

✶ BENBELLA VEGAN'S ✶

THANKSGIVING TABLE

RECIPES FOR A HEALTHY, DECADENT
PLANT-BASED HOLIDAY



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SOUPS
AND
SALADS

curried sweet potato and carrot soup • 75

curried sweet potato and carrot soup

G 45 • Makes 3 to 5 servings

This soup is the perfect fall treat when the farmers markets are full of root vegetables. A great timesaver for the future is to make a double batch and freeze in the freezer.

1 tablespoon coconut oil or ½ cup water
3 cups sweet potatoes, cut into chunks
2 cups carrots, cut into chunks
Pinch sea salt
1 tablespoon curry powder, or more to taste
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon coriander

5 or more cups filtered water
1 tablespoon sweet white miso, dissolved in ¼ cup water
Sea salt, to taste
Handful parsley or cilantro, for garnish

Heat oil or water in large saucepan or stockpot. Add sweet potatoes and carrots with a pinch of sea salt and sauté for three minutes. Add the spices and sauté until well coated. Add water and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer 15 minutes, until vegetables are soft.

Let soup cool slightly. Puree the soup in a blender (or with immersion blender) until smooth and creamy, and then return it to pot. Dissolve miso in hot water and stir into soup. Simmer three to four minutes. Season to taste. Serve hot, garnished with chopped parsley or cilantro.

SPICY PUMPKIN SOUP

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes | **COOKING TIME:** 25 minutes

MAKES 4 SERVINGS   

½ medium onion, diced
2 tablespoons vegetable broth
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 cup water
1 cup almond milk
1 medium potato, thinly sliced
1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree
Sea salt to taste

- 1** | In a large soup pot, sauté onion in vegetable broth over medium-high heat, until onion is tender.
- 2** | Stir in curry powder, cumin, coriander, and red pepper flakes. Reduce heat to low and cook for 1 additional minute.
- 3** | Add water, milk, potatoes, and pumpkin. Cook over medium heat for 10–15 minutes. Add salt to taste. Serve hot.

TIP

This is a fast, easy, delicious soup. If you prefer a smoother consistency, puree it with an immersion blender.

Festive Kale Salad

[MAKES 2 TO 4 SERVINGS] This slightly sweet and crunchy combination makes a satisfying luncheon salad or festive first course for a holiday meal. The lemon tenderizes the kale, transforming it into a delightful alternative to your everyday green salad. Pair this appealing dish with crusty bread to enhance the delicate flavors.

DRESSING

3 tablespoons freshly squeezed
lemon juice
3 tablespoons maple syrup

SALAD

6 to 8 cups very thinly sliced, lightly
packed curly kale, washed and
dried
½ cup dried cranberries or dried
cherries
⅓ cup chopped walnuts
Sea salt, to taste (optional)
Freshly ground pepper, to taste
(optional)

To make the dressing, put the lemon juice and maple syrup in a small bowl and briskly whisk until smooth.

Put the kale, cranberries (or cherries), and walnuts in a large bowl. Pour about three-quarters of the dressing over the salad and toss gently until the kale, cranberries (or cherries), and walnuts are evenly coated. Taste and add the remaining dressing, if desired.

Cover and let stand at room temperature for about 20 minutes before serving. Just before serving, top with a few grinds of sea salt and pepper, if desired.

CHEF'S NOTE

This salad can be made several hours in advance. If you will not be serving it within 20 minutes of preparation, cover and refrigerate it for up to 4 hours.



GARBANZO-SPINACH SALAD

MAKES 4–6 SERVINGS



RECIPE BY JOHN AND MARY MCDUGALL

This is one of our favorite salads and very often we eat this right after putting it together. It also keeps well in the refrigerator for several days.

3 15-ounce cans garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed

2 cups loosely packed chopped fresh spinach

½ cup chopped red bell pepper

½ cup chopped yellow bell pepper

3 green onions, finely chopped

½ cup oil-free Italian dressing

Freshly ground pepper

1. Combine garbanzo beans and vegetables in a bowl.
2. Pour dressing over and toss to mix.
3. Season with freshly ground pepper.
4. Refrigerate for 1–2 hours for best flavor.



THE FIRST STEP

You're convinced by all the information you've read about the benefits of eating a whole foods, plant-based diet and you want to start immediately. But how? Dr. Campbell explains that the most important step is just to change the way you eat. The diet is simple: "Eat whole, plant-based foods, with little or no added oil, salt, or refined carbohydrates like sugar or white flour . . . There is nothing more convincing than experiencing the change for oneself."* The delicious recipes in this book help too!

**Whole*, p. 289

MAIN DISHES

Roasted Spaghetti Squash, Cauliflower, Garlic, and Mashed Potatoes with Porcini Mushroom Gravy

Serves 4

- 1 cup whole cloves garlic
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 pounds spaghetti squash, cut lengthwise into quarters

Salt and pepper, to taste

- 1 head cauliflower, florets cut from stem

For the mashed potatoes:

- 1½ pounds peeled potatoes, cut into large cubes

- 4 tablespoons vegan butter

- 1 cup unsweetened rice milk

Salt and pepper, to taste

For the porcini mushroom gravy:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil

- ½ cup diced white onion

Pinch salt

- 3 cloves garlic, minced

- 2 ounces dried porcini mushrooms, rinsed and soaked in 2 cups warm water until soft; reserve liquid

- 2 cups sliced mixed mushrooms* (small pieces)

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

- 3 cups vegetable broth

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch mixed with ¾ cup cold water

- 2 tablespoons vegan butter

* White, oyster, white beech, or any of your choice will do.

For the vegetables: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the peeled garlic cloves and 4 tablespoons olive oil in a pan over medium heat and cook until light brown. Reserve oil.

Brush the spaghetti squash with 1 tablespoon olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste. Spread out on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, then cover with foil paper. In a bowl, toss cauliflower florets and fried garlic with reserved oil. Add salt and pepper to taste; spread cauliflower and garlic on a cookie sheet, uncovered. Place both squash and cauliflower florets in the preheated oven. Remove the cauliflower after 15 minutes, or until they are soft. Remove the squash after approximately 1 hour, when a fork can easily pierce the squash.

For the mashed potatoes: Put potatoes in a large pot and add water to just above the top of potatoes. Bring water to boil, then uncover. Continue the boiling until water evaporates and potatoes are soft, about 10 minutes. Remove pot from heat. Strain any remaining water and mash the potatoes with fork. Add vegan butter, rice milk, and salt and pepper. Mix very well and set aside, covered.

For the porcini mushroom gravy: Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large sauté pan. Add onions and a pinch of salt, and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add minced garlic, all the mushrooms, and mustard; keep stirring the pan for another 3 to 5 minutes, then add more salt and pepper to taste. Add the liquid from the soaked porcini and the vege-



table broth, bring the sauce to boil, then lower it down to simmer. Continue cooking for another 10 minutes. Pour in the cornstarch mixture and butter, stir for another minute, then remove the pan from heat.

To assemble: Arrange each plate with a piece of squash, top with cauliflowers and garlic, and set mashed potatoes next to them. Ladle gravy on top of the potatoes and vegetables. Serve immediately.

Thanksgiving Loaf

SERVES 4 | GF | SF* | MA | PA | P |

I've never had Tofurkey, and while my family has become pretty adventurous over the years, no amount of persuasion is going to get them to eat tofu shaped into a turkey mold. (Just sayin'.) If you want a centerpiece to your meal that doesn't pretend to be turkey, this Thanksgiving Loaf is where it's at. While this loaf doesn't taste anything like meatloaf (or turkey), it captures all the Thanksgiving flavors that we know and love.

- 1 15-oz can white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 c mashed potatoes
- 1 carrot
- 1 parsnip (optional)
- 2 celery stalks
- 1 small onion
- 2½ tbsp poultry seasoning (not powdered)
- ½ tsp rubbed sage (not powdered)
- 2-3 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 2-3 tbsp yellow miso*
- ¾ c instant oats (uncooked)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and set aside a standard loaf pan.
2. Pulse beans in a food processor or mash in a bowl with a fork so no whole beans are left, but mixture is still chunky with some bean parts. Transfer to a mixing bowl along with the mashed potatoes and set aside.
3. Grate, chop, or pulse vegetables in a food processor until finely minced, but do not puree. Add to mixing bowl with seasonings, nutritional yeast, and miso, stirring to combine.
4. Stir in oats and taste, adding additional nutritional yeast or miso if desired. **STOP**
5. Transfer combined mixture to your loaf pan, pat down firmly, and bake for 30-40 minutes

until firmer and crisp on the top (make sure it's not still wet).

6. Let cool in the pan for 10-20 minutes before serving out of it (while keeping it perfectly intact).

►► **CHEF'S NOTES:**

- One-use aluminum loaf pans that have ridges on the sides make the prettiest loaves, and it's easier to pop the loaf out of that (and keep it perfectly intact) than a traditional metal pan. While normally I'd prefer not to use something that creates waste, I like a perfect, magazine-looking loaf at Thanksgiving.
- If using a regular pan, run a knife along the edges, put a plate or cutting board over top, flip over, and pat (bang) the bottom of the pan until your loaf slides out onto the plate or cutting board.

Per serving (¼ loaf): 259 calories, 2.5g fat, 48g carbohydrates, 11.5g fiber, 3.9g sugars, 13g protein





SIDE DISHES

Holiday White Bean, Potato, and Stuffing Casserole

[MAKES 6 SERVINGS] Holidays can be challenging when you are serving vegans and meat-eaters alike. But fret no more! This hearty stuffing-based casserole contains the comfort-food “feel” of shepherd’s pie—sans the meat, dairy, and eggs, of course!

POTATO/BEAN LAYER

3 cups peeled and chopped white potatoes
 1½ cups cooked white beans
 (drained and rinsed if canned)
 ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
 ¼ teaspoon sea salt
 1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves

STUFFING

4 cups whole-grain bread cubes,
 from 7 to 9 slices fresh whole-
 grain bread (see note)
 3 teaspoons Italian seasoning (see
 note)
 ½ teaspoon sea salt
 2 cups diced onion
 2¼ cups vegetable broth
 1 teaspoon dried basil
 1 cup diced celery
 4 cups diced mushrooms
 ⅔ cup chopped pecans

GARNISH

½ teaspoon paprika, plus more as
 needed

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Oil an 11 x 7 inch baking pan or casserole dish.

To make the potato/bean layer, fit a large sauce pan with a steamer insert. Add 2 inches of cold water, and then add the potatoes. Cover and bring to a boil. Steam for 15 to 20 minutes, until they are soft, but not mushy. Put the potatoes, beans, garlic powder, and salt in a high-performance blending appliance and process until smooth. Transfer to a medium-size bowl and stir in the marjoram.

While the potatoes are steaming, cut the whole-grain bread into 1/2-inch cubes. Put the bread cubes, Italian seasoning, and salt in a large bowl and toss to combine. Transfer to a large, rimmed baking sheet and bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until the bread is slightly crisp. Put the pan on a wire rack and let cool.

While the bread cubes are cooling, prepare the stuffing by combining the onion, ¼ cup vegetable broth, and the basil in a large skillet. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, for 7 minutes. Add the celery and ¼ cup broth, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add the diced mushrooms and



another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup broth, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes, or until most of the liquid has cooked down, leaving the mushroom mixture very moist but not soupy. Stir in the pecans and remove the skillet from the heat.

Put the remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups vegetable broth into a small sauce pan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Put 4 cups of the toasted bread cubes in a large bowl. Add the mushroom-pecan mixture and stir gently to combine. Pour in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the hot vegetable broth and stir to

combine. Add as much of the remaining broth as needed so the mixture is moist but not soupy. (If the mixture still seems dry after adding all of the broth, add a small amount of water.)

Spread the stuffing in an even layer in the bottom of the prepared baking pan or casserole dish. Spread the potato mixture over the stuffing in an even layer. Sprinkle with the paprika. Cover loosely and bake for 40 to 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for 5 to 7 minutes, until slightly golden on top. Cool for 15 minutes. Serve warm.

CHEF'S NOTES

For a gluten-free option, make gluten-free stuffing using 7 to 9 slices of gluten-free bread in place of the whole-grain variety.

If you prefer a sage-flavored stuffing, replace the 3 teaspoons Italian seasoning with 1 teaspoon crumbled dried sage leaves, 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, and 1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves.

WALNUT CRANBERRY SQUASH “RICE”

MAKES 4 SERVINGS



RECIPE BY ANI PHYO

Cranberries are packed with antioxidants and promote a healthy heart, teeth, gums, and urinary tract. They help fight cancer and may help prevent stomach ulcers.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 small butternut squash (about 1 pound),
peeled, seeded, and cut into 2-inch cubes | ½ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped |
| ½ small yellow onion, chopped (about ½ cup) | 1 cup dried cranberries |
| 1 tablespoon cumin seeds | 1 cup walnuts, crushed |
| 1 tablespoon coriander powder | 2 teaspoons sea salt |

1. Put small batches of cubed squash in a food processor and process into small pieces.
2. Put processed squash in a large mixing bowl. Add onion, cumin, coriander, cilantro, cranberries, walnuts, and salt, and mix well.

TIPS

A potato peeler works great for peeling the skin off squash. Once peeled, cut squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Then cut it into smaller pieces.

If cranberries are hard to find, you can also use raisins or dates instead.

Serve with Coconut Chutney (p. 215) and a soup or salad on the side.

This dish will keep for 2 days in the fridge.



Parsnip Mashed Potatoes

SERVES 4

See photo on pages 260–261.

Parsnips add a little zing to otherwise-ordinary mashed potatoes. They also make them a little creamier. While I normally pass over mashed potatoes as a side dish, I can eat a bowlful of this tasty version.

6 medium red or white new potatoes, cubed

3 medium parsnips, peeled and cubed

Dash of cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon sea salt

Put the potatoes and parsnips in a large pot with just enough water to cover the vegetables. Bring to a boil, decrease heat to medium, and then cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally with a spoon. Test the tenderness of the potatoes and parsnips with a fork; they should pierce easily and be tender yet firm. Drain any remaining liquid and mash the potatoes and parsnips with a potato masher until there are no visible lumps. Gently stir in the cayenne pepper and salt with a wooden spoon.



Parsnip Mashed Potatoes (page 262)
Mushroom Bourguignon (page 238)



Simple Candied Sweet Potatoes

SERVES 4

Most candied sweet potato recipes are chock-full of butter, sugar, and probably marshmallows. This one that I eat with my favorite Korean dish, Bibimbap (page 237), has just three ingredients and comes together quickly. I keep Best Date Syrup Ever on hand so I always have a healthy sweetener when I want something sweet besides fresh fruit.

- 3 cups sweet potatoes, peeled and diced into ½-inch cubes**
- ¾ cup Best Date Syrup Ever (page 83)**
- Black sesame seeds (garnish)**

Steam the sweet potatoes for 8 to 10 minutes, until tender. While they steam, add the date syrup to a large skillet with ¼ cup water and bring it to a boil. Let it simmer for 5 minutes. Add the steamed sweet potatoes and let them cook for another minute. Serve garnished with the black sesame seeds.

The Best Date Syrup Ever

MAKES 3 CUPS

Dates are nature's candy and a great natural sweetener. Medjool dates are sweeter than other dates, and stevia gives this recipe extra sweetening power, so I can use less of this calorie-dense treat. Use this date syrup as a sweetener in place of your regular sugar, or add a little vanilla extract to it and use it as a topping for ice cream (pages 266–267).

2 cups pitted Medjool dates

½ teaspoon stevia powder

1½ to 2 cups water

Place all ingredients in a blender and purée until smooth and creamy. Add water as needed to get the mixture to blend. Store refrigerated for up to one week.



autumn

lemon-kissed brussels and butternut squash

G **A** **45** • Makes 4 to 6 servings • **CHEF FAVE**

I know so many people who think they don't like Brussels sprouts, but after trying this dish, they realize they just haven't had them cooked well. If you think you are a Brussels hater, try this dish immediately!

**3 cups butternut squash, peeled and cut in
½-inch cubes**
2 cups Brussels sprouts, halved, ends trimmed
⅓ cup slivered almonds
1 teaspoon ginger, grated
1 tablespoon lemon zest
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon tamari
1 tablespoon maple or brown rice syrup
1 tablespoon brown rice vinegar
(or other vinegar)
Sea salt, to taste

Steam butternut squash until just tender. Place in a medium bowl. Steam Brussels sprouts until just tender and place in bowl with squash. Pan-toast almonds in a skillet over a medium-low flame until golden brown, stirring continuously. Mix together the rest of the ingredients in a small bowl, then toss with veggies and almonds until well combined. Season with sea salt to taste.

chef ★ fave

lemon-kissed brussels and butternut squash • 119

Steamed Green Beans and Carrots with Orange Sauce

[MAKES 4 SERVINGS] [NO OIL] The refreshing citrus notes of the orange juice enhance this colorful green beans and carrots combo. A finishing sprinkle of *gomasio* adds a subtle crunch, but if you cannot find *gomasio* in your market, plain toasted (or raw) hulled sesame seeds substitute perfectly.

4 carrots, scrubbed and sliced into sticks
3 cups green beans, cleaned and trimmed
2 tablespoons orange juice (freshly squeezed or store-bought)
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 teaspoon maple syrup
2 teaspoons *gomasio* (optional)

CHEF'S NOTE

For a completely oil-free recipe, eliminate optional *gomasio*.

Fit a steamer basket into a large sauce pan with a tight-fitting lid. Add 2 inches of cold water, then add the carrots. Cover and bring to a boil. Steam for 5 minutes. Add the green beans, cover, and steam for 6 to 7 minutes more, or until the carrots and beans are crisp-tender.

Meanwhile, put the orange juice, lemon juice, and maple syrup in a small bowl. Whisk to combine.

Transfer the cooked carrots and beans to a medium bowl. Add the sauce and toss to coat. Sprinkle with the *gomasio* (if using), toss lightly, and serve.



SEE PICTURE ON PAGE 213

CREAMED CAULIFLOWER

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes | COOKING TIME: 10 minutes

MAKES 6–8 SERVINGS  

8 cups cauliflower florets
1 cup water
1 cup raw cashews
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
2 tablespoons white miso
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon tahini
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
Freshly ground black pepper and sea salt to taste

- 1 | Cook cauliflower in boiling water until well done. Drain and pat dry on paper towel.
- 2 | Meanwhile, place water, cashews, nutritional yeast, miso, mustard, tahini, and vinegar in the bowl of a food processor. Blend until smooth.
- 3 | Add cauliflower to food processor and pulse 6–7 times. Do not puree. Place in a bowl and season with salt and pepper.
- 4 | Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm.

TIP

Do not place cauliflower in a Vitamix; this will over process it.

Roasted Veggies



psst! Save turnip greens and beet tops for an easy sauté. Toss one bunch of tops in a skillet over medium-high heat for 3 minutes with 1 teaspoon of coconut oil, 2 cloves of minced garlic, ¼ cup veggie stock (page 122), 2 teaspoons of red wine vinegar, 2 heaping tablespoons of pumpkin seeds, and then salt and pepper to taste. Try this preparation with kale, collards, and chard, too — infinite possibilities indeed.



4+ SERVINGS (PHOTO PREVIOUS PAGE)

Roasted veggies can transform a salad, wrap, or rice bowl, and they're always delicious on their own. The combinations you can try are infinite, and I've listed a few of my favorites for inspiration here.

STEPS

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Sprinkle with seasoning and toss with ½ teaspoon coconut oil (or 2 tablespoons veggie stock, page 122) for every cup of veggies.
3. Roast for 20 – 40 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork.

TRY TURNIPS

Toss with coconut oil and season with simple sea salt and pepper.

EAT SOME BEETS

Try them with lemon juice, lemon wedges, fresh thyme, coconut oil, sea salt, and pepper.

CHOMP A FEW CARROTS

Balsamic vinegar, coconut oil, Sucanat, and sea salt — wow.

ROAST TOMATOES

Simple sea salt, pepper, and coconut oil prepares these guys for all sorts of tasty recipes like Roasted Cherry Tomato Salsa (page 272).

OH YES, SWEET POTATOES, TOO

Toss with minced garlic, thyme, sage, rosemary, coconut oil, sea salt and pepper, sunflower seeds, and pumpkin seeds for a little crunch factor.

ROASTED ASPARAGUS WITH SWEET POTATOES AND CHICKPEAS

This summer dish is a delicious combination of vegetables. I love to serve it over a bed of mixed greens and make it a dinner salad.

- 2 sweet potatoes, cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks
- 12 ounces asparagus, ends trimmed, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 onion, sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper, plus more to taste
- 1 cup canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- ¼ cup Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing

Yields: 4 servings

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 35 minutes

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Spread the potatoes on one of the prepared baking sheets and bake until tender, about 20 minutes.
3. While the potatoes are cooking, toss the asparagus and onion with the garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl until well coated.
4. On a separate prepared baking sheet, spread the asparagus mixture evenly and bake until the asparagus is tender yet still crisp, about 15 minutes, stirring half-way through. Remove from the oven.
5. Place the potatoes, asparagus, and chickpeas into a large serving bowl. Pour the balsamic dressing over the mixture and stir gently to combine. Season with more salt and pepper to taste.





Creamy Broccoli & Red Pepper Macaroni

4+ SERVINGS

This is one of the recipes that I love to try out on the biggest skeptics because they all end up loving it — simultaneously proclaiming their disbelief that it's dairy-free and asking for more.

STEPS

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add noodles and cook according to manufacturer's instructions.
2. Blend together all sauce ingredients until smooth and set aside.
3. While noodles cook, place coconut oil in a skillet heated to medium and add diced red bell pepper. Stir often for 5–7 minutes.
4. Add broccoli and water to skillet, stir, cover, and steam for 3–5 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. Return to the noodles. If they've finished cooking, drain and rinse and return them to the pot. Mix together cooked and rinsed noodles, veggies, and sauce over medium heat. Season with more salt and black pepper to taste if necessary.



INGREDIENTS

2 cups gluten-free macaroni noodles

Sauce

1 tablespoon lemon juice

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup water

1 tablespoon coconut oil*

1 tablespoon nutritional yeast

1 cup cashews, soaked

1 clove garlic

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

2–3 drops liquid smoke*

—

1 teaspoon coconut oil*

1 red bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed, diced

1 cup broccoli florets

1–2 tablespoons water

Sea salt to taste

Black pepper to taste

psst! Swap mushrooms for broccoli, or add mushrooms to the mix.

—

You can use applewood-smoked sea salt for the sea salt called for in this recipe if you aren't using liquid smoke.

—

Top this recipe with Almond Crunch Kale Chips (page 33) for a healthy non-breading texture that's outta this world.

—

Just as tasty with or without the red bell pepper.

SAUCES AND TOPPINGS

5-MINUTE CRANBERRY RELISH

MAKES 4 CUPS 

RECIPE BY CHEF AJ

Why cook your relish or use sugar when you can make this instead? This relish is delicious served with oatmeal.

1 12-ounce bag fresh cranberries
2 large peeled oranges, zest included
Dates to taste

2 tablespoons psyllium husk
Fresh ginger (optional)
Fresh lime juice (optional)

1. In a food processor, process all of the ingredients until the desired chunky texture is reached.
2. Adding fresh ginger and lime juice is also a delicious variation.



Everyday Mushroom Gravy **30** **G** **\$**

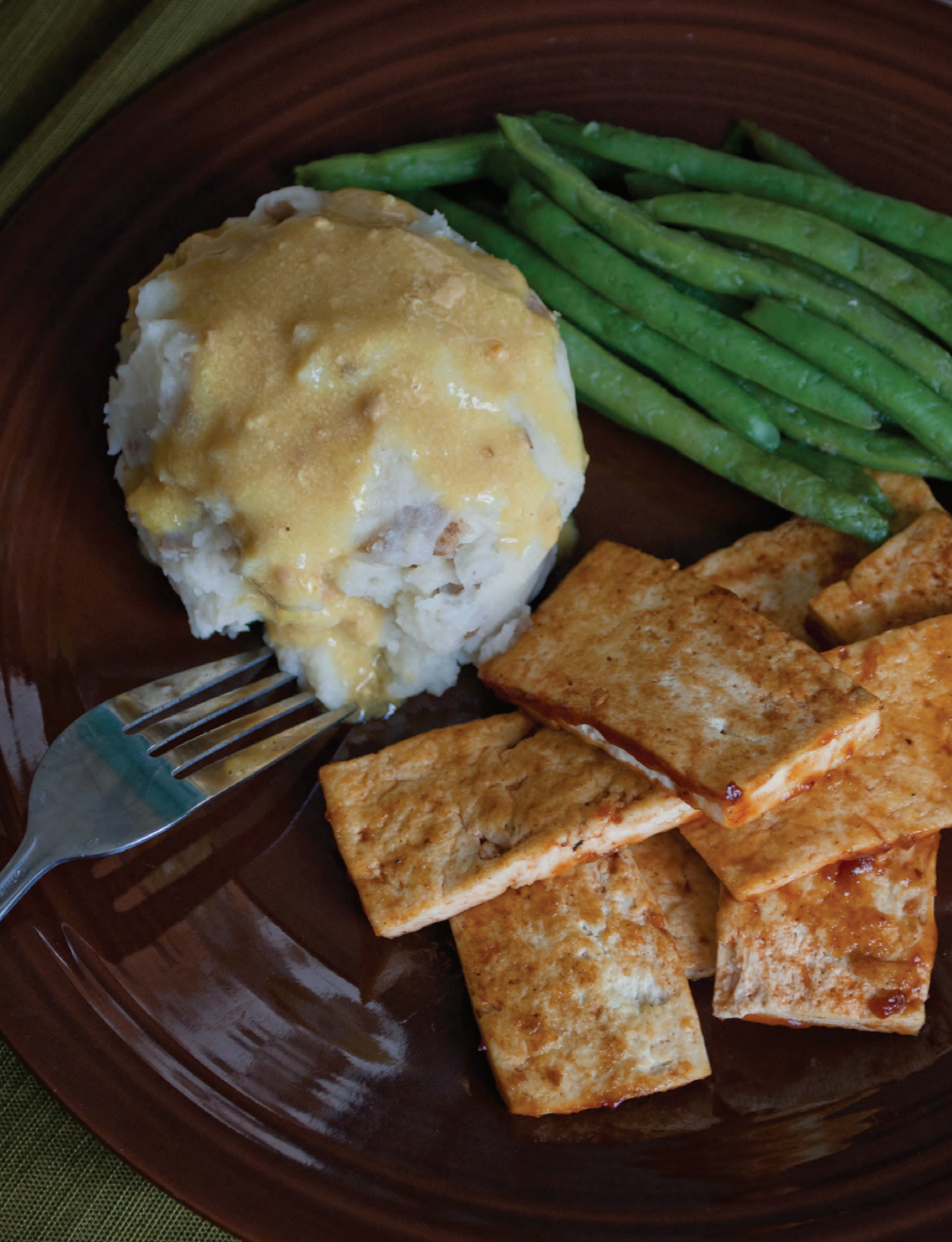
Makes 1 cup | This is a great everyday gravy, meaning it goes with just about anything and can turn a meal from boring to superb. I love it with mashed potatoes, but it's also great on greens, rice, and couscous.

1 c water
2 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
2 tbsp nutritional yeast, divided
¼ tsp onion powder (granulated)
¼ tsp garlic powder (granulated)
¼ tsp ground ginger
8 oz white or brown mushrooms, sliced
Italian seasoning
½ c nondairy milk
2 tbsp cornstarch
dash of ground nutmeg (optional)
black pepper, to taste
pinch of salt (optional)

- 1 In a skillet, whisk water with low-sodium soy sauce, 1 tablespoon of nutritional yeast, onion powder, garlic powder, and ground ginger.
- 2 Bring to a boil and add mushrooms, sprinkling them generously with Italian seasoning (a good 10 shakes).
- 3 Continue to sauté over medium-high heat until the mushrooms are brown and soft, about 3 minutes. Meanwhile whisk nondairy milk with cornstarch and remaining 1 tablespoon of nutritional yeast. Add a very light dash of nutmeg, if desired.
- 4 Pour over mushrooms, stirring to combine. Reduce heat to low and continue to cook until thick and gravylike, about 5 minutes.
- 5 Add black pepper to taste (I like it really peppery) and a few more shakes of Italian seasoning unless you were very generous before. Taste again, adding a pinch of salt if necessary.
- 6 Set aside for a few minutes before serving to let the flavors merge.

CHEF'S NOTE: For a smoky-flavored gravy, substitute smoked paprika for the nutmeg, and add more to taste.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION (¼ C) 60 Calories, 1.4g Fat, 8.9g Carbohydrates, 1.4g Fiber, 1.2g Sugars, 5.6g Protein



DESSERTS

Pumpkin Pie with Date-Nut Crust

[MAKES 8 SERVINGS] This recipe follows in the footsteps of traditional pumpkin pie with a few jazzy twists. A delectable date, nut, and oat crust takes the place of the classic butter-and-flour version and the addition of vegan whipped cream makes it super festive. 'Tis the season for pumpkin pie!

CRUST

10 large pitted Medjool dates, plus
more as needed
½ cup whole pecans
¾ cup rolled oats

FILLING

14 to 16 ounces firm regular tofu
1 can (about 16 ounces) pumpkin
purée
⅔ cup maple or brown sugar
1 tablespoon maple syrup
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
1½ teaspoons Pumpkin Pie Spice
⅛ teaspoon sea salt

TOPPING

Vanilla Whipped "Cream"

CHEF'S NOTE

If desired, you may use a rolling pin to roll the dough into a 10-inch round before placing it in the pie plate.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Oil a 9-inch pie plate.

To make the crust, put the dates, pecans, and oats in a high-performance blending appliance and process until the mixture forms a dough. If the mixture is still too crumbly to hold together, add more pitted dates, one at a time, until the consistency is doughy. Form the date mixture into a ball and place it in the center of the prepared pie plate (see note). Press the date mixture evenly over the bottom of the plate, pushing it up the sides of the pie plate as you go, to make a crust. To craft a pretty edge to the crust, use your index finger to push the inner edge of the crust out, while pinching the outer edge in with the thumb and index finger of your other hand to make a classic scalloped edge around the pie crust.

Put all of the filling ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Pour the filling into the crust and bake for 20 minutes. Remove the pie from the oven and cover the crust edges with small strips of foil. Bake the pie for 20 to 30 minutes more, or until the filling is somewhat firm to the touch (the center will still be slightly soft).

Place the pie on a wire rack to cool completely. Before serving, pipe whipped "cream" (if using)



around the perimeter of the pie using a star tip, or simply serve a dollop of the whipped “cream” on the side. If you are serving the pie warm, cool it at room temperature for 45 minutes to 1 hour before serving. If you are serving the pie

chilled, cool, then cover it with foil and place it in the refrigerator for 3 to 24 hours before serving. Covered tightly and stored in the refrigerator, leftover pie will keep about 2 days.



SPICED CARAMEL APPLE MUFFINS

Yield: 6 large muffins

Prep time: 30 minutes

APPLE FILLING

3 Fuji apples, peeled, cored, and cubed

2 tbsp. coconut crystals

1 tbsp. peeled and grated ginger

Juice of 1 lemon

MUFFIN BASE

1½ c. almond flour

¼ c. coconut flour

3 tbsp. coconut crystals

1½ tsp. vanilla bean powder or vanilla extract

1½ tsp. ground cinnamon

¼ tsp. ground cloves

½ c. coconut nectar

2 tbsp. almond butter

CARAMEL SAUCE

¾ c. melted cacao butter

¼ c. lucuma powder

¾ c. coconut nectar

“Plant the seeds and they will grow . . .” I was reminded of this saying as I was traveling through apple and pumpkin orchards in the beautiful rolling hills of Comstock Park, Michigan, one dewy and slightly cool yet humid morning. Our host, Rose, took Alex and I on a seven-mile road trip outside of downtown Grand Rapids to an orchard that she favored as a young girl. The orchard grew a large variety, ranging from Fuji (my all-time favorite) to the delicious Honeycrisp. It was a dream come true: I had fantasized about apple picking when I was a kid. At the time, I was also entertaining another dream come true by growing our own little “apple”—that is, our son—so things just couldn’t get any better. I had been craving apples all throughout my pregnancy, so it wasn’t by happenstance that I was referring to the baby as our little “apple.” Maybe we really are what we eat.

If you find apples as inspiring as I do, these muffins were made for you. They get a kick from fresh ginger and a spicy sweetness from apple’s natural partners, cinnamon and cloves. The finishing touch is a drizzle of caramel, which, after it firms up in the refrigerator, gives the muffins a bit of crackle as you bite into them.

Line a muffin tin with 6 liners.

To make the apple filling: Place the apples in a medium bowl. Add the coconut crystals, ginger, and lemon juice and mix with a spoon until the apples are well coated. Set half of the apple mixture aside (you’ll use this as a topping later) and transfer the other half to a blender. Blend into a lightly chunky applesauce. Set aside and make the muffin base.

To make the muffin base: Place the almond flour, coconut flour, coconut crystals, vanilla bean powder, cinnamon, and cloves in a food processor. Process until well combined. With the machine running, add the coconut nectar and almond butter. Process until the mixture just sticks together. Be careful not to overprocess.

To assemble: Press half the muffin base into the cupcake liners, leaving a deep well in the center for the apple filling. Fill the well to the top with the applesauce.



Turn the remaining half of the muffin base out onto a flat surface lined with parchment paper and shape into a flat rectangle. Using a circle cookie cutter, a glass, or a knife, cut out thin circles and place them over the apple filling to enclose the muffin. Press gently around the edges to seal the muffin top to the base.

Spoon the reserved apple mixture onto the muffin tops, approximately 1 tbsp. per muffin. Set aside and make the caramel sauce.

To make the caramel sauce: Place the melted cacao butter in a small bowl. Whisk in the lucuma powder and coconut nectar until smooth. Drizzle the caramel sauce over the muffins until well coated. Serve immediately while deliciously gooey or store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

♥ MAKE IT YOUR OWN ♥

Four horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a dotted blue border.





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