

Vegvibe

JAN/FEB 2011

Racing Ahead Lee Song Mau

Also in this issue

**ECO Singapore
Garbage Enzyme
Barefoot Running
Great Complexion
Mesmerising Macau
Avoiding Rabbit Mania**

MICA (P) 105/06/2010

FREE



ISSN 2010-2631



The Chief Veggie Speaks!

Welcome to the new year and here's to fresh beginnings - we hope that one of your resolutions will be to explore a plant-based diet, failing which we hope that you will continue to do your part and reduce meat consumption.

With Christmas just out of view, it is now time for the red fever to consume us - Chinese New Year preparations are going full swing in many homes and even offices around Singapore. In that regard, we offer up some pineapple recipes (*page 38*), talk about the symbolic oranges (*page 25*) and review a local cookbook that provides a comprehensive bank of ideas on how to whip up some creative local cuisine (*page 40*).

Quite pertinent though is our call to the community not to indulge in vanity and impulse when commemorating the Lunar New Year - Year of the Rabbit (*page 02*), and we ask our readers not to buy any rabbit but to donate to the *House Rabbit Society (Singapore)* instead.

The Jan/Feb 2011 issue has the particular honour of featuring several passionate individuals such as Wilson Ang who runs *ECO Singapore* (*page 08*); Lee Song Mau, our vegetarian hero this time round (*page 20*); Michael Sandler who is an inspirational barefoot running expert (*page 28*); and Ms Vinitha Ang of the popular *NutriHub* (*page 34*).

We also teach you how to turn your fruit peels into organic cleaners (*page 10*) and review a pioneering documentary that gives a firsthand account of the damage and dangers of natural gas drilling (*page 07*).

Not forgetting Valentine's Day that is on the horizon, we share reviews on *Green Room Café* (*page 24*) and *Whole Earth* (*page 31*) which are ideal places for that special dinner (or even for the reunion dinner).

As to **VegVibe's** progress, well, we have now bumped up our partner locations to over 70 (see inside back cover for full list), with polyclinics belonging to the *National Healthcare Group* now carrying our copies. Talks are also underway to secure a permanent sponsor who will be committing to a year's worth of advertisements, and it is moments like this that make all the hard work worthwhile.

Finally, please keep your emails coming at **vision@vegville.com** or **vegville@gmail.com** and remember to share this copy with at least one other person so that we can foster reuse and reduce waste, and if you need to, do use the online version (which is exactly the same) for reference.

Thank you for giving us a reason to do this wonderful job and please, never feel shy to become part of the process if you wish.



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Erratum: In the Nov/Dec 2010 issue, we wrote that the *Soup Kitchen Project* was run by *Food #03* located at 103 Rowell Road. The correct address is 109 Rowell Road.

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Running Barefoot*

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**Delicious
pineapple
recipes**

**Mesmerising
Macau**

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Hopping for a brighter future

By Betty Tan

Commemorate the Year of the Rabbit by making sure rabbits in Singapore don't suffer needlessly

Are you thinking about bringing home a real bunny because it's the Year of the Rabbit? Well, think again - there is absolutely no auspicious meaning or significance to having a rabbit in the house just for the rabbit year.

Sadly, every year in Singapore many hundreds of rabbits are abandoned at shelters or released outdoors (a sure death sentence for a domestic rabbit) often because of the lack of awareness on the part of people who buy them on impulse.

Contrary to common belief, rabbits are not 'low maintenance' pets - they require at least the same amount of effort to care for as a cat or dog, and often more.

The *House Rabbit Society (Singapore)* strongly urges parents and everyone else not to get a rabbit on impulse or give rabbits as gifts unless they are willing to make at least a 10-year commitment to properly care for the animal.

Most children typically want a furry companion whom they can hold, carry and cuddle, but rabbits are in fact fragile, ground-loving creatures who break easily when dropped. To compound matters, rabbits are also easily frightened by loud noises.

It is not realistic to expect a small child to understand the gravity of making a 10-year commitment to take care of a rabbit, and all too often it is a case of the child losing interest and leading to the unsavoury result of neglect or abandonment.



Photo: Michal Marcol / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Fighting Ignorance

"Many pets in Singapore suffer unnecessarily because of ignorance on the part of their owners", commented HRSS Vice President Jacelyn Heng. "Many people buy pets on impulse and do not fully appreciate the responsibilities of keeping an animal at home. The problem is particularly acute for rabbits because people wrongly assume that they are low-maintenance 'starter' pets."

Jacelyn added, "Many pet shops in Singapore are also not well informed on the care needed for a pet rabbit and often provide wrong or false information to unsuspecting first time owners."

Help save the rabbits while celebrating the Year of the Rabbit by getting these cool rabbit-themed Hong Bao packets from the House Rabbit Society (Singapore)! All proceeds go towards rabbit rescue and education initiatives.

www.hrss.net

HRSS handles two to five cases each week of owners wanting to give up their pet rabbits, citing reasons such as children having lost interest, having a lack of time, sudden development of allergies, or the arrival of a newborn to the family, among others.

Many fail to understand the responsibility of having a pet and often succumb to cute, adorable rabbits displayed at pet shops and the novelty of having a rabbit at home.

The HRSS was in fact formed by a group of concerned bunny-lovers to address this specific problem. Today, besides promoting awareness about responsible pet ownership through public events and talks, the organisation maintains a website to provide pertinent information on rabbit care and behaviour. It also runs a fostering programme to rescue and re-home abandoned rabbits.

Think Long and Hard

It is a good time as any to remind ourselves that a pet is for life (be it the owner's or the animal's) and owners must be willing to share a part of their life with their rabbit and to spend time, love and effort to ensure their safety and proper care.

Many people buy pets on impulse and do not fully appreciate the responsibilities of keeping an animal at home. The problem is particularly acute for rabbits because people wrongly assume that they are low-maintenance 'starter' pets.

**Jacelyn Heng, Vice President
House Rabbit Society (Singapore)**

ONLY \$2 PER PIECE
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If after thinking long and hard, you sincerely believe you would enjoy sharing your home with a rabbit, please choose to adopt over buying. There are too many healthy and sweet natured rabbits in need of a good home and you can find one that captures your heart at the SPCA shelter or from the HRSS through its foster programme.

However, if you are not sure whether you can make this kind of commitment, then please consider buying your child a soft toy bunny this Lunar New Year instead - it will be less stressful for you, your child, and the rabbits too!

I hope you can join us in ensuring that the Year of the Rabbit is a year where solutions rather than problems are created for the rabbits in Singapore.



HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

(SINGAPORE)

[HTTP://WWW.HRSS.NET](http://www.hrss.net)

TOA PAYOH CENTRAL POST OFFICE PO BOX 108 SINGAPORE 913104

House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS) is an all-volunteer, non-profit organisation dedicated to rabbit welfare and awareness. It seeks to reduce the number of unwanted rabbits in Singapore and improve rabbits' lives through education. For more information on HRSS, please visit www.hrss.net

Be a Foster Parent!

The HRSS is urgently seeking new Foster Parents to save as many of the 1,000 unwanted animals that SPCA Singapore receives every single month (currently 90% of them have to be euthanised). If you have prior experience in taking care of rabbits or are an animal lover who is willing to learn about rabbit care and behaviour, the HRSS needs your help. As a fosterer, you will be responsible for the rabbit's health and general well-being, and arrange for meetings between the rabbit and potential adopters. You will work closely with our Fostering and Adoptions Coordinator to find the best possible home for the rabbit in your care and the HRSS will reimburse you for all medical expenses incurred. The HRSS recognises that being a Foster Parent is demanding, but the reward of knowing that you made a difference in the life of a helpless animal who cannot speak for itself will more than make up for it. So if you're ready to open your heart and home to a bunny in need, please send an email to information@hrss.net with your full contact details.

Are You Ready to Care For a Bunny?

For those considering taking in a rabbit, here are a few important points to consider before getting one:

Housing - Bunnies need to be kept indoors and, preferably, be allowed to roam freely or at least be kept in a roomy playpen setup. If they are to be kept in a cage, the cage needs to be approximately four times the size of an adult rabbit and should not have a wire bottom, as the wire can cause sores on the rabbit's feet. There must also be enough room for a litter box, toys, food and a water bowl.

Diet - Rabbits need fresh water, unlimited fresh grass hay, 1-2 cups of fresh vegetables and a small serving of plain rabbit pellets each day.

Litter Box - Rabbits, once spayed or neutered, will readily use litter boxes that are placed in one corner of their living area; the rabbit's running space should contain at least one additional box as well. Use dust-free litter and not the clumping kind, and softwood shavings should be avoided as well.

Playtime - Rabbits need plenty of exercise and should be provided at least 30 hours out-of-cage running time (in a rabbit-proofed area) per week.

Health - Like dogs and cats, rabbits should be spayed or neutered as the risk of uterine cancer in unsplayed

female rabbits is alarmingly high, and unneutered males are likely to spray. Rabbits are delicate animals and not many vets are well trained in rabbit care, thus owners must make the effort to find a reliable and experienced vet.

Grooming - As rabbits shed their coat 3 to 4 times per year, it is important that no one in the family is allergic to fur. Owners must be prepared to spend time grooming their rabbit on a regular basis.



Classic Lao Di Fang

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oil, less salt, no
MSG, gluten-free*



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Pumpkin Rice
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Vegling Corner

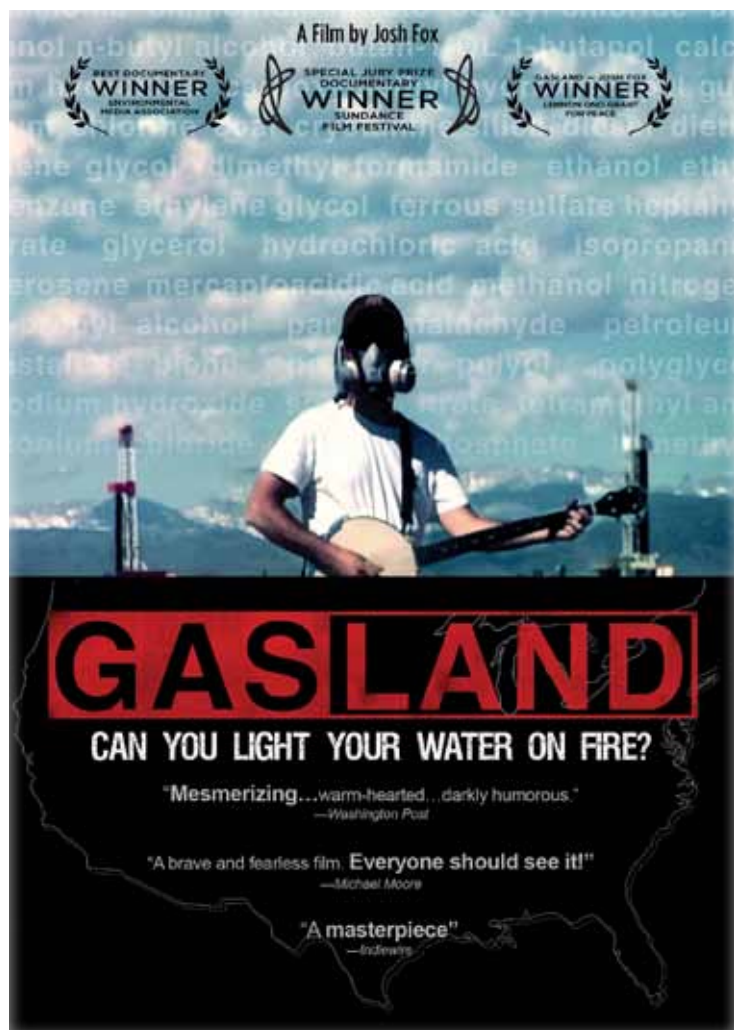


10-year-old *Lavanya Prakash* is a young lady on a mission. An avid animal lover, Lavanya hopes to start an animal shelter or be a writer when she grows up. She enjoys playing with animals and counts *Animal Planet* and *Disney Channel* as some of her favourite TV channels. Parents Bhavani and Prakash bond as a family by visiting parks and having meals together. Lavanya enjoys watching vegetables and herbs grow in their garden and relishes ladies fingers, potatoes and spinach. Currently studying in *National Public School (International)*, the multi-talented youngster can sing, dance and loves writing short stories.

A primary six student at *Maha Bodhi School*, 11-year-old *Lai Wai Ler* is an exceptional youngster who is not only vegetarian from birth but has taken the additional step of being vegan for the past two years. He enjoys eating all types of vegetables but, in particular, has a soft spot for his grandmother's *Mee Hoon Kueh*. A talented pianist, Wai Ler counts playing with his neighbours, watching movies and reading as some of his favourite activities. Mother Koh Li Keng bonds with him and his sister Lai Wai Sum (13) during meals and watch movies together. No surprise then that Wai Ler hopes to be a movie director when he grows up.



Lee En Le is a lively and cheerful 2-year-old who enjoys playing with her older brother and baking with her mother. With a passion for food at such a tender age, En Le loves to eat and will pester her family members to feed her whenever they are eating. She enjoys chomping on all kinds of mushrooms, potatoes and avocados. On weekends, En Le makes little trips to the supermarket with dad Lee Yew Wah, while on weekdays it is mummy-time with mum Tan Chai Ling, helping her to prepare dinner by plucking and washing vegetables. This bright young toddler enjoys drawing, writing and being read to.



A documentary that premiered at the famed *Sundance Film Festival* in January, *Gasland* by first time feature film director Josh Fox was awarded a *Special Jury Prize* there - and has gone on to rake in another four at various other film festivals as well.

The documentary is a simple first-person narrative of the journey undertaken by the director to find out more about *Hydraulic Fracturing* (or *Fracking* as it is referred to) - a method of extracting natural gas, after receiving a letter from an Oil & Gas Exploration company to lease his land for almost \$100,000.

Believing it too good to be true, he earnestly tries to find out more by visiting a (relatively) nearby community that has natural gas drilling wells already in place. This initial foray reveals desperate land owners who are living with illness and poor living conditions due to contaminated water as a result of *Fracking*.

Moved by what he sees, he then becomes the accidental investigator and travels to other parts of the United States to gather information and firsthand accounts. What he finds is the same sort of despair everywhere there is *Fracking* and documents all this on film. He even captures several instances of tap water catching fire (due to the gas escaping through the water system), water that smells like turpentine, contaminated water that can destroy the

membrane of high-grade water filters, and contaminated water that forms a layer of plastic-like substance when exposed to the flame of a blowtorch.

In addition, he collects and sends water samples from the various places for tests which reveal everything from lethal toxins, to un-pronounceable chemicals and even carcinogens in the water, and eventually brings his camera to witness a congressional subcommittee discussion regarding a bill to amend exemptions for hydraulic fracturing.

While the people affected are seen in distress with little help offered, the authorities and industry representatives come across as downplaying the seriousness of the issue and even dismissing it to a certain extent. *Gasland* also reveals that a secret concoction of 596 chemicals is used together with millions of gallons of water to perform each *Frack* and that each of the 400,000 wells across the United States can be *fracked* 18 times.

At the end of 104 minutes, we are left to ponder how 'natural' natural gas really is and whether it is a truly better alternative (in terms of the environmental impact caused).

For those who may find the length of the documentary a tad too long to sit through, the second half (after the hour mark) picks up steam and is riddled with fast paced interviews with experts and officials, culminating in footage from the congressional discussion at Washington D.C.

“On the want-to-see scale, Gasland tops the list”

Washington Post

But whether you watch from the start or from the midway point - with *Fracking* now gaining popularity outside of the United States (notably, it is being explored in Northern Africa and Europe), it is timely to understand the implications now rather than when it is already too late.

Recognised by many as pioneering work on the implications of the new *Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing* (as opposed to the age-old practice of *Vertical Hydraulic Fracturing*), this acclaimed documentary has just been released on DVD in mid-December and is a highly recommended watch.

Gasland is available for purchase at US\$30 (S\$43) from Amazon (includes shipping)

ECO SINGAPORE

From humble beginnings in 2003, the *Environmental Change Organisation*, fondly known as *ECO Singapore*, is today an easily-recognisable name in the environmental scene.

A not-for-profit social enterprise, the organisation strives to generate opportunities for Singaporean youths to get involved in creating awareness of environmental issues and global hazards. Ultimately, its aim is to encourage youths to take the initiative and choose to live environmentally sustainable lifestyles.

ECO Singapore was first registered in 2003 but it was not until 2006 that it was operationalised - when the central founder decided to leave his air-force job and concentrate on developing the organisation full time.

ECO Singapore differentiates itself in its approach to environmental issues - using a more holistic thrust to repackage environmental issues and make it more youth-oriented, and this process enables it to engage about 2,000 young leaders annually.

Relying exclusively on youth volunteers to execute its grand initiatives, *ECO Singapore* counts 1,200 supporters in its database but largely depends on a team of about 30-50 in its day-to-day management.

How you can help

ECO Singapore needs as many volunteers to join the cause and is always on the lookout for youths interested in being actively involved in its activities and programmes. But if that is too much of a commitment, then its president asks you to at least lead a more responsible choice of consumerism.

www.eco-singapore.org

Capturing the hearts and minds of youths

Among many other events, it conducts environmental forums and publishes a quarterly magazine to keep youths, corporate partners and environmental groups abreast of environmental developments, and reaches out to an estimated 60,000 members of the public each year.



Notably, *ECO Singapore* represents the nation in the *Asia Youth Environmental Network* (AYEN) which was formed in 2003 together with seven other Asian countries and which is supported by the *Commonwealth Youth Program* - in fact, it has been appointed Secretariat of the AYEN.

Perhaps, this quiet powerhouse is best known for its involvement at the *15th Conference of the Parties (COP 15)* to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, when its representatives had the opportunity to interview in person PM Lee Hsien Loong himself in Copenhagen, Denmark.

ECO Singapore's funding largely comes from the government and supportive corporations who provide the financial backbone, while environmental services such as training, workshops, consultancy, talks, and publication advertisement make up the remainder.

History of ECO Singapore

Mr Wilson Ang, the founder who decided to take on the role of driving the organisation full-time and who is now its president, acknowledges first the list of founders, "notably Diana Koh, Jamie Li, Tiew Ghim Chuan, Eugene Tay, Ng Pak Shun, and Kelly Tan."

He recalls the incident that happened in 2002 during the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* in South Africa - "That was the first time when I was exposed to the environment at such a macro level. The local youths are not really aware of what's happening. And that spurred me to start something."

RE-Live 2010 at 313@Somerset, 5 June 2010
- flash mob activity that engaged members
of the public to re-think the way they are
living and to promote a sustainable lifestyle

He recounted how ironic it was that the two-week conference generated trash per day that equalled the amount of trash generated in a typical month there. He added, "You represent your country when you come, and they think you're somebody who's going to make a change. You leave knowing you haven't done too much or anything at all."

"When we left we sat in a van with a logo, specially for delegates. People came out from the roadside and actually kneeled down to say thank you. That hit me quite badly. So it came upon me that I should do something when I come back."

And that spark has led to this dedicated organisation that exists today. Mr Wilson Ang (below) highlighted how *ECO Singapore* was a work in progress by noting that getting volunteers and partners who are able to commit their energy and resources for the longer term is a challenge for the organisation to overcome.

He nevertheless noted that "with the support given by the public over the years, we have grown in our involvement both locally and overseas." He hopes to have the continued support of the public for *ECO Singapore's* activities and asks everyone who believes in the organisation's work to share information on their programmes with their peers, actively participate, offer resource support, and most importantly, "start taking the initiative to lead change in their own community."

Photos courtesy of ECO Singapore



Come Learn From The Expert



*Chef Halimah of Kalavira
vegan cuisine expert*

The 'best vegan baker in town' is now sharing her secret so that you too can produce delicious vegan food that satisfies even the most ardent anti-vegetarian!



Chinese New Year Cookies 2:

Sesame Bites

Walnut Apricot Cookies

Zesty Orange Cinnamon Cookies

16 Jan 2011 (Sun) 11am - 2pm



Chinese New Year Cookies 3:

Orange Shortbread

Cashew Chocolate Chip Cookies

Chocolate Dipped Finger Cookies

23 Jan 2011 (Sun) 11am - 2pm



Festive Cooking:

Yam Seaweed Beancurd Rolls,

Pineapple Cashew Rice

Tempeh Asparagus Stir Fry

30 Jan 2011 (Sun) 11am - 2pm

Sessions are fully 'hands on' and will be conducted at **Robinsons, The Centrepont, Level 5**, in class sizes of less than 8 participants each. Participant fees are priced at between \$100 & \$120 each and includes ingredients, light refreshments and all other materials.

To register, visit www.kitchencapers.net
or email Chef Halimah at
kalavira.cakes@gmail.com

Organised by

Kitchen Capers
... a haven for novices in cooking & baking ...

Garbage Enzymes

Wonder cleaners that double-up as effective natural fertilisers and pesticides, garbage enzymes have the potential to revolutionise our kitchens by converting our kitchen waste into something truly restorative.

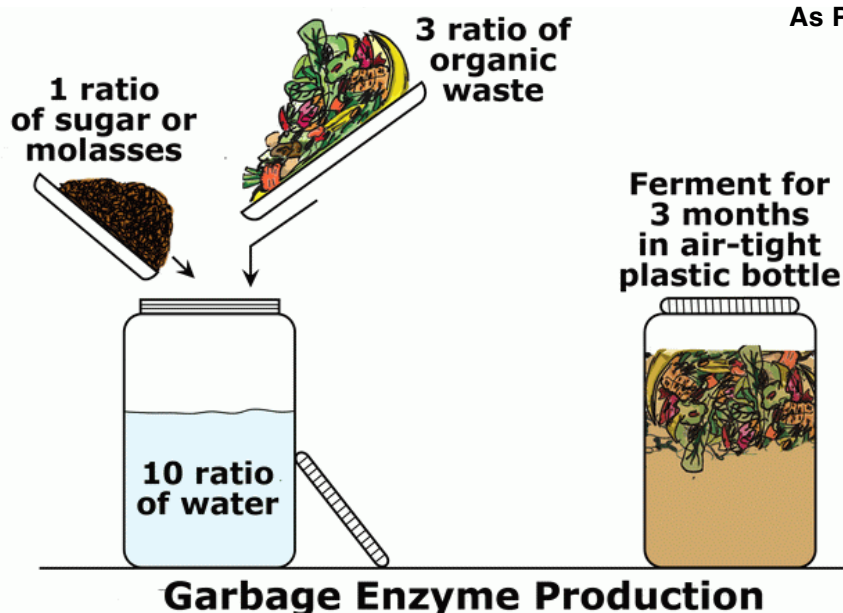
I caught the garbage enzyme (GE) bug more than a year ago, when I learnt the fermenting process at Joyce Lye's *Kampung Senang Charity & Education Foundation* at Tampines, Singapore.

The formula was researched and popularised by the founder of the *Organic Agriculture Association of Thailand*, Dr. Rosukon Poompanvong, who won a UN FAO award in 2003 for her outstanding contribution to organic farming, through her work in using fermented organic waste as fertilisers, pesticides and livestock feed.

What are Garbage Enzymes?

GE is nothing but vinegar or alcohol derived from fermenting fresh kitchen waste such as vegetables and fruit dregs (peels, cuttings and bits), sugar (brown sugar, jaggery or molasses sugar) and water.

The enzyme is derived after one filters and removes the residue after 3 months. The key ingredient is molasses, which are metabolised by the bacteria and microorganisms present in the waste into alcohol. This is then reduced into its final form of acetic acid or vinegar. Vinegar, with its acidic properties, is well known as an all-round non-toxic cleaner.



How to use Garbage Enzymes

GEs are concentrated vinegars and work better when diluted with water. For organic gardening or farming, GEs can be used as natural fertilisers, insecticides, pesticides and as a plant growth hormone. For highly degraded soils, spraying continuously for 3 months can even help restore soil quality.

Here are some guidelines for use on your garden or farm:

Enzyme for Fertiliser - 1 part : 100/500/1000 parts

Enzyme for Insecticide - 1 : 1000

Enzyme for Pesticide - 1 : 100

As Plant Growth Hormone - 1 : 500

Please use diluted solutions as recommended above as they work better in homoeopathic quantities and are more effective when used in that way. Do note that concentrated solutions can burn the plant or make the soil too acidic.

I have been using a combination of home-made compost, vermicastings, as well as garbage enzymes, so together they help nourish the soils of my organic garden at home. However, I do know that *Kampung Senang* exclusively uses GEs for their thriving community garden, by spraying the diluted solution (1:1000) on the leaves and the soil about once a week. The gardener there prefers to do this really early in the morning to facilitate better nutrient absorption.



Day 1



1 month



3 months

How to make Garbage Enzymes

Supplies needed:

- Molasses, Jaggery or Brown Sugar
- Fresh vegetable and/or fruit peels (dregs, peels and cuttings which are not cooked)
- Air-tight plastic container
- Measuring cup

In an airtight plastic container, measure and add 1 part molasses to 3 parts vegetables/fruit peels and 10 parts water. You can use any multiples of this ratio as desired but do give the mixture a good shake before screwing the lid on tightly.

This initial process takes less than 5 minutes once you are

all set up with the ingredients and container. However, the fermentation process takes a minimum of 3 months, so it is best to plan ahead and stagger the enzyme-making in batches with labels on the container indicating the date they were started - this will ensure a regular supply later on.

One thing to note is that you will need to keep the container sealed airtight during fermentation but must **open the lid once a week or once every few days to let out the gases produced, otherwise they may build up and explode the container.**

After 3 months, you can filter the residue as shown below to get a clear, dark brown liquid that has a fresh, sour smell like vinegar.



end of fermentation



filter to remove residue



enzyme ready for use



residue as fertilizer

You can use GE for household cleaning as well and, unlike gardening, you can be more flexible with the dilution rates for this purpose (see box below for suggestions).

Why Garbage Enzymes?

Making homemade GEs will keep tons of kitchen waste from reaching landfills and incinerators, including the plastic bags that are needed to bag them. Think of how much CO² emitting fossil fuels can be saved that would otherwise be used in making, packaging and transporting

toxic cleaners, fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides.

Furthermore, using GEs improves indoor air quality and promotes all of us to take up organic gardening or farming which will help generations to come in terms of health and healthy soils.

So I hope you'll join me in fermenting and spreading the Garbage Enzyme revolution!

USING GARBAGE ENZYME CLEANERS AT HOME

Bath	Add 50-100cc in bath water to improve skin condition
Washing machine	Pour 20-50cc into laundry load and soak before washing
Toilet bowl	Pour 250cc in and wash
Toilet cistern	Add 20-50cc 2-3 times every week
Garden pond & water tank	Add 1cc for every 10,000 litres of water occasionally to purify water
Kitchen sink, stove & cooker hood	Dilute 1 part GE : 50/100 parts water as required, soak and wipe as needed
Carpet	Dilute 1 : 50/100 as required and spray 1-2 times a month to remove odour and bacteria
Air-conditioned room & indoor closets	Dilute 1 : 250/500 as required and spray occasionally (as humidifier and deodorant)
Drains	Dilute 1 : 500 as required and flush occasionally to prevent blockage

Use an airtight plastic container and not a metal or glass one which cannot expand, as gases build up within the container and may explode. Even with plastic containers, it is important to open the lid at least once a week during the first month and stir the contents.

If any worms appear, add an extra ratio of sugar and reseal the container. They will disappear by themselves.

Do not worry about the white, black or brown layer that forms on top of the concoction. The white layer is actually yeast that is rich in Vitamin B Complex and Vitamin C and can even be used to make bread.

Use any combination of fresh vegetables or fruit peels or dregs. I personally prefer a combination of pineapple, papaya and citrus peels. Do not use cooked food, meat or fish, or other non-food items like paper, metal, glass, plastic, etc.

DO's & DON'Ts

Store the sealed container in a cool and dry place that is away from direct sunlight. Keep the GE at room temperature and do not store in a refrigerator.

Bhavani Prakash, founder of [Eco Walk The Talk](http://EcoWalkTheTalk.com), is an environmental activist, speaker and writer who is available to conduct workshops, give talks and contribute articles on a range of environmental issues, and can be contacted at bhavani@ecowalkthetalk.com

How many of us are aware of the ecological impact of the products we buy? And of those who are aware, how many of us soothe our guilty souls by buying items that are labelled 'eco-friendly', 'recyclable' or 'carbon-neutral'?

But do we really understand under what criteria these terms are used or in what tangible way they conserve fast depleting natural resources? Not quite.

Ecological Intelligence: How Knowing Hidden Impacts of What We Buy Can Change Everything authored by Dan Goleman sets out on a critical journey to examine the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of a large range of products.

Taking into consideration the hidden effects of our items right from the time the materials are extracted, through the manufacturing, transportation, retailing, consumption and disposing process, the LCA reveals the environmental, biological and social implications of consumer choice.

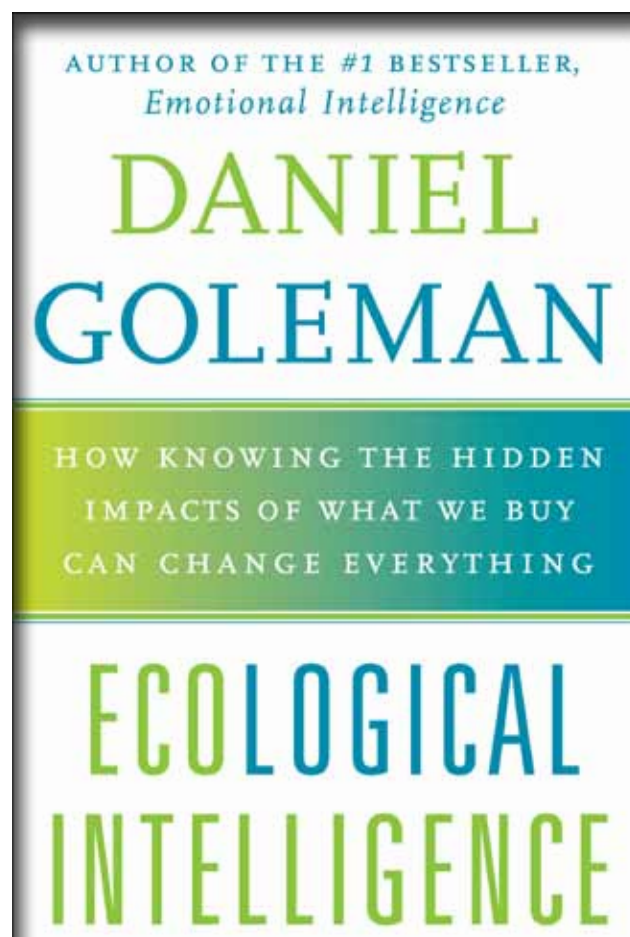
“In short, the virtuous market will save the earth. Goleman argues that we can train ourselves to think differently – to develop an innate flight instinct when confronted by, for example, a shampoo that contains methylparaben, or a garden chair made from tropical wood.”

The Financial Times

For example, a simple glass bottle requires 1,959 discrete steps from birth to disposal and each step can be evaluated on its impact on air, water and soil pollution, carbon footprint and even the incidence of cancer.

Goleman urges us not to fall for glib eco-friendly labelling – *green washing* as it commonly called – and tells us in no uncertain terms that there is only one way forward and that is to reduce consumption and be smart about our purchases.

To do this, he calls for 'radical transparency' where all



decisions are made publicly so as to provide consumers access to information that can enhance their purchasing power. To prove his point, he shares an overlooked ecological impact - sunscreen that gets washed off into the sea can cultivate a type of algae that attacks coral reefs.

Dismissing the distance of goods travelled as not a good indicator of carbon footprint, Goleman goes on to outline three suggested ways to be ecologically conscious in our consumption:

- *knowing the true cost of a product*
- *encourage and support improvements*
- *share what you have learnt with others*

He argues that two-third of shoppers actually want to make ethical decisions but lack the necessary information to do so. Taking the position that consumer perception has greater influence than the manufacturer, he ends on a positive note suggesting that we are at a pivotal point to create change in our consumption patterns such that companies become motivated to genuinely seek out truly sustainable processes instead of just clever, technical labelling.

Ecological Intelligence: How Knowing Hidden Impacts of What We Buy Can Change Everything is available for USD\$28.83 (S\$38) from Amazon.com

Mesmerising Macau

Mention *Macau* and typically the image of casinos and pawnshops is what comes to mind. This is not surprising however, what with more than 20 casinos packed into this little place that is about 30 square kilometres and a population that counts way under one million (544,600 to be exact).

Glitzy casinos are everywhere - even next to schools and residential estates, and most people here work in the tourism or hospitality industry that contributes to more than 50% of Macau's GDP.

However, having settled into Macau as a new resident, I am gradually beginning to appreciate the other face of Macau – its old world charm. While Macau is one of only two *Special Administrative Regions* (SAR) under China rule, it has a rich cultural history stemming from the 15th century.

Brief History

According to historical records, fishermen from the Fujian province of China together with farmers from the Guangdong province were the first known settlers in Macau. During the 16th century, the Portuguese arrived and duly established onshore trading depots. Macau thus played a crucial role in the development of Portugal's trade with India, China, Japan and South-East Asia.

With the influence of the Portuguese, Macau developed into a crossroad for the meeting of Eastern and Western cultures. The Roman Catholic churches even sent their greatest missionaries to build many churches and fortresses which have enabled this bright-lights city to retain a romantic European feel even in this modern age.

By Cassandra Tan

Photos: MeL-Knackz by MeLisa Tan

Macau Tower - highest bungee jump point in the world

Street signs in both Chinese and Portuguese reflect the unique east-meets-west culture evident in Macau

Consequently, the foreign merchants left Macau after the *Opium War* in 1841 but Macau continued to enjoy its leisurely multicultural existence. The historical buildings have been preserved and are used for other purposes, while its identity has now developed to become *Asia's Las Vegas* where the gambling industry generates billions of dollars in revenue each year.

Place to Fall in Love

Apart from the touristy places that most people would visit such as *St Paul's Ruins*, there are a few quiet attractions that have beautiful architecture and rich history. *Our Lady of Penha* chapel (below) located at the top of *Penha Hill* is one such attraction. The chapel was founded in 1622 by crew and passengers of a Portuguese ship which had narrowly escaped Dutch raiders.



The chapel was rebuilt in 1837 and since then has been standing tall and proud to this day. In addition to its heritage, the hilltop view offers a magnificent panorama of the *Macau-Taipa Bridge*, *Macau Tower* and the inner harbour. You can marvel at

its architecture and take a slow stroll on the chapel's grounds or watch couples having their bridal photoshoot.

Meanwhile, the former red light district known as *Rua da Felicidade* has a faint similarity to Singapore's Chinatown area with shophouses painted bright-red lining the streets. In the 'good old days', prostitutes would stand at the upper floors waving to prospective clients and calling out to them. Today though, the same shophouses now house restaurants instead but have been preserved in their original form. If you take a slow walk into the inner lanes, you can still see people enjoying a game of mahjong in these shophouses that probably date hundreds of years.

For an away-from-the-bustle experience, *Coloane Village* on the island of *Coloane* - one of two islands that are linked to the Macau peninsular - is the place to go. The village still retains most of its countryside and rustic charm as villagers go about their daily lives at a leisurely pace, chatting over a game of chess and enjoying their afternoon tea together. A couple of quaint little cafes have since sprouted in this area and you can enjoy a detached afternoon just enjoying the slower pace of life.



Rustic house in Coloane

For the Veg Traveller

Vegetarian restaurants are plentiful in Macau but they largely serve Chinese cuisine due to the significant Buddhist background of the region. However, it is not difficult being a vegetarian here as most cafes or restaurants do offer sandwiches or are able to accommodate vegetarian requests.

Vegetarian restaurants do seem to enjoy pretty brisk business of late as people in Macau are becoming more health conscious. The food served here is also more healthy - lesser fried items on the menu and generally, dishes here are less oily compared to those served in Singapore.

Although having a lack in variety with most restaurants serving very traditional Chinese fare, vegetarian food is served in generous portions and remains delicious and affordable at most places. As a practice though, it is recommended that you call in advance to ensure the restaurant is open and to reserve a table, as most vegetarian restaurants here are still small family-run establishments.

Old shops such as this still exist in Macau today



USEFUL LINKS

Ola Macau Guide

<http://www.olamacauguide.com>

Happy Cow (Veg Food Listing)

<http://www.happycow.net/asia/china/macau>

Macau Government Tourist Office

<http://www.macautourism.gov.mo>

All About Veggie (Blog)

<http://ilovemyveg.blogspot.com>



St Paul's Ruins

Shanghai Yuan Vegetarian
Rua de Marques de Oliveir 66 G/F
Tel: 28358338

*near a busy street market
 at Three Lamps District*

A favourite haunt in Macau, *Shanghai Yuan Vegetarian Restaurant* is located near where many locals frequent. While not a very touristy area, a visit is definitely recommended to witness the true local culture. There are also at least two more vegetarian restaurants in this area as the locals do like vegetarian food. This restaurant specialises in *Shanghainese* cuisine and has a wide variety of food on its menu from cold dishes to *dim sum*. The dumplings in particular (*xiaolongbao*), with juicy mock-meat fillings are as succulent as their non-vegetarian counterparts. Other favourites include *mock chicken with pine nuts* that is eaten wrapped with lettuce.



TOP PICKS

Feng Cheng Xuan Vegetarian Restaurant
Rua do Monte, No. 2
Tel: 28362334

*near St Dominic's Church,
 towards St Paul's Ruins*

Located within a mere 5 minutes' walk from the famous *St Paul's Ruins*, *Feng Cheng Xuan* is located near the popular *Senado Square* and is easily accessible. Its most famous dish is *Wonton*, which comes served both in soup or fried versions. Their *wantons* are generously filled with vegetables, mushrooms and mock-meat filling and the food is not oily.



*Beautiful view of the inner harbour
 from Our Lady of Penha Chapel on Penha Hill*



Most of the time I do not really measure my intake of fruits and vegetables and simply eat whatever takes my fancy or is easily available. I find that taking note of what you eat everyday - although helps to serve as a good health habit - can be tedious for busy working individuals, myself included. So for me, as long as I consume vegetables or fruits each day, I'm happy.

But if you want great-looking skin, Vitamin C is definitely not to be neglected in our daily intake of nutrients as they help promote and protect collagen, thus preventing wrinkles from forming.

Research suggests that our minimum daily intake of Vitamin C should be at least 500mg but as many of us do not have the luxury to calculate our nutritional intake each day, some of the simple practices that can help include opting for freshly squeezed fruit juice or fresh salad.

Strawberries and kiwis, which are hassle-free to prepare, make great snacks enriched with Vitamin C, and even

provide for DIY strawberry cleansing facial mask (clear up blemishes) and kiwi toner (tighten skin pores) - if you're up to it!

Skin Care Not About Beauty

Apart from '*you are what you eat*', I believe '*you are also what you use*'. Beauty is not only skin deep - the surface of your skin, a large visible organ that protects all your internal organs and tissues, needs to be well taken care of. Unfortunately not many bother, thinking that taking care of one's skin is purely for beauty's sake.

Basic skin care starts with gentle cleansing and religious moisturising. No matter how lazy you may be, you **MUST** clean your face with a gentle facial cleanser and apply face moisturiser that is suitable for your specific skin type.

All of us have different skin types but in sunny island Singapore the most common skin types found are *Normal* (the blessed ones!), *Combination/Oily*, *Combination/Dry*, and *Sensitive*.

Great Complexion - The Natural Way

By Joey Lam

Some of the fruits and vegetables that can help you reach the daily recommended dose (500mg) of Vitamin C

Cantaloupe	1 cup (8oz)	59mg
Orange juice	1 cup	97mg
Broccoli, cooked	1 cup	74mg
Red cabbage	½ cup	40mg
Green pepper	½ cup	60mg
Red pepper	½ cup	95mg
Kiwi	1 (medium)	70mg
Tomato juice	1 cup	45mg

Your Gear May Need Revamp

Our skin types may change according to age, stress, and environmental factors, so do not have the misconception that once you've found your suitable set of skin care products it will last through your lifetime.

Most of the time it will not and that is why you sometimes hear women complaining that their products don't seem to work as well as before. The fact is the products' efficacy is the same but the skin type has changed instead.

For those who can afford to spend a little more time and money on looking good, it is always helpful to add an eye-cream, eye-gel, or eye-serum (depending on your skin type) and face-serum for that added moisturising that goes deeper into the epidermis layers.

All Important Vitamin C

It will be helpful to look for serums that contain Vitamin C as well for the added benefits of collagen stimulation. Products with Vitamin C will generally help to disperse *melanin* and whiten the skin's outlook, an essential necessity for Asian women these days.

An effective Vitamin C ingredient to look out for is *Sodium Ascorbyl Phosphate* as it is activated only upon penetration by enzymes present in the skin. It also represents a stable precursor of Vitamin C that ensures the constant delivery of Vitamin C into the skin and is proven to prevent and treat *acne vulgaris* effectively without side effects.

The most important and often neglected step in skin care is sun block. Unfortunately, to find an organic or natural sun block product that is suitable for one's skin type is almost like searching for a needle in the haystack.

So what I always do is to opt for the lesser evil and look for sun block that states '*No Animal Testing*' on their labels instead, even if they may not be totally organic or made of natural ingredients.

More Than Just About Face

Most women tend to focus on the face and forget to take care of the skin on the rest of their bodies, especially the neck and hands. These are the areas where one's age will be revealed drastically no matter how taut our face may look, so it might be a good habit to start incorporating a handy hand cream in your handbag and start smoothing your facial moisturiser down your neck.

Another practice is to have weekly body scrubs to exfoliate dead skin cells with sea salt scrubs or cane sugar scrubs.

This will help to detoxify and eliminate toxins accumulated in our bodies as well create healthier looking skin and improve health in general.

Always Lather Up At Night

Also, a nightly routine of slapping on body moisturiser all over is a habit that EVERY WOMAN should cultivate, especially if you are one to sleep in an air-conditioned room every night or work in an air-conditioned office all day.

Do not have the misconception that once you've found your suitable set of skin care products it will last through your lifetime

If you don't like the sticky feel of body crème lotions, you can always opt for body lotion mists that have lighter moisturising properties but are sufficient in keeping your skin supple from the harmful effects of air-conditioners or environmental pollution. But for those who have extremely dry skin, it would be wise to go for deep moisturisers like body butters.

To have great looking skin the natural way, one not only has to eat right but also incorporate the use of the right skin care products. You can always go green and help care for the environment in your daily regime by switching to organic or natural skin care products and going vegan in your diet.



Photo: graur codrin / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

LEE SONG MAU

THE QUIET CHARMER

Lee Song Mau, 28, a high-flier in the financial services industry, has been a vegetarian for almost half his life. It all started when his mother who hails from a vegetarian family background decided one day to focus on vegetarian cuisine at home, which put the rest of the family on the vegetarian bandwagon.

Song Mau recalls that “we had no choice but to follow” but adds that after two years of his own research on the benefits of the diet, he decided to observe vegetarianism full time.

But it wasn't all smooth sailing for the young go-getter who was in junior college at the time. Going out with classmates posed a stickler since the options were limited a decade ago (unlike today's vibrant vegetarian scene) and he admits “walking past KFC was also tempting back then, but no problem now!”



Twelve years on and the ovo-lacto vegetarian feels that being vegetarian is a great conversation-starter with the “common topic for new acquaintances being why I became vegetarian”. He is also pleased to note that “colleagues and friends are generally understanding and supportive so social activities have been quite smooth”, but feels that “finding a life partner might be a challenge, I’m still trying to figure that one out.” (*Editor’s note: Ladies who might wish to demonstrate that it is not a challenge, we are sorry to inform that this prized catch is taken.*)

Family is a big part of Song Mau’s life and when asked on coping with family gatherings during festive periods, he counts himself fortunate that most of his maternal relatives are vegetarians too. On a candid note, he admits that “there had been some friction” with his paternal relatives, but that his grandmother has since come to accept it and even makes compromises for his family.

“Knowledge is Power”

Unsurprisingly, this brilliant analyst relied on educating himself about vegetarianism and says, “if you know so much about the downsides of a meat diet, I can’t imagine a rational person being tempted to give in by just the smell of fried chicken”. As for limited choices while eating out with friends, he has noticed that it is less of an issue these days.

Letting himself gloat, the typically humble Song Mau reveals that “for the record, I’ve not taken an MC for the past 4 years of working” and that he seldom falls sick - “maybe once a year”. He also shares that he finds himself recovering faster than before the diet change and “most times without medicine.”

The active runner who participates in the Singapore Marathon regularly - in the *Standard Chartered Marathon Singapore 2010*, he completed the half-marathon for the first time - describes himself as a novice who does it “more for the experience and fun running together with friends”. He has also recently taken up road-biking and is training to conquer longer distances soon.



Representing the Veg Movement

A little known fact about Song Mau is that he was invited by the *Vegetarian Society (Singapore)* to present at a conference held at Xiamen, China, in 2009. Recalling the opportunity fondly, he describes it as “an invaluable experience” before quickly adding humbly that “there are definitely much more dedicated vegetarian heroes out there.”

The avid traveller also shares his secret to managing abroad - canned food being extremely useful. “I don’t use them all the time, but in ‘emergencies’ they fill your stomach.” He illustrates this by recounting an incident during a recent trip to Tibet where “I requested for a bowl



of rice on the train ride up to *Lhasa* and opened two cans. Fellow travellers looked on in envy.”

His advice to those considering a vegetarian lifestyle is to “do the switch gradually and take as much time as you need to learn about the positive aspects of it.” Then, his bureaucratic persona kicking in, he briefs solemnly, “as I said earlier, education is key.”

1) What is one veg food that describes you best?

Tough one on that. Maybe seaweed because dried seaweed looks rough, like my skin.. haha. But seriously, I love being close to the sea and my close friends enjoy the deep philosophical side of me, just like the humble seaweed that one has to dive deep to find.

2) If you were given one wish for the world, what would it be?

I have a soft spot for kids. Really wish that all children have access to quality education. It's the best hope for breaking out of the poverty cycle.

3) What misconception about vegetarianism gets your goat?

I don't get angry easily. But if you force one out of me, it may be people remarking, "If we don't eat meat, there will be over-population of animals". Total rubbish.

4) What is your favourite book or movie on vegetarianism?

None really. I got converted by a Chinese documentary that depicted the cruel factory farming, but such gory films don't actually rank high in my box-office. Now, I'm trying to find books that teach busy executives how to quickly prepare tasty meals.

5) Name a Quotable Quote to you...

*"When dealt with a hard blow in life, suck it up and move on.
Self-pity and denial will do you no good; regaining control
will put you better on the road to recovery."*

- Lee Song Mau -



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Green Room Café offers a much needed oasis in metropolitan Singapore and remains true to its name of being green. Greeted by lush emerald hued shrubs of varying shapes and heights, the relaxed yet quaint setting is a throwback to the colonial era - accentuated by the white wooden beams and interior, large windows, open veranda and skylight roof of the premises.

However, it is not only the location and decor that mesmerises - the food was impeccably prepared and served artistically, right down to the presentation. A feast for the eyes, four signature dishes - the 'chicken' rice, laksa, portabella burger and homemade soy milk yogurt - were sampled.

The *Vegetarian Chicken Rice* (\$14) was cooked to perfection with the rice fluffy and flavourful complete with the unmistakable aroma imparted from a heady mix of pandan leaves and ginger. The accompanying chilli sauce too had just the right amount of spiciness to compliment the dish.

The *Laksa* (\$13) meanwhile was unlike any other and

was prepared using non-GMO soy milk, resulting in a dish (bottom, left) without any of the heaviness typically associated with the traditional coconut-milk-laden laksa. However, the dish still retained the authentic flavour thanks to the liberal addition of spices and herbs, and together with mock prawns and crunchy bean sprouts, it was a fine balance of textures and flavours.

The *Portabella Burger* (\$13) came with a juicy succulent portabella mushroom sandwiched between a freshly baked herbed bun (bottom, right). Layers of greens, tomato and garlic relish were added to this healthy ensemble, giving it a distinct savouriness.

Finally, *Homemade Soy Yogurt* (\$9) was presented which was a fruity yet creamy blend of fresh ripe fruits (strawberries, kiwis, bananas and mangos) generously doused with a slightly sweetened soy milk yogurt, that made for a light, refreshing and rather unique dessert.

Apart from these signature dishes, *Green Room Café* presents wide ranging cuisine from salads, pizzas and smoothies, and even offers an afternoon tea spread from 2-5pm daily.

While the menu contains a few dishes that have been expressly created using only plant-based ingredients (and also without garlic and onion), vegan customisation is additionally available for advance reservations.

A perfect retreat for Valentine's Day or any other special occasion, *Green Room Café* impresses not only with their menu but also the scenic location, welcoming ambience and warm hospitality.

***Green Room Café* is open daily from 11.00am to 10.00pm.**

**Green
Room
Café**

Bishan Park II

Tel: 65561533

www.greenroomcafe.com.sg



The orange fruit, which originated in South-East Asia, is considered a berry as it is soft and fleshy and consists of many seeds.

Orange is the third most-popular flavour in the world - after chocolate and vanilla - and about 80% of total orange crop is juiced.

Oranges have more than 170 types of phytochemicals and most of them are found in the peel and inner white pulp. Some of these phytochemicals have been found to help reduce blood pressure and have anti-inflammatory properties.

Oranges are not only high in Vitamin C, they are also a good source of folate, thiamin, potassium and calcium.

One whole orange provides 116% of the daily required amount of Vitamin C - a water soluble antioxidant that combats free radicals that can cause cancer and reduces the severity of the common cold.

Juicy Orange Facts

Oranges tend to contain pesticide residue, so organic oranges are recommended wherever possible and practicable.

Research indicates that the high Vitamin C content in oranges may help protect against peptic ulcer and stomach cancer.

Oranges should be selected by their firmness, weight and smooth texture; the heavier the orange the higher the juice content. Do avoid oranges that have soft spots or appear mouldy.

Research suggests that a class of compounds found in citrus fruits, especially oranges, called *polymethoxylated flavones* have the potential to reduce cholesterol levels more effectively than even prescription medication.

Oranges are high in pectin, and not only do they help regulate bowel movement and protect the colon against cancer, they can help to stabilise blood-sugar levels as the natural sugar found in oranges can prevent these levels from spiking.

Non-organic oranges are often injected with artificial dyes to give it a uniform orange hue. Oranges tend to re-green when ripe, so oranges that may appear greenish or brownish are actually perfectly fine for consumption.

Fluffy Orange Pancake

1. Mix soymilk, orange juice, sugar, oil, orange zest and salt in bowl
2. Sieve together the plain flour, baking powder and baking soda
3. Add sifted ingredients to soymilk mixture and whisk until combined (avoid over-mixing)
4. In hot non-stick pan, pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (or two small ladle scoops) of batter
5. Cook on one side until bubbles start to appear, then flip over and cook until brown
6. Serve hot immediately with jam, fruits or maple syrup

160ml semi-sweetened soymilk
135g plain flour
70ml orange juice
2 tablespoon organic sugar
2 tablespoons corn/canola oil
2 tablespoons orange zest
(tightly packed)
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
Pinch of salt

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Vegetarian Society (Singapore), VSS, is a non-profit, non-religious organisation formed in 1999 which strives to build a more humane and harmonious world for everyone on the planet - for our children, as well as for our fellow creatures. Now, as we enter into our second decade, we aspire to become a thousand-strong society that can move mountains, and to achieve this, we need the support of each and every vegetarian who believes in our noble cause.

Becoming a member is easy - just download the GIRO form directly from the VSS website at <http://www.vss.sg> and mail it to:

Seeds of Hope, Vegetarian Society (Singapore)

3 Pemimpin Drive #07-02

Lip Hing Building, Singapore 576147

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... display distance of restaurant from current location

... display location of restaurant on the map

... provide direction (by bus, car, or foot) from current location to the restaurant

... find nearby restaurants and view them on the map or as a table

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Running Free Running Barefoot

The annual *Singapore Marathon* witnesses a great many running enthusiasts and the health conscious who participate for a whole host of reasons. This year, almost 60,000 runners were clocked on the road - the largest ever participation since the first race in 1982.

The latest race also saw a creative twist to running the marathon as a group of 50 brave running enthusiasts came together to form *Team Barefoot* which ran the race with the members tied together. Supported by *Terra Plana* which produces *Vivabarefoot*, the runners were outfitted with the minimalist running footwear for the race.

With the bold ambition to start and finish the entire race together, *Team Barefoot* managed to complete the race in under 8 hours with 35 runners intact. The endeavour was in support of the *Animal Concerns Research & Education Society* (ACRES) and aimed to raise \$15,000 for the local wildlife rescue group.

Barefoot Running Clinic

The highlight in the run-up to the race was undeniably the barefoot running clinic conducted by Michael Sandler and Jessica Lee. Specially flown into the region by *Terra Plana*, the barefoot running experts held clinics in Cebu, Manila and Singapore which were all over-subscribed.

In Singapore, the clinic was held at the *Botanical Gardens* and scheduled on the eve of the national marathon. Following a short briefing session for the *Team Barefoot*

runners involved, Michael and Jessica began by sharing their inspiring stories on how they literally fell into the sport (Michael's journey involved bouncing back from a horrible accident) and touched on the science and logic behind barefoot running.

The animated and passionate Michael then freely shared the techniques he has perfected and developed over the years and substantiated his assertions using scientific research done in the field of running and athletics.

It was apparent that the 50 or so participants thoroughly enjoyed the candid and forthcoming presentation by Michael and Jessie, which was followed by a practical session on how to run barefoot correctly (*note: it is NOT just a matter of taking off the shoes and running*).

At the end of the satisfying session, the participants were invited to some refreshments and many took the opportunity to purchase copies of Michael and Jessie's book, *Barefoot Running: How to Run Light and Free by Getting in Touch with the Earth*, and get hold of their autographs as well.

Not one to let the opportunity to run a race slip by, the day after the clinic Michael ran half the *Singapore Marathon* on *au naturel* feet before accompanying *Team Barefoot* the rest of the distance, guiding and encouraging the runners through the final leg of their noble journey.

Run Free, Be Vegan

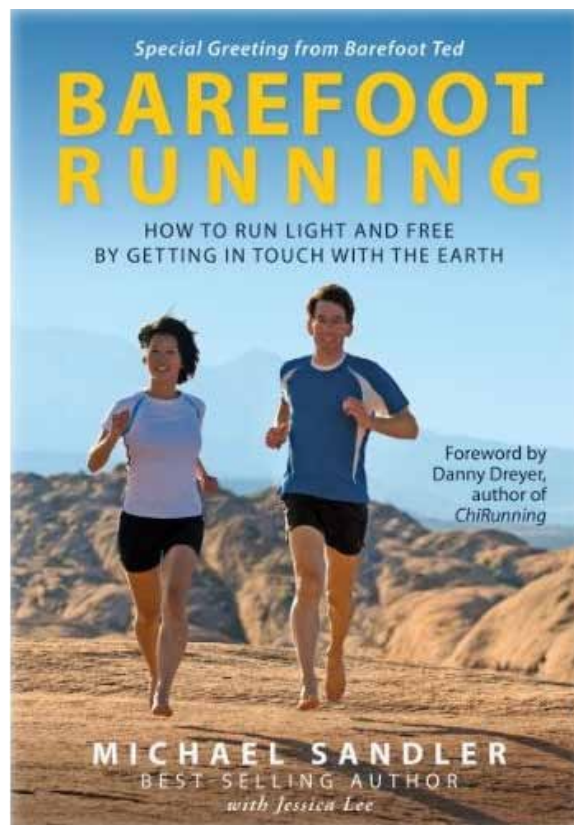
Although Michael and Jessie were here particularly to share their expertise in the art of barefoot running, it is also notable that Michael has been a vegan since 2005 (after witnessing dairy farming practices firsthand) and a vegetarian since his high-school days. Sharing that he had always intrinsically felt that eating meat was wrong, he had to wait until he was old enough in his mother's eyes to make that initial choice for himself.

Of course, he never looked back on his decision to stop eating meat and has in fact served as a role model, having trained for the Olympics in the 1990's and participated at various national competitions in both speed-skating and cycling right up to the fateful accident in 2006.

Today, the 40-year-old is moving towards a raw food diet and is working through the challenge of ensuring that his diet is complete while travelling on the road to spread awareness on barefoot running.

To that end, he relies on bananas and *ProBars* while trying to plan ahead as much as possible. With his increasingly busy schedule, he is also considering getting a nutritionist to plan his diet in detail so as to avoid any problems when travelling overseas.

Someone who can only be described as a man who aspires to get back in touch with nature, Michael - together with Jessie - intends to assimilate himself with indigenous



tribes around the world to learn more about 'Vitamin G' (i.e. 'vitamin' ground) and how natural healing remedies can be rediscovered and a better lifestyle can be achieved by returning to the bare (no pun intended) basics.

Michael Sandler guiding participants - young and old - on the finer points of barefoot running



Michael's Story

On 2nd April 2006, while training for a cross-country inline skating trip, Michael Sandler suffered a near-death accident which left him with a shattered femur, hip and arm. He was rolling along the *Boulder Creek* bike path in Boulder, Colorado, when a father, not realising that the path was used by cyclists and skaters, stepped out with his toddler who was attempting to walk. Michael recalled. "I had the choice of hitting the



toddler or hitting the deck. No one hits a baby." So he flung himself backwards over the child and landed hard on the pavement.

"My body was broken pretty good," he said. "I could see the baby was OK, and I could wiggle my fingers and toes." After being rushed to the hospital and undergoing surgery, doctors doubted if he would be able to walk again.

However, Michael had other ideas and persevered with his efforts to regain mobility. Along the way to recovery, he even found the time and energy to set a record for the fastest time for a person on crutches to complete the *Bolder Boulder* race and *Denver Half Marathon*.

Due to the injuries he sustained, Michael had to be outfitted with titanium parts which causes him to be somewhat off-balanced. This posed some difficulties in running and he was able to correct it by taking on a natural running stance - barefoot. Today, there are no traces of the man who was once "broken pretty good" - other than a hollow in his knee where the *anterior cruciate ligament* (ACL) should be - as he runs several miles a day barefoot.



His experiences and firsthand knowledge have led Michael to form the *RunBare Company* together with his wife, Jessica Lee. Together, they travel the country - and more recently, the world - spreading awareness on barefoot running and conducting clinics on the proper methods and techniques involved.



It is not often that we come across restaurants that score both in terms of delicious food and excellent service. In that regard, *Whole Earth* scores an A+. The premier restaurant serving Thai-Peranakan cuisine remains true to its philosophy of being a trendsetter in vegetarian cuisine without compromising on the authenticity of its food or service.

While *Whole Earth* is famed for its *Assam Pedas*, *Nonya Curry*, *Braised Monkey Head Mushroom* and *Penang Rendang*, the specially created Chinese New Year spread boasts incredible dishes that could very well usurp these mainstays.

This year's version of the shark's fin, entitled *Creamed Spinach Shark's Fin Soup*, comes swimming in a bowl of malachite creamed spinach, quite unlike the traditional clear soup. Thick and comforting, the spinach does not have a grassy aftertaste and in fact offers a nice contrast to the crunchy transparent strands meant to replicate shark's fin. With a liberal drizzle of almond cream on top, there is an added dimension of creaminess and flavour.

The aptly named *Walnut Delight* (below) is truly a delightful dish that has been created in the tradition of sweet and sour dishes. It comes with crunchy nuggets of walnut wrapped in beancurd skin and coated with sweet and sour sauce. With the addition of bell peppers, cucumbers and pineapple chunks - all served atop a nest made of shredded yam and hard noodles, this dish is as much a treat for the eyes as it is for the taste buds.

And for those who enjoy spicy food, the *Sambal King* (bottom, right) is a must-try. Made with *Whole Earth's* secret sambal sauce together with sautéed eggplants, long beans and the pungent *petai*, this dish delivers the spiciness without overwhelming the diner. The vegetables are cooked *al dente* and therefore still have a firm bite when munched into.

Complementing these mouthwatering creations is the *Golden Oats* - a renowned dish at *Whole Earth's* sister restaurant, *naïve* - which has been brought into the menu by popular demand. Essentially monkey head mushrooms that have been deep fried together with oats and curry leaves, this dish comes speckled with grains of sugar and salt which add an interesting savouriness to the dish. Notably, the use of specially-selected monkey head mushroom offers a unique texture and chewiness which compliments the crispy oats beautifully.

It has by now become common knowledge that this is one restaurant that consistently makes the effort to move away from the practice of replicating traditional dishes by simply plying mock-meat and gluten based ingredients into the original recipes. *Whole Earth* certainly commands respect for its dedication in using vegetables and spices to recreate the taste and texture of our favourite cuisine.

***Whole Earth* is open daily from 11.30am to 3.00pm and 5.30pm to 10.00pm. The dishes do not contain added MSG or mock-foods.**

Whole Earth Vegetarian

76 Peck Seah Street
Tel: 63233308
www.wholeearth.com.sg



Thank You 2010

**Vegetarian movement
enjoys a fruitful year**

As we enter into a new year and herald a new decade, it would be timely to reflect on the year past and all the exciting hope that 2010 has brought all of us. So here's one for the scrapbook as we review the past 12 months in pictures...



*Asia for Animals Conference 2010
15-19 January*

*'Tiger Show' By Cat Welfare Society
21-28 February*



*Vegetarian Society (Singapore) AGM
20 March*

*Skate Migrate Against Cat Hate
3 April*





*ACRES Gala Dinner
22 May*



*VegVibe Print Launch
29 August*



*39th IVU World Vegetarian Congress
1-5 October*



*Balik Kampung @ Bottle Tree Park
10 October*



*World Vegetarian Day
Dinner at Eight Treasures
1 October*



*Vegetarian Meetup at Rang Mahal Pavilion
12 December*

Within the vegetarian circle, Vinitha Ang Siew Teen is a rather household name, and for those unfamiliar with the woman herself, the cafe she runs at *Cuppage Plaza* might ring a bell - *NutriHub, the Organic Fusion Cafe*.

Anyone who has met Vinitha in person will easily vouch for the passion with which this nurse-by-training goes about the business of filling the stomachs of busy executives with wholesome vegetarian food.

But this talented chef also aspires to fill the minds of those interested and conducts a whole range of culinary classes - more than 100 in fact, that "is the achievement and satisfaction which I gain although struggling to survive every month."

The 48-year-old shares that spending five years from 1999 to 2004 nursing her parents through cancer led her "to change my diet from non-vegetarian to vegetarian and from vegetarian to organic / natural wholesome diet."

Her process of discovery highlighted the importance of supplementing one's diet with natural foods that optimise health and the importance of preparing these in the right way to maximise their benefit.

Naturally, she then started to explore and experiment with various ingredients and cooking methods - the result of which is the splendid array of dishes that appear on *NutriHub's* menu. Vinitha's series of *NutriMeal Cooking, Raw Food, Nutrition Assessment, and Harmonizing Your Body Energy* classes are also the natural extension of this lifestyle exploration.

Today, Vinitha specialises in international fusion cuisine and 'raw like cooked' food that is low in calories yet nutrient-dense. On a personal note, she singles out the humble *Swiss Muesli* - a concoction of raw oatmeal with fresh fruits, nuts and seeds - as her favourite food.

In the kitchen, her latest Raw Food creation - the *Asian Pizza Delight* using raw crisp bread without flour, local greens, plus "my special raw-nut cheese" - is the proud badge of honour she wears, and nothing pleases her more than to hear from her students that they have recovered from their problem or illness after adopting her methods - "Nothing better than their personal experience and testimonial."

Being the founder and chief culinary expert of *NutriHub*, Vinitha juggles being a passionate cook with the necessity to be a business owner, and thus finds herself struggling "to manage the cashier counter and, at the same time, prepare food for customers".

Being a rank-and-file chef who worked herself up from zero knowledge to her expertise today, she advises those starting out exploring vegetarian and organic cuisine not to give up and keep on trying, and also to "work hard, but smart!"

Nutrition Hubber

Ms Vinitha Ang

1. Soak chickpeas for 8 hours or overnight
2. Discard water and use 4 to 5 cups of clean water to cook for 1 to 2 hours till soft
3. Remove cooked chickpeas and drain till dry (water can be used as soup)
4. Wash and cut bell pepper, purple cabbage and cucumber into cubes, then marinate for 2 to 3 minutes before mixing with chickpeas
5. Top with some sesame seaweed sprinkle if desired



**Chickpea Salad Delight
(makes 4 servings)**

1 cup Organic Chickpea (Garbanzo)
1 small Organic Red Bell Pepper
1 slice Organic Purple Cabbage
1 small Organic Japanese Cucumber

Marinade for Salad
1 tablespoon Lemon or Lime Juice
1 tablespoon Plum Syrup, Passion Fruit Jam or Lemon Myrtle Dressing
1 teaspoon Bragg Liquid Aminos
1 tablespoon Agave Nectar or Honey
1 teaspoon Toasted Sesame Oil

Recipes with photographs courtesy of Ms Vinitha Ang



Pumpkin Pudding with Pomelo
(makes 4 servings)

200g Organic Pumpkin 4 to 5 Medijol Dates
20g Coral Seaweed (remove seeds)
50g Cashew Nuts 1 to 2 pieces Pandan Leaf

1. Soak coral seaweed and cashew nut overnight
2. Remove skin and cut pumpkin into small pieces before blending with coral seaweed and half cup of water
3. Blend cashew nut and dates with half cup water and 3 ice-cubes
4. Mix all blended ingredients together and add pandan leaf before cooking for 10 to 15 minutes
5. Chill and add to pomelo when serving



**Burdock Root
Mushroom Brown Rice**
(makes 4 servings)

2 cups Organic Brown Rice
½ Burdock Root
4 to 5 pieces Dried Shiitake Mushroom
1 pinch Sea Salt
1 teaspoon Sunflower Oil

1. Soak the brown rice for 6 to 8 hours or overnight
2. Soak dried mushroom in hot water for 30 minutes and cut into small pieces
3. Remove skin and cut burdock root into small pieces
4. Stir fry ingredients before pouring into rice cooker together with 2 to 3 cups of water, sea salt and sunflower oil
5. Cook according to rice cooker instructions

1 medium Organic Broccoli
1 to 2 Organic Carrots
1 packet Fresh Buna Mushroom

Sauce
¼ cup Organic Polenta
2 Organic Tomatoes (cut into small cubes)
1 teaspoon of sea salt (or liquid amino)

1. Cut broccoli, carrot and Buna mushroom before blanching them
2. Cook polenta in 1 cup of water over 30 minutes
3. Add tomato cubes and sea salt to polenta
4. Pour polenta sauce over broccoli, carrot and mushroom before serving



**Broccoli with
Polenta Tomato Sauce**
(makes 4 servings)

Look resplendent in this gorgeous floral-inspired maxi dress designed to give maximum comfort despite the full ankle-length. Made of eco-friendly GOTS-certified organic cotton, the material is so breathable that it can be worn indoors or outdoors. The versatile design allows you to transform daytime casual wear to an elegant evening party dress, and comes with two hidden pockets on the sides as well. There are loops along the chest line so you can wear the dress as a halter or loop around the neck, and a petite frame can even throw a belt around the hips to have a very edgy 70's silhouette. The **Etrican Flower Print Maxi Dress** is available in four sizes.

Retails online at www.etrican.com for \$43



Delicately handcrafted with naturally occurring *JungleVine Fibre*, the sustainably produced **Pahk Style Nature Bag** has rich, earthy tones and a satin-like lustre which radiates from each individual cord under most lighting.

The beauty of the bag is only matched by its versatility to fit any occasion – from relaxed shopping trips to a sophisticated evening on the town. The Nature Bag is well-known for its durability and can last several years easily.

It is also truly organic and most parts of the bag are in fact garden-compostable - truly a chic way to stay green!

Retails online for \$33 (large) and \$38 (extra large) at www.kangaorganics.com

Tallulah Jane is a New York City based perfumery creating 100% natural perfumes, body oils and colognes made only from botanical essences. These ingredients are organic or wildcrafted whenever possible, without compromising the quality of the perfume. Free of *parabens*, *phthalates*, and petrochemicals, all of the products are vegan and certified cruelty-free by *Leaping Bunny*. Choose from three signature perfumes – *Tallulah* with a creamy jasmine aroma, *Gotham* made with exotic spices and rose extract, and *333* which is an exquisite triple threat of chamomile, lavender and 3 essences of citrus tree.

Retails for \$125 per 8ml bottle at **The Naturally Better Company (Tel: 64717220)**





Made with 100% vegan and organic ingredients and without the artificial colours and additives, **Coconut Bliss Mint Galactica** ice-cream is subtle on the mint and big on the chocolatey chunks. Though this ice-cream is made with coconut milk, it imparts a rich and creamy flavour and goes easy on your waistline as it is sweetened using agave syrup instead of traditional white sugar. Also available in *Cappuccino* and *Naked Coconut* flavours.

**Retails at \$15.20 for a 473ml container
at Four Seasons Organic Market**

Embark on a healthy Chinese New Year with *Algae Plus* - a complete natural health supplement consisting of three unique species of seaweed, *Chlorophyta*, *Phaeophyta* and *Rhodophyta*. Made from the finest, freshest and purest seaweed from Greenland and Iceland, *Algae Plus* contains more than 150 nourishing substances like vitamins, minerals, trace elements, anti-oxidants, amino-acids, Omega-3, Omega-6, Omega-9, GLA, CLA, ALA, proteins, Q10, fibers, alginates, Chlorophyll, Mannitol, Astaxanthine, enzymes and a complete set of isomers - and more. Suitable for vegans, this supplement's small tablets make it suitable for children and the elderly to consume.



**Retails online for \$68
per bottle of 150 tablets
- email natural@xinyuangroup.com.sg for ordering information**



Prepare for Chinese New Year the eco-friendly way with **Ecover Floor Soap**. Made with natural linseed oil and plant-based ingredients with a refreshing citrus scent, the floor soap leaves surfaces sparkling clean without leaving behind any hazardous chemical residue. Suitable for most types of floor, this cleaning liquid works as effectively as commercial chemical cleaners but without the damage to your health and the environment. An added benefit of **Ecover Floor Soap** is its packaging - the containers are 100% recyclable.

**Retails for \$13 per bottle at Choose Eco Store
and online at www.oliveventures.com.sg**

Pining for Pineapple?

Don't worry about buying pineapple in bulk - here are some delicious recipes to turn the fruit into marvellous dishes

Spicy Sour Pineapple Noodle Soup



1 tablespoon olive oil
60g onions
3 cloves garlic
1 thumb-sized ginger
40g tamarind + 200ml water
600ml water
65g baby corn
50g sweet peas
70g shiitake mushroom
3 chilli padi
300g noodles (any choice)
2 tablespoon light soy sauce
½ teaspoon salt (or to taste)
150g fresh pineapple

1. Prepare vegetables by peeling and slicing onions, garlic and ginger - slice baby corn, peas, mushroom, fresh pineapple and chilli padi to desired size
2. In bowl, soak tamarind with 200ml water, then discard pulp and seed and reserve tamarind water
3. In pot, sauté onions, garlic and ginger with olive oil until fragrant
4. Add 600ml of water and bring to boil
5. Add vegetables, chilli padi, noodles, soy sauce and salt, then bring to boil before adding tamarind water
6. Once noodles are cooked, remove from heat and add pineapple pieces (allow to cook in residual heat)
7. Serve immediately while hot

Pineapple Ginger Juice

250g ripe pineapple flesh
1 lemongrass bulb (the white part)
5g ginger
100g ice
170ml water
1 tablespoon organic sugar (optional)
Cherries for garnish

1. Blend ingredients together until smooth
2. Strain to remove pulp (optional)
3. Serve immediately and garnish with cherries



Pineapple Sweet Potato Sago Dessert



75g pearl sago + 600ml water
400ml water
220g sweet potato
1 pandan leaf
100g brown sugar
Pinch of salt
100ml coconut milk
150g pineapple chunks (slightly sour)

1. In pot, bring 600ml of water to boil, then add pearl sago and boil until pearls turn translucent
2. Drain cooked pearl sago through sieve and wash in water to remove starchiness, then set aside
3. Peel and cut sweet potato into chunks
4. In another pot, bring 400ml of water to boil, then add sweet potato chunks and pandan leaf, and boil until sweet potato is tender
5. Add sugar, salt, coconut milk and cooked sago pearls, then remove from heat when comes to a boil
6. Add pineapple chunks to dessert and serve hot or cold as preferred



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Nonya Laksa

Satay
with gravy
(garnishings
not inclusive)



Nonya Otak-Otak



Lotus Leaf Rice

Created by the *Vegetarian Society (Singapore)*, the *New Asian Traditions Vegetarian Cookbook* presents a splendid repertoire of 66 kitchen-tested recipes ranging from snacks, mains, drinks and desserts with accompanying gorgeous full-colour pictures of luscious food.

The *New Asian Traditions* is put together rather well with thoughtful and quirky names for each category such as 'Energy' for drinks, 'Hope' for raw food and foods to prevent diseases, and 'Snug' for sandwiches and wraps.

Each recipe is accompanied by a short introduction and many morsels (no pun intended) of information about ingredients, diet, nutrition and remarkable people. It is obvious that a lot of thought and effort has gone into producing this cookbook as it serves not only as a recipe compilation but as an information resource.

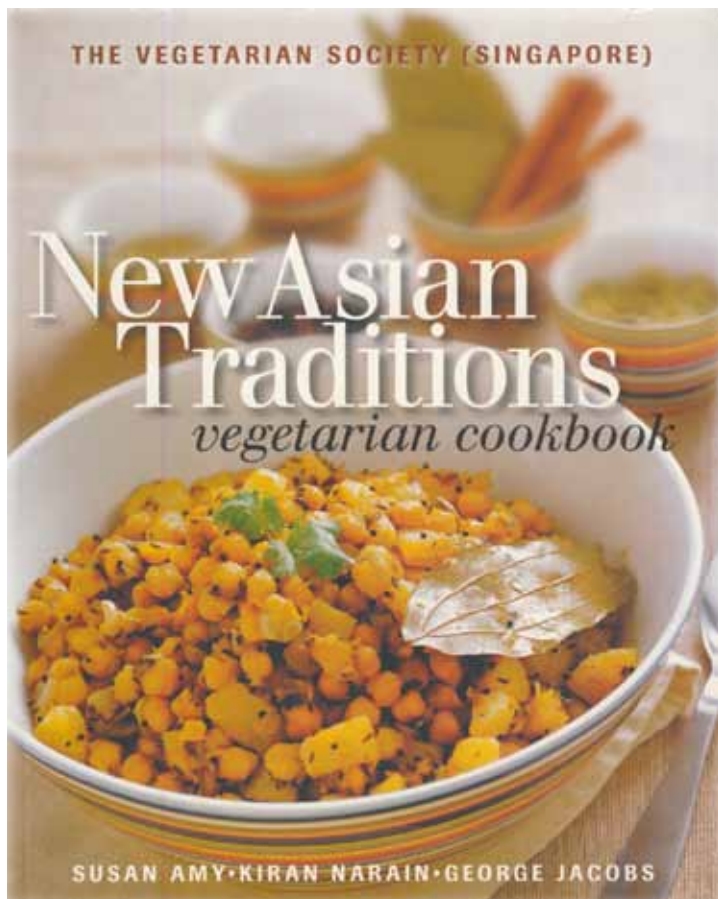
The recipes vary from the simple such as 'Teenage Veggie Sandwich' and 'Kacang Pool' to more elaborate dishes like 'Scalloped Potatoes'. However, most recipes use ingredients that are easily available and are a cinch to prepare.

Get Creative

with Tradition

The recipes that we tried include 'Chole (Chickpeas)', 'Deluxe Mixed Vegetables', 'Nam Lu (Red Beancurd Wrap)' and 'Simplicity Tofu and Mushrooms', which were all well-received and seasoned just right. Particularly, the 'Kama Sutra Drink' in the section on 'Aphrodisiacs' was a perfect fizzy blend of sweet and tartness.

Overall, *New Asian Traditions* is a labour of love from several volunteers and contributors from the *Vegetarian*



Society (Singapore) and easily rivals cookbooks produced by well-known chefs and authors. In fact, this cookbook is well-organised, unpretentious and information-rich, making it suitable for those wanting a healthier lifestyle and needing an introduction to vegetarian food, or even novice home chefs.

***New Asian Traditions* retails online (www.vss.org) directly from the Vegetarian Society (Singapore) for S\$30 including shipping**

- 1 cake soft tofu
- 200g (7 ounces) fresh shiitake mushrooms
- 5 teaspoons soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 150ml (5 fluid ounces) water
- 1 head butterhead lettuce
- carrots and other assorted raw vegetables to taste

Simplicity Tofu and Mushrooms (serves 2)



1. Place all ingredients, except the vegetables in the rice cooker.
2. Cook for half an hour.
3. Serve on a bed of lettuce with unpolished, long-grain rice or your favourite pasta.
4. Garnish with carrots and other raw vegetables.

Preparation: 8 mins

Cooking: 30 mins



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VegVibe magazine was first published online in August 2009 as the first magazine in Singapore to address vegetarian and vegan issues. We are a wholly content-driven publication that strives to cover anything and everything that matters to the vegetarian and vegan community, and have positioned ourselves as a uniting platform for those interested in **Health & Nutrition**, **Animal Welfare** and **Environmentalism**.

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VegVibe has been well-received since inception and enjoys a conservative estimate of 4,000 readers per issue, with almost 300 direct subscribers, as well as over 900 fans on our *facebook* page – all achieved by word-of-mouth alone. We have also established ourselves as a reliable news provider and are the Singapore correspondent for the *European Vegetarian and Animals News Alliance* (EVANA) and a registered news source with *Google News*.

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