



❧ EASY ❧
**SOUTHERN VEGAN
COOKBOOK**

PLANT-BASED RECIPES FOR CLASSIC FAVORITES

TROY GARDNER





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Photography by Nataša Mandić

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First Rockridge Press trade paperback edition 2022

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Paperback ISBN: 978-1-63878-058-8 | eBook ISBN: 978-1-63807-885-2

Manufactured in the United States of America

Interior and [Cover](#) Designer: Patricia Fabricant

Art Producer: Hannah Dickerson

Editor: Anne Goldberg

Production Editor: Rachel Taenzler

Production Manager: Lanore Coloprisco

Photography © 2022 Nataša Mandić

Illustration © White Heart Design/Creative Market, p. [89](#)

[Author photo](#) courtesy of Courtney Garza

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To my wife and two sons, who have endured countless weekends, holidays, and late nights patiently waiting while I prepared amazing meals for strangers. Thank you for allowing me this life choice. I couldn't do it without you.





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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

Southern cooking means different things to different people. As far as geography goes, most define it as foods from the regions south of Maryland and east of the Rio Grande. For this book, I define Southern cuisine as the amazing delicacies that made their way out of my grandmother's kitchen and into my heart. As a child, I recognized these extraordinary fried, roasted, and mashed regalements not as "Southern" food but, rather, as just food. Kettle-fried chicken, collard greens, and mashed sweet potatoes were part of the normal routine of pleasurable sustenance that molded my palate. Over the years, much like my waistline, my tastes have greatly expanded. I have grown to appreciate the difficulties in making health-conscious life choices while trying to balance the comfort of enjoying my favorite foods. I've tackled these challenges by developing recipes that lend credence to the days of yesteryear in my grandmother's kitchen, with a few modern modifications. If I could travel back in time with my air fryer and Instant Pot, I believe Grandma would have tossed out the pot of lard and come along for the ride.

As fascinating as my time-traveling grandmother scenario may be, it is not what you are here for . . . this time. Today, you are here to explore the endless possibilities of cooking Southern-inspired vegan dishes like a pro. If you are new to vegan cooking, welcome to the future and say hello to a refreshing new world. If you are a seasoned aficionado, buckle up for an adventurous ride! The techniques and recipes in this book will make it easy to create healthier versions of tasty Southern favorites that your heart and belly crave.

It is hard to make drastic changes in your diet, but very few epic achievements come easily. With a little advice and direction, I'll help you navigate the new terrain and even give you some shortcuts along the way.

The most important principle to embrace when fashioning the perfect vegan meal is to always intend to make the perfect vegan meal. Intent is nine-tenths of the law, at least that's what good ol' Grandma used to say back in the day. What I mean by this statement is be cognizant of what you want to achieve and eventually you will achieve it. With a few basic ingredients and a little initiative, you can create incredible food using the basic principles laid out in this book.

Now that you are familiar with the “what” and the “how” of this book, let's look at the “why.” I am a people pleaser. I truly enjoy creating things that make people happy. Happiness is the original contagion, and it is an easy thing to share. These dishes have brought joy to many diners in my restaurants over the years, and it feels like the right time to share my knowledge and expertise with you. This book is a seed to a better way of preparing Southern meals. Eating vegan strengthens the foundation of what you grow into daily. If we consume healthier food, we become healthier. Whether you change your eating habits entirely or just take regular vacations from eating as an omnivore, eating plant-based will help you feel better. Vegan Southern food is the “gateway drug” to eating better, so get ready for a long and glorious trip.



CHAPTER 1

YOUR VEGAN SOUTHERN KITCHEN

Southern cooking is a hodgepodge of international techniques and ingredients that found their way to the New World by means of necessity. America is a unique experiment that welcomed people from around the world to join in a common country and sit at a common table, and a few hundred years of development have brought us to the incredible place that we inhabit now. Chapter 1 briefly tells the story of these people and how modern food resonates from their experiences. It's time to sit back and learn a little history.

THE WIDE WORLD OF SOUTHERN COOKING

Southern cuisine is the regional cuisine of the southeastern United States. Southern cooking primarily includes regional dishes from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. One thing any Southerner can tell you about our food is there is no quintessential Southern technique. Just as every Bo is not short for Beauregard, every Creole gumbo is not a red wine stew from southern Louisiana. There are

countless intersections of cultures, ethnicities, and international origins that have textured and molded the epicurean landscape of this vast region.

NATIVE AMERICAN

The Indigenous Peoples of the South cultivated the first maize, peppers, and wild onions, incorporating them into a variety of dishes reminiscent of Southern dishes we eat today. European settlers later embraced tribal favorites, like sofkee, a Seminole drink derived from corn grits in the Central Florida region. The Choctaw of Mississippi created a famous corn flour dish named *banaha*, which is similar to tamales or hush puppies. The Apache, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Comanche, Tonkawa, and Wichita created the foundation of early Tex-Mex cuisine. Utilizing wild tomatoes and rosemary, Mexican oregano, chile peppers, beans, and avocados, the Indigenous Peoples of the South began the first wave of Southern American fusion.

SPANISH

The earliest hints of modern Southern cooking began with the trading of goods between Spanish settlers and the Indigenous Peoples of the South. The Spaniards brought saffron and paprika to the region to recreate flavors from abroad, but instead new standards were born from collaborations. The Spanish spices that made their way to the Caribbean Islands eventually blended with the fruity, spicy flavors of the Florida tropics and became Floribbean classics of today, as seen in mango salsa and Floribbean paella.

AFRICAN

Unlike the Spaniards, enslaved Africans came to the South with some but not all of their native spices and supplies. While they did bring some foods, such as black-eyed peas and okra, African culture was also infused into the items that were readily available. Traditional African yam dishes were prepared with sweet potatoes. Native beans, short-grain rice, and wild greens were the basis for recreating foods from their homeland while

employing spices from the European settlers and the Indigenous Peoples of the South. Some Native American tribes, like the Chickasaw, participated in the slave trade, whereas other tribes, like the Cherokee, married Africans. These social interactions further mingled the early cuisines of the region and created unique flavors the Old World had never experienced.

SCOTTISH AND ENGLISH

Scottish and English settlers brought a variety of interesting cuisines to the table that still influence Southern cooking today. The British were famous for eating heavy breakfasts of porridge and scones. The Scottish porridge of heavy oats was quickly replaced with ground hominy and butter. Scone-inspired biscuits and grits have found their way onto every respectable Southern table since the dawn of the breakfast bugle. A Tennessee night wouldn't be complete without a little nip of Scottish-style corn mash whiskey. Tennessee and Kentucky both built their famous whiskey distilleries from the knowledge brought across the big pond from Scotland. The love of puddings and British cookies (ironically called "biscuits" in the UK) is what brought about such Southern favorites as bread pudding, butterscotch pie, and butter cookies. The variety of Southern-style meat pies, like chicken potpie and shepherd's pie, all found a home in the States thanks to the migration of the English and the Scottish into the Deep South. Many traditional Scottish lamb and mutton dishes were altered to use the more regionally friendly chicken and pork. These changes helped formulate new flavors and textures in a new world.

FRENCH

Given the historical love-hate relationship between the British and the French, it is no wonder that the Southern French settlers embraced the African and Indigenous Peoples' cultures more than that of their Anglo neighbors in the South. With the infusion of the traditionally wine- and butter-heavy cuisine of France added to the African and Native American local cooking styles, Louisiana Creole and Cajun cooking techniques were born. The people and the food blended beautifully over generations until a

uniquely Southern culture thrived throughout Louisiana and neighboring southern Mississippi. Louisiana Creole and Cajun cooking quickly became culinary standards throughout the South.

CUBAN

Cuba played a large part in the development of the Southern palate as well. With its plentiful tobacco, sugar cane, rice, and bean crops, Cuba traded regularly with the U.S. mainland. Many Cuban workers and transplants began populating the Southern United States in the 1800s, bringing with them the fusion of traditional Spanish cuisine meshed with sweet complexities from the tropics. The subtle additions of rice, plantains, papaya, mango, and beans intermingled with sweet and savory were welcome in the coastal Southern states.

MEXICAN

For someone growing up in the South, *fixin' to* is a preposition, the word *Coke* refers to all soft drinks, and a hard-shell taco is not Mexican food. The influence of Mexico and its culture is astronomical in the southwestern and south central United States. It was especially influential in my home state of Texas. Texas is unique in that it was originally part of Mexico, became its own country, and then was annexed to the United States. During these many transitions, Texas took on social and culinary landscapes all its own. Texas cuisine gave birth to Tex-Mex. If Mexico is the estranged godfather of Texas, Mexican food is the older first cousin of Tex-Mex that everyone mistakes for his twin brother. Crunchy tacos, margaritas, queso cheese sauce, and many other items that the rest of the world reveres as Mexican food are actually Tex-Mex. This fabulous cuisine was made possible because of the many Indigenous Peoples of Mexico, the Spaniards that settled there, and the hodgepodge of American settlers that found their way to the rugged southern terrain of Texas.

Now that we've discussed the people of the South, let's talk about regions that developed as cultural independents. The southern United States sprawls across thousands of miles of mountains, flatlands, lowlands, and coastline. Because of the seemingly limitless geography of this country, a cornucopia of subcultures emerged over the years and identify as individual categories of Southern culture and food. Some stand-alone regional styles commonly referenced include Appalachian, Cajun, Creole, Floribbean, Gullah, Low Country, and the aforementioned Tex-Mex.

APPALACHIAN

The Appalachian region sprawls across thirteen states that encompass the Appalachian Mountains, extending from the northernmost part of Virginia through all of West Virginia, the Carolinas, and parts of the Midwest. For the purpose of this book, we will concentrate on the southern parts of Appalachia, which produce such delicacies as [Country Captain Seitan Chicken](#) and [Carolina Bog](#). Appalachia is a rugged terrain with fertile soil and drastic seasonal change. The cuisine is equally diverse, incorporating fresh produce and a variety of wild greens and mushrooms. Root vegetables and fruits that find their way onto Appalachian plates during summer months return throughout the winter in the form of canned and pickled variations, like pickled rutabagas and okra.

LOW COUNTRY

Just south of the Appalachian Mountains on the East Coast lies the Low Country, which is located geographically along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia but whose cultural influence spreads from North Carolina to Florida. Because of its strong French and African influences, Low Country cuisine is similar to the Creole and Cajun dishes of Louisiana. As in Appalachia, Low Country dishes utilize the cards the area was dealt. "Use what you've got" describes the resourcefulness of the region and its unique flair. Long-grain rice, a transplant from West Africa, is the centerpiece of

many of the French-African fusion dishes that made a home in the Low Country.

GULLAH

Just off the coast of South Carolina lie a variety of small islands occupied by the ancestors of enslaved Africans brought to Georgia and the Carolinas. These people and their culture are known as *Gullah*. They speak a variety of dialects as unique as the food and culture they created. Their influence on Low Country cuisine was paramount in creating the tastes we experience today. Their one-pot stews and knowledge of cultivating native African spices and vegetables in the damp, fertile marshlands were integral to honing the local culture. Gullah dishes are heavy on sauces, jams, and preserves made from the many subtropical fruits that grow in the region.

SOUL FOOD

When I was growing up African American in the 1970s, my formative years mirrored the adolescence of Black culture's public embrace for the first time in American history. With the rise of the civil rights movement in the 1960s came a newfound pride in and celebration of a culture that had previously been quieted and suppressed. The newly fostered identity of Black culture was often embodied by the word *soul*. *Soul music* and *soul food* quickly became popular terms in the '60s to describe the colorful, bittersweet art of a culture born from resilience in the face of adversity. Many soul food staples come to mind when talking about Southern cuisine in America today. Modern soul food is an amalgamation of the daily sustenance of enslaved people and sharecroppers mixed with the celebratory dishes served at community potlucks and religious gatherings. Early African Americans had little choice when it came to their food's primary ingredients. Given meager weekly allotments, enslaved people supplemented their rations with what was readily available.

They infused their meals with elements of what they had known in the past alongside what they learned from their current surroundings. Emancipation opened the way for prosperity in the African American community and therefore more expensive additions to the dinner table. Fried chicken and pork became more common alongside the more frugal dishes of yesteryear. These decadent dishes, as well as corn bread, greens, and okra, are some of the base dishes from the soul food repertoire that we will veganize in the coming chapters. Many soul food dishes were inherently vegan due to circumstance. Throughout this book, we will utilize herbs and spices to recreate the flavors and textures of these classic dishes that originally contained trace elements of meat or dairy.

FLORIBBEAN

A few hundred miles south of the Gullah region lies another Creole community fused with African, Caribbean, Native American, and Spanish roots. The Floribbean cuisine of South Florida takes the best parts of all of these cultures and effortlessly weaves them into a singular work of art. Floribbean paella has the finesse of Spain and the tropical pizzazz of the Caribbean. Floribbean food masterfully blends savory, sweet, and salty as naturally as the ocean makes waves, then calms.

CAJUN AND CREOLE

About 800 miles northwest of South Florida is where we travel next. When it comes to the heart of Southern cuisine, Louisiana is home to two of my favorite cooking styles: Cajun and Creole cuisines. The reality is that Cajun and Louisiana Creole are nearly identical on the culinary spectrum. The primary differences are proximity and self-identity. The complex creations of Bourbon Street were derived from years of metaphorical and physical matrimony between the French settlers, African transplants, and the Indigenous Peoples of Louisiana. These are the people and culture referred to as *Creole*.

If we look to southern Louisiana's rural settlements of early French Canadian Acadian settlers, these are the people and culture that identify as Cajun. The main distinction in modern-day America is primarily the color of their skin. Creoles have African and Indigenous blood and are the main occupants of many Louisiana cities and much of the countryside. Creoles are behind the colorful pageantry and spicy French-infused dishes on the tables in New Orleans. Cajuns are the northern European descendants that populate a very small geographic area and share many of the same culinary techniques but differ slightly in their cultural heritage.

SOUTHERN COOKING VEGANIZED

In a genre of cooking where mac 'n' cheese is a vegetable and everything else is cooked with pork, recreating healthier vegan dishes can be a challenge. I've found the easiest way to veganize a recipe is to break down the non-vegan ingredients, then figure out which items need substitutes and which items can be eliminated. So many quintessential ingredients comprising Southern cuisine seem, at first glance, impossible to replicate. The following chapters will serve as a substitution guide to Southern vegan cooking.

BACON

At the center of most Southern vegetable recipes is a quarter pound of bacon. Salted pork in some fashion is a signature flavor in a variety of Southern dishes. Many soy-based products mimic bacon's texture and flavor, without the cholesterol and trans fat. Lightlife and Morning Star brands have good products that work in green beans and cabbage when you're in a pork pinch. [Chapter 2](#) has a great [Smoky Mushroom Bacon](#) recipe that will crisp up your morning as well.

BUTTER

Few ingredients are used more in a Southern kitchen than butter. It's the base for a Louisiana roux and the secret to tasty piecrusts. It's 50 percent of

the famed couple, bread and butter. Butter's overwhelming popularity makes it one of the most readily available veganized commodities. There are a variety of incredible vegan butters that vary in price, texture, and flavor. Miyoko's makes an amazing coconut oil butter that can pass for grass-fed Irish butter, while Earth Balance is my favorite economical brand because of its low water content. I recommend trying a variety and sticking to your favorite.

BUTTERMILK

Buttermilk is the curdled sour foundation for many Southern baked goods, like biscuits, cakes, flapjacks, and more. There are several store-bought alternatives, but the simplest substitute is a home recipe of soy milk and raw apple cider vinegar. Soy milk curdles with a splash of vinegar or freshly squeezed lemon juice stirred in. There are great vegan milk substitutes, but soy milk is one of the few that will replicate the curdle this well. Feel free to substitute vegan buttermilk for the vegan milk in any of the recipes.

CHEESE

The common denominator that prevails in menus across the South is the phrase *and cheese* . Alongside butter, Cheddar cheese and cream cheese are welcome additions to almost everything on a Southern table. Whether in a casserole, soup, or vegetable dish, cheese is a standard fixture in the Southern flavor profile. There are many great store-bought varieties of creamed, shredded, and sliced vegan cheeses, including Violife Cheddar and Tofutti cream cheese, that I use regularly. You will also learn to make my famous [The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce](#) , which uses vegetables and nutritional yeast to mimic the flavor and texture of the original article. To add a little cheesy flavor without a lot of effort, there is always nutritional yeast (see [here](#)).

CHICKEN

Chicken is to the South what lobster is to Maine. Chicken is an essential element in traditional Southern cooking, and now there are countless vegan chicken alternatives in your neighborhood market. There are vegan soy protein chicken, mushroom-based chicken alternatives, TVP (texturized vegan protein), seitan, and my personal favorite, Tindle. In later chapters, I show you how to make mock chicken with mushrooms (see [here](#)) and create [Down-Home Seitan](#) out of vital wheat gluten. Vital wheat gluten is a high-protein wheat flour that has been washed free of the majority of its starch. Seitan is a meat alternative that can be textured and flavored to mimic a variety of meats including beef, chicken, and pork.

CHICKEN STOCK

A standard base for many Southern casseroles, soups, and stews is comforting and aromatic chicken stock. Fortunately, giving up meat doesn't equate to giving up flavor. There are a variety of vegan chicken broths on your local supermarket's shelves, or save yourself the trip and make my [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) .

EGGS

Easy availability and exceptional versatility make eggs a common character in the storybook of Southern cuisine. Eggs are used as binders and emulsifiers, as well as for texture and flavor, in many recipes throughout the South. Luckily, there are options for veganizing the egg portion of recipes. In the coming chapters, you will use ground flaxseed, tofu, and store-bought vegan egg replacers as binders. Crumbled firm tofu can strongly resemble the texture of scrambled eggs, and with a little help from black salt (see [here](#)) and nutritional yeast, it is easy to achieve the aroma and flavor as well.

GROUND MEAT

Dishes like crispy beef tacos and dirty rice wouldn't be the same without ground meat—or would they? There are so many meat alternatives available,

like Impossible patties and Beyond Beef, that it is easy to see why vegan cooking is becoming more accessible. If you don't want a store-bought substitute, I'll show you how to use mushrooms and walnuts to mimic some of the meat dishes you crave.

VEGANIZING “MEAT AND THREE”

Something to remember at a Southern meal is that sides are as plentiful as desserts. In a Southern kitchen, *sides* are synonymous with *vegetables*. I know that in some parts of the United States, mac 'n' cheese, potato salad, and rice pilaf, also known as *pilough*, are not considered vegetables, but for this book we are in the South. Any respectable Southerner knows that for every plate of fried pork chops there should be three sides of pork-, mayo-, and cheese-smothered vegetables. In Texas, there is a state fair dedicated to this tradition, at which the crown of blue ribbon stardom is bestowed upon the most overtly fried item. I promise to eradicate a good share of traditional vegetables' calories by substituting a variety of slimmed-down ingredients for the cholesterol-driven traditional ones without slimming down the flavor. We will make greens and cauliflower without bacon fat, as well as deep-fried okra without a kettle full of lard. With some minor tweaking, Southern vegetables will once again be primarily vegetables. The beauty of a plant-based recipe book is that almost all the ingredients are plants. When planning supper around a main dish, some people presume that a different dynamic exists without meat. I regularly argue there is no difference. If your main dish is chicken-fried mushroom steak, it can still be accompanied by cabbage, corn bread, mac 'n' cheese, mashed potatoes, and gravy. Assimilating a plant-based main into a meal is no different than planning a meal around fish or steak. Remember, the first rule of veganizing your meals is to mimic what you like by removing and replacing. There is no need to stop eating

great Southern food just because you have stopped eating animal products. Start with good ingredients and you'll make good food!

MAYONNAISE

The South is famous for its sauces, and at the center of many is Duke's mayonnaise. If you're a mayo aficionado, you know that Duke's has a little more vinegar pizzazz than Hellmann's, without the extra sweet vinegar zing of Miracle Whip. It is easy to make vegan mayo at home, though with the rising price of avocado oil and extra-virgin olive oil, it is more cost-effective to take advantage of the many great store-bought brands. Some of my favorites include Hellmann's, Just Mayo, Sir Kensington's, and Vegenaise. Vegan versions of come back sauce, Northern Alabama white barbecue sauce, remoulade, and tartar sauce are just a scoop of vegan mayo away.

COME BACK SAUCE: In a small bowl, whisk 1 cup of vegan mayonnaise, 2 tablespoons of ketchup, 1 tablespoon of cayenne pepper, 1 tablespoon of agave nectar, 1 tablespoon of freshly squeezed lemon juice, 2 teaspoons of pickle juice, 1 teaspoon of smoked paprika, and 1 teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper until smooth. Serve cold.

NORTHERN ALABAMA WHITE BARBECUE SAUCE: In a small bowl, whisk 1 cup of vegan mayonnaise, ¼ cup of prepared horseradish, ¼ cup of spicy brown mustard, ¼ cup of raw apple cider vinegar, 2 tablespoons of freshly squeezed lemon juice, 1 tablespoon of minced garlic, 1 tablespoon of hot pepper sauce, and 1 teaspoon of sea salt until combined. Serve cold.

REMOULADE: In a small bowl, whisk 1 cup of vegan mayonnaise, ¼ cup of whole-grain Dijon mustard, 2 tablespoons of chopped fresh parsley, 1 tablespoon of minced dill pickle, 1 teaspoon of garlic powder, 1 teaspoon of smoked paprika, 1 teaspoon of onion powder, and ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper until blended. Serve cold.

TARTAR SAUCE: In a small bowl, whisk 1 cup of vegan mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon of finely minced fresh onion or 1 teaspoon of onion powder, 1 tablespoon of fresh or dried dill, 1 teaspoon of finely minced garlic, 1

teaspoon of freshly squeezed lemon juice, and ½ teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper until smooth. For extra zest, whisk in 1 tablespoon of capers or diced dill pickle. Serve cold.

ROUX

From gravies to soups, a solid dark roux is a must when making Louisiana Creole and Cajun goodies. To make a solid vegan roux, start with vegan butter and unbleached flour. Many people lose their vegan wings by utilizing flour and sugar bleached with bone char. As in every good recipe, start with solid base ingredients, and the glorious Southern taste will follow.

WINE

What great étouffée and gumbo have in common is a good table wine. At the center of many Southern dishes is a splash—or more—of wine. Many wines are not vegan, due to the fish bladders used during the clarification process. Thankfully, there are many sources, like barnivore.com, that can assist in weeding out the non-vegan alcohols from the vegan ones.

STRATEGIES FOR EASY COOKING

Have you ever planned the perfect dinner for your seven o'clock guests only to realize the time changed today and you left work an hour late? These are the moments that I anticipate when preparing you for a worst-case scenario. A key word in the title of this book is “easy.” There are a few shortcuts that boost the “easy” portion of cooking. You can also take shortcuts because you work hard all day and deserve it. I promise not to judge either way—so, let's get to it!

LET THE SUPERMARKET DO THE WORK

I am a professional chef and I love creating masterpieces from scratch, but sometimes life happens and it's easier to buy prepared products for ingredients. There is no shame in purchasing Impossible meat alternatives

or Veganize It! fry batter to speed up my chicken-fried steak recipe. It is also easy to find prepped vegetables in the produce section of most stores to save yourself some chopping time. It's not a crime for you to cook a fast vegan Southern meal with a little quality commercial help.

FROZEN FARE IS FAIR

Keeping a stock of frozen fruits and vegetables saves you time in a pinch by preventing you from having to run to the store for miscellaneous ingredients. You can also freeze a variety of fresh herbs to use at later dates when you are in a hurry, or when they're out of season, and you need a splash of flavor. Flash-frozen fruits and vegetables hold their color, flavor, and nutritional elements in a way that canned equivalents can't match. Frozen corn and okra have saved my dishes when seasonal alternatives were in poor condition or unavailable. The prep time for frozen vegetables is often faster, because they are precut, blanched, and cleaned.

SOMETIMES THE CAN CAN

Substituting canned beans for dried saves time and eliminates some cleanup. There are even a few recipes that require canned chickpeas because of the thick aquafaba liquid that comes in the can. Seasoned canned tomatoes speed up recipes because of their inclusion of garlic, onions, and peppers that would otherwise take additional preparation.

MAKE BIG BATCHES AND FREEZE

There are several staple recipes utilized throughout the book. It is easier to make large batches of these basics and freeze them in small portions rather than making the same recipe again and again on a regular basis. A good example is the [Louisiana Roux](#) . It can be made in a large batch and frozen in portions in an ice cube tray. The cubes can be removed from the tray and kept frozen in a freezer-safe zip-top bag, then mixed into gravies, soups, and stews for weeks to come. Simply pull a cube from the freezer and mix it into the pot. This technique works with any recipe that is freezable.

MISE EN PLACE

Mise en place is the French phrase that every successful chef lives by. It means “put in place.” The easiest way to prepare a good meal is to start with your ingredients, tools, and pans set out in an orderly manner. Do not begin a single whisk, cut, or pinch without properly setting the stage for your masterpiece. Much like a pilot completing a checklist before flying, a chef completes his *mise en place*. Once the pieces are laid out, the game can begin. This exercise also ensures that you do not miss ingredients or have to go searching for much-needed tools in the middle of the process.

STOCKING YOUR EASY VEGAN KITCHEN

Southern cooking came about to fill a need because it had to, but making it vegan through the clever little products in our kitchen is a new level of phenomenal. Your journey begins with stocking your pantry and refrigerator.

PANTRY INGREDIENTS

A well-stocked pantry is a chef’s best friend. It allows for necessity, creativity, and success. You don’t have to fill your cabinets instantly with everything here, though a gradual stocking of basic goods will make your Southern vegan journey more palatable.

BEANS

Depending upon the recipe, you can use either dried or canned beans. I like to keep both on hand, in case of a bean emergency. The types of beans you need for the recipes in this book are black beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, pinto beans, and white beans. If you must make a choice of which dried beans to keep on hand, kidney bean recipes are made most often in the pressure cooker alongside rice.

COCONUT MILK AND COCONUT CREAM

Different types of coconut milks are used in this book, including canned coconut milk and coconut cream as well as shelf-stable and refrigerated

coconut milks. Canned coconut milk and coconut cream are thicker due to their higher content of coconut solids and oils; they have the strong coconut flavor needed in recipes like curries and desserts. Coconut milk is actually blended coconut pulp mixed with water. Shelf-stable, box-style coconut milk is similar to other nut milks in consistency and is intended as a milk replacer with very little coconut flavor. Refrigerated varieties are interchangeable with the box style, though I have found the refrigerated versions to be more flavorful; when purchasing coconut milk, always buy the unsweetened variety.

CORNMEAL

Cornmeal is typically a more finely ground yellow corn used as a flour, but for grits, there are options, and the choice comes down to personal preference. Some people prefer a finer corn flour for their fry batter and corn bread, and others like a thick, gritty cornmeal when preparing their specialties. When possible, I prefer a 1-to-1 ratio of corn flour to cornmeal. It gives most recipes a well-rounded texture, with just the right amount of grit.

DICED TOMATOES

I like to use fresh ingredients whenever possible, but nothing helps in a time crunch like a can of diced tomatoes. Many of my quick recipes utilize cans of diced tomatoes with green chiles for the undeniable flavor of the South they provide. The Ro-Tel brand is my favorite, as it includes diced onion for an extra shot of flavor, as well as varying spice level options, but some store-brand versions are equally tasty.

FLOURS, THICKENERS, AND LEAVENERS

You need unbleached wheat flour for biscuits, flapjacks, and piecrusts. Chickpea flour and rice flour are used in my protein-packed [Mima's Chicken-Fried Steak Coating Mix](#) . Buy unbleached grain products to avoid bone char, which is used during the bleaching process for many flours and sugars. You'll also want agar agar, baking powder and baking soda, cornstarch, and xanthan gum. Xanthan gum is both a thickening agent and a stabilizer that helps keep sauces from separating. Agar agar, also called

super agar, is a thickening agent made from red algae. Both agar agar and xanthan gum can be easily found on Amazon, in most Asian markets, and in some specialty markets, like Whole Foods.

GRITS

Grits, like cornmeal, are ground corn and come in white and yellow varieties as well as different grinds that will cook at different rates. White grits come from white corn and are slightly sweeter, whereas yellow grits come from yellow corn and are slightly starchier. I prefer stone-ground organic grits, like Bob's Red Mill brand, though good old-fashioned quick grits are equally acceptable. One advantage of hearty stone-ground grits is that it is easy to make a Southern-style "polenta" without an egg binder—basically, grits cooked into a thickened form similar to a pudding or casserole.

JACKFRUIT

Jackfruit is a tropical fruit with a fleshy texture and is a key meat replacer in the vegan community. It is best to use canned jackfruit for Southern recipes; fresh jackfruit is very sweet and very messy. You can find canned jackfruit at many grocery stores, specialty grocery stores like Whole Foods, and Asian markets. As with canned artichokes or tomatoes, quality can vary. Purchase jackfruit vacuum-sealed or in glass jars when possible, to eliminate the tinny flavor that some aluminum-canned fruit has.

LIQUID AMINOS

Bragg's is the most common brand of liquid aminos. Liquid aminos are a fancy soy sauce that enhances the flavor of recipes and doubles as a browning sauce for gravies and stews. You may substitute tamari or soy sauce for liquid aminos, though there will be a slight flavor variation. If you are leaning toward soy-free cooking, coconut liquid aminos are an option. They tends to be sweeter, with a mellower flavor profile, than soy-based liquid aminos.

NUTRITIONAL YEAST

A variety of yeast used for its taste rather than as a leavening agent, nutritional yeast is sold as vitamin-packed flavored yeast flakes that help

give a recipe a creamy, cheesy flavor. It is found in the spice aisle in some supermarkets and in the baking section in others. It is usually packaged in 12- to 16-ounce plastic containers.

RICE

Rice is an essential ingredient in many Southern dishes; it's used as porridge, as a grain side dish, and in stews, pilafs, and desserts. A well-stocked Southern pantry has short-grain rice for serving with gumbos and gravies as well as long-grain rice for bogs and pilafs, African-inspired single-pot meals. A modern Southern pantry will also contain wild rice and brown rice for the added protein and fiber they offer.

SPICE ARSENAL

There are a few “must-have” spices in my pantry, and then there are the “it tastes better with/it's quicker with” spices. The must-have list includes:

- ❖ Cayenne pepper
- ❖ Dark chili powder: Made from dried, pulverized New Mexican or guajillo chiles, dark chili powder is an important spice in Tex-Mex cuisine.
- ❖ Freshly ground black pepper
- ❖ Garlic powder
- ❖ Ground cinnamon
- ❖ Ground cloves
- ❖ Ground cumin
- ❖ Ground nutmeg
- ❖ Ground thyme
- ❖ Ground turmeric
- ❖ Ground white pepper
- ❖ Himalayan black salt: Also known as kala namak and available in Indian, Arab, and online stores, black salt mimics the aroma and flavors of eggs and is inexpensive.

- ❖ Onion powder
- ❖ Rubbed sage: Popular in Southern cuisine, rubbed sage is the same herb as ground sage but in coarser pieces. If you can't find it, use ground sage.
- ❖ Sea salt
- ❖ Smoked paprika: Made from smoked, dried, and powdered red bell peppers, smoked paprika has a mild, smoky, sweet flavor.

The “tastes better with” list includes:

- ❖ Bay leaves
- ❖ Cinnamon sticks
- ❖ Dried cilantro
- ❖ Dried dill
- ❖ Dried parsley
- ❖ Dried rosemary leaves
- ❖ Ground coriander
- ❖ Gumbo filé: An integral part of Cajun and Creole cooking, gumbo filé (pronounced fee-LAY) is dried sassafras leaves.
- ❖ Liquid smoke
- ❖ Mexican oregano: Mexican oregano has a stronger, almost citrus, flavor, whereas the Italian variety is sweeter and has a greener, more herby flavor. Look to the label to determine the variety.
- ❖ Montreal steak seasoning: A spice mixture of peppercorns, red pepper flakes, and salt, Montreal steak seasoning is used for a lot more than just steaks.
- ❖ Poultry seasoning
- ❖ Smoked chipotle chile powder
- ❖ Sweet paprika
- ❖ Whole cloves

❖ Yellow curry powder

The “it’s quicker with” category includes several prepared blends and mixes that have been time-tested in my kitchens and that I happily endorse:

- ❖ Old Bay Seasoning
- ❖ Tony Chachere’s Creole seasoning
- ❖ Veganize It! Magic Chick Vegan Chick’n Fry
- ❖ Veganize It! Morning Quickie biscuit and scone mix
- ❖ Veganize It! Taco Topia seasoning
- ❖ Veganize It! Wrangling Waffles mix

VINEGAR

Vinegar is an ingredient key to the success of many dishes. I like to keep raw apple cider vinegar as well as distilled vinegar on hand for a sour splash or a catalyst in a magic baking recipe. Raw apple cider vinegar is known to work wonders for gut health and makes a great pickling agent.

REFRIGERATOR INGREDIENTS

The pantry is the solid back beat to any kitchen, but our next section addresses the lead singer, refrigerated goods.

SEITAN

Seitan is a meat substitute that is made primarily of a dense wheat flour called vital wheat gluten. Seitan takes many shapes and flavor profiles depending on how it was initially prepared. Make [Down-Home Seitan](#) , or when shopping at your local grocery store, peruse the vegan refrigerated section to find a variety of vegan meat substitutes, the majority of which are made of seitan. I recommend Tindle brand, if you can find it.

TOFU

There are two types of tofu used in this book, extra firm and soft silken. I like extra-firm tofu because it’s the most versatile and has great texture. It can be used as a binder as well, though the preferred binder and baking egg

replacer choice is soft silken tofu. Silken tofu can be beaten into cake recipes with ease and blends well, with very little crumbly residue.

VEGAN BUTTER

My two favorite vegan butter options for the price are Earth Balance and Smart Balance. Although a little higher priced, Miyoko's is another great brand. When shopping for vegan butter, check the packages. Many products say they are lactose-free, but that doesn't always mean vegan. There are multiple lactose-free Smart Balance products that are not vegan.

THE SOUTHERN LOVE AFFAIR WITH SUGAR

From sweet tea to sweet rice, there's a clear-cut sweet theme in the Southern palate. Taming a sweet tooth is a difficult task when raised in the South, but remember that the vegan journey is not just for the animals and the planet, it's also about your health. Introducing raw organic sugar to your diet is a necessity, since most white sugars are bleached with animal bone char and, therefore, are not vegan. Honey is not considered vegan, either, because it is a product created by bees. There are a variety of other vegan sweetening options, such as agave nectar, coconut sugar, maple syrup, monk fruit extract, and stevia. With all sweeteners, moderation is key to maintaining a healthy diet.

- ❖ Agave is not necessarily healthier than sugar, but it is sweeter in smaller quantities, so you can use less to obtain the same sweetness; it is also absorbed by the body more slowly than sugar.
- ❖ Coconut sugar has half the glycemic index of white sugar. It is also packed with calcium, iron, and zinc to help your body stay stronger.
- ❖ Maple syrup is another lower-glycemic-index alternative to sugar. It is rich in antioxidants, and because it is sweeter than sugar, you can use less for similar results.

- ❖ Monk fruit extract comes from the fruit of the same name and is around 200 times sweeter than sugar. It is a natural antioxidant and has zero calories.
- ❖ Stevia is a natural sweetener with a mild aftertaste. It has zero calories and is significantly sweeter than sugar by volume.

VEGAN CHEESE PRODUCTS

Although homemade vegan cheeses are delicious, they can be time-consuming to make, and unless executed perfectly, they don't melt the same way commercial products do. A few of my favorite national cheese brands are Violife, Tofutti, Miyoko's, and Follow Your Heart. There are a variety of Cheddar, cream cheese, mozzarella, and parmesan alternatives from these brands that will please and impress. If you're in a bind, Daiya has improved their Cheddar and mozzarella offerings, but I prefer the aforementioned brands. One thing these brands have in common is that they do not contain saturated fats or cholesterol. Although these products are processed more than others used in this book, the primary ingredients in most vegan dairy substitutes are nuts, seeds, vegetable oils, and kelp, making them a healthy alternative to their dairy counterparts.

VEGAN MEAT SUBSTITUTES

Impossible Foods has created the fundamental game changer when it comes to a viable replication of ground beef. It tastes, bleeds, and cooks like a good 80/20 ground beef product. The second contender is Beyond Meat. I prefer the Beyond Meat sausage product to its ground beef alternative, but it is still comparable to most vegan beef products.

If you're not making my [Smoky Mushroom Bacon](#), my top choice for vegan bacon is Be Leaf, a thick-cut soy-based bacon out of California. Beyond Meat's brats and spicy Italian sausages work great as pork sausage filler in most vegan recipes.

VEGAN MILK OPTIONS

When it comes to vegan milk, choose the best tool for the job. If you need a froth, foam, or curdle, use unsweetened soy milk. If you want a cream sauce with a neutral base, use rice milk. If you need a thick coating with a neutral flavor, use unsweetened coconut milk. There are a variety of great options including oat, hemp, flaxseed, and almond, but for the recipes in this book stick to the first three. I find that the refrigerated versions of the shelf-stable milks tend to have a slightly better flavor, but the shelf-stable milks have a much longer shelf life when unopened.

ABOUT THE RECIPES

Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Imagine the aromas of magnolia and honeysuckle on a warm summer night. Hear the repetitive rumble of cicadas humming in the distance. Now picture yourself sitting on an old wooden boat dock and dipping your toes into a calm pond. Ignore the mosquito buzzing near your ear! This feeling, minus the mosquito, is what I want people to experience while exploring the recipes in this book. I tried tirelessly to compile a fair compilation of the most popular dishes from across the South. I wanted to represent a little something from each unique region to capture the collective flavor of the South.

The most misunderstood part of vegan cooking is that people assume vegan food simply tastes like vegetables, because vegans only like vegetables. My goal as a vegan chef is to recreate the textures, flavors, and appearance of the food people crave, vegan or not. Replicating flavor is easy; it is replicating the look and texture of non-vegan foods that is challenging. We feast first with our eyes and then with mouthfeel. Many of my recipes replace meat with mushrooms, seitan, or soy products, and many require no replacement at all. My [Texas Frito Pie](#) is hearty and protein packed with beans alone, whereas the [Country Captain Seitan Chicken](#) utilizes seitan chicken to replicate the texture and flavor you crave.

When approaching Southern dishes, people assume there will be a certain level of decadence and indulgence. For this endeavor, however, I

have made allotments for less sugar, fat, and oil in order to to achieve healthier versions of classic originals. I've provided several baked and air fryer versions of deep-fried dishes as well as suggestions for healthier sugar alternatives in a few desserts.

The majority of recipes require ten or fewer ingredients, excluding salt, pepper, and oil. I've labeled the simplest with 5 Ingredients or Less, 30 Minutes or Less, and One Pot. In addition to the labels and headnotes, many recipes have an additional tip, such as Make It Easier, Make It Healthier, or Variation Tip. The final bonus is that every recipe has nutritional information given right below it. This helps take the guesswork out of meal planning when on a calorie budget. Now I think we're fixin' to make stuff!



Country Frittata

CHAPTER 2

BREAKFAST

Tofu Scramble

Country Frittata

The Ultimate Southern Omelet

French Quarter Toast

Vegan Cheese Grits

Southern Breakfast Potatoes

Oat Breakfast Sausage

Smoky Mushroom Bacon

Waffle and Flapjack Mix

TOFU SCRAMBLE

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

In the absence of eggs as a protein source, tofu scramble is a blank slate for breakfast mix-ins and the cornerstone of many vegan breakfast tables. It can stand on its own as a morning main dish or be added to other recipes in place of scrambled eggs or chopped hard-boiled eggs. Be sure to use extra-firm tofu to get the right texture. Other varieties will not maintain the texture and consistency of eggs when crumbled and cooked.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

2 (14- to 16-ounce) packages extra-firm tofu

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

1 tablespoon Himalayan black salt or kala namak

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ teaspoon onion powder

½ teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil or vegan butter

1. Drain the tofu and place it in a medium bowl. Using your hands, gently crumble the tofu into pieces about the size of small gravel, or until it resembles the consistency of scrambled eggs.
2. Add the nutritional yeast, black salt, turmeric, onion powder, sea salt, and white pepper. Gently mix until the spices are evenly mixed with the tofu.

3. In a skillet over medium heat, heat the oil for about 30 seconds. Add the tofu and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring gently, or until it is lightly browned in sections and the mixture resembles the texture and color of scrambled eggs.

VARIATION TIP: For more flavor, in the skillet, sauté mushrooms, peppers, and onions in vegan butter before stirring them into the tofu scramble.

PER SERVING: Calories: 275; Total fat: 18g; Saturated fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 1,457mg; Carbohydrates: 6g; Sugar: 1g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 22g

COUNTRY FRITTATA

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

A frittata is a baked egg dish that's the cousin of the stovetop Southern omelet. A proper vegan country frittata starts with a [Tofu Scramble Puree](#), or a store-bought egg substitute, such as JUST Egg or VeganEgg. What I love about frittatas is that they have all the makings of an upscale breakfast for guests and special occasions but take less effort than an omelet to make. A frittata can also be made in muffin tins and tossed in the oven to be ignored until the timer goes off.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

4 cups liquid vegan eggs, or 1 recipe [Tofu Scramble Puree](#)

¼ cup shredded vegan cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh spinach

¼ cup halved grape tomatoes

2 scallions, white and green parts, finely chopped

1 tablespoon chopped fresh or dried rosemary leaves

½ teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

Neutral oil, for greasing

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. In a large bowl, combine the vegan eggs, cheese, spinach, tomatoes, scallions, rosemary, salt, and pepper and gently stir to combine.

3. Lightly coat a small cast iron pan, carbon steel skillet, or ceramic quiche pan with oil and pour in the egg mixture.
4. Bake for 6 to 10 minutes, or until lightly browned on top.
5. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

VARIATION TIP: To make quiche with the same recipe, line muffin tins or a quiche pan with store-bought puff pastry or piecrust. Fill the crust with the frittata mixture and bake: If using puff pastry, increase the oven temperature to 450°F and bake until the puff pastry turns golden brown. It is better to overcook puff pastry slightly than to undercook it. Overcooked, it will be dark in appearance but still taste great. Undercooked puff pastry will be doughy, gooey, and greasy. Both Pepperidge Farm and Pillsbury brands sell vegan puff pastry.

PER SERVING: Calories: 438; Total fat: 32g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 1,284mg; Carbohydrates: 10g; Sugar: 0.5g; Fiber: 0.5g; Protein: 27g

THE ULTIMATE SOUTHERN OMELET

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

A typical Southern omelet starts with fresh items typically found in a Southern refrigerator. Availability is a consistent theme in regional cooking, making the Southern omelet more about availability and seasonality than intentionality. South Louisiana omelets are stuffed with blue crab and crawfish tails, whereas a typical Fort Worth omelet has brisket, Cheddar, and jalapeño. Today's omelet features a slew of vegetables and a little vegan cheese. For a little kick, serve this omelet slathered with Northern Alabama White Barbecue Sauce ([here](#)) or Come Back Sauce ([here](#)).

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 small potato, cut into ¼ -inch dice

½ teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 small red bell pepper, cut into ¼ -inch dice

1 small green bell pepper, cut into ¼ -inch dice

½ cup diced (¼ inch) yellow onion

4 cups liquid vegan eggs, or 1 recipe [Tofu Scramble Puree](#)

¼ cup shredded vegan cheese

1. Preheat a large skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds. In the skillet, combine the oil, potato, salt, and pepper. Sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are light brown.

2. Stir in the red and green bell peppers and onion. Sauté for 4 minutes, then evenly distribute the vegetables in the skillet.
3. Pour the vegan eggs over the vegetables in the skillet—do not stir. Sprinkle the vegan cheese evenly over the omelet, then cover the skillet.
4. Let the omelet cook for 4 minutes, remove the lid, and fold the omelet in half with a large spatula. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: Calories: 514; Total fat: 36g; Saturated fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 1,288mg; Carbohydrates: 17g; Sugar: 2g; Fiber: 1.5g; Protein: 28g

FRENCH QUARTER TOAST

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

There is no better way to wake up than in a hotel room overlooking New Orleans's Bourbon Street, with the smell of cinnamon and maple wafting through. I first made this vegan dish for Mardi Gras in 1998, and I didn't have the luxury of store-bought vegan eggs. I blended my tofu scramble recipe with a little coconut milk and, voilà, made a vegan egg wash. It was so successful, though, I had a hard time convincing customers it was vegan! To make this quickly, I recommend using JUST Eggs.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

4 cups liquid vegan eggs

2 tablespoons maple syrup

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Dash sea salt

8 slices Texas Toast or thick-cut French bread medallions

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, divided

¼ cup organic confectioners' sugar

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the vegan eggs, maple syrup, cinnamon, vanilla, and salt to blend.
2. Gently prick each slice of bread several times with a fork. Gently dip the bread in the egg mixture until the bread is soaked. Do not oversoak the bread, or it will fall apart before making it to the next step.

3. In a large skillet over medium heat, melt 2 tablespoons of butter.
4. Gently place 4 pieces of soaked bread into the heated skillet. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until brown on one side, then flip with a spatula. Cook for 2 minutes, remove from the heat, and repeat with the remaining 4 pieces of toast and 2 tablespoons of butter.
5. Serve dusted with the confectioners' sugar.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: Replace the maple syrup with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of monk fruit powder to reduce the calories and the overall glucose for this recipe. It can also be made with thick-cut multigrain bread to increase the fiber.

PER SERVING: Calories: 738; Total fat: 38g; Saturated fat: 9g; Sodium: 1,377mg; Carbohydrates: 59g; Sugar: 17g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 33g

VEGAN CHEESE GRITS

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

There is no right or wrong style of grits, only your preference. I prefer a thick-cut style of grits cooked loose, with a little liquid behind it! Some people prefer their grits al dente with a light crunch, while others like them cooked into a gooey mush. This basic recipe includes cheese because of its overwhelming popularity in the corner of the South where I reside. Remember, like rice, grits will continue cooking for a few minutes once you remove them from the heat.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

4 cups grits

2 cups [The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce](#) or store-bought vegan cheese

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter

1. In a saucepan over high heat, combine the broth, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce the heat to medium and stir in the grits. Cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes for a thinner consistency or up to 8 minutes for thicker grits, depending on your preference.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the cheese sauce and butter.

VARIATION TIP: For a Texas zing, stir diced fresh jalapeño and red bell pepper into the finished grits. For a taste of South Louisiana, use 1 teaspoon of Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning instead of the salt.

PER SERVING: Calories: 644; Total fat: 23g; Saturated fat: 11g; Sodium: 5,293mg; Carbohydrates: 101g; Sugar: 4g; Fiber: 7.5g; Protein: 14g

SOUTHERN BREAKFAST POTATOES

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

Country-style breakfast potatoes make a hearty side on their own or a crispy main when mixed with faux meats, vegetables, or vegan cheese alternatives. The South produces a variety of potatoes, ranging from creamy golden spuds to new red potatoes. For this recipe, any variety will yield a similar result. Think of these country potatoes as the canvas on which to create your breakfast masterpiece.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

4 large potatoes (about 3 pounds), cut into ½ -inch cubes

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

4 tablespoons sea salt, divided

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons chopped fresh or dried rosemary leaves

2 tablespoons gumbo filé or ground sage

1 tablespoon ground white pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 500°F.
2. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine the potatoes, broth, and 3 tablespoons of salt. Bring the broth to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cook the potatoes for about 10 minutes, or until they are tender but not crumbling. When they are poked with a fork, the fork should effortlessly penetrate the entire potato, similar to a baked potato texture. Drain the potatoes and transfer them to a baking sheet.

3. To the potatoes, add the oil, rosemary, filé, remaining 1 tablespoon of salt, and the pepper. Stir to coat evenly.
4. Bake for 6 to 10 minutes, or until golden brown. There is no need to stir or rotate the potatoes unless your oven has excessively hot spots and cooks unevenly.

VARIATION TIP: For extra-crispy potatoes, cook them in an air fryer at 400°F for 5 to 7 minutes. After you drain the potatoes, a cool hack is to save the vegan chicken stock and make [Country Cream Gravy](#) .

PER SERVING: Calories: 385; Total fat: 13g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 4,899mg; Carbohydrates: 61g; Sugar: 3g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 9g

OAT BREAKFAST SAUSAGE

MAKES 8 PATTIES

This is, arguably, the best breakfast sausage this side of the Georgia state line. With confidence, I can say that statement runs true regardless of your actual proximity to any border of the great state of Georgia. The texture and flavor are remarkably similar to traditional pork breakfast sausage. Oat bars are popular snack foods for active people because of their dense, hearty texture. It's no wonder that oats and dense grains are integral parts of many recipes in pursuit of solid meat alternatives. Whether you're using steel-cut oats or quick oats, the oats absorb the liquid and cook in the oven to achieve similar results. Serve with [Tofu Scramble](#) and [Southern Breakfast Potatoes](#) for a complete meal.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 35 minutes

1¾ cups water

2 tablespoons Bragg's liquid aminos, tamari, or soy sauce

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast flakes

1½ teaspoons onion powder

1½ teaspoons ground dried rosemary leaves

1½ teaspoons maple syrup

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon dried sage

1 teaspoon ground thyme

¼ teaspoon liquid smoke

¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1¾ cups steel-cut oats or quick oats

Nonstick cooking oil spray

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper and set aside.
2. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine the water, liquid aminos, nutritional yeast, onion powder, rosemary, maple syrup, garlic powder, sage, thyme, liquid smoke, and red pepper flakes. Bring the liquid to a boil, then remove from the heat.
3. Gently stir the oats into the liquid until a thick paste forms. Let sit and thicken for 5 minutes, until the oats become engorged.
4. Scoop out 2-tablespoon-size balls and evenly line them up on a baking sheet. Flatten the balls into patties, spray both sides with cooking oil, and transfer to the prepared baking sheet.
5. Bake for 20 minutes. Flip the patties and bake for 5 minutes more, or until golden brown. The bottoms will be brown when flipped, and the tops will not be as seared. We want both sides to brown, like cooked sausage in a skillet.

MAKE IT EASIER: Use an ice cream scoop to form perfect equal-size oat balls, then spray canning-jar tops with cooking oil and flatten the balls into circles using the jar lids. The lids make perfect circles, and the tops pop out for easy removal of the sausages.

PER SERVING (1 PATTY): Calories: 152; Total fat: 4g; Saturated fat: 0.5g; Sodium: 242mg; Carbohydrates: 25g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 3.5g; Protein: 5g

SMOKY MUSHROOM BACON

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

Bacon is to the American South what rice is to Southeast Asia—if you're not eating bacon, it's hardly considered a meal. Vegan Southern cooking doesn't mean you have to forego this most essential of foods. Shiitake mushrooms will resemble large bacon bits when cooked, whereas king oyster mushrooms have long shafts that can be cut lengthwise to resemble bacon slices.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

½ cup maple syrup

¼ cup Bragg's liquid aminos, tamari, or soy sauce

2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon liquid smoke

4 ounces shiitake mushroom caps or whole king oyster mushrooms

Neutral oil, for greasing the pan

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the maple syrup, liquid aminos, pepper, garlic powder, and liquid smoke to blend.
2. If using shiitake mushrooms, cut the caps into thin slices; if using king oyster mushrooms, thinly slice the mushrooms lengthwise.
3. Dip and coat the mushrooms in the maple marinade.
4. Coat a skillet with oil and place it over medium-high heat for about 30 seconds.

5. Add the mushrooms to the skillet and sear for about 1 minute, or until crisp. Flip with a spatula and repeat on other side.
6. Remove from the heat and let cool/crisp for 1 to 2 minutes before serving.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: Preheat the oven to 450°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Coat the mushroom bacon with olive oil cooking spray and place the slices side by side on the baking sheet. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes, flip, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes more. Let cool/crisp for 2 minutes.

PER SERVING: Calories: 134; Total fat: 2.5g; Saturated fat: 0.5g; Sodium: 967mg; Carbohydrates: 29g; Sugar: 25g; Fiber: 0.5g; Protein: 3g

WAFFLE AND FLAPJACK MIX

SERVES 8

30 MINUTES OR LESS

An age-old argument over many a campfire and plenty of kitchen tables is “Which is better, waffles or flapjacks?” I think it’s obvious, since waffles are always listed first, and it’s not alphabetical, and you can tell my bias because I haven’t bothered giving you a method for cooking the flapjacks. Whichever you choose, this is my go-to batter for a vegan version of these breakfast staples.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

4 cups unbleached wheat flour

3½ tablespoons baking powder

1 tablespoon raw organic sugar

1 tablespoon sea salt

3½ cups unsweetened coconut milk

1¼ cups (2½ sticks) vegan butter, melted

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Nonstick cooking oil spray (optional)

1. Preheat the waffle iron according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt to blend well.
3. Using a handheld electric mixer or immersion blender, mix in the coconut milk, butter, and vanilla until the batter is smooth. The batter can be hand whisked for about 2 minutes as well.

4. Depending upon your waffle iron, spray the waffle iron with cooking oil, or use a dry iron.
5. Pour 5 to 6 ounces of batter into the waffle iron, depending on your waffle iron.
6. Cook for 3 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove the waffle, set aside, and repeat with the remaining batter.

VARIATION TIP: For a fluffier, more Southern, waffle, substitute vegan buttermilk for the coconut milk. Add 1 tablespoon of raw apple cider vinegar to 1 cup of soy milk as a buttermilk replacement. Vegan buttermilk is best with soy milk, because it curdles when mixed with an acid. Lactic acid works very well for this, too!

PER SERVING (½ WAFFLE OR 1 PANCAKE): Calories: 660; Total fat: 47g; Saturated fat: 41g; Sodium: 1,061mg; Carbohydrates: 53g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 8g



Texas Frito Pie

CHAPTER 3

APPETIZERS AND SNACKS

Impossible Sloppy Joe Sliders

Jackfruit Taco Salad

Texas Frito Pie

Roasted Habanero Salsa

Crispy Fried Corn Fritters

Almond Agave Butter

Hush Puppies

Cabbage Rolls

Fried Plantains

Southern Fried Green Things

IMPOSSIBLE SLOPPY JOE SLIDERS

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Sloppy joes are great Southern sandwiches because they're made in the spirit of community. It's easy to make a huge skillet full of sauce, peppers, and meat, scoop it onto bread with a pickle, and call it a day. An entire family or group of families can be fed with a minimal amount of formality or preparation.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

1 pound vegan ground beef alternative

1 tablespoon smoked paprika

1½ teaspoons dark chili powder

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

1½ teaspoons ground thyme

1½ teaspoons onion powder

1½ teaspoons garlic powder

1½ teaspoons sea salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ small yellow or white onion, diced

1½ cups ketchup

12 small dinner rolls or slider buns, sliced horizontally

24 dill pickle slices

1. In a medium bowl, mix the beef alternative, paprika, chili powder, cumin, thyme, onion powder, garlic powder, and salt with your hands

until thoroughly combined.

2. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the oil. Add the onion and sauté for about 3 minutes, or until translucent.
3. With a wooden spoon or heat-resistant rubber spatula, stir the seasoned beef alternative into the onion and cook over medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes, until lightly browned, breaking up the meat alternative with the spoon.
4. Gently stir in the ketchup, mixing it evenly throughout. Cook, stirring, until the vegan meat is cooked through and reaches 160°F, then remove the skillet from the heat.
5. Evenly distribute the sloppy joe mix on the 12 roll bottoms. Top each sloppy joe sandwich with 2 pickles, then place the roll tops on to complete the sandwiches.

VARIATION: A pound of jackfruit meat can be substituted for the beef alternative. You can also spice things up by adding 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper to the mix, then topping the sandwiches with pickled jalapeños!

PER SERVING: Calories: 561; Total fat: 24g; Saturated fat: 5g; Sodium: 1,643mg; Carbohydrates: 65g; Sugar: 9g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 35g

JACKFRUIT TACO SALAD

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

The South is known for making anything and everything into a salad: corn salad, fruit salad, potato salad, shrimp salad. And even the toxic pokeweed plant is turned into poke salad! It is no wonder that one of America's Tex-Mex favorites, the crunchy taco, was also turned into salad. My discovery of this ambrosia-like mixture of taco meat, tortillas, lettuce, and cheese at a neighbor's house in fourth grade was life changing, and my hope is that this vegan rendition will change your life, too.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

1 (20-ounce) can unsweetened jackfruit, drained

1 tablespoon dark chili powder

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

1½ teaspoons onion powder

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 large head iceberg or romaine lettuce

Neutral oil, for preparing the pan

1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), drained

1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed

½ cup shredded vegan Cheddar

¼ cup sliced pickled jalapeño peppers, drained

¼ cup vegan sour cream

4 cups partially crushed corn chips or uncrushed Fritos

1. In a large bowl, combine the jackfruit, chili powder, cumin, onion powder, and salt and mix with your hands.
2. Dice the lettuce into ½ -inch cubes, similar to a Caesar salad cut, and place in another large bowl.
3. Lightly coat a medium skillet with oil and place it over medium heat. Add the seasoned jackfruit and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Add the sautéed jackfruit to the lettuce, along with the tomatoes and green chiles, black beans, Cheddar, pickled jalapeños, sour cream, and corn chips. Toss to coat and combine, then divide the salad evenly into serving bowls.

VARIATION TIP: If you want to eat like a true Texan, drizzle in a little vegan jalapeño ranch (see the Vegan Ranch Dressing variation [here](#)) and top with diced fresh serrano peppers!

PER SERVING: Calories: 568; Total fat: 26g; Saturated fat: 6.5g; Sodium: 2,442mg; Carbohydrates: 70g; Sugar: 4g; Fiber: 25g; Protein: 14g

TEXAS FRITO PIE

SERVES 8

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Several years ago at a vegan culinary institute in the south of Spain, one of the instructors asked me to tell the class about the top-selling item on my menu. I immediately blurted out “Frito pie.” It was in that moment, while gazing at an ocean of blank stares, that I realized Frito pie is a delicacy reserved primarily for Texas.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

1 (15.5-ounce) bag Fritos Super Scoops

Neutral oil, for preparing the pan

1 pound vegan ground beef alternative

1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

1 tablespoon dark chili powder

2 teaspoons sea salt

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

1½ teaspoons onion powder

1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed

1 cup shredded vegan Cheddar, or 2 cups [The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce](#)

¼ cup vegan sour cream

¼ cup drained sliced pickled jalapeño peppers

1. Pour the Fritos into a large serving bowl or onto a large platter.

2. Lightly coat a medium skillet with oil and place it over medium heat for 30 seconds.
3. Gently stir in the beef alternative and cook until it begins to lightly brown.
4. While stirring, add the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices, then stir in the chili powder, salt, cumin, and onion powder. Cook, stirring, for 3 minutes.
5. Add the black beans to the skillet. Cook, stirring, for 1 to 2 minutes, until the mixture reaches a temperature of 160°F and is browned. Pour the skillet mixture evenly over the Fritos. Layer the cheese over the skillet mixture.
6. Drizzle the sour cream on top and sprinkle with the jalapeños to serve.

VARIATION TIP: For even more authenticity, try the Frito pie with [Four-Bean Chili](#) .

PER SERVING: Calories: 533; Total fat: 35g; Saturated fat: 9g; Sodium: 1,548mg; Carbohydrates: 43g; Sugar: 1g; Fiber: 3.5g; Protein: 14g

ROASTED HABANERO SALSA

MAKES 2 TO 3 CUPS

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Having a good homemade salsa recipe in your repertoire is the hallmark of a great Texas home cook and a shortcut to a delicious meal no matter what ingredients you have on hand. Salsa's popularity in Southern cooking may be due to the abundance of both wild and cultivated peppers, as well as the variety of tomatoes, tomatillos, peaches, and other soft fruits. When adjusting salsa recipes with different peppers, remember that you can always increase the spiciness by adding more peppers, but you can't remove it once it's in there.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

3 pounds Roma tomatoes

¼ yellow onion, roughly chopped

4 habanero peppers

2 garlic cloves, peeled

Extra-virgin olive oil spray or avocado oil

¼ cup fresh cilantro, leaves and stems

2 scallions, white and green parts

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice

2 teaspoons sea salt

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 500°F.

2. In a baking or casserole dish, combine the tomatoes, onion, habaneros, and garlic, and lightly coat with oil.
3. Bake on the middle rack for about 10 minutes, or until the peppers and garlic are lightly browned.
4. Carefully transfer the roasted vegetables to a blender (being careful not to overfill it) and add the cilantro, scallions, lime juice, and salt.
CAUTION: Do not fill the blender pitcher more than half full unless you allow ample time for the mixture to cool. When you blend hot liquids, the hot air builds pressure in the blender pitcher and will cause the top to shoot off while mixing if the pitcher is overfilled. Blend on high speed until you have a smooth puree.

MAKE IT EASIER: To save time, skip the roasting, or use canned tomatoes, and go straight to the blender for a fabulous salsa fresca.

PER SERVING (¼ CUP): Calories: 56; Total fat: 3.5g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 477mg; Carbohydrates: 7g; Sugar: 4.5g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 2g

CRISPY FRIED CORN FRITTERS

MAKES 12 FRITTERS

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Corn fritters are a delectable treat, similar to hush puppies, which are good alongside greens and beans or even all by their lonesome. I don't just love the taste, but I also love the way the words *corn fritter* sound exotic and intoxicating, like a large boat full of fried corn, a fritter freighter, pushing its way up the Mississippi River. They are traditionally made with eggs, but I use silken tofu to make their texture fluffy and crisp. Having a candy thermometer will help ensure you get your frying oil at the right temperature; if you don't have one, drop a small piece of potato or yellow onion into your oil to test the temperature. If the test piece instantly smokes and turns colors, the oil is too hot. If it begins to bubble around the edges within 5 seconds and turns golden brown in about 3 minutes, it's just right. I use a potato or onion because it will not give your oil a burned flavor or leave a mess if the oil is the incorrect temperature.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

4 cups canola oil or peanut oil

1 recipe [Jalapeño Corn Muffins](#) batter

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

2 tablespoons soft silken tofu

⅓ cup water

1 tablespoon vegan butter or extra-virgin olive oil

¼ cup diced yellow onion

2 tablespoons diced red bell pepper

1 large jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced

1 cup frozen or canned (drained) corn kernels

1. In a large saucepan or cast iron skillet over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, using a large spoon, stir together the corn muffin batter, flour, tofu, and water for 1 to 3 minutes, or until mostly smooth—the odd lump is okay.
3. In a small skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and bell pepper, and sauté for about 4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent. Gently stir the sautéed vegetables and corn into the muffin mixture, being sure to distribute the ingredients evenly.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or wax paper. Line a second sheet or plate with paper towels to use as a cooling rack.
5. Using a 2- or 3-ounce ice cream scoop or large spoon, scoop the batter into 12 balls and place them on the parchment-lined baking sheet.
6. Using a large-slotted spoon, gently lower the balls one at a time into the hot oil. Rotate the fritters in the oil with the slotted spoon. Fry for about 2 minutes, until the balls float to the top and are light golden brown on all sides. With the slotted spoon, transfer the fritters to the paper towels. Allow 2 minutes to cool and drain before serving.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: This recipe works incredibly well in an air fryer at 350°F for 6 minutes with a little oil spray. You can also bake the corn fritters in a mini muffin tin in a 350°F oven for 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden brown. When baking the fritters, thoroughly coat the tin with oil and allow at least 10 minutes of cooling time before removing the fritters from the tin.

PER SERVING (3 FRITTERS): Calories: 876; Total fat: 50g; Saturated fat: 24g; Sodium: 464mg; Carbohydrates: 94g; Sugar: 2.5g; Fiber: 6g; Protein: 13g

ALMOND AGAVE BUTTER

MAKES 2 CUPS

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Be prepared to experience one of the most addictive substances known to the human race! It's no secret that the South is famous for its sweet, creamy delicacies, but few people north of Tennessee know the ecstasy that is almond honey butter. It's spread on croissants in New Orleans, biscuits in Georgia, and Texas toast in Texas! Because honey isn't vegan, I use agave syrup instead. Slathered on [Jalapeño Corn Muffins](#) or [El Paso Biscuits](#), almond agave butter is a nice start to any meal or a satisfying midday snack.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

1 pound vegan butter

2 tablespoons amber agave nectar

1 teaspoon almond extract

1. In a food processor or blender, combine the butter, agave, and almond extract. Blend for no more than 15 seconds on medium speed, until smooth. Do not overmix and melt the butter.
2. Refrigerate in an airtight container for weeks, or freeze for months.

PER SERVING (2 TABLESPOONS): Calories: 191; Total fat: 20g; Saturated fat: 18g; Sodium: 142mg; Carbohydrates: 2g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 0g; Protein: 0g

HUSH PUPPIES

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Hush puppies are the falafel of the South. Small fritters made with a mix of flours, they're soft in the middle and crunchy on the outside and make a great appetizer, side, or even entrée if you gussy them up properly.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

4 cups canola oil or peanut oil

1 cup cornmeal

1 cup rice flour

1 cup chickpea flour

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon ground thyme

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

½ teaspoon onion powder

½ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

⅓ cup soy milk

1 teaspoon raw apple cider vinegar

2 scallions, white and green parts, finely chopped

¼ cup soft silken tofu

1. In a large saucepan or cast iron skillet over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the cornmeal, rice flour, chickpea flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, thyme, black pepper, onion powder, garlic powder, and cayenne.
3. In a cup, stir together the soy milk and vinegar until the soy milk curdles to make vegan buttermilk. Stir the milk mixture into the flour mixture along with the scallions and tofu until mostly smooth. This should take 1 to 3 minutes of continued stirring.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or wax paper. Line a second sheet or plate with paper towels to use as a cooling rack. Scoop the batter into 12 to 16 balls and place them on the parchment-lined baking sheet.
5. Using a large slotted spoon, lower the balls one at a time into the hot oil. Rotate the hush puppies in the oil. Fry for about 2 minutes, until the balls float and become light golden brown on all sides. With the slotted spoon, transfer the hush puppies to the paper towels.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: This recipe works incredibly well in an air fryer at 350°F for 6 minutes with a little oil spray.

PER SERVING (3 HUSH PUPPIES): Calories: 623; Total fat: 26g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 767mg; Carbohydrates: 84g; Sugar: 4g; Fiber: 5.5g; Protein: 12g

CABBAGE ROLLS

SERVES 4

Stuffed cabbage rolls are a huge hit at any gathering where neighbors come together and bring food to share. A staple of this variety of Southern hospitality, like many Southern dishes, cabbage rolls originate in Europe. In Britain, they're made on the stovetop, steamed, and covered in a broth. I learned how to make a similar version in Skopje, Greece, but in the oven instead. I believe this version was brought to the South by Polish and Jewish immigrants who prepare it similarly, with stewed tomatoes and lamb. Traditional cabbage rolls take time, because they use pickled or soured cabbage leaves, but this recipe takes a two-week shortcut by using boiled cabbage instead. The better you get at rolling, the tighter and smaller the cabbage rolls will be. A master roller can get them as small as egg rolls or dolmas!

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 45 minutes

4 quarts water, plus 3 cups

5 teaspoons sea salt, divided

1 (2- to 3½ -pound) cabbage head

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

8 ounces vegan ground beef alternative

1½ cups long-grain rice

2 tablespoons sweet paprika, divided

1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

2 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. In a large pot over high heat, combine 4 quarts of water and 2 teaspoons of salt. Bring to a boil. Carefully add the cabbage to the boiling water and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the cabbage leaves are flexible and partially opaque. Remove the cabbage from the water and let it cool until you can handle it.
3. While the cabbage cools, in a medium skillet over medium heat, heat 2 tablespoons of oil for 30 seconds. Add the beef alternative, rice, 1 tablespoon of paprika, and 1 teaspoon of salt, and cook, stirring, until the meat substitute is lightly browned, then remove from the heat and let cool.
4. Peel 8 large leaves from the cabbage and lay them on a large cutting board or baking sheet.
5. Scoop 2 tablespoons of the filling mixture onto the middle front side of each leaf. Evenly fold the left and right sides of each leaf over the filling, so only cabbage is visible. Now roll the leaf from the bottom, up and away from your body, to form a roll similar to a small burrito. Place the rolls side by side in a casserole pan.
6. In a small bowl, stir together the crushed tomatoes, remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, remaining 2 teaspoons of salt, remaining 1 tablespoon of paprika, pepper, and vinegar. Pour the sauce over the cabbage rolls.
7. Pour the remaining 3 cups of water into the casserole pan, then cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil.
8. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and check the center temperature of the cabbage rolls. It should be 160°F. A good indicator that the rolls are ready is the rice will be fluffy and full. The rolls should be plump and golden on top as well. Serve hot or at room temperature.

PER SERVING: Calories: 645; Total fat: 23g; Saturated fat: 4.5g; Sodium: 2,323mg; Carbohydrates: 89g; Sugar: 14g; Fiber: 11g; Protein: 22g

FRIED PLANTAINS

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

These South Florida favorites are a crispy delight to start any social gathering, and they taste great with dips or salsas or on their own. Plantains are vitamin packed and higher in fiber than potatoes, making these crunchy treats a great alternative to potato chips. I recommend wearing rubber kitchen gloves when cutting off the skins. Plantain skins are like fiberglass and have tiny prickly fibers that can be painful if they get under your nails. Plantain skins look like banana peels, but they are deceptively tough. The best plantains for chips are not very ripe. Ripe plantains tend to be softer and sweeter, making it difficult to achieve the paper-thin cut needed for chips.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

8 cups canola oil

4 firm green plantains, peeled

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F.
2. Using a potato peeler, shave the plantains into long chips. Start from one side of the plantain and shave the chips lengthwise. Sprinkle the chips with the lime juice.

3. Gently drop the lime-infused chips into the hot oil 2 or 3 chips at a time. Be sure to tease the chips with long metal tongs while frying. This will give the chips depth and curly shapes. Fry the chips for about 3 minutes, or until light golden brown. Transfer the chips to a serving bowl and toss with the salt and cinnamon. Let cool in the bowl before serving.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: You can use an air fryer at 350°F for 4 to 5 minutes for extra-crispy chips. You can also bake the chips on a baking sheet in a 450°F oven for 6 to 10 minutes per side. Flip the chips when they become light brown, spray with oil, and bake until crisp.

PER SERVING: Calories: 702; Total fat: 26g; Saturated fat: 8.5g; Sodium: 1,167mg; Carbohydrates: 112g; Sugar: 8.5g; Fiber: 8g; Protein: 3g

SOUTHERN FRIED GREEN THINGS

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

Southerners are notorious for frying vegetables, meats, fruits, and desserts. Our motto is “If you can make it, we can fry it!” The glorious fried pickle and fried green tomato are identical in execution and deliciousness. Serve with any of the sauces from [chapter 1](#), like Come Back Sauce ([here](#)), Northern Alabama White Barbecue Sauce ([here](#)), or Remoulade ([here](#)).

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

8 cups canola oil or peanut oil

3 cups rice flour, divided

3 cups unsweetened coconut milk

2 cups chickpea flour

1 tablespoon Tony Chachere’s Creole seasoning

16 dill pickle spears, or 2 cups dill pickle slices, or 4 green tomatoes, sliced

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and line a second sheet with paper towels for draining after frying.
2. Place 3 medium bowls in a row: From left to right, place 2 cups of rice flour in the first bowl; place the coconut milk in the middle bowl; and place the remaining 1 cup of rice flour, the chickpea flour, and the Creole seasoning in the final bowl. Thoroughly whisk the last bowl of flour to combine the ingredients.

3. One at a time, gently dust each pickle in the rice flour. Then submerge the pickle in the coconut milk, then coat it in the fry mix bowl. Once the pickle is coated in the fry flour, gently place it into the hot oil. Fry until golden brown, about 3 minutes, then remove with long metal tongs and place on the paper towel-lined baking sheet.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: You can use an air fryer at 350°F for 4 to 5 minutes for extra-crispy pickles and tomatoes, or you can bake the pickles on a baking sheet in a 425°F oven for 4 to 6 minutes per side. Flip the pickles when they turn light brown, spray with oil, and bake until crisp.

PER SERVING: Calories: 713; Total fat: 42g; Saturated fat: 18g; Sodium: 2,208mg; Carbohydrates: 76g; Sugar: 4g; Fiber: 6.5g; Protein: 12g



Vegan Chicken Potpie

CHAPTER 4

SOUPS AND STEWS

Vegan Chicken Gumbo

Vegan Seafood Gumbo

Potato and Corn Chowder

Four-Bean Chili

Taco Soup

Vegan Green Chile Chicken Chili

Jambalaya

Vegan Chicken Potpie

Vegan Chicken and Dumplings

Jackfruit Pot Roast

VEGAN CHICKEN GUMBO

SERVES 4

When it comes to a true Louisiana staple, few things stand out more distinctly than chicken gumbo. There are many Creole-style versions of gumbo throughout the Carolinas, Florida, and the Georgia coast, but Louisiana is the state that most people associate with this dish. Gumbo is definitely one of the most versatile and imitated soups across the South. That's why I made this recipe equally versatile. It works great with jackfruit or TVP using the same ratio as the soy protein chicken in the recipe. A spice that gets its name from gumbo is also an integral flavor component: gumbo filé, or ground sassafras leaves. Sassafras tree bark is unhealthy to eat, but the harmless leaves are a time-honored part of Cajun and Creole cooking. Filé has a distinct flavor you'll recognize as an undercurrent of many Creole spice mixes and dishes you have tasted before.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 30 minutes

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter

1 cup chopped celery

½ cup diced yellow or white onion

1 cup red wine

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 tablespoons gumbo filé

1 tablespoon poultry seasoning

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

1 teaspoon ground thyme

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

2 cups vegan soy protein chicken

1 cup fresh okra, cut crosswise into coins, or sliced frozen okra

Cooked rice, for serving

Louisiana-style hot sauce, for serving

1. In a dry skillet over medium-low heat, make the roux by cooking the flour, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon, for 6 to 8 minutes, until it turns a medium shade of brown. It is very important not to burn the flour. Once the flour has achieved a nice golden-brown color, slowly stir the butter into the flour. Continue stirring until the butter and flour thicken and form a brown liquid paste. Remove from the heat.
2. In a large pot over medium heat, combine the celery, onion, and wine. Sauté for about 5 minutes, until the onion is translucent.
3. Stir in the broth, filé, poultry seasoning, onion powder, salt, thyme, and pepper and bring to a boil.
4. Add the soy protein chicken and slowly stir in the roux. If you add the roux too quickly, it will lump and cause chunks in the soup. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring, until the gumbo thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux.
5. Remove the gumbo from the heat and stir in the okra. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving over rice, passing the hot sauce at the table.

MAKE IT EASIER: Substitute 1 tablespoon of Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning for all the spices except the gumbo filé, and use a store-bought roux instead of making your own. Make sure the store-bought roux is made with oil and not butter or lard. When in doubt, search online to find a vegan brand. A simple hack for making a fast thickening agent is to mix equal parts flour and olive oil in a bowl, and then stir that into your sauce, soup, or gravy. It does not have the dark richness of a traditional roux, but it is very effective in thickening your sauce without drastically changing the flavor.

PER SERVING: Calories: 595; Total fat: 44g; Saturated fat: 37g; Sodium: 4,830mg; Carbohydrates: 26g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 8.5g; Protein: 18g

VEGAN SEAFOOD GUMBO

SERVES 4

There are plenty of great seafood alternatives for soups and stews, such as plant-based shrimp, products made of pea powder, and soy shrimp. Some varieties of kelp and seaweed have very fishy flavors, as do hearts of palm and jackfruit. Feel free to play with the seafood alternatives in this recipe.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter

1 (14-ounce) jar hearts of palm in brine, drained

1 (14-ounce) can or package jackfruit, drained

1 cup chopped celery

½ cup diced shallot

1 cup dry white wine

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 tablespoons gumbo filé

1 tablespoon poultry seasoning

1 teaspoon ground thyme

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 cup fresh okra, cut crosswise into coins, or sliced frozen okra

Cooked rice, for serving

Hot sauce, for serving

1. In a dry skillet over medium-low heat, make the roux by cooking the flour, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon, for 6 to 8 minutes, until it turns a medium shade of brown. It is very important not to burn the flour. Slowly stir the butter into the flour. Continue stirring until the butter and flour thicken and form a brown liquid paste. Remove from the heat.
2. Slice the hearts of palm into ½ -inch-thick medallions. Place them in a medium bowl and add the jackfruit.
3. In a large pot over medium heat, combine the celery, shallot, and wine. Sauté for about 4 minutes, until the shallot is translucent.
4. Add the broth, filé, poultry seasoning, thyme, white pepper, onion powder, salt, and cayenne, mix well, and bring to a boil.
5. Slowly stir in the roux. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring, until the gumbo thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux.
6. Remove the gumbo from the heat and gently stir in the okra, hearts of palm, and jackfruit. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving over rice, passing the hot sauce at the table.

PER SERVING: Calories: 587; Total fat: 40g; Saturated fat: 36g; Sodium: 5,642mg; Carbohydrates: 39g; Sugar: 10g; Fiber: 7.5g; Protein: 8g

POTATO AND CORN CHOWDER

SERVES 4

Potato and corn chowder found its way south with British and Acadian settlers moving from the northeastern coast of North America. With the bountiful supplies of potatoes and corn in the South, it was no wonder this dish became so popular. Although the Northeast's coast is known for its clam chowder, the South utilized shrimp and chicken in this mostly vegetable soup.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted

¼ cup unbleached wheat flour

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 large potato (1 to 1½ pounds), peeled and diced

1 cup chopped celery

½ cup diced shallot

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

2 cups rice milk or flaxseed milk

1 cup fresh or frozen whole corn kernels

1. In a medium bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
2. In a large pot over high heat, combine the broth, potato, celery, shallot, salt, onion powder, coriander, and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce the

heat to medium and cook for 6 to 10 minutes, until the potato is soft but not crumbly or pasty. You need the potato to be firm enough to endure an additional 10 minutes of cooking without falling apart.

3. Pour in the rice milk.
4. Slowly stir in the roux. If you add the roux too quickly, it will lump and cause chunks in the soup. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring, until the chowder thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux.
5. Remove from the heat and gently stir in the corn. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

VARIATION TIP: I like to add a couple of tablespoons of chopped fresh parsley, tarragon, or dill when I add the corn. This gives an aromatic country herb flavor to the dish.

PER SERVING: Calories: 433; Total fat: 22g; Saturated fat: 18g; Sodium: 4,005mg; Carbohydrates: 55g; Sugar: 11g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 7g

FOUR-BEAN CHILI

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Chili is a breakfast, lunch, and supper staple in Texas. Beans and chili are both old staples of campfire cooking throughout the Southwest. Chili was easy to make from dried salted beef, as well as from wild game that was hunted along the trail. This quick version of my legendary chili recipe works for any occasion.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

1 cup diced yellow or white onion

1 (15.5-ounce) can pinto beans, undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can kidney beans, undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can chickpeas, undrained

1 cup water

2 tablespoons dark chili powder

1 tablespoon smoked chipotle chile powder

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh cilantro, or 2 tablespoons dried cilantro

1. In a large pot over medium heat, combine the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices and the onion. Bring to a low boil. Cook for about 5

minutes, stirring, until the onion is translucent.

2. Pour the pinto beans, black beans, kidney beans, and chickpeas, with all their juices, and the water into the pot.
3. Stir in the chili powder, chipotle chile powder, cumin, onion powder, and salt until evenly distributed. Bring the chili to a low boil and cook for 7 to 10 minutes, until the flavors meld, then remove from the heat.
4. Stir in the cilantro and serve.

VARIATION TIP: If you're looking for a spicier and "meatier" chili, add 1 pound of sautéed ground beef alternative with 2 dried ancho chiles. Chop the ancho chiles and add them with 1 teaspoon of ground cumin and 1 teaspoon of sea salt to the skillet while browning the beef alternative. Stir the mixture into the chili just before serving. If you have a typical Southern palate, add 2 tablespoons of raw sugar or 1 tablespoon of agave nectar to sweeten the pot!

PER SERVING: Calories: 446; Total fat: 2.5g; Saturated fat: 0.5g; Sodium: 3,324mg; Carbohydrates: 81g; Sugar: 12g; Fiber: 22g; Protein: 26g

TACO SOUP

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Taco soup is an evolution of the famed “crunchy taco.” The hard-shell taco was the first evolution in Tex-Mex from the traditional soft tortilla taco. Then a Southern culinary master came along and turned that dish into something people could eat on a cold day without spilling salsa on their shirt.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

Nonstick cooking oil spray

8 ounces vegan ground beef alternative

3 teaspoons ground cumin, divided

3 teaspoons sea salt, divided

3 teaspoons dark chili powder, divided

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, drained

1 (15.5-ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro, or 2 tablespoons dried cilantro

2 cups corn chips

1. Lightly coat a small skillet with cooking oil and place over medium heat for 30 seconds.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the beef alternative, 1½ teaspoons of cumin, 1½ teaspoons of salt, and 1½ teaspoons of chili powder to

combine. Transfer the mixture to the hot skillet and cook for about 4 minutes, stirring, until evenly crumbled and browned.

3. In a large pot over medium-high heat, combine the broth, remaining 1½ teaspoons of cumin, remaining 1½ teaspoons of salt, and remaining 1½ teaspoons of chili powder and bring to a boil.
4. Lower the heat to medium and add the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices, the beans, corn, and the browned meat mixture. Simmer for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Remove the pot from the heat, stir in the cilantro, and serve in bowls topped with crunchy corn chips.

VARIATION TIP: Give this a country feel by adding 1 cup of chopped cabbage, kale, or avocado slices.

PER SERVING: Calories: 519; Total fat: 21g; Saturated fat: 3.5g; Sodium: 5,677mg; Carbohydrates: 64g; Sugar: 8g; Fiber: 12g; Protein: 24g

VEGAN GREEN CHILE CHICKEN CHILI

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Green chili is a West Texas classic. West Texas borders Mexico and New Mexico and shares the culinary influences of both. Mexican green chiles, also known as pueblo chiles or Anaheim chiles, and New Mexican Hatch chiles both work for amazing soups and stews. The Mexican-style peppers have a sharper, herbier zing, while the Hatch chiles have a warm, smoky flavor. Depending on the season, you can purchase these fresh, but you'll have to roast and peel them before adding them to your chili.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

1 (16-ounce) can tomatillo sauce or crushed tomatillos

1 cup diced yellow or white onion

1 (15.5-ounce) can pinto beans, undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can kidney beans, undrained

1 (4-ounce) can diced green chiles

1 tablespoon green chile powder

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

2 cups soy protein chicken, or 1 (16-ounce) can jackfruit, drained

1 cup chopped fresh cilantro, or 2 tablespoons dried cilantro

1. In a large pot over medium heat, combine the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices, tomatillo sauce, and onion. Bring to a low boil. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the onion is translucent.
2. Pour in the pinto beans and kidney beans and their liquid and the green chiles.
3. Stir in the green chile powder, cumin, onion powder, and salt until evenly distributed. Bring to a low boil.
4. Gently stir in the soy protein chicken and cook for 5 minutes, until the chicken is heated through and the flavors meld.
5. Remove from the heat, stir in the cilantro, and serve.

PER SERVING: Calories: 454; Total fat: 6.5g; Saturated fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 3,542mg; Carbohydrates: 74g; Sugar: 13g; Fiber: 21g; Protein: 35g

JAMBALAYA

SERVES 8

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Like most Louisiana dishes, jambalaya is a mix of African, French, and Native American influences cooked in a single melting pot of goodness. Jambalaya is a great vegan go-to dish because it's packed with vegetables and protein, which makes for an easy meatless transition. I use walnuts in this and many other rice and tomato sauce dishes to add texture and protein that mimic ground meat.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

4 cups raw short-grain rice

1 cup diced white or yellow onion

1 cup chopped celery

8 ounces sliced [Seitan Andouille Sausage](#) or Beyond Meat spicy Italian sausage

1 cup finely chopped walnuts or vegan ground beef alternative

4½ cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

1 (15.5-ounce) can kidney beans, drained

1 cup diced red bell pepper

1 tablespoon gumbo filé

1 tablespoon Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning

Louisiana-style hot sauce, for serving

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the oil, rice, onion, and celery. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring regularly, or until the onion is almost translucent. Add the sausage and walnuts. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring.
2. Gently stir in the broth, tomatoes and green chiles and their juices, beans, bell pepper, filé, and Creole seasoning, then cover the pot with a tight lid. Bring the soup to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the rice is fluffy and ready to eat.
3. Serve with your favorite Louisiana-style hot sauce.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: You can substitute wild rice or long-grain brown rice for the short-grain rice, adding 1 cup of broth to the recipe and simmering for an additional 10 minutes.

PER SERVING: Calories: 564; Total fat: 17g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 1,981mg; Carbohydrates: 83g; Sugar: 6g; Fiber: 7.5g; Protein: 19g

VEGAN CHICKEN POTPIE

SERVES 6

Potpie is the warmth of a stew baked in the nostalgic comfort of a pie. When I'm creating recipes, warmth and comfort are two of my favorite ingredients, so it's no wonder that vegan potpie was at the top of my list when formulating this book. Making potpie can be a long and tedious chore, but this recipe makes it quick and fun! Most people don't realize that a variety of store-bought piecrusts are inherently vegan. It is easy to check out the ingredients or simply search online to determine whether your favorite piecrust is animal-product-free.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 35 minutes

2 (9-inch) Mrs. Smith's Deep Dish Flaky Pie Crusts, or 1 (2-crust) batch homemade piecrust (see [here](#)), substituting additional wheat flour for the confectioners' sugar

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter, melted

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

6 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 potato (10 to 15 ounces), peeled and cut into ¼ -inch dice

1 cup chopped celery

1 tablespoon poultry seasoning

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

2 cups vegan soy protein chicken

1½ cups frozen peas, carrots, and corn

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F. Remove the piecrusts from the refrigerator.
2. In a medium bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
3. In a large pot over high heat, combine the broth, potato, celery, poultry seasoning, salt, onion powder, and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 6 to 10 minutes, until the potato is soft but not crumbly or pasty. You need the potato to be firm enough to endure an additional 10 minutes of cooking without falling apart.
4. Slowly stir in the roux. If you add the roux too quickly, it will lump and cause chunks in the soup. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring, until the chowder thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux.
5. Remove the pot from the heat and gently stir in the soy protein chicken and the vegetables. Once everything is thoroughly mixed, carefully pour the mixture into one of the pie shells. Do not overfill it.
6. Remove the second pie shell from the tin and gently roll it with a rolling pin. Place the flattened pie shell over the top of the pie to cover the filling. Seal the pie shell around the edges by pressing together with your index finger, middle finger, and thumb. Use a small knife to gently cut 6 equal-size (1- to 1½-inch-long) slits in the top to vent steam.
7. Place the pie tin on a baking sheet, then place the baking sheet on the middle oven rack. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown. Let cool for a few minutes before cutting and serving.

PER SERVING: Calories: 686; Total fat: 44g; Saturated fat: 32g; Sodium: 2,663mg; Carbohydrates: 61g; Sugar: 5g; Fiber: 8.5g; Protein: 19g

VEGAN CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS

SERVES 6

One of my favorite dishes growing up was my grandmother's chicken and dumplings. I remember waiting for her to boil and then debone the chicken, then make the dough. This vegan version comes together even more quickly.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 20 minutes to rest the dough

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

FOR THE DUMPLINGS

2 cups unbleached wheat flour

¼ cup water

3 tablespoons powdered vegan egg replacer (such as Bob's Red Mill)

3 tablespoons olive oil

½ teaspoon sea salt

FOR THE VEGAN CHICKEN

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter, melted

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1 cup chopped celery

1 tablespoon poultry seasoning

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

1 (15-ounce) can jackfruit, drained

- 1. TO MAKE THE DUMPLINGS:** In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, water, egg replacer, oil, and salt until the mixture thickens and a thick ball forms. Continue mixing the dough with your hands until it has a semi-elastic texture. Leave the dough ball in the bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Set aside for 20 minutes.
- 2. TO MAKE THE VEGAN CHICKEN:** In a medium bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
- 3.** In a large pot over high heat, combine the broth, celery, poultry seasoning, salt, onion powder, and pepper, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for about 5 minutes.
- 4.** Meanwhile, separate the dough into 12 equal-size balls. Drop the balls in the broth and boil for 4 minutes, until they solidify into a texture similar to a thick noodle.
- 5.** Stir the jackfruit into the pot, then slowly stir in the roux. If the roux is added too quickly, it will lump and cause chunks in the soup. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the broth thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux.

PER SERVING: Calories: 556; Total fat: 34g; Saturated fat: 25g; Sodium: 3,460mg; Carbohydrates: 52g; Sugar: 6g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 10g

JACKFRUIT POT ROAST

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Whether you're looking to eliminate animal products from just some or all of your diet, you'll enjoy this simple recipe with all its big pot roast flavor. Best of all, it won't leave you with the heavy feeling you get after filling up on a bowl of beef. The jackfruit has a nice stringy texture similar to pot roast, but it is much less dense than seitan or other beef alternatives. I like my jackfruit pot roast with a big piece of buttered corn bread.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

8 cups store-bought vegan beef broth

2 large potatoes (1 to 1½ pounds each), peeled and cut into eighths

2 cups chopped celery

2 large carrots, peeled and cut into ½ -inch slices

2 large yellow onions, quartered

2 tablespoons liquid aminos

1 tablespoon Montreal steak seasoning

3 bay leaves

2 (15-ounce) packages jackfruit, drained

1. In a medium bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.

2. In a large pot over high heat, combine the broth, potatoes, celery, carrots, onions, liquid aminos, steak seasoning, and bay leaves and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 6 to 10 minutes, until the potatoes are soft but not crumbly or pasty. You need the potatoes to be firm enough to endure an additional 5 minutes of cooking without falling apart.
3. Add the jackfruit to the pot.
4. Slowly stir in the roux. If the roux is added too quickly, it will lump and cause chunks in the stew. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring, until the chowder thickens. Allow at least 5 minutes to cook off the starch from the roux. Serve immediately.

VARIATION TIP: Add ½ cup of red wine or sherry to wake up the beefy flavor of the vegan beef broth. To give it a little North Carolina bite, add ½ teaspoon of ground cloves before stirring in the roux.

PER SERVING: Calories: 632; Total fat: 20g; Saturated fat: 18g; Sodium: 2,948mg; Carbohydrates: 96g; Sugar: 9.5g; Fiber: 27g; Protein: 19g



Carolina Bog

CHAPTER 5

MAIN COURSES

Seitan Andouille Sausage

Blackened Mushroom Scallops with White Wine Sauce

Creamy Cajun Pasta

Country Captain Seitan Chicken

Carolina Bog

Walnut and Mushroom Dirty Rice

Jackfruit Barbacoa Tacos

Chicken-Fried Oyster Mushrooms/Chicken-Fried Steak

Roasted Cauliflower Steak

Portobello Fajitas

King Ranch Vegan Chicken Casserole

Spiced Pineapple Ham

Naked Chile Rellenos

Banana Blossom Catfish

Southern Goulash

SEITAN ANDOUILLE SAUSAGE

MAKES 4 SAUSAGES

Andouille sausage is a traditional addition to many dishes like gumbo, jambalaya, and pilaf, and this vegan rendition is no different. It is also a very solid main dish when grilled and served in a split French roll with peppers and onions as a po'boy, or as a centerpiece with greens and a side of [Red Beans and Rice](#) . This is a simple, tasty version of a recipe that ordinarily has twenty-three ingredients. Through a little ingenuity we will make this one pop with only thirteen. However you serve it, this andouille is sure to shine!

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME : 1 hour

¼ cup dry-packed sun-dried tomatoes

1 cup canned white beans, drained and roughly smashed

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

2 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

½ cup light red wine such as Pinot noir

2½ cups vital wheat gluten

¼ cup nutritional yeast

2 tablespoons onion powder

1½ tablespoons Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning

2 teaspoons smoked paprika

1 teaspoon mushroom powder

1 teaspoon ground mustard

½ teaspoon ground cloves

1. Fill a double boiler steam pot with water and place it over medium-high heat to warm.

2. In a small bowl, combine the sun-dried tomatoes with enough boiling water to cover and let soak for 10 minutes, or until soft. Drain, then transfer to a food processor, along with the white beans and garlic. Process on high speed for about 20 seconds, or until a uniform paste forms. Transfer to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, or a large bowl. Add the broth, wine, wheat gluten, nutritional yeast, onion powder, Creole seasoning, paprika, mushroom powder, ground mustard, and cloves. Slowly mix the ingredients, using your hands if you're not using a stand mixer, to combine, then knead the dough for 5 to 10 minutes, or until a smooth, stretchy dough forms.
3. The dough must be kneaded thoroughly to activate the gluten in the flour. This process of thoroughly working the dough into an elastic, stretchy material is what makes the seitan eventually mimic the texture of meat.
4. Divide the dough into 4 equal portions. Form one piece of dough into a ball, then flatten the ball into a disk. Roll the disk into a tight cylinder about ½ inch in diameter and 6 inches long. Repeat with the remaining dough pieces. Individually wrap the sausage cylinders tightly in heavy-duty aluminum foil, twisting both ends to keep liquid from entering.
5. Place the sausages in the top portion of the double boiler. If you don't have a double boiler, make a steamer by placing the sausages in a colander in or over a similar-size pot filled with a few inches of boiling water and covering the colander with a lid or heavy-duty aluminum foil.
6. Steam the sausages for about 1 hour, or until they become firm and bouncy to the touch, like a cooked smoked sausage. Squeeze the sausage with metal tongs to test. The sausage will expand about 30 percent when it is fully cooked. It will feel doughy and soft if it is undercooked.
7. Remove the sausages from the steamer and let them cool for 5 minutes before removing the foil.
8. The andouille can be served as is immediately, or grilled over an open fire, or browned in a sauté pan or skillet to improve the meaty texture.

MAKE IT EASIER: This recipe can be cooked in half the time by using an Instant Pot or other electric pressure cooker. Use the steamer tray insert and cook the andouille on high heat and high pressure for 30 minutes. The Bean setting on most electric pressure cookers should do the trick.

PER SERVING (1 SAUSAGE): Calories: 475; Total fat: 0.5g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 2,407mg; Carbohydrates: 48g; Sugar: 2.5g; Fiber: 7g; Protein: 58g

BLACKENED MUSHROOM SCALLOPS WITH WHITE WINE SAUCE

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

I love mushrooms because of their ability to change flavor and texture depending upon how they are prepared. Even before I began intentionally creating vegan recipes, I used mushrooms as a filler in seafood dishes because of their similar texture to octopus, scallops, and squid. Fungi were more economical than seafood but took on the same flavors and textures when cooked side by side on a grill or in a pot. These flavorful and easy vegan “scallops” are as tender and delectable as the real deal. This recipe is also a great base to riff on using your favorite herbs and spices along with other vegetables. I love making a fresh tarragon and rosemary version mixed with roasted acorn squash and cauliflower. Serve with rice, grits, pasta, or mashed potatoes. It even goes great with parsnip puree.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

1 pound large king oyster mushrooms

Juice of 1 lemon

2 tablespoons Tony Chachere’s Creole seasoning

2 tablespoons gumbo filé

1 tablespoon ground thyme

1 tablespoon ground white pepper

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter

2 cups dry white wine

¼ cup cornstarch

1 teaspoon sea salt

Grated zest of 1 lemon

1. Remove the cap or top of the mushrooms. The caps can be saved for another recipe or diced and added to the sauce. Cut the mushroom stalks into 1-inch-thick medallions. Do not use the hard non-sponge root of the mushroom. Using a paring knife, gently score a hashmark into both sides of the mushroom scallops, transfer to a bowl, and toss with the lemon juice.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the Creole seasoning, filé, thyme, and pepper to blend.
3. In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter.
4. Add the scallops to the spice bowl and lightly toss to coat, then gently place them, one by one, flat-side down, in the skillet. Sear for 2 to 3 minutes, until a light brown coat develops on the mushrooms, then flip and repeat on the other side for 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the mushrooms to a bowl.
5. Return the skillet to the heat and whisk in the wine, cornstarch, and salt, combining them with the remaining butter and spices left behind. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, whisking, or until the sauce thickens.
6. Serve the sauce in the bottom of a bowl or plate, topped with the scallops. Garnish with the lemon zest.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: You can substitute extra-virgin olive oil for the vegan butter, then serve this with wild rice, brown rice, or cauliflower rice.

PER SERVING: Calories: 256; Total fat: 10g; Saturated fat: 9g; Sodium: 2,778mg; Carbohydrates: 17g; Sugar: 2.5g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 4g

CREAMY CAJUN PASTA

SERVES 6

30 MINUTES OR LESS

The base of this creamy pasta is basically a vegan béchamel sauce. This is an excellent example of the traditional French cooking that is prevalent throughout the Deep South. Remember, these are simple dishes that you can jazz up into an elevated experience with minimal effort—don't be afraid to add a little green by folding in a handful of fresh parsley or baby spinach at the end. Serve this simply with hot French bread or topped with [Blackened Mushroom Scallops with White Wine Sauce](#) .

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

4 cups short pasta (such as rigatoni, penne, or farfalle)

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted, divided

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

1 cup frozen mixed vegetables with cauliflower

1 medium yellow or white onion, cut into ¼ -inch dice (about 2 cups)

6 garlic cloves, finely minced

4 ounces sliced cremini mushrooms

1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced

1 yellow bell pepper, seeded and diced

1 cup dry white wine

4 cups rice milk

2½ cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 tablespoons Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning

1 tablespoon ground nutmeg

1. In a large pot, cook the pasta in salted water according to the package directions until al dente. Drain, rinse with cold water, and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, make a simple roux by whisking 4 tablespoons of melted butter and the flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
3. In a large saucepan over medium heat, sauté the frozen mixed vegetables, onion, and garlic in the remaining 4 tablespoons of butter. Cook for about 4 minutes, stirring gently, until the onion is slightly translucent.
4. Add the mushrooms, red and yellow bell peppers, and wine to the pan while gently stirring. Slightly increase the temperature and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes, until the mushrooms begin to soften.
5. Stir in the rice milk, broth, Creole seasoning, and nutmeg and bring to a low boil. Reduce the heat to medium and gently stir in the roux until the sauce thickens.
6. Gently stir the pasta into the creamy sauce. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring, and then remove from the heat. Serve hot.

VARIATION TIP: Make a gluten-free version by using gluten-free pasta and substituting $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cornstarch for the simple roux. Mix 1 cup of the rice milk with the cornstarch in a separate bowl. Add the cornstarch slurry at the end of the recipe, in place of the roux.

PER SERVING: Calories: 573; Total fat: 16g; Saturated fat: 12g; Sodium: 2,505mg; Carbohydrates: 88g; Sugar: 15g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 13g

COUNTRY CAPTAIN SEITAN CHICKEN

SERVES 6

Country Captain is a curried chicken and rice dish from the Carolinas that fuses the flavors of Africa, India, and Britain into one pot. The subtle sweet hint of currants contrasting with the sharp acidic zing of stewed tomatoes creates a delightful celebration in your mouth. It's not traditional, but I like to sauté the first round of ingredients in 1 cup of sweet white wine, like a chardonnay or a Riesling. If you try this trick, reduce the broth by ½ cup.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

1 cup dried currants or raisins

4½ cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought, divided

1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste

3 tablespoons yellow curry powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

1 tablespoon agave nectar

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter

1 medium yellow or white onion, cut into ¼ -inch dice (about 2 cups)

2 cups frozen peas and carrots

1 pound store-bought vegan chicken alternative, or [Down-Home Seitan](#) , cut into 4 pieces

4 cups raw basmati rice

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

Shaved or sliced almonds, for garnish

1. In a small bowl, combine the currants and 1 cup of broth.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the tomato paste, curry powder, salt, agave, and remaining 3½ cups of broth.
3. In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion, peas and carrots, vegan chicken alternative, and rice. Sauté for about 4 minutes, until the onion is slightly translucent.
4. Pour in the currants and broth, the tomato paste and broth mixture, and the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices. Increase the heat to medium-high and bring the mixture to a low boil, stirring occasionally. Cover the pot and reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 15 minutes, or until the rice is fluffy and cooked.
5. Serve garnished with almonds.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: This dish is incredible with wild rice or brown rice as well. Use the same amount of rice, but add an additional 1 cup of broth, then cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes. The seitan in this dish is a high-protein meat alternative, though you can give this recipe a little more protein boost by adding ½ cup of shaved almonds with the broth and tomatoes.

PER SERVING: Calories: 884; Total fat: 19g; Saturated fat: 13g; Sodium: 2,829mg; Carbohydrates: 151g; Sugar: 27g; Fiber: 12g; Protein: 29g

CAROLINA BOG

SERVES 6

ONE POT

Carolina bog is a dish intended to be made in large quantities and shared with friends and family. It's a simpler and less bold version of [Country Captain Seitan Chicken](#). I like to think of the difference between these two dishes as like the difference between an osso buco and a Bolognese. The Country Captain is richer and full of spice, whereas the Carolina bog is brothier and more of a comfort food. Both dishes change drastically depending upon family and regional interpretations. Though Carolina bog is originally made with long-grain white rice, you can significantly increase the fiber content by switching to wild rice or brown rice. Anytime we make a switch that involves more fiber, there is a need for more liquid. Adjust this recipe by adding an additional 1 cup of broth.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

12 ounces store-bought seitan chicken, Beyond Meat grilled vegan chicken strips, unbreaded soy chicken strips, or [Down-Home Seitan](#)

4 cups store-bought vegan sausage, [Seitan Andouille Sausage](#), or whole sun-dried tomatoes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter

1 medium yellow or white onion, cut into ¼ -inch dice (about 2 cups)

2 cups roughly chopped celery (from 4 large celery stalks)

2 ounces fresh thyme (6 to 8 sprigs), or 1 tablespoon ground thyme

3 ounces fresh rosemary (4 sprigs), leaves removed and finely chopped, or 2 tablespoons dried rosemary leaves

4 cups raw long-grain white rice
4½ cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought
1 tablespoon sea salt
1 tablespoon ground white pepper

1. If using a single piece of seitan chicken, cut it into 4 equal pieces.
2. Slice the vegan sausage into ¼ -inch medallions. If using a brand that doesn't slice well, simply crumble the sausage into the pot when called for.
3. In an 8-quart saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the seitan chicken, sausage (if using sun-dried tomatoes, add them in step 4), onion, celery, thyme sprigs, rosemary, and rice. Sauté for about 5 minutes, until the onion is slightly translucent.
4. While gently stirring, pour in the broth and add the salt, pepper, and (if using) sun-dried tomatoes. Slightly increase the temperature and bring to a low boil, then cover the pot and reduce the heat to medium. Cook for 15 minutes, or until the rice is fluffy and cooked through. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT EASIER: When you're in a bind, the overall prep time can be halved by using an Instant Pot or other electric pressure cooker. Melt the vegan butter in the microwave, then put all the ingredients, including the melted butter, into the Instant Pot. Gently mix the ingredients with a slotted spoon, and seal the lid. Use the Rice setting and wait for the pot to do the work!

PER SERVING: Calories: 788; Total fat: 20g; Saturated fat: 14g; Sodium: 2,798mg; Carbohydrates: 121g; Sugar: 2.5g; Fiber: 9.5g; Protein: 32g

WALNUT AND MUSHROOM DIRTY RICE

SERVES 6

Standard Creole and Cajun dirty rice is a short-grained rice cooked with ground chicken liver, butter, and spices. The rice looks “dirty” because of the ground liver. This vegan version has a similar appearance because of the ground mushrooms and walnuts. For more of a musky country flavor, stir 2 tablespoons of mushroom powder and ¼ cup of white miso into the rice with the broth.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

8 ounces king oyster or shiitake mushrooms

2 red or yellow bell peppers, diced

1 cup finely chopped walnuts

2 shallots, diced

4 cups raw short-grain rice

3 large celery stalks, chopped

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter

2 tablespoons gumbo filé

1 tablespoon ground thyme

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon ground white pepper

4½ cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1. In a food processor, combine the mushrooms, peppers, walnuts, and shallots. Pulse several times, in 3-second bursts, until all ingredients are

evenly minced but not a paste.

2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the rice, celery, butter, and the minced mixture. Mix well. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring regularly, or until the shallot is almost translucent.
3. Add the filé, thyme, salt, and pepper. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring.
4. Gently stir in the broth and cover the pot with a tight lid. Let the mixture come to a boil, without stirring, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook for 13 to 15 minutes, or until the rice is fluffy and ready to eat. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: You can substitute wild rice or long-grain brown rice for the short-grain rice by adding 1 cup of broth to the recipe and simmering for an additional 10 minutes. If you need to omit the nuts due to allergies, use 1 cup of vegan ground beef alternative instead.

PER SERVING: Calories: 580; Total fat: 20g; Saturated fat: 7.5g; Sodium: 2,232mg; Carbohydrates: 88g; Sugar: 4g; Fiber: 7g; Protein: 12g

JACKFRUIT BARBACOA TACOS

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Jackfruit is an incredibly versatile meat alternative because of its meaty texture and ability to absorb the flavor of almost any spice or sauce you cook with it. The stringy texture replicates the texture of pulled pork, shredded beef, and chicken. This is an impressive and very simple recipe.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

1 (16-ounce) package jackfruit, drained

1 teaspoon dark chili powder

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground thyme

2 teaspoons sea salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves

8 (4-inch) corn tortillas

1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. In a small bowl, stir together the jackfruit, chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder, cumin, thyme, salt, and cloves. Set aside.
2. Preheat a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds.

3. Slightly dampen the tortillas by patting them with a wet paper towel, then place in the skillet, two at a time. Cook for 20 seconds, or until lightly browned, then flip. Wrap the warmed tortillas in aluminum foil. Repeat until all the tortillas are heated.
4. Add the jackfruit to the heated skillet. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, using a spatula to flip the jackfruit as it begins to brown, until browned on all sides.
5. Add the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices and the cilantro. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, gently stirring with a spatula, until the liquid thickens. Remove the jackfruit mixture from the heat and fill the warmed tortillas.

VARIATION TIP: It is fun to top these tacos with a variety of fresh ingredients like diced tomatoes, jalapeños, onions, and shredded vegan cheese.

PER SERVING: Calories: 144; Total fat: 1g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 1,379mg; Carbohydrates: 27g; Sugar: 2g; Fiber: 12g; Protein: 5g

CHICKEN-FRIED OYSTER MUSHROOMS / CHICKEN-FRIED STEAK

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

Chicken-fried chicken and chicken-fried steak have very different textures, so, to replicate them, we will use very different ingredients. Oyster mushrooms, which I use for the chicken-fried chicken, have a fluffy, light, chicken-like texture when fried or grilled. Portobellos are hearty and meaty. Massaging oil into the portobellos gives them an even meatier texture. We're using these portobellos for the chicken-fried steak. Serve with [Country Cream Gravy](#) or on a sandwich with a variety of sides from [chapter 6](#).

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

8 cups canola oil

1 pound oyster mushrooms, or 4 large portobello mushrooms

2 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar

2 teaspoons sea salt

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (optional)

2 cups rice flour

4 cups unsweetened coconut milk

4 cups [Mima's Chicken-Fried Steak Coating Mix](#)

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F.

2. Tear the oyster mushrooms into large bite-size pieces (2½ - to 3-inch sections); if using portobellos, remove the stems from the caps. Use a spoon to gently scrape the gills from the bottom of the portobello mushrooms without breaking the caps.
3. Place the mushrooms in a small bowl and gently mix in the vinegar and salt. Let the mushrooms soak for 10 minutes. If using portobello mushrooms, add the oil.
4. Place the rice flour in a medium bowl. In a second medium bowl, place the coconut milk. In a third bowl, place the coating mix.
5. Lightly dust the mushrooms in the rice flour. Then lightly dip the mushrooms in the coconut milk, but do not submerge or soak them in the milk. You do not want the mushrooms to absorb excess amounts of liquid, which will make them limp when frying, not crisp and light like chicken. Remove the mushrooms from the coconut milk and coat in the coating mix. If the mushrooms do not thoroughly coat in the mix, lightly dip them again in the coconut milk and apply a second coating of coating mix.
6. Gently drop the mushrooms into the hot oil. Cook for 1½ minutes, then use long metal tongs to rotate the mushrooms for even cooking.
7. After 3 to 4 minutes, the mushrooms will float to the top of the oil and should be crispy and light golden brown. Using tongs, transfer to a paper towel to drain. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: This dish can be made in an air fryer set at 375°F and cooked for 4 to 6 minutes. Follow steps 2 to 5; once the mushrooms are battered, lightly spray them on all sides with nonstick cooking oil spray, then place in the air fryer.

PER SERVING: Calories: 863; Total fat: 46g; Saturated fat: 23g; Sodium: 1,875mg; Carbohydrates: 100g; Sugar: 4.5g; Fiber: 12g; Protein: 17g

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER STEAK

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

Cauliflower steaks are a healthy and tasty alternative that is often overlooked in vegan cooking. At TLC Vegan Kitchen, I regularly serve this dish for holiday dinners with roasted or mashed sweet potatoes and drizzled with a roasted red bell pepper sauce. I recommend serving it with any of the sauces in [chapter 1](#) (see [here](#)).

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

1 cup raw apple cider vinegar

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons Montreal steak seasoning

4 quarts water

2 cauliflower heads

1 (4-ounce) package fresh tarragon

1. Preheat the oven to 500°F. Line a rimmed sheet pan or large shallow casserole dish with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl, whisk the vinegar, oil, and Montreal seasoning to blend.
3. In an large saucepan over high heat, bring the water to a boil.
4. Fill a large bowl with ice water and set aside.
5. Carefully lower a whole head of cauliflower into the boiling water and cook for 2 minutes. Remove it with large tongs and immediately submerge it in the ice water for 4 minutes, or until cool. Repeat with the second head of cauliflower.

6. Cut the cauliflower heads horizontally into 1-inch-thick steaks. You may get 2 to 4 steaks from each.
7. Place the cauliflower steaks on the parchment paper. Pour the vinegar mixture over the steaks.
8. Roast for 20 minutes, or until lightly brown. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: Calories: 223; Total fat: 14g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 1,888mg; Carbohydrates: 21g; Sugar: 5.5g; Fiber: 6g; Protein: 5g

PORTOBELLO FAJITAS

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Fajitas are quintessential Tex-Mex, consisting of grilled peppers, onions, steak, chicken, and shrimp. Portobello fajitas are meant to mimic the traditional skirt steak–style fajitas that are the go-to for most Texans. The Montreal-style steak seasoning and liquid smoke help mimic the meaty flavor of traditional fire-grilled fajitas. Serve with guacamole and your favorite salsa to complete the meal.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons liquid aminos

1 tablespoon Montreal steak seasoning

1 teaspoon liquid smoke

1 teaspoon ground cumin

4 large portobello mushrooms

12 (6-inch) flour tortillas

1 large yellow onion, julienned into ⅛-inch strips

1 green bell pepper, cut into ¼ -inch strips

1 red bell pepper, cut into ¼ -inch strips

1. In a small bowl, whisk the oil, liquid aminos, steak seasoning, liquid smoke, and cumin.
2. Remove the stems from the portobello caps. Use a spoon to gently scrape the gills from the bottom of the portobello mushrooms without

breaking the mushroom caps. Slice the portobellos into ¼ -inch-thick strips. Place the strips in the bowl with the liquid amino marinade and gently massage the marinade into the mushrooms. Let stand for 15 minutes.

3. Preheat a 10-inch skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds.
4. Place the tortillas in the skillet and lightly brown each side for 30 seconds, then remove and wrap in aluminum foil to keep warm. Increase the heat to medium-high. Wait 1 minute, then drain the mushrooms and place them in the skillet along with the onion and red and green bell peppers. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes to brown one side, then flip with a spatula and cook until both sides are lightly browned. Serve the mushroom fajitas in the warmed tortillas.

PER SERVING: Calories: 465; Total fat: 21g; Saturated fat: 5g; Sodium: 1,901mg; Carbohydrates: 58g; Sugar: 8g; Fiber: 5.5g; Protein: 13g

KING RANCH VEGAN CHICKEN CASSEROLE

SERVES 6

King Ranch chicken is a creamy casserole delight filled with Tex-Mex staples like tortillas and queso. It's named after the largest ranch in the United States: King Ranch, located in South Texas near Corpus Christi. The ranch occupies more square miles than the state of Rhode Island or the country of Luxembourg! This vegan King Ranch chicken casserole has an equally grand flavor. No one knows for sure who created this dish, but the most popular story sets its originator as a young lady in South Texas who entered the recipe in a national cookbook competition. She lived near the King Ranch and thought it was a catchy name. The recipe originated around the 1950s in Texas.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 45 minutes

- 1 (22-ounce) package jackfruit, drained, or 1 (16-ounce) package soy protein chicken
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained
- 3 cups [The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce](#) , or 1 (20-ounce) jar vegan queso sauce
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, drained
- 2 (8-ounce) packages vegan sour cream
- 1 cup [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought
- 1 (8-ounce) package vegan cream cheese
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons dark chili powder
- 1 tablespoon smoked chipotle chile powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon sea salt

Nonstick cooking oil spray

12 (6-inch) corn tortillas, cut into equal-size triangles

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the jackfruit, tomatoes and green chiles and their juices, cheese sauce, beans, sour cream, broth, cream cheese, cilantro, chili powder, chipotle chile powder, cumin, onion powder, and salt. Cook, stirring, for 5 to 7 minutes, until the mixture begins to lightly bubble, then remove from the heat.
3. Coat the bottom of a medium (2- to 3-quart) casserole dish with cooking oil. Pour 2 cups of the tomato mixture over the bottom of the dish.
4. Arrange 4 tortillas in an even layer covering the sauce.
5. Ladle half of the remaining tomato mixture over the tortillas, spreading it evenly with the bottom of the ladle.
6. Arrange 4 more tortillas over the sauce, then spread half of the remaining sauce over the tortillas.
7. Cover this new layer of sauce with the remaining 4 tortillas, then spread the remaining sauce over the tortillas. Cover the casserole dish with aluminum foil.
8. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and turn the oven to broil. Move the casserole to the middle rack (if it's not there already) and broil for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the cheesy top is light golden brown.
9. Remove from the oven and cut into squares like lasagne.

PER SERVING: Calories: 665; Total fat: 38g; Saturated fat: 9g; Sodium: 3,022mg; Carbohydrates: 72g; Sugar: 6g; Fiber: 28g; Protein: 17g

SPICED PINEAPPLE HAM

SERVES 4

Most holidays at my house began with a really good spiced ham, so this was one of the first things I needed to veganize. I love the pineapple that adorns holiday hams, and that was my inspiration for cutting out the middleman and just making a pineapple holiday “ham”. Not to brag, but my spiced “hams” were so good that, once, an ex-girlfriend hired her co-worker to secretly order one for her family gathering. Apparently, love does conquer all, at least love of a really good, spiced ham! I’ve made several great seitan ham recipes over the years, but I’ve always liked having a gluten-free trick up my sleeve for my celiac friends. This ham can be served sliced hot or cold on a sandwich, or sliced and piled on dressing and sweet potatoes. The whole cloves can stay in the ham until serving, just like a traditional spiced ham. I do recommend removing them in advance if serving the “ham” on a sandwich or in a dish where the ham is precut into bite-size pieces.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 1 hour to marinate

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

½ cup agave nectar

¼ cup tamari or soy sauce

1 (4-ounce) bottle pickling spice

3 tablespoons smoked paprika

2 tablespoons sesame oil

1 tablespoon liquid smoke

¼ cup whole cloves

1 large (3-pound) whole pineapple, peeled

2 cups packed organic brown sugar

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
2. In a large bowl (big enough to hold the pineapple), whisk the agave, tamari, pickling spice, paprika, sesame oil, and liquid smoke for 30 seconds to blend.
3. On a clean work surface, press the sharp side of the cloves into the pineapple 1 inch apart in a horizontal line around the fruit. Repeat three times to make four equally spaced clove lines around the pineapple.
4. Place the pineapple in the marinade and let it sit for 1 hour, rotating it every 15 minutes, four times, to distribute the marinade evenly.
5. Preheat a medium skillet over medium-high heat for 30 seconds. Place the pineapple in the skillet, reserve the marinade, and sear for 3 minutes per side, then remove from the pan.
6. Let the pineapple cool enough to handle it safely, then slice it crosswise into ½ -inch-thick rounds.
7. Submerge the pineapple rounds in the reserved marinade for 1 minute, then transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Coat the pineapple with brown sugar.
8. Preheat the same medium skillet over medium-high heat for 30 seconds. Add the pineapple pieces and sear for 3 minutes on each side, or until heated throughout.

VARIATION TIP: This recipe can be made soy-free by using coconut liquid aminos instead of tamari. If you're trying to make this soy-free, purchase soy-free liquid smoke as well. You can also give it a healthier twist by substituting coconut sugar for the organic brown sugar.

PER SERVING: Calories: 392; Total fat: 3.5g; Saturated fat: 0.5g; Sodium: 520mg; Carbohydrates: 93g; Sugar: 87g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 2g

NAKED CHILE RELLENOS

SERVES 4

For those unfamiliar with classic chile rellenos, they're stuffed and battered poblano peppers. This recipe is slightly healthier and much easier, as it's batterless—served naked! Though the chiles are served naked, I should clarify that most people serving chile rellenos are clothed. This, of course, is your choice, being that this is a home cookbook and I am a strong advocate of to each their own. Serve with rice, beans, or roasted potatoes, as you like.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 30 minutes

4 large poblano peppers

1 (16-ounce) package jackfruit, drained, or 1 (16-ounce) package soy protein chicken

1 (15.5-ounce) can black beans, drained

1 (8-ounce) package vegan cream cheese

1 tablespoon dark chili powder

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon Mexican oregano

2 cups [The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce](#) , or 1 (20-ounce) jar vegan queso

1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles (preferably Ro-Tel brand), undrained

2 cups breadcrumbs

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F.
2. Slice off one-third of each poblano pepper, lengthwise, and reserve. This section will be considered the top of the stuffed pepper. Scoop the seeds out with a small spoon and ensure the lengthwise opening is large enough to stuff ingredients into without cracking the pepper.

3. Dice the reserved pepper pieces and place in a medium bowl. Add the jackfruit, beans, cream cheese, chili powder, cumin, salt, and oregano. Gently mix with a fork until consistently blended, being careful not to smash the beans.
4. Using a small spoon, gently fill the poblanos with the jackfruit mixture, about two-thirds full. Place the peppers, open-side up, side by side, in a casserole dish and pour the cheese sauce into the peppers. It is okay if the sauce overflows the peppers, so use the entire amount.
5. Pour the tomatoes and green chiles and their juices over the cheese sauce and the peppers.
6. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the peppers, then cover the casserole dish with heavy-duty aluminum foil.
7. Bake for 20 minutes. Carefully remove the foil and bake for 5 to 10 minutes more to brown the poblano peppers and breadcrumbs. Serve immediately.

VARIATION TIP: If you love this recipe and want to play with the flavors, substitute browned vegan ground beef alternative or [Portobello Fajitas](#) for the jackfruit. If using ground beef alternative, season 12 ounces of meat substitute with the same seasonings as the jackfruit, then sauté in a skillet over medium heat for about 4 minutes, or until mostly browned. Fill each pepper with a 3-ounce scoop of “meat.” If using the Portobello Fajitas, divide the fajita recipe by four. One-fourth of the recipe will be enough to stuff four peppers.

PER SERVING: Calories: 565; Total fat: 13g; Saturated fat: 1.5g; Sodium: 2,644mg; Carbohydrates: 87g; Sugar: 12g; Fiber: 27g; Protein: 23g

BANANA BLOSSOM CATFISH

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

Banana blossom “catfish” is one of the most surprising dishes for people new to vegan cooking. Elsewhere, I explain the importance of texture when replicating seafood, meat, and dairy. This is an excellent example of how the proper texture for a dish appears in unexpected places. Flowers make incredible meat substitutes, and they often have neutral flavors. Here, we use banana blossoms to mimic fried catfish fillets, which are usually dipped in beaten eggs and buttermilk, then battered in cornmeal. You can find fresh banana blossoms at Mexican and Asian markets. Canned banana blossoms can be found on Amazon and in a variety of specialty markets, like Whole Foods. Serve with tartar sauce or on a sandwich with a variety of sides from [chapter 6](#).

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

8 cups canola oil

1 (16-ounce) can banana blossoms in brine, or 1 pound fresh banana blossoms

3 cups rice flour, divided

4 cups unsweetened coconut milk

3 cups cornmeal

1 tablespoon Tony Chachere’s Creole seasoning

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil to 350°F.
2. Remove the blossoms from the can and drain them. If using fresh blossoms, peel open the pod to reveal the blossom, then cut it into four

lengthwise slices. If using small blossoms, halve them lengthwise.

3. Place 2 cups of rice flour in a medium bowl. In a second medium bowl, place the coconut milk. In a third bowl, whisk the remaining 1 cup of rice flour, cornmeal, and Creole seasoning to blend.
4. Working one at a time, lightly dust a banana blossom in the rice flour, then dip the blossom into the coconut milk. Do not submerge or soak the blossom. You do not want it to absorb excess amounts of liquid, which will make the blossoms limp when frying and not crisp and light like catfish. Remove the banana blossom from the coconut milk and thoroughly coat it in the cornmeal mix. If it is not thoroughly coated in the mix, lightly dip it again in the coconut milk and apply a second coating of cornmeal.
5. One at a time, gently drop the banana blossoms into the hot oil. To avoid sticking, do not overcrowd the pot; work in batches as needed. Cook for 1½ minutes, then use long metal tongs to rotate the blossoms to allow even cooking.
6. After 3 to 4 minutes, the banana blossoms will float to the top of the oil and should be crispy and light golden brown. Remove with tongs and place on a paper towel to drain. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: This dish can be made in an air fryer set at 375°F and cooked for 4 to 6 minutes. Follow steps 2 to 5; once the banana blossoms are battered, lightly coat them on all sides with extra-virgin olive oil, then place them in the air fryer.

PER SERVING: Calories: 886; Total fat: 44g; Saturated fat: 23g; Sodium: 893mg; Carbohydrates: 107g; Sugar: 1g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 13g

SOUTHERN GOULASH

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Another traditional Southern side, goulash was one of my favorite dishes as a kid. My parents loved that it was packed full of vegetables and was an economical way to feed an entire family. Goulash is basically a succotash or vegetable stew with meat. It has its roots in eastern Europe and, thanks to immigrants, found a home in the United States. You really can't go wrong with whatever vegetables you add.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

- 3 cups dried macaroni
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 bell pepper, any color, diced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 6 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans stewed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 yellow squash, diced
- 4 ounces fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large pot, cook the macaroni according to the package instructions until al dente. Drain and set aside.

2. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil. Add the bell pepper, onion, and garlic and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the onion is slightly translucent.
3. Add the tomatoes and their juices, the squash, basil, salt, paprika, red pepper flakes, and black pepper. Gently stir until the mixture begins to boil. Simmer for 10 minutes, until the flavors meld.
4. Gently stir in the macaroni and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve immediately.

VARIATION TIP: Goulash is typically made with ground beef or ground pork. This recipe is great with browned Impossible or Beyond Meat, as well as hen of the woods mushrooms. When adding vegan meat substitutes or mushrooms, add them while sautéing the pepper and onion. When adding the tomatoes, I like to add ½ cup of red wine to add a little zing.

PER SERVING: Calories: 524; Total fat: 15g; Saturated fat: 2g; Sodium: 2,241mg; Carbohydrates: 85g; Sugar: 16g; Fiber: 8g; Protein: 14g





Southern-Style Greens

CHAPTER 6

VEGETABLES AND SIDES

Beer-Battered Okra

Spicy Pickled Okra

Stewed Tomatoes and Okra

Southern-Style Greens

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Scalloped Potatoes

Down-Home Vegan Mac 'n' Cheese

Glazed Sweet Potatoes

Country Dijon Potato Salad

Creamed Corn Pudding

Red Beans and Rice

Green Bean Casserole

BEER-BATTERED OKRA

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS

The beer batter for this fried okra gives it a light, fluffy, and crisp texture that highlights the flavor of the vegetable. This recipe works great with whole okra or bite-size medallions. When frying frozen okra, use cut okra, because it cooks more quickly than whole frozen okra and prevents overbrowning the batter.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

8 cups canola oil

1½ cups rice flour, divided

2¼ cups unbleached wheat flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

1 teaspoon Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning

2 (12-ounce) cans or bottles ice-cold beer (preferably a light-colored beer)

1 pound fresh or frozen okra, cut or whole

1. In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat the oil to 375°F if using fresh okra, or 350°F if using frozen okra.
2. Place 1 cup of rice flour in a medium bowl. In another medium bowl, whisk the remaining ½ cup of rice flour, wheat flour, baking powder, and Creole seasoning to break up clumps and distribute the seasoning. Whisk in the cold beer until it forms a thick batter, about 3 minutes. Once the batter is mixed, it is best to keep it chilled until needed. You can store it for several hours but not overnight. The baking powder and the carbonation in the beer become less active with time.

3. Dust the okra in the rice flour, then, using metal tongs, dip it into the beer batter, making sure the okra is coated entirely with the batter. Using metal tongs, carefully drop the battered okra into the hot oil to avoid splashing.
4. Gently rotate the okra once with the tongs, then cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until crisp and golden brown. If you're frying frozen okra, it may take 1 to 2 minutes more to cook.
5. Remove the fried okra from the oil with tongs and drain on a paper towel. Serve hot.

VARIATION TIP: Fried okra is amazing, but this beer batter works great for any vegetable to make delicious, crunchy sides and starters.

PER SERVING: Calories: 482; Total fat: 20g; Saturated fat: 1.5g; Sodium: 187mg; Carbohydrates: 64g; Sugar: 2g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 8g

SPICY PICKLED OKRA

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

Historically, pickling has been a necessity for storing and preserving fruits, vegetables, and even meats throughout the South, especially when there was no refrigeration. The summer months were bountiful with produce, but it was impossible to utilize all of the crops at one time. Pickling helped salvage food from the bounty to utilize during the scarcer months. No Southern cookbook is complete without at least one pickled staple. Pickled okra makes an amazing garnish for meats, vegetables, and sandwiches as well as a tasty addition to salads and rice dishes. Spoon a little on almost anything to give it a salty, spicy kick.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 20 minutes to 24 hours to pickle

COOK TIME: 5 minutes

1 pound fresh or frozen whole okra, thawed if frozen

¼ medium or small yellow onion, halved

2 serrano peppers

3 garlic cloves, peeled

2 tablespoons kosher salt

1 tablespoon whole peppercorns

4 cups apple cider vinegar

1. In a medium saucepan over high heat, bring 8 cups of water to a boil. Add the okra, onion, and peppers. Boil for 2 minutes, then drain.
2. Slice the okra and peppers into ¼ -inch rounds, then place them in a quart-size mason jar.

3. Add the onion, garlic, salt, and peppercorns to the jar. Fill the jar with vinegar to the top, then seal with the lid.
4. Refrigerate the jar and serve as soon as 20 minutes after pickling. For optimal flavor, allow 24 hours before serving. Keep refrigerated for up to 2 months.

VARIATION TIP: This quick pickling technique can be used with a variety of vegetables like cucumbers, peppers, and root vegetables. Boost the flavor by adding 2 bay leaves, 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and 1 rosemary sprig with the vinegar.

PER SERVING: Calories: 95; Total fat: 0g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 189mg; Carbohydrates: 12g; Sugar: 3g; Fiber: 4g; Protein: 2g

STEWED TOMATOES AND OKRA

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Okra's popularity as a Southern crop was made possible because of the many enslaved Africans that brought this plant and the knowledge of cultivating it with them from their homeland. A native plant of North Africa, okra was an easy transplant to the hot and fertile lands of the southern United States. It is a durable crop that thrives in heat and fertilizes the soil for future crops. Stewed tomatoes and okra is a staple dish throughout the South, but one that has a variety of versions depending upon where it's prepared. In the Southwest, the dish is usually more tart with a bit of spice. Around Georgia and North Florida, it is much sweeter and skips the spice altogether. No matter where the dish is prepared, it is almost certainly served with rice, greens, and corn bread.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

1 (28-ounce) can stewed tomatoes

3 medium shallots (about 4 ounces), peeled and julienned

1 pound whole or sliced fresh or frozen okra, thawed if frozen

2 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar

1 tablespoon agave nectar

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

½ teaspoon sea salt

1. Strain the tomatoes, reserving the liquid from the can.

2. Preheat a medium skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds. Add the shallots and sauté for 30 seconds. Gently stir the shallots once, then add the reserved liquid from the tomatoes to the skillet. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until the shallots become translucent.
3. Stir in the okra, drained tomatoes, vinegar, agave, pepper, and salt. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until heated through.

VARIATION TIP: This is a quick version of a Southern favorite, though it is easy to spice it up to create more of a Louisiana version: Add 1 julienned bell pepper, any color, 1 peeled garlic clove, crushed, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper to really make it shine. Add the peppers and garlic with the shallots in step 2. The cayenne can be added with the remaining ingredients.

PER SERVING: Calories: 95; Total fat: 0g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 189mg; Carbohydrates: 12g; Sugar: 3g; Fiber: 4g; Protein: 2g

SOUTHERN-STYLE GREENS

SERVES 4

ONE POT

Greens were transformed by the African transplants who prepared them in the 1600s. Enslaved families were allotted the tops of turnips, collards, and mustard greens, and they cooked these bitter leaves down into a salty, smooth gravy served with corn bread and rice. By the mid-1800s, slow-cooked greens were popular throughout South. If purchasing fresh, uncut greens, soak the greens in salted water (see tip), then rinse thoroughly and cut into 1-inch squares.

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

COOK TIME: 1 hour 15 minutes

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 pound washed and cut fresh mustard greens or frozen mustard greens

1 pound washed and cut fresh collard greens or frozen collard greens

1 large white onion (about 8 ounces), diced (about 3 cups)

2 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#)

1 rutabaga or turnip (about 18 ounces), peeled and diced

3 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon garlic powder

2 teaspoons smoked salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon sea salt

1. In a large pot over medium heat, heat the oil for 30 seconds. Add the mustard greens, collard greens, and onion. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring with a long wooden spoon, until the greens cook down, reducing to a soft, leafy texture surrounded by liquid.
2. Pour in the broth and add the rutabaga, vinegar, onion powder, garlic powder, smoked salt, pepper, and sea salt. Cover the pot. Cook for about 1 hour, stirring occasionally to avoid sticking to the pot, or until the greens are tender. You may need to add 1 to 2 cups of water throughout the simmering process. Once the greens are tender, serve hot.

INGREDIENT TIP: If you can't purchase pressure-washed greens, you must thoroughly wash them yourself: Soak the greens in salted water for 20 minutes, then rinse and drain them until you feel they are clean. Then wash them two more times.

PER SERVING: Calories: 224; Total fat: 11g; Saturated fat: 1.5g; Sodium: 2,125mg; Carbohydrates: 27g; Sugar: 10g; Fiber: 10g; Protein: 8g

GARLIC MASHED POTATOES

SERVES 4

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Because of their affordability, density, and ability to stay warm while you're preparing other dishes, mashed potatoes have always been a go-to dish for Southern families. Yet, there is a delicate art to creating perfect mashed potatoes. There are two distinct secrets that guarantee the texture and rich flavor people crave when looking for the perfect mashed potatoes. The most important thing is not to overcook or undercook the potatoes. The perfect boiled potato is soft enough that it crumbles but is not overcooked, which makes it waterlogged and pasty. The second secret is to whip the potatoes in a hot pot. It helps keep them fluffy and light! This quick, simple, foolproof recipe yields mashed potatoes that are delicious plain, served with [Gluten-Free Savory Brown Gravy](#), or topped with a dollop of vegan butter.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#)

2 large potatoes (2 pounds total), peeled and quartered

3 garlic cloves, peeled

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter

¼ cup rice milk

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

2 teaspoons sea salt

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

1. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine the broth, potatoes, and garlic. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium. Simmer for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft and flaky when poked with a fork.
2. Remove the pot from the heat, drain the liquid, and then add the butter, rice milk, oil, nutritional yeast, salt, and pepper to the potatoes and garlic in the pot.
3. Using a handheld electric mixer or a whisk, mix until fluffy and smooth. This should take about 2 minutes with an electric hand mixer, or about 5 minutes manually with a sturdy metal whisk. Serve hot.

PER SERVING: Calories: 399; Total fat: 24g; Saturated fat: 11g; Sodium: 1,900mg; Carbohydrates: 43g; Sugar: 2.5g; Fiber: 3.5g; Protein: 6g

SCALLOPED POTATOES

SERVES 4

Because of the shameless amount of butter, cheese, and cream in scalloped and au gratin potatoes, they are traditionally served for special occasions. The vegan version makes this dish more approachable for the daily dinner table with its minimal amount of vegan butter and cholesterol-free ingredients. When you're making a transition to plant-based eating, it is important to have a few decadent options.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 35 minutes

2 large potatoes (2 pounds total), peeled and sliced into ¼ -inch-thick medallions

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

2 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 cups rice milk

¼ cup nutritional yeast

1 tablespoon sea salt

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F.
2. Layer the potato medallions in a 3- or 4-quart casserole dish.
3. In a small bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
4. In a large saucepan, whisk the broth, rice milk, nutritional yeast, salt, onion powder, garlic powder, and pepper. Place the pan over medium-

high heat, then bring the mixture to a light boil. Reduce the heat to medium, then slowly whisk in the roux. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the liquid thickens. Pour the liquid over the potatoes in the casserole pan. Cover the casserole with aluminum foil.

5. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for 5 minutes more, or until the potatoes are soft when pricked with a fork. Serve immediately.

VARIATION TIP: Before covering the casserole with foil, sprinkle on 2 or 3 scallions, white and green parts, finely chopped, 3 tablespoons of McCormick bacon bits, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegan parmesan.

PER SERVING: Calories: 481; Total fat: 21g; Saturated fat: 18g; Sodium: 2,596mg; Carbohydrates: 65g; Sugar: 8g; Fiber: 4.5g; Protein: 9g

DOWN-HOME VEGAN MAC 'N' CHEESE

SERVES 4

The earliest reference I found to mac and cheese in the South was in what is considered by most to be the first American cookbook, *The Virginia Housewife* by Mary Randolph, published in 1824. Ms. Randolph's recipe was layered cheese, macaroni, and butter. As various techniques formed regionally, so did opinions about which version of this comfort food was correct.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 30 minutes

3 cups dried macaroni

¼ cup plain breadcrumbs

3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh rosemary leaves, divided

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

4 cups rice milk

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

1 cup Follow Your Heart vegan shredded mozzarella

1 cup Violife vegan shredded Cheddar

1. In a large pot, cook the macaroni according to the package instructions until al dente. Drain and set aside.

2. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the breadcrumbs and 1 tablespoon of rosemary. Pour onto the prepared baking sheet and toast for 1 to 2 minutes, or until golden brown. Set aside.
4. In a small bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
5. In a large saucepan over medium heat, stir together the rice milk, onion powder, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring, or until boiling.
6. Whisk in the roux, remaining 2 tablespoons of rosemary, and mozzarella and Cheddar. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, whisking, until the sauce thickens. Stir the macaroni into the cheese sauce and remove the pan from the heat.
7. Scoop the mac and cheese onto a serving plate, then top with the toasted breadcrumbs.

VARIATION TIP: This recipe can easily be made gluten-free by using a gluten-free pasta and substituting $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cornstarch for the flour.

PER SERVING: Calories: 996; Total fat: 48g; Saturated fat: 32g; Sodium: 1,874mg; Carbohydrates: 126g; Sugar: 16g; Fiber: 6.5g; Protein: 14g

GLAZED SWEET POTATOES

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

There are countless succulent sweet potato recipes, but these glazed sweet taters have a particular versatility. I also like the fact that this dish can be turned into a whipped sweet potato recipe simply by skipping the glazing instructions and whipping the ingredients into the potatoes. Most sweet potato recipes utilize brown sugar or molasses as garnish. To make this one a little healthier, I use low-glycemic agave.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter

2 large sweet potatoes (about 30 ounces), peeled and cut into 1-inch dice

¼ cup agave nectar

2 teaspoons sea salt

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

1. Preheat the oven to 475°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter, then remove the pan from the heat.
3. Drop the sweet potatoes into the pan and stir to coat them lightly in the butter.
4. With a slotted spoon, transfer the potatoes to the prepared baking sheet, leaving most of the melted butter in the saucepan.

5. Bake the sweet potatoes for 20 minutes, or until they can be pierced easily with a fork.
6. Return the saucepan with the melted butter to medium heat. Cook the butter for about 2 minutes, or until it begins to boil. Add the agave, salt, cinnamon, and cloves. Stir until the mixture begins to bubble and caramelize.
7. Gently stir the roasted sweet potatoes into the caramelized mixture to coat. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT EASIER: Make this recipe in a fraction of the time using canned sweet potatoes. Follow the glazing instructions from step 6 after draining the canned potatoes.

PER SERVING: Calories: 602; Total fat: 40g; Saturated fat: 36g; Sodium: 1,560mg; Carbohydrates: 59g; Sugar: 25g; Fiber: 6.5g; Protein: 3g

COUNTRY DIJON POTATO SALAD

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS

There are few dishes more universal than potato salad. This particular potato salad is unique in that it can be served either warm or chilled. The recipe calls for chilling the potatoes for at least 20 minutes, though you can add the remaining ingredients shortly after cooking the potatoes and serve the salad warm. A nice addition is [Smoky Mushroom Bacon](#) . Serve with Southern-style mains or sides, like [Jalapeño Corn Muffins](#) , coleslaw, [Spiced Pineapple Ham](#) , [Seitan Andouille Sausage](#) , [Chicken-Fried Oyster Mushrooms](#) , or [Chicken-Fried Steak](#) .

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 20 minutes to chill

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

8 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 (10- to 15-ounce) potatoes, peeled and cut into ½ -inch dice

2 tablespoons sea salt

1 cup vegan mayonnaise

¼ cup whole-grain Dijon mustard

2 scallions, white and green parts, finely chopped

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large pot over high heat, combine the broth, potatoes, and salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for 6 to 10 minutes, until the potatoes are soft but not crumbly or pasty. You need the potatoes to be firm enough to endure mixing without falling apart.

2. Drain the potatoes and transfer to a baking sheet, spreading them into a single layer. Place the baking sheet with the potatoes into the freezer for 20 minutes to quickly chill them.
3. Transfer the chilled potatoes to a medium bowl. Stir in the mayonnaise, mustard, scallions, and pepper.

PER SERVING: Calories: 512; Total fat: 36g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 1,708mg; Carbohydrates: 32g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 4g

CREAMED CORN PUDDING

SERVES 4

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

As mentioned before, the Scottish and British had a good amount of influence on much of American regional cuisine. The British loved their puddings, and it is no wonder there are numerous great puddings found throughout the South. This particular dish was one my grandmother made for special family dinners. Grandma's was packed with cream, sugar, and eggs. This version is a bit lighter.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter, melted

1 (15-ounce) can whole kernel corn, strained, liquid reserved, divided

3 tablespoons agave nectar

2 tablespoons soft silken tofu

1 recipe Jalapeño Corn Muffins batter—minus the peppers ([here](#))

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Spread a little of the melted butter evenly around a medium cast iron skillet or a small casserole dish.
3. Pour the remaining butter into a food processor and add half of the corn, the agave, and the tofu. Blend for 15 seconds, or until creamy.
4. To the muffin batter, whisk in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the reserved corn water, the creamy corn mixture, and the remaining corn, whisking for 30 seconds to 1 minute, until thoroughly combined. Using a rubber spatula, scrape all of the batter into the prepared skillet.

5. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until light brown hints appear on top.
6. Let cool for 5 minutes before scooping out portions to serve.

PER SERVING: Calories: 860; Total fat: 46g; Saturated fat: 38g; Sodium: 788mg; Carbohydrates: 101g; Sugar: 17g; Fiber: 6.5g; Protein: 12g

RED BEANS AND RICE

SERVES 6

If there was a top 10 list of the most popular Southern foods of all time, I'm sure red beans and rice would make the cut. It's a filling, protein-rich dish that works as a main or a side depending on what else is on the table. Red beans and rice is typically seasoned with ham hocks, smoked neck bones, or sausage. This is a meat-free version; a little [Seitan Andouille Sausage](#) adds a special kick.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOK TIME : 1 hour

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, melted

¼ cup unbleached wheat flour

8 cups water

3 cups dried dark kidney beans

1 medium yellow onion, diced (about 2½ cups)

1 tablespoon Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning

3 bay leaves

9 cups cooked short-grain rice

1 scallion, white and green parts, finely chopped

1. In a small bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
2. In a large saucepan with a lid over high heat, combine the water, beans, onion, Creole seasoning, and bay leaves. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-high and cover the pan. Cook for about 45 minutes, or until the beans are tender.

3. Gently stir the roux into the pot and reduce the heat to medium. Cook, stirring, for about 5 minutes, until the liquid thickens.
4. Serve with a scoop of rice, garnished with the chopped scallion.

MAKE IT EASIER: This recipe time can be cut in half by using an Instant Pot or other electric pressure cooker. Combine everything from step 2 in the pressure cooker. Set the pressure cooker for the Bean cycle, or high pressure for 30 minutes. When the beans are ready, stir in the roux, seal the lid, and set the pressure cooker for 2 minutes.

PER SERVING: Calories: 753; Total fat: 7.5g; Saturated fat: 6g; Sodium: 758mg; Carbohydrates: 141g; Sugar: 1g; Fiber: 26g; Protein: 30g

GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

SERVES 4

In most of the South, this is known as “string bean” casserole. I don’t think I realized that most of the world called these vegetables green beans until my teens. And they are legumes, not beans! Although green bean casserole was invented in the Campbell’s Soup test kitchen in 1955, it has been adopted as a Southern side dish and is regularly served at Southern gatherings. Pacific Foods makes a good mushroom broth.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, melted

¼ cup unbleached wheat flour

1 pound fresh green beans, blanched, or 1 pound frozen green beans, thawed, or 2 (15.5-ounce) cans green beans, drained

4 cups vegan mushroom broth

1 pound sliced cremini mushrooms

1 small yellow onion, diced (about 1½ cups)

2 teaspoons sea salt

1 teaspoon onion powder

2 cups store-bought vegan fried onions

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. In a small bowl, make a simple roux by whisking the melted butter and flour until a smooth paste forms. Set aside.
3. Place the green beans in a medium casserole.

4. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine the broth, mushrooms, onion, salt, and onion powder. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-high and stir the roux into the pan. Reduce the heat to medium and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the liquid thickens. Pour the broth mixture over the green beans in the casserole dish and cover with aluminum foil.
5. Bake on the middle rack for 10 minutes. Remove the casserole from the oven, then remove the foil.
6. Cover the green beans with the fried onions, then return the uncovered casserole to the oven for 5 minutes, until the sauce is thick and the onions are crisp and golden. Serve immediately.

MAKE IT HEALTHIER: Replace the melted vegan butter with extra-virgin olive oil.

PER SERVING: Calories: 390; Total fat: 24g; Saturated fat: 17g; Sodium: 1,946mg; Carbohydrates: 33g; Sugar: 6g; Fiber: 4g; Protein: 7g



Key Lime Pie

CHAPTER 7

DESSERTS AND BREADS

Auntie Bess's Apple Pie

Spiced Sweet Potato Pie

Peachtacular Cobbler

Bourbon Pecan Pie

Key Lime Pie

Coconut Cream Pie

El Paso Biscuits

Bourbon Street Bread Pudding

Jalapeño Corn Muffins

Double Chocolate Dream Cake

AUNTIE BESS'S APPLE PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH DEEP-DISH PIE (8 SERVINGS)

The most common apple pie in the South is similar to the traditional Dutch laced-top pie, though there are many sugared breadcrumb-topped pies in the Southwest, as well as variations with pecans and raisins. Although the most labor-intensive part of pie making is always the crust, I think it's worth the effort. Luckily, there are vegan crusts available at your local grocery if you need a shortcut. I like Mrs. Smith's Deep Dish Flaky Pie Crust because of its depth—real homemade Southern pies are hearty and have a little height.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes, plus 10 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

FOR THE CRUST

7 cups unbleached wheat flour, plus more for dusting

2 cups organic confectioners' sugar

½ teaspoon sea salt

2 cups (4 sticks) cold vegan butter, divided

4 tablespoons ice water, divided, plus more as needed

Nonstick cooking oil spray

FOR THE FILLING

2½ cups water, divided

3 tablespoons cornstarch

1 cup organic unbleached raw granulated sugar

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter

½ teaspoon sea salt

4 cups fresh apple slices, or 4 cups frozen apple slices, or 2 (15.5-ounce) cans apple slices

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

TO MAKE THE CRUST

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, confectioners' sugar, and salt for about 30 seconds to blend. Transfer half of the flour mixture to a food processor, along with 1 cup (2 sticks) of butter and 2 tablespoons of water. Blend on high speed until a consistent dough forms. If the dough looks and feels like soft powder pebbles, add a bit more water and blend until a nonsticky dough forms. This process should take no more than 1 minute. If the food processor runs too long, it will heat the dough and create a tough crust.
2. Place a large piece of parchment paper on a work surface and transfer the dough to it. Form the dough into a ball on the parchment.
3. Repeat the process with the remaining flour mixture, butter, and cold water.
4. Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Using a rolling pin, gently roll each dough ball on the prepared surface into a 10-inch circle, about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick.
5. Lightly coat a 9-inch deep-dish pie pan with cooking oil, then lay one dough circle in the pan. With your hands, form the dough evenly over the outside edges of the pie pan, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch over the edge. Set the second pie dough circle aside.

TO MAKE THE FILLING AND BAKE THE PIE

6. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F.
7. In a small bowl, whisk $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and the cornstarch until the cornstarch dissolves.
8. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the remaining 2 cups of water and the granulated sugar, butter, and salt. Cook until the mixture

comes to a low boil.

9. Whisk the cornstarch slurry into the pan and continue cooking over medium heat until the sauce thickens.
10. Stir in the frozen apples and lemon juice and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the apples thaw, then remove the pan from the heat. If using canned apples, drain them and stir them into the pot, then immediately remove from the heat.
11. Pour the apple pie filling into the pie shell. Put all of the apples in the pie shell, but do not overfill the pie shell with liquid. Depending upon how moist your frozen apples are, you may end up with a little extra liquid filling. This liquid can be used as a sauce for vegan ice cream, waffles, or any variety of desserts.
12. Place the second pie dough circle over the top of the pie. Be sure to center it, so the edges will evenly spill over the side around the entire pie. Use your fingers to roll the bottom piecrust edges over the top piecrust edges and pinch the dough together around the entire pie. Use a fork to press indentations around the edge of the pie to help seal the crust.
13. Using a small knife, cut 5 (2-inch) slits in the top of the piecrust to vent steam and avoid the formation of bubbles in the top crust. Make these slits evenly separated from each other.
14. Place the pie on a baking sheet, then place the baking sheet on the middle oven rack. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the pie turns light brown.
15. Let cool for at least 10 minutes before serving.

VARIATION TIP: For more flavor, use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of triple sec, rather than water, when making the cornstarch slurry. A great hack is to mix 2 cups of breadcrumbs, 1 cup of sliced almonds, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of packed brown sugar, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground cinnamon in a medium bowl. Pour this mixture over the top of the pie rather than topping it with the second piecrust. Cover the pie with aluminum foil for the first 10 minutes of cooking, then remove the foil and cook for 5 minutes more. This makes a very festive and even easier apple pie recipe.

PER SERVING: Calories: 1,147; Total fat: 55g; Saturated fat: 45g; Sodium: 647mg; Carbohydrates: 154g; Sugar: 55g; Fiber: 4.5g; Protein: 12g

SPICED SWEET POTATO PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH DEEP-DISH PIE (8 SERVINGS)

I like to have a few recipes in my back pocket that let the store do the majority of the work for me. There are few recipes faster or simpler than this one for spiced sweet potato pie. When making pies from dense root vegetables or squash, add a little citrus or apple cider to the mix for a little acid zing.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 1 hour to cool

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

1 (9-inch) Mrs. Smith's Deep Dish Flaky Pie Crust, or 1 (1-crust) batch homemade piecrust (see [here](#))

2 (15.5-ounce) cans cut sweet potatoes in syrup, drained

¼ cup light agave nectar or maple syrup

2 teaspoons grated citrus zest

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ teaspoon sea salt

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. Thaw the frozen crust for 15 minutes. Leave the crust in the pie tin package in which it was purchased.
3. In a blender, combine the sweet potatoes, agave, citrus zest, vanilla, salt, and cinnamon and blend on medium speed until smooth. Scoop the sweet potatoes into the pie shell and evenly spread with the back of a large spoon.
4. Place the pie on a baking sheet, then place the baking sheet on the middle oven rack. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the pie has light golden-

brown peaks.

5. Let cool for at least 1 hour before serving, either chilled or at room temperature. Store in the refrigerator for 6 days or at room temperature for 2 days.

VARIATION TIP: This simple spiced sweet potato pie has great flavor, but to elevate your pie game even further, add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of ground cloves and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of ground nutmeg to the sweet potato mix to give the pie a holiday feel.

PER SERVING: Calories: 235; Total fat: 5g; Saturated fat: 2.5g; Sodium: 273mg; Carbohydrates: 46g; Sugar: 23g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 2g

PEACHTACULAR COBBLER

MAKES ONE 9-INCH COBBLER (8 SERVINGS)

When it comes to cobbler, the South is the undisputed champion. When it comes to peach cobbler, the South, again, reigns supreme. When American settlers began migrating southwest, they didn't have the supplies available back home for basic dishes, like pies. They made do with pickled fruits and jams for fillings and biscuit dough rather than traditional piecrusts. From this was born the modern-day cobbler. You can make the biscuit dough (see [El Paso Biscuits](#)), use a store-bought vegan biscuit dough, or use two packages of refrigerated biscuits.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes, plus 5 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

2 batches [El Paso Biscuit](#) dough, divided

Nonstick cooking oil spray

2½ cups water, divided

3 tablespoons cornstarch

2 cups organic unbleached raw sugar, plus 2 tablespoons

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter

½ teaspoon sea salt

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

4 cups fresh peach slices, or 4 cups frozen peach slices, or 2 (15.5-ounce) cans peach slices, undrained

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F.

2. Place a piece of parchment paper on a work surface. Starting with the first batch of biscuit dough, form a large ball and flatten it with your hands on the parchment paper. With a rolling pin, gently roll the circle flat, to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Repeat with the second batch of biscuits and set the two crust circles aside.
3. Lightly coat a ceramic, glass, or cast iron casserole dish with cooking oil, then lay one biscuit dough circle in the dish. With your hands, form the dough evenly over the outside edges of the dish, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch over the edge. Set the second biscuit dough circle aside.
4. In a small bowl, whisk $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and the cornstarch until the cornstarch dissolves.
5. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine 2 cups of sugar with the butter, salt, cloves, and the remaining 2 cups of water. Cook until the mixture comes to a low boil.
6. Whisk the cornstarch slurry into the pan and continue cooking over medium heat until the sauce thickens.
7. Stir the frozen peaches and lemon juice into the mixture and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the peaches thaw, then remove the pan from the heat. If using canned peaches, stir the peaches and their liquid into the pan, then immediately remove the pan from the heat.
8. Pour the peach filling over the biscuit dough in the casserole dish. Utilize all of the peaches in the pan, but do not overfill the cobbler dish with liquid. Depending upon how moist your frozen peaches are, you may end up with a little extra liquid filling.
9. Cut the second biscuit dough circle into 1-inch strips, making about 8 strips about 8 inches long. Criss-cross the strips over the cobbler filling, leaving small visible spaces of cobbler filling between the dough strips. The result should look like a diagonal checkerboard. Sprinkle the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar over the cobbler.
10. Place the cobbler on a baking sheet, then place the baking sheet on the middle oven rack. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the cobbler turns light

brown. Let cool for at least 5 minutes before serving.

PER SERVING: Calories: 807; Total fat: 35g; Saturated fat: 27g; Sodium: 962mg; Carbohydrates: 117g; Sugar: 64g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 9g

BOURBON PECAN PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH DEEP-DISH PIE (8 SERVINGS)

I remember the first time I discovered that the weird green-husked pods that covered the ground around my home were not only edible but contained the tasty delicacy that is a pecan. My friends and I filled trash bags with these tasty ground treats and plotted to make loads of money selling pecans to people and stores. About two hours into the cracking and de-shelling process, we realized we had enough for a pie and decided to treat ourselves instead, calling it a day. Pecan pie is still my favorite dessert. I hope this story doesn't deter you from collecting free pecans on your way home from school—or wherever you've been.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 10 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

FOR THE CRUST

3½ cups unbleached wheat flour

1 cup organic confectioners' sugar

½ teaspoon sea salt

1 cup (2 sticks) cold vegan butter

2 tablespoons ice water, plus more as needed

Nonstick cooking oil spray

FOR THE FILLING

¼ cup bourbon

¼ cup cornstarch

3 cups dark corn syrup

½ cup molasses

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

½ teaspoon sea salt

3 cups pecan halves

TO MAKE THE CRUST

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, confectioners' sugar, and salt for about 30 seconds, until evenly blended. Transfer the flour mixture to a food processor, along with the butter and water. Blend on high speed until a consistent dough forms. If the dough looks and feels like soft powder pebbles, add a couple teaspoons more of water and blend until a nonsticky dough forms. This process should take no more than 1 minute.
3. Place a piece of parchment paper on a work surface and transfer the dough to it. With a rolling pin, gently roll the dough ball into a 10-inch circle about ⅛ inch thick. Lightly coat a deep-dish 9-inch pie pan with cooking oil, then lay the dough circle in the pan. With your hands, form the dough evenly over the outside edges of the pie pan, about ¾ inch over the edge. Pinch the edges to form a pattern around the top of the piecrust.

TO MAKE THE FILLING AND BAKE THE PIE

4. In a small bowl, whisk the bourbon and cornstarch until the cornstarch dissolves.
5. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the corn syrup, molasses, butter, vanilla, and salt. Bring to a low boil.
6. Whisk the cornstarch slurry into the pan and continue cooking over medium heat until the sauce thickens.
7. Fill the piecrust with the pecans, then pour the syrup over the pecans, filling the pie just to the brim of the pan with the liquid and pecans. Do not overfill the pan.

8. Place the pie on a baking sheet, then place the baking sheet on the middle oven rack. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the pie turns light brown. Let cool for at least 10 minutes before serving.

VARIATION TIP: For a modern twist, substitute an equal amount of walnuts or pistachios for the pecans. If using pistachios, give the pie a Mediterranean zing by switching out the bourbon for Grand Marnier or Cointreau, in the same amount.

PER SERVING: Calories: 1,193; Total fat: 54g; Saturated fat: 25g; Sodium: 661mg; Carbohydrates: 174g; Sugar: 124g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 9g

KEY LIME PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH PIE (8 SERVINGS)

Key lime trees, like many other American plants, are a transplant brought by the Spaniards sometime in the 1500s. The large, thick-rind limes in most American supermarkets today are a hybrid of the key lime called Persian limes, which are not as tart and acidic as key limes but are less susceptible to insects and the environment and have therefore become a more popular crop. It's believed that key lime pie was first invented by fishermen in the Florida Keys in the late nineteenth century and was popularized by a wealthy Key West resident's cook. Regardless of who created it, the South embraced its tart-sweet creaminess with open arms.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes, plus 30 minutes to chill the bowl and beaters, overnight to chill the coconut cream, and 1 hour 10 minutes to chill the pie

COOK TIME: 20 minutes

FOR THE GRAHAM CRACKER CRUST

1 (15-ounce) box vegan graham crackers (Keebler's or Kellogg's original graham crackers)

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, melted

½ teaspoon sea salt

Nonstick cooking oil spray

FOR THE WHIPPED CREAM TOPPING

1 (15.5-ounce) can coconut cream, chilled overnight

¼ cup organic confectioners' sugar

¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

⅛ teaspoon xanthan gum

FOR THE FILLING

⅓ cup freshly squeezed key lime or lime juice

Grated zest of 2 key limes or limes (about 6 teaspoons), divided

2 tablespoons agar agar

2 tablespoons cornstarch

¼ teaspoon salt

1 (15.5-ounce) can coconut cream

TO MAKE THE GRAHAM CRACKER CRUST

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. Place half of the graham crackers into a food processor. Process on high speed for 20 seconds, or until a fine powder forms. Remove the crumbs and repeat until you have 2 cups of cracker crumbs. Place the crumbs in a medium bowl and whisk in the melted butter and salt until everything is evenly combined and the crust sticks together if pressed between two fingers.
3. Lightly coat a 9-inch pie pan with cooking oil, then scrape the crust into the pan with a rubber spatula. Evenly spread the crust from the center of the pan toward the outside edges. Press the piecrust up evenly along the sides of the pie pan. Using the back of a spoon, smooth and flatten the crust around the top edges.
4. Bake on the middle rack for 10 minutes, then remove and set aside.

TO MAKE THE WHIPPED CREAM TOPPING

5. Place the bowl of a stand mixer and the whisk attachment, or a large stainless-steel bowl and handheld electric mixer beaters, in the freezer for at least 30 minutes.
6. Open the can of chilled coconut cream and scrape the fatty cream from the can into the chilled mixing bowl. Discard the remaining clear liquid, or save it for another use.

7. Add the sugar, vanilla, and xanthan gum to the coconut cream and whisk on medium-high speed for 30 seconds, or until the cream thickens. Once the cream thickens, immediately turn off the mixer. The longer the mixer runs, the warmer the bowl and whipped cream become. Heat will make your whipped cream fall and become liquid.
8. Place the whipped cream in the refrigerator.

TO MAKE THE FILLING AND THE PIE

9. In a small bowl, whisk the key lime juice, $4\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of key lime zest, agar agar, cornstarch, and salt until smooth.
10. Pour the coconut cream into a saucepan and place it over medium heat. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the coconut cream begins to steam. Whisk in the key lime juice mixture and cook for about 3 minutes more, whisking, until the filling thickens. Do not let the coconut milk boil! Reduce the heat if the coconut milk begins to boil. Using a rubber spatula, scrape the thickened filling into the piecrust. Let cool for at least 10 minutes before refrigerating for 1 hour.
11. Remove the pie from the refrigerator and dollop the whipped cream on top. With the back of a large spoon, evenly spread the whipped cream across the filling.
12. Sprinkle the remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of key lime zest evenly across the pie, cut, and serve.

PER SERVING: Calories: 534; Total fat: 34g; Saturated fat: 27g; Sodium: 606mg; Carbohydrates: 51g; Sugar: 16g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 4g

COCONUT CREAM PIE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH PIE (8 SERVINGS)

In the South, coconut cream pie has long been the king of desserts at truck stops and diners, family gatherings, and backyard cookouts. Coconut didn't make a huge debut in the States until the late nineteenth century, but it took off quickly from there. Coconut's exotic flavor and unique texture made it a popular addition to candies and desserts. Once coconut custard recipes gained popularity, the coconut cream pie quickly followed. Two key elements of a great coconut pie are the texture of the coconut cream and the fluffy toasted meringue on top.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes, plus 1 hour 10 minutes to chill

COOK TIME: 35 minutes

FOR THE GRAHAM CRACKER CRUST

1 (15-ounce) box vegan graham crackers (Keebler's or Kellogg's original graham crackers)

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, melted

¼ cup toasted coconut flakes

½ teaspoon sea salt

Nonstick cooking oil spray

FOR THE VEGAN MERINGUE TOPPING

1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas

½ cup organic confectioners' sugar

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

¼ teaspoon xanthan gum

FOR THE FILLING

¼ cup cornstarch, plus more as needed

1 tablespoon agar agar

2 (15.5-ounce) cans coconut cream, divided

¼ cup toasted coconut flakes

TO MAKE THE GRAHAM CRACKER CRUST

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Place half of the graham crackers into a food processor. Process on high speed for 20 seconds, or until a fine powder forms. Remove the crumbs and repeat until you have 2 cups of cracker crumbs. Place the crumbs in a medium bowl and whisk in the melted butter, coconut flakes, and salt until everything is evenly combined and the crust sticks together when pressed between two fingers.
3. Lightly coat a 9-inch pie pan with cooking oil, then scrape the crust into the pan with a rubber spatula. With the back of a large spoon, evenly spread the crust from the center of the pan toward the outside edges. Push the piecrust up evenly along the sides of the pie pan. Smooth and flatten the crust around the top edges with the back of the spoon.
4. Bake on the middle rack for 5 minutes, then remove and set aside.

TO MAKE THE VEGAN MERINGUE TOPPING

5. Drain the liquid from the can of chickpeas, also known as aquafaba, into the bowl of a stand mixer or a large stainless-steel bowl. You should have about ¾ cup. Save the chickpeas for another use.
6. Using the whisk attachment or a handheld electric mixer, whisk the aquafaba on medium speed for 2 minutes, until froth begins to form. Add the confectioners' sugar, vanilla, cream of tartar, and xanthan gum. Continue mixing for 7 to 10 minutes, until the meringue begins to peak. Set aside.

TO MAKE THE FILLING AND BAKE THE PIE

7. In a small bowl, whisk the cornstarch, agar agar, and ¼ cup of coconut cream to blend.
8. Place the remaining coconut cream in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring, until the coconut cream begins to steam. Do not let it boil!
9. Stir the cornstarch slurry into the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until the filling thickens to a pudding-like consistency. If the cream does not thicken within 10 minutes, you must start with a new cornstarch slurry. Whisk an additional ¼ cup of cornstarch into ¼ cup of cool water, then add the slurry to the filling and stir less frequently this time, cooking the cream over a higher temperature for less time.
10. Remove the thickened filling from the heat and use a rubber spatula to scrape the filling into the piecrust.
11. Dollop the meringue over the filling, making sure to cover the entire coconut cream surface and leaving plenty of peaks and plateaus in the meringue. The more texture the meringue has, the better it will brown and set.
12. Bake on the middle rack for 15 minutes. If the meringue doesn't brown, increase the oven temperature by 25°F and let brown for 4 or 5 minutes more.
13. Remove the pie from the oven and sprinkle with the toasted coconut flakes. Let cool for at least 10 minutes before refrigerating for at least 1 hour before serving.

MAKE IT EASIER: When in a time crunch, substitute store-bought vegan coconut milk whipped cream for the meringue. You can also cut time by not baking the pie. Once you've made the crust, do not place it in the oven; instead place it in the refrigerator while making the pie filling. Once the pie filling has thickened, pour it into the chilled piecrust and then place it in the refrigerator for 1 hour. Once it has chilled, add the store-bought whipped cream and toasted coconut flakes. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: Calories: 580; Total fat: 36g; Saturated fat: 29g; Sodium: 537mg; Carbohydrates: 57g; Sugar: 20g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 4g

EL PASO BISCUITS

MAKES 6 BISCUITS

30 MINUTES OR LESS

There are two basic types of biscuits in the South. Texas-style biscuits are flaky and sturdy, leavened with baking powder, and often accompanied by sausage gravy or topped with potatoes and eggs. In Georgia, Mississippi, and the Carolinas, biscuits tend to be softer and sweeter as a result of the softer flour in the region; they tend to be leavened with baking soda and are usually accompanied by jams, preserves, and honey. Baking soda is a chemical leavening agent that needs acid to activate it and make your baked goods rise, which is why traditional Southern biscuit recipes usually call for buttermilk. Because we use baking powder in Texas biscuits, this recipe can be made with rice milk or the vegan buttermilk we create.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup cold soy milk

1 teaspoon raw apple cider vinegar

2 cups unbleached wheat flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

1 tablespoon organic unbleached raw sugar

1 teaspoon nutritional yeast

1 teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick) cold vegan butter

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a small bowl, stir together the soy milk and vinegar for 30 seconds, until the milk curdles.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder, sugar, nutritional yeast, and salt for 30 seconds to evenly mix and disperse the ingredients.
4. In a food processor, combine the soy milk mixture, flour mixture, and butter. Process on high speed for 30 seconds, or until a smooth dough forms. If you do not have a food processor, in a large bowl, cut the butter into the flour with a dough knife or pastry cutter. Stir in the buttermilk, then use your hands to mix the ingredients into a dough ball.
5. Carefully remove the dough from the food processor, using a small spatula to scrape out all the dough. Scoop the dough into 6 (¼ -cup) balls and place the dough balls 3 inches apart on the prepared baking sheet.
6. Bake on the middle rack for 12 to 15 minutes, or until light golden-brown hues appear throughout.
7. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

VARIATION TIP: This recipe is amazing with vegan parmesan, vegan bacon bits, or jalapeños. Do not add more than 2 tablespoons of dry volume or more than 1 tablespoon of wet volume. If you stay within these parameters, you can add any variety of flavors and still maintain the correct consistency.

PER SERVING (1 BISCUIT): Calories: 299; Total fat: 14g; Saturated fat: 12g; Sodium: 497mg; Carbohydrates: 36g; Sugar: 3.5g; Fiber: 1.5g; Protein: 5g

BOURBON STREET BREAD PUDDING

SERVES 8

Most baked desserts need some type of binder to keep them from crumbling apart, but this bread pudding is an exception to that rule. Although bread pudding typically uses eggs and milk to obtain the “sticky” pudding texture, here the oil from the vegan butter combined with the fat in the vegan milk helps make up for the lack of eggs to hold this dessert together. Bread pudding is a popular dessert in the South, in part because it is an easy way to utilize day-old bread, but also because it appeals to the Southern sweet tooth. The Bourbon Street style adheres to the Southern love of using sauces and alcohol in the kitchen.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 45 minutes

FOR THE BREAD PUDDING

5 cups unsweetened coconut milk, plus more as needed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup organic unbleached raw granulated sugar

4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) vegan butter

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 stale loaf white or wheat bread, torn (about 12 cups), plus more as needed

FOR THE WHISKEY SAUCE

1 cup (2 sticks) vegan butter

1 cup whiskey

2 cups organic unbleached raw granulated sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ cup unsweetened coconut milk

½ cup organic confectioners' sugar

TO MAKE THE BREAD PUDDING

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 500°F.
2. In a 4-quart saucepan over medium heat, combine the coconut milk, granulated sugar, butter, vanilla, and cinnamon, and cook until the butter melts.
3. Place the bread in a large bowl and pour the milk mixture over the bread. Carefully and gently mix the bread and milk together until a sticky dough forms. Do not overmix the bread into indistinguishable pieces, but keep it as damp gooey pieces. For best results, allow a few minutes to let the milk mixture cool, and then mix gently with your hands rather than a spoon. All the liquid should be absorbed by the bread before moving to the next step. If the bread is sopping wet and dripping, add a little more bread to the mix. If the bread is dry and not moist throughout, add a little more coconut milk.
4. Using a spatula, scrape all the bread and liquid from the bowl into the top of a double boiler.
5. Fill the bottom part of the double boiler with about 1 inch of hot water and then set the top pan, full of bread pudding, over the bottom pan. The water does not need to touch the bottom of the top pan, because it will steam the pudding once the water boils. The double boiler will prevent the bread pudding from crisping and sticking to the bottom of the pan.
6. Cover the bread pudding with aluminum foil or a tight-fitting lid, then place the double boiler in the oven on the middle rack. Bake for 30 minutes if the water is hot, or 45 minutes if the water in the double boiler is not hot, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the pudding comes out clean. Remove the bread pudding from the oven and set aside.

TO MAKE THE WHISKEY SAUCE

7. In a 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter.
8. Carefully stir in the whiskey, granulated sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon. The whiskey may flame, but do not be alarmed. The fire is just the alcohol cooking out of the whiskey. Cook for about 1 minute, stirring, and the sugar should dissolve and begin to caramelize.
9. Stir in the coconut milk and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until the sauce bubbles and begins to thicken again. Remove the sauce from the heat while you portion out servings of the pudding.
10. Pour a generous amount of sauce over the bread pudding servings, then dust them with the confectioners' sugar.

VARIATION TIP: If you really want to “NOLA” up this dish, add some sliced fruit and pecans to the whiskey sauce at the same time you add the whiskey. Raisins and pecans can also be added to the bread before mixing in the milk. I recommend about 2 tablespoons of each if you’re adding them to the bread.

PER SERVING: Calories: 955; Total fat: 58g; Saturated fat: 51g; Sodium: 452mg; Carbohydrates: 104g; Sugar: 76g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 8g

JALAPEÑO CORN MUFFINS

MAKES 6 MUFFINS

Corn bread was an essential staple for most early settlers of the South. It was served with buttermilk for breakfast, with greens for lunch, and then again with beans and rice for a hearty dinner. For many Southerners, corn bread was the one item they could expect to see at every meal. A basic corn bread recipe includes cornmeal, salt, a leavening agent, and water.

Depending on the region in which you dwell, you can also make your cornbread with either sugar or molasses. This recipe can be on the table in less than 40 minutes.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 10 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

4 tablespoons (½ stick) vegan butter, melted, divided

1 cup unsweetened coconut milk

2 tablespoons ground flaxseed

1½ cups cornmeal

1 cup unbleached wheat flour

1 (4-ounce) can diced jalapeño peppers, drained

2 tablespoons soft silken tofu

1 tablespoon baking powder

½ teaspoon sea salt

1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Lightly grease 6 wells of a standard muffin tin with a bit of the melted butter.

3. In a small bowl, stir together the coconut milk and flaxseed. Let stand for 5 minutes to thicken, then transfer to a medium bowl.
4. Whisk in the remaining melted butter, cornmeal, flour, jalapeños, tofu, baking powder, and salt until mostly smooth, about 1 to 2 minutes. Pour the batter equally into the prepared muffin tin, filling each well about two-thirds full.
5. Bake on the middle rack for 12 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
6. Let cool for 10 minutes before removing the muffins from the tin.

VARIATION TIP: This recipe is equally good with a variety of regional peppers. Try Hatch green chiles, which can be purchased in 4-ounce cans right beside the jalapeños.

PER SERVING (1 MUFFIN): Calories: 375; Total fat: 15g; Saturated fat: 13g; Sodium: 297mg; Carbohydrates: 50g; Sugar: 0.5g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 6g

DOUBLE CHOCOLATE DREAM CAKE

MAKES ONE 9-INCH CAKE (8 SERVINGS)

Chocolate cake is by no means a purely Southern dessert, but it is definitely a popular necessity for this book. Cocoa beans had been used in Mexico and Central America for thousands of years, but they didn't become popular in North America until the mid-1500s, when the Spaniards brought them to Florida. Cocoa was utilized in savory dishes by the Indigenous Peoples of what is now Mexico for centuries before Europeans began creating chocolate candies and pastries. This recipe is equally sweet and chocolatey, though you can dial down the sweetness using just half the sugar and still get a rich, dark chocolate result.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 30 minutes to cool

COOK TIME: 25 minutes

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SAUCE (OPTIONAL)

1 cup agave nectar

¼ cup coconut oil, melted

2 tablespoons cocoa powder

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

FOR THE CAKE

1 teaspoon coconut oil, plus ⅓ cup

1⅓ cups unbleached wheat flour, plus more for dusting

Nonstick cooking oil spray (optional)

¼ cup vegan chocolate chips (optional)

1 cup organic unbleached raw sugar

¾ cup unsweetened coconut milk

2½ tablespoons soft silken tofu

2 tablespoons vegan mayonnaise (preferably Follow Your Heart brand)

1 tablespoon cocoa powder

2 teaspoons baking soda

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon raw apple cider vinegar

TO MAKE THE CHOCOLATE SAUCE (IF USING)

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the agave, coconut oil, cocoa powder, and vanilla for 30 seconds, or until thoroughly mixed.

TO MAKE THE CAKE

2. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
3. Lightly coat a 9-inch cake pan with 1 teaspoon of coconut oil, then dust the oiled pan with flour or spray with cooking oil.
4. In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of coconut oil and the chocolate chips (if using) and melt in the microwave for 20 to 30 seconds on high power. Alternatively, melt the oil and chocolate in a double boiler on the stovetop for about 1 minute. Pour the coconut oil mixture into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, or use a large mixing bowl and a handheld electric mixer.
5. Add the flour, sugar, coconut milk, tofu, mayonnaise, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and vinegar, and mix for about 2 minutes on high speed, until mostly smooth. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan.
6. Bake on the middle rack for 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
7. Let cool for 30 minutes before removing the cake from the pan and serving, topped with the chocolate sauce (if using).

VARIATION TIP: Substitute 6 tablespoons of rum for $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the coconut milk. The result will be a fluffier and more flavorful chocolate cake.

PER SERVING (WITHOUT SAUCE): Calories: 314; Total fat: 16g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 24mg; Carbohydrates: 41g; Sugar: 24g; Fiber: 1g; Protein: 3g



Country Cream Gravy

CHAPTER 8

SAUCES AND STAPLES

Vegan Chicken Broth

Mima's Chicken-Fried Steak Coating Mix

Gluten-Free Savory Brown Gravy

Louisiana Roux

Country Cream Gravy

The Ultimate Vegan Cheese Sauce

Homemade Vegan Whipped Cream

Vegan Ranch Dressing

Tofu Scramble Puree

Down-Home Seitan

VEGAN CHICKEN BROTH

MAKES 4 QUARTS

ONE POT

Broths and bullions are at the center of many Southern recipes. Having a handy arsenal of frozen, canned, and powdered versions of these staples at your fingertips makes throwing together a vegan dish on a moment's notice a cinch. There are a variety of store-brand vegan chicken broths, but this homemade one is economical, quick, and can be frozen for future recipes. It can also serve as the base for chicken and rice soup by simply adding soy protein chicken and cooked rice. Remember, the ingredients can all be roughly chopped or whole, because they will be strained out at the end.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 30 minutes

5 quarts water

2 large yellow onions, quartered

1 celery bunch, halved

4 large carrots, roughly chopped

1 (3-ounce) bunch fresh thyme, or ¼ cup ground thyme

1 (2-ounce) bunch fresh rosemary

¼ cup pickling spice

¼ cup nutritional yeast

3 tablespoons sea salt

2 tablespoons poultry seasoning

1 tablespoon whole coriander seed

3 whole cloves, or ½ teaspoon ground cloves

1. Place a large fine-mesh strainer or a large flour sieve over a large pot in the sink.
2. In another large pot over high heat, combine the water, onions, celery, carrots, thyme, rosemary, pickling spice, nutritional yeast, salt, poultry seasoning, coriander seed, and cloves and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cook for about 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the broth has reduced by 20 percent. Remove the broth from the heat, then remove the large ingredients with a long, slotted spoon. These items can be placed in a bowl until they cool to save for stews or sides, or discarded.
4. With a large ladle or measuring cup with a handle, scoop the broth from the pot into the strainer to strain the broth. Once the broth is strained, discard the spices, herbs, and ingredients in the strainer. If desired, ladle the broth through the strainer a second time, to catch any additional ingredients.
5. The final broth should be slightly cloudy and resemble a light-colored chicken broth. Chill or freeze in ice cube trays to use in future recipes. This broth can keep refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 7 days, or frozen for 6 months.

PER SERVING (2 CUPS): Calories: 13; Total fat: 0g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 2,632mg; Carbohydrates: 1g; Sugar: 0.5g; Fiber: 0g; Protein: 1g

MIMA'S CHICKEN-FRIED STEAK COATING MIX

MAKES ABOUT 6 CUPS

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Over the years many people have asked me, “Chef Troy, how do you teach the vegan chickens to fry the steaks?” A little-known fact is that my famous vegan chicken-fried steak is neither made by chickens nor always fried. The key to a good chicken-fried steak, or chicken-fried anything, is to create a light, crispy batter. This recipe produces a high-protein, gluten-free coating that can be used with virtually any type of food. I’ve crusted everything from pickles and olives to vegan boiled eggs, and they all taste great with this simple recipe. I use this mix regularly with my countertop electric fryer, as well as my air fryer. It even works great with some items in the oven. To save time, make this coating mix in a large batch and keep it handy in your cupboard or freezer for when the urge to batter-fry something strikes. I’ve done enough talking—let’s get clucking!

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

4 cups chickpea flour

2 cups fine rice flour

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 tablespoon smoked paprika

1 tablespoon salt

2 teaspoons garlic powder

1 teaspoon ground thyme

In a large bowl, whisk the chickpea flour, rice flour, onion powder, paprika, salt, garlic powder, and thyme for 1 minute, or until evenly distributed. Store in airtight containers or zip-top bags.

VARIATION TIP: The flavor and texture of this mix can be adjusted to match the style of the meal you are making. If you are frying asparagus for a Cajun feast, simply add ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper and 1 teaspoon of gumbo filé to one batch of the coating mix for a distinctive Louisiana Creole touch. If you're making Kentucky-style chicken-fried mushrooms and you want the mix to taste like that famous colonel's, replace 2 cups of chickpea flour with White Lily flour or another Southern brand of soft red wheat flour when making the mix. The flour and an extra dash of salt will help mimic the texture and flavor you're looking for.

PER SERVING (½ CUP): Calories: 260; Total fat: 2.5g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 582mg; Carbohydrates: 50g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 7.5g; Protein: 8g

GLUTEN-FREE SAVORY BROWN GRAVY

MAKES 2½ CUPS

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS

Brown gravy is the smooth base for many stews and sauces throughout the South. It's the rich and salty signature flavor in pot roast, oxtail stew, and Salisbury steak. It's also the underlying flavor in many versions of liver and onions. I use mushroom broth in this recipe because of its versatility and availability, but there are many store-bought vegan beef broths that work well for brown gravy. Don't be afraid to add more or fewer onions per your preference or your favorite wine, because the true nature of Southern cooking is improvisation and adaptation. The variations in this recipe's tip are exactly that.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

2 cups vegan mushroom broth, divided

2 tablespoons cornstarch

¼ small yellow onion, finely diced (about ¼ cup)

2 tablespoons tamari or liquid aminos

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1. In a medium bowl, whisk ½ cup of broth and the cornstarch until the cornstarch dissolves. Set aside.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, sauté the onion until lightly browned.

3. Stir in the remaining 1½ cups of broth, tamari, and garlic powder. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce boils, then cook for 5 minutes, stirring.
4. While stirring, gradually pour in in the cornstarch slurry. Adding it a bit at a time avoids clumping and caking. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, to cook off the starch and allow the gravy to thicken.

VARIATION TIP: Add ½ cup of red wine or sherry just before adding the slurry to add richness. I also like to add a thyme sprig and 1 cup of sliced mushrooms. This gravy works well with 1 tablespoon of minced fresh sage as well. There are no limits to how you can adapt this recipe to mimic beef sauces, mushroom sauces, and beef demi-glace.

PER SERVING (½ CUP): Calories: 24; Total fat: 0g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 587mg; Carbohydrates: 4g; Sugar: 0.5g; Fiber: 0g; Protein: 2g

LOUISIANA ROUX

MAKES 2½ CUPS

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

A thickening agent for sauces and soups, roux consists of equal parts flour and oil. White roux is cooked within 5 minutes and used for white sauces like béchamel. Blonde roux is light brown and used in gravies and light soups. Dark-brown roux takes upwards of 20 minutes to make and is very tricky not to burn. Both vegan butter and avocado oil have relatively high smoke points, which is an important quality, especially for a dark roux—the higher the smoke point, the more difficult it is to burn the oil.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

2 cups unbleached wheat flour

2 cups (4 sticks) vegan butter or avocado oil

1. Pour the flour into a dry medium skillet or saucepan and place it over medium heat. Cook for 1 minute, stirring, until the flour is warm and slightly toasted.
2. Stir in the butter and let the flour thicken with the melting butter to form a thick paste. Continue stirring as the flour continues to brown. After about 5 minutes, all of the starch should have cooked out of the flour and you will have a nice blond roux. Remove the roux from the heat if using for a white sauce. Continue cooking and stirring if your intent is a darker roux. After 10 minutes, you should have a dark brown and creamy roux. If you begin to suspect that the flour is beginning to burn, quickly scoop your roux into a sealable heat-resistant bowl or container.

3. If using the roux immediately, add the spices from the recipe and stir for an additional minute before removing from the heat.
4. This roux may be stored in an airtight container for weeks at room temperature.

PER SERVING (¼ CUP): Calories: 379; Total fat: 32g; Saturated fat: 29g; Sodium: 224mg; Carbohydrates: 19g; Sugar: 0g; Fiber: 0.5g; Protein: 3g

COUNTRY CREAM GRAVY

MAKES 3½ CUPS

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Country cream gravy, in many parts of the South, is simply called gravy. It is the staple go-with for everything from chicken-fried steak to biscuits and gravy. The standard cream gravy is very basic with few variations. It starts with flour, water, salt, pepper, lard, butter, and milk. This particular recipe will be a little easier on your arteries and your stomach.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOK TIME: 10 minutes

½ cup [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

½ cup unbleached wheat flour

8 tablespoons (1 stick) vegan butter

1½ cups rice milk

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the broth, nutritional yeast, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper until evenly mixed. Set aside.
2. Put the flour in a small dry skillet and place it over medium heat. Cook for 1 minute, stirring, until the flour is warm and slightly toasted. Stir the butter into the flour and let the mixture thicken with the melting butter to form a thick paste.

3. Stir in the seasoned broth and cook, stirring continuously, until the paste is completely mixed with the broth.
4. Stir in the rice milk and cook, stirring continuously, for 3 to 4 minutes, until the cream gravy is creamy and thick, with no lumps.

VARIATION TIP: Like [Gluten-Free Savory Brown Gravy](#) , this gravy can be customized. Rather than red wine, use a dry white wine. Other than the change of wine color, every trick mentioned in the brown gravy variation (see [here](#)) works wonderfully with the cream gravy. Be sure to add an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of flour for every $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of liquid added to the recipe.

PER SERVING ($\frac{1}{2}$ CUP): Calories: 165; Total fat: 12g; Saturated fat: 10g; Sodium: 528mg; Carbohydrates: 12g; Sugar: 3g; Fiber: 0.5g; Protein: 2g

THE ULTIMATE VEGAN CHEESE SAUCE

MAKES 1 QUART

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

Many new vegans cooking in the Southern style struggle to find great vegan cheese sauce. My cheese sauce is incredible, because it's easy to make, it tastes amazing, and it is virtually allergen-free! Most vegan cheese recipes include raw cashews, which are at the top of the list when it comes to nut allergies. It is nice to have a cheese option that doesn't alienate so many diners. This sauce is terrific in casseroles, over macaroni, or made into a queso dip.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

2¾ cups water

1 medium russet potato (10 to 12 ounces), peeled and quartered

1 medium carrot (6 to 8 ounces), peeled and cut into 8 pieces

¼ small yellow onion, diced (about 2 tablespoons)

¾ cup nutritional yeast

5½ tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon tahini

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

2½ teaspoons sea salt

⅓ teaspoon garlic powder

⅓ teaspoon ground cumin

1. In a large saucepan over high heat, combine the water, potato, carrot, and onion. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer for about 15 minutes, until the potato and carrot flake with a fork. Do not allow the potato to overcook and become pasty. Remove from the heat.
2. Add the nutritional yeast, oil, tahini, lemon juice, salt, garlic powder, and cumin. Using an immersion blender or a handheld electric mixer, blend the ingredients in the saucepan until a creamy cheese sauce forms. If the sauce is thicker than desired, add additional warm water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the sauce reaches your desired thickness.
3. Refrigerate the sauce in an airtight container for up to 6 days, or freeze for 3 months.

VARIATION TIP: To make this recipe into queso, first make a pico by dicing 1 jalapeño pepper, 1 Roma tomato, and $\frac{1}{4}$ small yellow onion. Mix the diced vegetables into the hot cheese sauce along with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chopped fresh cilantro, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of chili powder, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of ground cumin. Cook for 1 minute.

PER SERVING ($\frac{1}{2}$ CUP): Calories: 156; Total fat: 10g; Saturated fat: 1.5g; Sodium: 754mg; Carbohydrates: 12g; Sugar: 1.5g; Fiber: 2.5g; Protein: 4g

HOMEMADE VEGAN WHIPPED CREAM

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • ONE POT

There are few dessert toppings more universal than whipped cream. It elevates almost any dessert and is one of the items that many people thought they would have to give up when going vegan. I've made this recipe countless times for diners new to vegan whipped cream, and every time, I'm thrilled at their surprise and excitement!

PREP TIME: 10 minutes, plus 30 minutes to chill the bowl and beaters and overnight to chill the coconut cream

1 (15.5-ounce) can coconut cream, chilled overnight

¼ cup organic confectioners' sugar

¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

⅛ teaspoon xanthan gum

1. Place the bowl of a stand mixer and the whisk attachment, or a large stainless-steel bowl and handheld electric mixer beaters, in the freezer for at least 30 minutes.
2. Open the can of chilled coconut cream and scrape the fatty cream from the can into the chilled mixing bowl. Discard the remaining clear liquid, or save it for another use.
3. Add the sugar, vanilla, and xanthan gum to the coconut cream and whisk on medium-high speed for 30 seconds, or until the whipped cream thickens. Once the cream thickens, immediately turn off the mixer. The longer the mixer runs, the warmer the bowl and whipped cream become. Heat will make your whipped cream fall and become liquid.

4. If making ahead, refrigerate the whipped cream in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

VARIATION TIP: I'm here to tell you that there are fifty shades of whipped cream. Replace the vanilla extract with almond extract for a fun variation on Southern [almond honey butter](#) , or add mint extract for the flavor of Kentucky Derby mint juleps. The flavors are only as limited as your imagination!

PER SERVING (2 TABLESPOONS): Calories: 62; Total fat: 5.5g; Saturated fat: 5.5g; Sodium: 1mg; Carbohydrates: 3g; Sugar: 2g; Fiber: 0g; Protein: 0g

VEGAN RANCH DRESSING

MAKES 1 QUART

30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

To the average Southerner, ranch dressing is a cure-all condiment. It's served with salads, fried dishes, corn chips, and pizza. I know that last one isn't in the general repertoire of the South, but it is on the radar for new vegans. This needn't change because you're going vegan, and this recipe is both quick and versatile: Add fresh cilantro or other fresh herbs and jalapeño or chipotle, depending on your taste and intended accompaniment.

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

2 cups vegan mayonnaise

1 cup rice milk

½ small Roma tomato

¼ small carrot, peeled

¼ small yellow onion

1 scallion, white and green parts

1 tablespoon onion powder

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon sea salt

1. In a blender, combine the mayonnaise, rice milk, tomato, carrot, onion, scallion, onion powder, pepper, and salt and blend for 30 seconds, or until all the ingredients are mixed.
2. Serve chilled with almost anything. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for up to 10 days.

VARIATION: For jalapeño ranch, add ¼ cup of chopped fresh cilantro and 1 fresh jalapeño, diced, with seeds. A dill or tarragon ranch can be made by adding 2 tablespoons of fresh herbs or 2 teaspoons of dried. A new twist to help jazz up cauliflower wings is a lemon pepper ranch. Add 1 teaspoon of lemon pepper and 1 teaspoon of grated lemon zest to the blender.

PER SERVING (¼ CUP): Calories: 381; Total fat: 36g; Saturated fat: 0g; Sodium: 645mg; Carbohydrates: 4g; Sugar: 2g; Fiber: 0.5g; Protein: 0g

TOFU SCRAMBLE PUREE

MAKES 4 CUPS

5 INGREDIENTS OR LESS • 30 MINUTES OR LESS • ONE POT

There are many vegan recipes that call for an egg substitute, and not just for scrambled eggs. If you are not in the market for purchasing a liquid vegan egg product from the grocery store, this recipe will help fill the gap. As in [Tofu Scramble](#), black salt is the key ingredient. It is the secret replicator of the sulfur smell and flavor of eggs. Black salt is mined at the base of the Himalayas and is used frequently in Indian and Pakistani dishes. It is easy to find in most Asian grocery stores as well as very economical to purchase online.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

2 (14- to 16-ounce) packages extra-firm tofu

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

1 tablespoon Himalayan black salt or kala namak

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ teaspoon onion powder

½ teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

Drain the tofu and place it in a blender. Add the nutritional yeast, black salt, turmeric, onion powder, sea salt, and pepper. Blend on high speed until the ingredients are thoroughly mixed into a fine paste. Use in recipes as you would eggs: As a binder in a savory recipe, 1 tablespoon equals 1 egg; as an egg substitute in an egg-based dish, 3 tablespoons equal 1 egg.

PER SERVING (1 CUP): Calories: 112; Total fat: 5.5g; Saturated fat: 1g; Sodium: 1,453mg; Carbohydrates: 3g; Sugar: 0.5g; Fiber: 2g; Protein: 12g

DOWN-HOME SEITAN

SERVES 4

Seitan is a wonderful meat alternative and possibly one of the most useful tools in your vegan faux-meat arsenal. Seitan is made from a high-protein wheat flour called vital wheat gluten, which is basically wheat flour that has had most of the starch washed away until mostly protein is left. At the end of the day, think of seitan as a really chewy high-protein bread. There are literally thousands of flavors and textures that can be created with this magical material. This recipe can be substituted for most of the meat alternatives throughout this book. Although it takes a bit of effort up front, the final product is well worth it—if chilled properly, seitan can be stored in the refrigerator for up to ten days and kept frozen for a couple months, making all your subsequent cooking easier! Vital wheat gluten can be ordered online if you can't find it locally.

PREP TIME: 15 minutes, plus 8 hours to chill

COOK TIME: 45 minutes

1 cup water

2 tablespoons tamari or liquid aminos

1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or avocado oil

1 tablespoon white miso

1½ cups vital wheat gluten

1 tablespoon onion powder

1½ teaspoons garlic powder

½ teaspoon ground white pepper

10 cups [Vegan Chicken Broth](#) or store-bought

1. In a large bowl, whisk the water, tamari, oil, and miso until blended.

2. In a small bowl, whisk the vital wheat gluten, onion powder, garlic powder, and pepper.
3. In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the broth to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium.
4. Spread a large sheet of parchment paper on a clean work surface.
5. Gradually whisk the gluten mixture into the tamari mixture until a solid ball begins to form. Transfer the dough to the parchment and knead it by hand for about 12 minutes, until it acquires a stretchy, elastic consistency. It will feel similar to play dough and will almost snap when pulled apart. Once the dough reaches this consistency, stop working. If the dough is overworked, the seitan turns out chewy and hard. If the dough is underworked, the gluten does not form and the seitan turns out like boiled bread.
6. If you want a single solid piece of seitan that will be sliced later, move to step 7. If you are making nuggets, strips, or patties, then cut the seitan into these shapes before proceeding.
7. With long metal tongs, gently lower the seitan into the boiling broth. Be sure to continuously rotate the seitan to cook it evenly on all sides. Avoid letting the broth overboil by monitoring the heat regularly. If you are boiling a single solid piece of seitan, cook for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until firm. If you are preparing smaller pieces, the cook time should be no more than 30 to 35 minutes.
8. Once the seitan is cooked, remove it from the broth and chill it in the refrigerator, unwrapped, for 1 hour before placing it in a sealed container and chilling for an additional 7 hours before using.

VARIATION TIP: The boiled seitan is an empty canvas for flavor application, awaiting the final step of grilling, frying, or baking. The seitan can be seasoned with any variety of spices, herbs, or sauces before searing. I like to sprinkle mixed herbs like thyme, rosemary, and sage on the seitan with a pinch of sea salt before searing it in a hot skillet.

PER SERVING: Calories: 272; Total fat: 5g; Saturated fat: 0.5g; Sodium: 734mg; Carbohydrates: 20g; Sugar: 1g; Fiber: 0g; Protein: 31g



MEASUREMENT CONVERSIONS

VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (LIQUID)

US STANDARD	US STANDARD (OUNCES)	METRIC (APPROX.)
2 tablespoons	1 fl. oz.	30 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	2 fl. oz.	60 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	4 fl. oz.	120 mL
1 cup	8 fl. oz.	240 mL
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups	12 fl. oz.	355 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	16 fl. oz.	475 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	32 fl. oz.	1 L
1 gallon	128 fl. oz.	4 L

OVEN TEMPERATURES

FAHRENHEIT (F)	CELSIUS (C) (APPROX.)
250°	120°
300°	150°
325°	165°
350°	180°
375°	190°
400°	200°
425°	220°
450°	230°

VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (DRY)

US STANDARD	METRIC (APPROX.)
$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon	0.5 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon	1 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	2 mL
$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon	4 mL
1 teaspoon	5 mL
1 tablespoon	15 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	59 mL
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup	79 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	118 mL
$\frac{2}{3}$ cup	156 mL
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	177 mL
1 cup	235 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	475 mL
3 cups	700 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	1 L

WEIGHT EQUIVALENTS

US STANDARD	METRIC (APPROX.)
$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce	15 g
1 ounce	30 g
2 ounces	60 g
4 ounces	115 g
8 ounces	225 g
12 ounces	340 g
16 ounces or 1 pound	455 g

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my mother, who sweet-talked customers, staff, and friends while working harder than anyone ever should. From her I have learned never-ending patience and empathy.

To my wife, Mary, who has given endless support through inspiration, perspiration, and aspirations. You give me the confidence to make dreams come true.

To Jeff and Matisse for their constant support. You are beautiful people who have been integral to my success, and I will always be in your debt for it.

To my sister, Toi, who is responsible for not just my name but my passion for food and travel. If I didn't have your footsteps to follow, I would have surely been lost.

To my father, who showed me that anything was possible if I believed it so. Thank you for being a visionary, an artist, and a dreamer.

To my staff, both current and past, who have given me the tools to carve my dreams daily. You have been inventive, compassionate, and essential, and there are too many of you to list. I'll mention Leo, Tomas, Destiney, Dylan, and Carmen for making the writing of this book possible.

Last, and definitely not least, to Victoria Tieu for telling me to start a business when I was at a crossroads in life. I don't believe I've thanked you for your profound influence on my culinary career, nor have I asked you for the recipe for your spicy chicken. I would like to take this opportunity to do both. My life would not have been the same without either.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



CHEF TROY GARDNER is known for innovative vegan recipes and restaurants that have earned him critical praise and countless awards over the last two decades in Dallas, Texas, and throughout the Southwest. Chef Gardner specializes in creating vegan alternatives to popular dishes commonly found on non-vegan tables. He has been featured on three *Food Network* television shows and a variety of international publications. He enjoys fusing elements of world cuisine with traditional Southern dishes to create flavorful and unique culinary masterpieces.