

## ON THE VEGE

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# The vegetarian Iftar

Ever heard of "Meatless Monday"?

Some know and the rest are probably reaching for their phones, or opening a browser window to Google the term. Honestly, it's just as it sounds. A day (that's Monday) without meat!

Why? Meatless Monday is not a new idea. This routine was implemented during both the World Wars to either save resources, or feed other war-ravaged countries. It was recently revived in 2003 by former ad man turned health advocate Sid Learner, together with John Hopkins University as a public health awareness campaign.

I know it sounds boring right now, but bear with me.

Basically, it's a way to relieve your body from all the stress it endures to digest meat. That's right, our bodies let out a silent cry every time we eat a beef cheese- burger. We take meat at least twice a day, if not thrice, and some more in between, and the mid-night snacks... I think you get it. And we do this every single day!

It not only takes a toll on our bodies, but also the environment. This forces our farmers to factory farm (Google the term, seri-

ously, you'll be shocked) and the standard of living for these animals is outrageously inhumane.

We complain about formalin and the hormone injections, but really, it boils down to the never ceasing demand. We ask, hence they supply.

So do the good deed, and munch on some greens instead. Give your body that much deserved vacation, if not once a week, do it once a month, but do give it a go.

It is a kind solution with great impact. Trust me when I say, if you are a culinary enthusiast, this seriously challenges you to explore the beautiful produce our country has to offer, and I am here to help you along the way!

There are two types of meatless diets. Vegetarian and Vegan; both exclude all animal tissue, but vegetarian diets allow milk, honey and eggs, the other does not - yeah, it's super difficult; I do not know how they do it. But hey, do not run away just yet; we are doing an array of vegetarian recipes that are just as good, if not even better than meat based dishes.

I hope you will give these recipes a go, and thoroughly enjoy devouring them!



Starting with the ever refreshing --

## VIETNAMESE FRESH SPRING ROLLS WITH PEANUT SAUCE

### Ingredients

Rice paper  
Bean noodles  
1 large cucumber  
1 large carrot  
1 small green papaya  
½ a head of a small cabbage  
Some chives  
Handful of mint leaves  
Handful of basil leaves  
Bean sprouts

### For the sauces

½ cup of roasted, unsalted peanuts (husked)  
3 tsp light soya sauce  
1 tsp hoisin sauce  
Balsamic vinegar  
2 cloves of garlic  
2 red chillies  
1 whole lime, juiced  
1 tsp sesame oil  
2 tsp brown sugar  
2 tsp honey

### Method

Cut cucumbers lengthwise, and carefully spoon out the seeds. Julienne the cucumber into thin strips. Peel and julienne the carrot and green papaya as well.

Shred the cabbage. Cut the white parts off the chives and segment into 3 parts.

Fill a saucepan with water and bring to boil, and immediately turn the heat off. Soak the bean noodles for 10 minutes and strain, but keep the warm water.

Time to rock and roll!

Take a sheet of rice paper and dip in warm water for 10 -15 seconds, until softened. Take out of the water and let the water drip for a couple of seconds. Place on a clean work bench and at the bottom end of the sheet assemble a bit of the noodles



along with a bit of each vegetable, 2 strips of chives, 3 basil leaves and 3 mint leaves. Fold in the two sides and "roll out"

Repeat till you run out of veggies!

### On to the sauce

Chuck the peanuts in the blender and blitz till it becomes butter. This may take a couple of minutes, so don't add water to "ease" this- it will completely ruin the sauce. You may need to pause and scrape the sides of the blender once or twice, but that is about it. Anyway, after the peanut has buttered, crush the garlic cloves, cut the chillies down the middle and deseed them - chuck in the blender along with the rest of the ingredients- blend away till smooth. Taste, and adjust to your taste.

## VEGETABLE MOMOS/DUMPLINGS

### Ingredients

#### Wrappers

1 cup all-purpose flour  
½ tsp oil  
2/3 tsp water (for kneading)  
A good pinch of salt  
1 medium onion, minced  
2 cloves of garlic, minced  
1 tsp grated ginger  
½ small head of cabbage, shredded  
1 small carrot, finely diced  
1 cup mushrooms, finely diced  
1 tsp soy sauce  
1 tsp oil

#### Dip

2 tsp red chilli flakes  
1 tsp paprika  
1 tsp honey  
3 tsp sesame oil  
Chives to garnish  
Momo wrappers -  
Take the all-purpose flour, salt and oil in a bowl and mix. Add water in parts and

