Your V-Guide: Vegan, Vibrancy, Vitality!

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Lit from Within,
Fat, Broke & Lonely No More,
Creating a Charmed Life,
The Good Karma Diet

and

Main Street Vegan:
Everything You Need to Know to Eat Healthfully
And Live Compassionately in the Real World

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Sections of this e-guide:

I. Go veg and love all life
II. Feel amazing
III. Age exquisitely
IV. High raw eating
I. Go veg & love all life (while you love living your own!)

First off, read up:

Eating Animals, by Jonathan Safran Foer
The Veganist, by Kathy Freston
Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows, by Melanie Joy, Ph.D
Main Street Vegan has 40 terrific recipes, one following each of the 40 essay-chapters. Here are some other great books that are full of fun and easy recipes:

- The Candle Café Cookbook, Joy Pierson et al
- Thrive Energy Cookbook, Brendan Brazier
- Great Chefs Cook Vegan, Linda Long
- The 4-Ingredient Vegan, by Maribeth Adams
- How to Eat Like a Vegetarian Even if You Never Want to Be One, by Patti Breitman and Carol J. Adams
- Eat Vegan on $4 a Day, by Ellen Jaffe-Jones

II. Feel amazing

**The Ageless Acronym: M-E-N-D**

- MEDITATE
- EXERCISE
- NOURISH YOUR BODY & YOUR SOUL
- DETOX YOUR BODY & YOUR LIFE

*Note the acronym within the acronym, ME...Think “ME in the morning.” Who am I going to take care of first thing every day? ME! – with meditation and exercise.

**Helpers:**

- **A great juicer** – I like the Breville Juice Fountain. It’s basic, easy to clean, and juices greens as well as any mid-priced juicer out there. If you get really serious, take a look at the Greenstar – it’s big, powerful, pricey (around $500), but it juices everything bone-dry and even has an attachment for making wheatgrass juice.

- **A decent blender** – I get by fine on the top-of-the-line Cuisinart, but connoisseurs of blending swear by the high-powered VitaMix or Blendtec. Legend has it that these can almost blend rocks. You’ll use your blender for green smoothies and yummy pureed soups. To learn more about green smoothies, read Victoria Boutenko’s *Green for Life*. She also has a Facebook page called “I’m part of the green smoothie revolution.” To make a green smoothie, add mild greens (spinach, kale, romaine, celery) to your fruit smoothie. If you want to use a protein/nutrient powder to supplement your smoothie, the most complete and health-promoting brand I know of is Vega, developed by triathlete Brendan Brazier.

- **Good knives** – A chef’s knife and a paring knife, kept sharp, are essential for salads, crudites, etc.

- **A way to exercise that you’ll actually do** – This might mean investing in a treadmill (add a TV ... watching Dr. Oz while you walk really helps), or joining a gym...
(or signing up for classes at the gym so you get there), or discovering the wonders of yoga, a way to bring body and soul together exquisitely. If you have a mini-tram or a big exercise ball, jump on that tram or bounce (seated) on the ball a few minutes every day for your lymphatics.

**A pantry and cupboard clean-out** – Detox your body by detoxing your home: use your land line more than your cell – the research from Europe and Israel on ElectroMagnetic Field radiation is convincing. Buy low-VOC paints and real wood furniture. Use cosmetics that meet your highest standards.

Clear out the cleaning product under the kitchen sink and replace them with brands that are friendly to the environment and your body or with simple, effective (and cheap!) cleaner like baking soda and white vinegar. See *Clean ‘n’ Green*, by Amie Berthold-Bond, for fun recipes for cleaning anything with these products you already have.

And give your pantry a good going-over. You’ll do this in your own way and at your own pace, but in the best of all possible worlds, I suggest that you move toward tossing anything that came from an animal; anything with white sugar or high-fructose corn syrup; all the white flour, white rice, processed corn meal products; the packaged, preserved, refined stuff: most chips, candies, pastries, etc. Then shop for:

- Vegetables, fresh and frozen
- Fruit, fresh and frozen
- Beans, dried or canned (if you buy canned, look for the organic brands if you can; they’re also lower in sodium)
- Whole grains – brown rice, millet, amaranth, quinoa, real whole grain bread (Ezekiel bread, or Essene or Manna bread, in the freeze at the health food store), whole-wheat or spelt pasta
- Raw nuts and seeds – Brazils give you selenium (remember: 22 of them a month provide all the selenium you need), and pumpkin seeds are high in zinc. Also enjoy almonds, filberts, pecans, walnuts (high in omega 2 fatty acids), macadamias, etc. These are concentrated foods, so don’t go crazy with room – ditto the avocado
- Dried fruits – nature’s candy: Medjool dates, dried apricots, organic raisins. Dates blend up as a wonderful sweetener; you can also buy at the health food store or order online “date sugar” – it’s just dried dates ground up. A little real maple syrup is fine, too. If you want a calorie-free sweetener, go with stevia.
- High quality extra virgin olive oil (for salad dressing) and coconut oil (sometimes called coconut butter) for cooking. Keep an eye on extracted oils so you don’t overdo
- Wonderful spices and seasonings. Some – cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, cayenne, garlic – have strong anti-cancer and other disease-preventive properties. If you use salt, choose Himalayan salt or Celtic sea salt – these are minimally refined and contain valuable minerals
- For beverages, you’re making fresh juices – these are superb. Pure water – there’s huge controversy about what kind is best; use your intuition. (My intuition tells me I ought to be ordering Mountain Valley water from Arkansas in glass bottles, but it’s pretty pricey, so for the moment, I just run
my NYC tap water through a Britta filter.) Enjoy sparkling water from glass bottles (mix with fruit juice or squeeze in lemon or lime). Make herbal teas – licorice, ginger, there array is endless – and, if you’re not ready to fully part ways with caffeine, black tea and green tea, both rich in antioxidants. Instead of milk, try various brands of soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, oat milk, and hemp milk. One of them you’re bound to love.

III. Age exquisitely

Your spirit is ageless and timeless: reflect that. Then follow the three recommendations of Dr. Brian Clement of Hippocrates Health Institute:

“First, choose to think positively. Then, act in a way that is consistent with those affirmative thoughts. Finally, fuel yourself and create newly broadened horizons with the bountiful banquet of vegetarian offerings so full of life [they] give you strength, vigor, and unlimited physical and mental vigor.”

Some Practices to Practice

1. See yourself as the star of your life every day of your life.
2. Stand up straight: you’ll look slimmer and feel more in command of any situation.
3. Make your first drink of the day hot water with an ample squeeze of fresh lemon.
4. Eat breakfast: it’s one of the habits centenarians have in common.
5. Half the time, do dry skin brushing before your bath or shower (brushes are sold at natural food stores).
6. The other half, precede bathing with abdyanga, self-massage with warm sesame oil.
7. If you can treat yourself to a professional massage every 21 days to keep your immunity up to par. Short on cash? Trade massages with your main squeeze.
8. Invert yourself with a yoga headstand or shoulderstand or by lying on a slantboard (www.ageinreverse.com).
9. Use creative sun protection: a hat, gloves, barrier (non-chemical) sunblock properly applied.
10. Buy yourself a juicer that’s powerful and easy to clean. Fresh vegetable juice is an infusion of vitality.
11. Keep a pitcher of water on the counter, a bottle in your bag, and hot water easily accessible.
12. If you wear makeup, get a lesson every year or so—and remember to lighten up just inside your eyes.
13. Breathe. Start each day with 5 long, deep “belly breaths.” And if you’re afraid or upset during the day, 3 nice, full breaths will calm you down and set your straight.
14. Exercise four to six days a week and include weight training.
15. Adopt a companion animal: you’ll be saving a life, and people with nonhuman family member live longer than those in Homo-sapiens-only households.
16. Have role models, people you know or have heard of who’ve grown older with elegance, grace, and style. My current one: Mimi Kirk – she won PETA’s “Sexiest Vegetarian Over Fifty” content at age 70!
17. Maturing is a gift; appreciate it. And let yourself grow older the way you want to do it.
18. Live for something bigger than you are. Explore your spiritual nature.

IV. High-Raw Eating: The Ultimate Health Adventure!

Eating at least 70% of your food in the diet of uncooked plant food can work wonders in your life. If it seems like too much for now, put it on a back burner, but if you’re intrigued ...

HERE'S WHAT YOU’LL NEED;

Willingness – *This is something new. It’s not about perfection or percentages, but about fun, discovery, vitality, delicious food & fascinating people....*

Flexibility – Take it easy and first things first. Getting to vegan is the most important thing, and even if you’re interested in raw, 75% raw puts you in that category. Listen to your instincts: if you want more steamed veggies, hot soup, and baked roots veggies in the winter, there’s a reason for that. Trust yourself.

Fundamental kitchen tools -- *Chef’s knife, paring knives, blender (VitaMix or Blendtec can come later), food processor, juicer (I like the Breville Juice Fountain, about $200 new)....*

**A few basic books** – My faves are:

* Becoming Raw*, by Brenda Davis, RD, and Vesanto Melina, MS, RD, is a new and definitive, *scientifically-based* book about going raw or high-raw. A lot that’s out there in the raw food world is anecdotal; this is solid.

* Crazy Sexy Diet*, by Kris Carr. Kris is a vivacious cancer survivor, strong proponent of juicing, and a high-raw vegan. She writes in a young, in-your-face, but totally enticing style. This book is packed with information, and it’s also a major motivator.

* Raw Food Made Easy for 1 or 2 People*, by Jennifer Cornbleet (my tip-top #1 cookless book). These recipes are yummy, foolproof, & super-simple; no weird ingredients or unusual appliances needed. You can also get the DVD on her site, www.learnrawfood.com. If you like gourmet desserts, Cornbleet has another book, *Raw for Dessert*, which is very nice but not as easy)

*The Raw Revolution Diet*, by Cherie Soria, Brenda Davis, RD, and Vesanto Melina, RD -- great recipes and scientifically grounded information on the how-to and benefits of a high-raw diet; Cherie is founder/director of Living Light Culinary Institute in Ft. Bragg, CA; her site is [www.rawfoodchef.com](http://www.rawfoodchef.com)

**A plan:**

Raw food groups are:

- Greens
- Other veggies
- Sprouts
Fruits (fresh, frozen, dried)
Fermented foods (Kimchee, sauerkraut, Rejuvalac, nut yogurt)
Nuts & seeds, usually soaked before eating
Avocados, olives, oils
Treats & convenience foods (Dr. Cow Tree Cheese, raw candy bars, kale chips, flax crackers, sunflower “butter,” raw granola, etc.)
Super-foods (maca, cacao, mesquite, spirulina, sea veggies)
Condiments (herbs and spices, Celtic sea salt or Himalayan earth salt, lemon juice and/or raw apple cider vinegar, Nama Shoyu, sweeteners such as stevia, maple syrup, or date sugar – with the exception of lemon juice, all these are “in moderation”
Beverages: pure water, fresh juices, coconut water, green and herbal teas (hot or cold), nut milks, vegan wine

Note: not all raw-fooders eat all these foods, and many keep their diet very simple. This is to show some of the many options available. These basic ingredients can be made into salads, soups, smoothies, and various entrees such as wraps, “pasta” (zucchini, sweet potato, and carrot can be put thru a spiralizer to make spaghetti or cappelini, or simply sliced thinly with a vegetable peeler for fettuccine), nut-balls, pates, spreads, and specialty dishes, as well as luscious desserts. For “breads,” “crackers,” “bagels,” “pizza crust,” etc., you’ll need a dehydrator that heats food slowly up to 118 degrees or less to preserve the enzymes. I am a happy high-raw fooder and I do not own a dehydrator.

SOME RECIPES:

**Lavishly Lemony Green Juice**
*So good!*

1 head romaine or celery
4 stalks kale (another dark leafy green can substitute, but kale is mildest)
1-2 apples
1 peeled lemon

Juice. Drink daily or almost daily.

**Very Berry Muesli**

This is a classic vegan breakfast dish from the late 19th/early 20th century health reform movement. Invented by Swiss M.D. Maxmilian Bircher-Benner (1867-1939). He healed people on a diet of fresh, raw fruits, vegetables, and nuts. By creating a cereal based on soaked, raw oats (we’re using gluten-free), he realized he could get people to eat more of the fruits and nuts. (Note: oats aren’t technically raw. That doesn’t bother me.)

For the bulk muesli mix:

5 cups oats (choose that would take at least 5 minutes to cook if you were cooking them)
2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut (I used de-fatted)
2 cups slivered almonds
1/2 cup ground flax (or equal parts ground flax, chia, hemp hearts)
1/2 cup chopped dates
1 cup organic raisins

Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.

To prepare for serving, measure out desired portion and allow to soak in milk (I used almond milk) for 15 minutes to 2 hours prior to serving, depending upon consistency desired. Add fruit – shredded apple was used in the Bircher-Benner clinic; I favor berries with their high antioxidant content.)

**Magnificently Marinated Kale Salad**

Kale (or mix of kale and collard greens)
Red bell pepper, chopped
Black olives, chopped
High-quality oil (olive, hemp, or flax)
Mineral-rich salt (Celtic sea salt or Himalayan earth salt)
Lemon juice and/or apple cider vinegar

Strip kale (and collard if using it) leaves from the stems. Roll them like a cigar and chop finely. (You can also chop in a food processor. The point is to get finely chopped greens.) Then mix the oil and lemon juice/vinegar (I go with 3 parts oil, 1 part acid) and salt to taste. Mix into the greens and **massage** the dressing into the greens for a few minutes, really squeezing the greens. This will tenderize them so they’ll be yummy to eat. Add the chopped bell pepper and black olives. If you can, let the salad sit for at least two hours so it can fully marinate. Keeps in fridge up to two days.

**FAQs –**

**Where will I get my protein? –** Dark leafy greens primarily, but all foods have some protein; fruits have the least, so be sure to eat plenty of veggies and greens. Hemp seeds are a concentrated source of protein (32 percent), as are sea vegetables and quinoa, which can be sprouted for eating raw.

**Are there some nutrients to watch out for? –** Yes, B-12, as for any vegan; this must be supplemented. Vitamin D is likely to be a problem unless you live in the South and get sunshine every day year-round. You won’t be getting the vitamin D that’s added to soy milk, some orange juice, and other packaged foods, so you’ll need to supplement. An optional omega 3 supplement (V-Pure – [www.v-pure.com](http://www.v-pure.com) – and Opti-3 – [www.opti3omega.com](http://www.opti3omega.com) – provide both EPA and DHA) to help with heart and bone health. You’ll do fine on selenium if you eat Brazil nuts (22 a month is the magic number). Zinc can be a problem for any vegan; the highest plant source is pumpkin seeds, but the occasional supplement can’t hurt – maybe once a week.
Do I have to be 100% raw? – Not at all. A meeting of the leaders of the raw food movement last year determined that anyone on a 75% raw food diet could be “in the club.” If you’re eating mostly salads, fruits, green juices and green smoothies, sprouts, nuts and seeds, the cooked 25% (or less) might be steamed vegetables, baked or steamed starches such as yams and winter squash, beans, and grains such as quinoa, amaranth, millet, and brown rice. In winter, it’s also nice to heat up soups; if you keep them under 118 degrees, they’re still “raw” in terms of enzyme integrity.

Will I lose weight? – Most people lose lots of weight on raw food, even when they’re eating freely and consuming high-calorie foods like nuts and avocados. The theory is that you’ll lose tons of weight while you’ll detoxifying and then gain back what you need in healthy tissue to get to your ideal weight. If I start getting too thin on raw, I add more cooked foods (beans, grains) and smoothies – you can pack a lot of calories into a fruit smoothie, especially if you add a nutrient-dense superfood supplement like hormone-balancing maca powder or Vega meal replacement powder created by vegan triathlete Brendan Brazier.

Some Favorite Quotations

“To every creature, his own life is very dear.” – Mahavira, Jain saint of India

“Healthy eating may be best achieved with a plant-based diet, which we define as a regimen that encourages whole, plant-based foods and discourages meats, dairy products, and eggs as well as all refined and processed foods.” (Permanente Journal 2014)

“When we kill animals to eat them, they end up killing us because their flesh, which contains cholesterol and saturated fat, was never intended for human beings, who are natural herbivores.” (William Clifford Roberts, MD, Amer J Cardiology 2003)

"A vegetarian diet can prevent 90% of our thrombo-embolic disease, and 97% of our coronary occlusions." (JAMA, 1961)

"To-day, no one can deny the possibility of adequate nutrition and the prolonged maintenance of health and vigor on a vegetarian diet." (JAMA 1/20/1912)

“Why is broccoli so scary?” – Kris Carr, author and filmmaker

“You can’t be an environmentalist and a meat-eater.” – Howard Lyman, former cattle rancher

“I wouldn’t eat a grouper any more than I’d eat a cocker spaniel.” – Sylvia Earle, former lead scientist, Nat’l Oceanic and Atmospheric Institute

“Martin Luther King taught all nonviolence. I was told to extend nonviolence to the mother cow and her calf.” – Dick Gregory, comedian and activist