

**HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming for  
Dinner!**

**Recipe Sampler**

**With Excerpts from the *Tall Travel Tales* series**

**Karen Jennings**



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# Introduction

Traditionally, food has brought people together at social events and family gatherings. But when someone becomes a vegan, things change. For people who eat a meat-based diet, the thought of having a vegan come to dinner can be quite overwhelming. The “HELP! There’s a VEGAN Coming for Dinner!” series of cookbooks dispels the myth that vegans are impossible to feed, and provides easy, delicious, meat-free, egg-free and milk-free dishes for all.

The recipes in this ebook were selected as an introduction to this accessible, family-style of vegan cooking and contain items from:

**HELP! There’s a VEGAN Coming for Dinner!** (the original cookbook)

**HELP! There’s a VEGAN Coming for Dinner! Japanese Style**

**HELP! There’s a VEGAN Coming for Dinner! Indian Style**

There are also short passages from my “Tall Travel Tales” adventures to India and Japan to entertain you along the way. I hope you enjoy it!

***Karen Jennings***

# What IS a Vegan Anyway?

The term “vegan” was first used by Donald Watson in 1944 and was defined as follows:

**Veganism is a way of living which excludes all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, the animal kingdom, and includes a reverence for life. It applies to the practice of living on the products of the plant kingdom to the exclusion of flesh, fish, fowl, eggs, honey, animal milk and its derivatives, and encourages the use of alternatives for all commodities derived wholly or in part from animals.**

There are three main plant-based diets: **Vegetarians** do not eat meat or seafood but might eat eggs, milk, cheese and honey. **Vegans** avoid *all* animal-source foods, including dairy and honey and, in most cases, anything which has been refined using animal by-products. A **raw food vegan** diet has the added restriction that the foods must be uncooked. The recipes in this book are suitable for vegetarians and vegans, but most are not appropriate for raw foodies.

So why do people eat a vegan diet? For some it's simply for health reasons. Eating a plant-based diet has many health benefits as compared to eating a standard meat-based diet. Others eat a vegan diet out of compassion for animals and the environment, and some live a completely vegan lifestyle which includes the avoidance of animal products such as leather and wool.

If you are interested in finding out more about plant-based diets, animal rights, factory farming or the environmental impact of raising animals for meat there are some good movies such as *Vegucated*, *Forks over Knives*, *Food, Inc.*, and *Cowspiracy*. If you're an omnivore who is thinking about adopting a vegan diet, check out the Vegetarian Resource Group for dietary advice at <http://www.vrg.org/nutrition>.

# Appetizers and Snacks





## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: India

Alan and I were quite hot, tired, possibly a bit tetchy and feeling the effects of a ten and a half-hour time change, so we asked Ajay (*our driver for the day*) if he could take us somewhere for lunch. “Cheap or expensive?” he enquired. “Cheap,” I replied. “Expensive,” Alan countered. “We don’t want to get an upset stomach on our first day.” “Perhaps somewhere not too cheap but not really expensive?” I suggested. Ajay nodded, pulled into the stream of traffic while honking his horn enthusiastically, and off we went. We hadn’t gone very far when he abruptly pulled over near the side of the road. “Get out here. Go through the gap in the wall. When you finish walk along the road and I find you.” I looked blankly at Alan, who shrugged in reply. “Quick. Quick. I don’t stop here. Get out now,” Ajay insisted.

With some reservation Alan and I disembarked and watched our taxi drive away. We knew he would come back at some point since we hadn’t paid him yet, but we had no idea where we were or what type of restaurant he’d brought us to. Alan took my hand and led me towards the gap in the wall. Other than some pictures of deities painted on the wall underneath the word “welcome” there was no indication that a restaurant lay within.

We walked along a winding pathway lined with lush green plants and emerged into a courtyard filled with dining tables, cabanas and tree stumps topped with cushions. A buffet was laid out under the canopy of large trees and at the end of the courtyard was a long table displaying various dishes in heated pots. But the thing which struck me most about this lunch spot was the people. We were the only white faces to be seen, and the only people dressed in “travel clothes”. You know what I mean – comfy sandals, multi-pocketed pants, quick-dry t-shirts. The best I can say about my personal attire is that it didn’t have any stains on it and I’d topped it off with a flowing hand-painted scarf. The other female diners wore beautiful embroidered saris or pristine European-style dresses with fabulous footwear. “Oh my

goodness,” I whispered to Alan. “They’re all wearing Louboutin shoes!” He looked at me blankly. “They’re, like, \$800 a pair!” His eyebrows shot up, but I’m not sure if that’s because he was astounded by the cost of red-soled shoes or because he didn’t expect me to know the price of designer footwear. The men were dressed in shirts and ties, with hand-stitched jackets thrown casually over the backs of their chairs. “I’m thinking this place isn’t going to be cheap,” I murmured in Alan’s ear.

# Mushroom Pate

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



*Use whatever mushrooms you have on hand to make this pate. I usually use a mixture of cremini (coffee), white and portabella mushrooms. Spread this on crackers or use as a dip. Yes, I know it's a bit of an earthy colour, but it tastes great.*

*If you want a bit of a kick, fry a chopped jalapeno chilli along with the mushrooms.*

**2 Tbsp olive oil**

**1 Tbsp vegan margarine**

**1 medium onion, finely chopped**

**3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped**

**About 6 cups sliced mixed mushrooms (400g)**

**1 tsp salt**

**Dash of ground black pepper**

**1 avocado, pitted and chopped**

**1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar**

**Makes about 1 ½ cups**

- 1.** Heat the oil and margarine in a large frying pan and add the onion, garlic, mushrooms, salt and pepper. Fry over a high heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 2.** Transfer the vegetables to a blender and add the avocado and vinegar. Process until it looks the way you like it. Some like it smooth while others like it to have some chunks.
- 3.** Put into little dishes and chill for a couple of hours before serving.

# Lentil Donuts

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*These are a bit fiddly to make, but worth the effort. Serve hot with your favourite relish or chutney.*

**1 ½ cups split black urad dhal (they should look white)**

**3 Tbsp fresh ginger, grated**

**1 tsp salt**

**½ tsp ground black pepper**

**¼ tsp baking soda**

**2 jalapeno chillies, finely chopped**

**½ cup gram flour (chick pea flour), or as needed**

## **Oil for deep frying**

**Preparation time: Soaking overnight, then 15 minutes.**

**Cooking time: 8 minutes per batch. Makes 20, serves 4.**

- 1.** Wash the lentils thoroughly and soak overnight in plenty of water. Drain well, then put the lentils in a blender and process until smooth. This will take about 5 minutes, scraping down the sides of the blender frequently and using the pulse function at the start.
- 2.** Using a spoon, stir in the grated ginger, salt, black pepper, baking soda and jalapenos. Add just enough gram flour to make it possible to handle the dough. The more flour you add the heavier your donuts will be.
- 3.** Pour about 8cm / 3" of oil into a large deep pan or wok, and heat until a small amount of the batter sizzles when dropped in. Reduce the heat to medium.
- 4.** Pour some extra oil onto a plate and use it to keep your hands coated in oil while you make the donuts. Place a ball of the mixture in the palm of your hand (no bigger than a golf ball). Use an oiled finger to create a large donut hole. Carefully transfer the donut into the hot oil.
- 5.** Cook the donuts for 3 - 4 minutes, turn them over and continue to cook for another 3 - 4 minutes until golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper-towels and serve hot with your favourite relish or chutney.

# Beer-Batter Tempura

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



*Don't put a dark beer in the batter - the flavour will be too strong. I like to use Sapporo Japanese lager, which is vegan.*

## **Batter:**

**1-2 cups cold beer, as needed**

**1 ½ cups rice flour (not *glutinous* flour)**

**1 tsp salt**

## **Dipping Sauce:**

**1 cup dashi or stock**

**¼ cup mirin**

**¼ cup soy sauce**

**½ Tbsp sugar**

**Grated fresh ginger**

**Grated daikon**

**Wasabi paste**

**Mixed veggies – I used green onions, mushrooms, daikon, sweet potato and red pepper**

**Canola oil for frying**

**Preparation time: 10 minutes plus 15 minutes chilling. Cooking time: 3-5 minutes per batch. Serves 4.**

**To make the dipping sauce:**

**1.** Mix together the dashi, mirin, soy sauce and sugar in a small pan. Stir while it comes to a boil then remove from the heat. Divide between four small bowls. Serve the daikon, ginger and wasabi on the side for diners to add to taste.

**2.** Peel the sweet potato and slice thinly. Peel the daikon and cut into thin rounds. Cut the red pepper into about 8 pieces and remove any seeds and veins. Cut the mushrooms in half if large. Trim the green onions.

**To make the batter:**

**1.** In a medium bowl, mix together the beer, rice flour and salt. Mix until smooth and creamy. Cover and chill for at least 15 minutes.



**2.** Pour some canola oil into a deep pan, making sure it is not more than 1/3 full. Put over a medium-high heat. When the oil is hot (but NOT smoking!) dip the vegetables in the batter, then carefully drop into the oil. You can tell the oil is hot enough when a small amount of batter sizzles immediately when dropped in. Don't overcrowd the pan – just cook a few veggies at a time.

**3.** Allow the tempura to cook for about 3 minutes or until crisp and lightly golden brown. Remove and drain on paper towels while you cook the next batch. Serve hot with dipping sauce.

# Soups



## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: Japan

Our next destination was Sannomachi Street (*Takayama*), home to many sake breweries located in buildings dating back to the Edo period (1600-1868). The breweries were easily recognized by the *sugidama* (balls made from cedar branches) hung over their doorways and, in some cases, the bottles of sake displayed outside.

We were quite excited about sampling the local brews, and squeezed ourselves between other tourists to read the information above the bar in one of the breweries. It stated: “*Wish from a store. The carrying out from this corner of the sample alcohol should withhold. I refuse that a cup uses about. Please purchase one-person one cup.*” Always happy to oblige, we purchased a sake glass each and headed over to the tasting corner. A tour guide from Quebec was pouring out drinks for his flock, and when he realised we were also Canadians gathered Alan and I into his fold enthusiastically. “*Kampai!*” Cheers! he shouted as we raised our glasses. I suspect we drank a lot more than we were supposed to, but our new-found friend was quite insistent that we tried everything the brewery had to offer. We were a bit wobbly by the time we met up again with our group to go for lunch, but Takayama sake and shochu got a big thumbs up from us.

Lunch was a delicious meal of tofu, miso soup and rice, eaten sitting on cushions around low tables. John and Doris chose not to join us on the floor, but the rest of us took our time and made ourselves comfortable. After the food had been eaten, some of the older ones grumbled about the difficulties they were having standing up again. I smiled in sympathy, then realized I could no longer feel my left foot. Standing up turned into quite a performance as I unfolded my long limbs and grabbed at Alan for support. My companions were openly laughing at me, and I laughed too. I was aware that locals were smiling quietly, but I could never catch them actually watching me. After my award-winning performance was over I staggered out of the

restaurant and clambered onto a coach with the rest of the group.

# **Coconut and Green Bean Soup**

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



- 3 Tbsp olive oil**
- 1 medium carrot, scrubbed and cut into thin strips**
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed**
- 1 Tbsp fresh ginger, grated**
- 2 jalapeno chillies, finely chopped**
- 2 tsp lemon rind, finely grated**
- 1 tsp turmeric**
- 1 Tbsp ground coriander**
- 4 green onions, finely chopped**
- 1 cup green beans, trimmed and sliced lengthways**

**1 can / 2 cups coconut milk**

**2 cups vegan “chicken flavour” stock**

**3 tsp soy sauce**

**1 tsp raw unrefined sugar**

**2 cups bean sprouts**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh basil, chopped**

**Serves 4**

- 1.** Heat the oil in a medium pan and fry the carrots, garlic, ginger and chillies for 5 minutes over a medium heat, stirring frequently. Add the lemon rind, turmeric and coriander and stir fry for another minute.
- 2.** Add the green onions, green beans, coconut milk, stock cube, soy sauce and sugar. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer gently for 10 minutes.
- 3.** Stir in the bean sprouts and basil, heat for a minute and serve.

# Tomato Miso Soup

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



- 1 Tbsp sesame oil**
- 2 tomatoes, coarsely chopped**
- 1 leek, thinly sliced**
- 1 large king oyster mushroom, thinly sliced OR 8 fresh shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced**
- 5 cups vegan seaweed dashi**
- 1 cup (about 225g / 8oz) silken tofu, cut into small cubes**
- 1 Tbsp soy sauce**
- 3 Tbsp red miso**
- 2 green onions, finely chopped**

**Preparation time: 5 minutes. Cooking time: 10 minutes. Serves 4.**

- 1.** Heat the oil in a medium pan and fry the tomatoes, leek and mushroom(s) for 3 minutes, or until softened.
- 2.** Add the dashi, tofu and soy sauce. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes.
- 3.** Mix the miso with a small amount of stock from the pan and add to the soup. Allow to simmer gently for 1 minute – don't let it come to a full boil.
- 4.** Divide the soup between four bowls and top with green onions. Stir gently before drinking because the miso will separate out while the soup is sitting in the bowl.



# Tomato Soup

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*This soup requires Worcestershire sauce. Look for vegan brands in the health food aisle of your supermarket or check out your local health food store. Vegan Worcestershire sauce is usually gluten free, but read the ingredients before buying.*

**2 Tbsp canola oil**

**5 large tomatoes, finely chopped, about 5 cups**

**1 onion, finely chopped**

**4 garlic cloves, finely chopped**

**1 tsp ground cumin**

**½ tsp crushed dried red chillies**

**½ tsp freshly ground black pepper**

**1 Tbsp vegan Worcestershire sauce**

**2 Tbsp tomato ketchup**

**1 Tbsp tomato paste**

**3 cups vegan stock**

**1 tsp salt, or to taste**

**To garnish:**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup coconut milk**

**Thinly sliced tomato**

**2 tsp fresh coriander**

**Preparation time: 10 minutes. Cooking time: 40 minutes. Serves 4.**

**1.** Heat the oil in a large pan then add the tomatoes, onion, garlic, cumin, chillies and black pepper. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes until the tomatoes are completely melted and the onion is soft.

**2.** Stir in the Worcestershire sauce, ketchup and tomato paste. Add the stock, bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer gently for 30 minutes. Add salt to taste.

**3.** The soup can be served as-is, but I prefer to pop it into a blender and process until smooth.

**4.** Divide between 4 bowls and swirl each one with coconut milk. Garnish with sliced tomato and fresh coriander.

# Beans



## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: India

Dinner tonight was our first experience of eating in a family home, hosted by a man whom Lucinda refers to, perhaps with some justification, as “the most boring person in the world.” Madhukar (*our bus driver*) dropped us in Jaisalmer and we walked through the dark streets until we reached our destination. A cow stood outside of the home next door, mooing loudly. “She’s come home for her dinner,” Puru (*our guide*) said. “Cows wander wherever they want, but they always come home when they’re hungry.”

I was hungry too. It had been a long day, and lunch was a distant memory. Our host greeted us at the door. “Welcome! Namaste! Come in! Come in!” He gave us a tour of his multi-roomed home, which he shared with his wife, his daughter, his son, his son’s wife and their small child. His brother lived next door with his own wife, children and grandchildren. Both families usually ate together in the evenings, totalling about 16 people as far as I can work out.

Three women were at work in the kitchen, one stirring things on a stove while the younger ones sat on the floor chopping vegetables and making chapattis. “Please come in and sit down,” said our host, gesturing towards one of the rooms. We placed ourselves on cushions on the floor and the lucky ones leaned back against a wall. The last ones to enter sat on the large bed which occupied most of the room. Our host took his seat in a plastic chair in the corner and began to talk. And talk. He told us he talks for a living, sitting for an entire day sharing his wisdom with his followers, pausing neither to eat nor drink nor to go to the bathroom. He talked to us about many things over the next two hours, although felt like much longer.

My concentration faded in and out (admittedly more out than in) but I caught snippets such as “A marriage is like a cart. If the wheels are not the same size the cart will fall over,” and “Don’t pay to go out for meals. Eat food in your own home. This is the better way.” Hm. We were

paying to go out and eat in his home. “Give away your gifts for free. Don’t be greedy.” In the room next door his daughter was applying henna to any ladies who wanted it, “for a free will donation.” “Don’t drink chai. For me it is the road to ruin.” Apparently his wife didn’t share his views on this, and she smiled indulgently while giving out cups of steaming milky chai to those who wanted it.

# African Black Eyed Peas

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



*I can't always find cans of black eyed peas in my grocery store, so I use black beans instead.  
Serve with rice, couscous or quinoa.*

**1 can / 2 cups cooked black eyed peas, rinsed and drained**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil (or vegan margarine)**

**1 medium red onion, finely chopped**

**1 large tomato, finely chopped**

**1 jalapeno chili, finely chopped**

**2 garlic cloves, finely chopped**

**1 tsp grated fresh ginger**

**¼ tsp ground fenugreek (methi)**

**1 tsp cumin**

**¼ tsp ground cardamom**

**¼ tsp ground cloves**

**½ tsp cinnamon**

**½ tsp allspice**

**1 tsp turmeric**

**1 Tbsp dried oregano**

**2 tsp dried basil**

**1 cup coconut milk**

**1 cup water or stock**

**1 tsp salt**

**2 Tbsp chopped coriander leaves**

**Serves 4**

**1.** Heat the oil in a medium saucepan. Add the onion, tomato and chili. Fry over a medium low heat for about 10 minutes or until the onion is soft.

**2.** Add the garlic, ginger, fenugreek, cumin, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, allspice and turmeric. Fry for 30 seconds then add the oregano, basil, coconut milk and stock. Simmer for 20 minutes.

**3.** Stir in the black eyed peas and salt. Simmer for another 20 minutes. Sprinkle with coriander leaves and serve.

## Kidney Beans from Delhi

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*This dish is a simple affair, adapted from a recipe given to me by a family living in the suburbs of New Delhi. It's equally nice made with cooked black beans.*

**2 Tbsp canola oil**

**3 cups canned diced tomatoes**

**1 Tbsp fresh ginger, grated**

**2 jalapeno chillies**

**1 black cardamom, crushed**

**1 cinnamon stick**

**4 cloves**



**6 green cardamom pods, crushed**

**1 - 2 tsp salt, to taste**

**1 tsp paprika**

**2 tsp coriander**

**1 tsp ground cumin**

**2 cups cooked red kidney beans,**

**¼ of a block of creamed coconut (about 60g / 2oz)**

**4 cups of spinach (about 225g / 8 oz), roughly chopped**

**Fresh coriander (for garnishing)**

**Preparation Time: 5 minutes. Cooking Time: 30 minutes. Serves 4 as a side dish, 2 as a main meal.**

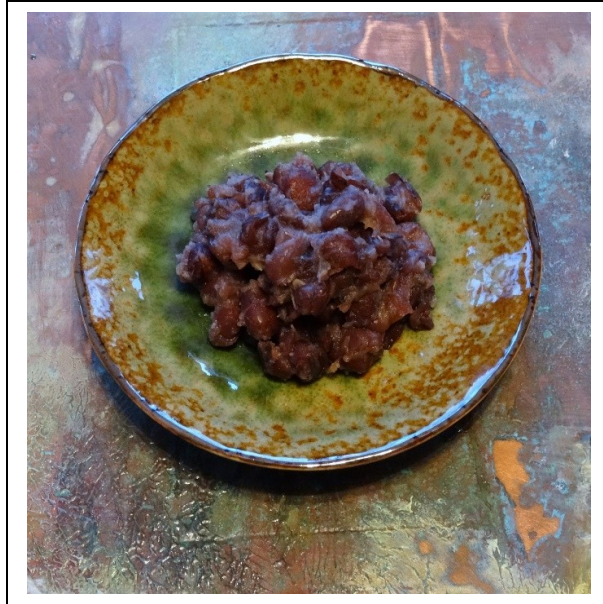
**1.** Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the tomatoes, ginger, jalapenos, black cardamom, cinnamon stick, cloves, green cardamom, salt, paprika, coriander and cumin. Cook over medium-high heat for about 10 minutes, or until the tomatoes have melted.

**2.** Stir in the beans and coconut, bring to a boil then reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 15 minutes.

**3.** Add the spinach, cover and cook gently for a final 5 minutes. Stir in the coriander before serving.

# Simple Sweet Beans

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



**2 cups cooked soy or adzuki beans**

**2 Tbsp water**

**2 Tbsp sugar**

**3 Tbsp mirin**

**1 tsp salt**

**Preparation time: 5 minutes. Cooking time: 30 minutes. Serves 4.**

**1.** Rinse and drain the beans then put into a small pan along with the water, sugar, mirin and salt.

**2.** Cook over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved then bring to a boil. Simmer gently, covered, for 20 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature.

# Faux Meat Dishes



## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: Japan

Later that evening we gathered in the lobby and Erika (*our guide*) told us where we were going for dinner. My heart sank. She'd booked a steak dinner at the Best Western for the group, but explained that eating together was always optional and not part of the tour package. Alan shot me a look. "I'd rather find some noodles," he whispered. On the walk from the ryokan I reminded Erika that I didn't eat meat and asked if Alan and I could find our own food. "I think they can cook you vegetables at the Best Western," she replied. "We'd rather eat Japanese food," we countered. Cathy and Lora overheard us. "Can we find some noodles?" they asked. They'd also done some research and had heard that we were in a town known for its ramen. Erika looked at us dubiously. She knew Alan and I had some grasp of the language so we were unlikely to get into major difficulties, but she still had some reservations about letting us wander around on our own, especially since she'd misplaced us for a while back in Tokyo. Eventually she sighed and said "OK. Meet at the Best Western afterwards and we'll all walk home together." And so four of us melted into the night like naughty schoolchildren as snow started to gently fall.

It wasn't long before we were cold, tired, hungry and irritable. It was dark, there were very few street lights, and Takayama seemed to be completely closed for the night. And then, up a small side street, we saw a light. Could it be...? It was! It was a noodle café! Through the windows we could see wizened old men sitting at rustic-looking tables, slurping noodles. We couldn't believe our luck and almost knocked each other over in our hurry to get out of the cold, damp air. We drew wobbly chairs up to a table and settled down to look at the menu. Even without any knowledge of Japanese it wasn't hard to understand. There were five choices: ramen with pork, ramen with egg, ramen with pork *and* egg, ramen with *neither* pork nor egg, and ramen with garlic toast. My choice was easy. No pork, no egg. And no toast. I would be a fool to think

that the soup stock was vegan, but it was still preferable to sitting down in a hotel restaurant while people munched on slabs of beef. The soup was steamingly hot. The noodles were chewy and stretchy. And, best of all, we were sitting and eating ramen in Japan. Happy days indeed.

# **Shepherdless Pie with Baked Beans**

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



**3 Tbsp olive oil**

**1 large onion, finely chopped**

**2 garlic cloves, finely chopped**

**450g / 1 lb veggie grounds**

**1 can Heinz Baked Beans in tomato sauce**

**2 Tbsp tomato paste**

**½ can (28oz) diced tomatoes**

**1 tsp dried oregano**

**1 tsp dried basil**

**2 tsp dried parsley**

**1 tsp salt**

**½ tsp ground black pepper**

**Topping:**

**4 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered**

**Large pan boiling water**

**2 Tbsp vegan margarine**

**Serves 4**

**1.** Heat the oven to 400°F / 200°C / Gas Mark 6.

**2.** Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion and garlic over a medium heat for 5 minutes or until soft. Stir in the veggie grounds, baked beans, tomato paste, diced tomatoes, oregano, basil, parsley, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil then reduce the heat, cover and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

**3.** Put the potatoes in a large pan of boiling water and simmer for 20 minutes or until soft. Drain and mash with the margarine.

**4.** Transfer the sauce to a large oven-proof dish (about 9" x 13") and top with the mashed potatoes. Bake for 30 minutes.



## One Pot “Chicken” Stew

From HELP! There’s a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



*On our first morning in Takayama we bought breakfast from a konbini (convenience store) close to the ryokan where we were staying. Our fellow travelers left with ham sandwiches, but Alan and I were feeling more adventurous. There were various items simmering in pots next to the cash, so I did a lot of pointing, asking “Nan desu ka?” (What is it?) and came away with various vegetables in a thin miso soup. This dish reminds me of my konbini breakfast, but I’ve made it a bit heartier with the addition of faux chicken. I like to serve it with three different dips: mirin dip, onion-ginger dipping sauce, and seven spice dipping sauce (see the chapter on “dips”) but you can just make one of your choice if you’re short of time.*

**6 cups vegan seaweed dashi**

**½ cup soy sauce**

**¼ cup mirin**

**4 faux chicken breasts, thawed if frozen, cut into bite size chunks**  
**1 large leek, cleaned and cut into 1" slices**  
**3 medium potatoes, cleaned or scrubbed and cut into bite size chunks**  
**½ large eggplant, cut into 1" / 2 ½ cm slices**  
**1 daikon, peeled and cut into ½" / 1 cm slices**  
**1 carrot, peeled and cut into ¼" / ½ cm slices**  
**2 medium parsnips, peeled and cut into ½" / 1 cm slices**  
**4 large garlic cloves, peeled and coarsely chopped**  
**1 Tbsp ginger, peeled and finely chopped**  
**¼ tsp ground black pepper**  
**1-2 tsp seven spice powder, to taste**  
**¼ cup red miso**  
**¼ cup white miso**  
**Salt to taste**  
**4 green onions, finely chopped**  
**Dips (optional – see note above)**

**Preparation time: 10 minutes. Cooking time: 40 minutes. Serves 4.**

- 1.** Put the dashi, soy sauce, mirin, faux chicken, leek, potatoes, eggplant, daikon, carrot, parsnips, garlic, ginger, black pepper and seven spice powder into a large pan. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 30-35 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
- 2.** Take ¼ cup of stock from the pan and mix it with the miso to form a paste.
- 3.** Gently stir the miso paste into the stew. Allow to simmer gently for 5 minutes (don't allow it

to come to a full boil). Taste and add salt if needed – miso can be quite salty so it may be fine as it is. Serve topped with chopped green onion.

# Vindaloo with Tamarind

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*This dish is nice the day it's made but even better the day after. It's fairly hot - feel free to adjust the number of chillies to taste.*

## **Marinade:**

**2 cups (about 225g / 8oz) faux beef chunks or seitan**

**2 tsp ground cumin**

**1 tsp ground allspice**

**1 tsp ground black pepper**

**4 tsp white, rice or cider vinegar**

## **Sauce:**

**3 Tbsp canola oil**

**2 medium onions, finely chopped**  
**6 garlic cloves, crushed**  
**2 Tbsp fresh ginger, finely chopped**  
**15 - 20 whole dried red chillies, or to taste**  
**2 tsp fennel seeds**  
**3 medium potatoes, about 3 - 4 cups, cut into bite-size pieces**  
**2 cups water**  
**4 Tbsp tomato paste**  
**1 tsp sugar**  
**1 tsp tamarind concentrate**  
**2 tsp dried methi leaves**  
**1 tsp salt, or to taste**  
**2 Tbsp canola oil to fry the faux beef**

**Preparation Time: 10 minutes. Cooking Time: about 1 hour.**

**Serves 4 as a main dish.**

- 1.** Mix together the faux beef, cumin, allspice, black pepper and vinegar. Set aside.
- 2.** In a large pan, heat the oil and fry the onions over medium-high heat for 10 minutes or until well browned, stirring frequently. Add the garlic, ginger, chillies and fennel seeds. Stir for 30 seconds.
- 3.** Stir in the potatoes, water, tomato paste, sugar, tamarind concentrate, methi leaves and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 40 - 50 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Check periodically – some potatoes cook faster than others – adding more water if it looks too dry.

**4.** When the potatoes are nearly ready, heat the oil in a separate frying pan. Lift the faux meat from the marinade (but keep the marinade) and fry over medium-high heat for 10 minutes or until nicely browned. Add the marinade and stir for 3 minutes or until the vinegar has evaporated

**5.** Add the faux beef to the potatoes and simmer for 5 minutes before serving.

# Tofu



## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: Riding the Rails in Japan

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote *Not all those who wander are lost*. However, I suspected that at some point during our trip we would be both wandering **and** lost.



# Tofu with Satay Sauce

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



*The sauce is very easy to make in the blender, or you can just mix it together in a bowl.*

**2 packs firm tofu, cubed**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup soy sauce**

**1 tsp grated lemon rind**

**4 garlic cloves, crushed**

**230g / 8oz rice noodles**

**Large pot of boiling water**

**2 Tbsp vegetable oil**

**2 cups grated carrots**

**2 cups beansprouts**

**1 cup thinly sliced snow peas**

**Sauce: Mix together:**

**1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups coconut milk**

**$\frac{3}{4}$  cup crunchy peanut butter**

**4 Tbsp soy sauce**

**3 Tbsp fresh ginger, finely chopped**

**3 Tbsp unrefined raw sugar**

**1 tsp crushed dried red chillies**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh basil or mint**

**Garnish:**

**Baby greens (optional)**

**Serves 4**

- 1.** Put the cubed tofu in a re-sealable plastic bag. Add the soy sauce, lemon rind and crushed garlic and set aside. This can be left in the fridge overnight if you like.
- 2.** Soak the rice noodles in hot water for 5 minutes, or as per instructions on the packet. Drain.
- 3.** Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Pat the tofu dry and place it in the pan. Cook over a medium-high heat for 5 minutes or until it starts to turn golden brown. Reduce the heat to low and cook gently for 15 minutes.
- 4.** Add the carrots, beansprouts and snow peas. Cook for 1 minute or until hot.

**5.** Stir in the sauce and, stirring constantly, heat without boiling. Serve on top of the noodles sprinkled and garnished with baby salad greens.

## Agedashi Tofu

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



*One lunchtime, when wandering around the streets of Kyoto, I saw a plastic replica of agedashi tofu in a restaurant window. It had been a while since I'd had any tofu, so we went in and sat down. When the menu arrived I searched through the pictures, but didn't see tofu of any kind in there among the photos of pork, chicken and fish dishes. I tried asking the waitress if I could have tofu, but the Kyoto accent can be quite hard to understand. Eventually inspiration hit me and I got up and beckoned her to follow me outside. I pointed at the replica and looked at her pleadingly. She smiled and nodded. I got the impression that I wasn't the first foreigner who had asked her to step outside to order their meal.*

### **Sauce:**

**1 cup dashi or stock**

**$\frac{1}{4}$  cup mirin**

**2 Tbsp soy sauce**

**Batter:**

**½ cup flour**

**¼ tsp salt**

**½ tsp baking powder**

**1 Tbsp canola oil**

**½ - 1 cup ice cold water, as needed**

**Oil for frying**

**2 cups (450g / 16 oz) semi-firm tofu, cut into cubes**

**To serve:**

**Grated fresh ginger**

**3 green onions, finely chopped**

**Preparation time: 10 minutes. Cooking time: 3-5 minutes per batch. Serves 4.**

**To make the dipping sauce:** Mix together the dashi, mirin and soy sauce in a small pan. Bring to a boil then remove from the heat.

**To make the batter:**

- 1.** Mix together the flour, salt and baking powder. Slowly add the oil and ice-cold water. It should be no thicker than vegan sour cream. Mix gently – it's OK if there are a few small lumps.
- 2.** Pour some canola oil into a deep pan, making sure it is not more than 1/3 full. Put over a medium-high heat. When the oil is hot (but NOT smoking!) dip the tofu in the batter, then

carefully drop into the oil. You can tell the oil is hot enough when a small amount of batter sizzles immediately when dropped in. Don't overcrowd the pan – just cook a few pieces of tofu at a time.

**3.** Allow the tofu to cook for about 3 minutes, or until crisp and lightly golden brown. Remove and drain on paper towels while you cook the next batch.

**4.** Divide the tofu between 4 small dishes and serve surrounded by sauce, topped with grated ginger and green onions.

## **Tofu / Paneer with Peas**

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*Perhaps it's my British upbringing, but I like to add fresh mint to this dish. Don't put too much in - you want a hint, not an overwhelmingly minty taste. If you're not a mint fan feel free to use coriander leaves instead.*

**2 Tbsp canola oil**

**1 large onion, thinly sliced**

**2 tsp fresh ginger, finely chopped**

**4 medium tomatoes, finely chopped, about 4 cups**

**1 tsp turmeric**

**1 tsp ground cumin**

**1 tsp ground coriander**

**½ tsp crushed dried red chillies**

**1 tsp salt, or to taste**

**2 cups peas, fresh or frozen**

**2 cups (about 450 g / 14 oz) home-made paneer or firm tofu, cut into bite-size pieces**

**1 Tbsp fresh mint, finely chopped**

**Preparation time: 5 minutes. Cooking time: 25 minutes. Serves 4 as part of a meal, 2 as a main dish.**

- 1.** Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the onion and ginger. Cook over medium-high heat for 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until the onion is well browned.
- 2.** Stir in the tomatoes, turmeric, cumin, coriander, chillies and salt. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring frequently.
- 3.** Add the peas and paneer, stir gently then allow to simmer for 5 minutes or until the peas are cooked. Stir in the mint just before serving.



# Vegetables



## Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: India

I sat down on one of the seats dotted around the courtyard (*Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur*) and watched the world go by. An American lady plopped down next to me. “It’s hot, isn’t it?” she gushed, flapping a tourist information sheet in front of her face. I smiled my agreement, thinking of Puru (*our guide*) walking around in his body warmer and tweed hat.

She was about to say something else when a young man squeezed onto the bench between us. “Take it now,” he instructed his friend, who placed himself in front of us, camera at the ready. “What are you doing? Go away!” insisted the woman, giving the young man a bit of a push. I leaned forward and spoke past him. “It’s much faster if you just smile for the camera, honestly. Doesn’t this happen to you all the time?” Apparently this was the first time she’d encountered such behaviour, having only arrived in India the day before. “If I smile for your friend will you go away?” she asked our unwanted companion. “Yes. Of course.” We turned towards the camera and gave our best forced smiles while the young man gave a big thumbs up. “Thank you so much, beautiful ladies,” he enthused as he left. The American woman looked at me in horror. “Does that happen often?” “All the time,” I replied, much to her dismay. All. The. Time.

# Mushroom Curry

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*This is best made with white or coffee / cremini mushrooms. Portobello mushrooms release too much liquid into the sauce.*

**2 Tbsp canola oil**

**1 onion, thinly sliced**

**4 garlic cloves, chopped**

**20 medium mushrooms, quartered**

**½ tsp crushed dried red chillies**

**1 tsp paprika**

**½ tsp ground cardamom**

**4 cloves**

**1 Tbsp ground coriander**

**½ tsp fennel seeds**

**½ tsp turmeric**

**½ cup coconut milk**

**½ tsp salt, or to taste**

**6 green onions, thinly sliced**

**2 Tbsp fresh coriander, finely chopped**

**Preparation Time: 5 minutes. Cooking Time: 30 minutes. Serves 4 as a side dish.**

- 1.** Heat the oil in a large saucepan and fry the onion over medium-high heat for 5 minutes until soft and lightly golden.
- 2.** Add the garlic and mushrooms. Continue to cook for another 5 minutes.
- 3.** Add the chillies, paprika, cardamom, cloves, coriander, fennel and turmeric. Stir for 30 seconds, adding a splash of oil if needed.
- 4.** Pour in the coconut milk and stir in the salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 5.** Stir in the green onions. Serve sprinkled with fresh coriander.

## Spinach Two Ways

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



*These little spinach rolls are a nice addition to a Japanese style meal, and are very easy to make. Serve them as individual rolls topped with sesame seeds or, if you're feeling more energetic, chop the rolls into chunks and mix with sesame dressing.*

**1kg / 2 lb spinach, washed and stems trimmed**

**Water**

**Pinch of salt**

**Bowl of cold water**

**3 Tbsp sesame seeds, fried in a dry pan until browned**

**Ponzu Sauce. Mix together:**

**½ cup lemon juice**  
**¼ cup rice vinegar**  
**1 cup soya sauce**  
**1 ½ Tbsp mirin**  
**1 Tbsp brown sugar**  
**2 Tbsp warm dashi**  
**A few strips of lemon rind**

**Sesame Dressing. Mix together:**

**8 Tbsp sesame seeds, pounded to a paste in a mortar (or 3 Tbsp tahini)**  
**2 Tbsp sugar**  
**4 Tbsp soya sauce**  
**2 Tbsp warm dashi**

**Preparation, cooking and assembly time: 10 minutes. Serves 4.**

- 1.** Put lots of water and a pinch of salt into a large pan and bring to a boil.
- 2.** Put the spinach into the boiling water and cook for about one minute or until wilted. Drain and drop into a bowl of cold water to preserve the colour.
- 3.** Drain and squeeze the spinach to remove the excess liquid then lay it neatly along the edge of a bamboo mat. Roll it up firmly, give it a good squeeze, then leave to sit for a few minutes before unrolling the mat. You should now have a long spinach “sausage”.

**To make mini rolls:** Cut the long spinach roll into about 1-inch lengths. Press one end of each piece into toasted sesame seeds. Serve with ponzu sauce for dipping.

**To make a salad:** Coarsely chop the large spinach roll. Gently mix with the sesame dressing and top with toasted sesame seeds.

# **Roasted Pepper and Sundried Tomato Salad**

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



**4 large red or yellow peppers**

**2 Tbsp capers**

**½ cup sliced green and/or black olives**

## **Dressing:**

**½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, (rehydrated if dry,) finely chopped**

**2 Tbsp fresh basil**

**2 garlic cloves, crushed**

**2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar**

**½ cup olive oil**



**4 cups mixed salad greens**

**¼ cup toasted pine nuts**

**Serves 4**

- 1.** Put the peppers on a baking tray and put them in a hot (450°F / 230°C / Gas Mark 8) oven for 45 minutes. Allow to cool very briefly and then put in a plastic bag to cool completely. The charred skins should then just slide off.
- 2.** Remove the stems and seeds then slice the peppers into thick strips.
- 3.** Toss the peppers with the capers and olives.
- 4.** In a small container with a lid, shake together the tomatoes, basil, garlic, vinegar and oil until well mixed.
- 5.** Arrange the peppers on fresh lettuce greens. Pour the dressing over the salad and serve topped with pine nuts.

# Desserts



## **Excerpt from Tall Travel Tales: Japan**

The following morning we headed off to the train station in search of breakfast at the bakery, where we encountered some of the others from our merry band of travellers. We sat opposite Tony and Judy and engaged in casual chit-chat, which was suddenly interrupted by Tony making loud exclamations about his meal. He'd bought what he thought was a British style jam donut, and was more than a little surprised to find that it contained an egg in curry sauce. Alan wandered over to take a look at where Tony had picked it up, and for those who could read Japanese it clearly stated "curry egg bread". We showed him which katakana he needed to look for if he wanted to avoid similar surprises in the future. I, however, was on a quest from that point on to find a vegetarian curry donut, which I happily devoured a few days later in Kyoto. Whenever I make them at home I always remember the look on Tony's face as he bit into his "jam donut".

## Pumpkin Pie with a Pecan Base

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner!



*This sounds like a tongue twister or the beginnings of a song, but it's actually a tasty little dessert. Don't wait for thanksgiving to make it! If you have a nut allergy (or are feeling lazy) replace the nut base with a ready-made frozen pie shell from the freezer section of your local grocery store, but check the list of ingredients before you buy it.*

### **Pecan or Walnut Base:**

**2 ½ cups finely chopped pecans or walnuts**

**¼ tsp salt**

**2 Tbsp vegan margarine, melted**

**Filling:**

**¾ cup unrefined raw sugar**

**½ tsp salt**

**1 tsp ground cinnamon**

**½ tsp ground ginger**

**¼ tsp ground cloves**

**2 cups pureed pumpkin**

**1 cup plain non-dairy milk**

**¼ cup corn starch mixed with 3 Tbsp water**

**Serves 4 -6**

- 1.** Heat the oven to 350°F / 180°C / Gas Mark 4
- 2.** Mix together the nuts, salt and margarine. Press into a 9" round pie dish and bake for 15 minutes.
- 3.** Turn the oven up to 425°F / 220°C / Gas Mark 7
- 4.** Mix together the sugar, salt, cinnamon, ginger and cloves.
- 5.** In a medium pan, mix together the pumpkin and non-dairy milk. Stir in the spices and corn starch mixture.
- 6.** Stirring constantly, bring to the boil and allow it to thicken slightly.
- 7.** Fill the pie crust with spiced pumpkin. Bake for 15 minutes then turn the heat down to 325°F / 170°C / Gas Mark 3 and let it cook for another 40 to 50 minutes.

**8.** Stick a toothpick in the pie; if it comes out clean, the pie is done. If the toothpick is sticky, cook the pie longer. It may take up to an extra 30 minutes.

**9.** Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving, or allow to cool completely and serve chilled.

**Pumpkin pie goes nicely with vegan vanilla ice cream. Look for ones made with soy or coconut milk.**

# Sweet Rice Flour Balls

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Japanese Style



*The amount of glutinous rice flour needed for this recipe is hard to give an exact measure for. It changes depending on the brand, how hot your water is, and, apparently, the weather. Start with ½ cup and add extra in small amounts until you get a firm dough which sticks to itself but not to everything else. If you squeeze your earlobe that's what you want the dough to feel like.*

**1 cup white rice flour**

**2 Tbsp powdered sugar**

**½ - 1 cup glutinous rice flour, as needed**

**¾ cup warm water**

**Bowl of iced water**

**Options:**

**½ tsp green tea powder**

**1 small blob of vegan red food colouring paste**

**Optional coatings:**

**3 Tbsp powdered sugar mixed with ½ Tbsp green tea powder**

**Powdered sugar**

**¼ cup sesame seeds, fried in a dry pan until lightly golden**

**Preparation time: 10 minutes. Cooking time: 20 minutes. Serves 4.**

**1.** Put the white rice flour, sugar and ½ cup of glutinous rice flour into a bowl. Add the water and mix well. I like to use a silicone spatula to do this. The dough will probably be too thin at this point. Gradually add more glutinous flour until it starts to form crumbs, then use your hands to knead it into a smooth ball.

**2.** Divide the dough into 3 equal portions. Knead ½ tsp green tea powder into one portion, and a tiny blob of red food colouring paste into another. Leave the third piece white. Cut the dough into pieces about the size of a teaspoon - you should get about 32 pieces. Roll each one into a ball.

**3.** Bring a large pan of water to a boil and gently drop in the white balls. They will sink to the bottom and after about 3-4 minutes they will float up to the surface. Once they are floating, cook for another 2 minutes then scoop out and put into a bowl of iced water. Repeat with the

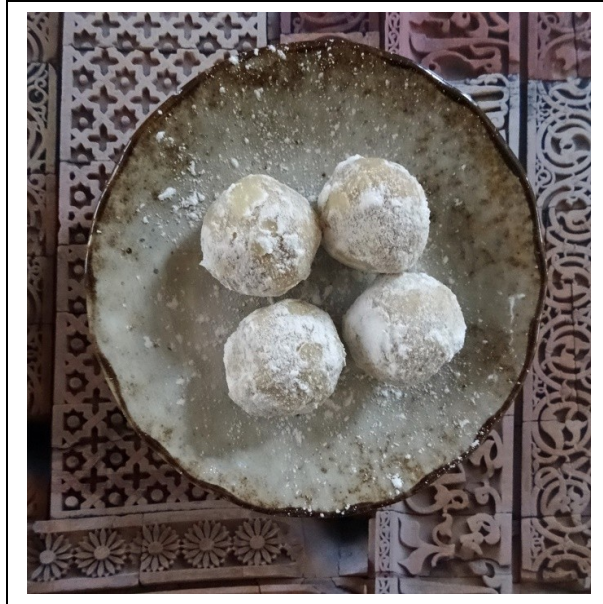


green balls, followed by the red balls.

**4.** When all the colours have been cooked remove the balls from the iced water and pat dry. Put 3 balls on a skewer. Roll pink balls in powdered sugar, green balls in a mixture of powdered sugar and green tea powder, and the white ones in toasted sesame seeds. Nice served as an afternoon snack with green tea.

# Sweet Gram Flour Balls

From HELP! There's a VEGAN Coming For Dinner! Indian Style



*Try not to eat these treats so quickly that you accidentally inhale icing sugar.*

**2 cups gram flour (chick pea flour)**

**1 cup vegan margarine**

**1 tsp ground cardamom**

**1 tsp rose water**

**1 cup powdered sugar**

**½ cup powdered sugar for rolling**

**Preparation time: 5 minutes. Cooking time: 20 minutes plus 10 minutes cooling plus 10 minutes shaping. Makes about 40 mini balls.**

- 1.** Melt the margarine in a medium size, heavy pan. Stir in the gram flour and cook over medium heat, stirring very frequently (especially near the end) for 15 minutes. It will be a dark golden brown and fragrant. Don't let it burn.
- 2.** Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the cardamom, rose water and powdered sugar. Mix well.
- 3.** Allow to cool for 10 minutes. Form tablespoons of the mixture into small balls and roll in the powdered sugar.
- 4.** Set the balls aside to cool completely, then roll them in powdered sugar a second time. Store in an airtight container at room temperature, not in the fridge.

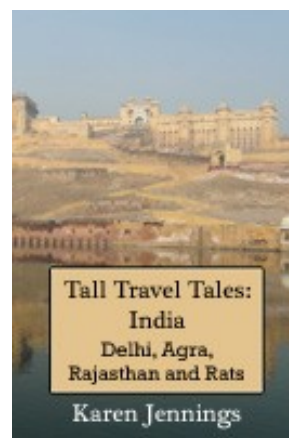
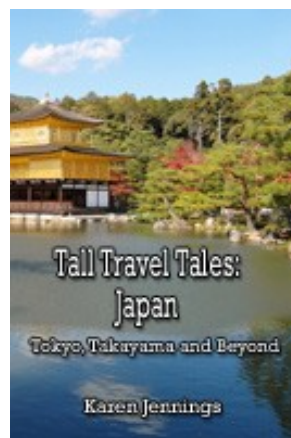
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