

## How To Cook For A Vegetarian This Holiday Season

Are you worried about cooking for a vegetarian in your family this upcoming holiday season? Well, worry no more. This article will tell you exactly what you need to do and know before you start cooking this holiday season.

You can start off by finding out what type of vegetarian your guest is. For instance, if she is a strict vegan, then there's a chance she will not eat food that contains honey or yeast; however, if on the other hand, she is a "semi" or "pseudo" vegetarian, there is a chance she will actually eat the meal as it is prepared, including the meat. And if she's a lacto-ovo-vegetarian, she might eat anything with eggs and milk, but will probably avoid meat dishes.

If you talk to the vegetarian in your family before you prepare your holiday meal, you should consider asking the following five questions:

1. Do you eat certain types of meat or none at all?

If the vegetarian in your family will eat certain meats (generally fish, chicken, and turkey), then you should consider preparing that as a side dish or asking them if they would like to bring a small dish of it for their own meal.

2. Will you use serving utensils that have been placed in dishes containing meat?

Some vegetarians experience severe gastrointestinal stress when they consume meat and grease from meat, so it is a good idea to find out whether or not they can do so ahead of time. If they can't, you can simply put out one utensil for all non-meat dishes and ask that guests do not cross-contaminate.

3. Do you eat foods that contain milk and eggs?

As I mentioned above, lacto-ovo vegetarians will eat milk and eggs, but other sub-categories of vegetarian will not. Some won't do it for health reasons; others won't for ethical reasons. Whatever the case, you can get around this problem by either creating more dishes that do not contain milk and eggs or by using egg replacer, which you can find at most supermarkets, and milk replacements, such as soy milk.

4. Do you eat honey and yeast?

Some vegetarians do not eat honey and yeast for ethical reasons. If you find out that the vegetarian in your family does not eat honey and yeast ahead of time, you can either prepare alternate dishes or ask if they are willing to bring an alternate dish.

5. Would you like to bring your own main dish (to replace the turkey, ham, etc.)?

Many vegetarians eat popular meat-replacement dishes, such as "tofurkey" and "veggie burgers." Your guest will probably be more than willing to bring her own meat-replacement dish if you ask.

To reiterate, there are a number of things you should take into consideration when you cook for a vegetarian this holiday season; however, the single most important thing you can do is actually approach the vegetarian and ask how you can accommodate her and if she would like to cook with you or bring her own dish.

If you keep this in mind, your holiday meal will be a success with everyone - even the vegetarian in your family!