

Vegvibe

A full-page background image of a man with long hair, wearing a black wetsuit and red patterned shorts, surfing on a wave. He is in a dynamic pose, leaning forward with his arms outstretched. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, and the sky is blue with white clouds. The overall mood is energetic and adventurous.

MARCH 2010

An inspiration...

Liam Webb

Also in this issue:

Cat Welfare Society's Tiger Show, Studying Food Labels, Kid-Friendly Recipes, Knowing Your Okra, Sustainability Arguments and Charismatic Cambodia

The Chief Veggie Speaks!

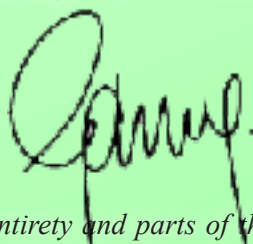
The first term-break of the school year starts this week and we acknowledge this in the March issue by offering some nutrition tips especially for vegan teens (*Page 13*), as well as some interesting recipes (*Page 16*) that will make kids jump for joy (hopefully not due to any 'sugar rush' though).

We also feature a vegan all the way from Melbourne, Australia, in this issue (*Page 14*). Liam Webb, who also appears on the cover, is an inspiration to one reader, Ms Amanda Teng, and she nominated this active young man in response to the contest we held over the past month. Ms Teng has won herself a pair of Golden Village movie tickets as a result of her successful nomination, and we hope Liam's story will similarly be an inspiration to all our young vegans and vegetarians.

We are now embarking on a fan-recruitment drive to create more awareness of **VegVibe** on facebook and humbly request you to encourage your friends and family to join our *facebook fan page* (*Page 18*). We have created a discussion board there so that new fans can post the name of their 'referer' and the top 2 active 'referers' will be each getting a pair of *Golden Village* movie tickets!

We are also proud to share that we have been registered with *Google* as a news provider. All news stories published on our **blog** will now be tracked by *Google News* and appear in their search results accordingly. We therefore encourage newsmakers in the areas of vegetarianism, veganism, animal activism, and environmentalism, to get in touch with us so that information of their good work can reach far and wide.

Finally, as ever, we continue to include updates and breaking news stories on the **VegVibe blog** at <http://vegville.com/blog>, and remain contactable via email at vision@vegville.com and through our website at <http://vegville.com>, thank you.



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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Start Studying Food Labels | 02 |
| Charismatic Cambodia | 04 |
| Know Your Okra | 07 |
| Tiger Show for Singapore's 'Little Tigers' | 08 |
| Talk Shop | 10 |
| <i>Product review</i> | |
| Out & About | 11 |
| <i>Food review</i> | |
| What the Vegan Teen Needs | 13 |
| Vegetarian Heroes | 14 |
| <i>Liam John Webb</i> | |
| Veg Kitchen | 16 |
| <i>Recipes just for the kids</i> | |
| Print & Film | 19 |
| <i>Media review</i> | |
| Sustainability Arguments | 20 |

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*The editor would like to thank
Mr Liam J Webb for graciously agreeing
to be featured in this issue.*

Start Studying Food Labels

By Bhavani Prakash

The brand of cookies, bread, ketchup, chocolates and the multitude of other edibles you put in your shopping trolley has a direct bearing on your health and the health of your children. In the case of sensitive people, such as children with ADHD, it could even affect learning ability and behaviour. This is due to the number of food additives that are used in the manufacture of processed foods.

What are Food Additives?

Food additives are substances that are intentionally added to improve a characteristic of the food item, and are not normally eaten by themselves or used as a typical ingredient.

Manufacturers use food additives mainly to increase the shelf-life of the product, and improve the colour, texture, volume, taste and flavour of the product that may otherwise be lost during processing. Needless to say, they do not necessarily make the product any healthier.

Though for centuries, additives such as salt and vinegar have been used to preserve foods, over the last couple of decades, the range and usage of food additives have increased dramatically with the rise in the consumption of processed foods with most today being petroleum based.

Even though many additives are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the US, other independent research studies have shown links between various additives to allergies, cancer, heart disease and other ailments.

For example, researchers at the University of Liverpool say that 'exposure

to food additives during a child's development has been associated with behavioural problems such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder' In addition, they go on to warn that "there are signs that when you mix additives, the effect might be worse."

What are 'E' Numbers?

Have you ever noticed on many food labels a long list of mysterious looking numbers after the letter E? Well, they denote the food additive that is used - for example, E621 is Monosodium Glutamate or what is more

commonly known as MSG, a flavour enhancer.

Sometimes you may find the names of the colours instead of numbers such as 'Yellow No. 5' or 'Blue #', and the label may say 'FD&C' before the number which means it can be used for 'Food, Drug & Cosmetics'. Likewise, if a number is listed as 'D&C', it means that this colouring is considered safe for drugs/medicines and cosmetics, but not for food.

Understanding Food Additives

1) **FOOD COLOURING** is added to food because, in most cases, a lot of the natural food colours are lost during factory processing. Dyes or colouring are then added to the processed foods or even applied on fresh fruits, to make them 'look' good. Unfortunately synthetic dyes that are used on fresh fruits (e.g. RED#2 used on oranges and RED#3 used on cherries) are suspected to cause cancers and brain damage and difficult to detect as there are no labelling requirements on fresh food.



ART - DAN BERGER • CONCEPT - MIKE ADAMS

International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organisation (WHO) lists these as possible carcinogens.



Photo courtesy of A What's Cooking America

4) **ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS** - typically, Aspartame, Saccharin and Acesulfame-K - continue to be a subject of much controversy, though the US FDA approved it as far back as 1974. It is therefore best stay away from artificial sweeteners, unless there is a strong medical reason, and intake of sugars from natural sources like fruits, honey, or unrefined sugars is the best

option for children.

5) **HIDDEN SUGARS** in a product usually add up surreptitiously to the total intake. Sugar can be disguised as Brown Sugar, Corn Sweetener, Corn Syrup, Dextrose, Fructose, Fruit-Juice Concentrate, Glucose, High-Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS), Honey, Invert Sugar, Lactose, Malt Syrup, Maltose, Molasses, Raw Sugar, or Sucrose, Syrup. So, to make out how much sugar you are really eating, read the part of the food label which says 'Sugars' - every 4 grams equals a teaspoon of sugar.

6) **TRANS FATS** are essentially created by adding

hydrogen molecules to liquid vegetable oil to make them solid, and can be identified as 'Hydrogenated' or 'Partially Hydrogenated Oils'. Typically, they are used as an economical way to extend the shelf-life of the product, and enhance their flavour and texture. However, consumption of trans fats create risks of cancer, clogging arteries, heart disease and immune dysfunction. Also, our bodies can't get rid of them and they thus keep building up inside. Remember too that restaurants and fast-food joints use hydrogenated oils in commercial friers as it is cheap and can be used repeatedly without going bad quickly.

7) **HIDDEN MEAT CONTENT** is particularly important as there are several products which have hidden meat in the ingredients. Gelatin, for example is made from the boiled bones, hooves and skin of slaughtered animals and can be found in jellies, marshmallows, candies, and even in ice-cream. Rennet, which is used for fermenting cheese, is obtained from the stomach linings of slaughtered calves. Other things to watch out for include soup stock which may have chicken or beef, sauces that may contain anchovies - a type of small fish, and lard (pig fat) or tallow (beef fat) which may be found in pastry, bread and cake mixes.

So is there Anything Safe at All?

In moderate quantities, acids such as citric acid, lactic acid, ascorbic acid, vitamins and minerals, pectin, lactose, casein, lecithin, sorbitol, calcium propionate, glycerin, annatto, and beta-carotene are generally considered safe (not all of these may be vegan though).

It is mostly the processed and pre-packaged food that come with a host of additives, so getting into the habit of deciphering food labels, and teaching our children to do the same will go a long way in ensuring that only the healthy and wholesome stuff gets put into our - and our children's - bodies.

Worryingly, researchers in the UK have even linked consumption of processed foods to depression. So opt for a diet largely based on whole foods, which includes lots of fruits and vegetables, instead of one with sweetened desserts, fried food, processed ingredients, refined grains and high-fat dairy products.

Read and familiarise yourself with the labels so that the small changes you make in the way you shop can make a huge difference to the health of your family.

Photo courtesy of Adazon



Photo courtesy of Malta Chamber of SMEs

Charismatic Cambodia

By **loretta M Perera**
with photos

Just a 2-hour flight from Singapore, *The Kingdom of Cambodia* awaits - full of culture, history, adventure, bargains and some of the loveliest locals (below) you could hope to meet. From modern cities to world wonders and bargain-hunting at markets, to discovering history on a new level, Cambodia holds the key to invigorating your senses, regardless of what you are looking for.



The capital of Cambodia, *Phnom Penh*, is a hybrid of local simplicities and the speed of any city. Roads packed with *tuk-tuks*, motorcycles, cars and the occasional wandering cow introduce you to the essence of Cambodia – a city heading quickly towards everything a modern society holds without forsaking her originality and charm.

Things to do

The *Khmer Rouge* occupation, which occurred during 1975 to 1979, saw the deaths of more than 1 million people, and the atrocities that took place not so long ago are remembered in the form of monuments, museums, and in the eyes of every local aged 40 and above. Thus, mandatory for any visitor is a trip to the *Killing Fields of Choeng Ek*, where a tower of skulls serves as a solemn remembrance of the genocide.

Along the way, mass burial sites, sites of torture and photographs (left) of journalists and locals



who lost their lives can be seen, and joss sticks and flowers are available to show your respect. The entry fee is USD\$2 (\$2.80) and you can take a *tuk-tuk* from any central location for about USD\$6 (\$8.40) or hop on a motorcycle ride for USD\$4 (\$5.60).

Meanwhile, the *Tuol Sleng Museum*, or S21 as it is commonly known, was a school-turned-prison and torture chamber, now restored as a museum. It holds shocking evidence of the brutality that took place and is best viewed with an open heart and gathered courage; and definitely an important stop to understand the history and culture of the *Khmer* people. The entry fee is USD\$3 (\$4.20) and you can take a *tuk-tuk* for about USD\$4 (\$5.60) or a motorcycle ride for USD\$2 (\$2.80).

Shopping & Entertainment

For the best bargains and a thorough shopping experience, head to the *Russian Market* – so called because of its earlier days of Russian traders, where everything from clothes, ornaments, furniture and accessories were sold. Reaching the market is just a short ride via either *tuk-tuk* for about USD\$3 (\$4.20) or motorcycle for USD\$1.50 (\$2.10).

There is also no lack of bars, cafes and restaurants in Phnom Penh. For a night out, head to *Sisowath Quay*, commonly known as *Riverside*, which runs along *Tonle Sap River*. Alternatively, you could head to another haunt at *Lakeside*, the backpackers 'ghetto' by *Boeng Kak Lake*. Lined with bars, restaurants and the cheapest accommodation available - USD\$5 (\$7) and up - the atmosphere is waiting to be soaked in; conversations with strangers are waiting to be had.



Vastly different from Phnom Penh, *Siem Reap* meanwhile is home to what many consider an alternative wonder of the world – *Angkor Wat* (above). Besides its historical richness, Siem Reap warmly receives all visitors with novel experiences and any pampering you may desire.

There is one reason why countless travellers flock to Siem Reap – the *Temples of Angkor Wat*. Culturally rich, the location has enjoyed increased fame since Angelina Jolie scaled its (*Ta Prohm* temple) walls for *Tomb Raider* in 2002. With hundreds of temples to explore in all, a 3-day pass at USD\$40 (\$56) gives you sufficient time, with opening hours from 6.00am to 6.00pm.



A *tuk-tuk* can bring you around for about USD\$15 (\$20.90) a day, while renting a bicycle for USD\$2 (\$2.80) is the cheaper and more adventurous option. The sunrise at the main *Angkor Wat* temple is spectacular whilst the sunset view at *Phnom Bakheng* temple is equally breathtaking.

And if you need some background information before you set off to the temples, the *Angkor National Museum* provides a thorough understanding on the historical and cultural relevance of the temples. The entry fee for the museum is USD\$12 (\$16.80) and it opens from 8.30am to 6.30pm.

Another rare find is *The Cambodian Land Mine Museum and Relief Facility* set up by an ex-child soldier. This initiative addresses the after-effects

of the *Khmer Rouge* which are still prevalent in Cambodia till today - land mines. The focus is thus devoted to demining land and helping land mine victims, with all profits from the museum's store going towards funding the cause.

For the Veg Traveller

With a largely Buddhist population, most places in Cambodia have a vegetarian menu or offer at least vegetarian and vegan options. Ranging from western cuisine such as Veggie Burgers to local curries modified to accommodate vegetarians, no animal-loving veg person will go hungry in Cambodia.

As far as safety is concerned, travelling in Cambodia - especially in *Phnom Penh* - requires that you be aware of your surroundings, and if you feel uneasy at any point, you should leave for a more secure place.

It is also important to keep your valuables close at all times – a money belt saves you from becoming a target of pickpockets or snatch-theft. It is best to just carry what you need, leaving the rest of your money locked safely in your bag at the hotel or

guest-house. It is also not advisable to visit the ATMs at night.

Don't be surprised if you are frisked by police officers before entering a club at night (both male and female are on duty, not to worry) – it is a safety measure that is taken seriously. Finally, if you are travelling alone, do make new friends along the way to help if you encounter any difficulties; enjoying Cambodia is all about taking care and absorbing the culture!





Places to Eat in Cambodia

Although Cambodia is not famed for its cuisine, there is still an ample amount to try. Vegetarians must work hard to find 100% vegetarian or vegan places, but they are there! The most affordable and satisfying meals can be found at local-run establishments and whilst there is some risk as to the food hygiene, the gastronomic rewards are indeed plentiful!

By Luke Otter with photos

Chamkar Vegetarian Restaurant *Siem Reap*

Being a popular nestling point for tourists eager to venture to *Angkor Wat*, you can expect to pay higher than usual prices for food in Siem Reap, where *Chamkar Vegetarian Restaurant* is located. At Chamkar we ordered the 'green papaya inclination', a reasonable-tasting dish comprising of papaya (the 'fruit of Cambodia') in a thick curry. The dish had a heavy undertone of garlic, but was not overly spicy and came with a price tag of USD\$4.75 (\$\$6.60).



Mercy House *Battambang*

With most tourists usually sticking only to *Phnom Penh* and *Siem Reap*, the French-inspired Battambang is relatively free of tourists. *Mercy House*, located on *La He Road*, is a superb vegetarian place, and although it is hardly aimed at Western tourists, the dishes are top-notch. The *fried rice with basil* costing around USD\$0.80 (\$\$1.10) is a must-have and absolutely delicious with a subtle dash of spice coupled with a captivating aroma. Also worth a try there is the hamburger costing USD\$0.60 (\$\$0.80), which is not over-complicated and is one of the best vegetarian burgers we have tried.



With no English or Chinese speaking staff, paralinguistics are a must here. Quite easy to locate but not somewhere a traveller would stumble upon, it is locally-owned and cheaply priced. The *cool noodle* priced at USD\$0.80 (\$\$1.10) is an interesting dish that, as the name would suggest, is served cold. Do make sure you exclaim "no ice!" though or else this dish will come with a cube of ice in the middle. The thick yellow noodles were fresh and bouncy, with the dish containing a heady amount of mushroom-stem mock meat. Contrary to most cuisine in Cambodia, it is also quite spicy and emanates from the amount of chili sauce used.



Surn Yi Mei Shi Guan Vegetarian *near The Royal Palace, Phnom Penh*

Know Your Okra!

The slimy nature of okra acts as a natural thickener for soups, stews and curries - to reduce this, add lemon or tamarind juice to the dish.

Okra belongs to the same family as cotton and hibiscus.

Okra has one of the highest levels of antioxidants such as vitamin A, beta-carotene and lutein which are needed for good vision.

To retain most of the okra's nutrition, it should be cooked as little as possible.

Okra is thought to have originated in Ethiopia and through the slave trade spread to the Americas and eventually the rest of the world.

When choosing okra, the tips should snap when bent. If it does not, it is too fibrous for cooking.

Okra is super food and is recommended to pregnant women for its high folic acid content.

The slimy mucilage binds with cholesterol and also helps in relieving constipation.

Okra is rich in vitamin B complex and vitamin K which is necessary for strengthening bone and blood clotting enzymes.

Tiger Show for Singapore's 'Little Tigers'



Cat Welfare Society's signature event for the Year of the Tiger brings attention to feline issues with style and class

By Ganga

All things feline arrived at the forefront in February as the Lunar New Year gave birth to the Year of the Tiger. Arguably signalling the year for the *Cat Welfare Society* (CWS) to reach new heights in its noble endeavour, it organised and executed the widely anticipated *Tiger Show* to great success.

The event was so successful that the exhibition was extended for a second week and led to a flea market being held at the end of the exhibition after a local photo studio donated a big stash of set props, clothes and accessories to the CWS.

Tiger Show of the Positive Kind

Typically associated with the red light district of Thailand, the name was specifically chosen for its provocativeness to incite interest - which it did.

The week-long event opened at the *Post Museum* located along Rowell Road on 21st February to an invitation-only ceremony that saw a lion dance troupe perform an auspicious performance before a crowd of 50 or so esteemed guests. And with the performance beginning from the open area outside on a crowded Sunday evening, it caught the attention of the public as well.

After the welcoming address by the CWS, guests were then invited to mingle and view the exhibits - and of course, encouraged to support the cause by purchasing an interesting range of souvenirs (left).

An Exhibition that Informed & Entertained

The exhibition, which ran until 28th February (and thence extended to 6th March), combined various genres of art together and showcased the work of renowned cat artists such as Paul Koh of *Catmasutra*, Ng Ling Tze of *Sloth Studios*, the team from *Cats of the World*, as well as others such as multi-disciplinary visual artist Tay Bee Aye and ceramist Michelle Lim.



Incorporating extremely well with the exhibits were the CWS's own artistic-looking placards (above) on cat welfare issues and notably, focussed attention on the need to move away from the culling-as-a-solution approach towards a more sensible *Trap-Neuter-Return* (TNR) policy.



Programme to be Proud Of

The Tiger Show was not just about the exhibition though and included some interesting activities near the end of the first week.

On Thursday (25th February), a workshop entitled '*I Am Cat, Hear Me Roar*' saw representatives from SPCA, *Action for Singapore Dogs* (ASD), CWS, *Leafmonkey Workshop* and guest panelist, former Nominated Member of Parliament Mr Siew Kum Hong discuss where animal welfare stands in Singapore, with insights into the role of new media in advancing the cause.

Then, on Friday, a funky *Animal People Singles' Night!* facilitated lots of animal-friendly and like-minded individuals to mingle and get to know one another - with a special performance by celebrity

Maia Lee who was also present.

And to round off the slew of activities was a *Cat's Day Out* on Sunday where feline companions were proudly showcased and adults, cats, children and kittens enjoyed a memorable opportunity to interact and bond. Adding to the glamour was TV personality Melody Chen who led the evening's progress whilst '*Smiling Yogi*' Balakrishnan Matchap added to the ambience by sharing his expertise through a special '*Cat Yoga*' session.

A great start to the *Year of the Tiger* indeed, it certainly seems as though 2010 will be a good year for animal welfare - and our feline friends in particular - and regardless of the zodiac year, the *Tiger Show* should be a mainstay on our annual calendar of animal welfare events.



After a hard day's study, reach for UNISOY's *Instant Organic Soya Milk Powder* which is made from 100% top grade Non-GMO organic soya beans. This full-bodied and creamy drink does not have the usual beany taste as the beans have been 100% deskinning before processing. Suitable to be drunk on it own, this instant soy milk powder is delectable served hot or cold. Use it as milk substitute in your favourite beverages without having to worry about cholesterol, artificial colouring or flavourings and preservatives.

UNISOY Instant Organic Soya Milk Powder retails at S\$8 a pack (30g x 12 sachet) and is available at all major supermarkets

www.unisoyn.com.sg



Photo courtesy of Health Freak Mommy



www.vitamin.sg

The age-old question of where vegans get their B12 nutrition can be finally put to rest with *Deva's Vegan Vitamin B12* supplements. Made by Deva, an all vegan nutrition company certified by the Vegan Society, each Vitamin B12 tablet contains 1,000mcg of B12 to ensure adequate intake. This product comes as a sublingual tablet that dissolves under the tongue so that the vitamin B12 can directly penetrate the bloodstream and yield its benefits.

Deva - Vegan Vitamin B12 (Sublingual) retails at \$22.75 per 90-tablet bottle and is available online at www.vitamin.sg.

If you would like to 'Talk Shop' about any product or provide further information on those featured in this column, please drop us an email at vision@vegivibe.com

Velvety and smooth, *Pure Harvest's Calcium-Enriched Rice Milk* is a suitable beverage for those seeking an alternative to dairy milk. Made with the consumers' wellbeing in mind, this beverage does not contain GMO ingredients, cane sugar or preservatives. Instead, it is enriched with a unique sea-plant based calcium and delivers a whopping 250mg of calcium per serving. Its natural sweetness and creamy consistency is delicious in coffee, cereal or just plain on its own.

Pure Harvest - Calcium Enriched Rice Milk retails at \$3.90 per one-litre pack and is available at all major supermarkets



www.pureharvest.com.au



VegSenz
2 Serangoon Road
The Verge #01-24/25/26
Tel: 63920369

Located in the heart of *Little India*, VegSenz, a newly opened organic vegetarian eatery, certainly got me jumping with excitement! The concept of organic vegetarian food is hardly unique in Singapore but, when done well, it can be spectacular.

With the restaurant being in its infancy, the menu is still a little hollow. Nevertheless, it does have some excellent dishes - in particular, the delectable organic baked burger is vastly dissimilar to a typical soggy mock patty, with beancurd sheets as its 'meat' which give the burger an outstanding texture and flavour.

The presentation for all dishes is faultless, especially with the rice dishes. The *organic millet rice* (top) is commendable, with the salad for this dish being a particularly intriguing mix of radish, pomelo, ginger and orange rind. The organic coffee is also worth a try.

The interior design is charming, the staff attentive, and a restful atmosphere exudes from this eatery. The end bill is neither high nor low and there is also presently an opening special 20% discount off the total bill.

VegSenz is open daily from 10am to 10pm.

*Review with photos
 by Luke Otter,
 blog author of
 The Hungry Ang Mo*



Out & About

An establishment already intensely popular with Indian families, *Chellas Vegetarian Corner*, located along bustling Serangoon Road, is a unique style of Indian cuisine - the establishment attempts to fuse traditional Indian fast-food with an Indian mid-range restaurant.

Families adore this place due to the interior design, child-friendly menu and ever-smiling waiters. The seating is actually situated upstairs, with the downstairs vicinity selling small Indian snacks such as *onion pakodas* (right).

The concept and vibe of *Chellas* is certainly distinctive but unfortunately, some may consider the food on offer average and costly. The most commendable dish is the *Rava Masala Dosai* (top), which had a generous *masala* filling and pleasant taste.

However, dishes such as the *Navarathana Kurma* (bottom) were not as impressive with the portion not quite matching up to the price (\$7). Content-wise, the *paneer* cubes in this dish also seemed small; the vegetables used, too

trite; and the flavour of the curry, a tad naive.

Overall though, in spite of the mixed feelings as regards to the food, the decor and ambience at *Chellas* do offer families wanting to experience Indian cuisine, a place that doesn't disappoint too much.

Chellas Vegetarian Corner opens daily from 8:30am to 10:30pm.

Chellas Vegetarian Corner
70 Serangoon Road
Tel: 62976297
www.chellas.com.sg



*Review with photos
by Luke Otter,
blog author of
The Hungry Ang Mo*



What the Vegan Teen Needs

By Halimah

Parents often groan in despair when their teenage children tell them they are going on a diet and tend to become overly worried when it involves a vegan diet. With sincere intentions, parents sometimes try to sneak in some milk or dissuade them from dieting, but the truth is, with a little research and planning it is very possible to bring up a healthy and fit teenager on a wholly vegan diet.

During adolescence, a teenager's body goes through dramatic physiological changes. Hormonal changes, for example, trigger off growth spurts which result in considerable gains in bone and muscle mass, especially for the boys. Thus, teenagers generally require about 2,200 to 2,800 calories a day and most of these calories can be found in grains, nuts and vegetables.

However, vegan teenagers are sometimes hard-pressed for time and due to a lack of options (especially when they are out with friends) they tend to rely on deep-fried or convenience food which are high in saturated fats and low in nutrients.

To reduce this dependence on convenience food, teenagers can prepare simple snacks like sandwiches and *paus* (steamed dumplings) or bring along bananas, avocados, carrot sticks and nuts.

It also wouldn't hurt to conduct a little research on the accessible food-joints that offer tasty and nutritious vegan options so that both vegan teens and their non-vegan friends can spend some time together happily.

What to look out for

Just as any teenager should, vegan teenagers have to be mindful that they consume sufficient minerals and vitamins, especially iron, calcium and vitamin B12. Iron deficiency can be avoided by eating a wide range of fruits and vegetables such as broccoli, spinach, chickpeas, watermelon and raisins.

Busy teenagers can seek iron-fortified food like cereals that they can easily reach for in the morning to increase iron intake, and pair such iron-rich foods with citrus sources like orange juice to improve its absorption.

Calcium is another vital nutrient to monitor in a growing vegan teenager's diet. As bone density is determined during adolescence and early adulthood, teenagers need about 1,000mg of calcium a day with as many different sources as possible.

Foods such as *tahini* (sesame seed spread), tofu, green leafy vegetables and calcium-fortified foods are some good sources. Calcium supplements are another alternative, but they should never be the only source of calcium intake.

Being a vegan teenager can certainly be challenging, especially if the teen is the only vegan in the family or social circle. The key to healthy development is to consume a wide range of food, have regular meals, drink sufficient fluids and prepare and plan ahead - pretty much the same as for any other teenager. And whilst there will be hectic days when nutrition intake might not be optimal, this should not become a habit.

Start the day with a heavy breakfast to allow for better concentration in school

Keep non-perishables like trail-mix, dried fruits and nuts in your bag for easy access to quell hunger

Look up simple recipes online for quick preparation - many cookbooks are available that offer recipes

Prepare extra portions that can be frozen and consumed later - soups, bread and rice freeze well



Liam John Webb, 20 Manager-in-Training

It is rare to see youth paired with deep spiritual awareness, but that is the first thing that is apparent about Liam Webb, an active and effervescent 'dude' from Melbourne, Australia. Having met Liam and been inspired to turn vegan a few years ago, reader Amanda Teng (with Liam, below) nominated him as an inspiration in her life.



Photo: Amanda Teng

When told of this nomination, Liam was quick to show her praise on his 'proposer' and pointed out how she is a "thinker

and will sacrifice stuff if it means someone is better off".

How it All Began

Liam's story is rather interesting and tied intrinsically with his own spiritual awakening. About 4 years ago, in the midst of significant changes in his life, a chance spiritual encounter was followed by a sudden realisation as he sat for dinner that he could not bring himself to eat the beef curry that sat in front of him. He says that he just could not justify to himself the fear that would have been going through the animal just as it was being killed in that instant at the slaughterhouse. And just like that, he became a vegetarian from that day on. Fortunately, his parents did not stand in his way and only required that he prepare his own food.

Subsequently, in early 2009, a chance reading of a pamphlet on the cruelty involved in hatcheries, where the male baby chicks are gassed and minced alive, convinced him to turn vegan with immediate effect.

Liam shares that he suffered from kidney haemorrhaging during most of his early years that left him anaemic and zinc deficient. What had been expected to be a lifelong condition for him is now a thing of the past with medication discontinued and recent tests showing that his iron stores are above the high healthy range (i.e. too much iron) and his zinc level being quite high as well.

Notably, he has a clearer mind these days, and "bucket-loads of energy, so much so people keep asking me how I can do so much". He feels healthier and fantastic than ever before and finds that the newfound awareness of his surroundings has enabled him to empathise with the people around him and identify with many causes as well.



Photo: Kewyn Appadoo

Cooking, and Other Challenges

He reveals that turning vegetarian - and then vegan - has helped to improve his cooking skills. With his parents requiring him to prepare his own meals, Liam jumped into it and taught himself using cookbooks.

Surprisingly, his obstacles were other vegetarians themselves, some of whom actually discouraged him by saying that they got sick and were quite pale-looking, whilst others scared him with unfounded claims that it would stunt his growth.



Photo: Farley Webb

Fortunately, he did not take heed of such stereotypical fear-mongering and instead, reached out to organisations that could help provide proper information to arm himself with the right knowledge.

The Good Life

Whilst the active Liam is involved in many outdoor endeavours such as kayaking, body-boarding, skateboarding, swimming in the ocean and exploring the nearby forests, he also paints and spends time as a volunteer teaching an abstinence program in local schools, and in a 'big brother little-brother' program as well.

His commitment to being a vegan is even more evident in the fact that he has taken up sewing his own clothes in order to be a fair-trade supporter.



Photo: Jonathan Leishman

His canine companion, Daisy, meanwhile observes a vegetarian diet together with him.

Being the straightforward person that he is, his advice to those considering vegetarianism or veganism is simply "GO FOR IT!". He does recommend proper research on "how to do it healthily,

because you want to enjoy being veg. Balance and variety is key I have found throughout the veg years".

And as for awkward social situations, he finds that they can actually be a good opportunity to share his perspectives on being vegan and often, "the right people respect you for your choices and actually encourage you".

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

Probably a Vegemite and avocado sandwich. I do love my Vegemite, being Australian of course, but yeah, have an extremely different flavour to most people around me, but there are parts of me that I have in common liking with everyone else - much like the avocado part.

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

It would be for people to know the love that Jesus has for them, that he offers eternal life, love in this life like nothing else and is there to help anyone out through talking to him. For people to know and respond to the love that Jesus has for them.

3) What misconception about vegetarianism gets your goat?

That vegetarians are deficient and are weaklings (especially being a dude). So often when



I am out people will tell me that if you are vegetarian your hair will be bad, you end up dying younger, all these things, oh and not to forget... it stunts your growth apparently - yet somehow, I have actually grown in height more since being vegetarian and vegan.

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

Man... I think it would have to be Ollie Alderidges' *Vegan Delights*. I love cookbooks but also ones with some commentary about life and hers is fantastic for that, introducing the eight laws of health which have had a profound affect on my health.

5) What would be a 'Quotable Quote' to you?

"Don't let evil defeat you, but defeat evil with good"

- St. Paul - Romans 12:21

Just for the kids...

By Chef Halimah with photos

Method

- 1) Cube beancurd into large chunks and marinate in barbeque sauce and olive oil for several hours or overnight
- 2) Cut bell peppers into squares
- 3) Skewer bell peppers and beancurd cubes, alternating colours (reserve the marinade)
- 4) Grease non-stick grill pan with some oil
- 5) When pan is hot, grill kebabs by brushing remaining marinade and rotating occasionally
- 6) When kebabs are browned, remove and serve immediately



*1 red bell pepper 2 pieces firm beancurd
1 yellow bell pepper 2 teaspoons olive oil
1 green bell pepper 3 tablespoons barbeque sauce*

Traffic Light Kebabs

Chickie Boats



*250g cooked chickpeas 1 stick celery
1 teaspoon olive oil 8 slices bread
1 clove garlic 1 teaspoon parsley
1 small onion salt and pepper to taste
1 1/2 tablespoon vegan mayonnaise*

Method

- 1) Peel and mince onion and garlic, then dice celery stick
- 2) In pan, add oil and sauté onion, garlic and celery
- 3) Add mixture, mayonnaise, parsley and seasoning to chickpeas
- 4) Mix well and mash chickpeas slightly
- 5) Grease muffin pan with some vegan margarine
- 6) Flatten bread slices and cut large circle from each slice

- 7) Place cut bread slices onto muffin pan so as to make a cup
- 8) Bake at 190 degrees Celcius for about 10 minutes until brown
- 9) Fill cup with chickpea filling and serve immediately

Tip for kids: Get the kids to make the chickpea filling and help cut circles in the bread!



Potato Nuggets

1 teaspoon salt or to taste 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
 1 tablespoon flour 1/2 teaspoon rosemary
 450g potatoes 1 teaspoon chilli powder
 2 cloves garlic breadcrumbs for coating
 1 teaspoon basil

Method

- 1) Peel potatoes and garlic, then boil until soft
- 2) Drain and mash potatoes and garlic, then add remaining ingredients (other than breadcrumbs)
- 3) Drop spoonfuls of mixture onto breadcrumbs and coat mixture in breadcrumbs before shaking off excess crumbs
- 4a) To deep fry, prepare vat with hot oil, then deep fry until nuggets turn golden-brown
- 4b) To bake, oil baking tray and place nuggets, before flattening slightly and baking at 190 degrees Celcius for about 40 minutes or until crispy and brown

Tip: For added nutritional value, replace 100g of the potatoes with carrots.

Tip for kids: Get the kids to mash the potatoes and mix in the herbs; they can also help coat the mixture in breadcrumbs!



Greenie Ice Pops

100g kiwi
 2 teaspoons unrefined sugar
 130g fresh mango juice
 'ice-pop' mould

Method

- 1) Peel and slice kiwi to bite-sized portions
- 2) Add 1 teaspoon of sugar to kiwi and sit for 1/2 hour
- 3) Mix remaining teaspoon of sugar to fresh mango juice
- 4) In 'ice-pop' mould, add tablespoon of kiwi and press in with spoon before pouring in mango juice
- 5) Freeze for several hours, preferably overnight (makes 4 ice-pops)

Tip: Get the kids to spoon the kiwi and pour in the mango juice!





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VegVibe It's not often we hear jokes about vegans that are funny... enjoy :)



Top 10 funny vegan jokes | The Sun | Features

www.thesun.co.uk

Here we pick our top 10 lentil-lover wind-ups before the fun police put a stop to it.

Fri at 11:02 · Comment · Unlike · View feedback (3) · Share



VegVibe Seems as though Resorts World Sentosa is not about to be dissuaded from doing the unsavoury...



Summoning hither the dolphins | The Online Citizen

theonlinecitizen.com

Despite strong objections from animal activists, the dolphins' dubious path to Resorts World Sentosa continues. What will eventually happen to them remains to be seen, but the picture isn't rosy.

Thurs at 12:28 · Comment · Like · Share

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VegVibe Facebook Fan Page Recruitment Drive
Golden Village movie tickets up for grabs!



A new house costs 1,500% more than it used to 50 years ago but chicken is not even double the price. If inflation is taken into account, meat costs less today than ever before which suggests that there is something seriously wrong with the meat industry. Enter Jonathan Safran Foer who intends to find out what is wrong, with his first non-fiction book entitled *Eating Animals*.

By Loretta M Perera

An off-and-on vegetarian since childhood, Foer realises the importance of food and where it comes from when his son is born – as he points out, “Feeding my child is not like feeding myself: it matters more.”

From writing letters to farms requesting an in-depth look into how meat is produced, to challenging questions that the reader is often left to ponder on, such as why do we eat chickens but not dogs? Is it because “all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others” (from George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*)?

While packed with information and research, *Eating Animals* remains interesting by observing, and often defending, different points of view. From PETA’s shock tactics to a factory farmer’s defence, this book becomes more believable with every side being represented.

Rather than trying to point out flaws in an omnivore’s diet, Foer tries to make sense of the decisions we make, without coming off as self-righteous or judgemental. Factory farmers, family farmers and animal activists all have a say in this book and it’s reassuring to know that Foer has opened the floor to anyone who wishes to speak.

While his opinion is clear, what this book ultimately does is present the facts and give both sides of the

argument, leaving the reader to come to his or her own conclusions. It is as if Foer speaks directly to every reader, saying, “Here’s what I’ve found, here’s what I think. What about you?”

The book isn’t always an easy read though – an omnivore might question the difference (or similarities) between a companion animal and a barnyard animal, while a vegetarian might reassess his decision to consume eggs and dairy – is it better to die a cruel death or live a cruel life?

Having turned 20-year vegetarian Natalie Portman to a vegan activist, *Eating Animals* succeeds as a critical but honest look at the meat industry simply because it shies away from the pedestal and prefers to be part of the crowd.

Vegetarian activist Sir Paul McCartney once said that if every slaughterhouse had glass walls, every one would be vegetarian. While slaughterhouses do not feature in most of our lives, this book can and has what it takes to challenge anyone

from any train of thought, diet or opinion. Foer acknowledges though that “It’s always possible to wake someone from sleep, but no amount of noise will wake someone who is pretending to be asleep.”

Most of the local libraries have a copy of *Eating Animals*, although most are on loan or reserved (a testament to its popularity). Copies are also available for purchase through Amazon.com from US\$18 (\$25) with shipping, and at major bookstores (\$41.90 at Borders) as well.



Photo courtesy of New York Magazine

Unsustainable Argument

One of my biggest concerns and vegan swayings is over the issue of sustainability. This is my principal reason for veganism and my principal argument when faced with the “so why are you vegan?” confrontation.

Whilst I do believe that the factory-farmed animal products consumed on a global scale are unsustainable, I still have trouble convincing myself that the extreme opposite (strict veganism and advocacy of everything organically holy) is the best solution.



It certainly seems an impractical - and just about impossible - thing to wish for, so if someone gets me into a discussion about it, my standpoint is that I think people in general should eat less meat or at least that the meat should be produced sustainably (but due to the decreased efficiency of sustainably-produced meat, everyone would have to eat less meat anyway). This same argument applies in general for all animal products although the main lumbering problem is the products of dead animals.

for Sustainable Farming

The Problem with The Problem

This argument, while suffice in expressing that I forego any extreme hippie views in favour of slightly more realistic ones, does not however satisfy me. For a while, I sincerely believed that ‘sustainably-produced’ meat (such as meat produced on small-scale organic farms, fish caught by oneself from the sea and such) was ethically sound.

Yet, the more I’ve thought about it the more I’ve realised that, ultimately, meat production just cannot be sustainable in the current state of the world. There are simply too many people for such an inefficient process to ever be sustainable – each link of the food chain is more and more inefficient, which in turn causes a cumulative negative impact.

Keeping Things Simple

Thus, the closer to the bottom of the food chain we source for food, the more efficient will be the conversion of the energy that the plants get from sunlight to the energy that is tangible to us.

In terms of actual numbers, I won’t pretend to know, but for me this is an emotional reaction – the more sustainable I can be at the personal level, the more sustainable the world will become.

And in a world with such a high and ever-increasing population, compounded by the exponential conversion to a voracious consumerist society that is slave to low prices and factory-farmed and manufactured goods, I find it illogical to do

By Devin Dunseith,
author of Veggie Ponderings blog



Photo courtesy of Indymedia Ireland

anything but the extreme.

I do, however, respect that not everyone believes as strongly as I do in the drastic need for dietary shift, which is why I rather advocate a slight shift away from our carnivorous-obsessive diets instead. To quote the glorious Edinburgh-based Kalpna Restaurant, “You don’t have to eat meat to be wise and strong”.



Vegetarian Society (Singapore), VSS, is a non-profit, non-religious organisation formed in 1999 which is also a member of the International Vegetarian Union. We strive to build a more humane and harmonious world for everyone on the planet - for our children, as well as for our fellow creatures.

For the year 2010, as we enter into our second decade of existence, we would like to become a thousand-strong society - which can then move mountains. And for this, we need your support - both from the pocket and the heart.

If you are not yet a member, please consider putting your thoughts into action by committing a monthly contribution of just S\$5 to enjoy VSS Premium Membership as well as \$100 worth of food vouchers per year, discounts on all VSS organised events, invitation to special ‘Members Only’ events, and a complimentary copy of the *Singapore Vegetarian Food Guide*.

Meanwhile, if you have already become a member (thank you!), please help us to encourage your friends and family who support the work that VSS does to turn their moral approval into physical action by joining us officially as a member.

Just drop us a line at soh@vss.sg for the GIRO form to be mailed to you, or download the GIRO form from the VSS website and mail it to Seeds of Hope, Vegetarian Society (Singapore), 3 Pemimpin Drive, #07-02, Lip Hing Building, Singapore 576147.



<http://www.vegetarian-society.org>

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We currently have over 250 subscribers and each issue is downloaded about 500 times every month, not including the countless email forwards that we estimate would further add between 100 and 200 to this figure. We also maintain a fan page on facebook that has attracted over 200 fans - click on the button to join us there!



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