

WHY IT'S

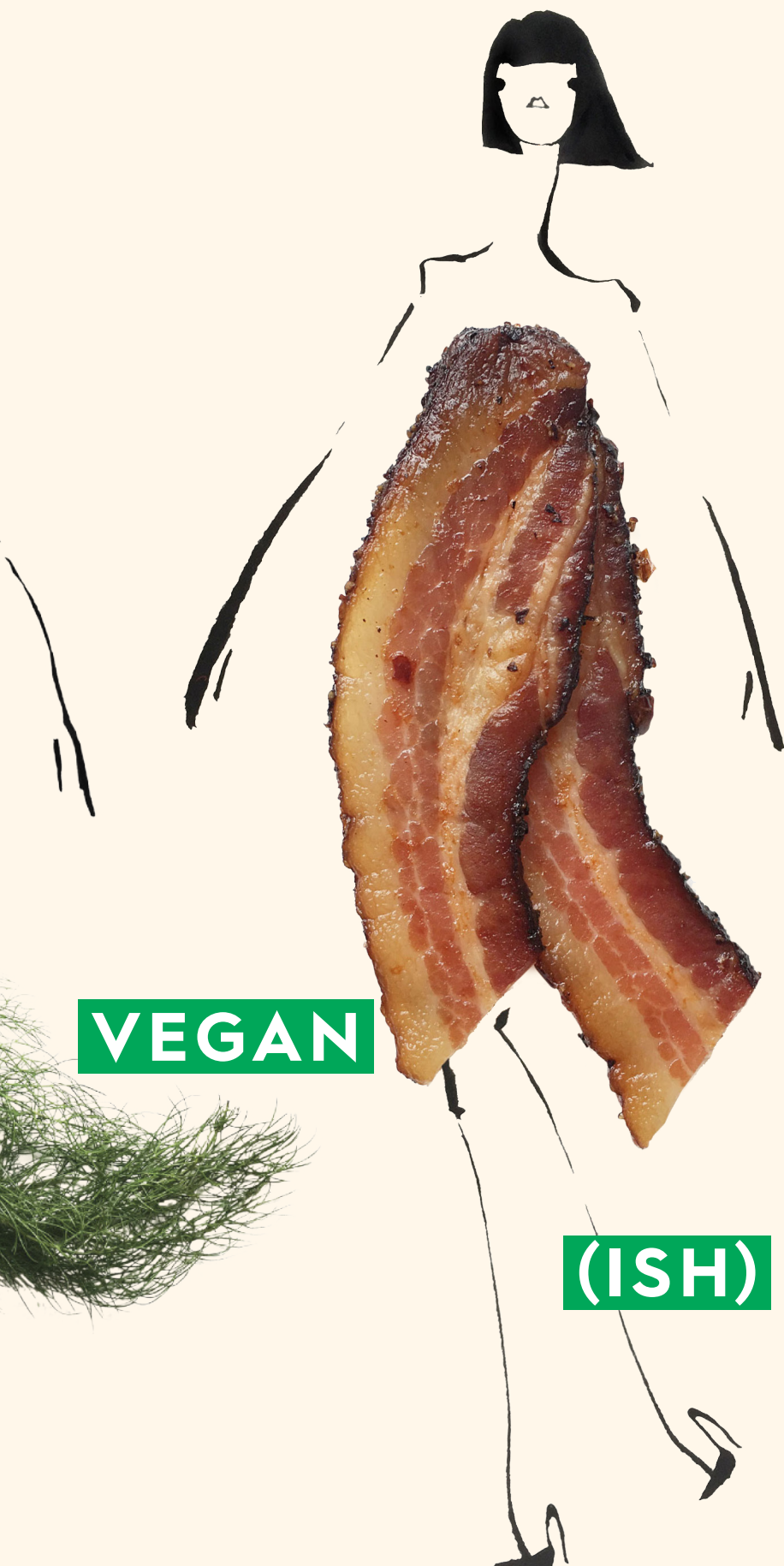
FASHIONABLE

TO BE



It seems the world is going vegan. Well, for part of the week, anyway...

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I'm tucking into a crispy fried chicken burger with vibrant pink pickled cabbage and mustard mayo, while my friend eats a quesadilla, oozing cheese. The catch? No animals were harmed in

the making of our dinner. The food is all vegan, care of Club Mexicana at vegan pub The Spread Eagle in east London. We, however, are not. This might sound antithetical to committed vegans, but there's a growing movement of people who are vegan(ish) – following a vegan diet part-time.

After giving up animal products for Veganuary, Jess Williams, 23, a PR executive from London, only stocks her fridge with plant-based products, allowing herself meat and dairy when out. "I am trying to make the transition, but as a massive foodie I'm not ready to completely cut out meat and dairy," she says. A vegetarian colleague has committed to 'vegan Mondays' but lacks the time to prepare vegan meals every day. For me, various health issues stop me from going fully vegan, but I am trying to cut down on dairy and eggs.

Though not a full-time endeavour for many, being vegan(ish) still plays an important part in reducing the environmental impact of animal agriculture on the planet: a rising priority for many. Veganuary had its biggest year yet in 2018, with 167,000 people taking part (100,000 more than last year), while a 2017 YouGov report showed 25% of us are actively cutting back on meat.

A glance at the high street proves restaurants are on board too, with Wagamama launching a full vegan menu and Pizza Express swapping in vegan cheese on request. Supermarkets aren't being left behind either. *The Grocer* magazine tipped plant-based innovation as its top retail trend for 2018, with Sainsbury's pulled jackfruit and Tesco's Wicked Kitchen range leading the way.

Meriel Armitage, founder of Club Mexicana, estimates that up to 80% of her clients are non-vegan. "We set out with a vision to get more people who are not vegan to try vegan food," she says. Meanwhile, the rise in vegan junk food joints, serving plant-based fried chicken and even doner kebabs, shows that eating vegan definitely doesn't have to mean eating clean.

On the whole, a vegan diet can be good for your health, being linked to a lower risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer – but that might be due to what you're putting in rather than what you're cutting out. Helen West and Rosie Saunt, dietitians and co-founders of The Rooted Project, say, "Lots of dietary patterns have those benefits – for example Mediterranean, which contains animal products. A lot of the benefits might just be because vegans eat more plants."

Whatever percentage vegan you're going, there are benefits for both the outside world and your internal health. Read on for *Stylist's* guide to living vegan(ish).



THE UK'S BEST VEGAN RESTAURANTS



PUREZZA, LONDON

Purezza set up in Brighton two years ago as the UK's only vegan pizzeria, and luckily for Londoners, its plant-based fare comes to the capital this month. Prepare for sourdough, hemp flour and gluten-free wood-fired bases oozing brown-rice-milk mozzarella.

What to order: The Couch Potato, with smoked mozzarella, oven-roasted potatoes and seitan. **43 Parkway, NW1; purezza.co.uk; opens end of March**



THE ALLOTMENT, MANCHESTER

When chef Matthew Nutter opened his vegan fine-dining restaurant in 2016, he caused a stir by claiming he could "make aubergine taste better than steak". Doubters soon had to eat their words, though, as Nutter's 7- and 10-course tasting menus became a huge hit.

What to order: Golden beetroot chorizo paella with courgette scallop. **6 Vernon St, Stockport, SK1; allotmentvegan.co.uk**



HARMONIUM BAR + KITCHEN, EDINBURGH

Drawing on Leith's nautical heritage, the food at Harmonium features the best of the sea... without the fish. Mushroom scallops and 'crab' cakes will have you double-checking the menu to make sure you're not eating the real thing.

What to order: A filet o' to-fish burger: beer-battered tofu served with tartare sauce. **60 Henderson Street, Leith, EH6; harmoniumbar.co.uk**



V-REV, MANCHESTER

This award-winning Northern Quarter eatery serves up all-American diner classics in vegan form. Think dirty burgers, buffalo fried chicken and loaded fries, as well as a huge dairy-free milkshake and craft beer menu. Cheat on meat without missing out.

What to order: The Hell-vis Presley seitan burger with baecon, peanut butter, banana and baeonnaise. **20-26 Edge Street, Manchester, M4; vrevmcr.co.uk**



THE FLYING DUCK, GLASGOW

With its thriving plant-based restaurants, bars and pop-ups, Glasgow is regularly voted the UK's best vegan city. And diner-turned-late night bar The Flying Duck plays a big role.

Enjoy chickpea quarter pounders, Bavarian-style bratwursts and huge overstuffed subs.

What to order: The Hog roll with seitan, apple sauce and little gem. **142 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2; theflyingduck.org**



WHITE WOLF KITCHEN, LIVERPOOL

Housed in a Victorian ballroom, this yoga studio and vegan cafe has a showstopper of a setting. It is also the place to go in Liverpool for a hearty, nutritious brunch, and the tasty cakes show vegan baking at its best.

What to order: The Big Boston Breakfast with spicy scrambled tofu, black beans and smashed avocado. **14 Cook Street, Liverpool, L2; whitewolfyoga.co.uk**

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT IS VEGAN

JUS-ROL PAIN AU CHOCOLAT

Using a vegetable-based margarine in place of butter, it turns out you can have your patisserie and eat it.

BOURBON BISCUITS

Crack open the biscuit tin: most brands of this teatime classic are dairy-free, but just check the label to be absolutely sure.

NEW YORK BAKERY CO BAGELS

Rejoice! All varieties of these bagels get the green light. Stock the office fridge with vegan margarine and get toasting.

BISTO GRAVY GRANULES

Yes, the original beefy kind. Totally vegan. No, really! Mind blown, roast dinner saved.

WALKERS PRAWN COCKTAIL CRISPS

Unlike many fish and meat-flavoured crisps, these are totally free of animal products.

OREOS

They contain no animal products but are at risk of 'cross contact' with milk – so trace amounts may have crossed over during manufacturing. Up to you...



SUPER SIMPLE RECIPES



Lunch: courgette frittata

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

(serves 4)

◆ 2 medium courgettes, grated ◆ 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped ◆ 120g chickpea flour ◆ ¼ tsp turmeric (optional, for colour) ◆ Handful of chopped fresh basil

METHOD

Step 1: Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/Gas Mark 4. Grease a baking tin or line it with greaseproof paper.

Step 2: Cook the grated courgette in a non-stick ceramic pan with 2 tbsps water until soft. If the water evaporates before the courgette is done, add a little bit more. Stir in the garlic and continue to cook for a further 3-4 minutes. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Step 3: Blend the chickpea flour with the turmeric (if using), a pinch of salt and 500ml water in a large bowl until well combined and clump-free. Add the cooked courgette and chopped basil to the batter and mix well. Pour the mixture into the baking tin and bake for 40-45 minutes.

Step 4: Remove the frittata from the oven and leave to cool for 10 minutes before slicing and serving with a fresh tomato salad.

From *Vegan In 7* by Rita Serano (£16.99, Kyle Books), out now



Dinner: Moroccan flatbread pizza

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS

(serves 1)

◆ 1 tbsp olive oil ◆ 1 large onion, finely sliced ◆ 1 tbsp tomato purée ◆ 2 tps harissa ◆ 1 large flatbread ◆ Generous handful of baby spinach leaves ◆ Generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil ◆ 1 rounded tbsp pine nuts ◆ 1 tbsp pomegranate seeds ◆ Small handful of fresh flat-leaf parsley, roughly torn ◆ Juice of ¼ unwaxed lemon

METHOD

Step 1: Heat the olive oil in a frying pan over a medium-high heat and cook the onion for 8 minutes until golden and softened. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas Mark 6.

Step 2: Mix together the tomato purée and harissa. Arrange the flatbread on a baking tray, then spread over the spicy tomato mixture.

Step 3: Scatter over the spinach leaves, then drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Spoon over the onion and scatter with the pine nuts.

Step 4: Bake for 5-6 minutes until hot, then scatter with the pomegranate seeds and parsley. Squeeze over a little lemon juice just before serving.

From *15 Minute Vegan Comfort Food* by Katy Beskow (£15, Quadrille), out now

WHY VEGAN RULES

◆ A high-meat diet (eating more than 100g of meat a day) produces more than 7kg of carbon dioxide each day. That's the same amount as you'd get after generating enough electricity to run a 13-watt lightbulb non-stop for 23 days.

◆ Halving your meat intake reduces your dietary carbon footprint to 4.7kg, leaving the lightbulb on for 15 days.

◆ Pescatarians, who eat fish but not meat, contribute 3.9kg of carbon dioxide. That's 12.5 days of lightbulb.

◆ Vegetarians, surprisingly, aren't much lower, with 3.8kg, leaving the lightbulb on for 12.2 days.

◆ A vegan diet results in 2.9kg of carbon dioxide, or 9.3 days of leaving that lightbulb burning.

V-GLOSSARY

SEITAN

Not the devil in vegan form, but a meat substitute made of wheat protein that soaks up flavours well and can be fried or grilled to make a 'meaty' textured protein source. Try the vegan hot dogs at Birmingham's Not Dogs (notdogs.co.uk) for proof.

TEMPEH

Popular in Indonesia, tempeh is made from cooked and fermented soy beans, which are formed into patties. A great alternative if you're not a fan of tofu, it's high in protein and calcium but has a firmer texture and slightly nutty flavour, making it great in a stir-fry or sandwich.

NUTRITIONAL YEAST

The holy grail in vegan cooking for lending a realistic cheese flavour, these yellowy flakes are part of the fungi family. Unlike regular yeast, nutritional yeast is inactive, so can't be used to leaven bread, but can be used to make a damn tasty vegan macaroni cheese.

TOFU

A vegan staple that often gets a bad press, tofu is essentially soya 'cheese', made by curdling and pressing soya milk. Sponge-like in texture, it needs to be drained first so it can drink up marinades. Fry until crispy and serve in a Korean-style bibimbap.

AQUAFABA

It might sound like a luxury spa, but aquafaba is actually the water used for cooking chickpeas or legumes that mimics the properties of egg white. When draining chickpeas for a salad or curry, save the liquid to whip up vegan mayo and meringues.

JACKFRUIT

This prickly green Asian fruit is massive right now. Literally – they can grow up to 90cm in length. Sweet and juicy when ripe, if picked under-ripe it has a mild flavour and stringy texture that is remarkably similar to pulled pork when cooked. Serve in tacos for the ultimate on-trend vegan dish.

