

Common foods you thought were vegetarian

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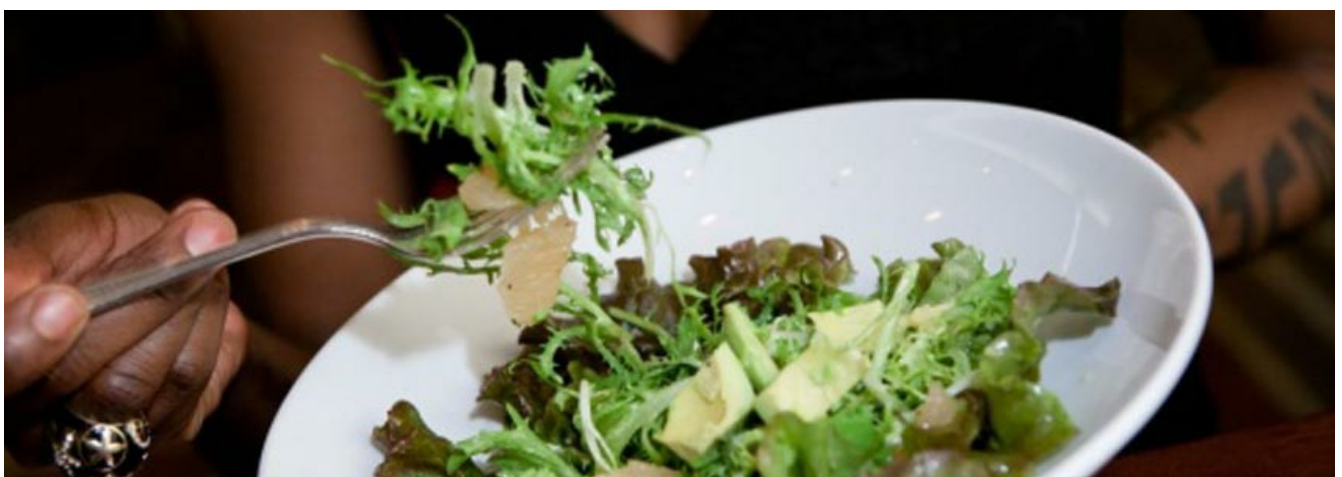
March 18, 2015



COMMON FOODS YOU THOUGHT **WERE** VEGETARIAN



If you're a **vegetarian** and are blindly trusting what you eat just because the **ingredient list doesn't mention any non-veg ingredients**, you need a reality check. Many foods, considered vegetarian actually contain traces of non-veg food. Though there are substitutes available for the vegetarians, they are still not popular or widely used. So the next time you crave one of these foods, your best bet would be to confirm if they are actually "**vegetarian**".



Salad Dressings

Think you're safe when you ordered that lettuce salad? Think again! You know the vegetables are, well, vegetarian but have you ever wondered about the sauces? What exactly is in those sauces that make your salad so tasty? Most often than not, **salad dressings** are not completely vegetarian and **contain eggs**. So the next time you order a salad or are buying your favourite salad dressing, please check the ingredients list thoroughly, especially if it is an **imported brand**.



Soups

We all love **Indian Chinese**. The tanginess, the spice, heat. But what if we told you your favourite Manchow soup is actually non-vegetarian? Restaurants often add sauces to your soups which are derived from **fish or add fish sauces to the mix. Yes. Even in your vegetarian soup!** We kid you not. Try asking them about it the next time you are at a restaurant.

Many soups, especially in restaurants, are made with chicken stock, beef stock, or fish stock. And you'll find ham stock in most split pea soups. Even **Campbell's Vegetable soup isn't so mmm-mmm-chicken-friendly**; look for their Vegetarian Vegetable instead.

French onion soup is one that seems so obvious now, but when we were fresh new vegetarians, my wife and I most definitely chowed down on some.

We promise you'll hear things like, "It's Tom Yum soup and ..."



Cheese

Life just feels incomplete without a **pizza**, doesn't it? Indians have taken to cheese like a fish to water and we now add cheese to each and every recipe! So you have cheese **pav-bhaji, cheese poha, cheese rajma, cheese dosa and even cheese paratha!** But did you know that the cheese you love might contain rennet, which is an **enzymes derived from animal guts**. And for the love of humanity, we shall not get into how the enzymes are extracted. Unfortunately for you, the cheese packets do not list the actual enzyme used but just a generic "enzyme".

I was traumatized to learn that **Parmigiano-Reggiano**, the nuttiest, most flavorful, most classic cheese in the world is made with **rennet**. And rennet, for the unenlightened, is a nice way of saying "**enzymes from animals' stomachs.**" And guess how they get those enzymes out?

Parmigiano-Reggiano is actually required by law to be made with rennet, and you'll find rennet in many other authentic imported cheeses (Pecorino Romano is another one). While some cheeses list rennet as an **ingredient, others simply say "enzymes,"** leaving the buyer unsure whether or not any stomachs are being ripped open to get those goodies.



Jelly / Gummy Bears

The very sight of these delectable **gummy bears** has left you craving one. Admit it! But before you give in and indulge, read this. We all know what the main ingredient of jelly is. That's right! Gelatin. And **gelatin is an animal derivative**. However, in recent times, gelatin is being replaced by starch or other similar food products and chemicals but they are specialty range and not common.

CARMINE



There have been reports that the **bug based** coloring can cause severe **allergic reactions** in some people

Carmine is a **red** food coloring that comes from boiled **cochineal bugs**, which are a type of beetle.



Red Candies

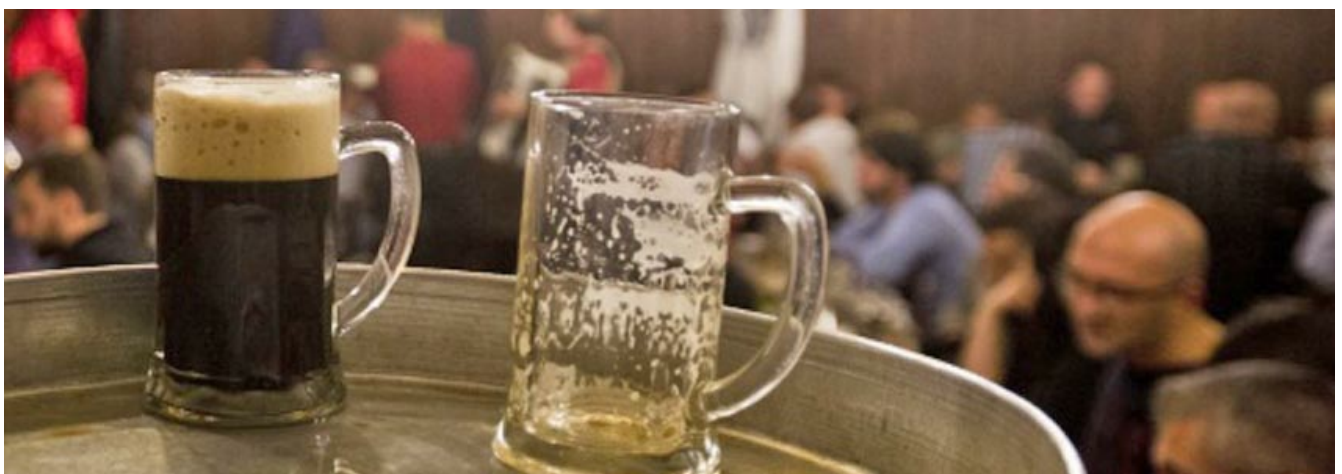
Who can take a rainbow, wrap it in a sigh, soak it in the sun and make a strawberry lemon pie? The candyman can, but watch out, because that dude puts crushed beetles in things, too. Red candies – and, as a matter of fact, practically anything that's colored red – often contain **red pigments extracted from the female Dactylopius coccus costa, or cochineal insect**. Red bug dye is **typically listed as cochineal, carminic acid or carmine in the ingredients**, and it's more pervasive than you might think, found in things like wine, vinegar, juice and colored pasta. Many candies are also coated with **shellac, a resin excreted by the lac bug**, which is usually listed as **'confectioner's glaze'**.



BBQ Flavored Lays chips & potato chips

Some people are used to scanning the ingredients list of virtually any food before they'll consume it, but when you're vegetarian, it's easier to let your guard down, assuming that some foods are 'safe'. Take chips, for example. Would you guess that a bag of **BBQ-flavored Baked Lay's contained chicken fat**? Probably not – but they do. The same goes for many other brands of BBQ-flavored chips like KC Masterpiece BBQ Chips and Ruffles The Works chips.

Ever wonder why you can't just eat a handful of potato chips? I used to think it was the salt, until I discovered that many brands are soaked in tallow (fat from membranous tissue in cattle) before hitting the shelves at the grocery store. And, here you thought you were just chomping on some greasy, deep-fried potatoes. I find this to be incredibly unfair.



Beer/Wine

Cheers! No, we aren't drunk writing this. Unfortunately, we aren't. We're as sober as a beaver (just coz it rhymes, you know). Beer or wine makers often use isinglass – or fish bladders to clarify their beer. So the colour you keep raving about? It's all thanks to **fish bladder**! Sounds ugh? Well, most of the famous beer and wine brands in the world use isinglass. Vodka, here we come!



Ice Cream

Ice cream is the one comfort food that temporarily heals all wounds. Unfortunately, you may be noshing on Bessie under all that chocolate sauce. Many brands of **ice cream contain capric acid, a fatty acid that's obtained from animal fats**. Check the label!

I hate to break it to you – I really do – but that chocolate sauce you pour over your sundaes may not be any better than the ice cream underneath it. Emulsifiers are present in chocolate, which may or may not be derived from animal fat. The problem is that most labels don't specify the difference, so you're better off sticking to ones that do.



Oils

That advertisement for your 'heart-friendly' oil? That's actually not heart-friendly at all! Oils and juices that contain **Omega-3 acids**, advertised to be good for your heart are derived from **fish oil**. Also, some juices claim to have Vitamin D which is derived from Lanolin, obtained from sheep! So much for pure veg. Hmpf!



Naan

This accompanies every meal! How the hell is naan non-veg?! This is taking things too far. Well, it is not. Many recipes for authentic naan call for use of eggs while kneading the dough to keep it soft and give it good elasticity. That's absolutely fine if you're an **eggitarian** but dear vegetarian, you might want to eat that paneer tikka with chapati now?



White Sugar

Whoa! Did you know that while processing white sugar, to make it precisely as you like it, white, manufacturers send it through a cleansing process. And the cleansing process is done using '**natural carbon**'. Wondering where that 'natural' in carbon comes from? **Bone char**. Yupps, that's right. Charred animal bones! The safest way out is to buy unrefined sugar or stick to brown jaggery.



Orange Juice

Who knew that fish lurk in some brands of orange juice? If you want to avoid animal products altogether, skip any juices enhanced with Omega-3's; some brands like Tropicana's Heart Healthy Orange Juice get those **amino acids from fish oil and gelatin**. Also, the **vitamin D in some enhanced juices is derived from lanolin, a natural oil in the fiber of sheep's wool**. Coca-Cola juices contain lanolin-derived vitamin D, while Tropicana juices are fortified with synthetic ingredients and Pepsi-Co juices contain no animal products or by-products at all. Typically, **vitamin D3 is animal-derived**.

So the next time you are out grocery shopping, make sure to include the names of some ingredients from this article on your list to double check upon. You may just find another alternative that you normally miss out on.

~ Rutu Ladage

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