get more than 5 burgers from the batch. I bake the sweet potatoes at  $400^{\circ}$  for about an hour, and always make extra potatoes for snacks!)

### **Stuffed Peppers**

Whether you prefer red peppers or green, this is yummy comfort food at its finest.

3 large peppers

$\frac{1}{2}$  onion, chopped

1 clove of garlic, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup red pepper

1 cup of cooked brown rice

1.5 cups cooked bulgur wheat or cooked quinoa (or riced cauliflower\*)

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely chopped walnuts (optional, but makes a difference)

1 15-oz tomato sauce

1 8-oz tomato sauce (optional, but I like more sauce)

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. sea salt

(Note: “Tofu Crumbles” Vegetarian Hamburger by Marjon is excellent in this recipe—if you can find it in your area. They’re usually located in the refrigerated section of the produce department, but may be in the frozen section. The product has compliant ingredients and tastes delicious in stuffed peppers. Tofu Crumbles would replace the cooked bulgur/quinoa/cauliflower and the walnuts. Simply sauté the crumbles with the garlic and onion in step #3.)

#### Instructions

- 1) Preheat oven to 350°.
- 2) Slice peppers in half and clean out. No need to boil, just lay them flat in a baking pan.
- 3) Cook the onion and garlic in a just a bit of water to prevent sticking. Drain excess water.
- 4) Stir in the cooked rice, cooked bulgur (or quinoa or riced cauliflower), walnuts (if using), chopped red pepper, salt, and 1 cup of tomato sauce. Heat through.
- 5) Fill the pepper halves with the mixture, and pour the extra sauce over top.
- 6) Cover and bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer.
- 7) Top with the Vegan Mozzarella Cheese recipe, if desired.

\*Riced cauliflower can be purchased frozen (just thaw before using, no need to cook it); or you can finely chop raw cauliflower in your food processor.

### **Sweet Potato and White Bean Curry Soup with Roasted Broccoli**

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

#### Cashew Cream for the Soup:

1/3 cup raw cashews (soaked overnight if you don’t have a high-powered blender)

2/3 cups water

#### Roasted Broccoli:

3 cups frozen broccoli florets

#### Soup:

4 cups water

1 packed cup finely chopped yellow onion

3–4 extra large garlic cloves, minced (about 1½ TBS)

3 heaping cups of peeled and chopped ½” chunks sweet potato

2 tsp fine sea salt

1 to 1½ TBS curry powder (see Brandi’s website for brand suggestions)



2 15-oz cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

¼ cup tomato paste

1 cup cashew cream (see Brandi's website for substitutions)

#### Instructions

- 1) First, make the cashew cream. If you don't have a high-powered blender, soak the cashews overnight in lukewarm water. Drain, rinse, and add to a blender. Add the 2/3 cup water. Blend until completely smooth and no bits remain. Set aside.
- 2) Next, roast the broccoli. Preheat the oven to 375° and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spread the broccoli out and season well with salt and pepper. Bake 15 minutes until just beginning to see the tips browning.
- 3) While broccoli is roasting, prepare the soup, which comes together pretty quickly. Add chopped onion, garlic, and 4 cups of water to a large pot. Turn to high heat. Once boiling, let cook for 5 minutes.
- 4) Add sweet potatoes, salt, and curry powder. Stir well, reduce heat to medium-low and cover with a lid. Cook for 10 minutes.
- 5) Add the beans, tomato paste, and cashew cream. Stir and cook another 10 minutes or so until it has thickened up a bit. Taste and adjust salt or spices if needed. If you like it spicier, add a pinch of cayenne pepper. The broccoli should be done by now. Top the soup with the broccoli and serve.

(Cyd's notes: All of Brandi's soups are delicious, but this one is a definite favorite! Start out with 1 TBS of curry powder, then taste before adding more. I stir the roasted broccoli right into the soup.)

### **Vegan Egg Salad**

*(Recipe by Terri Edwards at [www.EatPlant-Based.com](http://www.EatPlant-Based.com). Please visit her website to see additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

1 block firm tofu squeezed dry

¾ cup chickpeas rinsed and drained

¼ - ½ cup Low-Fat Eggless Mayo (see below recipe)

1/3 cup Dijon mustard

½ cup celery diced

½ green onions with scallions

¾ cup frozen green peas thawed in drainer under warm water

3 Tbsps. Nutritional yeast

½ tsp. garlic powder

1/8 tsp. cayenne powder for spice

1 tsp. turmeric

½ tsp. black pepper

1 tsp. sea salt or for an excellent addition, 1/2 tsp Indian black salt

#### Instructions

1. In blender, briefly pulse tofu, chickpeas, ½ of the celery, and ½ of the onions. Barely pulse this and leave it very chunky.
2. Transfer blender contents to large bowl. Add the other ½ of celery, onions, green peas, and all other ingredients.
3. Stir thoroughly and serve on your choice of whole grain bread with fresh leaves of spinach or lettuces.
4. For those gluten intolerant, serve alone or on your favorite gluten-free bread or crackers.

#### **Low-Fat Vegan Mayonnaise Ingredients**

1 package silken tofu

1 tablespoon healthy sweetener I use sucanat unrefined sugar or agave nectar

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar or fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoons Dijon mustard

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

#### Instructions

1. Open container and drain water. I do this by setting it on paper towels for about 10-15 minutes.
  2. Place the tofu into a blender. Add the rest of the ingredients and puree until smooth and creamy.
  3. Keeps in the refrigerator for about 10 days. This makes approximately 1 pint of mayo.
- (Cyd's Notes: This delicious recipe is a crowd-pleaser and perfect for your lunch bag. For the egg salad, use a 16-oz package of water-packed, firm tofu typically found in the produce section. And for the mayo recipe, use a 12-oz package of Mori-Nu silken tofu, which is typically found on a store shelf. The mayo recipe can be used in a wide variety of salads or as a sandwich spread. Be sure to visit Terri's website for more ideas!)

## Vegan Garlic Alfredo Sauce

*(Recipe by Brandi Doming, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Please visit her website for additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

1 medium white onion, chopped to measure 1 ½ cups

1–2 cups low sodium vegetable broth, separated

½ tsp fine sea salt

¼ – ½ tsp ground black pepper

4 large garlic cloves, minced

½ heaping cup of raw whole cashews (soaked overnight in hot water if you don't have a high-powered blender)

1 TBS lemon juice (or more to your taste, but don't omit)

¼ cup + 1 TBS nutritional yeast

Brandi's notes: It is not recommended to substitute or eliminate any ingredients. If you don't have a high-powered blender, it is crucial to pre-soak the cashews so they can soften and the sauce ends up smooth, not gritty. Drain and rinse the cashews after soaking.

### Instructions

- 1) Add the onion and one 1 cup of the broth to a large pan over medium-low heat. Cook for about 8 minutes until the onion is very tender. Add a bit more broth if it's cooking too fast, or turn the heat down so the onions don't burn. After several minutes, add the garlic and cook a couple of minutes more. All of the broth should have evaporated by now. If not, keep cooking until the broth has evaporated.
- 2) Add the cooked onions and garlic to a blender. Start out by adding just ¾ cup more of the remaining vegetable broth, and add the remaining ingredients (salt, pepper, cashews, lemon juice, nutritional yeast). Blend on high for a couple minutes until creamy and smooth. Add more broth to reach desired consistency, if necessary. Taste and add more salt and pepper, if desired.
- 3) Serve over preferred pasta. (See Brandi's notes on her website for additional suggestions.)

(Cyd's note: If you prefer a nut-free version of Alfredo sauce, be sure to check out other recipes on Brandi's website, [www.thevegan8.com](http://www.thevegan8.com). Search for "Nut-free Vegan Garlic Alfredo Sauce" or "Low-fat Nut-free Creamy Garlic Parsley Sauce.")

## Vegan Mozzarella Cheese

¼ cup raw cashews

1 cup hot water

½ TBS nutritional yeast

2 TBS tapioca starch (or corn starch)

1 tsp apple cider vinegar

1 garlic clove, minced

¾ tsp salt

- 1) If you don't have a high-powered blender, soak the cashews for several hours and then drain.
- 2) Blend all ingredients until smooth.
- 3) Pour into a small saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring often.
- 4) Cook and stir until thick.

## Veggie Sloppy Joes | Lentils

*(Recipe by Terri Edwards at [www.EatPlant-Based.com](http://www.EatPlant-Based.com). Please visit her website to see additional details and notes regarding this recipe.)*

5 TBS veggie broth

1 small onion, diced

1 small red bell pepper, diced

2 stalks celery, diced

1 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp chili powder

1 cup lentils (Terri used red lentils, but any will work fine)

1 cup dry bulgur wheat

4 cups water

1 15 oz can tomato sauce

4 TBS tomato paste

1 TBS Hoisin sauce (found in Asian section of most grocery stores)

1 tsp salt

1 tsp garlic powder

2 tsp balsamic vinegar

#### Instructions

1. In large cooking pot, sauté diced onion, celery, and red bell peppers in veggie broth approximately 5 minutes.
2. Add cumin, chili powder, garlic powder, and salt.
3. Then add lentils, bulgur, water, tomato sauce, tomato paste, balsamic vinegar, and Hoisin sauce. Increase heat to medium high and bring to a boil.
4. Once boiling, turn heat down to low and cook uncovered about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Taste lentils to make sure they are tender. Serve on whole grain buns with favorite toppings. Suggestions—lettuce, spinach, onions, relish, pickles, coleslaw, anything goes!

### **Versatile Rice and Bean Tostadas**

This simple, flexible recipe makes a great tostada topper, a good burrito filling, or it can be eaten straight up! The nice thing is you can easily tweak it to your liking!

2 cups of cooked brown rice (use frozen in a pinch)

1 15-oz can of black beans OR pinto beans, drained and rinsed

½ cup of your favorite salsa

1 package baked, oil-free tostadas (Charras is a good brand)

Optional add-ins:

1 15-oz. can corn, drained and rinsed

Tomato

Onion

Green pepper

Avocado

Fresh cilantro, chopped

Chili powder

Hot sauce

Fat-free Vegan Cheese Sauce (as a topper)

Instructions

1. Combine rice, beans, and salsa.
2. Add any of your favorite options.
3. Serve on baked tostada shells.
4. Top with optional Fat-free Vegan Cheese Sauce (recipe included)

### **Easy Meals**

Don't have time to cook? No worries. There are easy ways you can still eat healthy meals with very little prep time. If you're willing to boil a bag of gold potatoes or a whole-grain pasta, you're already ahead of the game.

- 1) Microwave or roast sweet potatoes. Top them with salsa, greens, or white beans.
- 2) Prepare frozen Sunshine burgers or Engine 2 burgers. Serve on whole-grain buns with a side of vegetarian baked beans.
- 3) Fast pizza: Purchase healthy pizza crusts (such as Engine2 brand), top with oil-free pizza sauce, fresh or frozen peppers, onions, mushrooms, or whatever veggies you like. If time permits, make a batch of Vegan Mozzarella Cheese (shown in the Stuffed Pepper recipe).
- 4) Top pre-cooked gold potatoes with gravy, a healthy soup, or pre-made chili.
- 5) For a cheesy, broccoli potato, top your pre-cooked potatoes with Fat-Free Vegan Cheese Sauce (recipe included) and frozen steamer broccoli.
- 6) Purchase fat-free hummus (or make a fat-free hummus) and spread onto a tortilla shell. Add cut up veggies (peppers, cucumber, carrots, tomato, sprouts—whatever you like). Roll up, slice, and enjoy.
- 7) Make a quick burrito or Mexican bowl by combining frozen brown rice, sautéed southwestern veggie mix, canned black or pinto beans, and taco or fajita seasoning. Wrap in a tortilla shell with lettuce, tomato, salsa, or taco sauce.
- 8) Boil your favorite whole-grain pasta, top with oil-free jarred marinara sauce and steamer vegetables (asparagus, zucchini, broccoli). Sprinkle with basil and nutritional yeast.
- 9) Create a quick salad made of frozen brown rice or other grain, steamer vegetables, frozen corn and/or peas, any canned beans, and your favorite seasonings, salsa, or fat-free dressing.
- 10) Create a quick stir fry or Asian bowl using frozen brown rice, frozen stir-fry vegetables, and a can of water chestnuts. Season with Braggs liquid aminos, tamari, or hoisin sauce, and sprinkle with unsalted peanuts.
- 11) Roast or grill portabella mushrooms, zucchini, or artichokes. Serve on whole-grain rolls with your favorite mustard.
- 12) A healthy tomato soup (pre-purchase, or make the Lazy Day Vegan Tomato Bisque) served with a Baked Cheese sandwich (both recipes included)

- 13) Purchase pre-cooked lentils, combine with scallions, celery, parsley, sunflower seeds, and a bit of lemon juice. Add miso for extra flavor, if desired. Serve with crackers.
- 14) Healthy pre-packaged soups served with whole-grain bread and a side salad.
- 15) Pre-made chili served with cornbread.
- 16) A super large green salad with plenty of veggies, beans, and sliced grapes.
- 17) Quick Pasta salad (leftover pasta, corn, broccoli, white beans, and a fat-free dressing or vegan sour cream recipe)
- 18) Microwave a frozen entrée from PlantPure Nation.

## Desserts

### **Baked Apples**

4–6 baking apples (Gala, Braeburn, Jonagold)

2 TBS chopped nuts (walnuts or pecans)

1 TBS brown sugar

1 TBS raisins or currants

¼ tsp cinnamon

#### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 300°.
2. Core each apple, but not completely through to the bottom. Peel a small strip around the top (around the core), if desired, and also cut a thin slice from the bottom so the apple sits flat in your pan.
3. Combine the nuts, brown sugar, cinnamon, raisins/currants, and cinnamon. Arrange apples in a baking dish. Fill each apple and add a bit of water, apple juice, or orange juice into the core as well.
4. Pour a small bit of water in the bottom of the pan—not too much—just to keep the apples moist while baking.
5. Bake for 40 minutes or until tender.

### **Banana Split Smoothie**

1 cup unsweetened plant milk

1 ripe banana

2 TBS raw cacao powder (or cocoa)

3–5 frozen cherries

## Ice

Blend all ingredients in a high-powered blender, using just 2 ice cubes to start. Add more cherries or ice, as desired.

## Brownies

These brownies are so yummy they make a great option for gift giving! The ingredients to make these brownies are typically always in the house, making it a go-to recipe when you want to make something quickly. Unfortunately, the source of the recipe is unknown, or I would certainly give them the credit they deserve.

½ cup peanut butter (Smuckers Natural or another brand with no added-oil)

¼ cup maple syrup (or honey)

1 tsp vanilla

½ cup unsweetened applesauce

½ cup raw cacao powder (or cocoa)

½ tsp baking soda

1/8 tsp salt

¼ cup vegan mini-chocolate chips + 2 TBS (Enjoy Life Brand works well)

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Line an 8x8 pan with parchment paper, or use a silicone baking pan.
2. Combine peanut butter, maple syrup (or honey), vanilla, an applesauce in a food processor until smooth.
3. Add the cacao powder, baking soda, and salt. Mix again until smooth.
4. Gently fold ¼ cup of chocolate chips into the batter. Pour batter into pan and smooth the top.
5. Sprinkle the remaining 2 TBS chocolate chips over the top.
6. Bake for 18–22 minutes or until the top is set. Let cool completely.



## Carrot Cake

This recipe is a real crowd pleaser and is perfect for those times you want to bring a dessert to a social event. The recipe has been in my collection for years, and I've tweaked it a bit from the original version. Unfortunately, the source is unknown.

1.5 cups whole wheat flour

1 cup flax seed meal

1 cup oatmeal

1 cup natural cane sugar

2 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt

2 tsp. cinnamon

3 grated carrots (approx. 1.5 cups)

2 chopped apples

½ cup raisins or currants

1 cup chopped nuts

2 TBS ground flaxseed

6 TBS water

¾ cup plant milk.

1 tsp. vanilla

2 TBS applesauce

- 1) Mix the first 8 ingredients, then add the carrots, apples, raisins (or currants), and nuts.
- 2) Blend or whisk 2 TBS flaxseed with 6 TBS water until frothy. Set aside.
- 3) Mix plant milk, vanilla, and applesauce, then add to dry ingredients along with the flaxseed mixture. Don't overmix. Spread into a non-stick 9x13 pan.
- 4) Bake at 350° for 25-28 minutes, until golden brown and firm to the touch.  
Allow to cool. The cake is best kept in the fridge.

## Chocolate Mousse Pie

This delicious pie recipe has been in my collection for years, but the source of the recipe is unknown. No baking is required, and the pie comes together quickly. However, the best results are achieved when the crust is chilled overnight. Fresh strawberries on top are a nice addition!

### Crust

1 cup pitted dates

1/3 cup walnuts

1/3 cup cashews

1/3 cup almonds

1 tsp vanilla

### Mousse filling

1 12-oz box Mori-Nu silken tofu (firm works well)

6 oz. vegan chocolate chips (Enjoy Life is a good brand)

1½ TBS honey (or maple syrup)

1. Prepare crust by blending all ingredients in a food processor to achieve a sticky consistency. Press into a pie pan and chill overnight.
2. Prepare the filling by blending the tofu and honey (or maple syrup) in a food processor. Melt the chocolate chips (I do so very carefully in the microwave, stirring often). Add the melted chips to the food processor and continue blending. Fill the pie crust and chill for several hours.
3. For added garnish, I line the outer rim with additional chocolate chips and top with fresh strawberries.

## Dreamsicle Shake

1 ripe banana, peeled, cut into chunks, and frozen

1 mango, peeled, cut up, and frozen (or purchase frozen mango)

1 orange, peeled and sectioned

½–1 cup unsweetened plant milk

Blend all ingredients in a high-powered blender until thick and smooth. Start with ½ cup plant milk and add as needed.

### **Easy Caramel Dip with Apples**

½ cup almond butter

½–1 TBS maple syrup

¼ cup warm water

Instructions

Whisk all ingredients in a small bowl and serve with sliced apples.

### **Easy Chocolate Caramel Shake**

Here's a quick chocolate fix that we throw in the blender now and then. Don't be fooled by the simple ingredients—it's very rich and decadent!

Makes 2 small shakes

1.5 cups unsweetened plant milk

2 small frozen bananas

2 TBS cacao powder (or cocoa)

¼ tsp. caramel extract

Blend all in a high-powered blender until smooth. To make the shake sweeter, add a few pitted dates. To thin the mixture, add a bit of plant milk. To thicken the shake, add small chunks of frozen banana. Tweak as you go.

### **Elvis Has Left the Building Smoothie**

1.5 ripe bananas, peeled, cut up, frozen

1 cup unsweetened plant milk

½ TBS peanut butter

1½–2 TBS raw cacao powder (or cocoa)

Pitted dates, add 1 or 2 if needed for sweetness

Blend all ingredients in a high-powered blender. Taste and adjust to your liking.

## Fantastic Fruit Balls

This recipe was clipped from an unknown magazine in 2009. There's wiggle room with this recipe—add finely chopped nuts or sesame seeds if you feel led, but be aware of their high fat content.

1 banana

½ cup currants or raisins

½ cup chopped, pitted dates

1/8 cup raw cacao powder (or cocoa)

½ apple, peeled and diced in small chunks

1 pear, peeled and diced in small chunks

¼ cup coconut flakes

### Instructions

1. Mash the banana with a fork and set aside.
2. Combine the remaining ingredients (except the coconut) in a bowl, and add the mashed banana. Start by adding about half the banana, and add more as needed. Too much banana can make the balls too mushy.
3. Roll the mixture into small balls and roll in the coconut to coat. Place balls on a parchment-paper covered plate and refrigerate until firm.

## Oatmeal and Chocolate Chip Cookies

This recipe has something for everyone: oatmeal, oatmeal/nut, oatmeal/raisin, or oatmeal/chocolate chip cookies! According to my recipe notes, I began making these cookies in 2012 and I'm still making them today. I'd say that qualifies as a keeper.

1/3 cup unsweetened almond milk

1/3 cup maple syrup

4 tsp apple cider vinegar

2 tsp vanilla

1 cup rolled oats

1 cup oat flour

1 tsp cinnamon

1 tsp aluminum-free baking powder

¼ tsp baking soda

1/3 cup currants (or ½ cup raisins)

Optional: 1/3 cup finely chopped walnuts

Optional: ¼–3/8 cup vegan chocolate chips (Enjoy Life brand works well)

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Combine almond milk, syrup, vinegar, and vanilla in a small bowl.
3. Mix oats, oat flour, cinnamon, baking powder, and baking soda in a large bowl.
4. Add the milk mixture, currants (or raisins), and any optional ingredients (nuts and/or chocolate chips) to the flour mixture and mix completely.
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper (or use a silpat sheet) and drop heaping teaspoons of dough onto the sheet. Flatten slightly.
6. Bake for 15–20 minutes until the bottoms are lightly browned.

### Yonana Ice Cream

Here’s a quick and delicious way to make “ice cream” that even your guests will love.

The “Yonana” machine is a handy appliance that turns frozen fruit into soft serve consistency desserts. I’ve served Yonana Banana Splits in a few of my classes, and the attendees were amazed and delighted. If you don’t care for bananas, there are sorbet recipes using pineapple, mango, berries, citrus, or lemon, to name a few. Recipes come with the machine or can be found online—just be sure to choose recipes which only include fruit and other plant-based ingredients. The Yonana can be purchased online or at Bed, Bath & Beyond. If you have a birthday coming up, put this on your wish list!

NOTE: If you don’t have a Yonana machine, a food processor will work. It may not produce the exact consistency, but still yummy!

Our favorite combos are quite simple:

#### Cherry Ice Cream

Peeled and frozen bananas

Frozen dark cherries

Peel and freeze your bananas when they’re ripe and become spotted. Process the frozen fruit through the Yonana machine starting with a banana, followed by cherries. Process the fruit into bowl(s) so you can stir the mixture for even banana/cherry consistency. Adjust to your taste by adding more cherries or bananas. Repeat the process, depending on how many servings you need. Use frozen strawberries, mango, or other frozen fruits in place of cherries if you wish.

**Yonana Banana Split**

Peeled and frozen bananas

Chopped pineapple, fresh or canned

Chopped strawberries, fresh

Chocolate Sauce

Process the frozen bananas through the machine and spoon into individual dishes. Top with pineapple, strawberries, and chocolate sauce.

**Easy Chocolate Sauce**

10-12 Deglet Noor dates, pitted (packaged SunSweet dates, near the raisins)

½ cup unsweetened plant milk

1.5 TBS cacao powder (or cocoa)

Blend all in a high-powered blender until smooth. Double the recipe if necessary, and adjust to taste by adding more cacao, dates, or plant milk.

**Snacks and/or Cooler Food**

Items with an \*asterisk indicate a recipe has been included.

Any fruit or fruit/melon salad (try something different than your usual picks)

Whole grain, oil-free crackers served with 100-calorie pack Wholly Guacamole

Edamame (purchase frozen and let thaw)

Vanilla plant-based yogurt with fresh or frozen fruit added

Raw veggies (peppers, cucumber, sliced zucchini) with hummus or bean dip

Hummus roll-ups (tortillas, hummus, veggies; wrap and slice)

Sugar snap peas

Cherry tomatoes

Oat bran muffins\*

Pumpkin raisin muffins\*

Rice cakes topped with all-fruit jelly

Unsweetened applesauce

Baked sweet potato wedges\*

Roasted sweet potatoes, sliced, and sprinkled with cinnamon

Approved cereal with plant milk and berries

Air popped popcorn (top with a spritz of Braggs, nutritional yeast; or favorite spice)

Whole-grain crackers with Colby Cheese\*

Barbecue Lentil Loaf\* sandwich, served on whole-grain bread with ketchup or BBQ sauce

Sausage Patties\* on whole-grain toast with all-fruit jelly

Mock tuna on whole-grain crackers or a whole-grain bun with lettuce

Vegan egg salad\* on whole-grain crackers or a whole-grain bun (recipe included)

Mango salsa served with baked tortilla chips (purchase oil-free corn tortillas, cut into quarters, spritz with water or lime juice, add salt or spice, bake at 350° for 12–15 minutes until crispy)

Ants on a log (celery stuffed with peanut butter and topped with currants or raisins)

Stuffed dates (dates, sliced open on one side; fill with peanut butter and one almond)

Healthy cookie recipe\*

Smoothies\*

*~Father, embracing a new meal plan can seem arduous, but with Your help we'll be able to persevere through the learning curve. May we stay encouraged as we begin the planning process, and may we stay motivated knowing that our weight loss and improved health will bring glory to You. Give us the determination needed to select new recipes and create meal plans for our families. Guide us as we shop for nutritious foods and begin to experiment with plant-based cooking. May our initial efforts continue to grow each day and quickly blossom into eating patterns that are second nature. Lord, thank you in advance for the strength of mind and endurance we'll have through our daily connection with You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen~*

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1) Being prepared is a key to success on this eating plan. Are you a planner? If not, are you willing to make a meal plan, shop, and spend some kitchen time preparing food? What obstacles do you perceive, and how will you overcome them?
- 2) Name some foods that you foresee having trouble replacing. (Most recipes can be “healthified” by replacing the unhealthy ingredients with good ones.)
- 3) Name some ways you can cut down on your kitchen time (purchasing pre-cut veggies or frozen items, enlisting family help, batch cooking, etc.).
- 4) When it comes to every night dinners, what’s your typical routine? Are you a batch cooker or do you cook every day?

- 5) Do you currently prepare extra food for leftovers? Do you freeze extras for later use?
- 6) How much water do you typically drink each day? If you're falling short of the recommended amount, what can you do to increase your intake? (Refer to the FAQ chapter for more information.)