Vegetarian for Life

Take V

Five-ingredient favourites that are low-cost, quick *and* easy-to-make



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Introduction

The recipes in Take V were specially created by Vegetarian for Life's Roving Chefs, Maggie and Ollie. With only five ingredients each, they're low-cost, quick, *and* easy-to-make – without lacking flavour or nutrition.

Not everyone has the time or energy to create lavish dishes. The good news is that it needn't take much to make simple, tasty food. With a few key ingredients, you'll find inspiration to recreate these meals at home with ease.

Each recipe presented serves four, but can easily be tweaked to feed fewer people – or, in most cases, frozen to create meals for another day. Use recipes like these as a guideline – you don't have to stick to exact ingredients, because alternatives can be used. The recipes here require minimal fuss and have been created with simplicity in mind. So if you're not a fan of the kitchen, or want food that tastes great but requires minimal effort, we hope that you'll welcome this guide.

Eating healthily needn't mean only using fresh, expensive items, either. Frozen and tinned foods are a handy kitchen standby, and contain many of the vital nutrients needed for a well-balanced diet.

We've taken our own spin on classics, and throughout the guide you'll find an array of tasty starters, mains and puddings, which we hope that you'll enjoy.



Creamy mushroom bruschetta, pasta, or vol-au-vents

This recipe can be used as a pasta sauce; with bruschetta or rice; or even as a filling for vol-au-vents.

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 1 onion, finely diced
- 400g/14oz mixed mushrooms, sliced (shitake, oyster, chestnut)
- 4 tbsp garlic and herb dairy-free cheese
- Splash of non-dairy milk
- Toasted bread, pasta, or rice

Optional extras: freshly chopped chives, lemon juice, smoked paprika

1 In a pan, slowly sauté the onion until soft, then add the sliced mushrooms.
2 Continue to cook for around 5 minutes or until mushrooms brown.
3 Add the non-dairy cheese and make sure mushrooms are well-coated.
4 Add a little non-dairy milk to loosen, then add 2 tsp chives (if using).
5 Serve on toasted bread or with pasta or rice.

Caraway seed soup

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp caraway seeds
- 4 tbsp flour
- 1 litre hot vegetable stock
- Parsley

1 Heat saucepan and add oil.
2 Add caraway seeds and stir them as they pop.
3 Mix in flour and cook over medium heat for about 3 minutes. The mixture should be dark in colour, but not burnt.
4 Slowly add the stock while stirring. Bring to a boil.
5 Season well and top with finely-chopped parsley.





Easy Thai noodles

If you're not a fan of tofu, you can substitute any mock-meat or chunky mushrooms.

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 300g/10oz firm tofu, drained and cut into 2.5cm/1 inch cubes
- 500g mixed stir-fry vegetables, fresh or frozen
- 2 tbsp Thai curry paste (make sure this does not contain fish-derived ingredients)
- 400ml tin coconut milk
- Noodles of choice

Optional extras: fresh coriander and a wedge of fresh lime added at the end

1 Make sure tofu is well drained and pressed for at least 30 minutes to remove any excess liquid. Slice into cubes.
2 In a wok or non-stick frying pan, shallow-fry tofu for around 5 minutes, making sure the cubes don't stick and are sealed well.
3 Remove from pan and lay to rest on kitchen paper to soak up excess oil.
4 In the same pan, stir-fry the mixed vegetables on a medium heat for 2 minutes. Add curry paste.
5 Make sure vegetables are well coated then add coconut milk.
6 Allow to simmer for 5 minutes.
7 Add cooked tofu and simmer for another 5 minutes.
8 While curry is simmering, cook noodles to packet instructions.
9 Serve hot.



Cheat's pizza

SERVES 2 AS A MAIN, 4 AS A STARTER, VEGAN

- Refrigerated packet of Jus-Rol puff pastry, or an alternative brand of vegan pastry
- 2 tbsp vegan pesto
- ½ onion, sliced
- 100g/3.5oz sliced peppers, fresh or frozen
- Vegan cheese to finish

Optional extras: any other vegetables. Fresh rocket for topping

1 Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6. Grease and line a baking sheet.
2 Unroll the pastry. Using a knife, score a 2.5cm/1 inch border so it looks like a frame, being careful not to cut through the pastry.
3 Using a fork, prick the central square around 10 times. This helps the pastry to stay flat.
4 Spread vegan pesto evenly, making sure not to spill over the edge of the frame.
5 Add sliced vegetables.
6 Sprinkle with grated vegan cheese.
7 Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes or until golden.



Zingy lemon and artichoke pasta

A very quick pasta dish that requires minimal cooking.

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 200g/7oz marinated artichokes, roughly chopped
- Juice and grated zest from 1 unwaxed lemon
- 4 tbsp garlic oil
- 150g/5oz fresh peas (or use frozen, defrosted)
- 300g/10oz linguine

1 In a bowl, mix together the chopped artichokes, lemon juice and zest, garlic oil, and peas.
2 Cook pasta to packet instructions.
3 Once cooked, combine all ingredients.
4 Season well with salt and pepper.



Meatless meatballs and tomato sauce

This dish also works well in a baguette… it's messy but very tasty!

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- ½ packet of sosmix/ready-made vegan meatballs
- 2 tins chopped tomatoes with herbs
- 1 medium onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- Pasta of choice

1 If using pre-made vegan meatballs, cook to packet instructions and start with making the sauce. If using sosmix, make to packet instructions and form into small meatball shapes.
2 In a pan, lightly fry the vegan meatballs until golden brown all over (around 10–15 minutes).
3 Remove from pan and rest on kitchen paper to soak up any excess oil.
4 In a food processor or hand blender, blend the tomatoes, onion and garlic until smooth. Heat in a pan. If you don't have a blender, slowly fry onion and garlic on a low heat until soft, then add chopped tomatoes.
5 While sauce is warming, cook pasta to packet instructions. Drain, reserving water if needed for step 7.
6 After sauce has heated for 5 minutes, place cooked meatballs into sauce to re-heat.
7 If the tomato sauce is a little thick, then add up to 4 tbsp of water from the pasta to loosen.



Spring veggie pie

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 2 large spring onions or 2 small leeks, sliced
- 50g/1.8oz flour
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1kg/35oz potatoes, peeled and quartered

1 Heat some vegetable or olive oil in a saucepan over a medium heat.
2 Add the onions and cook until softened. Stir in the flour and cook for another couple of minutes.
3 Add the garlic and cook until it begins to soften. (You could also add more vegetables if you have any.)
4 Tip the chopped tomatoes into the pan along with a can of water. Simmer until the sauce has thickened and the vegetables are cooked through.
5 Boil the potatoes in a pan of salted water until tender.
6 Drain the potatoes, then place them back in the saucepan and mash. Stir through some olive oil and season to taste.
7 Heat the grill. Spoon the hot vegetable mix into a pie dish. Top with the mash and drag a fork lightly over the surface. Place under the grill for a few minutes until the surface is golden.
8 Serve. Would be nice with some steamed seasonal veg.



Broad beans with garlic, rosemary and eggs

SERVES 4, VEGETARIAN

- 2 tbsp olive oil (plus a bit extra)
- 1 large garlic clove, peeled and crushed
- 1kg/35oz fresh or frozen broad beans (skins removed)
- 60g/2oz rosemary, roughly chopped
- 4 large fresh eggs

1 Heat a large, deep frying pan over a low-medium heat. Add olive oil.
2 Sweat garlic until it softens.
3 Add broad beans and increase heat to medium. Season well.
4 After 5 minutes add rosemary and cook for a further 5 minutes.
5 Add a touch more oil and crack the eggs onto the surface of the beans.
6 Shake the pan to distribute the egg whites.
7 Wait until the eggs are cooked and serve with warmed flatbreads.

Take V burger

Our colleague, Mike, first had this five-ingredient burger in a pub. He found it so tasty that he's made it at home lots of times since.

MAKES 1, VEGAN

- 1 burger bun
- 1 large tomato, thickly sliced
- 1 portobello mushroom, grilled
- 1 sweet potato, mashed
- 1 onion, raw or fried

1 Put thick slice of tomato on bottom half of roll.
2 Layer grilled portobello mushroom on top of the tomato.
3 Top with a layer of mashed sweet potato.
4 Place onion on top of that, then add the top half of the roll.
5 Garnish with – you've guessed it – what's left of the tomato.





Roasted squash on toast

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 2 butternut squash, cubed
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- Couple of sprinkles of sage, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 2 crusty loaf baguettes

1 Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
2 Mix the cubed squash, half the olive oil, garlic, and sage in a bowl.
3 Add to a baking tray and bake for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4 Toast the bread on each side. Scoop the roasted squash mixture over the bread, brush with olive oil, and put back in the oven for 3 more minutes before serving.

Watermelon and feta salad

SERVES 4, VEGAN

- 650g/23oz watermelon (without skin)
- 200g/7oz vegan Greek-style cheese
- 20g/0.5oz basil leaves
- ½ small red onion, very thinly sliced
- Olive oil

1 Cut the watermelon into thick wedges.
2 Slice the cheese into large, thin pieces. Alternatively, crumble it into chunks in your hands.
3 Mix all the ingredients and drizzle with olive oil. Serve.





Spiced coconut rice pudding

A warming favourite with a twist.

SERVES 4–6, VEGAN

- 100g/3.5oz pudding rice
- 400ml tin of coconut milk
- 400ml non-dairy milk
- 1 tbsp mixed spice (e.g. cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg)
- 4 tbsp soft brown sugar

1 Preheat the oven to 150°C/300°F/gas mark 2.
2 Grease a deep oven dish.
3 In a bowl, combine all the ingredients, making sure the mixed spice and sugar are well mixed.
4 Place in the greased dish and cook in the centre of the oven for 2 hours.
5 You can check on the progress half way through. Don't worry if a skin forms. If the mixture is too thick, you can add more non-dairy milk.

Unique grants scheme improves lives of older veggies

VfL is renowned for its work with the care sector and the information and resources it provides to individuals. But the charity's grant scheme is also making a big difference to people's lives.

The charity has two charitable funds, the Vegan Fund and the Vegetarian Fund. The first grant dramatically changed the life of a vegetarian woman. The grant was for a stairlift, and enabled her to move out of care, back to her own home and resume living independently.

Since then, grants have been awarded to help meet a wide range of needs, including mobility scooters, assistance with relocation, a replacement cooker, and fitting a downstairs shower room.

Full details of the grants scheme and information about how to apply can be found at **vegetarianforlife.org.uk/resources/grants** or by calling the charity on 0161 257 0887.



We're coming to your rescue

VfL publishes guides and recipe booklets for every occasion, from Burns Night and Valentine's Day to Diwali and Christmas. You – or your veggie service users – need never feel left out of the celebrations.

Other publications available from VfL:

- Vintage magazine
- Festive recipe selection
- Catering for older vegetarians and vegans
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- Nutrition for older vegetarians and vegans
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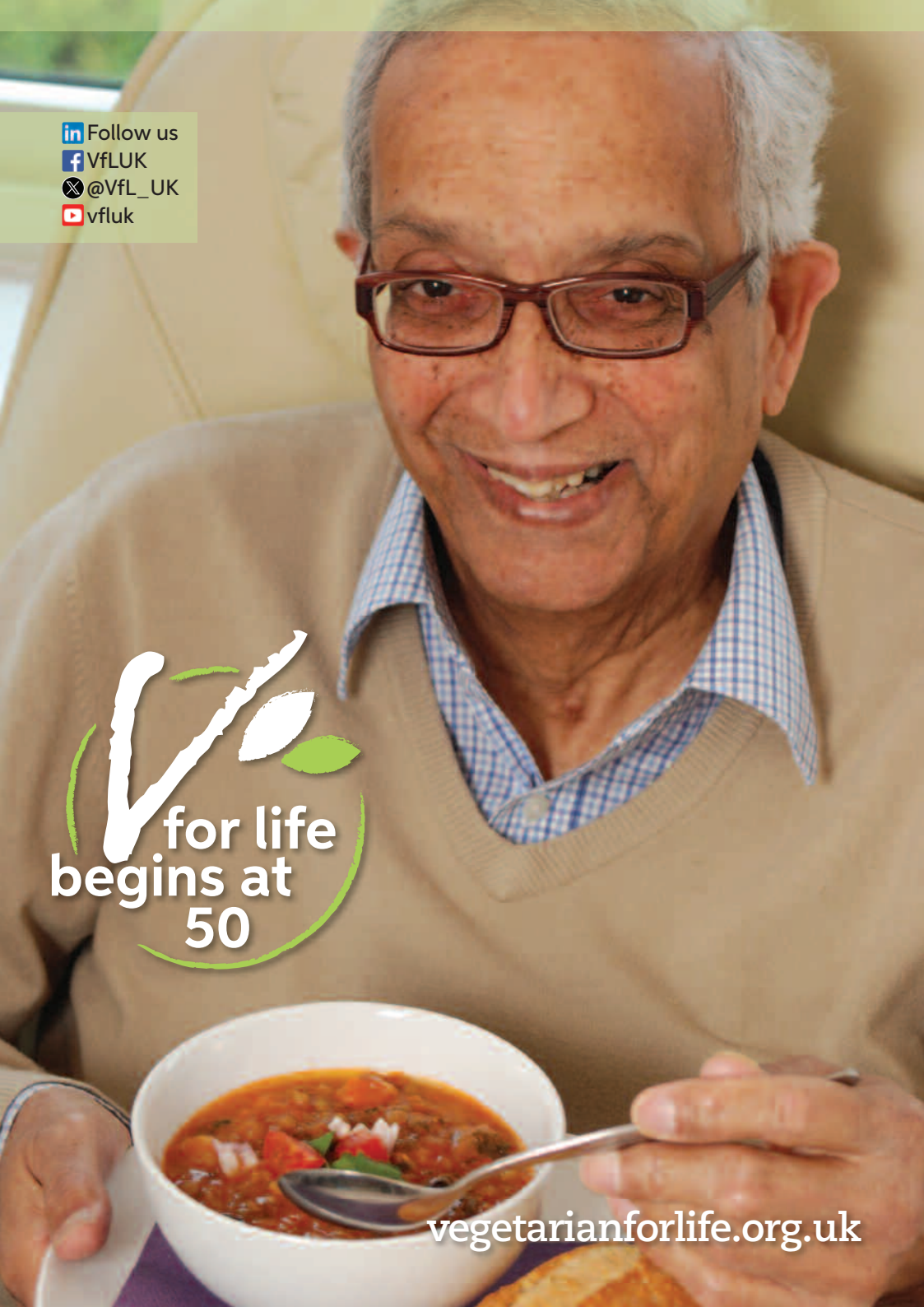
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