

# Vegetarian, vegan and dairy-free catering tips

## So what do you eat?

Let's start by defining just what vegetarians and vegans eat, as there are various misperceptions and confusion about this, with even large manufacturers labelling items as veggie when they're not and people calling themselves veggie when they're not!!! It's a bit of a minefield so it's best to know the strict definition and to follow this when providing options so as to please everyone.

### What's a vegetarian?

A vegetarian doesn't eat red meat (such as lamb, beef, pork, bacon etc), white meat (poultry such as chicken, duck and turkey), fish (eg anchovies, salmon, cod etc) or other water life (eg prawns, lobsters, crabs, oysters, shellfish etc) or slaughterhouse by-products (eg gelatine, animal fat, lard or animal rennet). Strict vegetarians will only eat egg products made from free range eggs and cheese products with vegetarian cheese.

### What's a vegan?

A vegan eats legumes (eg beans of all sorts, lentils, peas), grains (eg cereals, bread, pasta, rice etc), fruits, nuts, seeds and vegetables. Vegans do not eat any animal products at all - so no meat, fish or slaughterhouse by-products like a vegetarian - but additionally exclude dairy products, eggs and honey. Most vegans also choose not to wear animal products such as fur, wool, silk or leather due to the exploitation (and usually death) of the animals concerned in order to derive them.

**The easy way to remember - vegetarians eat nothing from slaughtered animals; vegans eat nothing from living or dead animals.**

### Dairy-free – catering for the dairy intolerant

An increasing number of people are dairy (lactose) intolerant and as a result need to avoid milk and other dairy products to prevent them from suffering a wide range of ill effects, from mild to severe.

Like vegans, as well as avoiding obvious dairy products such as milk, yoghurt, butter, cream, the dairy intolerant need to avoid other dairy-based products including lactose, whey, etc.

### Clearly providing choice

The first thing to do is to check your existing menu – do you have any items marked as being suitable for vegetarians or vegans that in fact are not? As mentioned, there is confusion as to exactly what's vegetarian or vegan, with

fish being listed as vegetarian, or cheese listed as vegan. Don't fall into this trap – try and ensure your menu items are clearly and correctly labelled. And please ensure when preparing veggie options that there is no contamination with meat, fish and dairy products. Separate pans, dishes, chopping boards and utensils must be used and only plant oils and vegetable stocks used to cook with.

**Including correctly labelled vegetarian and vegan items on your menu will mean that people won't have to ask and this will ensure that you are maximising your business's potential.**

All of the items listed below are suitable for vegetarians, vegans and the dairy intolerant as it's obviously better to provide choice for all.

### Suggestions for your menu

The following suggestions will hopefully give you an idea of menu options you could include, suitable for vegetarians, vegans and the dairy intolerant. They are by no means extensive but will hopefully give a good starting point as to the sort of thing that can be provided and enjoyed by all. See below for recipes and, if that whets your appetite, visit the recipe pages on the Viva! website [www.viva.org.uk](http://www.viva.org.uk) or contact the Viva! office.

### Drinks:

You can quickly expand the selection of drinks available to vegans and the dairy intolerant by offering soya milk which can be used in tea, coffee, lattes, cappuccinos and even milkshakes.

Note: Some soya milks may curdle in instant coffee. This is caused by the soya protein shrinking when it comes into contact with the hot liquid. This is influenced by a number of factors: temperature of the drink, hardness of the water, pH (acidity) of the water and strength of brewing time of the drink. The most successful method is to pour the soya milk into the cup or mug, then pour in the water (not boiling, and slightly cooled off), add the coffee granules, stirring vigorously as you do so.

Soya milk does not curdle in tea or coffee, lattes and cappuccinos using coffee machines.

### Alcohol:

Some alcohol is not suitable for vegetarians and vegans as it has been produced using various animal products

including gelatine, isinglass and egg albumen.

Wines are often processed using animal products, although an increasing number of animal-free ones are available, including those from the Co-op which are clearly labelled as being suitable for vegetarians and vegans so you can easily choose which are suitable. Many wine suppliers label vegetarian and vegan wines and some specialise in organic/vegetarian/vegan wines (see below for details).

Keg, canned and some bottled beers are okay but best to check before labelling as suitable.

Most spirits are fine, with the exception of Campari and Advocat.

### Breakfasts:


- Cereal with soya milk
- Toast with vegan margarine and jam or Marmite
- 'Scrambled' tofu on toast – try with fried onion and mushrooms and a smattering of herbs
- Full English – veggie style – with sausages, tomatoes, mushrooms, beans, hash browns or potatoes. Most health food stores sell Redwoods rashers if you want to push the boat out!



### Lunches:

- Sandwiches, bagels, pittas or ciabatta with vegan margarine and filled with:
  - Hummus and roasted veg
  - Vegan BLT
  - Falafel, grated carrot and sweet chilli sauce
  - Bean burger with salad and ketchup
  - Sausage, tomato, salad and vegan mayo
  - Cream 'cheese' with olive tapenade and lettuce
  - 'Cheese' and pickle
  - Spicy bean pate with green salad and vegan mayo
  - Cheatin' chicken with avocado and vegan mayo
  - Peanut butter and jam

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### Lunches (cont'd):

- Salad – the sky's the limit! Choose a basic leaf salad with dressing, bean, rice or pasta salad
- Soup – easy to make for veggies – just add chosen veg, stock (made using Marigold Swiss Vegetable Vegan Bouillon Powder), herbs and blend. Add soya milk or cream if you prefer
- Baked potatoes with vegan margarine and topped with hummus, veggie chilli, mixed bean salad, vegan cheese and even good old baked beans

### Dinner:

- Linda McCartney pie served with steamed veg and boiled or roast potatoes and veggie gravy (see below for a great gravy recipe)
- Flans made with tofu and your favourite veg (made in super-quick time using Jus-Rol shortcrust pastry)
- Puff pastry parcels filled with mushrooms, veg, herb stuffing - you can again use Jus-Rol to save making your own pastry
- Pizza with tomatoes, garlic, mushrooms and courgettes, aubergines, and even vegan cheese (make sure its Redwoods Cheezly melting version)
- Pasta – try a Bolognese using veggie mince or use a sauce (your own or any of the many veggie ones available), adding tinned artichokes, mushrooms and more!
- Veggie chilli (made with soya mince)

- Stir-fry with rice noodles, bean sprouts, diced marinated tofu, vegetables and a sweet chilli, black bean or sweet and sour sauce
- Curry – nice and creamy using coconut milk if you prefer – with popadoms, rice and dhal



### Desserts:

- Vegan ice cream, soya cream or yoghurt, served with fresh fruit
- Cakes – see below for two great recipes and [www.viva.org.uk](http://www.viva.org.uk) for masses more!

### Buffet foods:

- Mini sausage rolls – easy to make with Jus-Rol and Sosmix
- Sausages on sticks
- Samosas
- Onions Bhajis
- Pakoras
- Vegetable Spring Rolls
- Sushi – if you're feeling adventurous! It's colourful and easy to do.
- Dips – hummus (experiment with flavours), Guacamole (without cream), bean pate, cream cheese, salsa

- Crudites – carrots, celery, peppers, cauliflower
- Breadsticks
- Sandwiches – see above for suggestions – you can also put fillings on oatcakes or crackers or provide mini pittas
- Salads – green, mixed bean and rice
- Fresh fruit – especially slices of varieties of melon, strawberries and grapes
- Dried fruits and nuts
- Crisps

### Christmas:

Visit [www.viva.org.uk/christmas/recipes.php](http://www.viva.org.uk/christmas/recipes.php) for some

fabulous Christmas recipe ideas to appeal to all tastes. Why not try:

- Starters - Parsnip & Potato Rosti with 'Cream Cheese' & Cranberry or Grilled Asparagus with Walnut Sauce
- Main dishes - Artichoke & Wild Mushroom Strudel or Aubergine Towers & Roast Tomato Sauce
- Desserts - Chocolate & Brandy Truffle Torte or Lemon 'Cheesecake' with Blueberries.



## Suppliers

The following are major distributors of health foods and suppliers of vegetarian/vegan alcohol and are a good starting point when trying to source products. If buying in small numbers you should be able to buy all of the above products at your local health food store and many of them in the supermarket too (look in the free-from section first).

Essential Trading Co-operative Ltd  
T: 0117 958 3550 [www.essential-trading.co.uk](http://www.essential-trading.co.uk)

GreenCity Wholefoods  
T: 0141 554 7633 [www.greencity.co.uk](http://www.greencity.co.uk)

Infinity Foods Co-operative Limited  
T: 01273 424060 [www.infinityfoods.co.uk](http://www.infinityfoods.co.uk)

Suma Wholefoods  
T: 0845 458 2291 [www.suma.co.uk](http://www.suma.co.uk)

Vinceremos Wines  
T: 0113 244 0002 [www.vinceremos.co.uk](http://www.vinceremos.co.uk)

Vintage Roots (organic wines)  
T: 0800 980 4992 [www.vintageroots.co.uk](http://www.vintageroots.co.uk)

## The veggie shopping basket

All of the following items are vegetarian, vegan and dairy free so well worth going for if you want to cater for everyone in one hit! See above for suppliers.

**Burgers** try Frys (distributed by Beanie's Health Foods) – traditional or spiced.

**Cheatin' meats** try Redwood Wholefood's tasty slices – available in beef, chicken, garlic sausage, ham, pepperoni and turkey – perfect for sandwiches (including toasted).

**Cream cheese** try Tofutti original or herbs and chives or Bute Island's cheddar style Creamy Sheese.

**Discovery Foods** widely available range of products, many of which are suitable for vegans, which include taco shells, tortillas, salsa, sauces and seasoning mixes.

**Egg-free mayonnaise** try Plamil's – plain, chilli, garlic, tarragon and organic plain and lemongrass. Available in jars or catering tubs.

**Fish fakes** try Redwoods 'Making Waves' range, which include fish style fingers.

**Gravy** see below for a great vegan gravy recipe else try ready-to-use products such as Redwood's Cheatin' Instant Vegan Gravy Powder.

**Hard cheese** try Redwoods 'Cheezly' – with Edam, Garlic & Herb, Gouda, Mature Cheddar, Mozzarella, Nacho in a

block or Cheddar and Mozzarella sliced – look for the super-melting versions for cheese on toast or pizza! Also try Bute Island's Sheese, available in nine flavours including Cheshire and Smoked Cheddar.

**Hummus** plain widely available but also increasing number of varieties including sundried tomato, caramelised onion and olive. Try Arthur St Trading Company or San Amvrosia brands.

**Ice cream** try Swedish Glace – Rich Chocolate, Smooth Vanilla, Strawberry Ripple, Raspberry Ripple, Mocha and Coffee Ripple, Soft Caramel and Wild Blueberry or the soya-free B'Nice brand.

**Linda McCartney pies**

## The veggie shopping basket (cont'd)

**Meat alternatives** try Redwood's Vegi-Deli Cheatin' Chicken-Style Pieces, uncannily like the real thing! And dried TVP mince and chunks are great in curries and stews – they are cheap and easily available from wholesalers and retailers everywhere.

**Pastry** if you're short on time, try Jus-Rol shortcrust or puff.

**Pates** try original, herb province and wild mushroom, with organic original, mushroom & herb and tomato from Granovita or the organic herb and mushroom varieties from Suma (in a tube, off the shelf, not chiller cabinet).

**Rice milk** try Alpro Rice Drink.

**Sausages** try Redwoods 'Ready to Eat' ones – Lincolnshire style, Oregano & Basil, Sage & Marjoram.

No need to cook – just slice up straight into a sandwich! Fry's and Be-Well brands are also very good – and of course, Linda McCartney sausages, available just about everywhere.

**Sosmix** try Direct Foods original or country herb mix. As well as sausages, Sosmix is also good made into 'meatballs', gently fried then added to a hearty vegetable stew.

**Soya cream** try Alpro Soya or Granose Soya Dreem, for a single cream alternative.

**Soya milk** try Alpro Soya sweetened or unsweetened – organic or vitamin-packed if you prefer. Small cartons of Oy banana, chocolate or strawberry flavoured soya milk also available from Alpro.

**Stock** try Marigold Swiss Vegetable Vegan Bouillon Powder or Kallo brand for either bouillon or stock cubes.

**Tofu** try Cauldron's plain, smoked or marinated versions. Their fried marinated pieces are fantastic in stir-fries etc – or just deep-fry tofu yourself and add a little soya sauce to it, before adding to Thai curries or any dish of your choice.

**Vegan spread** try Pure margarine – Sunflower, Soya or Organic.

**Veggie/soya mince** try Realeat's Vegemince, Redwood's Vegi-Deli Cheatin' Vegetarian Mince or Fry's Vegetarian Mince.

Dried savoury soya mince and chunks are cheap and easily available – each type just needs soaking in hot stock before using. The chunks are particularly good in curries and stews.

**Yoghurt** try Alpro's Organic Plain, Peach & Mango and Red Cherry; Forest Fruits, Peach, Raspberry & Vanilla, Strawberry or OY Pear & Pear and Strawberry & Banana.

**Cruelty-free washrooms:** If you can, try and provide customers with a cruelty-free soap for hand-washing, suitable for all. Businesses providing accommodation might also like to provide guests with cruelty-free shampoo and shower gel too. And you might also like to opt for cruelty-free washing up liquid, toilet cleaner, washing liquid/powder, surface cleaner and bleach too! Most of the Co-op's range are vegetarian and vegan and clearly labelled, otherwise many excellent brands are available from health food distributors and shops. You can promote the fact that you provide cruelty-free and veggie products on the premises and on your website, if you have one, as it may encourage extra custom!

## Ingredients to avoid – a glossary of common animal substances used in foods

The following list is by no means exhaustive but should give you an idea of ingredients to avoid when buying products suitable for vegetarians, vegans and the dairy intolerant. If you have any questions about any of the following, or other ingredient you're uncertain of, please contact Viva! and we will be happy to advise.

**albumen** (egg white) protein part of an egg.

**anchovy** small fish of the herring family, often used as a flavour enhancer. Found in Worcester sauce and pizza toppings.

**animal fat** fat derived from slaughtered animals. This is boiled off the skin and used in many processed foods eg baked and pastry products, margarines, soups and stocks as well as soaps.

**aspic** used as a glazing agent from meat or fish-derived jelly.

**carmine (E120)** red food and drink dye pigment obtained from cochineal.

**casein** milk-derived protein, used in cheese production.

**cheese** dairy product made from cow's (and goats, buffalo, sheep) milk. Unless otherwise stated on labelling, is likely to have been made using animal-derived rennet.

**cochineal (E120)** red dye made from the dried bodies of crushed insects.

**dairy produce** products made from cows, goats, sheep or any other animal's milk. Includes milk, butter, cream, ghee (rancid butter used in many Indian dishes), casein, yoghurts, cheese, ice-cream, lactose or anything that contains these products or derivatives of them.

**gelatin(e)** protein jelly obtained by boiling animal tissues such as hooves, bones, horns, skin etc. One of the most widely used animal-derived ingredients in processed foods and many other products. Used as a gel in most sweets, jellies, capsules (eg for nutritional food supplements and drugs), confectionary and all non-digital photographic film.

**isinglass** pure form of gelatine, obtained from the swim (air) bladders of slaughtered freshwater fish, especially sturgeon. Used to clarify (refine) alcoholic drinks.

**lactose** milk sugar from milk of mammals (mainly cows). Used as a carrier for flavouring agents in many processed foods. Also used in cosmetics and medicines.

**rennet** enzyme extracted from calves' stomachs after they have been slaughtered, used in cheese-making. Non-animal rennets made from microbial or fungal enzymes are available to make vegetarian cheeses.

**shellac (E904)** insect secretion, used as a candied sweet glaze and also added to hair spray, lip sealer and polishes.

**suet** hard fat used in cooking made from the kidneys of cattle and sheep. Vegetable suet is widely available.

**whhey** milk-derived substance left after most of the fat and casein has been removed in cheese-making. Used in many processed foods eg margarines, biscuits, and crisps as well as some cleaning products.

## Recipes

### SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE (serves 4)

The great thing about the base ingredients of a Bolognese sauce is that depending on the herbs and spices you add, it can be used to make curries, chillies, shepherds pie, lasagne and so on. The recipe below is for Spaghetti Bolognese, but variations follow.

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1/2 red pepper, chopped
- 1 medium courgette, chopped in half lengthways then sliced
- 100g (4oz) mushrooms, chopped
- 225g (8oz) veggie mince
- 2 x 400g tins of chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 bay leaves / 3 tsp basil/ 2 tsp oregano

1. Fry the onion and red pepper in the oil until soft.
2. Add the garlic, courgette and mushrooms and cook until the mushrooms are golden brown.
3. Add the mince and herbs and fry for 4-5 minutes, stirring constantly. (If the mixture sticks and needs a bit of moisture use some of the tinned tomato juice.)
4. Add the purée and tinned tomatoes, stir well and simmer for 10 minutes over a low heat.
5. Serve on a bed of cooked spaghetti (allow 75g (3oz) dry weight per person) and garnish with grated dairy-free cheese or Parmezano and chopped olives.



## COCONUT CURRY

Replace the last three Spaghetti Bolognese ingredients with 1 tsp each of medium hot curry powder, cumin, coriander, garam masala and 1/4 block of chopped, creamed coconut and serve on a bed of cooked basmati rice (allow 75g (3oz) dry weight per person). (To make the rice light yellow, add a pinch of turmeric to the water.)

## CHILLI NON-CARNE

Replace the last three Spaghetti Bolognese ingredients with 1 tsp each of chilli powder, paprika and cumin, 1 tbsp peanut butter, 100g (4oz) sweetcorn and 100g (4oz) kidney beans, cooked, rinsed and drained. Serve on a bed of cooked long grain rice (allow 75g (3oz) per person).

## SHEPHERDESS PIE

Replace the last three Spaghetti Bolognese ingredients with 3 tsp bouquet garni and place in a deep ovenproof dish. Top with mashed potato and cook at 375°F/190°C/Gas Mark 5 for 30 minutes.



## SUNDRIED TOMATO AND ASPARAGUS PASTA WITH PESTO (serves 3-4)

- 250g/8oz fusilli or penne pasta
- 1/2 pack sun dried tomatoes, soaked in hot water then chopped with scissors into bite sized pieces
- 1 tin asparagus (or 1/2 bunch fresh, lightly steamed), chopped into 2cm/1" pieces
- 8 garlic cloves, finely chopped but not crushed
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 jar vegan pesto
- 2tsp dried herbs such as basil or oregano OR a handful of fresh coriander, chopped
- freshly ground black pepper / salt

1. Cook pasta in a pan of boiling water for 10 minutes or according to taste.
2. Add some olive oil to stop pasta sticking.
3. Heat asparagus and add to cooked pasta.
4. Add coriander or dried herbs.
5. Add sun dried tomatoes.
6. In a saucepan, heat olive oil, add chopped garlic and fry gently until lightly browned.
7. Add oil and garlic mix to pasta and stir in carefully but thoroughly.
8. Add salt and freshly ground black pepper.



**If you have any questions or queries about catering for vegetarians, vegans and the dairy intolerant, please contact:**

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W: [www.viva.org.uk](http://www.viva.org.uk) and [www.vegetarian.org.uk](http://www.vegetarian.org.uk)

## VEGAN GRAVY

(from Rose Elliot's *Vegetarian Cookery*)

- 1 onion, diced
- 2 tbsp oil
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- Clove of garlic (crushed)
- 450ml/15 fl oz vegetable stock
- 1 tsp yeast extract
- 1 or 2 tbsp soya sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. Fry the onion in the oil for 5 minutes.
2. Add the flour and cook for a further 5 to 10 minutes until the flour and onion are nut-brown and the onion is soft and slightly pulpy.
3. Add the garlic then gradually stir in the vegetable stock (or the water from any vegetables you happen to be boiling at the same time).
4. Bring to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Add the yeast extract, soya sauce and black pepper.
6. Stir well. Strain if you like, or serve as it is.

## MUFFINS

Makes 12 (need large cases)

- 330g/12oz self raising flour
- 225g/8 oz caster sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 4 tsp 'allergycare' egg replacer or soya flour
- 290ml/10 1/2 fl oz soya milk
- 110ml/4 fl oz sunflower oil
- Plus whatever flavourings you like (eg blueberries, raspberries, vegan chocolate chips, lemon and poppyseed etc)

1. Sift together flour, sugar, baking powder and egg replacer. Mix well.
2. Add any flavourings, milk and oil.
3. Mix together until just mixed (try not to over mix the batter).
4. Bake in muffin tins at 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6 for about 20 minutes, until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.



## CHOCOLATE CAKE

This recipe also works well as chocolate muffins, just add chocolate chips.

- 450g/16 oz plain flour
- 450g/16oz caster sugar
- 2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 110g/4oz cocoa
- 560ml/1pint soya milk
- 225g/8 oz vegan margarine (eg Pure brand)
- 4 tbsp golden syrup

1. Melt margarine, golden syrup and milk over a low heat until the margarine has melted.
2. Sieve flour, sugar, cocoa and baking powder into mixing bowl.
3. Mix these dry ingredients together well, or you will get little white lumps of flour in the cake.
4. Add liquid mix and mix well.
5. Pour into two 10 inch tins, or three 8 inch tins and bake at 180°C until a skewer comes out clean.