



Nancy Walker's
**Wisdom
From
The
Kitchen**



*Healthy Eating,
Vibrant Living*

Volume I

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From
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Kitchen***

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Vibrant Living***

***Cookbook
Volume I***

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for all of his tireless dedication,
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Without him, all that I do would not be
possible. Thanks to my children who
are wonderful taste-testers and a joy.
Thanks also to all of my friends who
have encouraged me in a wide variety
of ways.***

***This book is dedicated to everyone
who desires to eat healthy without
being in bondage to their kitchens or
their food.***

Introduction

Hopefully you picked up this book because you are trying to positively affect your life through healthier eating. Never in my lifetime did I think I would author a cookbook – yet that is exactly what you are holding in your hand. My goal was never to become a vegetarian or even to teach others how to prepare delicious vegetarian dishes. My goal was, and still is, to enjoy health and vitality for as long as I can. And I believe - based on *all* of the scientific, unbiased studies - that a whole food, plant-based diet is a wonderful and delicious way to improve your well-being. So whether you are a vegetarian, want to become a vegetarian, or just want to know how to prepare healthier meals every once in a while – this collection of recipes and information should help you on your journey.

Like you, I had always known, somewhere in the back of my mind, that eating more fruits and vegetables, and fewer processed foods was a *great* idea. But somehow, taking that ethereal knowledge and putting it into practice was incredibly difficult for me. Perhaps it was a lack of experience selecting and preparing fresh fruits and vegetables or perhaps it was a lack of motivation which kept me locked into the standard American diet. Most days my only vegetables were potato chips and french fries and my only fruits were lemonade and orange juice. I had even managed to lose weight without improving my eating habits - I just changed the quantities of junk food I ate. I looked good on the outside, but probably not on the inside.

Then I had children! Besides permanently ruining my waistline, I discovered that I had the motivation I needed to get healthy and stay that way. It only took once trying to explain to my little girl what a

grandparent was to get me moving. You see, both my parents had died early from heart disease and diabetes and all of its horrible complications. My children will never know what it is like to have Grandpa teach them how to fish or throw a football or curl up on Grandma's lap for bedtime stories. I wanted better for them and their children. If the generational curses of diabetes, heart disease, obesity and cancer were going to be broken, it was up to me. I had to do something!

So I started slowly incorporating more fruits and vegetables into a rather ordinary diet. Then, I removed all dairy products – thanks to the fact that my daughter was allergic to dairy. Next, I began to tackle removing the meats. As I began to research and learn, I discovered that there is never a point of diminishing returns when it comes to removing animal products from your plate. Even removing that last 10% of animal products from your diet reaps benefits to your long term risk of a wide variety of cancers and diseases.

The information you will encounter in the next several pages will give you a great start towards a whole food, plant-based diet. Included are a step-by-step plan, menu planning basics and a sample menu for the week and information on meat replacements and how to use them. You can find even more information on how to easily improve your diet and health choices at my website www.Veg4Health.com.

Step by Step Plan for Better Eating

Are you trying to eat better? Perhaps lose weight or lower you cholesterol? You probably don't want to go on a diet since they never really work over the long haul. But what can you do today to start making positive changes? You know that eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains will help your overall health – but you just can't seem to make the change. What you may need is a step-by-step list to help incorporate the changes you need to make. Trying to overhaul your diet in one step is too hard. Just like trying to remodel your house – every room at the same time is too hard and too confusing. Take heart! There is help! Just follow the roadmap below and when you get lost, (or fall off the wagon) just back-up to the last place you were comfortable on the list. Then start moving forward once again from there. Change takes time, motivation and a clear cut plan. Remember every journey starts where you are so make a quick assessment and get moving.

1. Start eating at home. It is very difficult to get truly healthy food while dining out. If your habit is to grab what you can while on the road, set a goal to start eating at home. Don't worry yet about whether your recipes or food at home is healthy. You need to start the habit of eating at home – then later you can start experimenting with healthy recipes.

2. Start drinking water – only. Our bodies need water. We don't need sodas, energy drinks, caffeinated beverages, coffees, teas or milks. Pure water – refreshing and invigorating – is the healthiest beverage. If you find you are drinking

anything *but* water – *stop!* Limit yourself to maybe one non-water beverage per day – and no, not an enormous, 32 oz beverage. Try limiting it to 1 cup of coffee or one small soda per day. Gradually you can eliminate that as well. Your kidneys, skin and body will love you for it. (Just one word of caution – if you are used to drinking caffeine all day long, you may have to endure caffeine withdrawal for a few days. Back off slowly if you have to, but the main thing is to persevere! You will survive and breaking the caffeine addiction is a huge step in the right direction!)

3. **Pick one meal per day to overhaul.** Trying to eat healthier at every meal is too hard to tackle. Set your sights on *one* meal. Change your family's eating habits for that one meal before moving onto the next. Perhaps you may want to work your way through the day. Start with changing breakfast this month, and then next month tackle lunch, then snacks, then dinner and ending with desserts. Before you move onto the next meal, make sure the changes you've already made are permanent and comfortable. If not, back-up and wait before moving on. The key is to make the change stick – whether that takes you one month or one year.

5 Easy Steps to Menu Planning

Trying to eat healthy without a menu and a plan is pretty impossible. After a busy day at work or field tripping with my children, I need to be able to come home and prepare dinner without having to think. I need to move quickly and with forethought in order to get a healthy and delicious meal on the table in 30 minutes. If I didn't take the time earlier in the week to plan our meals, I would be lost and the quality of our food would suffer. Not only would the taste suffer, but the healthiness would as well. If there is one thing I would strongly recommend it would be to make the time each week to sit down and develop a menu for the week. It doesn't have to be rigid and inflexible and it doesn't have to be elaborate. It just needs to take into account your family's schedule, taste buds and budget.

1. Prepare your menu when you are not hungry and not pressed for time.

I normally take about 15 minutes in the evening, right after the children have gone to bed. Dinner is over, my tummy is full and I find it relaxing to think about all of the delicious foods we will be enjoying the following week. If I am rushed or hungry when I prepare my menu, it doesn't work well for us.

2. Start with your family's activities and schedules.

The first thing I do when planning our menu, is to look at my calendar and see which days I know we will be too rushed or too tired to do much food preparation. Those are the days I rely on my slow cooker or on previously frozen meals (leftovers). There's nothing more frustrating to me than coming home from a full day and having a complicated or unfamiliar recipe staring me in the face. That is when my willpower is at its lowest and I am most tempted to use a drive-thru. Know your limits and plan around them.

3. Take into account your family's taste buds.

Every week, I try to make sure that I am fixing some of everybody's favorite foods. I also try to balance that out at every meal. If there is a dish I really love, but I know my children don't enjoy, I balance it out with a dish that same night that I know they love. They still have to eat

some of everything I prepare, but I can fill their tummies that night with a food they like. Also, most of your favorite recipes can be modified to a healthier version of its original self for a familiar, healthy meal.

4. Take into account your budget. Begin to learn when fruits and vegetables are in season in order to make the most money conscious menu choices. With the advent of global shipping most fruits and vegetables are available year round. However, the freshest foods are those grown nearby, not a half a world away.

5. Have a list of old time favorites and a cookbook nearby. Menu planning time can be a time to let your creativity shine, within the comfort of your family's favorite items. I love to find a favorite cookbook or a new one and peruse the collection of healthy foods. Sometimes the dishes I select are duds but most times we find some real gems.

Healthy eating doesn't just happen. It does require some planning and forethought, but it doesn't have to be complicated or boring. Often people ask me, "If you don't eat eggs, meat or dairy, just what *do* you eat?" My response is always the same. "There are not enough days in the year to make all of the delicious foods God's provided for us." Following are two sample menus of what our typical week of eating looks like. There are many nights when I don't prepare a *typical* main dish, but instead we enjoy a wide variety of side dishes.

Sample Menus

Monday	Fried Rice with Peas and Carrots – <i>recipe pg 60</i> Oriental Meaty Stir Fry - <i>recipe pg 67</i>
Tuesday	Crockpot Chili - <i>recipe pg 58</i> Cornbread Homemade Applesauce
Wednesday	Meatless Loaf – <i>recipe pg 64</i> Fresh Pineapple Bok Choy Salad
Thursday	Tortilla Casserole - <i>recipe pg 76</i> Corn on the Cob Diced Fresh Apples
Friday	Pasta Fagioli - <i>recipe pg 48</i> Garlic Bread Salad
Saturday	Baked sweet potatoes Collard Greens Black Eyed Peas
Sunday	Fajitas – <i>recipe pg 59</i> Guacamole – <i>recipe pg 33</i> Salsa – <i>recipe pg 31</i> Spanish Rice

Monday	Veggie Brunswick Stew - <i>recipe pg 52</i> Stewed Apples Biscuits
Tuesday	BBQ Soy Curls - <i>recipe pg 56</i> Green Beans and Mushrooms Cauliflower
Wednesday	Butternut Squash Butter Beans Spinach
Thursday	Cream of Broccoli Soup - <i>recipe pg 43</i> Bread Salad
Friday	Beef-Style Soy Curls with Gravy - <i>recipe pg 55</i> Brown Rice Roasted Asparagus
Saturday	Cabbage Rolls - <i>recipe pg 57</i> Fried Okra Fresh fruit
Sunday	Portobello Marsala - <i>recipe pg 69</i> Peas Whole wheat linguini noodles

Meat Replacements

Starting to experiment with meatless meals can be a little intimidating. Everyone has had a *bad* experience with Tofu and it has become the brunt of many a good joke. However, when we first started eating as a child, we probably did not like the taste of the meat our parents offered us. We only began to eat it as it kept appearing and appearing and appearing on our plates. The same is probably true when we first began cooking with meat. If it came *naturally* at all it was only because we watched so many people over the years prepare it, that we even knew where to begin. With some commitment and creativity, it won't be long before cooking with meat alternatives becomes easy, graceful and scrumptious – even to the most discerning palate. Below are some of the many plant-based foods available to use as substitutes for animal products in cooking. The list is neither complete nor exhaustive, but is a good starting place for most appetites. The texture of the plant-based food is almost as important as the taste. Often times we are *fooled* by the substitutes because it has the same texture in our mouth as its animal analog.

1. **TVP** – Textured vegetable protein (TVP) is a fibrous, dehydrated meat alternative that is usually made by a process that isolates the proteins from soy flour. TVP is often found in foods like veggie burgers, hotdogs, and “meat” crumbles. TVP is usually sold as a dehydrated product that must be rehydrated before using. It is available plain or flavored and in granular or chunk form. TVP is also available as a prepared frozen product made to resemble ground beef. Some varieties of TVP contain salt, flavorings, and other

additives, so be sure to read the label carefully before purchasing. Dehydrated textured vegetable protein keeps well at room temperature for up to 6 months if stored in an airtight container.

Rehydrated TVP should be kept refrigerated and used within 5 days. TVP is available in natural food stores and well-stocked supermarkets. To rehydrate TVP simply add 1 cup of boiling water to each cup of TVP. Let the mixture sit for approximately 5 to 10 minutes. You can also add TVP to a sauce or soup without rehydrating it. The TVP will take on the taste of whatever it is added to, and will absorb some of the liquid already in the dish.

2. **Soy Curls** - Soy curls are another great meat substitute which is made from the whole (non-GMO) soybean. They are an excellent source of protein and are high in fiber and resemble strips of beef or chicken. They simply need to be rehydrated before use and may be seasoned in a variety of ways. Try them with beef-style gravy, in chickenless salads or in barbecue sauce. They are available in some health food stores or online at www.Veg4Health.com. Soy Curls are easy to rehydrate by adding boiling water over them until the curls are covered. Let the Soy Curls sit for 10 minutes and then simply drain any leftover water away. These are one my family's favorite meat alternatives and we use them frequently.
3. **Tofu** - Tofu is a curd made from soybeans. Rich in protein and often

fortified with calcium, this meat substitute can be found in most grocery and health food stores. Tofu is rather tasteless which is part of what makes it such a great substitute for animal products, both meat and cheeses. Tofu comes in two different packaging styles; regular and silken styles; and several different textures. Some tofu brands are packed in water and can be found in the refrigerator section of your local grocer. Other tofu brands come in an aseptic package and can be found on the grocer's shelf where it will be stable for a year or more. Both are fine substitutes, but the one packaged in water is generally firmer in texture and will hold its shape better during the preparation process. Both silken and regular style tofu are fine substitutes, but the silken style is generally softer and is a better choice for use in sauces. Tofu also comes in Soft, Firm and Extra Firm – as well as regular and low fat. Firm tofu is dense and solid and can be cubed and used in soups, stir fried, or grilled. Firm tofu is higher in protein, fat, and calcium than other forms of tofu. The texture of tofu completely changes once it has been frozen and defrosted and I will often do this to get the firm, yet light texture my children love. I always make sure to have several tofu packages on my shelf, one in the refrigerator and several in the freezer. Don't panic about having the right type, texture and style of tofu. For the most part, any tofu will do in a recipe, so relax and give it a try.

4. **Tempeh** – Tempeh is a traditional Indonesian food. It is a chunky, tender soybean cake. Whole soybeans, sometimes mixed with another grain such

as rice or millet, are fermented into a rich cake of soybeans with a smoky or nutty flavor. Tempeh can be marinated and grilled and added to soups, casseroles, or chili. It can also be grated for a chickenless salad. You can find it at your local health food store and some local grocers.

5. **Seitain** - Seitain is also known as "wheat meat", because it is the "meat" of the wheat grain – meaning it is the high protein part. Seitain is a very versatile meat alternative which we love, but can be a little more difficult to find. It can be used to replace ground meat in recipes, but it can also be sliced thin enough to use as a substitute in elegant veal and chicken dishes. Seitain can be made from scratch or from mixes such as Seitain Quick Mix, available at health food stores or online. Commercially prepared seitain is available in several forms, including White Wave brand available in most health food stores. You can easily make your own seitain by kneading 1 ¼ C gluten flour with ¾ C water for about 1 minute until it forms a ball. Shape the ball into a cylinder, slice it thinly and then boil it in water seasoned with ginger and soy sauce for approximately 15 minutes. Remove the "cutlets" from the boiling water and use as you would any animal cutlet. (Note – If you should try to skip the boiling step, your seitain will end up like chewing gum and will be nearly impossible to eat.)

6. **Mushrooms** – Portobello mushrooms are a great and easy meat substitute that most people are very familiar with. They have a wonderful texture and unique taste that I find myself using them over and over again. High in fiber and nutrients they are a very healthy and easy substitute for meat. I often don't take the time to marinate them but simply add the flavors and sauces as I am preparing them. We love them in Fajitas, Philly "cheese steak" sandwiches, in place of hamburgers and just plain right off the grill.

7. **Packaged Meat Substitutes** – It is amazing how many prepackaged meat substitutes are readily available on local grocer's shelves. I am very careful to watch the ingredients and additives in these products. Often times, I think the alternative products that the scientists have engineered for mass consumption are far worse than the animal products they are designed to replace. I normally prefer to use basic meat alternatives and then add my own seasonings so that I know exactly what I am feeding my family. However, they can have their place in a healthy diet. Used as seasonings in recipes or infrequently, they are a convenient alternative to experiment with.

Breakfast

Breakfast is an important meal and should never be skipped. If you don't fuel up in the beginning of the day, what will your body use to keep it moving and thinking? We love to start our day with fruit or with a hearty whole grain cereal or bread. On Saturdays or Sundays I often make a double batch of waffles or pancakes and freeze the leftovers for quick breakfasts during the week. One item we always have on hand is *real* maple syrup. Pancake syrup sold in most stores is simply colored corn syrup – a very poor imitation of maple syrup. Oftentimes, I will skip the waffle or pancake and just drizzle a little maple syrup over a dish of fresh, sliced strawberries and bananas.

Applesauce Oatmeal Muffins

This is one of my favorite muffins. The only problem is that I often forget to get the oatmeal soaking an hour before I am ready to make them. I haven't quite figured out a short cut for that one yet. I will often let the oatmeal soak for longer than an hour, or overnight in the fridge!

Ingredients

- 1 C oats
- 1 C soy milk
- 1 C whole wheat flour
- ½ C brown sugar
- ½ C applesauce
- Egg replacer for 1 egg
- 1 tspn Apple Pie Spice blend
- 1 tspn baking powder
- ½ tspn baking soda
- ½ tspn salt

Preparation

1. Soak oats in milk for 1 hour or longer.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
3. Place egg replacer ingredients in mixing bowl and mix until foamy.
4. Add all ingredients to egg replacer and mix.
5. Add nuts or raisins if desired and mix.
6. Spoon into 12 greased muffin pans.
7. Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
8. Remove immediately and serve.

Banana Bread

Nothing beats a good old-fashioned loaf of fresh banana bread. Once again this breakfast food doubles as a nutritious dessert. I tried a lot of banana bread recipes before we settled on this one as our favorite.

Ingredients

- Egg Replacer equivalent to 2 eggs
- ½ C Earth Balance (vegan butter substitute)
- 1 C sugar
- 1 tspn vanilla extract
- 2 C whole wheat flour
- ½ tspn salt
- 1 tspn baking soda
- ½ tspn cinnamon
- 3 medium bananas, mashed
- ½ C chopped nuts, optional

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cream sugar and Earth Balance together until creamy in a large bowl
3. Add egg replacer and stir.
4. Add in dry ingredients and mix well.
5. Mix in mashed bananas and optional chopped nuts.
6. Place in well greased loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes, until toothpick inserted comes out clean. (Cover loosely with foil during the last 15 minutes to avoid over browning the top.)
7. Remove from oven and let cool on wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert pan and remove loaf. Let cool before slicing.

Banana Sandwich

This is a throwback to when I was a child and it is still one of my favorites.

Ingredients

- 1 or 2 slices of whole grain bread, toasted
- 2 T natural peanut butter
- Drizzle of honey or maple syrup
- 1 sliced banana

Preparation

1. Spread peanut butter over one slice of the toast
2. Add sliced bananas and drizzle with honey or maple syrup.
3. Top with second slice of toast for a closed-face sandwich, or leave as is and enjoy as an open-face sandwich. (You can place the open-faced sandwich under the broiler for a few minutes if desired.)

Breakfast Burritos

Sometimes traditional American breakfast fare just isn't what I am craving. On those mornings, I reach for a can of beans, add some salsa and I'm soon enjoying a nice hearty breakfast which will carry me through a very busy morning.

Ingredients:

- 4 Whole grain tortillas
- 1 15 oz can black or pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ C salsa
- Vegan sour cream and/or vegan grated cheese

Preparation

1. In a small saucepan, heat salsa and beans until warm.
2. Divide beans between the 4 heated tortillas. Add vegan sour cream or cheese to taste.
3. Roll up, serve and enjoy.

Double Chocolate Banana Muffins

These muffins should perhaps be listed under dessert items, but for a special treat I fix these for the kids. Anyone who loves chocolate and nice moist muffins will fall in love with these. They are also a wonderful way of using leftover ripe bananas.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ C whole wheat flour
- 1 C sugar
- ¼ C baking cocoa
- 1 tspn baking soda
- ½ tspn salt
- ¼ tspn baking powder
- 1 1/3 C mashed ripe bananas (2-3 medium)
- 1/3 C oil or unsweetened applesauce
- Egg replacer – equivalent to 1 egg
- 1 C semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large bowl, combine mashed bananas, oil or applesauce, and egg replacer. Mix well.
3. Add the remaining dry ingredients to the banana mixture. Mix well.
4. Fold in chocolate chips.
5. Fill greased or paper-line muffin cups ¾ full.
6. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until muffins test done. Makes about 12 muffins.

Fruit Bowl

We love to eat fruit for breakfast. I feel it is such a great jumpstart to a healthy eating day. We keep a selection of fresh fruit and berries on hand so we can be creative and varied with our breakfast fruit bowl. My favorite is sliced bananas and strawberries, topped with a little maple syrup, ground flax seed and chopped walnuts. My kids' favorite is a big bowl of fresh raspberries and my husband loves pineapple and cantaloupe or a big bowl of sliced bananas and raisins, topped with soy milk.

Good Morning Smoothie

Most mornings, I opt for a smoothie for breakfast. There is just something about starting my morning with a big glass of high nutrient dense foods. Perhaps it's because a smoothie is an easy thing to down right after my morning run when I am often pressed for time. There are no exact measurements and most anything will work in a smoothie. It's just a matter of personal preference and fruit availability.

Ingredients

- 1 apple, red delicious is best due to it's high antioxidant value
- 1 peeled orange
- 2 T ground flax seed
- ½ C frozen grapes
- ½ C frozen pineapple
- ½ C frozen berries
- Frozen spinach
- Apple or grape juice – enough to allow processing

Preparation

1. Blend well until creamy. This makes two large glasses.

Hot Cereal

I grew up in a warm climate and never really took to hot breakfast cereals, except for buttery grits. I finally encountered Scottish Oatmeal and fell in love. Since then, I have found that I could adapt my microwave cooking of hot cereal to almost any type of grain. Our favorites are Scottish oatmeal and oat bran – but you can substitute any kind you like.

Ingredients (Enough for two servings)

- ½ C oat bran or other hot cereal
- 1 ½ C water
- Toppings: Brown sugar, maple syrup, ground flax seeds, chopped walnuts, raisins, cinnamon

Preparation

1. Combine cereal and water in large breakfast bowl. Microwave on high for approximately 4 to 5 minutes.
2. Stir and add toppings of your choice. Enjoy!

Pumpkin Bread

The original recipe came to me from a dear friend's mother. I took her list of ingredients and modified them to make a fairly healthy breakfast or dessert bread. We can't get enough of this very tasty bread. The recipe makes two loaves and I always plan on freezing the second loaf – although I rarely get to since my family devours it.

Ingredients:

- 1 C unsweetened applesauce
- Egg replacer equivalent to 4 eggs
- 3 C sugar
- 3 ½ C whole wheat flour
- 1 tspn salt
- 2 tspn baking soda
- 1 tspn baking powder
- 1 tspn cinnamon
- 1 tspn allspice
- 1 tspn ground nutmeg
- ½ tspn ground cloves
- 2/3 C water
- 1 15 oz can of pumpkin

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix until smooth.
3. Pour into two greased loaf pans.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 1 ½ hours, until toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean.
5. Remove the pans from the oven and let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert pans and remove loaves. Let cool on wire rack before slicing and serving.

Sausage Gravy

I can truthfully say that I have completely ruined my children with this recipe. They will *never* be able to go to a restaurant and order Sausage gravy and biscuits and be satisfied after eating this! We love this breakfast and it is a real treat. I normally don't feel inclined to make biscuits in the morning, so we use this recipe when we have leftover biscuits from the night before.

Ingredients

- 1 14 oz pkg Lightlife Gimme Lean Ground Sausage Style (or any veggie sausage patties you like)
- 2 T Earth Balance
- 2 T Wondra flour
- 1 C soy milk
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Preparation

1. In a large nonstick or cast iron skillet brown the patties. Once browned, crumble.
2. Add Earth Balance to the sausage and melt.
3. Meanwhile, whisk together the milk and flour. Add to the Earth Balance and sausage.
4. Stir constantly over medium heat until thickened. Add salt and pepper to taste. (If you want more liquid, just double the flour and milk.)
5. Serve immediately over biscuits, toast, grits or potatoes.

Scrambled Tofu

This is a great substitute for scrambled eggs and can be prepared with or without the onions, mushrooms, pepper and garlic. I love to add any leftover diced vegetables I have and create a type of country scramble. We often eat this rolled up in whole wheat tortillas or on top of whole wheat toast.

Ingredients

- 1 pkg firm tofu (Silken style works well)
- ½ C chopped onions
- ½ C sliced fresh mushrooms
- ¼ C chopped bell peppers
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 2 tspn chicken-style seasoning, optional
- ½ tspn onion powder
- 3 dashes turmeric (a spice which adds a yellowish color so that your tofu will take on more of an appearance and taste of scrambled eggs)

Preparation

1. Drain and mash tofu with a fork. Add spices and mix well.
2. In a large skillet, sauté fresh veggies and garlic clove in small amount of water until soft. Add mashed tofu mixture.
3. Cook over medium heat 5-10 minutes until most of liquid has evaporated or until tofu looks golden brown.

Sweet Breakfast Rice

Ingredients

- 1 C cooked brown rice
- 3 dates, pitted
- 1/3 C water
- ¾ whole banana

Preparation

1. Heat the rice in a microwave until warm. Stir and set aside.
2. Place the dates and water in a blender and process briefly. Add the banana and process until smooth.
3. Pour over the warmed rice and serve

Sweet Muffins

Our children especially love these muffins. We start with the basic muffin and then add any tasty ingredient everyone can agree on. Sometimes it is blueberries, sometimes chopped pecans or walnuts and on special occasions, chocolate chips. We also have a wide variety of specialty shaped, silicone muffin bakeware. Serving these in a shape peculiar to the season makes these simple muffins seem elegant and special.

Ingredients

- Egg Replacer equivalent to 1 egg
- ½ C soy milk
- ¼ vegetable oil or unsweetened applesauce
- 1 ½ C whole wheat flour
- ½ C sugar
- 2 tspn baking powder
- ½ tspn salt
- ¾ C ingredients of your choice (blueberries, chopped nuts, chips)

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Place egg replacer ingredients in mixing bowl and mix until foamy.
3. Add soy milk and oil or applesauce. Blend at low speed until well mixed.
4. Add dry ingredients and mix until smooth.
5. Add optional ingredients and stir.
6. Spoon into 12 greased muffin pans.
7. Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
8. Remove immediately and serve.

Whole Wheat Pancakes

This is a great and versatile pancake mix which we use often. I always make extras and freeze them for another day. When my daughter wants pancakes and my son wants waffles, I just head for the freezer. I defrost the pancake in the microwave; toast it in the toaster oven for a few seconds and then top with maple syrup. Yummy! It sure beats the over-priced store-bought varieties full of chemicals and devoid of taste. (Ground flaxseed can be added to the batter if desired.)

Ingredients:

- Egg replacer equivalent to 2 eggs
- 2 C whole wheat flour
- 1 ½ C soy milk
- 4 T oil or unsweetened applesauce
- 2 T brown sugar
- 2 T baking powder
- ½ tspn salt
- Nuts, blueberries or chips

Preparation

1. Beat egg replacer until foamy.
2. Add remaining ingredients and stir until well combined. For thinner pancakes, stir in additional ¼ cup soy milk.
3. Pour about 3 tablespoons batter onto hot griddle. Cook until puffed and dry around edges. Turn and cook other side until brown.

Whole Wheat Waffles

This is one of my son's favorite breakfast items. He loves them with Earth Balance and maple syrup. My daughter likes them topped with chocolate chips. I like them topped with sliced bananas and strawberries. The extra waffles freeze well and are a fast and easy, any day breakfast. (Ground flaxseed can be added to the batter if desired.)

Ingredients:

- Egg replacer equivalent to 2 eggs
- 2 C whole wheat flour
- 1 3/4 C soy milk
- 1/2 C oil or unsweetened applesauce
- 1 T sugar
- 4 tspn baking powder
- 1/2 tspn salt

Preparation

1. Beat egg replacer until foamy.
2. Add remaining ingredients and stir until well combined. For thinner pancakes, stir in additional 1/4 cup soy milk.
3. Pour about 3 tablespoons batter onto waffle iron. Bake until steaming stops, about 4 to 5 minutes

Zucchini Bread

This is a great bread to make when your garden has produced too many zucchinis (a problem we never had with our garden) or anytime of the year.

Ingredients:

- ½ Cup unsweetened applesauce
- Egg replacer equivalent to 1 egg
- 1 C sugar
- 1 C grated zucchini
- 1½ C whole wheat flour
- 1/8 tspn salt
- ½ tspn baking soda
- 1½ tspn cinnamon
- 1 T vanilla extract

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Beat egg replacer until foamy. Add sugar, applesauce, zucchini and vanilla extract.
3. Add dry ingredients and stir until well combined.
4. Pour into a greased loaf pan.
5. Bake at 325 degrees for approximately 50-60 minutes, until toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean.
6. Remove the pan from the oven and let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert pans and remove loaf. Let cool on wire rack before slicing and serving.

Dips and Condiments

My inspiration for quite a few of these dips and spreads was my desire to enjoy a healthier version of the tastes I grew up with. Our refrigerator always contains one or two of these for easy and quick snacks or lunches. I also make sure to have celery stalks, sliced peppers or cucumbers, whole grain breads or baked chips to accompany them. With these on hand, there is never a reason to reach for prepackaged snacks. The tofu mayonnaise and sour cream are the base I use when modifying less healthy recipes. With no cholesterol and light on fat, they make a great substitute in most traditional dips.

"Don't Leave Home Without It" Salsa

Once upon a time, we owned our own produce market and I would make fresh salsa for sale. Along with my hummus and guacamole, it was a very popular item and a batch would only last a day or two. One day, a gentleman came in especially to buy some salsa. He was going on vacation in his motor home and would not leave our shop until I had made him enough for his trip!

Ingredients:

- 1 can diced tomatoes, drained, or 2-3 ripe tomatoes
- ¼ medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Juice from 1 lime
- ¼ bunch of cilantro
- 1 jalapeno pepper, or to taste
- Salt, sugar and hot sauce to taste

Preparation:

1. Place cilantro, onion, garlic, lime juice and jalapeno pepper in food processor. (Be sure to put the cilantro under the onion to weigh it down while processing.) Pulse in the food processor until minced well.
2. Add the diced tomatoes and pulse briefly until diced.
3. Taste and add seasonings as needed. (I try to make all of the taste buds on my tongue "fire".)

Easy Onion Dip

Sometimes I just crave those old-fashioned dips of my childhood years. Served alongside baked chips, this could almost pass as health food.

Ingredients:

- 1 package soft tofu
- 2 T lemon juice
- 2 tspn sugar or honey
- 1 tspn soy sauce
- 1 package dry onion soup mix

Preparation:

1. Place the tofu, lemon juice, sugar or honey, and soy sauce in a blender and blend until very smooth.
2. Pour the mixture into a mixing bowl and add the soup mix.
3. Stir well and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

Guacamole

One of my favorites - this provides lots of good fats...and it is soooo easy! This is my most requested dish when we go to parties or have someone over to the house. There is never enough because it goes so fast. *Always* use fresh ingredients – this is one dish where canned or frozen just doesn't work.

Ingredients:

- 1 large ripe avocado
- ¼ medium onion, minced
- 1 tomato, seeded and diced
- Juice from 1 lime
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt to taste

Preparation:

1. Peel and mash the avocado.
2. Add the onion, tomatoes, lime juice, and spices and stir gently.
3. Place in tightly closed container (so that avocado won't turn brown)

Healthy Spinach Dip

If you are a fan of that traditional spinach dip served at holiday parties - but don't like the fat and cholesterol - you will *love* this one! It has a great taste and is much healthier than the old-fashioned kind. We can't get enough of this - we love it on pretzels, crackers, bread and right off the spoon.

Ingredients:

- 12-oz soft, silken tofu
- 1 tspn honey
- 1 tspn lemon juice
- 1/3 C Veganaise
- 1 16 oz pkg frozen, chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 pkg dry vegetable soup mix (Knorr's)
- 1 8-oz can chopped water chestnuts, drained

Preparation:

1. Place tofu, honey and lemon into a blender or food processor. Process until smooth.
2. Place tofu mixture and remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well.
3. Chill before serving.

Hummus

This is my husband's favorite dip for pretzels, chips, celery sticks, red pepper slices or cucumber spears. We also love to spread this on tortillas and top with balsamic vinaigrette and sliced veggies for a quick roll-up sandwich.

Ingredients:

- 1 15oz can of garbanzo beans
- 2-4 T tahini
- Juice from 1 lemon
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 dash soy sauce
- ¼ bunch Curly Parsley, chopped

Preparation:

1. Drain and rinse can of garbanzo beans.
2. Place in food processor along with remaining ingredients.
3. Process until smooth, adding water as necessary for ease in processing.
4. Spread on a platter, sprinkle with fresh parsley.

Kidney Bean Spread

This spread reminds us of the ham salad we used to have as children. It is often a big hit with non-vegetarians who can't believe the wonderful flavor in such a simple dip.

Ingredients:

- 1 15 oz can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 Tbsp Veganaise (mayonnaise)
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 Tbsp sweet relish
- 1 Tbsp onion, chopped

Preparation:

1. Purée in food processor.
2. Serve on bread or as a dip.

Red Pepper Hummus

When we want a little change from our favorite spread, I add a little red pepper and some heat to create a tasty change.

Ingredients:

- 1 16 oz can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 T tahini
- 1 T lemon juice
- 2-3 cloves garlic (pressed or crushed)
- ½ c roasted or fresh red peppers
- 1 ½ tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- ¼ - ½ tsp cayenne
- ½ tsp salt
- Fresh ground pepper

Preparation:

1. Drain and rinse chick peas.
2. In small bowl, combine cumin, coriander, cayenne, and salt, mixing thoroughly.
3. Put chick peas in the food processor; add the spice mixture and the tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and roasted red peppers, and blend until well mixed.
4. Add water as needed to aid in processing.
5. Add the fresh ground pepper and serve with whole wheat pita bread or use as a sandwich spread.

Seven-Layer Dip

Get ready for Mexican night with this incredibly delicious dish! Serve it with baked chips or fresh corn tortillas to make it an even healthier appetizer.

Ingredients:

- 1 can vegetarian refried black beans
- 1 large ripe avocado, peeled and mashed
- 1 T lime juice
- ½ tsp garlic salt
- ¼ c tofu sour cream
- ¼ c vegan mayonnaise
- 1 package taco seasoning mix
- 2 large ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 C dark green leafy lettuce, chopped
- 1 4-oz can chopped green chilies
- 1 4-oz can sliced black olives

Preparation:

1. Spread beans evenly on the bottom of a 9 X 9-in baking pan.
2. Mash avocado with garlic salt and lime juice and spread evenly over beans.
3. Whisk together in a small bowl the sour cream substitute, vegan mayonnaise and the taco seasoning packet until smooth. Spread over avocado layer.
4. Evenly sprinkle a thick layer of tomatoes, then the lettuce, green chilies, and top with black olives.

Note: You might want to warm this dip right before serving by placing in oven at 325 degrees for approximately 20 minutes. Don't actually bake it until it bubbles because this could ruin the avocado and lettuce.

Tofu Mayonnaise

Ingredients:

- 1 C tofu
- 1 T lemon juice
- 2 tspn onion powder
- 1 tspn honey
- ½ c water
- 1 T sesame butter (tahini)
- 1 tspn garlic powder
- ½ tspn salt

Preparation:

1. Blend well and serve.

Tofu Sour Cream

Ingredients:

- 1 12 oz pkg soft tofu
- 3 T fresh lemon juice
- 2 T canola oil
- ¾ tspn salt
- 2 tsp honey or sugar

Preparation:

1. Blend well and serve.

Soups

A good soup and a fresh loaf of bread are a delicious, healthy and economical way to fill the belly of the most voracious eaters. Besides being quick to prepare, cleaning up is a snap as well. Oftentimes we think of soups as being a cold winter meal, but living in Florida we have learned to enjoy soup year round. Soup recipes are easy to double and freeze for later use and most recipes can be easily modified to remove the fat and cholesterol without removing the taste.

Cabbage Soup

This recipe is a modified version of the old cabbage soup diet recipe and is incredibly tasty. When we first opened our produce market, I made batches and batches of this to sell and it was quite a hit. Be sure to use a very large stockpot especially if you use a whole head of cabbage. It freezes well and is wonderful and hearty with the addition of the pearled barley.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 to 1 whole head cabbage
- 6 onions
- 2 green bell peppers
- 1 bunch scallions
- 1 bunch celery
- 6 carrots
- 16 oz bag frozen green beans
- 1 1/2 C V-8 or tomato juice
- One 28 oz can crushed or diced tomatoes
- 1/4 C McKay's beef-style or chicken-style seasoning
- Black pepper to taste
- Herbs to taste
- 1/2 C balsamic vinegar
- 1 C pearled barley

Preparation:

1. Chop vegetables, combine all ingredients in a very large stockpot, and add enough water to cover.
2. Boil 10 minutes.
3. Reduce to a simmer and continue cooking until vegetables are tender. Makes about 6 quarts.

Corn Chowder

This is a delicious alternative to chowders that are loaded with butter and cream. It is light and tasty and we love to have it alongside grilled sandwiches.

Ingredients:

- 1 C chopped onion
- 6 C corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 3 C vegetable or chicken-style broth
- ½ C diced red pepper
- ½ tspn rosemary
- ½ tspn thyme
- ½ tspn salt
- 1/8 tspn black pepper
- Cayenne pepper to taste
- Fresh basil, optional

Preparation:

1. Water sauté the onion until tender.
2. Add 4 C of the corn kernels and 2 C of the broth. Sauté until corn is soft and easy to mash, approximately 20 minutes.
3. Pure in a blender or with an immersion blender.
4. Add red pepper, rosemary, thyme, salt, pepper, cayenne, remaining 1 C of broth and 2 C of corn kernels.
5. Heat over medium heat for approximately 10 minutes until it is heated through.
6. Serve with chopped fresh basil if desired.

Cream of Broccoli Soup

This is such an easy and tasty soup that I love to prepare it most anytime. With the use of a pressure cooker and immersion blender, it is a one pot dish that is ready in 10 minutes or less. We often purée all of the florets rather than save some to add at the end.

Ingredients:

- 1 head of broccoli
- 1 medium onion, quartered
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 C vegetable broth or water
- 1/4 C unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 C soy milk*
- 2 T soy sauce
- 2 tspn basil
- Salt and pepper* to taste

Preparation:

1. Cut the broccoli into florets and slice about one-fourth of the top of each stem
2. Reserve 1 C of florets.
3. Put the broccoli, onion, garlic and broth or water in a large saucepan.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce to medium heat and cook until the vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
5. Put all the ingredients into a food processor and add the flour.
6. Process until smooth. Return the soup to the saucepan; add the remaining ingredients and the florets.
7. Cook over medium heat until the soup thickens and is heated through.

Cream of Cauliflower Soup

This is my children's favorite soup. We sometimes leave small chunks of cauliflower when we purée it and the kids love to see who gets the most "prizes" in their bowls. Served alongside fresh pumpernickel bread and a salad and you've got a full meal.

Ingredients:

- 1 large head of cauliflower
- 3 T all-purpose flour
- 3 ¼ C "chicken" flavor stock
- ¼ tspn pepper
- ¼ tspn nutmeg
- 2 ¼ C soy milk

Preparation:

1. Dissolve flour in stock. Place in large pot.
2. Add cauliflower, pepper and nutmeg. Heat over medium heat until cauliflower becomes quite soft. This will take approximately 30 minutes in a traditional pot, or less than 5 minutes in a pressure cooker
3. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup.
4. Add the soy milk and heat thoroughly.

Cream of Leek, Mushroom, Potato and Zucchini Soup

I created this soup when we owned our own produce market and had all of the ingredients readily available. Feel free to substitute or remove any ingredients that you don't have. It is a tasty, yet forgiving soup.

Ingredients:

- 3 leeks, white part only, chopped
- 1 lb mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
- 2 white potatoes, diced
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 3 C vegetable broth
- ¼ tspn dried dill
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ C white wine
- 1 C soy milk
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. In a large pot, over medium heat, water sauté leeks for approximately 5 minutes or until soft.
2. Add mushrooms, potatoes, celery and zucchini. Cook, stirring often over medium heat for about 10 minutes.
3. Add vegetable broth, wine, dill and bay leaf. Simmer over low heat for approximately 30 minutes.
4. Remove bay leaf and puree with an immersion blender.
5. Add 1 C soy milk and heat to desired serving temperature.
6. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately.

Hearty and Quick Black Bean Soup

This soup is so easy and great tasting that I love to make it often. I serve it with fried sweet plantains on the side and a loaf of good Cuban bread.

Ingredients:

- 1 C salsa
- 2 15 oz cans of black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 C vegetable broth
- Juice from one lime
- Several sprigs of fresh cilantro

Preparation:

1. Heat salsa for approximately 5 minutes in a medium pan.
2. Add beans and broth and simmer for approximately 15 minutes.
3. Purée some of the beans with an immersion blender, or use a potato masher and mash approximately ½ of the beans.
4. Add the lime juice and cilantro and heat thoroughly.
5. Serve topped with vegan sour cream if desired.

Lentil Soup

Lentils are a powerhouse of nutrition which can be used in a wide variety of ways. This is a very filling and delicious soup which gets better as it sits.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ C dried lentils, rinsed and drained
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 2 T whole wheat flour
- 1 C tomato puree
- ½ C long grain brown rice
- 4 carrots, peeled and sliced
- ½ tsp each of dried marjoram, thyme and parsley
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 C chicken-style broth
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. In a large pot, cook the onion and green pepper in water for a couple of minutes, until soft. Add flour and stir briefly.
2. Add remaining ingredients; stir until soup comes to a boil.
3. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for approximately an hour, stirring occasionally to make sure it does not begin to burn. Add additional broth or water if needed.
4. Remove the bay leaves and add salt to taste.

Pasta Fagioli

We like this soup so often that I will often cook a double batch and freeze some for later use. If you freeze ahead, freeze it without the pasta and add it right before serving. If the pasta sits too long in the soup, it will absorb most of the broth. I will often make this in my pressure cooker and use soaked, dried beans.

Ingredients:

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1 plum tomato, peeled, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 small carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- 2 fresh sage leaves, minced or ¼ tspn dried
- 3 C vegetable broth
- 1 16 oz can of white kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 C ditali or small shell pasta, cooked

Preparation:

1. Braise the onion and garlic, in small amount of water until tender.
2. Add tomato, carrot, celery and sage. Sauté an additional 2 minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Add broth and beans and heat thoroughly.
4. Add the pasta, immediately before serving.
5. Sprinkle with soy, parmesan (optional).

Pumpkin Soup

This is a great soup with a very unusual list of ingredients. If you love peanut butter, be sure to add all that is called for. If you don't love peanut butter, simply cut back on the amount called for. Whether you add peas or corn is up to your family's personal preference. We like to vary the ingredients each time to make it different.

Ingredients:

- 1 16 oz can pureed pumpkin
- 1 medium sweet potato, cooked and mashed with skin removed
- ½ C natural peanut butter
- 3 C vegetable broth
- ½ tspn pepper
- ½ tspn salt, optional
- 2 C cooked peas or corn kernels

Preparation:

1. Add all ingredients into a large pan and stir well.
2. Simmer over medium heat for 20 minutes.

Split Pea and Parsnip Soup

As simple as this recipe sounds, we were quite surprised at the wonderful taste it had the first time we tried it. The liquid smoke is optional, but it really adds a unique hint of flavor which I wouldn't want to leave out. If you need to reheat this soup before serving, add some additional broth or water as it will thicken when chilled.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 large parsnips, peeled and sliced
- 1 pound dried green split peas, rinsed and drained
- 1 tspn dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 C vegetable stock
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tspn liquid smoke (optional)

Preparation:

1. Sauté the onion and parsnips in a small amount of water until softened.
2. Transfer the vegetables to a crockpot and add the peas, thyme, bay leaf and stock. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.
3. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the Liquid Smoke. Remove and discard the bay leaf and serve.

Three Sister's Stew

I created this recipe when we were studying the pilgrims. When the pilgrims arrived in North America, they found the planting techniques and crops which sustained them in Europe did not work in the New World. Squanto and other Native Americans taught them how to successfully cultivate nourishing crops of corn, squash and beans. The corn is planted first and then the beans, which vine and climb the cornstalks. Lastly, the squash is planted which acts as a ground cover for the first two crops. Each vegetable plays an important part of this symbiotic relationship which the Native Americans referred to as "The Three Sisters". The Pilgrims and settlers adopted the traditional Native American technique of growing these three crops together which nourished and sustained them.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, minced
- 1 red pepper, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 1 16 oz bag of frozen butter beans
- 1 16 oz bag of frozen corn kernels
- 4 C vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 tsp rubbed, dried sage
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Water sauté the onion, pepper and garlic over medium heat until the onion is tender.
2. Add the remaining ingredients, except salt and pepper, and simmer for approximately 45 minutes or until all ingredients are tender and the squash starts to fall apart.
3. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve immediately.

Veggie Brunswick Stew

This is a hearty dish which we love to serve with coleslaw and fresh bread or biscuits. We used to love our neighborhood barbecue restaurant and this reminds us of the unhealthy fare we liked in the past. It's a winner with everyone in the family.

Ingredients:

- 1T olive oil
- 1 Pkg vegetarian sausage links, cooked & cut-up
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 celery stalk, minced
- 1 large potato, peeled & finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tspn fresh grated ginger
- 3 1/2 C beef-style broth
- 1-14.5 oz can died tomatoes, with juice
- 1-16 oz pkg frozen succotash
- 3T Worcestershire sauce or soy sauce
- 1/2 tspn Tabasco sauce (optional)
- 2 tspn prepared mustard
- 1 tspn brown sugar
- 1/2 tspn ground allspice
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1 C TVP, rehydrated with beef-style broth
- 1/2 tspn Liquid Smoke

Preparation:

1. In a large pot, sauté onion, celery, potato, and garlic in olive oil and 1/4 C broth for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. Add everything except sausage links, TVP, and liquid smoke. Cook about 35 minutes, simmering, uncovered.
3. Add sausage, TVP and liquid smoke - cook 10 minutes longer. Serve hot.

Winter Vegetable and Bean Ragout

This recipe takes just a little more prep time than other crockpot recipes but it is definitely worth it! It's loaded with all kinds of wonderful winter vegetables and packs a great nutritional punch. When I prepare my menu for the week, I make sure this dinner follows one where I am cooking greens. Then, I just cook an extra bunch and use the leftovers to add to this soup at the end of the day. The recipe calls for collards, but spinach, turnip greens or kale works just as well.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, sliced
- 1 large turnip, peeled and diced
- 1 large parsnip, peeled and sliced
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 1 15.5 oz can cannelloni or other white beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 C vegetable stock
- ½ C dry white wine
- ½ tspn dried thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 C cooked collards, spinach, kale or turnip greens

Preparation:

1. Sauté the onion and carrots in a small amount of water until softened.
2. Transfer the vegetables to a crockpot and add the turnip, parsnip, sweet potato, beans, stock, wine and thyme. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.
3. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the collards. Heat thoroughly and serve hot.

Main Dishes

When most people find out that I don't use any animal products in my cooking, they can't begin to imagine what my family must eat. When we have them over to the house for dinner, they are quite surprised to see that our food doesn't look or taste that much different from their normal fare. I have a great time recreating the dishes I have always loved into quick and tasty entrees. Often our dinner plates look like the country diner's vegetable platter but there are times when a main dish just *fits the bill*. Feel free to substitute ingredients to fit your family's taste buds and preferences. Most of these dishes could be fixed a variety of different ways and still turn out beautifully. That's part of the fun! It's also fun to sample the dish while creating it – a pleasure that's not often possible when cooking with eggs and other animal products.

Beef-Style Soy Curls

This is one of our favorite quick meals. Served along side mashed potatoes or brown rice and it feels like Sunday dinner at grandma's house.

Ingredients:

- 2 C Soy Curls, rehydrated with boiling water
- 2 C beef-style gravy (recipe follows)

Preparation:

1. Pour any remaining water off of Soy Curls.
2. Pour gravy over soy curls in a medium sauce pan, and heat thoroughly over medium heat.

Beef-Style Gravy

Ingredients:

- 1-2 T Earth Balance
- 2 T Wondra flour
- ½ C soy milk
- ½ C Water
- 1 T McKay's Beef Style Seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Melt Earth Balance over low heat in a small saucepan.
2. Whisk together Wondra flour, McKay's seasoning, soy milk and water.
3. Add to the saucepan. Stir constantly until it begins to thicken.
4. Add the salt and pepper.

BBQ Soy Curls

I normally use this dish to introduce people to vegetarian eating. Once they've tried it, they are normally convinced that all vegetarian eating is not the same. We love to eat this along side coleslaw and baked beans for a traditional barbecue meal. Try it on a bun, topped with coleslaw for a different type of sandwich.

Ingredients:

- 2 C Soy Curls
- 2 C boiling water
- 2 T beef-style broth powder
- 1 1/2 C BBQ sauce of your choice

Preparation:

1. Pour boiling water over Soy Curls and broth powder in a large bowl. Let sit for 10 minutes or more.
2. Drain and add BBQ sauce.
3. Heat thoroughly and serve.

Cabbage Rolls

My Mom used to make my Dad cabbage rolls on very special occasions. When I make cabbage rolls, I normally double the recipe so that I can freeze the leftovers. Then we don't have to wait for another special occasion to indulge in this delicious entrée.

Ingredients:

- 12 slightly steamed cabbage leaves
- 1 C Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP) rehydrated with 1 C boiling water and 1 T beef-style broth powder
- ½ C finely chopped walnuts
- 1 C cooked brown rice
- 3 - 8 oz cans tomato sauce
- 2 T sugar
- Fresh ground pepper

Preparation:

1. Combine rehydrated TVP, walnuts, rice, 1 - 8oz can tomato sauce and a twist or two of fresh ground pepper.
2. Evenly divide the filling mixture between the 12 cabbage leaves.
3. Roll up the cabbage leaves, tucking the loose ends under.
4. Place the rolls in an 11x7x1½ inch baking pan.
5. Combine sugar with remaining two cans of tomato sauce. Pour over the cabbage rolls.
6. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for about 25 minutes.

Crock Pot Chili

I *love* this chili recipe. The cinnamon, nutmeg and other ingredients add a unique flavor you don't normally encounter with chili. It is an incredibly easy recipe which will feed a crowd without much effort or expense.

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion
- 1 1/2 tspn garlic, minced
- 1/3 C water
- 2 T vegetable broth powder
- 2 T honey
- 1 T red wine vinegar
- 1 T paprika
- 1/2 T chili powder
- 1/2 tspn ground cumin
- 1/2 tspn cinnamon
- 1/4 tspn nutmeg
- 2 - 15 oz cans white beans
- 2 - 15 oz cans black beans
- 1 - 15 oz can red or pinto beans
- 1 - 15 oz can black-eyed peas
- 1 - 15 oz can chopped tomatoes

Preparation:

1. Place onion, garlic and water in a small sauce pan.
2. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes.
3. Add all seasoning, mix well and heat for 1 minute.
4. Combine beans and tomatoes in a crock pot.
5. Add onion-seasoning mixture, mix well, cook on high 4 hours, or low 8-10 hours.

Fajitas

If you have someone coming for dinner that is a little reticent about vegetarian eating, this is a great recipe to prepare for them. Serve it along side some fresh guacamole and salsa and it is sure to please the pickiest eater. It's also a great low fat dish which will fill you up without making you feel overstuffed and uncomfortable.

Ingredients:

- 2 colored bell peppers (your choice) - thinly sliced
- 1 medium onion - thinly sliced
- 1 C Soy Curls or 2 Portobello mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 T canola oil
- Salt, pepper, chili powder to taste
- Whole wheat tortillas

Preparation:

1. Add 1 C boiling water to Soy Curls to re-hydrate and let sit for 10 minutes or more.
2. Heat oil in a large cast iron skillet.
3. Add onions and peppers to hot skillet. Stir-fry for approximately 5 minutes or until they are soft and beginning to brown.
4. Add Soy Curls or mushrooms. If using Portobello's, heat until mushrooms have begun to soften.
5. Heat thoroughly and add spices and stir.
6. Serve immediately with warm tortillas.

Fried Rice with Carrots and Peas

I love to prepare this dish anytime I have leftover rice although I have been known to make rice just for this. The ingredients are easily modified to fit your family's personal preferences and mashed tofu can be added to mimic the eggs normally found in restaurant prepared dishes. We have great fun trying to eat this with chopsticks.

Ingredients:

- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bunch of scallions, diced
- ½ tspn ground fresh ginger
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 3 C cooked brown rice
- 1 C frozen peas, thawed
- Soy sauce to taste

Preparation:

1. Water sauté garlic, scallions, ginger and carrots in a large non-stick wok, until tender.
2. Add cooked brown rice and peas. (Crumbled tofu can also be added if desired.) Stir and heat.
3. Add soy sauce to taste. Serve immediately.

Hoppin' John

This dish is so easy to prepare that its taste may surprise you. I often overlook this recipe because I forget how much we like it. We like to fix this anytime, but it's wonderful to have it ready at the end of a long day. There is nothing like walking in to the house and being able to open the crockpot and sit down and eat.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 celery rib, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tspn dried thyme
- 2 15.5 oz cans black-eyed peas
- 1 14.5 oz can tomatoes, drained and finely chopped
- 1 4 oz can diced green chiles, drained
- 1 C water with 1 T McKay's beef-style flavoring
- Salt and pepper
- 8 oz vegetarian sausage, crumbled
- 3 C cooked brown rice

Preparation:

1. Water sauté onion and celery until softened. Add garlic and thyme, stirring briefly.
2. Transfer to a 4 quart slow cooker. Add the black-eyed peas, tomatoes, chiles, and stock, season with salt and pepper, cover and cook about 4-6 hours.
3. About 15 minutes before serving, cook the sausage until browned all over, about 8 minutes. Add the sausage to the slow cooker along with the brown rice, stirring top combine.
4. Taste to adjust the seasonings.

Kabobs

Kabobs are one of our favorite dishes to prepare on our electric grill. I'll often thread different ingredients on each child's skewer to accommodate their taste preferences.

Ingredients:

- Seitan or Tofu cubes, frozen and defrosted
- Teriyaki sauce
- Button mushrooms
- Sweet potatoes
- Sweet onions
- Fresh pineapple, cut into 1-inch chunks
- Red and green bell peppers, cut into 1-inch squares
- Cooked brown rice

Preparation

1. Cut the seitan or tofu into 1 1/2-inch pieces.
2. Pour teriyaki sauce into a shallow container and add the seitan slices.
3. Marinate in the refrigerator, stirring occasionally, for at least 3 hours.
4. Meanwhile, trim any rough ends from the stems of the mushrooms.
5. Steam the sweet potatoes until just done, let cool, then cut into 1-inch chunks.
6. Partially boil the onions, then cut into quarters.
7. Alternately thread the seitan, mushrooms, sweet potatoes, onions, pineapple and pepper on skewers.
8. Brush with teriyaki sauce and grill for about 10 minutes, turning several times to cook evenly.
9. Serve over brown rice.

Meaty Chili

This is a great recipe to use when needing to feed a large crowd on a small budget. Everyone loves it and it couldn't be easier. If you have a small crowd, adjust the ingredients accordingly.

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 1/2 tspn garlic, minced
- 3 C Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)
- 1 T McKay's beef-style seasoning
- 3 C boiling water
- 2 - 15 oz cans diced tomatoes
- 2 - 8 oz cans tomato paste
- 3 - 15 oz cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 T chili powder
- 1 tspn cumin
- Garlic salt to taste
- Water

Preparation:

1. Combine TVP, beef-style seasoning and boiling water. Let stand for 10 minutes.
2. Water sauté onion, green pepper and garlic in a small sauce pan until tender.
3. Combine all ingredients in a large pan or crock pot.
4. Add water until it is the desired thickness.
5. Adjust seasonings to taste. Heat thoroughly and enjoy.

Meatless Loaf

I have tried *many* different meatless loaf recipes trying to find a recipe which had a great taste and texture. I finally found this and it is wonderful. Sometimes I bake this in a loaf pan, and sometimes in a 9 inch round pan. I like the looks of it when I cook it in a loaf pan, but it is often a little too moist to hold together well. However, the texture is better after it is frozen and defrosted so I make it in a loaf pan when I am planning on freezing most of it for later use.

Ingredients:

- 1 C cooked brown rice
- 2 C whole wheat bread crumbs (Save your whole wheat bread crusts, toast or let dry and grind in blender to make healthy bread crumbs)
- 1 C finely chopped walnuts
- 1 small onion finely chopped
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
- 1 pkg extra firm tofu
- ¼ C barbecue sauce
- 3 T soy sauce
- 2 tspn Dijon mustard
- ¼ tspn black pepper

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. In a large bowl combine the brown rice, bread crumbs, walnuts, celery, carrots and onions.
3. Puree the tofu, barbecue sauce, soy sauce, mustard and pepper in a food processor or blender until very smooth.
4. Add the tofu mixture to the brown rice mixture. Stir with a spoon until well blended and it holds together.
5. Transfer mixture to an oil-sprayed baking dish.
6. Bake at 350 degrees F for 60 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving

Meaty Mushroom Stroganoff

I love the taste of this dish with a good marsala wine. It gives it an elegant flavor that can't be beat. Serve this dish with wide, whole wheat noodles or rice.

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms, I prefer crimini mushrooms
- 1 C rehydrated Soy Curls (with beef-style flavoring added)
- 2 T marsala or white wine
- 2 T soy sauce
- 1 C soy milk
- 1 C beef-style broth
- 2 T cornstarch mixed in $\frac{1}{4}$ C cold water

Preparation:

1. Water sauté onion in a large skillet until the onion is tender.
2. Add the mushrooms, and cook until they are slightly limp.
3. Add the Soy Curls and remaining ingredients, except the cornstarch mixture. Cover and cook over low heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the cornstarch mixture to the pan and stir until thickened.
5. Serve over noodles or rice.

Mushroom Stroganoff

This was the first dish I tried with pureed tofu instead of cream sauce. I was a little nervous about taking that first bite. It is now one of our favorite dishes.

Ingredients:

- 6 T white cooking wine, or 3 T white and 3T marsala cooking wine
- 1 medium sweet onion, sliced
- 1 pound mushrooms, cleaned and sliced thin
- 1 pkg firm tofu
- 2 T soy sauce
- 1 T lemon juice
- 1 tspn vegan Worcestershire sauce
- Fresh ground pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Place 3 T of the wine in a large frying pan. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally for approximately 3 minutes. Add the mushrooms. 2 more tablespoons of the wine, and the soy sauce. Continue cooking until onions are tender and the mushrooms give off their juice.
2. Meanwhile, place the drained tofu in a food processor or blender with the remaining 1 tablespoon wine and lemon juice. Process until smooth.
3. Pour the tofu mixture into the pan with the mushrooms and onions. Mix well.
4. Add the remaining ingredients and heat thoroughly. Serve over rice or noodles.

Oriental Meaty Stir-Fry

Healthy eating doesn't get much easier or tastier than this. I always make sure I have extra frozen vegetables in my freezer so I can prepare dishes like this on a moment's notice. I also always have instant brown rice so I can have it ready in a jiffy too.

Ingredients:

- 2 - 8oz bags of mixed frozen vegetables (I like broccoli, water chestnuts and carrot mixture)
- 1 C rehydrated Soy Curls (with beef-style flavoring added)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 medium diced onion
- 1 tspn minced fresh ginger
- ½ C Yoshida sauce or other stir fry sauce

Preparation:

1. Water sauté garlic and onion until onion is tender.
2. Add frozen mixed vegetables and stir-fry until tender, adding additional water as necessary.
3. Add Soy Curls and stir-fry sauce and heat thoroughly.
4. Serve over rice.

Portobello Sandwiches

Portobello mushrooms are my favorite meat replacement. They have a wonderful taste and texture. This recipe calls for marinating the mushroom over night. Don't worry if you don't have time to do that or if you have forgotten, it will taste great anyway.

Ingredients:

- 1 large Bell Pepper, sliced
- 2 medium fresh Portobello mushrooms (about 4 inches in diameter)
- 1 tspn balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tspn olive oil
- 1 T dry mustard
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/8 tspn salt
- whole grain bread or baguettes
- lettuce, sprouts, tomato, etc for serving on sandwiches

Preparation:

1. In a small mixing bowl, combine vinegar, oil, mustard, garlic, and salt.
2. Clean mushrooms; cut off stems even with caps. Discard stems.
3. Pour marinade mixture over mushrooms and pepper and allow to sit in a closed container in refrigerator overnight.
4. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
5. Spoon marinated mushrooms and pepper into a baking dish with sides to catch the marinade mixture. Bake for 15 minutes.
6. Place baked Portobello and pepper on toasted whole grain bread or baguettes and add lettuce, tomato and sprouts.

Portobello Marsala

Portobello mushrooms make a great meat alternative and are loaded with fiber and nutrients. If you don't like the taste of marsala wine, or can't find it, substitute any kind of cooking wine, or just add extra chicken style broth.

Ingredients

- 2-3 large Portobello mushrooms, cleaned with stem removed
- 1 medium sweet onion, sliced thin
- ½ pound crimini mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
- 1 C chicken style broth
- ½ C marsala cooking wine
- ¼ C water
- 2 T cornstarch

Preparation

1. Grill Portobello mushrooms in large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat until tender. Remove from pan and set aside.
2. Water sauté onions in the large skillet until tender. Add crimini mushrooms and stir until they begin to give off their juice. Add broth and cooking wine. Stir until hot and bubbling.
3. Combine cornstarch and water. Add to broth and wine mixture. Stir over medium-low heat until sauce thickens.
4. Add portobellos to sauce and heat. Serve over rice or noodles.

Note: Portobello's may be sliced at any time to accommodate number of servings.

Pinto Picadillo

This has quickly become one of our favorite Mexican dishes. The list of ingredients may seem a little different, but the taste is out of this world. You can serve this with some fresh salsa and guacamole or eat it just as it is.

Ingredients:

- 3 C cooked brown rice
- 1/2 C chopped onions
- 1/2 C chopped red or yellow bell pepper
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 16 oz can pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 15 oz can diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1/2 C raisins
- 1/4 C sliced pimento-stuffed green olives
- 1 small can of mild, chopped green chiles
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preparation

1. Water sauté the onions, bell pepper, and garlic for 5 minutes, or until vegetables are soft.
2. Stir in the pintos, tomatoes, apple, raisins, olives, chiles, and salt and pepper to taste.
3. Simmer stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes, adding a little water if the mixture becomes too dry.
4. To serve, combine the pinto mixture with the hot rice and transfer to a large serving bowl.

Sesame Soy Curls and Broccoli

We were pleasantly surprised the first time we made this dish. It was an immediate hit with all of the family – including the children and Nana. We serve it over rice but it works well with whole wheat pasta too.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 C sesame seeds
- 2 T low-sodium tamari
- 2 T tomato paste
- 1 1/2 T toasted sesame oil
- 1 1/2 T hoisin sauce
- 1 T sugar
- 1 T rice wine vinegar
- 2 T safflower or canola oil
- 3-4 C Soy Curls
- 2 C broccoli florets, blanched
- 2 scallions, minced

Preparation:

1. Rehydrate Soy Curls with boiling water.
2. Toast the sesame seeds in a medium skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently for 5 minutes.
3. Grind all but 1 tablespoon of the sesame seeds in a food processor, using short pulses.
4. Place ground seeds in a bowl, add the tamari, tomato paste, sesame oil, hoisin sauce, sugar and rice wine vinegar, plus the reserved tablespoon of sesame seeds. Combine well.
5. Heat oil in a large skillet, add Soy Curls and stir-fry until browned, about 5 minutes.
6. Add broccoli and scallions and stir-fry another minute.
7. Add sauce, turning to coat Soy Curls and broccoli.

Shepherd's Pie

This is my husband's favorite dish and is always a great hit with those who are experimenting with vegetarian dishes. I always make extra mashed potatoes so that I have them on hand to make this shepherd's pie. I will even freeze leftover mashed potatoes since defrosted ones work just fine in this recipe.

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- ¼ C walnuts, chopped
- 1 C TVP rehydrated with 1 C boiling water
- ½ tspn coriander
- ¼ tspn dried thyme
- ¼ tspn black pepper
- 1 C frozen green peas, thawed
- Juice from ½ large lemon
- 1 T soy sauce
- 2 C beef- style gravy
- 1-2 C mashed potatoes

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, water sauté onion in saucepan until tender. Add remaining ingredients, except mashed potatoes and heat thoroughly.
3. Pour mixture into large baking dish, approximately 11x7x1½.
4. Cover mixture with mashed potatoes. (The potatoes can be spread, or arranged in small dollops.)
5. Bake for approximately 20 minutes.

Southern Fried Tofu

This was the first dish I ever tried with frozen and defrosted tofu. The texture of the tofu is firm and light and pleases everyone. The gravy reminds me of homemade pot roast gravy. We like ours served with mashed potatoes.

Ingredients:

- 1 container (14.5 ounces) of Tofu, frozen, defrosted, drained and cubed
- ½ C all purpose flour
- 1/8 tspn salt
- 1/8 tspn pepper
- ¼ tspn paprika
- ¼ tspn dried thyme
- 2 tspn oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 carrot, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 C water
- 1/3 C cold water
- 2 T McKay's beef-style seasoning
- 3 T quick-cooking flour

Preparation:

1. Place the flour, salt, pepper, paprika and thyme in a plastic bag. Shake well to mix spices. Add tofu cubes to bag and shake well to coat the tofu.
2. Remove the tofu from the bag. In a non-stick skillet, sauté the tofu in oil until browned on all sides.
3. Remove the tofu from the pan and set aside.
4. In the non-stick skillet, water sauté onion until it begins to soften. Add celery, carrot, garlic and 2 C water. Cover and let simmer for 10 minutes.
5. In a small bowl, mix 1/3 C cold water, beef-style seasoning and flour. Whisk to blend. Add to skillet and stir until thickens.
6. Add tofu cubes, coat with gravy and heat through.

Spaghetti Sauce with TVP

This is a modified version of the spaghetti sauce recipe my Mom always used to make when I was a kid. I simply substituted TVP for the lean ground beef. Feel free to add more chili powder or red pepper to suit your own taste buds and desire for "heat".

Ingredients:

- 1 C Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)
- 1 onion
- 1 small can tomato sauce
- 2 small cans tomato paste
- 2 C water
- 1 T chili powder
- 1/2 tspn crushed red pepper
- Garlic salt, to taste

Preparation:

1. Add 1 C boiling water to TVP. Let stand until absorbed.
2. Sauté onion in small sauce pan with a little water until soft.
3. Combine all ingredients, heat to boiling, turn down and let simmer for several hours.

Stove-top Casserole

This one dish meal is surprisingly tasty and easy. Find a vegetarian sausage you like and always have it on hand for spontaneity at mealtime. The use of baby carrots simply cuts down on the prep time, but any carrot will do.

Ingredients:

- 1 T extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 (8 oz) package vegetarian sausage links, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 C chopped onions
- 1 C sliced baby carrots
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 16 oz cans cannellini beans or other white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 15 oz can diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 T McKay's beef-style seasoning
- 1 C water
- 1/2 tspn dried thyme
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- Vegan parmesan cheese (optional)

Preparation

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet or saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add the sausage and cook until browned, about 5 minutes.
3. Remove the sausage with a slotted spoon and set aside.
4. Put the skillet back on the heat and add the onions, carrots, and garlic. Cover and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
5. Stir in the beans, tomatoes, McKay's seasoning, water, and thyme.
6. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
7. Cover and cook until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes.
8. Stir the cooked sausage into the vegetable and bean mixture.
9. Top with vegan parmesan cheese, if desired.

Tortilla Pie Casserole

I created this recipe one night while trying to figure out how to serve tortillas to the entire family when I only had 3 tortillas left in the bag. It has since become a much requested dinner at our house. My son isn't always interested in soft tacos for dinner, but he loves this casserole.

Ingredients:

- 3 whole wheat tortillas
- 2 C taco or enchilada sauce
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 C TVP, rehydrated with boiling water
- 1 T beef-style seasoning
- Mexican seasonings to taste
- Shredded Veggie cheddar or Monterey jack cheese

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, water sauté onion and pepper until tender. Add black beans and set aside.
3. Mix beef-style seasoning and Mexican seasoning into rehydrated TVP and set aside. (We use chili powder, cumin and garlic powder as our Mexican seasoning.)
4. In a large pie dish, layer the ingredients in the following order.
 - ½ C enchilada sauce
 - Tortilla
 - ½ of the bean mixture
 - ½ of the TVP mixture
 - ½ C enchilada sauce
 - ¼ C shredded veggie cheese
 - Tortilla
 - ½ of bean mixture
 - ½ of the TVP mixture
 - ½ C enchilada sauce
 - ¼ C shredded veggie cheese
 - Tortilla
 - ½ C enchilada sauce
 - ½ C shredded veggie cheese

Place tortilla casserole in preheated oven and bake for approximately 30 minutes. Remove from oven, let cool for 5 minutes and serve.

Great served with guacamole.

Stuffed Peppers

This is another adaptation of one of my Mom's recipes. When I was a kid, we got to select our birthday meal, and I always requested stuffed peppers. To make our old recipe healthier, I simply substituted TVP for the ground meat. We love to sample the filling while we are stuffing the peppers.

Ingredients

- 3 large green peppers, cut in half with seeds removed
- 1 C TVP rehydrated with beef-style seasoning
- ½ C finely chopped walnuts
- 1 ½ C cooked brown rice
- 8 oz tomato sauce
- Ketchup for topping stuffed peppers

Preparation

1. Microwave peppers slightly to soften them.
2. Combine TVP, walnuts, rice (barley works too) and tomato sauce.
3. Stuff the peppers, top with tomato sauce and bake at 350 for 30 minutes - just enough to blend flavors and heat all the way through.



Nancy Walker is a published author, freelance writer, motivational speaker, life-style coach and health educator. Nancy holds a Masters of Science degree and has been a total vegetarian since 2000. She has been happily married for 28 years and is a home-schooling mother to two beautiful young children. Nancy is also an accomplished vegetarian cook and teaches others through classes, seminars, personal instruction and videos focused on preparing healthy, easy and tasty meals. As a former owner of a large retail and wholesale produce business, she is very familiar with all aspects of produce including cultivation, selection, marketing and preparation. Nancy also loves to bicycle, speed walk, weight lift and run. She is contemplating entering her first sprint triathlon and has begun training with that in mind.

Nancy's personal dedication to health and wellness springs from her long family history of heart disease and diabetes. She saw first-hand how these chronic diseases stole her parent's vitality, happiness, quality of life, finances and future. After her mother passed away from diabetes and all its complications, Nancy has been committed to her own personal health and that of her family's. She is also driven to helping others learn how to radically improve their own health through simple personal choices and steps.

Nancy's message is one of freedom, not bondage; vibrant living, not listless existence; margin, not stretched beyond one's limits; spiritual strength, not aimless wandering; full relationships, not sterile environments; joy, not sorrow. Her articles, recipes, menus and newsletter can be found at her website.

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