



**Bake and Destroy: Good Food for Bad Vegans**

By Natalie Slater

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## PLEASE READ!!!!

Hey, Natalie here. I decided to make this document free & downloadable so people stuck at home during the COVID-19 outbreak can try some new recipes.

Please note that this is the DRAFT of the book I published 7 years ago. The unedited, typo-riddled draft. I don't own the rights to the photographs or illustrations that appear in the book, but I do own the rights to alllll these words, so they are mine to give away to you for free.

But, yeah, there's gonna be mistakes and maybe references to page numbers that don't exist, none of these measurements have been converted and there's no info about yields or serving sizes.

If you think a measurement sounds weird, or instructions aren't clear - hit me up on Twitter or Instagram with your questions.

I hope you stay safe, and have fun with these goofy recipes.

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Dedicated to my dad - chili cook off champion, Hawaiian shirt enthusiast, and all-around great guy.

## Foreword

Okay. You bought a cookbook with a foreword written by a pro-wrestler. Why am I writing this? Well for one, Natalie Slater and I have been through hell and back with each other - and she knows all my secrets. So when she asked me to write this (threatened to reveal my secrets) I fell over myself to write it!

It's not like she actually had to twist my arm to get me to let you all know that the recipes you're about to feast your eyes upon in this book are all delicious as well as vegan. It's simply the facts. A lot of these recipes have been battle-tested by carloads of angry, 250 pound, starving pro-wrestlers who, if you told them after eating any assortment of Natalie's delicious treats that they were in fact, vegan, they would beat you up. (After telling you there was no way those fantastic brownies were vegan, because they don't eat "that crap".)

Alas, most of the world still adheres to the fallacy that athletes cannot survive on a plant-based diet. I, along with the contents of these pages, are here to convince you otherwise. Plus, who can resist desserts named after pro-wrestlers such as the Samoa Joe Cupcakes? And just try to resist the Cannibal Corpse Crock-Pot, I dare you!

Truth is, Natalie is extremely passionate about plant-based baking and cooking, and the recipes in this book are as rad as the author. She put the same amount of hard work and love into every page of this book as she did into the plates of vegan goodies she's send me off with on my way out the door to another wrestling adventure over a decade ago.

I'd stay longer and say many more nice things about Natalie and her cooking wizardry, but writing this has made me hungry. Time for me (and you) to dive into this book and whip up something your friends and family will gladly devour - not a leftover in sight. Enjoy, or else!

P.S. F cookbooks.

- CM Punk

## Introduction

When I was a kid, if I wasn't sitting too close to the TV with a Nintendo controller in my hand, you could find me in the kitchen with my mom. No matter how grown up I got, the magic of turning a handful of ingredients into cake or pizza or pie was never lost on me, and it helped me to form a very DIY credo - *if you're hungry, you should cook yourself something.*

But cookbooks can be so bossy! Just a bunch of people telling you how to make the "best" cupcake and the "ultimate" cornbread. My natural aversion to being told what to do is exactly what inspired me to start Bake and Destroy in the first place. I wanted to inspire people to try new things in the kitchen with a no holds barred approach. Food tastes better when you have fun making it, so why stress over whether or not it's "perfect"?

For years I've shared dessert recipes on my blog, but after transitioning to a mostly plant-based diet, I started getting more and more questions about what I eat *besides* cookies and cupcakes. In this book I've collected recipes for the food I really eat - from tacos to casseroles to a dairy-free version of the birthday cake my mom made me every year for my entire life. Vegan food inspired by my favorite music, restaurants and even a few pro-wrestlers. My hope is that these recipes encourage you try something new - and to use what you've learned to create your own recipes.

So get in the kitchen, and let's get weird.

-Natalie

## Sweets & Treats

Sophia Loren once said, "Everything you see, I owe to spaghetti." I'm no Sophia Loren, but I feel the same way about cupcakes. They took me to the Food Network as a judge on *Cupcake Wars*, to the Cooking Channel where I demonstrated my award-winning Banana Bread French Toast Cupcake recipe on *The Perfect 3*, and now, they have brought me to you - which might be my most exciting adventure yet! So I don't have Sophia's sweet bod, but she never wrote a cookbook, so who cares? (Dang it. I just Googled and she wrote *two* cookbooks. I shake my fist at you, Sophia Loren!)

Since launching Bake and Destroy in 2006, I have made cupcakes inspired by everything from slasher films to Andrew W.K. and it only gets weirder and more delicious from there. In this chapter I've included my award-winning recipe as mentioned above, a chocolate, coconut and caramel cupcake inspired by pro-wrestler Samoa Joe, and a handful of other easy-to-make and even easier to eat cupcakes.

I've also included an over-the-top cake named for my favorite late night B-movie hostess, Rhonda Shear and some from-scratch snack cakes that might look familiar, but they certainly don't taste like mom (didn't) used to make. Along with those, you'll find whoopie pies that look like tiny burgers but taste like a banana split and a couple of homemade cake mixes that make it easy to whip up dessert in minutes.

Brownies made with flax seeds? Cheesecake made from tofu? What sorcery is this? This is what I do, dudes. I can turn a handful of cashews and a can of coconut milk into dessert faster than you can say "this is vegan?" And you can do it, too - so c'mon, let's get some sugar into you before we all starve!

## **Banana Bread French Toast Cupcakes**

If you've spoken to my mom lately you might know that I won a Cooking Channel competition with this recipe. Inspired by a dish at Salt & Pepper Diner in Chicago, these moist cupcakes combine cinnamon, maple and banana for a breakfasty-dessert.

For the cupcakes:

1/2 cup over ripe banana, mashed  
1 & 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
1/3 cup canola oil  
2/3 cup rice or soy milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon almond extract  
1/2 cup walnuts, toasted & chopped

For the frosting:

2 cups confectioner's sugar  
6 tablespoons non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening  
6 tablespoons margarine  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
1/2 teaspoon maple extract  
pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350° and line pan with paper liners.

Toast walnuts in a 350° oven for just a few minutes – 4-5 should do the trick.

Cool, then chop into small pieces.

Throw your mashed banana in a blender or just smash it with a fork.

Sift the flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and sugar into a large bowl, mix well.

In a smaller bowl, whisk together the oil, soy or rice milk, vanilla, almond and mashed banana.

Stir or fold the wet ingredients into the dry. Small lumps are fine. Finally, add the walnuts, folding gently.

Fill liners 2/3 full. Bake 20-22 minutes or until tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan on wire rack for 10 minutes, then remove from pan and cool completely before frosting.

To make the vegan maple buttercream frosting, beat all of the ingredients together until they're light & fluffy.

## Samoa Joe Cupcakes

These cupcakes might be inspired by my favorite Girl Scout cookie - or they could be inspired by a six-foot-two, 280-pound professional wrestler. Take a bite and see which one comes to mind when the chocolatey, coconutty, caramely goodness puts the Kokina Clutch on your mouth.

Cupcakes:

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cold water
- 1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

- 1 batch Caramel Sauce\* (page XX)
- 1 & 1/2 cups shredded coconut

Salted Caramel Coconut Buttercream:

- 1/2 cup margarine
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
- 3 & 1/2 cups confectioners sugar
- 1/4 cup caramel sauce (see above)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon coconut extract
- 3/4 cup shredded coconut

Chocolate Drizzle:

- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon shortening

\*I recommend making this batch of caramel with coconut butter and coconut milk for extra flavor!

Preheat oven to 350° and line a muffin tin with paper liners. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in the remaining cupcake ingredients, and fill prepared cups 2/3 full. Bake 18-21 minutes, or until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan 10 minutes, then remove from pan and cool on a wire rack.

While the oven is still on, spread 1 & 1/2 cups shredded coconut on a rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Toast in oven 6-8 minutes, stirring once or twice, until toasted. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.

Use a chopstick or a straw to poke 4-5 small holes in each cooled cupcake. Use a spoon to drizzle caramel into the holes.

To make the buttercream, beat the margarine and shortening together until well combined. Gradually beat in the confectioners sugar on low speed, then increase speed to medium and beat three minutes until fluffy. Add caramel sauce, salt and coconut extract and beat to incorporate. Fold in shredded coconut.

Set up a double boiler and melt the chocolate and shortening together for the drizzle. Transfer the mixture into a plastic zip-top bag and set aside to cool for about 10 minutes.

Use a piping bag or offset spatula to pile the buttercream high on each cupcake. Dunk each cupcake frosting-side-down into the toasted coconut. Place the cupcakes on a sheet of waxed paper, snip the corner from the bag containing the chocolate, and drizzle a zig-zag of chocolate over the top of each cupcake. The chocolate will set up in a few minutes.

## Peach Cobbler Cupcakes

When I was a kid my whole family vacationed together - uncles, aunts, and piles of rowdy cousins. One one particular outing, we jammed the whole family into a buffet-style restaurant in Branson, MO. We were about to be late to a Yo-Yo Ma performance, but my Uncle Jim refused to leave until they replenished the giant hotel pan full of peach cobbler. Ever since then, “peach cobbler” has been running joke among all of us. This recipe is dedicated to Uncle Jim, who had his priorities straight. See the Party Tip below for frosting suggestions.

3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup cake flour  
2/3 cup sugar  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 & 1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1/2 cup + 2 tablespoons soy milk  
1/3 cup canola oil  
1 & 1/2 teaspoons vanilla  
1/2 teaspoon apple cider vinegar  
1 & 1/2 cups fresh or frozen peaches, roughly chopped

Preheat your oven to 350 and line a muffin tin with paper liners.

Sift together flours, sugar, cornstarch, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg and cardamom. Stir in the soy milk, oil, vanilla and vinegar. Allow the batter to rest for 5 minutes, then fold in the peaches.

Fill each muffin cup 2/3 full and bake 22-26 minutes, until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack and cool completely.

**Party Tip:** I love these cupcakes with a plop of Whipped Coconut Cream (page XX) with a pinch of cinnamon whipped in, or with maple buttercream frosting (see Banana Bread French Toast Cupcakes, page XX).

## Lemon Meringue-ish Pie Cupcakes

I was working on a key lime pie cupcake recipe when I started to get frustrated with all the contradictory opinions on ingredients out there. Some people act like if you use any other lime besides a key lime your head will explode or something. I don't have time for all these weird lime prejudices, so I opted to do lemon meringue-ish instead. Lemons is lemons, am I right? This tangy lemon curd recipe was adapted from one by Bryanna Clark Grogan. Many, many lemons are harmed in the making of these cupcakes.

### Lemon curd:

½ cup fresh lemon juice (2-3 lemons)  
¼ cup water  
¾ cup sugar  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
pinch of salt  
zest of one organic lemon  
2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons plain full-fat soy milk  
1 tablespoon margarine

### Crust:

1 & ½ cups graham cracker crumbs  
2 tablespoons sugar  
⅓ cup margarine, melted

### Cupcake:

1 cup all-purpose flour  
¾ cup cake flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
½ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
zest of one organic lemon  
¾ cup sugar  
⅓ cup canola oil  
1 cup soy milk  
1 teaspoon lemon flavor\*  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

### Topping:

## Whipped Coconut Cream (Page XX)

zest from 1 lemon

¼ teaspoon almond extract

\*Lemon flavoring is more potent, not to mention more consistent than fresh lemon juice. Look for an all-natural, alcohol-free flavor extract that consists mainly of lemon oil.

Make the lemon curd: In a food processor, combine lemon juice, water, sugar, cornstarch and salt until smooth. Transfer to a saucepan and add lemon zest. Over medium heat, whisk until the mixture comes to a full boil (about 10 minutes). You'll be standing there a while, so this would be a good time to look through the rest of the book and start thinking about how many copies you want to order for your friends. Once boiling, stop stirring and boil for one full minute. The mixture will be thick now.

Remove from heat and whisk in soy milk and margarine. Cool in the pan until it reaches room temperature, then refrigerate in a closed container until ready to use.

Preheat oven to 350° and line a muffin tin with paper liners.

Stir the graham cracker crumbs, sugar and margarine together. Place 1 tablespoons of mixture into the bottom of each prepared muffin cup. Use the bottom of a measuring cup or your fingers to pack the mixture into the bottom of each cup. Save the remaining crumbs for sprinkling later.

For the cupcakes, sift together the flours, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in the lemon zest and sugar. In a large measuring cup, whisk together the oil, soy milk, lemon flavor and vanilla extract. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry until just incorporated. Fill each cup ¾ full and bake 20-25 minutes or until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then move to a wire rack to cool completely.

Fill the cupcakes: When the cupcakes are completely cool, use a small knife to cut a cone shape out of the center of each one - the top should be about 1" in diameter. You can discard the cones (I discard them into my mouth). Fill each hole with lemon curd - each one will hold about 1 & ½ teaspoon.

Top each cupcake with a poof of Whipped Coconut Cream that has been beaten together with lemon zest and a touch of almond extract. Sprinkle with remaining graham cracker crumbs.

**Party Tip:** If you aren't a fan of coconut cream, top these cupcakes with a quick lemon buttercream. Beat together:

¼ cup margarine

¼ cup shortening

1 & ½ cups confectioners sugar

¼ teaspoon lemon flavor

## **DIY Cake Mixes**

Why buy a box of flour, sugar, baking soda and chemical stabilizers for a couple of bucks when you can make your own cake mix at home for pennies - no spooky chemicals required!

### **Chocolate Cake Mix**

“Vinegar cake” was the first vegan recipe I learned when I was in high school. I used to make a version for CM Punk to share with the other wrestlers at indie wrestling shows. Like a boxed mix, this recipe makes enough batter for a 13” x 9” cake. See bake times for different sized cakes below.

3 cups all-purpose flour  
2 cups sugar  
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 teaspoons baking soda  
2 teaspoons salt

Sift ingredients together into a large zip-top bag and store in a cool, dry place for up to six months.

To use, stir in:

2 cups cold water  
¾ cup oil  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Pour into prepared pan and bake at 350°.

2 8-inch cakes - 33-36 mins  
2 9-inch cakes - 28-31 mins  
13 x 9 inch cake - 32-35 mins  
Bundt cake - 38-43 mins  
24 cupcakes - 18-21 mins

## Vanilla Cake Mix

Consider this cake mix a canvas - dress it up with add-ins like sprinkles, spices or food coloring, or bake it in canoe pans for a homemade version of everyone's favorite cream-filled snack cake. Cake flour and the 5 minute rest before scooping the batter are the two keys to this recipe!

1 & 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 & 1/2 cups cake flour  
1 & 1/2 cups sugar  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt

Sift ingredients together into a large zip-top bag and store in a cool, dry place for up to six months.

To use, stir in:

1 & 1/4 cup soy milk  
2/3 cup oil  
1 tablespoon vanilla  
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar

Allow the batter to rest for 5 minutes before pouring into prepared pan and baking at 350°. See above for bake times.

## Whipped Coconut Cream

This recipe pops up a lot in this book because it's the easiest, healthiest way to make a vegan whipped cream I've found. No expensive stabilizers or magic tricks required. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of your favorite flavor extract, or add a dash of espresso powder, cinnamon or cocoa powder for bazillions of different flavored whipped creams. This recipe makes enough to frost a 9' x 13" cake, or to generously frost a dozen cupcakes.

3 (14 oz) cans full-fat coconut milk\*

1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

\*I like Aroy-D, which can be found in Asian markets, but any full-fat coconut milk in a can should do the trick. Check the ethnic aisle at your grocery store!

Place coconut milk and whisk attachment for mixer in refrigerator. Chill 4-12 hours, I leave them overnight. Without shaking them, open the cans of coconut milk and scoop out the thick cream on top. Place the cream in your mixing bowl, add the sugar, and beat with the chilled whisk for 1-2 minutes, until it's thick and fluffy.

**Party Tip:** Whipped Coconut Cream sets up when chilled, so you can refrigerate it for about 30 minutes, then scoop it into a piping bag if you want to be fancy. If you refrigerate frosted cakes, be sure to let them sit out about a half hour before serving so the whipped cream softens.

## **Caramel Sauce**

This is an all-purpose caramel sauce - drizzle it on top of non-dairy ice cream, use it to fill cakes and cupcakes, or take shots of it as part of the world's coolest drinking game. Just as butter is the star of the show in conventional caramel, margarine is center stage in this recipe, so make sure you use a buttery, tasty margarine.

½ cup margarine

⅓ cup maple syrup

1 cup sugar

½ teaspoon salt

¾ cup plain soy milk

2 tablespoons arrowroot starch

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a large measuring cup, whisk arrowroot starch into the soy milk and set aside. In a large saucepan over medium-low heat, cook the margarine, maple syrup, sugar and salt. Stirring constantly, cook until the margarine melts and the mixture begins to bubble.

Add soy milk mixture, and turn the heat up to medium. Cook, whisking often, until the mixture bubbles again. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla extract.

Cool in pan for 15 minutes, then transfer to preferred storage container.

Refrigerate for up to two weeks.

**Party Tip:** If you're a coconut fan, substitute a coconut spread for the margarine in this recipe -like I did it for the Samoa Joe Cupcake recipe (page XX). Play with different flavor extracts to make a variety of tasty sauces!

## Rhonda Shear's Up All Night Cake

If you stayed over at my house on a Friday night back in the day, you'd know I had two requirements for a good time - mom's Better Than Sex Cake, and Up All Night with Rhonda Shear. From 1991-1998, this B-movie goddess introduced me to classics like Attack of the Killer Tomatoes and Hell comes to Frogtown. This vegan version of BTS Cake is PG-13, but it's just naughty enough to be nice.

Update: Blehhhhhh Rhonda Shear turned out to be a real bumner. I've always said if I did a 2nd edition of this book I'd rename this recipe because she sucks now.

1 batch DIY Chocolate Cake Mix, baked in a 9 x 13 pan (Page XX)

½ batch Caramel Sauce (Page XX)

1 batch Whipped Coconut Cream (Page XX)

¾ cup vegan semi-sweet chocolate

1 tablespoons soy milk

½ cup slivered or chopped almonds

Cover a baking sheet with waxed paper. Place the chocolate and soy milk in a double boiler (see page XX), melting the chocolate. Stir in the almonds, and spread the mixture onto the waxed paper. Chill in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes, or until the chocolate hardens. Remove from fridge, and chop into small pieces.

With the handle of a wooden spoon, poke holes all over the cooled chocolate cake. Pour caramel sauce into holes and drizzle on top of cake. Top with ½ chopped chocolate, and frost with Whipped Coconut Cream. Sprinkle top with remaining chopped chocolate.

## **Cujo Chow**

Rabid Puppy Chow fans might recognize some of these ingredients. (Heh, get it? *Rabid*.) “Puppy Chow, for the rest of you, is the somewhat unappetizing name for the traditional mix of chocolate, peanut butter and rice cereal that showed up most often at sleepovers and class parties. In this version I’ve added some tasty new elements and even a superfood or two for good measure.

9 cups Corn or Rice Chex cereal

1 cup salted cashews

1 cup shredded coconut

½ cup raisins

1 & ¼ cup chocolate chips

¾ cup peanut butter

¼ cup margarine

1 teaspoon vanilla

¼ cup flax seeds

1 & ½ cups powdered sugar

Place cereal, cashews, coconut and raisins in a large bowl and set aside. Place chocolate chips, peanut butter and margarine in a microwave safe bowl and microwave for 1 minute. Stir, then microwave for another 30 seconds if everything hasn’t melted yet. Stir in vanilla and pour over the top of the cereal mixture. Mix everything together, then sprinkle in flax seeds and stir those in.

Place mixture inside a 2 gallon zip-top bag, add powdered sugar and close the

top. Shake until everything is coated. Spread on wax paper to cool.

## **BurgerTime Whoopie Pies**

BurgerTime, for those of you who are too young to be reading this book. is an early 80's video game featuring Chef Peter Pepper's quest to assemble giant hamburgers by running over the ingredients while fighting off killer hot dogs, pickles and eggs. It's one of the stupidest, most fun video games ever made so I decided to honor it with a really stupid dessert - whoopie pies that look like burgers, and taste like a chocolatey fruit salad. Makes 12 large burgers.

For the buns:

- 1 & 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 & 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening
- 4 tablespoons margarine
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup mashed, ripe banana (about one large banana)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 & 1/4 cup soy milk
- 2-3 tablespoons sesame seeds

Chocolate "beef patty" ingredients:

- 1 & 1/3 cups confectioner's sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder, sifted
- 4 tablespoons margarine
- 4 tablespoons non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening
- 3 tablespoons soy milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

"Mustard":

- 2 tablespoons margarine
- 2 tablespoons non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla or banana flavoring
- 3-4 drops yellow food coloring

Other toppings:

- 1 cup shredded coconut shaken with 3-4 drops green food coloring
- fresh, sliced strawberries

Preheat the oven to 350° and spray your whoopie pie pans with cooking spray. If you don't have whoopie pie pans, simply line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

Sift together the flour, baking soda, nutmeg and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper. In a large bowl, beat together the margarine, shortening and sugar. Start on low speed to combine the ingredients, then switch to medium-high for 3 minutes, until the mixture is fluffy.

Add banana, vanilla and almond and beat 2 more minutes.

Add 1/2 the flour mixture and 1/2 the soy milk, and mix until combined. Then add the remaining flour mixture and soy milk and mix until combined.

Drop 1 heaping tablespoon of batter into each cavity of the whoopie pie pan, or onto a lined cookie sheet, leaving at least 2" between each one. Sprinkle sesame seeds on top of 1/2 the unbaked whoopie pies - these will be the top buns. Bake 10 minutes, or until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

To make the "patty," beat together the margarine, shortening, confectioner's sugar and cocoa powder on low speed, increasing to medium, until the mixture is crumbly. About 1 minute. Add the soy milk, vanilla and salt, and beat on high until smooth. About 3 minutes. Scoop into a piping bag or plastic zip-top bag and refrigerate until firm - about an hour.

To make the "mustard," beat together the margarine and shortening on medium for about 1 minute. Add the confectioner's sugar, and beat on low until combined. Add the soy milk, vanilla or banana flavoring and enough drops of yellow food coloring until the mixture resembles mustard. Beat until smooth, about 4 minutes. Scoop into a piping bag or plastic zip-top bag and refrigerate until firm - about an hour.

To make "shredded lettuce," place the shredded coconut in a large zip-top bag, add a few drops of green food coloring, close the bag and shake until the color is distributed evenly.

Wash and slice fresh strawberries to make "tomato" slices.

To assemble, invert a whoopie pie without sesame seeds and pipe the chocolate buttercream on in a large circle, resembling a burger patty. Sprinkle on some green coconut, and top with two slices of strawberries. Pipe the "mustard" over the top of all of the other toppings in a zig-zag pattern. Top with a sesame seed whoopie pie and press down lightly, so the ingredients ooze out just like a juicy burger.

**Party Tip:** Prepare the "buns" and toppings ahead of time and let your guests assemble their own burgers. Get creative with the toppings. Roll out taffy for

cheese and chop up fruit jellies for onions.

## Pistachio Whoopie Pies

After discovering how easy it is to ship whoopie pies (especially vegan ones, whose ingredients are less likely to spoil in the mail) I arranged a whoopie pie giveaway on my website. The winner requested something with pistachio so I created this recipe to highlight the buttery flavor pistachios offer. I felt compelled to color the filling green, but you could skip that step if you prefer.

For the whoopie:

- 1 & 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 & 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 4 tablespoons margarine
- 4 tablespoons vegetable shortening
- 1 cup (packed) dark brown sugar
- 1/4 cup blended silken tofu (or soy yogurt)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 & 1/4 cup soy milk
- 1/4 cup finely-ground pistachio nuts\*

\*I bought mine raw and whole in the bulk bins and then roasted, salted and ground them as needed at home.

Preheat your oven to 375° and prepare your whoopie pie pan (this can be an actual whoopie pie pan, or a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.) In a small bowl, sift together the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, salt and cardamom. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat together the margarine, shortening and brown sugar on low speed until mixed, and then for 3 more minutes on medium. (You could also do this with a hand-held electric mixer.) Add the tofu and vanilla and beat for 2 more minutes. Add half the flour mixture and half of the non-dairy milk and beat on low until just incorporated. Add the remaining flour mixture and non-dairy milk and beat until completely combined. Add the ground pistachios and stir to incorporate. To make about two dozen 2" whoopie pies, drop the batter one tablespoons at a time onto a lined baking sheet, spacing them about 2 inches apart. I use a whoopie pie pan, which makes about 16 larger whoopie pies. Bake for 10 minutes or until the whoopies spring back when lightly touched. Cool on the pan on a wire rack for 5 minutes, then remove from pans to cool completely.

For the filling:

- 3 cups confectioner's sugar
- 4 tablespoons margarine

4 tablespoons non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening  
3-4 tablespoons soy milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup finely ground pistachio nuts  
Optional: green food coloring

In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat together the margarine and shortening just until mixed. Add the confectioner's sugar, beat on medium for about 1 minute until the mixture is crumbly. Add the non-dairy milk, vanilla and salt and beat on high speed until smooth, about 3 minutes. Add the food coloring now, if using. Stir in the pistachios.

To assemble:

When the whoopies are cool match them up as best you can. Plop a dollop of buttercream on the underside of one (I use a pastry bag to do this, but you don't have to) and sandwich it together with another whoopie.

## **Fruit Punch Winkies**

There's an awesome vegan bakery in Ohio called Bombshell Bake Shop. They make some of the best cookies I've ever had, but my favorite of all their creations is the Fruit Punch Vinkie, a fruity, vegan version of a certain oblong snack cake you all know and love. If you find yourself in the Buckeye State, make sure you get your hands on one, but until then, take comfort in my version - the Winkie.

For the cakes:

- 1 batch DIY Vanilla Cake Mix, prepared (Page XX)
- 1 pouch Tropical Punch Kool Aid

For the filling:

- ¼ cup vegetable shortening
- ¼ cup margarine
- 1 & ¾ cup confectioner's sugar
- 2-3 tablespoons soy milk
- 1 & ¼ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon coconut flavor
- pinch salt

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease canoe pans or prepare homemade pans as described on page XX. Stir Kool Aid into cake batter and scoop ¼ cup of batter into each cavity of the prepared pan. Bake 18-20 minutes, until the tops of the cakes spring back with lightly touched. Cool in the pans for 5 minutes, then turn cakes out onto a cooling rack and cool completely. While the cakes cool, make the filling.

Beat together shortening and margarine until well combined. Add the sugar, and beat for 3 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons soy milk, vanilla and coconut flavoring and beat until fluffy - about 5 minutes. If the filling consistency is too thick, add another tablespoon of soy milk.

If your canoe pan cake with a syringe, just load it up with your filling and inject each cake three times - inject on the flat side, which is the bottom. Otherwise, attach a pastry tip with a narrow end into a plastic baggie or pastry bag, fill the bag with icing and use the tip to inject the icing into each cake.

## **Bike Messenger Brownies**

Every barista has a name for it: a chai latte with a couple of shots of espresso. Some call it a dirty chai, some call it a speeder chai, but at Earwax Cafe in Chicago, we called it a Bike Messenger Chai. If you saw a guy (or girl) walk in with one rolled-up pant leg, a little cap and some weirdly-placed tattoos that was sign to pull a few shots and start steaming some chai. These barista-inspired brownies are dark and chocolaty with a spicy glaze.

For the brownies:

1/3 cup pureed tofu

1/4 cup brewed espresso (or very strong coffee)

1/2 cup canola oil

1/2 teaspoon almond extract

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup confectioner's sugar

1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 tablespoon cornstarch

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup vegan chocolate chips, chunks, or chopped dark chocolate

Preheat your oven to 325° and line a 9x9" pan with parchment paper. In a small bowl, whisk together the tofu, espresso, oil and almond extract. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, cornstarch, baking powder and salt. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry until well combined. Stir in chocolate chips. Spread batter in lined pan and bake 20-25 minutes, until the edges are firm and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with some crumbs attached. Cool in the pan on a wire rack.

Chai glaze:

1 tablespoon margarine, melted

1 tablespoon brewed black tea

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon each ground clove, ginger and cardamom

3/4 cup confectioner's sugar

Stir the ingredients together with a fork, add more tea if it seems thick. Transfer the glaze into a plastic baggie. Squeeze out the air, then seal the baggie. Snip off a tip, and drizzle the glaze over the cooled brownies. Allow the glaze to set up about 15 minutes before cutting and serving.

**Party tip:** This recipe makes a cake-like brownie. For a chewier, fudgier brownie recipe check out Black Metal Forest Brownies on page XX!

## **Black Metal Forest Brownies**

The Black Forest is a gorgeous mountain range in Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The Black Metal Forest is a fictional place in Norway where Fenriz from Darkthrone and I bake brownies and slice them with battle axes. This brownie is based on a formerly top-secret recipe from my friend Melissa Elliott, author of *The Vegan Girl's Guide to Life*.

2 cups flour

$\frac{2}{3}$  cups cocoa powder

1 tablespoon ground flax seeds

$\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon baking powder

$\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt

2 cups sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup canola oil

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup water

1 teaspoon vanilla

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup chocolate chips

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup cherry pie filling

Whipped Coconut Cream (page XX)

dark chocolate shavings

Preheat your oven to 350°. Sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt together in a small bowl. Stir in the ground flax seeds. In a large bowl, whisk together the sugar, oil, water and vanilla.

Stir the dry ingredients into the wet, the batter will be thick. Fold in the chocolate chips and scoop into a 9 x 9" pan lined with parchment paper or lightly greased. Drop pie filling by the tablespoonful on top of batter and use a knife to swirl it in.

Bake until sides are set up - the middle will look kind of wet and crackled - about 35 minutes.

Before serving, top each cooled brownie with a swirl of Whipped Coconut Cream and dark chocolate shavings.

## German's Chocolate Cookies

Sprichst du Deutsch? Well, you don't have to because contrary to popular belief, the combo of chocolate, coconut and pecans is not actually a German tradition. Rather, German chocolate is named for Sam German, who developed the extra-sweet, light chocolate flavor. Take that, everything you ever believed in! Makes about 30 cookies.

1 &  $\frac{2}{3}$  cups all-purpose flour  
1/3 cup white whole wheat flour  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking soda  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking powder  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
1 &  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup soy milk  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup canola oil  
2 tablespoons ground flax seeds  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 &  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups old fashioned oats  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chocolate chips  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shredded coconut  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped pecans

Preheat the oven to 350°. In a large bowl, sift together the flours, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar, soy milk, oil, flax seeds and vanilla. Whisk for about 2 minutes until the mixture thickens. Stir the wet ingredients into the flour mixture until just mixed. Fold in the oats, chocolate chips, coconut and pecans.

Drop by the heaping tablespoon onto baking sheets covered with parchment paper and bake 10-12 minutes until the edges are set up. Cool on pans for 5 minutes, then cool completely on racks.

**Party tip:** I like to slightly under-bake these for a chewier cookie. Since they don't contain any eggs, a little undercooked cookie dough won't make you sick.

## Chick-O-Cheesecake

Chick-O-Sticks are an old-school crunchy candy made with peanut butter and coconut. They're vegan, and even better than that, they're dirt cheap at most pharmacies and corner stores. I smashed them up to make a crust for this creamy peanut butter-coconut cheesecake that comes together with a whirl of the food processor.

### Crust:

1 cup finely ground graham crackers  
¼ cup finely crushed Chick-O-Stick candies  
2 tablespoons canola oil  
1 tablespoon soy milk  
¼ teaspoon salt

### Filling:

½ cup whole, raw cashews (soaked in water until very soft, 2-8 hours)  
1 (12oz) package silken tofu, drained  
⅔ cup sugar  
2 tablespoons light brown sugar  
1 tablespoon coconut oil, room temperature\*  
2 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 & ½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ teaspoon coconut extract  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cup crunchy peanut butter  
½ cup shredded coconut  
¼ cup chopped peanuts  
Crushed Chick-O-Sticks for topping, optional

\*Alternatively, you could use 1 tablespoon coconut butter.

Preheat oven to 350° and spray a 9 ½" springform pan with cooking spray. In a

mixing bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs, crushed Chick-O-Stick and salt. Drizzle in 2 tablespoons oil, mixing well to moisten the crumbs. Add more oil gradually if needed. Add the soy milk, then press the dough into the bottom of the pan. Bake 8-10 minutes until firm, and set aside to cool. Leave the oven on.

Drain the cashews and place in a food processor along with the tofu, sugar, brown sugar, coconut oil, cornstarch, lemon juice, vanilla extract, coconut extract and salt. Blend until smooth - there should be no chunks of cashew. Add the peanut butter and coconut and pulse to combine - this time there will be lumps of peanuts, and that's OK.

Pour filling into prepared crust, top with chopped peanuts (add a sprinkling of crushed Chick-O-Stick, if desired) and bake on top rack for 45-50 minutes, until the sides are golden and the top is puffy. To prevent a cracked surface, place a baking sheet on the lower rack, topped with an ovenproof dish containing 2 cups of hot water.

Remove the cheesecake from the oven and cool it on a rack for 30 minutes, then refrigerate for at least 3 hours before slicing.

## **Pinterest Pie**

I hate Pinterest. It's a place where weird moms post their corny party ideas and it creeps me out. So when my friends all started going nutty over some magical "frozen banana ice cream" they saw on Pinterest, I got ready to delete them all from Facebook. But before I committed mass Facebook murder, I gave pureed frozen bananas a try and I'll be damned- they taste like ice cream. But I still think Pinterest is stupid, so I improved upon the original by pie-ifying it.

### **Crust:**

1 & 3/4 cups crushed pretzels

3 tablespoons sugar

4 tablespoons melted margarine (or canola oil + 1/2 teaspoon salt)

1 tablespoons soy milk

3 oz chocolate

### **Filling:**

5 peeled, very ripe bananas, sliced into coins and frozen until solid

3/4 cup creamy peanut butter

2 & 1/2 tablespoons agave nectar

Preheat oven to 350° and spray a 9" pie pan with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, combine pretzel crumbs and sugar, drizzle in the margarine and mix, then gradually add the soy milk - the dough will be crumbly. Scoop the mixture into the pie pan and press into the sides and bottom. Bake 8-10 minutes, then cool before coating with chocolate.

Melt the chocolate using a double boiler, and pour the melted chocolate onto the cool crust. Tilt the pan to coat the bottom, if you have extra, keep tilting the pan to get some chocolate on the sides, too. Set aside to cool and set up - you can also place the pan in the freezer to speed up the process.

Puree bananas in a food processor until they resemble soft serve ice cream (You

may want to do this in 2-3 batches depending on the size and power of your food processor). Add peanut butter and agave and scoop into prepared pie shell. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze until set up enough to slice into - about 2 hours.

## Frozen Lemonade Pie

Years ago, my mom would mix frozen lemonade concentrate with a half gallon of vanilla ice cream, spoon it into a pie crust and bask in the glory of my sister, brother and me shutting up long enough to gobble up every last bite. Eventually I won my husband's heart with that very pie, and I've recreated it here with a homemade vanilla ice cream made with coconut milk and a quick graham cracker crust.

For the crust:

1 & ½ cups finely ground graham cracker crumbs

⅓ cup sugar

⅓ cup margarine, melted

For the ice cream:

2 (14oz) cans coconut milk

1 cup frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed

½ cup agave nectar

2 tablespoons vanilla extract

Zest of one organic lemon

Preheat your oven to 375°. To make the crust, mix the graham cracker crumbs, sugar and margarine until well combined. Press into a 9" pie plate and bake for 7 minutes. Cool completely.

Use a whisk to combine all of the ice cream ingredients together, then follow the directions on your ice cream maker to freeze it. If the ice cream is too soft to add to the pie shell at this point, scoop it into a lidded container and place in the freezer for two hours. Once its set up, scoop the ice cream into the pie shell, smooth the top with an offset spatula or the back of a spoon, cover with plastic wrap and freeze until firm enough to slice.

## **The Deserker**

Not too long ago, I received what has come to be known as The Greatest Email Ever. It was from my friend James (holler at him on Twitter at @chillhartman) and it contained his detailed plans for creating the ultimate dessert. A dessert so sweet and decadent, so over the top, it could only be called The Deserker. The plans called for stuffing a cake with a pie, which is first stuffed with cookies. This idea, which we have yet to execute due to structural concerns and also not wanting to die of a heart attack, has inspired these suggestions for taking your desserts up a notch on the ladder of ridiculousness.

## **Beyond the Permafrost**

You know what's awesome? Frosting. You know what's more awesome? Frosting with delicious stuff crushed up inside of it. Use your food processor to crush up cookies and/or candy and add anywhere from 1/4-1/2 cup to your favorite frosting as you whip it up. Here are some of my favorite vegan additions:

- Chick-O-Sticks
- Chocolate sandwich cookies
- Pretzels
- Potato chips
- Spicy hard candies like Brach's Cinnamon Hard Candy or Atomic Fireballs
- Nutter Butter cookies
- Lemonheads

## **Do the Cake Shake**

Childhood birthday parties were torture - party dresses, frilly socks, someone else's mom bossing me around - but there was one thing that got me through it: mashing my cake and ice cream together and enjoying the taste sensation that occurs when frosting and ice cream collide. The formula is simple, you blend one piece of frosted cake with a couple scoops of ice cream, and drink it up with the fattest straw you can find. It's the perfect send off for the last, kinda stale slice of

birthday cake. Or, you can whip one up from scratch as I did with my TLC Cake Crew Challenge-winning recipe, Cake Shake, Rattle and Roll. You can check out my how-to video at [http://is.gd/cakeshake!](http://is.gd/cakeshake)

### **Madame Cookiebottom**

Give your cupcakes a little extra something by dropping your favorite vegan chocolate sandwich cookie into the bottom of each paper liner before you add the batter. The cookie will soften once it's baked, giving each bite a boost of chocolate and frosting. It's also a fast and easy way to make two-bite cheesecakes - just toss a cookie in the bottom, top with cheesecake batter and bake. I've tried this with lots of other 2" cookies and although I certainly didn't kick any of them out of bed, sandwich cookies remain my favorite Cookiebottom components.

## **Morning Munchies**

As you read through my breakfast recipes you might start noticing a recurring theme: me trying my best to outsmart my cranky, stupid, morning self. I know most people moan and groan about getting out of bed in the morning, but I don't know many who literally hiss at the breaking dawn. I am that person. I spend my first several minutes of wakefulness trying to think of reasons to stay in bed. "Does my throat feel funny? I think my throat feels funny. If I get out of bed everyone else will get sick too. It's best that I just stay here."

The one thing that eventually does force me to shuffle out of the bedroom is the fact that I am starving. Becoming an adult and graduating to healthy foods ruined cold cereal for me, and oatmeal just looks like depression in a bowl. Cold pizza will do in a pinch, but why not live a little?

With a little planning - sometimes as little as making sure you have flour and maple syrup - you too can make vegan breakfasts worth getting out of bed for. In fact, you might even find yourself tossing together a tofu scramble for dinner or snacking on a healthy donut midday. I bet you will.

In this chapter you'll find a versatile breakfast cookie for your first meal on the go, French toast inspired by an Elvis-impersonating pro-wrestler, whole wheat donuts, two-toned muffins and a green smoothie disguised as a milkshake.

## Honky Tonk French Toast

Traditionally in the baking world the combo of peanut butter and banana calls for naming your dish after Elvis Presley, who loved peanut butter and banana sandwiches almost as much as he loved prescription drugs and rhinestones. But what I've done here is put the peanut butter and banana into the bread, then soaked it in peanut butter custard, making it an Elvis-inspired ass kicker much like professional wrestler Honky Tonk Man. Make the bread the night before you want to make French toast to give it time to dry out properly.

For the banana bread:

- 1 & 3/4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/3 cup vegetable shortening
- 3/4 cup natural peanut butter, crunchy or smooth
- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 3 large, mashed bananas
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

French toast it with:

- 1 cup peanut butter, smooth
- 1 & 1/2 cup soy milk
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch or arrowroot starch
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon oil (for pan)

Preheat your oven to 350°. In a small bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, soda, allspice and salt. In a medium bowl, cream shortening and peanut butter, then beat in sugar, bananas and vanilla. With a wooden spoon, stir dry

ingredients into wet ingredients. Pour batter into well-greased and floured loaf pan and bake 40-50 minutes until golden brown and a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean. Cool in pan 15 minutes, then remove from pan and cool completely on a wire rack.

When completely cool, cut bread into slices and store uncovered until slices are no longer soft. (Overnight should work.)

Preheat your oven to 350°. Place peanut butter in a microwave-safe bowl and zap it for 30-60 seconds, until it's melted. Whisk melted peanut butter together with soy milk, cornstarch, vanilla and cinnamon. Lay slices of banana bread out on a rimmed baking sheet and pour peanut butter custard mixture over the top, then flip slices to coat them. Soak for about 10 minutes.

Place soaked banana bread slices on a lightly greased baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes, turning over once 1/2 way through. French toast has been achieved once the slices are warm and slightly crispy.

Serve warm with maple syrup and slices of fresh banana.

## Breakfast Pizza

This dish is one of my husband's many contributions to this book. (He made me say that.) If, like us, you believe that Sunday morning breakfast should immediately be followed by a nap, you will appreciate the genius of a biscuit crust topped with gravy and tofu scramble. For convenience sake, you can prepare the gravy and tofu one day ahead of time, and just make the crust fresh in the morning.

For the gravy:

- 2 tablespoons margarine
- 2 teaspoon soy sauce (or Bragg's Amino Acids)
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1 cup plain soy milk
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1/2 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- salt and pepper, to taste

In a large saucepan, melt margarine over medium-low heat. Whisk in soy sauce and flour, continue to whisk for 2 minutes - the mixture will form a paste. Add vegetable broth, soy milk, onion powder, garlic powder, nutritional yeast and sage and whisk for a few minutes to break up the lumps. Raise the heat to medium-high until bubbles form around the edges of the gravy, then reduce the heat to medium-low and cook until thickened (about 5 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in apple cider vinegar and salt and pepper. Set aside.

For the tofu scramble:

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 block extra firm tofu, drained
- 1 cup thinly sliced broccoli
- 1/2 cup grated carrot
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary

1 teaspoon onion powder  
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons water  
1/4 cup nutritional yeast

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook minced garlic for about one minute, stirring often. Break the tofu into bite-sized pieces and add it to the pan along with the broccoli and carrot. Cook for about 10 minutes, using a metal spatula to turn the mixture over and to scrape the bottom of the pan now and again. The garlic and carrots will turn into brown crispy stuff - don't worry, that stuff is good!

In a small bowl or mixing cup, stir together rosemary, onion powder, turmeric, salt and water. Add this mixture, and the nutritional yeast to the tofu and cook 5 more minutes. Set aside and prepare the crust.

For the crust:

1 cup plain soy milk  
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar  
2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting the board  
1/4 teaspoon baking soda  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
6 tablespoons vegetable shortening

Preheat your oven to 450°. Add apple cider vinegar to soy milk and set aside to curdle.

Combine the dry ingredients in a bowl, and use a pastry blender or two forks to cut shortening into the flour until it resembles coarse meal.

Add the curdled soy milk and mix just until combined. The mixture should be wet, so add a splash more soy milk if it appears dry.

Turn the dough out onto a floured countertop and gently pat it out until it's about 1/2" thick. (Using a rolling pin with result in a tough biscuit!) Fold the pressed dough into its center 4-5 times so you have a pile, and gently pat it out into a

circle that's about 1/2" thick.

Place the dough onto a baking sheet - if you want to make it more pizza-like, press the center down slightly more so the edges are raised like a crust. Bake the biscuit crust for 5 minutes, then pull it out of the oven and top it with 1/2 the gravy and all of the tofu scramble. Place the pizza back into the oven and cook until the biscuit is cooked through - about 6-8 more minutes. Slice and serve with remaining warm gravy on top.

## You Don't Know Jack Hash

I wake up mega grumpy and tired, so I like to prep breakfast the night before so I have a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Cook your jackfruit and chop your sweet potatoes before you go to sleep and wake up to a smoky sweet hash that will knock that crabby look off your face.

### Smoky Jackfruit:

- 1 (20 oz) can young jackfruit in brine
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1/2 cup tomato puree
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 1 tablespoon Braggs Liquid Aminos (or soy sauce)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon hickory liquid smoke
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

### Hash:

- 4 cups sweet potatoes, peeled & diced (about 2 potatoes)
- 1 cup chopped toasted walnuts
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced

Drain and wash the jackfruit, then squeeze out as much of the water as you can. Heat the oil in a medium skillet over a medium flame, saute the garlic for 1 minute, then add the jackfruit and cook 3-4 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, mix together the tomato puree, water, nutritional yeast, Braggs, tomato paste, maple syrup, onion powder, liquid smoke, paprika and salt. Stir the cooked jackfruit into the tomato mixture and transfer to a slow cooker.

Cook on high, stirring every 15 mins or so, and adding water as needed. When the jackfruit is tender (1 hour), remove from slow cooler and use two forks to shred it. Transfer to a covered container and refrigerate several hours or

overnight.

Place the sweet potatoes in a large microwave safe bowl with 1/2 cup water. Cover and cook on high until potatoes are tender (8-10 mins), drain and set aside.

Add oil to a large skillet and heat over medium-high flame. Saute onions until soft and translucent (6-8 minutes), then add sweet potatoes, walnuts and jackfruit. Cook until potatoes begin to brown (5-8 minutes). If needed, add a splash more of oil to finish cooking.

While that cooks, place the avocado in a food processor with the lime juice and process until creamy. Salt and pepper to your taste.

## The Early Bird Special

I came up with this recipe one cold Chicago winter morning as I was missing my grandparents' sunny retirement village in Florida. The best thing about summers with Don and Sharon is going out for a late breakfast. I walk away so full of pancakes I'm not hungry until dinner at 4pm. Serve this maple-cinnamon donut with Orange Juice Granita (page XX) and eat while watching The Weather Channel at top volume.

2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/4 cup pure maple syrup  
1 tablespoon margarine, melted and cooled  
1 very ripe banana, mashed  
3/4 cup soy milk  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/2 teaspoon maple flavoring

1 package of your favorite vegetarian bacon\*

\*If you're skipping the veggie bacon I recommend tossing a 1/2 cup toasted and chopped walnuts or pecans into the batter to give this soft donut some crunch.

Preheat your oven to 325° and grease your donut pan. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Set aside. In a small bowl, mix together the brown sugar, syrup, margarine, banana, soy milk, vanilla and maple flavor. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry, mixing just until combined.

Fill each donut cavity 2/3 full and bake for 10-12 minutes, or until the tops spring back when lightly touched. Remove from pans while still hot and cool on a wire rack.

While the donuts are baking, start your bacon nest, if using. Using a pizza cutter,

slice cold veggie bacon into thin strips. Heat two tablespoons oil in a large skillet. Carefully drop strips into hot oil, allowing them to curl as they cook. Turn pieces over to ensure proper cooking. (Veggie bacon tends not to curl, so to achieve the “nest” look you’ll need to manipulate it with tongs while it cooks.) Place nest atop warm donuts and drizzle with maple syrup.

## Whole Wheat Choco-Coconut Donuts

This isn't your typical chocolate donut. Made with whole wheat flour and tofu, this donut could serve as an actual breakfast, not some shameful thing you grab on your way to work. It's fluffy and light, almost like German chocolate cake. For an even more indulgent donut, add a 1/2 cup each of chopped dark chocolate and pecans to the batter.

2 cups whole wheat pastry flour  
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 salt  
2 tablespoons canola oil  
1/4 cup pureed tofu (or soy yogurt)  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
3/4 cup coconut milk  
1/2 cup soy milk  
1 cup shredded coconut

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease donut pan and set aside. In a large bowl, sift flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a medium bowl, whisk together oil, tofu, brown sugar and coconut milk. Stir coconut mixture into dry ingredients just until incorporated. Fold in shredded coconut and fill donut cavities 1/2 full. Bake 12-15 minutes or until tops spring back when lightly touched. Cool in pan 5 minutes, then transfer to a rack to cool completely.

Optional chocolate glaze:

Place about 2" water into a large pot and place over medium heat on stovetop. Place 1 cup dairy-free chocolate or chocolate chips into a large, heatproof bowl and place bowl over pot of hot water. Stir as the chocolate melts, then remove from heat. Dip each donut into chocolate and set on waxed paper until the chocolate sets (about 10 minutes).

## Banana Carrot Cake Donuts

I was, and still am, the weird kid who preferred carrot cake to chocolate. The shredded texture, unexpected sweetness, and all the spices that go along with it make carrot cake something special. Celebrate your inner weird kid with these tasty donuts featuring a tropical coconut and pineapple glaze.

1/2 cup margarine  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 ripe banana, mashed  
1/4 cup soy milk  
2/3 cup finely shredded carrots  
3/4 cup walnuts, chopped  
2 cup all purpose flour  
2 teaspoon. ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon. nutmeg  
1-1/2 teaspoon. baking powder  
1-1/2 teaspoon. baking soda

### *Pineapple Coconut Glaze:*

1/4 cup cream of coconut  
1/4 cup chopped fresh pineapple  
3 cups confectioners sugar  
2-3 tablespoons soy milk

Heat oven to 325°. Spray donut pan with nonstick cooking spray; set aside. For the donuts, cream together margarine, sugar and salt in large bowl. Add mashed banana, soy milk and vanilla extract and beat until smooth. Stir in carrots and walnuts.

Sift together flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder, and baking soda. Slowly add dry ingredients to wet ingredients, stirring until combined.

Fill donut cavities 1/2 full. Bake 12-15 minutes. Let cool in pan 5 minutes before removing to wire rack.

For the glaze, toss cream of coconut, fresh pineapple and confectioner's sugar in a food processor and pulse until smooth. Add soy milk as needed to achieve a dunk-able texture. Dip each donut into the glaze and set on waxed paper or a cooling rack until the glaze sets up, about 5 minutes.

## Breakfast Bites

If you're like me in the morning - hungry and crabby - you can't be bothered with preparing a proper first meal. Make these wholesome oatmeal bites the night before and cut back on grouchiness by 75%. (This statement has not been evaluated by the FDA and is most likely made up.) They're yummy and chewy as-is, or you can smear them with almond butter or toss them into your favorite non-dairy yogurt for an instant parfait. Feel free to swap in your favorite dried fruit and nuts.

- 1 very ripe banana, mashed
- ¼ cup all-natural applesauce
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup or agave nectar
- juice from ½ a lemon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup whole wheat pastry flour
- ½ cup coconut flakes
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ⅓ cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons flax seeds, ground
- 1 tablespoon diced fresh ginger (more or less to taste)
- zest of one organic lemon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat the oven to 350° and line two baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone mats. In a small bowl, combine the banana, applesauce, oil, maple syrup, lemon juice and vanilla. In a large bowl, combine all of the remaining ingredients. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry, and stir to mix. Scoop a heaping tablespoon of dough onto the baking sheet, leaving at least 1" in between each cookie. Use your palm to slightly flatten the tops. Bake for 20-22 minutes, until the tops and edges are lightly browned. Cool cookies on a wire rack.

## The Non-Copout Tofu Scramble

According to my friend Ricky, tofu scramble is the ultimate vegan cop-out. It's hard to argue otherwise - often beige and flavorless, it's the staple vegan item on most contemporary diners' menus. With this Greek-inspired recipe, I set out not just to reclaim tofu scramble, but also to shove it in Ricky's face. Earthy Italian seasoning collides with tart lemon juice and Kalamata olives making this scramble anything but a copout.

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 block extra firm tofu, drained
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 cup nutritional yeast
- 1/4 cup sun dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1/3 cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- a few handfuls of spinach, chopped

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook minced garlic for about one minute, stirring often. Break the tofu into bite-sized pieces and add it to the pan. Cook for about 10 minutes, using a metal spatula to turn the tofu over and to scrape the bottom of the pan now and again.

In a small bowl or mixing cup, stir together the Italian seasoning, salt and lemon juice. Add this mixture, and the nutritional yeast to the tofu and cook 5 more minutes. Add the tomatoes, olives and spinach and cook just until the spinach wilts.

## Mighty Migas

My sister asked me to write this recipe for her husband Will. He looks exactly like Ricky “The Dragon” Steamboat, so I will basically do anything for him. Migas is an egg dish popular in the Southwest, it uses up leftover tortillas to make a stick-to-your ribs breakfast fit for a Texan. I’ve used tofu in place of eggs here, and replaced chorizo with black beans, but otherwise stayed true to the original recipe to make Will “the Steamboat” happy.

2 tablespoons oil  
1 block extra firm tofu, drained  
1/2 sweet onion, chopped  
1 cup sliced mushrooms  
1/2 red bell pepper, chopped  
1 chipotle chili in adobo sauce, rinsed & finely chopped  
1 can black beans, drained & rinsed  
1 ripe tomato, diced  
1/4 cup nutritional yeast  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 lb spinach leaves, chopped  
1 lime, cut into wedges  
Chopped fresh cilantro, diced avocado (optional)

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
4-6 corn tortillas (See Party Tip)

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Break the tofu into bite-sized pieces and add it to the pan. Cook for 5 minutes, using a metal spatula to turn the tofu over occasionally. Throw in the onion, mushrooms, red bell pepper and chipotle chili. Cook for 5 more minutes.

Add the black beans tomatoes, nutritional yeast and salt - cook 5 more minutes. Migas is traditionally a moist dish, but if, after 5 minutes it looks too wet for your taste, turn the heat up and cook off some of the excess moisture.

While that cooks, heat the oil in a heavy skillet and fry the tortillas one at a time, until they start to brown, make sure to flip them and cook both sides. Stack the cooked tortillas on a cutting board, and use a sharp knife to chop into bite-sized pieces.

Add the spinach to the tofu, and cook just until it begins to wilt. Remove from heat and stir in tortilla pieces just before serving. Salt and pepper to taste.

Serve topped with cilantro and chunks of avocado, and a wedge of lime.

**Party Tip:** If you don't normally have corn tortillas laying around the house - *what is wrong with you?* Anyway, if that's not your thing, you can smash up some tortilla chips and use them instead.

## **This Granola Bar Will Save Your Life**

Back before toddlers had smartphones and people could just Google themselves out of terrible situations, I found myself hungry and lost in Toledo, OH. A greasy diner was the only source of food for miles and not even their hamburger buns were vegan. If only I'd had one of these granola bars in my pocket I might not have eaten ketchup for dinner that night. Save yourself. Make these granola bars and carry them with you always.

2 cups oats  
3/4 cup wheat germ  
3/4 cup sunflower seeds  
1/2 cup almond slivers  
1/2 cup cashews, crushed  
1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger  
1 cup dried cranberries  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup agave nectar  
1/4 cup margarine  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1/4 teaspoon ground clove  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 400°. On a baking sheet with raised sides, stir together the oats, wheat germ, sunflower seeds, almonds and cashews. Bake 8-10 minutes, stirring often, until toasted. Remove from oven, transfer to a large bowl and stir in the ginger and cranberries.

Line a 11 x 13" baking dish with parchment paper and spray with nonstick spray. (A smaller pan such as a 9 x 13" is fine, it will just result in thicker bars.)

In a saucepan over medium heat, bring the brown sugar, agave, margarine, cinnamon, cardamom, clove and salt to a simmer, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Pour this mixture over the nut mixture and stir together so everything is coated. Transfer to prepared baking dish and use a rubber spatula to spread it out and press it into the pan.

Place a sheet of waxed paper on top, and press down hard to compact the mixture into the pan. Let this cool in the pan 2-3 hours, then turn out onto a cutting board and use a large knife to cut into bars.

Preheat your oven to 300°, and place the cut bars on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake 20 minutes, or until the edges start to brown. Cool completely, then store in an airtight container or plastic wrap.

**Party Tip:** Stir in some coconut and cacao nibs for an extra special morning munchie!

## Chai Berry Muffins

I have earned a reputation, at least with my husband, for being a spice addict. He sees “cardamom-rosewater” or “clove-infused” on a menu and shoots a knowing glance my way, because I love spicy spices and I don’t care who knows. Haters will try and tell you that spice muffins are just for cold-weather, so I stuffed these spicy muffins with juicy summer berries. Try and hate on that, sucka.

2 black tea bags  
3/4 cup soy or rice milk  
1 & 3/4 cups flour  
2/3 cup sugar  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
1 teaspoon cardamom  
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves  
pinch white pepper  
1/3 cup canola or veggie oil  
2 & 1/2 tablespoons ground flax seeds  
3 tablespoons water  
1 cup frozen mixed berries

Then you:

Preheat your oven to 400°. Grease your muffin pan. Heat soy or rice milk on stovetop or in microwave (until almost boiling) add tea bags, steep 3-4 minutes. Remove tea bags and cool. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar, spices, pepper and salt. Stir in frozen berries. In a small bowl, whisk the ground flaxseed and water. Add this, the milk tea mixture and oil to the dry ingredients. Stir just until mixed, the batter will be lumpy. Scoop batter into muffin pan and bake 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool 1 minute before removing from pan.

## Venus Chocolate-Pumpkin Muffins

Named for Venus, the feline Internet sensation with a half-black, half-orange tabby face, these muffins take a bit more effort than their single-color counterparts, but I think you'll agree it's well worth it. It also makes about 10-11 muffins, rather than a traditional dozen - a quirk that I hope you will find strangely endearing, just like Venus' face.

### Chocolate batter:

- 1 tablespoon + 3/4 teaspoon ground flax seeds
- 1 tablespoon + 1 & 1/2 teaspoons water
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup white whole wheat flour
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips + more for sprinkling
- 1/2 cup soy milk
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

\*For an extra-dark chocolate, use half Dutch process cocoa powder, half regular cocoa powder.

### Pumpkin batter:

- 1 tablespoon + 3/4 teaspoon ground flax seeds
- 1 tablespoon + 1 & 1/2 teaspoon water
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- pinch ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- heaping 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 1/4 cup soy milk

3/4 teaspoon vanilla  
1/4 cup chopped walnuts

Streusel topping:

1/4 cup flour  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
2 tablespoons margarine  
pinch of ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350° and lightly grease a muffin pan (or line with paper liners).

Make the chocolate batter:

In a small cup, stir together the flax seed meal and water until it becomes thick - about 1 minute. In a large bowl, sift together the flours, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, salt and sugar. Stir in the chocolate chips. Add the remaining ingredients, including the flaxseed mixture, and stir just until combined - do not overmix.

Then, make the pumpkin batter:

In a small cup, stir together the flaxseed meal and water until it becomes thick - about 1 minute. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and ginger. In a smaller bowl, stir together the flax mixture, canola oil, pumpkin, soy milk and vanilla. Gently stir the wet ingredients into the dry, then fold in the walnuts. Do not overmix.

In a small bowl, use a fork to combine the ingredients for the streusel topping. It will be a crumbly mixture.

Add equal parts of each batter to each prepared muffin cup, filling each one 2/3 full. Stack one flavor on top of the other, use two spoons to scoop them in side-by-side, or use a toothpick to swirl the flavors together. Sprinkle the tops with streusel topping and chocolate chips, and lightly pat the toppings down into the batter.

Bake 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in the pans for 10 minutes, then transfer to a cooking rack to cool completely.

## **Breakfast Granitas: The Slurpee's Stuck-up Cousin**

A granita is a semi-frozen Sicilian dessert, it's also fancy people talk for a Slurpee. As a long-time advocate of dessert for breakfast, I like to serve these frosty treats along side Honkey Tonk French Toast (page XX) or the Early Bird Special (page XX).

### **Orange Juice Granita**

Ingredients:

1 & 1/4 cups water

1/2 cup sugar

Zest of 2 organic oranges

Juice of 6 oranges (12 oz)

Juice of one lemon

In a small saucepan, bring water, sugar and orange zest to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until sugar is dissolved. Mix in the orange and lemon juice, and pour into a shallow pan. A baking sheet with raised edges works well, or a jelly roll pan.

Cover with foil and freeze 1-2 hours until solid around edges. Scrape mixture with a fork, mixing from the edges inward. Repeat the freezing and scraping process every 30 minutes (at least three times) until the entire mixture is flakey.

When ready to serve, scrape into serving dishes.

### **Arnold Palmer Granita**

Ingredients:

1 cup water

3/4 cup sugar

3 cups double-strength black iced tea (6 tea bags, 3 cups water)

Juice from 2 lemons (about 1/2 cup)

In a small saucepan, combine sugar and water and heat over a medium flame, stirring occasionally. Cook until the mixture begins to boil, then remove from heat and cool completely.

When the sugar water cools, stir it together with the iced tea and lemon juice and pour into a shallow pan.

Cover with foil and freeze 2 hours until solid around edges. Scrape mixture with a fork, mixing from the edges inward. Repeat the freezing and scraping process every 30 minutes (at least three times) until the entire mixture is flakey.

When ready to serve, scrape into serving dishes.

### **Double Soy Latte Granita**

Granita ingredients:

1 & 1/2 brewed espresso or really strong coffee

1 & 1/2 cup soy milk

1/4 cup vanilla syrup (see recipe below)

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

Vanilla syrup ingredients:

1 cup sugar

1 cup water

1 tablespoons vanilla extract

To make the vanilla syrup, stir the sugar and water together in a saucepan and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Cook until mixture begins to boil, then turn the heat down to low and simmer, stirring often, for 5-7 minutes until the mixture turns a golden color. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla. Allow syrup to cool before transferring it to your preferred bottle or container. Use it in this recipe, or to easily sweeten iced coffee and tea.

To make the granita, stir the ingredients together and pour into a shallow pan.

Cover with foil and freeze 1-2 hours until solid around edges. Scrape mixture with a fork, mixing from the edges inward. Repeat the freezing and scraping process

every 30 minutes (at least three times) until the entire mixture is flakey.  
When ready to serve, scrape into serving dishes.

## Smoothie Operator

I was the kid who threw things off the roof just to watch them smash on the sidewalk below - a natural-born smoothie fan. There's something about putting a bunch of perfectly good food in a blender and watching it explode that just makes me happy. Here are three of my favorite smoothies to satisfy the sadist in me.

### Candy Bar Smoothie

This recipe was given to me by my former WWE Women's Champion Amy "Lita" Dumas, so I can guarantee it's healthiness. But it is often consumed by reigning Sitting on the Couch Watching Reruns of Cops Champion Natalie "Naptime" Slater, so I can also guarantee it's tastiness. (Makes one.)

1 frozen ripe banana  
½ cup unsweetened shredded coconut  
2-3 tablespoons almond butter  
2 tablespoons flax seeds  
2 tablespoons raw cacao nibs  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
almond milk

Place the banana, coconut, almond butter, flax seeds, cocoa nibs, cinnamon and vanilla in a blender. Cover with almond milk and blend until smooth. Add more almond milk to achieve desired consistency.

**Party Tip:** Amy says to add a scoop of Sun Warrior Raw Vegan Vanilla Protein Powder if you're drinking this post-workout. I am not familiar with this "working out" thing.

### Yeah, It's a Green Smoothie

I've always loved the idea of green smoothies - drinking your greens so you have more time to eat cake - but I'd never made one I could stomach until Amy (yep, same Amy from the Candy Bar Smoothie recipe) gave me her basic formula. Here's my version of her nutritious drink. (Makes two.)

- 1 frozen ripe banana
- 1 cup frozen pineapple chunks
- packed ½ cup baby spinach
- 3-5 stalks curly kale, stems removed
- 1 sprig fresh mint
- 1 inch fresh ginger, peeled & minced
- ½ lemon, rind removed
- scoop wheat grass powder (optional)
- 1 teaspoon spirulina powder (optional)
- 12 oz coconut water

Blend everything together until smooth - add more coconut water if it's too thick for your taste.

**Party Tip:** If you're new to green smoothies, start with some mellow greens like baby spinach, bok choy or chard. Kale is mega-healthy, but it's not for everyone. Sweet berries also help to mask the earthy flavor of greens that some folks aren't keen on.

### **Dan's Drinkin' Kale**

The older I get, the more I realize I'm turning into my dad. I love black licorice, Hawaiian shirts and pistachio ice cream. So when I saw everyone on the Internet freaking out about a "pistachio ice cream kale shake" I had my suspicions. My dad would never drink a kale anything. After trying every version I could find, though, I came up with one worthy of Dan the Man. (Makes one.)

- 1 cup almond milk (+ a splash more)
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1/2 cup raw cashews, soaked in water
- 1 cup curly kale leaves, stems removed

1/2 cup chopped pitted dates  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract (or more to taste)  
1/2 teaspoon minced ginger (or more to taste)

The night before: Soak the chia seeds in 1 cup of almond milk in the refrigerator overnight. Soak the cashews, too - those can be left out on the countertop.

In the morning (or whenever): Scoop the almond milk and chia mixture and drained cashews into your blender along with the kale, dates, vanilla and ginger. Add a few ice cubes to make it frosty, and add almond milk as needed for texture. I like lots of vanilla and ginger in mine, but hey man, do your own thing.

**Party Tip:** This smoothie is also tasty with a ripe banana and some shredded coconut and/or cacao nibs.

## **Party Hard Entrees**

Being a grown up does not mean trading your diet of pizza and tacos in for meatloaf and side salads, but it does mean re-thinking pizza and tacos to make them healthier than meatloaf could ever dream of being.

Speaking of meatloaf, opting for a meat and dairy-free dinner shouldn't be a one-way ticket to veggie burger hell. There are lots of easy and inexpensive things you could be eating instead of fake meats from your freezer section. (I know, because I put them in this book!)

Dig into my spicy, savory Taco Lasagna or a piping hot Samosa Pie stuffed with peas and potatoes. Pizza for Thanksgiving dinner? My Green Bean Casserole Pizza is an obvious choice. Try a generous slice of Spaghetti Cake with Grandma's Hater-Proof Sauce - straight from my grandma Sharon's kitchen!

No matter what you choose, you won't miss fake burgers or take-out pizza, not even for a second!

## Taco Lasagna

In third grade I used to spend all my Scholastic money on Garfield books. It bummed my mom out, but those books taught me two important life lessons: lasagna is awesome and Mondays suck. I don't know Garfield's opinion on Taco Lasagna, but something tells me the layers of mushrooms, corn and spicy Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce would earn this dish a furry orange thumbs up.

1 jar of your favorite chunky salsa  
Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce (Page XX)

### Filling:

2 (15oz) cans black beans, drained & rinsed  
1 & 1/2 (15 oz) cans corn (or 3 & 1/4 cups frozen corn)  
3/4 lb button mushrooms, stemmed and quartered  
2 teaspoon oil for pan  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
freshly ground black pepper to taste  
8 soft flour tortillas

### Topping:

sliced black olives  
1 avocado, diced  
juice from 1 lime

Preheat the oven to 400°.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add mushrooms and cook, stirring often, for about 7 minutes or until browned. Add garlic, salt and black pepper to taste. Remove from heat.

In a medium bowl, mix beans, corn, mushrooms with Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce.

Pour 1/3 of salsa into bottom of a 10" round or 9 x13" oven-safe dish. Top with a layer of overlapping tortillas, similar to lasagna noodles.

Top with 1/3 of bean and Chee-Zee mixture, then 1/4 of remaining salsa and another layer of overlapping tortillas.

Repeat with another layer of Chee-Zee mixture and more salsa, and top with more tortillas.

Finally, add the last of the Chee-Zee mixture and 1/2 the remaining salsa, and top with tortillas.

Pour the remaining salsa on top and bake 30 minutes. Cool 10-15 minutes.

Toss avocado with lime juice, then top baked lasagna with avocado mixture and olives. Slice and eat!

## French Fry Tacos

For some reason, we always have odd amount of potato products left in our freezer - 14 Tater Tots, a handful of hash browns and a quarter of a bag of oven fries. Rather than toss out these rejected spuds, we started seasoning them and dressing them up as tacos. This recipe just calls for oven fries, but you can use any potato product you have on hand.

1 (2 lb) bag oven fries

Taco seasoning:

½ tablespoons chili powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

¼ teaspoon dried oregano

1 tablespoons oil

1 (15 oz) can black beans, rinsed & drained

1 cup diced red onion

2 cloves garlic, diced

1 red bell pepper, seeded diced

1/2 cup corn (frozen or canned)

salt and pepper

corn tortillas

1 avocado, sliced

2 scallions, chopped

1 large tomato, seeded and diced

1 lime

Vegan Mayo (optional, page XX)

Preheat oven according to directions on fries. In a small bowl, mix together all of the taco seasoning ingredients. Open the top of the French fry bag, pour in about ¼ of the taco seasoning mix, hold the top of the bag closed and shake. Add the remaining seasoning gradually, shaking after each addition, until fries are coated.

Place fries in a single layer on a baking sheet, and bake according to package directions. (I give them a few extra minutes so they're nice and crunchy. While those bake, prepare the filling:

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium flame. Add beans, onion, garlic, pepper and corn. Salt and pepper to taste, cook until the onions soften and everything is warmed through - about 10 minutes.

Heat a large skillet or griddle and warm up the tortillas, flipping to warm each side. Store warm tortillas wrapped in a clean kitchen towel until ready to serve.

To assemble the tacos, place some French fries on a tortilla, then some of the bean mixture, and top with avocado, scallions, tomato and a squeeze of lime juice. I like a dollop of Vegan Mayo on each one, too!

## I Love the Dough

Did you know that ancient cultures believed pizza held mystical healing powers? In fact, Archaeologists discovered what is believed to be the world's first pizza cutter inside Julius Caesar's tomb! That may or may not be true, but pizza's versatility and deliciousness is fact, son. What would pizza be without the crust? A mess, that's what. So channel your inner Biggie Smalls, because its time to make the dough. Makes two 12" pizza crusts.

I recommend using a pizza stone and a pizza paddle when making pizza crust. For more about pizza stones, check out I Want to Be Your Fantasy Pizza on page XX.

- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm water (no more than 115° F)
- 1/2 tablespoon sugar
- 3 cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil + more for drizzling
- 1/2 cup cornmeal

In a small bowl, use a fork to combine the yeast, sugar, and 1/2 cup of flour in the warm water. It might start to bubble, try not to get scared.

Use a food processor to pulse together two cups flour, olive oil and salt. (You can also do the mixing in a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook, or by hand with a wooden spoon.) Gradually add in the yeast mixture and mix until it forms a ball.

Turn the dough out on a lightly floured surface and knead it for about two more minutes. Roll it into a ball and place it in a large, lightly oiled bowl and drizzle with a bit of olive oil to keep it from drying out. Cover with a clean, damp towel and let it rise in a cool spot for about two hours or until the dough doubles in size. I like to prep my toppings while the dough rises.

Divide the dough into two balls (heh). Knead each ball a few times – if you don't plan on making two pizzas you can stick one ball in a plastic bag and stash it in the fridge for about 1 week.

Preheat your pizza stone to 450°.

Sprinkle your countertop with a generous amount of a 50/50 cornmeal and flour mixture. Push the dough down in the middle with your fingers to start forming the raised crust around the edge. Sprinkle the dough with more cornmeal/flour mixture and flip the dough over. Stretch the crust by pulling the dough in opposite directions with both hands and while you rotate the dough. When

you're done, you should have circular-shaped, even-thickness dough with a thicker crust. The crust should be as thick as your finger.

If you have a pizza paddle, I recommend transferring the stretched dough to a cornmeal-dusted paddle first, then adding your toppings, or pre-baking your crust for about 3-5 minutes before adding toppings. If you have some other genius way of transferring a wiggly, toppings-heavy, uncooked pizza to a flaming-hot pizza stone, though, then the force be with you.

Add your toppings, transfer to the hot stone and bake until the crust is light brown and the toppings are hot and yummy looking.

**Party Tips:**

- Want to get all Super Mario and try your hand at tossing the dough? Check out Be My Fantasy Pizza on page XX for dough-tossing tips and other magical advice.
- Add your favorite herbs to this basic dough to enhance your pizza creations. Add more sugar and top it with chocolate, vegan marshmallows and other good stuff for an aces dessert pizza!
- To pre-bake or not to pre-bake. If you like your crust slightly chewy, don't pre-bake it. If you like a crispier crust, pre-bake the un-topped dough for 3-4 minutes, then take it out, add the toppings, and finish baking.

## **Green Bean Casserole Pizza**

I brought this dish to my mom's very first vegetarian Thanksgiving along with Baked Potato Spring Rolls (Page XX) and received the ultimate compliment from my little brother: "I didn't like green beans until I had this pizza." You can prepare the topping and crust ahead of time - but wait to assemble them until guests arrive, or until you're at your final cooking destination. Or, like me, you can make one for yourself and eat it in bed while you watch Pee-wee's Playhouse Christmas Special.

1 crust (Page XX)

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon salt, divided  
1/2 lb fresh green beans, trimmed and halved  
2 tablespoons margarine  
1/2 lb white mushrooms, sliced  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
1 cup vegetable stock  
1 cup plain, unsweetened soy yogurt (See Party Tip)  
3/4 cups fried onion pieces + more for topping

Pre-cook crust in a 450° oven for 5 minutes and set aside.

Bring a gallon of water and 2 tablespoons of salt to boil. Add the beans and cook for 5 minutes, then drain and plunge into a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Drain and set aside.

Melt the margarine in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms, 1 teaspoon salt and pepper and cook until the mushrooms start to give up some liquid, about 5 minutes.

Add the garlic and nutmeg and cook 1-2 more minutes. Add flour and stir. Cook for 1 minute, then add the vegetable stock and cook until bubbling.

Decrease the heat to medium-low and add the soy yogurt. Cook until the mixture thickens, stirring occasionally – about 6-8 minutes.

Remove from heat and stir in 3/4 cup of fried onions and the green beans. Spread over prepared pizza crust and bake 10-15 minutes until crust is golden and toppings are hot and bubbly. Sprinkle with more fried onions to taste.

**Party Tip:** If you can't find plain, unsweetened soy yogurt in your area, whiz 1 cup (8 oz) of silken tofu together with 1 & 1/2 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice in a food processor.

## Shepherd's Pie Pizza

Some people are born to rock n' roll. Others are born to ride. I was born to put mashed potatoes on pizza. I've done it so many ways I can't even remember them all, but this was my favorite. It's quite possibly the only shepherd's pie you can eat while walking your dog, and for that reason, I am quite proud of it.

1 pizza crust, prepared (page XX)

For the "sauce":

1 lb. yukon gold potatoes  
¼ cup soy creamer  
2 tablespoons margarine  
½ cup red onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon dry rosemary  
½ teaspoon dry thyme  
A splash of oil for sautéing

Toppings:

1 carrot, diced  
½ cup peas (fresh or frozen)  
½ cup cauliflower, chopped  
½ cup green beans  
½ cup mushrooms, sliced  
2 tablespoons margarine  
2 tablespoons flour  
½ cup vegetable broth  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage  
salt and pepper to taste

Partially bake the pizza crust in a 450° oven for 3-4 minutes. Remove crust from the oven, leaving the stone inside, and set aside.

Peel the potatoes and cut into 1/2-inch dice. Place in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Over high heat, cover the pan and bring the water to a boil. Then lower the temperature to a simmer and cook the potatoes until you can easily smash them with a fork or tongs (15-20 mins.)

While the potatoes cook, cut your onion and garlic. Sauté with a splash of oil in a small pan over a medium flame. Cook until tender.

Drain the potatoes and place them in a large bowl with the garlic, onion, soy creamer, margarine and herbs. Use a potato masher to mash everything together

- some lumps are fine! (You can also use a food processor, but be aware that will result in a gluey mashed potato!)

Steam the carrots, peas, cauliflower and green beans until tender. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the steamed veggies, margarine, flour, vegetable broth, sage, salt and pepper. Cook until a thick sauce forms (about 3 minutes) and set aside.

Spread the potato mixture over the pizza crust and top with vegetables, salt & pepper to taste.

Bake for 15-20 minutes, until everything is warm and toasty.

## Indian Buffet Pizza

Dimo's Pizza in Chicago can make your wildest pizza fantasies come true (within reason, pervert). So when I asked them to make me a pizza inspired by Indian food I expected something exactly as delicious as this pie turned out. Richly spiced lentils, naughty fried cauliflower and a pop of chutney atop a chewy crust make this a sophisticated pizza that even your most lowbrow friends will enjoy.

1 pizza crust, prepared (page XX)

Madras Lentils:

½ cup dried red lentils  
2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger  
4 teaspoons tomato paste  
1 cup chopped tomatoes  
½ white onion, chopped  
½ jalapeno pepper, minced  
1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin  
1 ½ teaspoon ground coriander  
1 ½ teaspoon curry powder  
1 tablespoons minced garlic  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
⅓ cup water  
salt to taste

1 head of cauliflower  
oil for frying  
2 roasted red peppers, chopped

Cilantro-Mint Chutney:\*

1 cup (packed) fresh mint leaves  
1 cup (packed) fresh cilantro  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger  
1 cup vegan sour cream  
½ cup plain, unsweetened soy yogurt  
1 teaspoon salt

\*Or use your favorite store-bought chutney.

Preheat oven to 450°, cook pizza crust 3-5 minutes, then remove from oven and set aside.

Pick through the lentils and pick out any stones or debris. Rinse thoroughly under cold water. Boil lentils in a few cups of water until they begin to soften, about 10 minutes. Drain and put aside.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat, then add onions, ginger, jalapeno peppers, and garlic. Sauté until the onions and garlic are golden brown. Add coriander, curry, cumin, chopped tomatoes and tomato paste. Sauté until the tomatoes are soft. Add water and lentils and bring to boil, then reduce to simmer and cook until lentils become soft. Add salt to taste.

Place all the ingredients for the chutney into a food processor and blend until smooth.

Break cauliflower into small florets. Heat oil in a deep pan and fry florets until golden brown and tender, about 7-8 minutes.

Spread  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of lentils on crust, and top with cauliflower and roasted red peppers. Bake 15-20 minutes until the crust is golden. Top with a squirt of chutney.

## **Be My Fantasy Pizza**

In the Midwest, Dimo's Pizza is famous for their comfort food-inspired 'zas. But let's face it, sometimes you're too lazy, broke, or naked to leave the house for pizza – and unless you're filming a porno, you're probably not going to call for delivery when you're naked. Fear not, pizza lovers. My friends at Dimo's have been kind enough to offer up these tips for creating your own fantasy pizzas at home.

### **Break it down**

First conceptualize your pizza. Think about what foods you like, what goes well together, and most importantly what you'll be capable of making. For example, say you want to turn nachos into a pizza. Start out by dissecting what makes it so dang delicious. Tortilla chips, Chee-Zee Sauce, spicy baked tofu, jalapeños and olives? So those are your ingredients, go get them!

### **Get Stoned**

Unless you have a stone pizza deck in your house (and if you do, I hate you) you'll probably need to invest in a pizza stone. You can pick one up at Target, or any kitchen store, and for around \$20, this pizza essential will last virtually forever provided you don't wash it with soap or drop it.

- For crispy crust, always Preheat your pizza stone. To do so, place it in a COLD oven, and then heat the oven with the stone to the desired temperature. Placing a cold stone in a hot oven might crack the stone.
- Before placing your dough on the stone, sprinkle the stone with cornmeal so the dough doesn't stick.
- Don't slice your pizza on the stone – transfer your pie to a cutting board or serving dish first.
- Let the stone cool down before rinsing it – hot stone + cool water = cracked stone. And don't use soap! A pizza stone's job is to absorb moisture, it will also absorb soap. Wipe it clean, and let it dry.
- Throwing your dough on a hot stone can be tricky, you might also want to get a pizza paddle (or peel) or devise some other way to get the wiggly dough onto the stone.

### **Throw up**

If you're feeling adventurous enough, pick the dough, place it over your two fists (turn your hands towards each other and pretend you've got tennis balls in each

hand) and start tossing so that the dough rotates and you stretch every part of it. Don't actually throw the crust into the air, but instead rotate it with little flicks of your hands and pull your hands away from each upon each rotation.

### **Get sauced**

Red sauce is so passé. (Unless, of course, you're making a grilled Chee-Zee and tomato soup pizza!) What else could make your pizza ooey gooey and complement the flavor of pizza perfectly, not to mention help the rest of the toppings to stick? Get creative! Use pesto, or pureed veggies (and olives) for a savory sauce. Just remember whatever you use, you'll want to eat your pizza slice by slice and not with a spoon. So go crazy, but remember, sometimes your toppings are gooey enough, and you can skip the sauce all together.

### **Math is hard**

The trickiest part about fantasy pizza is the timing. You don't throw a raw potato covered in toppings in the oven, do you? Of course not! Occasionally your wacky pizza idea will require some prep work to make everything come out just right.

Here are some timing tips to get you started:

- Slice potatoes thin for quick and even cooking.
- Cut other slow-cooking veggies like carrots into a smallish dice.
- Don't bake everything – some toppings like dressings or Chee-Zee Sauce and other toppings look much better if they are placed on the pizza after it's cooked. Place them in a squirt bottle or in a plastic baggie with the corner snipped off and drizzle them over your pizza for the perfect presentation.
- Don't over-top! You should be able to taste each ingredient in every bite.

### **Adventures in cheese**

I might get my Chicago card pulled for saying this, but you don't need cheese on every slice of pizza! If you're using plenty of moist, fresh toppings and a savory sauce you won't miss the cheese. And if you do miss cheese, there are lots of great non-dairy alternatives these days like Daiya and Tease. Try this easy replacement for Parmesan cheese:

### **Not-Parm**

1 cup walnuts  
1/3 cup nutritional yeast  
1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt  
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Add all ingredients to a food processor and blend until its the texture of Parmesan cheese. Flavor your Not-Parm by adding chili powder, curry powder, etc.

**Eternal pizza party**

Think about pizza as a meal on an edible, delicious plate. It can be eaten for every meal. We all know that cold pizza in the morning is about as good as it gets – but what about a warm slice of breakfast burrito pizza? Tofu scramble, beans, cheese, salsa... why are you not eating this pizza right now? And what about dessert? Strawberry shortcake, peach cobbler, s'mores... all you need are the right ingredients.

**Just do it**

If at first you don't succeed, eat your mistakes and try again.

## Chicago-Style Sammich

When is a hot dog not a hot dog? When it's this sandwich! I took some of my favorite Chicago hot dog stand flavors and piled them onto a toasty baguette for a tasty (secretly healthy) sandwich that tastes great with a side of kale chips. Try it with sport peppers (pickled hot peppers) and a squirt of mustard over 'der.

½ batch Chee-Zee Sauce (recipe on page XXX)  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 medium red onion, sliced  
8oz button mushrooms, sliced  
2-3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 lb spinach  
1 medium tomato, diced  
celery salt  
pickle relish  
4 baguettes, sliced and brushed with olive oil  
sport peppers (optional)  
yellow mustard (optional)

If using a freshly-prepared batch of Chee-Zee Sauce, place it in the fridge to set up for a few hours to it's a spreadable consistency.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add the onion and saute for 3 minutes. Add the mushrooms and garlic and cook 3 more minutes. Add spinach and tomato and cook until spinach is wilted (2-3 minutes). The onions will become translucent and the mushrooms will brown. Sprinkle with celery salt and set aside. (I like to keep it over low heat to it stays warm while I move onto the next step.)

Heat a griddle over medium-high heat. Grill baguettes until they are toasty and marked with grill marks. Spread about 2 tablespoons of Chee-Zee Sauce on one half of each baguette, spread 1-2 tablespoons of pickle relish on the other half. Top with the mushroom and onion mixture and peppers and mustard if desired. Smooth the baguette halves together and eat up!

## Grilled Mac n' Cheez Sandwich

If food trucks are any indicator of popular food culture, and I believe they are, then grilled cheese sandwiches are very *in* right now. I have yet to find a grilled cheese truck, though, that offers a vegan option quite like this. This makes a whole mess of sandwiches, but you could tone it down just to make one or two if you like.

1lb. macaroni  
1 batch Chee-Zee Sauce (Page XX), divided  
sliced bread  
margarine  
1 pound spinach, washed & stems removed  
1 large tomato, seeded and sliced  
salt and pepper

Cook macaroni according to package instructions, drain, and stir in half of the Chee-Zee sauce. Store the other half in the refrigerator for later. Lightly spray a baking sheet with cooking spray, and spread the mac n' yeast out in an even layer. Place in the refrigerator to cool and set up. When the mac n' yeast is cold, slice it into squares that are slightly smaller than the bread you're using.

Preheat the oven to 500° and place a cast-iron skillet (or other ovenproof pan) inside.

Grab two slices of bread and spread margarine onto one side of each. Place one slice of bread, margarine side down, onto work surface and top with a smear of reserved Chee-Zee Sauce, a slice of mac n' yeast, spinach, a slice or two of tomato, salt and pepper. Smear some more Chee-Zee sauce on the non-margarine side of the other slice of bread, and place it on top, margarine side up.

Using a pair of tongs, place the sandwich on the hot skillet inside the oven until the bottom is toasted, then flip and cook for another few minutes until both sides are toasted and the macaroni is warm. Slice in half and eat hot.

## The Thai Dagwood Sandwich

Sandwiches were sandwiches until I started re-thinking my favorite foods in sandwich-form. This sandwichy take on Thai food combines the cuisine's signature spicy peanut sauce with lots of flavorful fresh veggies and marinated tofu steaks.

Fish-free Peanut Sauce (page XX)

1 package firm or extra-firm tofu

1 tomato

1 cucumber

1 red onion

handful sprouts

handful baby spinach

1 jalapeño, sliced (optional)

Whole grain sourdough bread, sliced (or your favorite sliced bread)

Drain tofu and slice lengthwise into four "steaks." Press out excess water. If you made your Peanut Sauce thick, thin out a 1 cup portion by adding coconut milk. Place steaks inside a sealed container with peanut sauce marinade and refrigerate at least 30 minutes, or up to 4 hours.

Heat your oven to 400° and line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spray with nonstick cooking spray. Place the marinated tofu steaks on the sheet, and bake for 40 minutes, flipping the steaks over halfway through cooking

When the tofu has about 15 minutes left in the oven, rinse and dry your veggies. Slice the tomato, cucumber, onion and jalapeño (I like to cut them thin and pile them high).

Slather two pieces of bread with thick Peanut Sauce, and load your sandwich up with tofu and veggies. This sandwich is also yummy cold, so store those leftovers in the fridge for lunch!



## **Cannibal Corpse Crock-Pot**

I named this faux-pulled pork recipe after my favorite American death metal band because, despite being meat-free, it looks like a straight-up massacre in your crock-pot. My fondest memory of writing this book was my mom texting me “Made the Cannibal Corpse Crock-Pot today, OMG that sauce is SO good!” Much like Cannibal Corpse and my mom, this recipe shreds hardcore.

- 1 (20oz) can of young jackfruit in brine, drained
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 & 1/2 cups organic ketchup
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce (or Bragg’s Liquid Amino Acids)
- 1 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Siracha chili sauce
- 1 teaspoon onion powder

Drain and rinse the jackfruit, and squeeze out the excess water. In a medium bowl, whisk together the garlic, ketchup, brown sugar, soy sauce, apple cider vinegar, chili sauce and onion powder. Fold jackfruit into the barbecue sauce and place in a crock-pot.

Cook on low for 6 hours, then use two forks to pull the jackfruit into shreds just like pulled pork. Serve on lettuce, or on your favorite roll - or make a BBQ Salad (page XX) if you think you’re cool.

## **BBQ Salad**

Salad sucks. At least the boring bowl of flavorless green stuff I used to consider salad does. But with different tastes and textures in every bite, this hearty bowl has become a go-to dinner at my house, and we don't even care that it's full of kale. Serve it with cornbread for soulful supper, or pack it for lunch and make everyone at the office jealous.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

1 batch Cannibal Corpse Crockpot (see page XX)

Canola oil for pan

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 small onion, diced

1/2 lb kale, stemmed & chopped

1 (15.5oz) can red beans, rinsed & drained

2 tablespoons water

juice from 1/2 a lemon

pinch salt

Serve with:

brown rice, cooked

Vegan ranch dressing (see page XX)

Note: The Cannibal Corpse Crockpot takes 6 hours to cook. Start the following steps without a 1/2 hour left on the timer.

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add a splash of oil, and cook the onions until translucent - about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook one minute more, stirring often to avoid burning. Add kale, red beans and water; cover and cook 5 minutes or until kale is wilted and beans are hot. Remove from heat; add a squeeze of lemon and salt to taste.

Serve over warm brown rice and top with ranch dressing. Also tasty served over quinoa, or on top of cornbread.

## Savory Pie Crust

This is a super-simple double pie crust - perfect for pot pies. I like to add herbs and spices to the crust itself to ramp up the flavor of the final dish, but it's perfectly flakey and delicious on its own. This recipe holds up well in the refrigerator so feel free to make it a few days ahead of time so you can whip together a pot pie like it ain't no thang.

1 cup all-purpose flour  
1 cup white whole wheat flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup vegetable shortening  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup very cold water

Sift together the flours and salt into a large bowl. Use a pastry blender or two forks to cut the shortening into the flour and salt until it resembles a coarse crumb. Stir in water until the mixture forms a ball. Divide in half, and wrap each half in plastic. Chill for at least 15 minutes, then roll out one ball and press it into a greased 9" round pie pan.

For pot pies, pre-bake the bottom crust for 5 minutes in a 425° oven. Remove from oven and set aside to cool while you prepare the filling.

## **Samosa Pot Pie**

Considering I have been known to eat an entire Samosa Pot Pie by myself, I was tempted to call this recipe "Worlds Largest Samosa". Spicy potatoes and peas mixed with spinach, tomatoes and green chilies make this comfort food extra cuddly on a chilly day, or any day, really. To verify its heartiness, I tested this recipe on my co-worker whose only request for her birthday lunch was "meat." She spent the whole day raving about it to the rest of the office. I win.

Savory pie crust (page XX)

2 tablespoons flour  
2 tablespoons margarine  
1 cup plain soy milk  
1 cup diced potatoes (1 large potato)  
1 teaspoon vegetable oil for pan  
1 cup tomatoes, chopped (1 large tomato)  
½ cup onions, chopped fine  
½ tablespoon minced ginger  
½ tablespoon minced garlic  
1-2 green chilies, chopped  
½ lb chopped fresh spinach  
3 teaspoons curry powder  
salt to taste  
1 bag frozen peas (1 & ½ cups)

Preheat your oven to 425° and bake the bottom pie crust for 5 minutes. Remove from oven, and set aside on a wire rack.

Poke the potato 3-4 times with a fork and microwave it for 10 minutes. Cool for 5 minutes, then dice.

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium-low heat and cook tomatoes and onions 2-3 minutes until onions begin to soften. Add ginger, garlic, chilies and spinach - cook until spinach starts to wilt, tossing the ingredients often to keep the garlic from burning.

In a small saucepan, melt margarine over low heat. Whisk in flour and continue to whisk until golden brown (3-4 minutes). Turn heat up to medium-high and whisk in the soy milk. Cook 2-3 minutes, whisking occasionally, until the mixture thickens. Turn off the heat and whisk in the curry powder.

Toss the peas, potatoes and spinach mixture in the curry mixture, add a pinch of salt. Spoon this into the prepared crust. Roll out the other crust and place over the filling, sealing the pot pie by pressing the top crust into the bottom crust.

Cut 5 slits into the top crust and bake 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, cover the edge of the pot pie with aluminum foil to keep it from burning, and bake 15 more minutes. Allow the pot pie to cool 5 minutes before slicing.

## Quinoa Pot Pie

What happens when you take a dish that's yummy on its own and bake it in between flaky layers of pie crust? Magic, that's what. And also, dinner. With bright flavors like citrus and Kalamata olives, this is a hearty-yet-light entree with surprises in every bite.

Savory pie crust (page XX)

1 large fennel bulb with greens (fronds)  
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided  
2 cans (15 oz) chickpeas, drained  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Kalamata olives, halved and pitted  
zest and juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  an organic lemon  
zest and juice of one organic orange  
salt and pepper to taste  
1 cup quinoa  
1 &  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups water  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons flour  
2 tablespoons margarine  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground coriander  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground cumin  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup toasted walnuts, chopped

Preheat your oven to 425° and bake the bottom pie crust for 5 minutes. Remove from oven, and set aside on a wire rack.

Remove the greens from the fennel and slice the bulb into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces. Wash and dry the fennel pieces. Reserve a few tablespoons of the greens for the garnish

In a small saucepan, bring quinoa, water and salt to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover, and cook for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and rest for 5 minutes before fluffing with a fork.

While the quinoa cooks, heat 1 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the fennel bulb, and cook 10-15 minutes until it becomes tender. Add the chickpeas, olives and lemon juice. Cook over medium heat for about 5 more minutes. Set aside.

Place the orange juice in a measuring cup and top off with water until you have 1 &  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups. In a large saucepan, melt margarine over low heat. Stir in flour and continue to stir until golden brown (3-4 minutes). Turn heat up to medium-high and stir in the orange juice mixture, lemon and orange zest. 1 tablespoons olive

oil and salt and pepper to taste. Continue to stir as it begins to thicken. Bring to a boil, then remove from heat, and stir in the quinoa, coriander and cumin.

Mix the quinoa mixture with the fennel mixture, and stir in the walnuts. Spoon into the bottom crust. Roll out the top crust, and place the crust over the filling, sealing the pot pie by pressing the top crust into the bottom crust. Garnish with reserved fronds.

Cut 5 slits into the top crust and bake 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, cover the edge of the pot pie with aluminum foil to keep it from burning, and bake 15 more minutes. Allow the pot pie to cool 5 minutes before slicing.

## Spaghetti Cake with Grandma Sharon's Hater-Proof Sauce

My grandma is a four foot, ten inch firecracker. She'll sass you so fast you won't know what hit you, but if you're lucky, she'll make it all better with her famous spaghetti sauce. I've seen semi truck drivers go weak in the knees for it - it's 100% hater-proof. Grandma's sauce is the star of the show in this homey baked pasta dish that holds up well as left overs.

### Sauce:

- 2 cups baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- ½ - 1 cup green or Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- oil for pan
- 2 (15 oz) cans tomato sauce
- 6 oz can tomato paste
- 12 oz water (use the empty tomato paste can to measure)
- 1 tablespoon dry Italian seasoning
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- pinch teaspoon black pepper
- pinch salt
- 1 medium onion, peeled (see below for cutting instructions)

### Cashew Ricotta:

- 1 (12.3 oz) box firm silken tofu
- ⅓ cup whole raw cashews
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 teaspoon salt

1 lb spaghetti, cooked al dente

### topping:

- ¼ cup bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Plus olive oil and bread crumbs to coat a 9 x 13" casserole dish.

My grandma's secret is to cut an end off the peeled onion, leaving the other end round. Cut 2-3 slices into the flat end, but don't cut all the way through. As the onion cooks in the sauce, it will open like a flower, flavoring the sauce without big chunks of onion. You can then decide if you want to break pieces of onion off and

leave them in your final sauce, or if you want to toss the onion out.

In a large saucepan, combine all of the sauce ingredients, including the cut onion. cover, and simmer the sauce over medium-low heat for 1 & ½ hours. Stir occasionally with a wooden spoon. When finished, remove the bay leaves from the sauce and discard.

While the sauce simmers, grind the cashews in a food processor until very fine. Add the tofu, lemon juice and salt and blend until well combined - some texture is good!

In a small bowl, mix together bread crumbs, nutritional yeast and salt to make the topping.

Preheat the oven to 300° and coat your casserole dish with olive oil. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoons of bread crumb mixture and set aside. Cook the spaghetti according to package directions.

Drain, but don't rinse the spaghetti and return the pasta to the pot you cooked it in. Stir in Cashew Ricotta and 1 cup of sauce.

Place the pasta in the casserole dish and top with about 2 tablespoons of the bread crumb mixture. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil, and bake 15 more minutes. Cut baked pasta into squares and serve with warm sauce poured over each slice. Sprinkle with additional bread crumb mixture or some Not Parm (Page XX).

**Party tip:** If you prefer a chunkier pasta sauce, throw a drained can of fire roasted tomatoes in there!

## Falafel Waffle

If it's edible, there's a 99% chance I've smooshed it into my waffle maker just to see what would happen. In the case of falafel, the result is a crispy-on-the-outside, soft-on-the-inside savory waffle - no deep frying required! This hummus recipe is great with pita and veggies as well, just reduce the amount of tahini to a few tablespoons. (Makes about 8 waffles.)

### Falafel mix:

3 cups cooked chickpeas, drained, about 2 (15.5 oz) cans  
¼ cup chopped parsley  
1 small onion, minced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon ground coriander  
½ teaspoon ground cumin powder  
salt & pepper to taste  
1 & ½ teaspoons all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda

### Hummus "syrup":

1 (15.5 oz) can chickpeas, drained  
juice from ½ a lemon  
¼ cup tahini  
¼ cup olive oil  
1-2 cloves garlic  
pinch of salt

### Topping:

1 medium cucumber, diced  
1 large tomato, diced  
juice from ½ a lemon  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
salt & pepper to taste

To make the falafel batter, use a food processor to blend chickpeas, parsley, onions and garlic until there are no large chunks (small chunks are fine, they give the falafel texture) - you might need to do this in two or three batches. Transfer this mixture to a large bowl and stir in coriander, cumin, salt, pepper, flour and baking soda. Refrigerate for at least one hour.

While that sets up, make the hummus. Combine all ingredients in a food processor until you have a creamy texture. It should be looser than a typical hummus, so you can pipe it on top of the cooked waffle.

Following the manufacturer's directions, Preheat your waffle maker and spray it with cooking spray. If you can choose a temperature, go with medium. Spoon about  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of falafel mixture into each cavity and close the cover. Cook for 12-15 minutes until the outside is crispy and lightly browned.

Toss the cucumber and tomato in lemon juice and olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Top the falafel waffle with hummus and a generous pile of tomato and cucumber. Serve warm.

## Whatsa Panzanella

In my dreams, I have a cooking show called Snackdown in which I prepare a meal for a famous pro-wrestler of the 1980's and we just hang out and talk about how cool they are. In this episode, I make over the classic Italian bread salad to the southern tastes of Hillbilly Jim. Check out the party tips for important notes on this recipe.

### Cornbread:

- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 Tb margarine
- 2 cups soy milk
- 2 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup canola oil

### Dressing:

- ¼ cup dijon mustard
- ¼ cup agave nectar
- ¼ cup Vegan Mayo (page XX)
- 2 Tb olive oil
- 2 Tb white vinegar

### Salad:

- 1 (14 oz) can black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1" cubes
- 2 tomatoes, cut into 1" cubes
- 1 cucumber, unpeeled, seeded and cut into ½" pieces
- 6 oz baby spinach
- 1 can sliced beets, cut into 1" pieces
- salt and pepper to taste

Preheat your oven to 350° F, and spray a 9 x13" baking pan with cooking spray. In a skillet over medium heat, melt the margarine, then add the corn and cook 5-7 minutes until brown flecks start to appear on the cooked kernels. Remove from heat and cool completely.

In a medium bowl, stir the vinegar into the soy milk and set aside to curdle. In a large bowl, mix together the cornmeal, flour, baking powder and salt. Add the soymilk mixture and oil to the dry ingredients and stir until just mixed. Stir in the

cooled corn kernels and pour the batter into the prepared pan.

Bake 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool completely.

Once cooled, cut the cornbread into 1" cubes - they should be pretty dense and relatively dry. If the cornbread seems too soft, throw the cubes into a 400° oven for about 10 minutes to dry them out.

In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients.

In a large bowl, mix the black-eyed peas, onion, pepper, tomatoes, cucumber and spinach together. Add the cornbread cubes and toss with the dressing. Season liberally with salt and pepper. Allow the salad to sit in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving, then re-toss the ingredients. Add the beets just before serving.

**Party tips:**

- This cornbread recipe is specifically made to hold up in this salad - if you eat it on its own you'll likely find it on the dense side.
- Throw the beets in last unless you like your salad bright pink.

## Rad Chick Salad

In the town where I grew up there was a Dunkin' Donuts directly across the street from the only decent Chinese restaurant, Dragon Light Inn. So it was only natural that after my family had their fill of sweet n' sour we'd mosey over to the donut shop for an after dinner treat. I was inspired by that combination of Asian and American classics to create a chickenless salad with lots of sesame and ginger. I suggest following this up with a donut, but old habits do die hard.

- 1 (14 oz) package extra-firm tofu
- 1/4 cup vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce or Bragg's Amino Acids
- 2 ribs celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup Vegan Mayo (page XX)
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon peeled & grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon agave nectar
- 1 tablespoon chopped chives
- salt and black pepper

Preheat oven to 400° and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Drain the tofu and thoroughly press the extra water out. Cut into 6-8 equal slices and place on the baking sheet.

In a small bowl, mix together the vegetable broth and soy sauce. Pour half over the tofu, then turn over and pour the rest of the marinade over it. Bake 20-25 minutes until the edges begin to brown, then remove from oven and cool the tofu on the baking sheet.

Once cooled, rip the tofu into small pieces. Transfer to a medium mixing bowl and toss with remaining ingredients. Salt and pepper to taste, then refrigerate until completely chilled. Serve on your favorite bread or rolls, or scoop on top of a

green salad.

## **Pretzel Dogs of the Dead**

Now, at first it might seem like government-issue crackers or Spam would be a more suitable Dawn of the Dead-inspired recipe, but when I think DotD, I think late-70's mall. When I think late-70s malls I think of food courts, and I can't pass a mall food court without gazing longingly at the pretzel dogs and wishing aloud that they were somehow vegan. Wish no more, my friends.

1 & 1/2 cups warm water  
1 tablespoon sugar  
2 teaspoon kosher salt  
1 package active dry yeast  
4 & 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tablespoons margarine, melted  
1 package veggie dogs  
1 cup warm water  
1 tablespoon baking soda

1-2 tablespoons margarine, melted  
Kosher or pretzel salt to finish

Combine the water, sugar and kosher salt in the bowl of a stand mixer and sprinkle the yeast on top. Allow to sit for 5 minutes or until the mixture begins to foam. Add the flour and margarine and, using the dough hook attachment, mix on low speed until well combined. Change to medium speed and knead until the dough is smooth and pulls away from the side of the bowl, 4-5 minutes. Remove the dough from the bowl, clean the bowl and then oil it well with vegetable oil.

Return the dough to the bowl, cover with plastic wrap and sit in a warm place for 50-55 minutes or until the dough has doubled in size.

Preheat your oven to 450°. Once the dough has risen, pinch off pieces and roll them into ropes. You might want to flour your hands and the surface you're rolling on because this dough is sticky. Wrap each veggie dog in the dough and place on a parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. (I use a Silpat, which makes my pretzel dogs fancy *and* French.) Mix the cup of warm water and one tablespoon of baking soda together. Brush each wrapped dog first with this mixture and bake for 10 minutes or until golden brown.

Brush each baked dog with melted margarine and sprinkle with salt.

Makes one entire package of veggie dogs. To feed invading biker gangs, you may want to double or triple this recipe.

## **Snack Time**

I wrote this chapter, and really, all of these chapters, with partying in mind. You might be down to cook a four course dinner for a group of friends, but I'd rather put a bunch of snacks on the table and let the RoboCop marathon begin! (He wears a jet-pack in RoboCop 3!)

But snacks are not limited to partying alone. These not-quite-entrees can also serve as appetizers - you know, pre-dinner snacks. Serve Mac n Cheez Ballz before diving into a BBQ Salad, or Baked Potato Spring Rolls prior to a Green Bean Casserole Pizza. Many of these recipes can be prepared ahead of time and then simply reheated when chow time is upon you.

Try my healthy Game Day Dip while you pretend to understand football, or make a batch of Ca-razy Caprese on Toast for a quick lunch. And don't miss my suggestions for eating everything on your plate including your plate!

## Pizza Cupcakes

Technically these are muffins, or possibly even biscuits. But after one bite of these savory little snack cups I doubt anyone will be too worried about semantics. Make them mini and serve them with marinara as a bite-sized appetizer or go big and serve them with a pasta dish. I use a pastry-filling tip to inject marinara directly into the center of mine.

### Ingredients:

1 cup soy milk

1/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 cup blended silken tofu

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 cup Not-Parm (page XX) + extra for topping

1/4 cup chopped fresh basil leaves

2 & 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon dry Italian seasoning

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes in olive oil, drained

1/2 cup Kalamata olives, chopped

Optional: Marinara or pizza sauce for dipping

Preheat your oven to 400° and grease the bottoms of a muffin pan. In a large bowl, beat together the soy milk, oil and tofu. Stir in the flour, Not-Parm, basil, baking powder, Italian seasoning and salt until just moistened. Fold in the tomatoes and olives and fill baking cups with batter - you'll probably get about 10. Sprinkle the tops with more Not-Parm and bake for 18-20 mins.

## Nacho Cupcakes

Again, technically this is a muffin. I think I just enjoy the horrified look on people's faces when I say things like, "have you tried the nacho cupcake?" Sadistic.

Anyway, serve these with a bean salad and a side of guacamole and you've got yourself a fiesta. Better yet, bake the muffins and let your guests top their own!

1 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup yellow cornmeal  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
1 cup soy milk  
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar  
2 medium jalapeños, diced with seeds  
1/3 cup corn kernels (thawed, if frozen)  
1/4 cup silken tofu, blended  
1/3 cup sugar  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
Vegetable shortening, for greasing pan

Toppings:

1 can refried beans  
Sliced olives  
Tortilla chips  
Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce (Page XX)

Optional:

Additional jalapeño slices, ground seitan, guacamole, etc

Preheat your oven to 400°; grease a muffin pan with shortening.

In a measuring cup, combine soy milk and apple cider vinegar, set aside to curdle. In a medium bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder, salt and pepper. In another bowl, whisk together soy milk mixture, jalapeños, corn, tofu, sugar, and vegetable oil. Add to dry ingredients until just combined.

Fill prepared muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the muffins comes out clean, about 15-20 mins. Remove from pan and cool completely on wire rack.

To nacho-fy the "cupcakes":

Warm the refried beans on your stove top; spread a layer of beans on top of each muffin. Sprinkle with olives and additional peppers, if desired. Top it with a

tortilla chip and get ready to party.

### **Mac n' Cheez Ballz**

Fancy grocery stores refer to these as “croquettes” but that’s nowhere near as funny as “ballz”. There’s a lot of downtime while making these, so make sure to fit in important activities like one-armed push-ups, hashtagging things on Instagram and practicing your air guitar solo while you wait. You can make these ahead of time and then reheat them in a 400° oven.

1lb. macaroni  
1 batch Chee-Zee Sauce (Page XX)  
1 cup self rising flour  
2/3 cup cornstarch  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
pinch paprika  
1 cup cold water  
2 tablespoons canola oil (warmed in the microwave for a few seconds)  
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon baking powder  
Canola oil for frying

Cook macaroni according to package instructions, drain, and stir in the Chee-Zee sauce. Transfer to a casserole dish, and place in the refrigerator for 2 hours to cool and set up. Scoop golf ball-sized scoops of cooled mac n’ yeast onto a baking sheet lined with wax paper and place in the freezer for 2 more hours.

Heat frying oil to 350° in a large pan, or fill a deep fryer with oil as directed by the manufacturer.

Whisk the flour, cornstarch, garlic powder and paprika together, then add water. Mix in warm canola oil, then baking powder. Use a fork to dip frozen mac n’ yeast balls in batter, allowing the excess to drip off. Add battered balls (heh) one or two at a time into the hot oil. Adding too many frozen items to the oil will lower the temperature and make everything greasy and soggy. Fry for 2-3 minutes until golden brown, then flip if necessary and fry for another 2 -- 3 minutes. Drain on paper towels before serving hot.

Dip your balls (heh) in marinara sauce or in Vegan Ranch (page XX)

## Totchos

Here I'm utilizing the potato's most impressive form - the tot - only this time the tot's going macho with the help of refried beans and spicy Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce. Some may argue that making nachos you have to eat with a fork defeats the purpose of nachos, so don't invite those people over and you won't have to worry about it. (Serves 6-8)

1 bag frozen Tater Tots

Taco seasoning:

½ tablespoon chili powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

¼ teaspoon dried oregano

1 batch Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce (page XX)

1 can vegetarian refried beans

1 tomato, diced (optional)

black olives, pitted and sliced (optional)

Prepare Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce and keep warm (or prepare ahead of time and reheat before serving).

Preheat oven according to directions on Tater Tots. In a small bowl, mix together all of the taco seasoning ingredients. Open the top of the Tater Tot bag, pour in about ¼ of the taco seasoning mix, hold the top of the bag closed and shake. Add the remaining seasoning gradually, shaking after each addition, until tots are coated. Place tots in a single layer on a baking sheet, and bake according to package directions. (I give them a few extra minutes so they're nice and crunchy.)

While the Tater Tots bake, warm up the refried beans in a small saucepan. When the tots are baked, remove them from the oven and place them on a large serving dish. Top with refried beans, Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce, and the nacho toppings of your choice.

**Party tip:** Make it a meal by pouring a can of chili over the whole mess before adding Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce.

## OCD Chips n' Dip

If watching your guests reach their grubby hands into the chip bowl time and time again makes you cringe, this recipe will solve your germophobe woes. A hearty serving of chunky avocado salsa nestled inside its own crispy chip bowl with all possibility of double-dipping eliminated.

12 mini Mini Tortilla Bowls (page XX)

canola oil

$\frac{2}{3}$  cups Vegan Mayo (page XX) or store-bought

juice of 1 lime

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint

1 garlic clove, grated

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

splash of hot sauce (to taste)

1 small red onion, finely chopped

2 plum tomatoes, seeded and diced

2 ripe avocados, diced

Prepare Mini Tortilla Bowls as directed on page XX, remove from oven and allow to cool.

In a large bowl, stir together the vegan mayo, lime juice, mint, garlic, salt and hot sauce. Gently stir in the onion, tomato and avocado until coated. Divide avocado mixture among tortilla bowls and serve immediately.

**Party tip:** Look for vegan wonton wrappers at the Asian grocery store and bake them into mini muffin pans instead of Mini Tortilla Bowls for bite-sized appetizers.

## Game Day Dip

I shock and horrify my punk rock friends with my genuine love of football. Yes, they are the same jocks who laughed at us and called us names in high school but I forgive them because I love violence and spinach dip. You can't properly watch the game with your buddies without a heaping bowl of tangy spinach dip, and being vegan is no excuse. Here I've added kale for additional green power, and replaced soup mix with a couple of MSG-free seasonings.

1 (12 oz) block silken tofu  
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice (about 1 & 1/2 lemons)  
1/4 cup red onion, roughly chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, roughly chopped  
1 teaspoon onion powder  
1 teaspoon Vegeta seasoning  
1 packed cup chopped spinach  
1 packed cup curly Kale leaves, washed, stemmed chopped  
1/2 cup chopped water chestnuts  
Black pepper to taste

In a food processor, blend the tofu, lemon juice, onion, garlic, onion powder and Vegeta seasoning until smooth. Add the spinach, kale and water chestnuts and pulse 3-4 times (you want chunks and bumps). Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Serve with bread, pita chips or veggie sticks.

### Party Tips:

- I like to use Vegeta seasoning in my Mac & Yeast (Page XX) as well. If you can't find it, use your favorite seasoned salt or celery salt instead.
- Jazz up your dip as you see fit by adding red bell peppers, green onions, or any other flavorful veggies, herbs and seasonings you like!

## Baked Potato Spring Rolls

No one ever called baked potatoes party food. Delicious as they are, they're just awkward to eat while standing around a crowded room. I took all the yummy flavors of baked potatoes and wrapped them up tight in a crunchy spring roll wrapper so you can eat them with one hand. Plus, they can be made ahead of time and frozen, then warmed up in the oven when guests arrive. Party hard. (Makes about 20)

1 lb russet potatoes, peeled, and chopped into large chunks  
1/4 – 1/2 cup soy creamer  
1/4 cup nutritional yeast  
2 tablespoons margarine  
salt and pepper  
1/4 cup chopped green onions  
1/2 cup vegetarian bacon (optional, see Party Tip)  
1 package spring roll wrappers  
Canola oil for frying  
1/4 cup Vegan Ranch (page XX)

Place potato chunks into a large pan and cover with water. Bring the water to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook potatoes 15-20 minutes, or until you can easily smash them with a fork. When the potatoes are done, drain and mash them together with the nutritional yeast, margarine and 1/4 cup of soy creamer - mash until smooth and salt and pepper to taste. You want a pretty loose mash, so add more creamer if needed. Stir in green onions. If you're going with the bacon-y option, add that now, too. See Party Tip for more.

Prep spring roll wrappers as directed on package. Add about 2 tablespoons of mashed potato mixture diagonally, near one corner of wrapper. Make an envelope by folding the other two corners in, over the filling, and then pulling the corner near the filling up. Roll toward the last corner, and use a little water to stick the roll closed. (See diagram.)

Place assembled rolls on a baking sheet covered in waxed paper, leaving a little space between them so they don't stick together. Freeze assembled rolls for at least 2 hours, this keep them from falling apart in the frier. You can also store them frozen until you're ready to fry them at a later date.

In a deep pan, add four inches of oil. Heat oil until it is about 350°. Add a 2-3 spring rolls at a time to the oil, and cook until golden on both sides. Set finished spring rolls on paper towels to drain. If desired, you can fry the rolls ahead of time, then reheat them in a 350° oven before serving.

Slice rolls in half and serve with Vegan Ranch Dip.

**Party Tip:** Want to add some smoky bacon flavor? Stir 1/2 cup of cooked veggie bacon, imitation bacon bits, or chopped pieces of your favorite vegetarian deli slices into the mashed potatoes along with the green onions. Quickly fry deli slices in a bit of oil to give them some crunch.

## Ca-razy Caprese on Toast

Caprese is one of the simplest, tastiest salads known to man - but the star of the show is fresh mozzarella, which vegan scientists have yet to perfect. Rather than fake the funk, I've swapped mozzarella for avocado, aka *nature's mozzarella*. Avocados start to turn brown quickly so make the spread right before serving.

1 loaf baguette, cut into 1/2-inch thick slices (about 30 slices)

1/4 cup olive oil

Salt and black pepper

5 plum tomatoes, diced

2-3 ripe avocados, mashed

1 bunch fresh basil leaves, stemmed and chopped

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar (optional)

Preheat the oven to 450°.

Brush one side of the sliced baguette with olive oil and arrange, oil-side-up on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt and bake until the bread is golden and crisp, about 5 minutes.

While the bread toasts, stir the tomatoes and basil into the mashed avocado (Italian guacamole!)

Spread avocado mixture on each piece of toast and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar. Salt and pepper to taste.

**Party tip:** If you don't plan on making out with anyone later, rub each slice of bread with a raw garlic clove before toasting it.

## Chicago Mix Popcorn

Chicago is best-known for its deep-dish pizzas and no-ketchup-on-hot dogs rule - but avid Chicagophiles will tell you that Chicago Mix popcorn is this city's best-kept snack secret. There's something so deliciously wrong about the combination of cheese powder and crunchy caramel corn - you want to say no, but you just can't! I've recreated the salty, cheesy, sweet flavor here with a dairy-free caramel and a cheeseless cheese powder!

### Chee-zee Popcorn:

½ cup unpopped popcorn kernels  
oil for popping  
olive oil spray  
¼ cup nutritional yeast  
1 teaspoon salt

### Caramel:

½ cup white sugar  
½ cup light brown sugar  
¼ light corn syrup  
1 & ½ tablespoons water  
1 & ½ tablespoons margarine  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
¼ teaspoon baking soda

Pop popcorn in your preferred method - but don't use microwave popcorn, it won't stay crunchy. I add about 3 tablespoons of oil to a large saucepan and heat it on medium-high. Drop a few kernels in and wait for them to pop. Once they pop, add the rest of the kernels, cover, and remove from heat for about 30 seconds so they all get brought to near-popping temperature at the same time. Return the pan to the heat, and shake the pan over the burner to prevent the popcorn from burning. Once it starts popping rapidly, remove the lid to release steam. Once you have to wait several seconds between pops, turn off the stove and remove the pan from the burner.

Dump the popcorn into a really big bowl, and lightly spray it with olive oil spray. Toss sprayed popcorn with nutritional yeast and salt, spraying more oil if needed. Set aside.

Line a baking sheet with waxed paper and set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine sugars, corn syrup and water and stir until the sugar is melted. Bring the mixture to a low boil, and cook it until it becomes amber in color - 8-10 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent burning. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla, margarine and baking soda. Working

quickly, pour the hot caramel over the popcorn and stir to coat.

Spread on the waxed paper and allow to cool completely.

## **Leave No Trace**

As a kid, I ate every meal with a utensil in my right hand and a piece of bread in my left hand. Using the bread to shovel food onto my fork, I would alternate between bites of dinner and bites of bread. My dad called it my edible napkin, which inspired these ideas for eating everything on your plate, including your plate.

## **Mashed Potato Bowl**

A certain fast-food fried chicken chain caught a lot of flack when they introduced a fat-and-calorie-bomb with a similar name. No worries, though, because this bowl can be filled with lots of healthy stuff from veggie chili to BBQ Salad (page XX).

1 1/2 lbs yukon gold potatoes, peeled  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 cup soy creamer  
2 tablespoons margarine  
Salt and pepper

Cut potatoes into a 1/2-inch dice and place in a saucepan. Add salt, and cover potatoes with water. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, 15-20 minutes, or until a fork can easily be poked into them.

Drain the potatoes and place in a heatproof bowl. Add soy creamer and margarine, and use potato masher to mash potatoes. Once the potatoes are mashed, use a wooden spoon to stir everything together. Salt and pepper to taste.

Scoop a pile of mashed potatoes onto a plate or in a shallow bowl and use a large spoon to create a well in the center. Fill the bowl with anything you like!

## **Mini Tortilla Bowls**

Arguably the best part of ordering the taco salad at a Mexican restaurant is the huge, crunchy tortilla bowl it comes in. Make your own mini versions at home and fill them with Totchos (Page XX) or use them for OCD Chips n' Dip (Page XX).

1 package small (6") flour tortillas  
water  
pinch of salt

muffin tin

Preheat your oven to 375° F and sprinkle the tortillas with enough water to make a little salt stick to each one.

Flip your muffin tin upside-down, and nestle the tortillas between the cups, shaping them into small bowls. Bake 8-10 minutes until golden and crispy.

**Party tip:** For full-sized tortilla bowls, sprinkle large flour tortillas with water and salt, then bake them for 8-10 minutes on overturned oven-safe cups or jars.

### **Chocolate Cups**

Tell me, what doesn't taste better with chocolate? Tomato soup, you say? OK, well maybe you're right. But these easy chocolate cups fancy-up any dessert. Fill them with Vanilla Soy Latte Granita (Page XX) or anything else you can imagine!

water balloons

1 bar vegan chocolate

Blow the balloons up so they're slightly larger than a large egg. Place them in a large bowl and set aside.

Line a few baking sheets with waxed paper and keep them close to where you'll be working with the chocolate.

Chop the chocolate into 1/2" pieces and place 2/3 of it in the top of your double boiler.

Heat the chocolate on low, stirring frequently. Use a candy thermometer to monitor the temperature - remove the chocolate from heat when it reaches 110-115°.

Allow the chocolate to cool to 95-100°, then stir in the remaining chocolate until it melts.

Holding the knot, dip the bottom of one balloon into the chocolate - almost half-way up the balloon. Remove from chocolate, and hold for about 5 seconds, then dip the same balloon again.

Set the dipped balloon on the lined baking sheet, the chocolate will form a little foot around the bottom. Continue with all the balloons until the chocolate is gone.

Allow the chocolate to cool completely - for about an hour. Then clip the tip of the balloon with scissors, letting the air out without popping it. (Popping might break the cup.)

If the popped balloons are sticking inside cups, place the cups in the freezer for a few minutes, then pull balloons out of the frozen cups. Store cups in the freezer or refrigerator until ready to use.

### **Squash Bowl**

Baked acorn squash comes in its own biodegradable bowl - how's that for convenience? After you eat the delicious guts, you can shove the rind in your compost or, depending on your neighbor situation, chuck it in your yard. But don't stop there - fill it with couscous and your favorite veggies and seasonings for a complete meal. (Omit the sugar if you're filling it with savory stuff!)

1 acorn squash

1 tablespoon margarine

2 tablespoons brown sugar

pinch salt

Preheat oven to 400°. Using a large knife, cut the squash in half from stem to end. Scoop out and discard the seeds.

Score the insides with a knife several times, and place cut-side-up on a rimmed baking sheet. Add 1/4" water to the bottom of the baking sheet to keep the squash moist while it cooks.

Coat the flesh with margarine (1/2 tablespoons on each half) and sprinkle with salt. Add 1 tablespoons of brown sugar to the cavity of each half and bake for 1 hour, or until the flesh is soft and slightly browned. Cool for 5 minutes before eating.

### **Bird Seed Plate**

I used to work for a company that sold eco-friendly everything. After three years of dealing with customer requests for a more sustainable paper plate I came up with this idea that, for whatever reason, never took off.

all-natural, unbleached, hippy dippy paper plates  
all-natural peanut butter  
bird seed

Coat the bottom of each paper plate with peanut butter, then dip into bird seed. Eat your meal outside because it will be incredibly messy and your hands will be sticky. When you're finished, throw the plate in the grass and watch the birds go nuts for it. *This may or may not be a terrible idea.*

### **On the Side**

What's a sandwich without a side of chips? What's a salad without ranch dressing? Macaroni without cheese? These are the questions that keep me up at night. A nightmare scenario where I am forced to forgo the crunchy, salty or cheesy side dish I crave simply because I'm trying to eat healthy.

The nightmare is over, because I have come up with Five Sauces and Dips You'll Always Use - from Vegan Mayo to Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce. Likewise, I have found five non-boring ways to enjoy kale chips - the bright green alternative to potato chips.

My Stuffin Muffins and Crouching Cornbread, Hidden Broccoli are perfect for sopping up extra sauce or scooping up fresh salads, and Mac n' Yeast is the vegan mac and cheese with a funny name you didn't know you loved.

## **Vegan Mayo, Ranch Dip & Dressing**

This is a simple recipe you can zip together on a weekend and store in the fridge for up to two weeks. Plus, it's a two-for-one because to make vegan ranch dressing, you must first make vegan mayo! This recipe makes a thick dressing that can also be used as a dip - to thin it out, just add a splash of unsweetened soy milk.

Vegan mayo:

- 1 (12.3oz) package firm silken tofu
- 1/2 cup raw cashews\*
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon yellow mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon granulated onion powder
- salt to taste

Drain water from the tofu. Place all of the ingredients into a high-speed blender and blend until smooth, scraping down the sides as necessary.

\*To make this recipe in a food processor or regular blender, soak the cashews in water for 2-3 hours to soften them, or use 1/3 cup of cashew butter instead of cashews and process until smooth.

To transform your mayo into ranch dressing, add the following to the mixture and blend again until smooth:

- 2 tablespoons fresh dill, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, minced
- 1 & 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika

Chill until ready to use.

## **Fish-free Peanut Sauce**

My apologies to ketchup and mustard, but peanut sauce is my favorite condiment by far. It makes a delicious dip for vegetables and fried tofu - in fact, you can even dunk your toast in it. Use it as a marinade, slather it on a sandwich or just eat it with a spoon when no one's looking.

1 cup dry roasted peanuts, unsalted  
1/3 cup water  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 teaspoon. sesame oil  
1 - 2 tablespoons. brown sugar, to taste  
1 & 1/2 - 2 tablespoons. Bragg's amino acids (or soy sauce)  
2 tablespoons. lime juice  
1 teaspoon hot chili sauce (Huy Fong Sriracha)  
1/3 cup coconut milk

Place all ingredients into a food processor and blend until smooth. Taste, and add more Bragg's if you'd like it a little saltier, or more sugar if it's too salty. If using as a marinade, add more coconut milk until you achieve the desired consistency. This sauce thickens as it sits.

## **Chee-Zee Sauce**

This all-purpose cheesy sauce calls for a whole lotta nutritional yeast. Nutritional yeast is a deactivated yeast grown on cane and beet molasses - but don't let that discourage you. After all, where would bread or beer be without yeast?

Nutritional yeast is a complete protein, rich in B-complex vitamins and its nutty, cheesy flavor has made it a staple in vegan pantries worldwide.

6 tablespoons margarine

1/3 cup flour

2 & 1/2 cups cups boiling water

1 tablespoon soy sauce (or Braggs liquid aminos)

2 cups nutritional yeast

1 teaspoon seasoned salt

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 tablespoons yellow mustard

In a large saucepan, melt margarine over medium heat. Whisk in flour until smooth and bubbly. Add boiling water and soy sauce, whisk until smooth. Add nutritional yeast and whisk until completely smooth. Stir in seasonings and mustard. Remove from heat.

### **Party tips:**

- If you're making pasta, or another dish that calls for melted cheese, use this recipe hot. You can also refrigerate it for a few hours to use as a spread. To reheat, add a splash of water and heat Chee-Zee Sauce over a medium-low flame just until hot.
- Sometimes you only need a *little* cheese. To make a half batch of Chee-Zee Sauce, use the following measurements: 3 tablespoons margarine, 2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons flour, 1 & 1/4 cup boiling water, 1 & 1/2 teaspoons soy sauce, 1 cup nutritional yeast, 1/2 teaspoon each seasoned salt, garlic powder and onion powder, and 1 & 1/2 teaspoons yellow mustard.



## Nacho Chee-Zee Sauce

This zesty version of Chee-Zee Sauce has just enough heat to let you know you're eating nacho "cheese," but not enough to blow your tastebuds off. Of course, if you're looking to make your mouth explode, just keep piling on the chipotle peppers and don't come crying to me when your body rebels against you.

Makes 3 cups

2 cups warm water  
1 & 1/2 teaspoons salt  
1/4 cup raw cashews  
1 cup nutritional yeast  
1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, diced  
2 tablespoons cornstarch  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1/2 teaspoon onion powder  
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Dissolve salt in warm water. Add cashews to water and soak for 1 hour.

Place all ingredients, including cashews and soaking water into a food processor and blend until smooth. Visible specks of pepper are a-ok! Taste at this point and decide if you want to add more chipotle peppers - remember, a little goes a long way.

Transfer to a saucepan and cook over medium heat, whisking occasionally, until thickened. Remove from heat.

## No-Honey Mustard

Whether or not you're sympathetic to the plight of the honey bee, you have to admit that honey (bee barf) is kind of gross. And yet, there's nothing better to dunk Mac n' Cheez Ballz (Page XX) or plain old pretzels in than honey mustard. Relax, here's a barf-free mustard dip that will get you buzzing.

Mix equal parts:

Vegan Mayo (page XX)

Dijon mustard

agave nectar

Plus, a dash of salt.

Combine ingredients in a small bowl - I usually make about one cup (so that's  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup each mayo, mustard and agave). Refrigerate for about an hour, it will thicken once it's cold.

**Party tip:** Add a bit more mayo to turn this dip into a sandwich spread. Add more agave to use it as a salad dressing!

## **Mac n' Yeast**

This recipe was handed down to me by my friend Eric, owner of Refuge Skate Shop in Detroit. He's a longtime vegan and snack master extraordinaire. I managed to pass this off as baked mac n' cheese at a recent family function - so, to my little sister and brother, if you're reading this... you totally ate mac n' yeast at mom's house.

1 lb. macaroni (or your preferred pasta)  
1 batch Chee-Zee Sauce (Page XX)  
a pinch of paprika  
bread crumbs

Preheat your oven to 350. Cook the macaroni half way (whatever time the package instructs, half it.) Drain and set aside. Prepare Chee-Zee Sauce and divide in half. Mix 1/2 with the noodles and transfer to a casserole dish. Pour the remaining sauce on top and sprinkle with paprika and bread crumbs. Bake for 25 mins and finish in broiler until crispy and browned.

## Deep-fried Creamed Corn

There aren't a ton of veggie options at Chicago's famous Superdawg Drive-In, but if you've found yourself eating an order of Superveggies you know that the deep-fried cream corn is the best part. You can make these ahead of time, then reheat them in a 400° oven. Serve them with Vegan Ranch (page XX) or No-Honey Mustard (page XX).

1/4 cup non-hydrogenated margarine  
1 (16 oz) bag frozen whole kernel corn  
1/2 cup plain soy creamer  
1 teaspoon sugar  
salt and pepper to taste  
1/4 cup bread crumbs (or crushed crackers)

Melt margarine in a large skillet over medium heat. Add frozen corn and cook until mostly thawed. Add soy creamer and sugar, then salt and pepper to taste. Continue cooking over medium heat, stirring frequently to prevent creamer from burning, for 10-15 minutes, until sauce is thickened. Stir in bread crumbs and remove from heat and cool 10-15 minutes.

Line a baking sheet with waxed paper and drop spoonfuls of the corn mixture onto the sheet, and freeze until firm (about 3 hours).

2 cups all-purpose flour, divided  
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/4 teaspoon onion powder  
1 cup beer\*  
oil for frying

\*If you're straight edge, don't worry - the alcohol burns off in the fryer, but you could always substitute non-alcoholic beer or seltzer water. Just ramp up the amount of seasoning you're using if you opt for bubbly water.

Mix one cup of flour with spices and set aside. Heat oil to 350° F in a large deep skillet - make sure there's enough to submerge the nuggets, or fill a deep-fryer with oil as directed by the manufacturer.

In a large bowl, mix the remaining cup for flour together with the beer. Dredge the corn nuggets in the flour/spice mixture, then in the beer mixture. Fry 2-3 at a time until golden brown, about 3-5 minutes. Be careful, the corn can sometimes pop when it gets hot. Drain on paper towels before serving hot.

**Party tip:** These fritters are sweet - you could even top them with a dusting of powdered sugar. For a more savory option, omit the sugar and throw ½ cup chopped white onion into the pan before adding the corn.

## **Kale Chips**

Welcome to the world of kale chips! Like potato chips, you can make them in any flavor your heart desires. Unlike potato chips, eating a whole batch is a nutritional accomplishment, not a point of humiliation. If you can't eat the whole pile in one shot, store them loosely covered on your countertop to keep them crunchy for a few days.

Before you make any of these kale chips, wash and dry your kale, and remove the ribs (that thick stem in the middle). Rip the leaves into bite-sized pieces (they'll shrink as they cook, so I like to rip them into 2"-3" pieces).

Low and slow cooking is the secret to a crispy chip, so I keep my oven door propped slightly open while I bake these, and check on them often. Rotate pans back to front and top to bottom to make sure all the leaves cook without burning.

## **Salt & Vinegar**

As easy as it gets - if you're new to homemade kale chips start here and note any of your oven's hot spots or weird quirks before you move on to a more complicated recipe.

1 bunch kale  
2 tablespoons white vinegar  
1/2 tablespoon olive oil  
salt to taste

Heat your oven to 200°. Gently massage kale with vinegar and oil (try not to crush it) and place in a single layer on lined baking sheets. Sprinkle with salt - go easy on the salt, you can always add more after baking. Place the kale in the oven, and prop the door open - bake for 10 minutes, and check on the progress. Rotate sheets as necessary. Keep baking in 10 minute increments until the kale is dry and crispy. 20-30 minutes.

## **Vaguely Asian**

As an Italian-American who is often mistaken for Russian, I feel uncomfortable pin-pointing the Asian cuisine that may have inspired this flavor. So I'll keep it

vague.

- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
- 1 bunch kale
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1/2 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 inch slice fresh ginger, peeled & minced
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds

Heat your oven to 200°. In a small bowl combine chili powder and lemon pepper and set aside. Toss kale with vinegar, oil and lime juice, then gradually add the dry spice mix. Make sure each leaf is coated in spices. Add garlic, ginger and sesame seeds, and give it a quick stir to evenly distribute.

Spread the kale in a single layer on lined baking sheets - you might need to scrape some ginger and garlic pieces from the bottom of the bowl. Place the kale in the oven, and prop the door open - bake for 10 minutes, and check on the progress. Rotate sheets as necessary. Keep baking in 10 minute increments until the kale is dry and crispy. 20-30 minutes.

## **Radical Ranch**

Tangy ranch chips are my all-time favorite, so I did the sweetest of all victory dances upon completing this recipe. If these chips also make you dance, please send me videos.

- 3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons dried dill
- 1 bunch kale
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

Heat your oven to 200°. In a small bowl combine nutritional yeast, onion powder, garlic powder and dill and set aside. Toss kale with vinegar, lemon juice and olive oil, then gradually add the dry spice mix. Make sure each leaf is coated in spices. You can also add some salt and black pepper to taste.

Spread the kale in a single layer on lined baking sheets. Place the kale in the oven, and prop the door open - bake for 10 minutes, and check on the progress. Rotate sheets as necessary. Keep baking in 10 minute increments until the kale is dry and crispy. 20-30 minutes.

### **BBQ Kale Chips**

Some of you might be looking at this recipe and wondering if allspice is a typo, but believe me, it's the secret to an accurate BBQ chip flavor. Add more cayenne if you want a little hair on your chest.

1 bunch of kale  
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar  
½ tablespoons olive oil  
2 teaspoons paprika  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
½ teaspoon onion powder  
½ teaspoon allspice  
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper  
¼ teaspoon dry thyme, crushed between your fingers  
salt & black pepper to taste

Heat your oven to 200°. In a small bowl, stir together the paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, allspice, cayenne pepper and thyme. In a large bowl, toss kale with vinegar and oil, then gradually add the dry spice mix. Make sure each leaf is coated in spices. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Spread the kale in a single layer on lined baking sheets. Place the kale in the oven, and prop the door open - bake for 10 minutes, and check on the progress. Rotate sheets as necessary. Keep baking in 10 minute increments until the kale is dry and crispy. 20-30 minutes.

### **Dorneatos (Nacho Cheese)**

The flavor of these kale chips lies somewhere between ranch and BBQ - cheesy, smoky and a touch spicy. Kick up the spice with a pinch of cayenne powder if

you're into that sort of thing.

1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon white vinegar  
3 tablespoons nutritional yeast  
1 teaspoon onion powder  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
½ tablespoon chili powder  
¼ teaspoon dry oregano  
pinch salt and pepper

Heat your oven to 200°. In a small bowl combine nutritional yeast, onion powder, garlic powder, chili powder and oregano and set aside. Toss kale with oil and vinegar, then gradually add the dry spice mix. Make sure each leaf is coated in spices. Add salt and black pepper to taste.

Spread the kale in a single layer on lined baking sheets. Place the kale in the oven, and prop the door open - bake for 10 minutes, and check on the progress. Rotate sheets as necessary. Keep baking in 10 minute increments until the kale is dry and crispy. 20-30 minutes.

## Stuffin' Muffins

My favorite part of holiday meals is stuffing (or “dressing” depending on who you ask). The problem with holidays, though, is there are only a few and I want stuffing year-round. I made these muffins in order to enjoy a side of stuffing with just about any meal, any time of the year. They even make soup less terribly boring!

### Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons margarine
- 1 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoons dried sage
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon salt dash black pepper
- 1 cup stone-ground yellow cornmeal
- 1/3 cup vegetable shortening, plus more for pan
- 1 cup plain soy milk
- 1/4 cup silken tofu, blended

Preheat oven to 350 and coat muffin pan with shortening. Melt margarine in a medium sauté pan over medium-high heat; add corn, celery and onion. Cook, stirring occasionally until the corn and onion are softened, about 5 minutes.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, sage, baking powder, salt and pepper. Stir in the cornmeal. Using a pastry blender (or a fork) cut in the shortening until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add soy milk, tofu and sautéed vegetables, stirring just until combined.

Scoop batter into prepared pan and bake about 18-20 minutes, until the tops are

golden and a toothpick inserted in center of the muffins comes out clean.  
Transfer to a wire rack to cool.

## **Crouching Cornbread, Hidden Broccoli**

I think most parents are convinced, at least for a short while, that their toddlers are going to starve. How on Earth could a growing body possibly survive on little more than juice boxes and goldfish crackers? The fear of accidentally starving my child lead me to creating this recipe, which disguises a few veggies as sweet, delicious cornbread. If you really want to get sneaky, add a bit of wheat germ or flax seeds! (Makes 12 muffins)

1/3 cup vegetable shortening, plus more for pan

1 tablespoon margarine

1 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen

1 medium broccoli crown

1/2 cup shredded carrots

1 cup all-purpose flour

1/3 cup sugar

2 teaspoon baking powder

3/4 teaspoon salt

1 cup stone-ground yellow cornmeal

1 cup soy milk

1/4 cup silken tofu, blended

Preheat the oven to 350 and coat a muffin pan with shortening.

Melt margarine in a medium sauté pan over medium-high heat; add corn. Cook, stirring occasionally until the corn is softened and some of the kernels are a light golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside to cool slightly. While that's cooling, steam broccoli for about 2 minutes, until bright green and softened. Cool slightly and chop into small pieces.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir in the cornmeal. Using a pastry blender (or a fork) cut in the shortening until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add soy milk, tofu, corn, broccoli and shredded carrots, stirring just until combined. Do not over-mix! Scoop batter into prepared pan and bake about 18-20 minutes, until the tops are golden and a toothpick inserted in center of the muffins comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Yummy served warm, but just as good at room temperature.

## **Tips, Tools and Magic Tricks**

It's the worst when cookbook authors assume you have a kitchen full of fancy equipment and Wolfgang Puck's food budget. I'm writing this book in a small Chicago apartment with a regular old kitchen, so I tried to keep it real.

I kept it so real, in fact, that I sourced 95% of my ingredients from Andy's Fruit Ranch, a small grocery store right by my house. Every few days when I went back to stock up the cashiers would compliment me on my ability to shop healthy on a budget - there are no Meyer lemons or truffle oil in this book, my friends.

As I developed recipes, I had two people in mind: My mom, who recently went vegetarian and lives in a not-so-veggie-friendly town; and my cousin Alison, who is also vegetarian but cooking and eating on a college student's budget. I regularly took surveys of my Facebook friends who live all over the world to gauge the availability of specialty ingredients, and adjusted recipes accordingly.

This chapter includes info on basic ingredients and equipment you'll need to get started, as well as some extra things you could pick up to make your life easier. Check out the Resources section for info on where to find some of the things you might not be able to source locally.

## **Ingredients:**

### **The Flour Power Hour**

These recipes call for all-purpose flour unless otherwise specified. But if you're cooking for people who are already keen on the idea of whole grains, feel free to substitute up to half of the flour in any of these recipes with whole wheat flour. I recommend white whole wheat flour and/or whole wheat pastry flour for dessert recipes. If you're new to the idea, but willing to try, start by replacing 1/4 of the flour with whole wheat. It's a good way to introduce whole grains into your diet without making your food taste like cardboard.

### **Cut Me Some Flax Seeds**

These wee seeds are high in omega-3 fatty acids and all-around good for you. You can grind them up and hide them in most cookies and muffins, or take advantage of their nutty flavor and throw them on top of salads. You can also use ground flax seeds and a little water to replace eggs in many baking recipes! (See "Suck an Egg" below for more.) Purchase flax seed meal if you don't feel like grinding the seeds yourself - but keep in mind that once ground, flax seeds need to be stored in the refrigerator.

### **Suck an Egg**

By now you've probably noticed that none of these recipes call for eggs. Very observant of you! In an effort to minimize cholesterol and maximize refrigerator space, I use other pantry staples in place of eggs. Here's a quick guide for replacing eggs in your other favorite recipes (each one replaces one egg):

1/2 banana

1/4 cup applesauce

1/4 cup pureed soft tofu

1/4 cup non-dairy yogurt (plain, unsweetened)

2 & 1/2 tablespoons ground flax seeds + 3 tablespoons of water

You can also use Enger-G Egg Replacer, although many people don't like the taste or texture of baked goods made with this.

Use your common sense when choosing an egg replacement – fruit will flavor your dish so stick to desserts when using bananas or apple sauce.

### **Sugar Coma**

I use old-fashioned white sugar in my desserts. I would rather have some sugar in moderation rather than artificial sweeteners that play tricks on your body and can leave a nasty aftertaste. If you'd like to cut back on processed white sugar I recommend these all natural alternatives:

Agave - use 2/3 of a cup of agave for every 1 cup of white sugar called for.

Reduce other liquids in the recipe by 1/4 cup or your batters will be too loose. To

prevent burning, lower baking temperatures by about 25° and slightly increase baking time.

Maple syrup - use 3/4 of a cup for every 1 cup of sugar called for and reduce other liquids by 3 tablespoons. For even baking, add 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda for every cup of maple syrup. Like agave, lower baking temperatures by 25° to prevent over-browning.

Stevia – Best in bold flavors like coffee and chocolate, and even then some people don't like the aftertaste. It's extremely sweet, so replace every cup of sugar with 1 teaspoon of powdered Stevia or liquid concentrate. To make up for lost bulk in your recipe, add applesauce, apple butter or soy yogurt.

What about honey? Silly bear, honey isn't vegan!

### **Better Believe It's Not Butter**

I use Earth Balance Vegan Buttery Sticks in my recipes because they're non-hydrogenated, but there are other vegan margarines on the market now to experiment with. I also only used non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening in these recipes. Check out Tips and Tricks (page XX) for more shocking news about margarine!

### **Not Milk?**

I prefer unflavored, unsweetened non-dairy milk - especially in savory recipes. I used plain soy milk in all of these recipes unless otherwise specified. You could also use almond milk, but I don't recommend rice milk as it lacks the body soy and almond milk offer, and coconut milk tends to make everything taste like coconut.

To make vegan buttermilk, add 1 teaspoon of white vinegar or lemon juice to 1 cup of soy milk and set aside to curdle for a few minutes.

### **Tofu**

You've probably heard some people refer to tofu as a flavor sponge because it takes on the flavors of whatever you marinate it with. There are just a few things you need to know about tofu before you start throwing it into everything you eat.

### **Know Your Fu**

**Silken tofu** is Japanese-style, it's soft and squishy (even if you buy extra firm) and can be packaged in water, or in aseptic containers that don't require refrigeration. For tofu beginners, is best used as an egg replacement in baking, as an ingredient in dips and dressings, or in smoothies. **Regular tofu** has a drier, meatier texture, and comes packaged in water. It retains its shape, so it's great on a sandwich or in a stir fry, but it can also be mashed and crumbled. Regular tofu can also be purchased pre-marinated, baked and fried in some stores.

Most recipes that call for tofu, including those in this book, specify which type of tofu you should use.

### **Press Your Fu**

Pressing your tofu is the first step to flavoring it. Before flavor can go in, the extra water must come out. Do this in four easy steps:

1. Slice open the tofu package and drain out the water. Cut the block of tofu width-wise into 4 slices.
2. Line a baking sheet with several layers of paper towels or clean kitchen towels, and place the tofu slices on top. Place more towels on top of the tofu, and put another baking sheet on top.
3. Place heavy objects on top of the upper baking sheet - books, a full teapot, whatever you have around. Leave it for at least 30 minutes - or, to really get the extra water out, move your whole contraption into the refrigerator and leave it overnight. (Not entirely necessary, but sometimes I do this if I'm thinking about it before I go to bed.)
4. Uncover, and you're ready to marinate. You can leave your tofu in big slabs, or cut it into smaller pieces.

### **Flavor Your Fu**

There are lots of ways to marinate tofu - from pre-made marinades you can get at the store to homemade mixtures made with vegetable stock, soy sauce, vinegar, or anything else you like. Just don't use oil-based marinades because the water still left in the tofu will prevent oily marinades from being absorbed.

### **Freeze Your Fu**

For a really chewy, meaty texture, freeze your tofu after pressing out the water. Place pressed slabs or diced pieces in a plastic bag and freeze them overnight. Let them thaw in the fridge before cooking for a totally unique texture.

### **Cook Your Fu**

Technically, you don't *have* to cook tofu. Sometimes a couple of uncooked chunks of marinated tofu on top of a fresh salad can really hit the spot. But if you're hankering for some hot 'fu, here are some ways to achieve that:

**Fried Fu** - Toss marinated tofu into a zip-top bag containing ¼ cup of cornstarch, flour or cornmeal. Use a colander to shake off any excess coating, and pan fry or stir-fry in a little oil.

**Baked Fu** - Place marinated slices of tofu on a baking sheet sprayed with cooking spray. Bake in a 350° oven for 20-45 minutes, depending on how firm

and chewy you like your tofu. If you're a first-timer, check on your tofu after 15 minutes, and flip it over while you're at it. Try different cook times for different textures.

Grilled Fu - You can grill tofu just like you would meat or vegetables. Just grease your grill with a little oil, and grill slabs of marinated tofu until both sides have nice grill marks.

## **Tools**

Aside from the usual mixing bowls, cooking sheets and measuring cups that all recipe books are going to assume you already own, there are a few tools you might want to pick up.

Food processor - I used mine a lot while writing this book for everything from blending tofu to shredding carrots.

Silicone baking mats - These replace parchment paper and, in most cases, the need for cooking spray so they save you money and cut back on kitchen waste. I have the expensive French version and the cheapo version and they work exactly the same way.

Donut pan – Available in mini and full-size, I prefer baking donuts over frying them. Baked donuts are healthier and they store better.

Whoopie pie pan - Technically you can scoop whoopie pies onto parchment paper-covered cookie sheets, but I like the perfectly round results a special whoopie pie pie gives.

Mini muffin pan – I'm assuming you already own a standard muffin pan or two. Minis are a nice option for when you're cooking for a lot of people, or just to cut portion sizes down.

Pizza stone - Essential for making homemade pizzas. Pizza stones absorb excess moisture from your dough and help produce a firm, chewy crust.

Canoe pan - These pans bake little cakes shaped like a store-bought treat that rhymes with "minkie." To make your own canoe pans at home, shape heavy-duty aluminum foil around a cardboard toilet paper tube and remove the tube. Make as many foil pans as you need, and line them up on a rimmed baking sheet to fill and bake.

Salad spinner - I thought these were the stupidest things ever until I found one on clearance for \$5 and now I use it every day. It speeds up drying time on leafy greens while also taking up an absurd amount of space in my cupboard. OK, maybe it is stupid after all - but if you get one at your wedding shower don't throw it away!

Kitchen scale - European recipes call for ingredients by weight, which is technically much more accurate than American measurements. I mainly use my kitchen scale to weigh out the amount of tofu I need when I buy it in large blocks, but it's pretty handy so go ahead and put one on your birthday list.

Double boiler - Double boilers are the perfect tool for slowly, gently heating

temperamental ingredients like chocolate - but don't bother buying one because you can make one out of things you already own. All you need is a glass or metal mixing bowl and a saucepan that the bowl fits on top of. The bowl should fit snugly, so steam gets trapped between the pan and the bowl when in use. To use, simmer a little water in the bottom pan, and place the bowl on top. Fill the bowl with whatever you're cooking or melting. Voila! Double boiler action.

## **Weirdo Ingredients**

Again, I tried to keep these limited because I know what it's like to get cockblocked by a recipe that calls for a rare berry found only in the jungles of Africa. Thankfully there is now a thing called the Internet that makes it easy to purchase things not readily available at your local supermarket, so if you can't locate these in your local grocery store (and don't forget to check out ethnic markets) then just check the Interwebs. (See Resources for more specific source info.)

Arrowroot starch - This thickener is similar to cornstarch, but different enough that it's worth adding to your pantry. It has a more neutral flavor than cornstarch, and works better with acidic liquids like citrus to make clear gels and sauces.

Bragg Liquid Aminos - It tastes like soy sauce (because it's made from soybeans) but contains less sodium, and the sodium it does contain is naturally occurring.

Jackfruit - These huge fruit (up to 80 lbs!) come from Southeast Asia where they've earned the nickname "tree mutton" thanks to the poultry-like texture of the young, unripe flesh. Look for young jackfruit in brine in Asian markets, or in the ethnic aisle at your grocery store. Don't use jackfruit in syrup for the recipes in this book, as it will be much too sweet.

Nutritional yeast - This deactivated yeast has a nutty, cheesy flavor and therefore, makes delicious dairy-free cheese and sauces. It can be pricey, but a good-sized container will last you a long time. Look for it in the bulk bins at your favorite health food store.

White whole wheat flour - All the whole-grain goodness of whole wheat flour but with a lighter flavor so you can sneak it into most recipes without offence.

Whole wheat pastry flour - Also known as graham flour, this is another whole-grain flour with a light flavor. It's milled from a soft wheat, so it's perfect for dessert baking like cookies, cakes and pie crusts.

## **Tips and Terms**

Just some general info that will help to make the kitchen a less scary place.

### **Fresh or Frozen**

Fresh greens and vegetables are generally preferred over frozen, unless a recipe specifically calls for or gives the option of using frozen. Frozen fruit, however, is a good option when the fruit a recipe calls for is out of season. (Only use frozen bananas in smoothies, though, because you need to mash them up for baking.)

Oh, and if you're zesting a lemon, lime or orange, buy organic. The thick rind is where all the chemical nasties hide in non-organic fruit.

### **Trust No One**

There's a good chance your oven is lying to you. If you don't have an oven thermometer, cough up about \$5 and get one asap. I have yet to meet an oven that doesn't run 10-20° hot or cold, which can make a big difference in cook times.

### **I'll Cut You**

This book's cutting terminology made simple.

Chop - Cut food into bite-sized pieces. You are not a food processor, take it easy.

Mince - Smaller than bite-sized, but not super small.

Dice - Smaller than minced - cut food into tiny cubes.

Grate - Use a grater for this, rub or scrape the food, breaking it down into small shreds. Most often done with ginger and citrus zest in this particular book.

### **Flame On**

Your stove is talking, are you prepared to listen? Most stoves' knobs are marked with some sort of number system, from low to high heat. Low heat is best for simmering, high is for boiling. If a recipe calls for a medium flame, shoot for somewhere between the two. You should be able to eyeball it with a gas range, but electric ranges can be tricky, so use those numbers as your guide.

Medium-low would be around 3-4 whereas medium-high is 6-7.

### **Ei Generico**

In the early 2000s I started writing a 'zine titled "Accidentally Vegan" in which I listed all the the unintentionally vegan foods I'd discovered as a broke, lazy food-eater. But because I am so lazy, I never finished writing it. The spirit of this

abandoned project lives on all over the Internet, with lots of new blogs and Tumblrs documenting vegan commercial products. In-the-know vegans skip the health food stores and look for generic versions of pantry staples in the regular grocery store as they're more likely to contain dairy alternatives.

Chocolate chips - Look for semi-sweet and scan the ingredients for milk or butter. Most generics I've found check out, and Trader Joe's semi-sweet chips are also vegan at the time of publication.

Graham crackers - As I write this, Nabisco Original Grahams are vegan, but also check out off-brand graham crackers and those found in health food stores.

Margarine - Contrary to popular belief, not all margarine is vegan - many contain some form of milk. Check out the ingredients next time you shop, but I can recommend Earth Balance and Becel Vegan to be sure.

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And thank you to my dad, Dan Mau, who loved to cook and eat, and who taught me that the harder you work, the luckier you get. I love you and I miss you.

## **Resources**

\*This entire section was so outdated I just removed it. If you have questions about where to find things hit me up on social media.