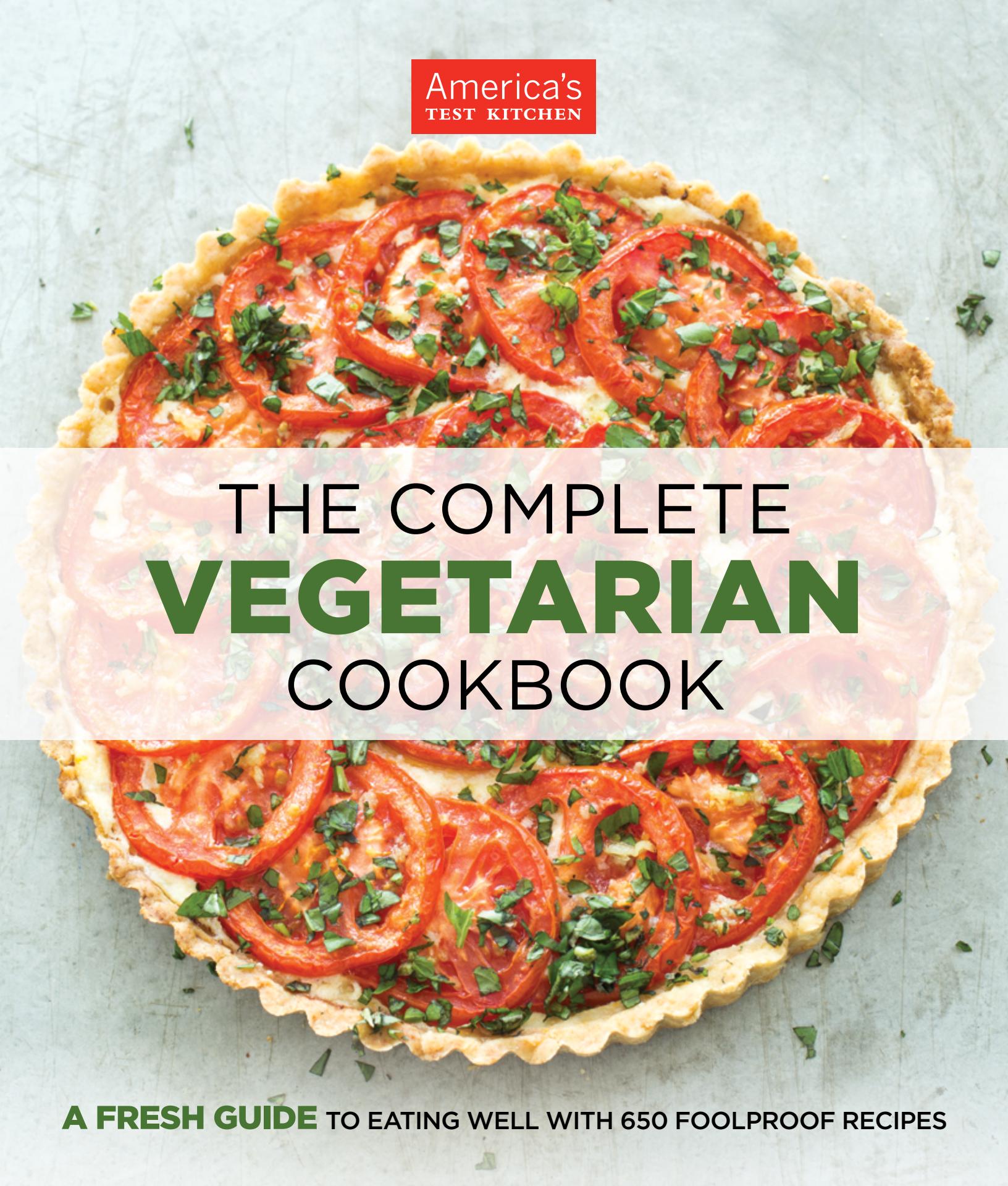


America's  
TEST KITCHEN



# THE COMPLETE **VEGETARIAN** COOKBOOK

**A FRESH GUIDE** TO EATING WELL WITH 650 FOOLPROOF RECIPES



RAW MARINATED TOFU



VEGETABLE BIBIMBAP



CURRIED MILLET PILAF



FIDEOS WITH CHICKPEAS AND AIOLI

# Introduction

As we tackled this, our first collection of vegetarian recipes, we thought hard about who would use this book and how they would cook from it. For vegetarians, this comprehensive cookbook offers a fresh, modern take on everyday cooking that will keep them busy and well fed for years to come. For cooks who want to incorporate more vegetables and hearty grains into their daily cooking repertoire and omit meat, at least on occasion, this book teaches new techniques for building flavor and new methods for assembling meals. With 650 recipes for everything from snacks and sandwiches to egg dishes and salads, we think all cooks will find plenty of appealing recipes here. The selection is eclectic and wide ranging and includes comfort food classics (like Shepherd's Pie and Hearty Vegetable Lasagna) as well as less well-known peasant dishes from around the globe (like Lentils, Rice, and Crispy Onions and Potato Vindaloo).

Since putting a satisfying vegetarian dinner on the table is the reason we think most people need this book, we've made these recipes the centerpiece: the Hearty Vegetable Mains chapter offers more than 50 recipes from casseroles and gratins to vegetable cakes and fritters to stuffed vegetables, stir-fries, and curries. Other chapters, including Salads Big and Small, Rice and Grains, and Beans and Soy, contain many recipes that can stand alone as a meal or can serve as the anchor for a meal when paired with a simple side. We've given serving suggestions where we think they will be helpful, and we encourage you to pair recipes across the book to make interesting vegetarian meals.

Vegetarian cooking can be labor intensive, so we made an effort to simplify recipes wherever possible. Throughout the book you will find icons for recipes that can be made in 45 minutes start to finish (including vegetable prep, which is generally quite considerable for vegetarian recipes); we hope this helps you navigate throughout this collection and pick out the recipes that work best for busy weeknights. There are also icons for vegan and gluten-free recipes on the pages and in the index. And we've often added notes to recipes indicating a simple ingredient swap that will make it gluten-free, like using tamari instead of soy sauce, or when we think a single ingredient (usually the cheese) can be changed or omitted to make a dish vegan.

Because we hoped to make this book a complete guide to vegetarian cooking, we didn't want to leave out simple recipes like basic tomato sauces, eggs every way, our favorite ways to cook rice, pestos, vinaigrettes, and more. Good home cooks rely on these cornerstone recipes again and again: A perfect fried egg turns a simple vegetable dish into hearty meal, while a dollop of pesto adds complexity to countless soups



and stews. You'll find these basic recipes grouped together throughout the book on featured recipe collection pages.

Whether you are new to vegetarian cooking or an old hand at it, a good resource can be helpful in encouraging you to try new ingredients, and perhaps more importantly to cook with them in new and surprising ways. We use quinoa to make Spanish-inspired vegetarian meatballs, change up a classic Caesar salad with flavor-packed raw kale, and roast chickpeas with warm spices for an easy, addicting snack. This book is packed with sidebars that will help you shop for or prep ingredients like the array of hearty greens on the market today, different types of tofu and tempeh, the world of beans and grains, and more. Spices and flavor builders are key too, from za'atar, sumac, and dried mushrooms to vegetarian fish sauce (we found a surprising vegetarian alternative, but we also tell you how to make your own).

Over the years in the test kitchen, we have learned a few things about how to make vegetarian recipes that have universal appeal. To get you started, this first section of the book offers tips on our favorite ingredients for building flavor, what equipment you really need for vegetarian cooking, and everything you need to know about buying, storing, and prepping vegetables.



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Millet seeds burst as they cook, releasing sticky starches that become a natural binder for our pan-fried cakes.

## Millet Cakes with Spinach and Carrots

SERVES 4 GF

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Technically a seed rather than a grain, millet makes a perfect base for pan-fried cakes because as it cooks the seed bursts, releasing starch and becoming sticky. It has a mellow, cornlike flavor and is easily adaptable to many types of cuisines, though it is a staple in Asia and its nutty flavor lends itself particularly well to bold flavor profiles. We liked the combination of millet and curry, and adding bright spinach and carrot along with shallot and garlic created a highly flavorful but nicely balanced mixture. Though millet holds together well on its own, we found that the addition of an egg and plain yogurt was helpful to keep the cakes together during cooking. Chilling the formed cakes

for 30 minutes further ensured that they were sturdy and easy to handle. Baking was an appealing hands-off cooking method, but we found that the heat of the oven dried them out and didn't add much flavor, so we decided to pan-fry them to create a flavorful crust on the exterior while maintaining a moist interior.

**1 cup** millet, rinsed  
**2 cups** water  
**Salt and pepper**  
**3 tablespoons** vegetable oil  
**1 shallot**, minced  
**6 ounces (6 cups)** baby spinach, chopped  
**2 carrots**, peeled and shredded  
**2 garlic cloves**, minced  
**2 teaspoons** curry powder  
**1/4 cup** plain yogurt  
**1 large egg**, lightly beaten  
**2 tablespoons** minced fresh cilantro

**1.** Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine millet, water, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt in medium saucepan and bring to simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until grains are tender and liquid is absorbed, 15 to 20 minutes. Off heat, let millet sit, covered, for 10 minutes; transfer to large bowl.

**2.** Heat 1 tablespoon oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add shallot and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in spinach and carrots and cook until spinach is wilted, about 2 minutes. Stir in garlic, curry powder,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon pepper and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Transfer to bowl with millet and wipe out now-empty skillet with paper towels.

**3.** Stir yogurt, egg, and cilantro into millet mixture until well combined. Divide mixture into 8 equal portions, pack firmly into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick cakes, and place on prepared sheet. Refrigerate cakes until chilled and firm, about 30 minutes.

**4.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in now-empty skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Gently lay 4 cakes in skillet and cook until deep golden brown and crisp on both sides, 10 to 14 minutes, turning gently halfway through cooking. Transfer cakes to prepared sheet and keep warm in oven. Repeat with remaining cakes and oil. Serve.



For a satisfying Tex-Mex supper, we fill subtly spicy poblano peppers with a melty, cheesy bean and corn stuffing.

## Cheesy Stuffed Poblanos

SERVES 4 TO 6 GF

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Inspired by the Mexican dish chiles rellenos, we set out to make a recipe for cheesy stuffed poblano peppers. Chiles rellenos are traditionally poblano peppers stuffed with cheese, battered, and fried. But the bright, vegetal flavor of the pepper is lost during frying, and most of the cheese fillings we came across were bland and oozed out of the pepper during cooking. We decided to roast the stuffed peppers to deepen their flavor and melt the cheese. Stuffing raw poblanos without tearing them was tricky, but after a quick trip to the microwave, they were more pliable. To make a flavorful, hearty filling, we added a couple of cans of pinto beans, corn, garlic, onions, and spices with the cheese. A quick fresh tomato salsa nicely balanced the rich, cheesy peppers.

**2 (15-ounce) cans pinto beans, rinsed**

**1 cup water**

**1 tablespoon vegetable oil**

**1 onion, chopped fine**

**4 garlic cloves, minced**  
**1 tablespoon ground cumin**  
**1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano or 1 teaspoon dried**  
**1 teaspoon chili powder**  
**1 teaspoon grated lime zest plus 1 tablespoon juice**  
**Salt and pepper**  
**½ teaspoon cayenne pepper**  
**2 cups frozen corn**  
**4 ounces Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (1 cup)**  
**4 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, shredded (1 cup)**  
**¼ cup minced fresh cilantro**  
**8 poblano chiles**  
**1 recipe Easy Cherry Tomato Salsa**

**1.** Adjust oven racks to upper-middle and lower-middle positions and heat oven to 425 degrees. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and set wire rack in each. Mash half of beans and water together in bowl until mostly smooth.

**2.** Heat oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, cumin, oregano, chili powder, lime zest, ½ teaspoon salt, and cayenne and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in mashed bean mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until nearly all liquid has evaporated, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in remaining beans, corn, and ½ teaspoon salt and cook until warmed through, about 2 minutes. Off heat, stir in Monterey Jack, cheddar, cilantro, and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

**3.** Leaving stem intact, cut slit lengthwise down 1 side of each poblano. Microwave poblanos in covered bowl until just pliable, about 2½ minutes. Gently pry open poblanos, remove seeds, and stuff evenly with bean-cheese mixture. Lay poblanos, stuffed side up, on prepared sheets. Bake until tender, switching and rotating sheets halfway through baking, 30 to 40 minutes. Serve with salsa.

### Stuffing Poblano Chiles

Leaving stem intact, cut slit lengthwise down 1 side of poblanos. Microwave poblanos in covered bowl until just pliable, about 2½ minutes. Gently pry open poblanos, remove seeds, and stuff evenly with bean-cheese mixture.



# Mushroom Bolognese

SERVES 4 TO 6 GF

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** We wanted to create a vegetarian pasta sauce that mimicked the rich, long-cooked flavor and hearty texture of Bolognese. Traditional Bolognese sauce gets its rich flavor from a combination of several types of meat, so we turned to two types of mushrooms to replicate that complexity: Dried porcini delivered depth of flavor while 2 pounds of fresh creminis gave the sauce a satisfying, substantial texture. To further round out the sauce's savory flavor, we added two umami-rich ingredients: soy sauce and tomato paste. To make prep easy, we used the food processor both to chop the creminis roughly and then to finely chop the onion and carrot. Pulsing whole canned tomatoes in the food processor allowed us to get just the right texture. We also used red wine to lend richness and depth and a little sugar for some balancing sweetness. A dash of heavy cream at the end rounded out the sauce and gave it a decadent silkiness. Cremini mushrooms are also known as baby bella mushrooms. In order for this recipe to be gluten-free, you must use gluten-free pasta and gluten-free soy sauce or tamari.

**2 pounds cremini mushrooms, trimmed and quartered**

**1 carrot, peeled and chopped**

**1 small onion, chopped**

**1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes**

**3 tablespoons unsalted butter**

**½ ounce dried porcini mushrooms, rinsed and minced**

**3 garlic cloves, minced**

**1 teaspoon sugar**

**2 tablespoons tomato paste**

**1 cup dry red wine**

**½ cup vegetable broth**

**1 tablespoon soy sauce**

**Salt and pepper**

**3 tablespoons heavy cream**

**1 pound fettuccine or linguine**

**Grated Parmesan cheese**

**1.** Working in batches, pulse cremini mushrooms in food processor until pieces are no larger than ½ inch, 5 to 7 pulses; transfer to large bowl. Pulse carrot and onion in now-empty processor until chopped fine, 5 to 7 pulses; transfer to bowl with mushrooms. Pulse tomatoes and their juice in now-empty processor until chopped fine, 6 to 8 pulses; set aside separately.



We make a truly meaty mushroom bolognese with lots of cremini, plus dried porcini, soy sauce, and tomato paste.

**2.** Melt butter in Dutch oven over medium heat. Add processed vegetables and porcini mushrooms, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until they release their liquid, about 5 minutes. Uncover, increase heat to medium-high, and cook until liquid has evaporated and vegetables begin to brown, 12 to 15 minutes.

**3.** Stir in garlic and sugar and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in tomato paste and cook for 1 minute. Stir in wine and simmer until nearly evaporated, about 5 minutes.

**4.** Stir in processed tomatoes, vegetable broth, soy sauce, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper, and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until sauce has thickened but is still moist, 8 to 10 minutes. Off heat, stir in cream.

**5.** Meanwhile, bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot. Add pasta and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, then drain pasta and return it to pot. Add sauce and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and adjust consistency with reserved cooking water as needed. Serve with Parmesan.



We use tamarind paste, fish sauce substitute, sugar, vinegar, and cayenne to make a pad thai sauce with authentic flavor.

## Vegetarian Pad Thai

SERVES 4 GF

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** With its sweet-sour-salty-spicy sauce, tender rice noodles, and bits of scrambled egg, pad thai is Thailand's most well-known noodle dish. We wanted a great vegetarian version that also featured crispy tofu. To get the noodles right, we soaked rice sticks in hot tap water for 20 minutes before stir-frying for tender but not sticky noodles. To create the balanced salty, sweet, sour, and spicy flavor profile, we combined vegetarian fish sauce, sugar, cayenne, and vinegar. We added tamarind paste for the fresh, bright, fruity taste that is essential to the dish. Chopped peanuts, bean sprouts, thinly sliced scallions, and lime wedges completed our authentic-tasting dish. For an accurate measurement of boiling water, bring a full kettle of water to a boil, then measure out the desired amount. Because this dish comes together very quickly, make sure all your ingredients are prepped before you start cooking. If using a tamarind substitute, use brown sugar instead of granulated sugar in the sauce. Serve with lime wedges.

### NOTES FROM THE TEST KITCHEN

#### Vegetarian Substitutes for Fish Sauce

Traditional fish sauce is a salty, amber-colored liquid made from fermented fish. It's rich in glutamates, tastebud stimulators that give food the meaty, savory flavor known as umami. Many recipes in Asian cuisines rely on fish sauce to provide a distinctive rich, salty, fermented flavor.

In search of a convenient vegetarian alternative, we found a variety of brands that offered a "vegetarian fish sauce." These sauces varied drastically in consistency (some were thick, some were thin), ingredients (some were fruit-flavored, others were mushroom based), and flavor (some were simply funky, some almost cheese-flavored). Overall, the products were inconsistent, and none of them were similar enough to traditional fish sauce to make a reliable substitute.

Luckily, with a little more research, we discovered

**Bragg Liquid Aminos.** Made from 16 amino acids derived from soybeans (amino acids are the structural units that make up proteins), it is advertised as a healthy alternative to soy sauce. Tasters found it to be surprisingly similar to fish sauce, offering a great saltiness, with a bit of fermented flavor.



We also wanted to develop an option for a homemade substitute for fish sauce. We started with a base of water and soy sauce, which is rich in meaty-tasting glutamates, then we looked for ingredients that would amplify its savory flavor. Dried shiitake mushrooms turned out to be the solution—they are rich in flavor-amplifying compounds called nucleotides. When used together, nucleotides and glutamates can boost savory, umami-like flavors exponentially. Simmering both the dried mushrooms and soy sauce in a salty broth provided just the right meaty punch; this recipe worked perfectly as a 1:1 substitute for fish sauce.

#### VEGETARIAN FISH SAUCE SUBSTITUTE

**MAKES** ABOUT 1/4 CUPS FAST VEGAN GF

In order for this recipe to be gluten-free, you must use gluten-free soy sauce or tamari.

**3 cups water**

**3 tablespoons salt**

**2 tablespoons soy sauce**

**1/4 ounce dried sliced shiitake mushrooms**

Simmer all ingredients in large saucepan over medium heat until mixture is reduced by half, about 20 to 30 minutes. Strain liquid and let cool completely. (Fish sauce can be refrigerated for up to 3 weeks.)

#### SAUCE

- 3 tablespoons tamarind paste or tamarind substitute**
- ¾ cup boiling water**
- ¼ cup fish sauce substitute**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar**
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**

#### NOODLES, TOFU, AND GARNISH

- 8 ounces (½-inch-wide) rice noodles**
- 14 ounces extra-firm tofu, cut into ¾-inch cubes**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- ¼ cup vegetable oil**
- 1 shallot, minced**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten**
- 6 ounces (3 cups) bean sprouts**
- 4 scallions, sliced thin on bias**
- Salt**
- ¼ cup minced fresh cilantro**
- 2 tablespoons dry-roasted unsalted peanuts, chopped**

**1. FOR THE SAUCE:** Soak tamarind paste in boiling water until softened, about 10 minutes. Push mixture through fine-mesh strainer into bowl, removing seeds and fibers and extracting as much pulp as possible; discard solids. Whisk fish sauce, sugar, oil, vinegar, and cayenne into tamarind liquid.

**2. FOR THE NOODLES, TOFU, AND GARNISH:** Cover noodles with very hot tap water in large bowl and stir to separate. Let noodles soak until softened, pliable, and limp but not fully tender, about 20 minutes; drain. Spread tofu over paper towel-lined baking sheet and let drain for 20 minutes.

**3.** Gently pat tofu dry with paper towels, then toss with cornstarch in bowl. Transfer coated tofu to strainer and shake gently over bowl to remove excess cornstarch. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Add tofu and cook, turning as needed, until crisp and browned on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes; transfer to bowl.

**4.** Wipe out now-empty skillet with paper towels, add remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and return to medium heat until shimmering. Add shallot and garlic and cook until lightly browned, about 1½ minutes. Stir in eggs and cook, stirring vigorously, until eggs are scrambled but still moist, about 20 seconds.

**5.** Add drained noodles and sauce, increase heat to high, and cook, tossing gently, until noodles are evenly coated, about 1 minute. Add tofu, bean sprouts, and scallions to skillet and cook, tossing gently, until tofu is heated through and noodles are tender, about 2 minutes. Season with salt to taste and sprinkle with cilantro and peanuts. Serve.



Sweet oranges, dates, and fresh cilantro play up the hearty combination of nutty red rice and tender quinoa in this salad.

## Red Rice and Quinoa Salad

SERVES 4 TO 6    VEGAN    GF

 **WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** For a rice and grain salad that was colorful, hearty, and a little out of the ordinary, we turned to a mix of nutty quinoa and red rice. Red rice is a variety of rice with a red husk; it has a nutty flavor and is highly nutritious. We decided to cook both in the same pot using the pasta method. We gave the rice a head start and then added in the quinoa to ensure the grains were both done at the same time. Then we drained them, drizzled them with lime juice to add bright flavor, and let them cool. Next, we added in orange segments (and used some of their juice in our dressing) and dates for sweetness. Cilantro and red pepper flakes added a fresh bite and a bit of spiciness to round it out.

- ¾ cup red rice**
- Salt and pepper**
- ¾ cup prewashed white quinoa**
- 3 tablespoons lime juice (2 limes)**
- 2 oranges**

- 1 small shallot, minced**
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh cilantro plus 1 cup leaves**
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 6 ounces pitted dates, chopped (1 cup)**

**1.** Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot over high heat. Add rice and 1 tablespoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. Add quinoa to pot and continue to cook until grains are tender, 12 to 14 minutes. Drain rice-quinoa mixture, spread onto rimmed baking sheet, and drizzle with 2 tablespoons lime juice. Let rice cool completely, about 20 minutes.

**2.** Meanwhile, cut away peel and pith from oranges. Holding fruit over bowl, use paring knife to slice between membranes to release segments. Cut segments in half crosswise. Squeeze spent orange membranes for 2 tablespoons juice.

**3.** Whisk 2 tablespoons orange juice, remaining 1 tablespoon lime juice, shallot, minced cilantro, and pepper flakes in large bowl. Whisking constantly, drizzle in oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add rice-quinoa mixture, dates, orange segments, and remaining 1 cup cilantro leaves and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.



Slowly braising mild tofu in a bold ancho chile sauce infuses it with a remarkable amount of flavor.

## Chile Braised Tofu

SERVES 4    **GF**

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Braising is a technique most often employed for cooking large, tough cuts of meat, as the “low-and-slow,” moist cooking method aids in breaking down the meat’s collagen. So it may seem counter-intuitive to braise tender, delicate tofu. But we found that the longer cooking time is perfect for infusing tofu with flavor as it cooks gently in a highly seasoned sauce, turning mild tofu into a boldly flavorful dish. For the sauce, we used dried ancho chiles to make a potent, Tex-Mex inspired sauce. The chiles alone, however, were too bitter and one-dimensional. Adding aromatic onion, garlic, and cumin made our sauce taste more well rounded. Tomato paste thickened the sauce and gave it more savory depth. Finishing the sauce with some butter gave it a silky richness and a lime juice brightened things up. Serve with lime wedges over rice.

- 3 dried ancho chiles, stemmed, seeded,  
and torn into 1-inch pieces**
- 1 onion, chopped**
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste**
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed and peeled**
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin**
- 1 teaspoon sugar**

### Salt

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- 21 ounces extra-firm tofu, sliced crosswise  
into ¾-inch-thick slabs**
- 1 tablespoon lime juice**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro**

**1.** Pour 2 cups boiling water over anchos in bowl and let sit until very soft, about 15 minutes; drain anchos, discarding liquid. Process softened anchos, onion, ¼ cup water, tomato paste, garlic, cumin, sugar, and 1 teaspoon salt in blender until mixture forms thick but smooth puree, about 1 minute,

**2.** Melt 1 tablespoon butter in 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add ancho puree and cook, stirring often, until mixture is fragrant and thickens slightly, about 3 minutes. Whisk in 1⅔ cups water until smooth.

**3.** Lay tofu in skillet in even layer and bring to simmer. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently until tofu is warmed through and flavors have melded, about 30 minutes

**4.** Transfer tofu to platter. Stir remaining 2 tablespoons butter and lime juice into sauce and season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour sauce over tofu, sprinkle with cilantro, and serve.



This super healthy soup features three kinds of greens and is thickened with Arborio rice for a luxuriously smooth texture.

## Super Greens Soup with Lemon-Tarragon Cream

SERVES 4 TO 6 GF

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** We wanted to create a deceptively delicious, silky-smooth soup that could deliver a big dose of healthy greens. It would be packed with all the essential nutrients of hearty greens and would boast a deep, complex flavor brightened with a garnish of lemon and herb cream. First, we built a flavorful foundation of sweet caramelized onions and earthy sautéed mushrooms. We then added broth, water, and lots of leafy greens (we liked a combination of chard, kale, arugula, and parsley), simmering the greens until tender before blending this mixture until smooth. We were happy with the soup's depth of flavor, but the soup was watery and too thin. Many recipes we found included potatoes to act as a thickener, but we found that they gave our soup an overwhelmingly earthy flavor. Instead, we tried using Arborio rice. The rice's high starch content thickened the soup to a velvety, lush consistency

without clouding its bright, vegetal flavors. For a vibrant finish, we whisked together heavy cream, sour cream, lemon zest, lemon juice, and tarragon and drizzled it over the top.

**1/4 cup heavy cream**  
**3 tablespoons sour cream**  
**2 tablespoons plus 1/2 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil**  
**1/4 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest**  
**plus 1/2 teaspoon juice**  
**1/2 teaspoon minced fresh tarragon**  
**Salt and pepper**  
**1 onion, halved through root end and sliced thin**  
**3/4 teaspoon light brown sugar**  
**3 ounces white mushrooms, trimmed and sliced thin**  
**2 garlic cloves, minced**  
**Pinch cayenne pepper**  
**3 cups water**  
**3 cups vegetable broth**  
**1/3 cup Arborio rice**  
**12 ounces Swiss chard, stemmed and chopped coarse**  
**9 ounces kale, stemmed and chopped coarse**  
**1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves**  
**2 ounces (2 cups) baby arugula**

**1.** Combine cream, sour cream, 1/2 teaspoon oil, lemon zest and juice, tarragon, and 1/4 teaspoon salt in bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

**2.** Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Stir in onion, sugar, and 1 teaspoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion releases some moisture, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring often and scraping up any browned bits, until onion is deeply browned and slightly sticky, about 30 minutes. (If onion is sizzling or scorching, reduce heat. If onion is not browning after 15 to 20 minutes, increase heat.)

**3.** Stir in mushrooms and cook until they have released their moisture, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cayenne and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in water, broth, and rice, scraping up any browned bits, and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.

**4.** Stir in chard, kale, and parsley, 1 handful at a time, until wilted and submerged in liquid. Return to simmer, cover, and cook until greens are tender, about 10 minutes.

**5.** Off heat, stir in arugula until wilted. Working in batches, process soup in blender until smooth, about 1 minute. Return pureed soup to clean pot and season with salt and pepper to taste. Drizzle individual portions with lemon-tarragon cream, and serve.

# Roasted Butternut Squash Salad with Za'atar and Parsley

SERVES 4 TO 6 | VEGAN | GF

 **WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** The sweet, nutty flavor of roast butternut squash pairs best with flavors that are bold enough to balance that sweetness. To fill this role in our roasted butternut squash salad, we chose the traditional Middle Eastern spice blend *za'atar* (a pungent combination of toasted sesame seeds, thyme, marjoram, and sumac). We found that using high heat and placing the rack in the lowest position produced perfectly browned squash with a firm center in about 30 minutes. Dusting the *za'atar* over the hot squash worked much like toasting the spice, boosting its flavor. For a foil to the tender squash, we considered a host of nuts before landing on toasted pumpkin seeds. They provided the textural accent the dish needed and reinforced the squash's flavor. Pomegranate seeds added a burst of tartness and color. Pepitas, or pumpkin seeds, are available at most supermarkets and natural foods stores. You can substitute chopped red grapes or small blueberries for the pomegranate seeds.

**3-3½ pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded,  
and cut into ½-inch pieces**

**¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**

**Salt and pepper**

**1 teaspoon za'atar spice blend**

**1 small shallot, minced**

**2 tablespoons lemon juice**

**2 tablespoons honey**

**¾ cup fresh parsley leaves**

**½ cup unsalted pepitas, toasted**

**½ cup pomegranate seeds**

**1.** Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Toss squash with 1 tablespoon oil in bowl and season with salt and pepper. Lay squash in single layer on rimmed baking sheet and roast until well browned and tender, 30 to 35 minutes, stirring halfway through roasting time. Remove squash from oven, sprinkle with *za'atar*, and let cool for 15 minutes.

**2.** Whisk shallot, lemon juice, honey, and ¼ teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Whisking constantly, drizzle in remaining 3 tablespoons oil. Add squash, parsley, and pepitas and toss gently to combine. Arrange on platter, sprinkle with pomegranate seeds, and serve.



We season roasted butternut squash with a bold blend of Middle Eastern spices for a complexly flavored squash salad.

## NOTES FROM THE TEST KITCHEN

### Toasting Nuts and Seeds

Toasting nuts and seeds maximizes their flavor, so whether you are adding them to a salad or tossing them into a pasta dish or baked good it pays to spend a few minutes toasting them.

To toast a small amount (less than 1 cup) of nuts or seeds, put them in a dry skillet over medium heat. Toast until they are lightly browned and fragrant, shaking the skillet occasionally to prevent scorching, 3 to 8 minutes. Watch the nuts closely because they can go from golden to burnt very quickly. To toast a large quantity of nuts, spread the nuts in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet and toast in a 350-degree oven. To promote even toasting, shake the baking sheet every few minutes, and toast until the nuts are lightly browned and fragrant, 5 to 10 minutes.



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