

your **V**LIFE

YOUR GO TO MAGAZINE FOR ALL THINGS VEGAN

DECEMBER 2016

We Talk: 'The 'V' Word'

Busting the myths and showing just how easy that vegan life can be

Exclusive Review:

Exploring Manchester's vegan hotspot, Deaf Institute

Vegan Christmas Gift Guide

We share our top picks for a very merry christmas

Vegan news:

Keeping you in the loop

Meet the Vegan Body Builder

Taking on the fitness world one veggie at a time and telling you how you can join him

ISSUE 1 | £5.99

FROM THE EDITOR

* Welcome to the Decemeber issue of *yourVLIFE*. Does this mean we can officially start getting excited for Christmas finally? In this issue we will share our top tips for a very merry vegan Christmas. Our best ideas for how to enjoy the christmas markets, vegan style. The best places to shop for all the trimmings plus our very special gift guide. We will also show you how to get your house ready for the festive season and have a look back on the year of 2016.

And what a year it's been. Over the past year we've seen so many changes within the vegan community- and beyond. Firstly, the availability of vegan products continues to grow, making plant-based products more available in the mainstream. Now you can walk into a high street chain and get dairy-free cheese on your pizza, or have your choice of plant-based milks for your latte. Things we couldn't have imagined a few years ago. A real vegan win and this is only getting better by the day.

But more than that, we've seen an increasing number of people become more passionate about engaging in activism, wherever that lands on the scale- from creating and sharing content online, to marches and protests, or gentle educational engagement, there are always more people looking to get involved. It's inspiring to see how proactive so many vegans are.

But this issue isn't all about looking back. It's time to look to the year ahead, as we get up close and personal with our very own vegan bodybuilder. Sharing his insider secrets to help you kick-start your new year's resolution and actually stick to it this time.

We have a round up of your vegan news plus a look at the best, must-visit restaurants in the country. All that and a look at new and exclusive products to make your vegan life easier.


There's also a feature on the growth of the vegan world and our best comfort food recipes for you take make in the comfort of your own kitchen.

We hope you enjoy the issue.

Bethany Cairns
Bethany Cairns
Editor

Get in touch...

We love hearing from you, whether its a story idea, a must-try recipe or a photo we just have to see, we want to hear from you. You can find us across all our social media. Be sure to follow us and keep up to date with all things VLIFE. You can also find us at www.yourlifemag.co.uk.

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Dates for your diary..

With so many vegan events happening across the UK through 2017, we just couldn't let you miss out. So here's a list of some of the biggies we wanted you to know about


January

What: Vegan Life Live
When: Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th January
Where: Alexandra Palace, London 


February

What: Cardiff Viva Festival
When: Saturday 4th February
Where: Cardiff City Hall 

March

What: Live a better life fair
When: Saturday 25th March
Where: St. George's Hall, Liverpool 

April

What: Northern V-Festival
When: Saturday 1st April
Where: Manchester Central 

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A round up of all things VLife across the country

Gym Junkie meets the VLIFE
We talk all things gym and diet related with vegan power-house, Nathan

VLIFE eats and treats
Reviews and recipes to get your tastebuds tingling.

Vegan christmas gift guide
All the products to make your christmas perfect, with a few added extra

The 'V' Word
We dismiss all the myths and explain how you can change the world, one vegan at a time

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Download the VLife magazine app.
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Keeping you up to date on all things vegan from what's on, places to go and things to try to fashion and entertainment you'll never miss a thing again!



Manchester at the centre of vegan protests

Manchester has been the hub for vegan and animal rights activist demonstrations throughout November as the city prepares for a busy festive period.

The group of activists is organised by volunteers who feel passionate about the cause via social media. Protesters have been grabbing attention with a string of protests with the aim of spreading their views and opinions. The bustling atmosphere in the town centre makes for the perfect platform to reach as many people as possible with their message.

Mosai Tesoro, 28, is the co-organiser of The Awakening Compassion Stall explained; 'We work hard to make the stall look engaging and friendly and this results in a positive reaction from the public. The signs have raised people's intrigue and whether they chose to engage or not, it still makes an impression.'

'Veganism embraces sustainable, healthy and soulful living by rejecting the commodity status of animals. It is the cheapest diet on the planet and we aim to show others how it can be achieved at any age, any budget or any lifestyle.'

Vegan approved menu at Weatherspoons

You can now be assured that selected vegan options at JD Weatherspoons are free of all animal ingredients in production and manufacture.

The Vegan Trademark team, part of The Vegan Society, recently liaised with the chain in order to produce their new and improved vegan menu.

'We're overjoyed that UK high street chains are taking note of the rise in veganism by improving their vegan options, and it's only getting better,' says Abigail Stevens, Trademark Relations Officer.

'Working alongside JD Wetherspoon to develop their vegan menu means that up and down the country, you can walk into one of their many establishments and enjoy hearty, affordable, accessible and tasty plant-based food. Look out for our Vegan Trademark on their menu.'

Tesco save christmas! With £2 vegan selection box

Christmas is traditionally a time for eating as much as possible and regretting it for weeks after. We have all been there but as a vegan, it can be harder to indulge in festive treats.

Well fear no more we have some brilliant news: Tesco have made Christmas a little more vegan friendly by bringing out a snazzy vegan selection box.

That's right. The same box of assorted chocolate-y goodness your parents used to get you, but now vegan-friendly.

The 'Free From' Selection Box is just £2, and contains one chocolate bar, one choc 'n' crispie bar, one white choc bar, one packet of choc buttons, and one packet of white choc buttons. Exciting.

The selection box's are currently available in Tesco stores, and will soon be available online, too.

Season's eatings, vegans!



Stella McCartney wows at Paris Fashion Week with 'vegan leather'

Stella McCartney's recent Paris fashion show had the models dancing down the runway, but backstage, the designer and PETA Vice President Dan Mathews were serious about explaining why she uses vegan ultra-suede instead of leather.

The spring 2017 show comes on the heels of McCartney's recent report on the much smaller environmental impact of clothing made from non-animal skins. McCartney explains, 'Fashion is an industry that makes a significant impact on the planet. It's not just

cool clothes and trends. ... Every single day, myself and my entire team are challenging ourselves and the industry: what do better?'

She describes the new collection as: 'Eco-friendly smooth ultra-suede in a signature all-in-one and trousers echo the feeling of freedom in tan colours, while keeping the brand's innovative cruelty free philosophy.'

Some pieces shown in Paris were emblazoned with 'Animal-Free' and 'All Is Love.' You go Stella, we're digging it!



Belfast Zoo must be closed, says Northern Ireland Says No to Animal Cruelty

A prominent animal advocacy organisation has called for Belfast Zoo to be closed down.

Northern Ireland Says No To Animal Cruelty spoke out after it emerged that the zoo's accreditation had been delayed amid concerns following an inspection.

The European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) questioned the leadership of the attraction and claimed that some animals were kept in unacceptable conditions.

A spokeswoman for the council said that the zoo was undergoing an 'improvement process'.

However Northern Ireland Says No To Animal Cruelty insisted it should be closed, stating, 'Belfast Zoo is failing to meet some basic welfare requirements.'

'Concerns about not enough room, light, bad water conditions and more paints a bleak picture for the victims of the zoo.'

'The time of zoos is over and unless they can offer genuine conservation then they really serve no purpose.'

Councillors are currently debating the future of the zoo, but the committee responsible has ruled out closing the facility.



Carlsberg set to bring gluten free, vegan friendly beer to the UK

Carlsberg UK is set for a marketing push of its Czech lagers Celia organic and Celia Dark, produced by Czech micro-brewery Zatecky Pivovary, which is co-owned by the Carlsberg group. Carlsberg vice president of marketing,

Liam Newton said that gluten free tapped into current consumer trend and gave the brand a point of difference. Celia also claims that the organic range of lagers are only 136 calories, and made with three ingredients, which are all locally sourced. It is specifically crafted to remove the gluten content of the lager, and used a silicone filtration process to make sure it's vegan friendly.

With independent breweries now becoming more popular with consumers, Carlsberg are redesigning their cans with a simplified craft look.

Not all brands are as responsive to the craft beer market however, at the 2016 Superbowl, Budweiser used its ad slot to take a jab at craft beers.



Vegans are currently protected under the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 9 refers to the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

Therefore veganism can be broadly considered under European human rights legislation, with Article 14 stating all rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination.

This means that vegans must not be discriminated against on grounds of their veganism. Brexit means that the government can choose to opt out of the European Convention on Human Rights, and have already set the repeal of the UK Human Rights Act.

The Vegan Society regularly receives calls from vegans who believe that their rights are being infringed. These range from people whose children are not provided a vegan option at school, workplaces not providing alternatives to leather or wool in uniforms, or letting workplace bullying go unchallenged, with the knock-on effects being increased stress in the workplace, increased sickness and reduced productivity.

To help protect potential threats on these rights following Brexit The Vegan Society have joined forces with International Vegan Rights Alliance: the pair have launched a petition with the aim of preserving these rights and are urging all vegans to support the act.

To get involved visit: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/168184>

Manchester's V Revolution named best in the country for vegan dining

Manchester based eatery V Revolution has been named 'Best Vegan Restaurant' at the annual VegFest in London.

There was stiff competition in the category but the north pulled through with V Revolution coming in first, followed by York's El Piano.

Based on Oldham Street in the Northern Quarter, V Revolution was founded by Manchester University graduate Dom Moss in 2011 as a grocery and record store, in early 2013 he began to introduce a small menu comprising mainly of vegan burgers, hot dogs and sandwiches.

Having established a large fan base with locals and tourists alike, the restaurant has up-scaled to a new unit on Edge Street, where Moss can expand the offering to include a full commercial kitchen, bar and in-house bakery.

The new Vegan Diner opened in November and is now in full swing welcoming visitors from across the country, all eager to try something the award winners have on offer.





VEGANISM AND BODYBUILDING: IS IT SAFE TO TRAIN INSANE ON A PLANT BASED DIET?

It can take years to build a body you want, years of commitment, years of gruelling exercise, sacrifices and pushing yourself beyond your limits to achieve your goals. But as with most things in life, anything worth having usually takes a great deal of commitment and self-control to obtain.

No one has ever pretended you can change your body over night or even in a week and it is solely through determination and dedication, as with anything, that you can achieve. Any of these fad diets that can be found scattered around the internet or in glossy magazines can often market themselves as a 'quick fix' but none of them demonstrate long-term sustainable results. It's been proven time and time again that the only real way to change your body is to change your lifestyle; spend time in the gym and eat

a balanced, healthy diet. The same is never more true, than when looking at body building. Body building is a sport that sees both men and women, train intensively in the gym consistently with the aim of building a well sculpted, muscular body. There are dedicated competitions which require both physical and mental discipline from competitors to show the best version of themselves against their peers as they are judged by industry professionals.

Not only is there intense training involved in becoming a bodybuilder there is a strict diet that must be followed to help build lean muscle, and this is where it gets interesting. A standard body builders diet is based on high protein intake. It is recommended to consume more protein than you need to help grow muscle, the suggested intake ranges from 0.8g-1.2g of protein per pound of

body mass per day. That's a lot of protein to consume in 24 hours. Here at VLIFE, we want to know how it's possible for someone to achieve this level of protein intake on a plant-based diet.

Of course it's not just about the protein, it's about achieving a long-term maintainable lifestyle whilst not putting yourself at any health risks and more than that, getting enjoyment from what it is you're working towards. The key to success in this strict diet is food preparation; planning and preparing meals in advance. This allows for you to get the right nutrition at the right times to help progress towards your goals, it can be challenging but worthwhile when done correctly. Nathan Umagash, 23, is a bodybuilder from Liverpool, he became vegan after discovering and researching the impact the meat and dairy industry place on not only the animals involved

but also the environment. We caught up with him to find out about his journey and how he finds time to prepare his meals, train hard in the gym and have an active social life.

He explained, 'I got into body building when I was about 16-years-old, it was more of something to do at the time but I take it more seriously now. It's a good way to stay focused and keep your health intact. Dieting with the sole purpose of losing weight can get pretty tedious and hard to sustain, so body building gave me a purpose and encouraged me to keep my diet clean. I'm vegan because I chose to be. In my faith, a lot of people don't eat meat for religious reasons so going vegan was just one step further for me. Of course I have friends who like to go to Nando's after the gym and refuel, but things like that I just don't indulge in. Not because I can't but because I don't want to. From being 13 I had started feeling ill when I ate foods which contained dairy so I started to look into what could be causing it. That then lead me onto vegan websites which is where my diet progressed from.'

When asked how he manages to consume enough protein to spike energy levels and promote muscle growth he added, 'you can get vegan protein powder which doesn't contain dairy that I have with water but also from foods such as: egg substitutes, lentils, rice cakes, spinach and oats. I'll usually have a pre workout shake which helps raise your energy just before training and this really helps to get me through those heavy sessions. Other than that I take amino acids which help to keep both my body and mind focused.'

Nathan aims to get to the gym six days a week which is slightly higher than the average body builder prefers, 'every body builder is different' he told us, 'some prefer three to four times a week if they have other commitments but this tends to be reflected in the physique they hold. A standard training session for me would include up to 12 different exercises depending on the time I have to train. When I first started I probably wouldn't train as often as I do now and that's because my recovery time was a little longer than others. I used to get myself really wound up about that. But since I've developed my body has got used to it and I am able to train heavier, and more often which is great for me.'

Nathan went on to explain how his cheat meals are limited, but he makes sure to indulge once a week to keep him hungry for success in the gym. He professes to feeling passionate about the lifestyle choices he has made and will do anything necessary to help him on the road to success. When asked if he would consider competing in an industry competition he said, 'I would

consider it definitely. I have considered it. Competition prep is a lot different to off season dieting and the side effects of completely cutting carbs could be a struggle. I think it all boils down to how much you want it and how mentally strong you are, more than physically. But I do think I could do really well on stage if I put my mind to it, my drive to stay healthy and feel good about myself would pull me through, some may call it vanity but after you spend so much time committing to the gym, once you start to see real results it becomes an addiction. There are worse things to be addicted to though.'

'once you start to see real results it becomes an addiction. There are worse things to be addicted to though'

Finally, we asked the 23-year-old if he could share any tips for being a successful body builder whilst being a vegan, he explained, 'it is so important to do your research! Make sure you have supplemented what you will miss and make sure you are 100 per cent committed to the vegan lifestyle because it isn't without it's challenges. Many people have started and failed because they haven't planned out an achievable exercise programme or planned their meals in advance and that can make it harder to motivate yourself to keep going. Expect it to be challenging at first but it does get easier as your body has time to adjust.'

Being a vegan shouldn't hold you

back from achieving your goals, nothing should. Nathan is living, lifting proof that your body can achieve anything, it's just your mind you need to convince. There are so many inspirational and empowering members of the vegan community that 'being vegan' isn't an excuse anymore. You've got this!

BEEFING UP ON VEGGIES:

NATHAN'S AVERAGE DAILY MEALS

MEAL ONE:
OATMEAL, WHEAT GERM, BANANAS AND BERRIES WITH GREEN TEA

MEAL TWO:
A COMBINATION OF GRAINS WITH VEGETABLES. E.G. RICE BASED

MEAL THREE:
HUGE SALD PACKED WITH SPINACH AND VARIOUS MIXED LEGUMES

MEAL FOUR:
LENTIL CURRY WITH CAULIFLOWER AND MIXED VEG

MEAL FIVE:
GRILLED TEMPEH WITH SWEET POTATO

SNACKS:
PROTEIN SHAKES (UP TO THREE DAILY), BANANAS, RICE CAKES, PROTEIN ICE CREAM AND NUTS



Nathan aims to train six times a week to build his physique

yourVLIFE: reviews and recipies

Whether it's dining out or homecooking you're after here at VLIFE, we're hooking you up with only the best of both worlds.

DEAF INSTITUTE MANCHESTER

We sent Beth to Manchester's hidden gem and entertainment hub

Situated just off Manchester's busy Oxford Road, The Deaf Institute is an unlikely venue for a vegan feast. The converted three story building, which was built in 1887 and originally used as an institute for the deaf and mute community seemingly has it all these days. A quirky basement bar greets you on arrival, make your way up the stairway to the casual vegan kitchen and topped off with the third floor music hall there is something to please everyone at the bustling hotspot. On the second floor lies every vegans dream come true with the institutes very own burger joint and kitchen. A small and intimate room dimly lit for a sophisticated yet relaxed atmosphere. The room is quiet and contained until it gets busy and adopts a lively, fun ambience. The dining booths and benches set the tone of a casual eatery set off by over-head pendent lights and red table lamps. The room is fittingly decorated with edgy mounted stag head, band posters and antique chandeliers. There's a constant theme of old vs new throughout the restaurant as retro wall paper lines the walls, dusted with fairy lights and all topped off with a central disco ball which shimmers lights around the room.

The food came out quickly and with a smile, we opted for the mac and cheese and the loaded vegan nachos to start and we weren't disappointed. The portion sizes were much larger than we expected and great value for money.



Just a small selection of the vegan menu on offer for £4.99



The veggie dog was a personal highlight from the evening.

The mac and cheese, made with cashew nut cheese sauce, although 100 per cent vegan was deliciously creamy and well-seasoned. Packed full of flavours with subtle under tones of garlic and a hint of spices made for a great indication of what was to come. Dressed with breadcrumbs and chopped parsley the dish was great winter comfort food on a cold evening in the city.

Covered in lashings of Tijuana barbeque and sour cream sauces and topped with jalapeños the dish smells almost as good as it tastes. Vegan sausage, which is made in house with only the best and freshest ingredients had a great texture and taste with a smoky and nut based flavour. Although the bread looks overwhelming it's pleasantly light and compliments the dish well. A definite must try when you visit.

If the food and atmosphere alone wasn't enough to encourage you to check out the institute they also have tonnes of events going on throughout the week plus a generous 20 per cent student discount to keep that bank balance happy. Other weekly highlights include Monday's open mic night and vegan roasts on Sunday's. There really is something to satisfy anyone here, vegan or not so why not nip down and give this stand out spot a try.

FOOD FOR FRIENDS BRIGHTON



Just some of the wonders on offer at FFF

By Anna Pickard

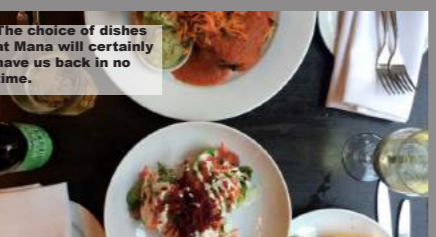
Picture soft jazz and a large menu of great, fresh food. Slowly sipping a glass of rosé after a tiring summer's day doing very little. That's Food for Friends for you. I'm not entirely convinced I need say any more - but if you insist.

The tempting piles of appetisers - bread, olives, Baba Ganoush and the like would make it easy to over-indulge unless you've traversed the desert to get here.

Generous portions are a theme that is carried through the entire menu, with expansive starters and mountainous mains. It's difficult to discern any over-arching theme other than the fact that it's vegetables all the way (although tofu also gets a look in, of course).

You shouldn't be able to fit pudding in after all that, and the heavy desserts may come as a slight disappointment after to the sharp, fresh ingredients of the previous courses.

Still, if you look carefully through the floor-to-ceiling windows, you'll see the jealousy in the eyes of the bewildered partners being dragged around the shops outside. Nor is that envy misplaced. Food for Friends' brightly lit premises are possibly the perfect place in Brighton to escape the hurly burly and enjoy a long, relaxed lunch.



The choice of dishes at Mana will certainly have us back in no time.

MANA LONDON

We sent Alice to the UK's oldest Vegetarian restaurant

Primrose Hill is notoriously known as being home to bohemian celebrities, posh boutiques and yummy mummies, but it's where you can dine out at London's finest vegan restaurant, Manna.

Tucked away on a small side street stands the UK's oldest vegetarian restaurant, Manna. The polenta tart was far from basic, with a deliciously thick and hearty cashew ricotta filling, topped with roast veggies. Next up was the mains an impressive combination

of flavours and textures presented immaculately and prepared to perfection.

After a twenty minute food coma upon advice from the waiter I was served a desert of Manna's infamous vice cream and cookie semi-fredo and a red berry cheesecake. The cheesecake was surprisingly NOT raw, with a sweet crumbly base Satisfied.

The great thing about Manna is the range of dishes on the menu, we'll definitely be heading back for more.



SPICY BEAN VEGAN BURGER

Makes 6 | 322 cals | 2g salt | 4.6g sugar

We love to indulge in comfort food and here at your VLIFE we don't think anything should stop us from enjoying what we want. So here is a quick and simple Spicy Bean Burger recipe to really get your taste buds going.

Ingredients:

- 1 chopped onion
- 2 crushed garlic
- 1 tin drained kidney beans
- 1 tbsp soya sauce
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- Vegan mayo

Method:

1. Fry onion and garlic in oil until softened
2. Add chilli, and any other spices
3. Mash beans thoroughly and add sauces and oats and mix all ingredients in thoroughly
4. Form mix into burgers and flatten.
5. Gently fry until they are brown on the outside and squidgy in the middle or bake for 20-30 minutes, 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
6. Serve with salad and baked potatoes, or on a wholemeal roll with a little vegan mayo and salad

OUR PICK OF THE MONTH

QUICK, HEALTHY ICE CREAM

8 servings | 245 cals | 0.8g salt | 12.8g sugar



It's not just us who sit eating ice cream no matter the weather. And even better if its guilt free, right?

Our tip: add fresh fruit for an extra treat.

Ingredients:

- 90g raw, Brazil

- nuts
- 8 fresh pitted dates
- 120ml water
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 20 ice cubes

Method:

1. Blend nuts, dates, water, and vanilla until smooth.
2. Blend with ice until smooth.



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Serves 8-10 | 378 cals (per serving) | 16.4g salt | 22g sugar

Christmas is fast approaching so why not let us spoil you with our out of this world christmas pudding.

Ingredients:

- 450g plain flour
- 450g currants
- 450g brown sugar
- 450g potato, mashed
- 450g carrots, grated
- 225g apples, peeled

- 110g hazel nuts
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 450g veg margarine

Method:

1. Mix all ingredients together in large bowl. Put the mixture into a large greased pudding basin (approx 4 pints or larger)
2. Cover the bowl with greaseproof paper, put foil on top and tie with string to

3. Place in large saucepan of water, cover and boil for six hours
4. Keep topping up with boiling water at least once an hour to ensure water levels don't fall
5. Remove basin and allow to cool
6. To serve: our choices: add dairy-free cream vegan ice cream or vegan custard.



THE ULTIMATE VEGAN PIZZA

Makes 3-4 small pizzas | 458 cals | 34g salt | 12g sugar

The ultimate go to, easy and satisfying meal and now you can enjoy it whenever you want following our simple recipe.

Ingredients:

- 500g white bread flour
- ½ tsp salt
- 7g dried yeast
- Vegan pesto or passata
- Vegan cheese

- Your choice of vegetables.

Method:

1. Sieve flour
2. Mix in yeast, sugar, oil and water and pour into the bowl
3. Bring in flour
4. Knead until you have smooth dough
5. Place dough on a flour-dusted surface and knead

6. Divide the dough up into as many little balls as you want to make pizzas
7. Heat oven to 250 °C
8. Spread the passata onto the uncooked dough
9. Add cheese and a combination of toppings
10. Put in the oven for 7-10 minutes until golden.



Luxury Christmas Gift Hamper

It's the most wonderful time of the year. And what better way to celebrate than treating your loved ones (or yourself) to one of these pre-made Christmas hampers from, **The Goodness Project**. The company have a vast array of hampers on offer from their website ranging from £10 up to £70. This Luxury Limited Edition Christmas Hamper retails at £40 this beautifully packaged Gift Hamper is sure to impress! Filled with a range of unique, quality products, from delicious chocolate treats to luxurious teas and cheeky cranberry chutney, this hamper has got everything you need to treat your loved ones this Christmas. Be sure to check out their website for the perfect hamper for you, you can even subscribe for monthly deliveries. [www.thegoodnessproject.co.uk](https://thegoodnessproject.co.uk)

One for the ladies

Calling all gym junkies, this one's for you. Ever feel the strain of trying to find a protein powder which you don't dread drinking? Strippd have launched three new flavours of vegan protein aimed at women to work as a gym aid or as just a snack substitute to all of you protein shake newbies. Each 490g tub provides 14 servings and there are three delicious flavours to choose from: chocolate (right), vanilla and mixed berry. The product aims to provide women with all the nutrients they need to enhance a well balanced and healthy lifestyle whilst nourishing hair, skin and nails. This is not just your bog standard protein powder, aimed at bodybuilders and popped in pink packaging to appeal to females. Strippd 'started from scratch' when producing this powder to ensure it's consumers get everything they want and need. Perfect for on the go or as an addition to any boring breakfasts, Strippd has made all our gym dreams come true (well, kind of!) In addition to the range of shakes Strippd have also created capsules to compliment their protein powder which are available to buy from their website. The brand presents a luxurious product for an affordable price of just £20 per tub. They are also available from selected boots stores. <https://strippd-uk.com/>



Vegan-friendly, super soft make up brushes

The team at Miss G Couture have come to the rescue with their all new make up brush collection. The set is comprised of a 12-piece complete set with brushes for your every need. They are all made lovingly and cruelty free to ensure you a luxury product that you can trust. The set is part of their cosmetics range and is available with guaranteed next day delivery and will make the perfect Christmas gift. Their brushes retail for £25 and are available exclusively from their website. www.missgcouture.co.uk

Put your feet up and have a read

Kirsty Turner is a read, blogger, writer and recipe developer. In her book she explores and dismisses all the excuses people have for not being vegan. She shows the possible meal choices and the array of cuisine on offer. The perfect Christmas gifts for those friends who think you're crazy for being vegan, you never know you might just be able to convince them after all. You can grab your copy from Amazon for £12.59. Be sure to check out Kirsty's blog too www.keepinitkind.com

Lush's christmas boxes are back!!

Our favourite high street vegan friendly retailer are back with their perfect Christmas collection once again. Lush pride themselves on a completely vegetarian, cruelty free shopping experience for your cosmetics and we are definitely with them. They have products for every occasion and Christmas is no different. As well as their signature Christmas scent *Snow Fairy* and other festive favourites, Lush have perfected the craft of a well put together festive gift box for pampering perfection. The wide variety of offer means you're

sure to find something for everyone, and maybe a little something for yourself too. (It is Christmas after all!) Their gift boxes range from £10-£40 and contain a selection of products. The perfect Christmas gift! All Lush products are available from your local store or via their website www.uk.lush.com

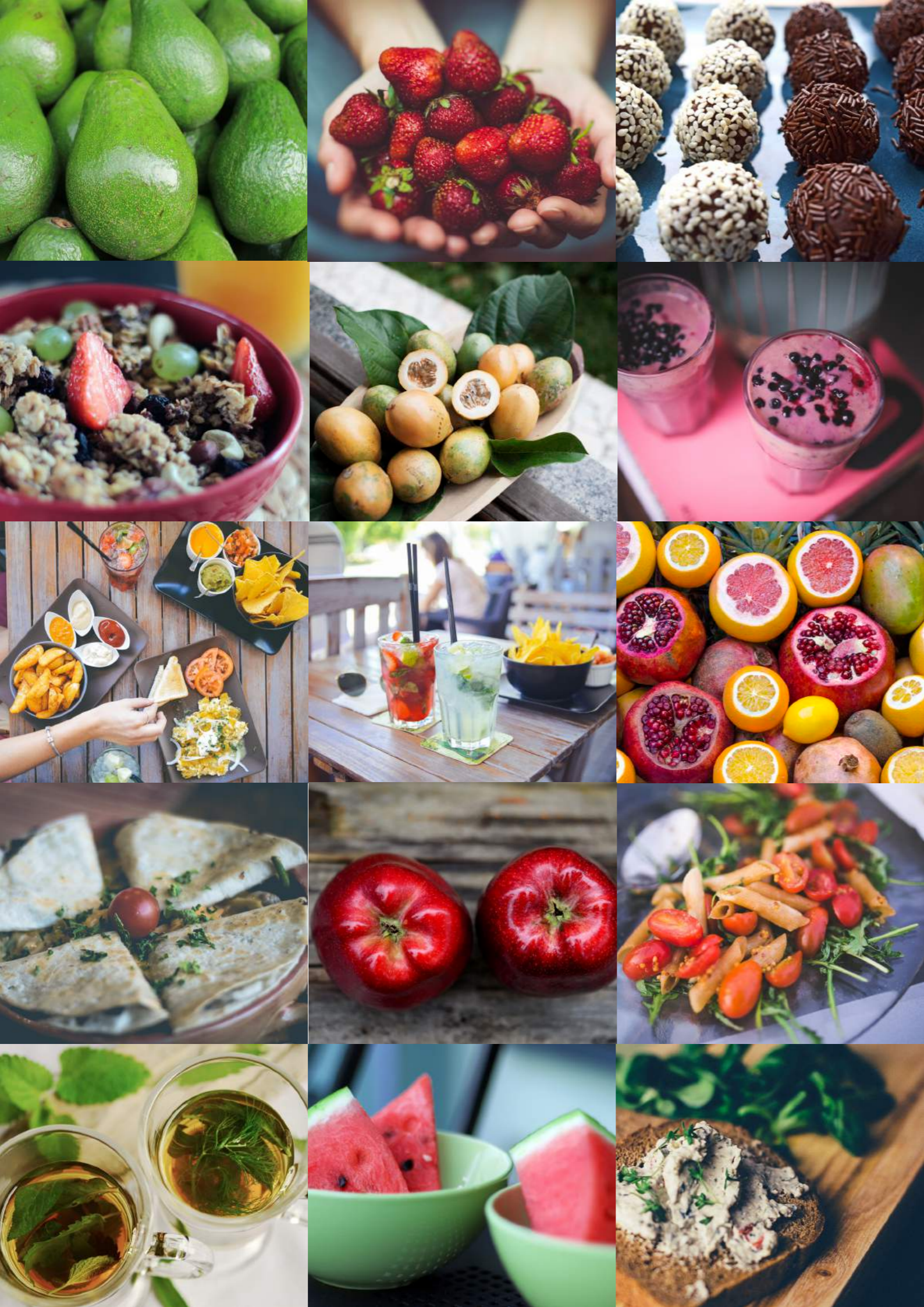


LIVIA'S KITCHEN



Vegan chocolate treats

LK's Raw Millionaire Bites are a nutritional twist on the classic millionaire shortbread. Available in chocolate orange, oat and raisin and salted caramel flavour. They are gluten, dairy and refined sugar free, with no additives or preservatives and full of delicious flavour. Available from WholeFoods, Selfridges&Co and Harvey Nichols to name a few. RRP £5.50 per tub. www.liviaskitchen.co.uk



LET'S TALK ABOUT: THE 'V' WORD

It's become one of Britain's fastest growing lifestyle movements. With at least 542,000 people now following a vegan diet. **Heather Large** takes a look at why so many people are becoming vegan and why you should join them.

With three and half times as many vegans as there were 10 years ago, pubs, restaurants and cafes up and down the country are offering more choices on their menus and supermarkets stock more 'vegan friendly' products on their shelves than ever before.

During the past decade there has been a steady rise in the number of 15 to 34-year-olds quitting meat and dairy, and almost twice as many vegans are female than male.

More than 860,000 of all vegetarians and vegans also avoid all non-dietary animal products such as leather and wool. The number of products labelled 'suitable for vegans' launched between 2012 and 2015 has more than doubled.

This has seen sandwich and salad chain Pret A Manger even open a branch in London offering only vegan and vegetarian food with more expected to follow.

UK and Irish pub chain JD Wetherspoon is also getting in on the act having recently rolled out new vegan options on its menu, which have been approved by The Vegan Society. Many celebrities have also spoken out in favour of a plant-based diet including Alicia Silverstone, Ariana Grande and Liam Hemsworth, which has also made the lifestyle choice more appealing to younger generations.

But why do people choose to become vegans is a question many people are asking. Some people speculate that it's a fashion statement whilst others suggest it is a fad diet. In reality people have

many different reasons for choosing a vegan lifestyle and there's no guarantee it's for everyone. But here at VLIFE we have piled together just a few key reasons you might choose to give it a go.

Reduce the risk of disease

Vegan diets are more healthy than the average diet, particularly in preventing, treating or reversing heart disease and reducing the risk of cancer. A low-fat vegan diet is the single most effective way to stop the progression of coronary artery disease or prevent it entirely. A vegan diet is inherently healthy as vegans consume no animal fat and cholesterol.

Weight loss

The standard diet—high in saturated fats and processed foods and low in plant-based foods and complex carbohydrates is making us fat and killing us slowly. A vegan diet helps to lose weight without counting calories or carbs and without measuring portions or feeling hungry.

Increased energy levels

Good nutrition generates more usable energy where too much fat in your bloodstream means that arteries won't open properly and that your muscles won't get enough oxygen.

Help to reduce pollution

Some people become vegans after realizing the devastation that the meat industry is having on the environment. Agricultural activities that cause pollution

include confined animal facilities, plowing, pesticide spraying, irrigation, fertilizing and harvesting.

Save the animals

Many vegans give up meat because of their concern for animals. Ten billion animals are slaughtered for human consumption each year. And, unlike the farms of yesteryear where animals roamed freely, today most animals are factory farmed.

It's easier than you might think

It's almost effortless these days to find great-tasting and good-for-you vegan foods, whether you're strolling the aisles of your local supermarket or walking down the street at lunchtime. If you need inspiration in the kitchen, look no further than the internet.

There's no denying that veganism is on the rise, and for good reasons to. There are people world-wide who have benefitted immensely from a change to a plant based diet, few more so than 42 year-old vegan and northern mother, Sara. Sara made the switch to vegan living after years of health problems including chronic pain due to being overweight for the majority of her life she explains how her transition to veganism has not only dramatically improved her weight and overall wellbeing, whilst also changing her whole relationship with her own body and life itself. 'I'm a lot calmer now. I used to be a bit 'out there on a limb'. Being vegan has allowed me to gain mental clarity. Not in

all cases, but some individuals start doing yoga, and then maybe even meditation. You begin to seek further meaning in your life and gain a sense of peace. What I have found lately is that I don't like harming any other living creature if I can help it, even an insect.'

When speaking about her reasons for going vegan she explains, 'I never set out at all with the intention to become vegan, but I was experiencing so much poor health a few years ago, all I wanted was to have more energy to get through the working day, and I found that I could do that with eating more fruits and vegetables while eating less animal products.'

So I came to veganism through realising that I didn't like eating meat anymore, not necessarily because of the ethics behind that at first. Even though at first I had simply changed the meat I was buying free range and organic, I got to the point where I didn't like the taste, texture and how it left me feeling afterwards. It was like a natural instinct. I went from not ingesting animal products, to also not putting them on my skin either.'

'I came to veganism through realising that I didn't like eating meat anymore, not necessarily because of the ethics behind that at first.'

Not only has Sara changed the way she lives, she has changed her health significantly for the better. From having to take days off work sick due to chronic pain caused from obesity to a more energetic and lively woman there are no doubts in Sara's mind how veganism has saved her life. Following her transition she has lost a dramatic amount of weight but she explains how the weight loss wasn't her sole aim.

'Becoming vegan has hugely changed the relationship I have with my body. The weight loss itself was a beneficial side effect. I never set out to deliberately lose weight, I was chasing increased energy and vitality. I needed to stop the brain fog and tiredness dips in the afternoon. I was trying to resolve that and give myself a better working day. But the weight did come off very very quickly. I mean I started in January 2013, and by August 2013 I had already lost 7 stone.'

The vegan lifestyle can do amazing things for the mind as well and you can develop more mental clarity from the foods that you eat. Personally I have found that I have been able to respect my body more. I think we all have body hang ups, and certainly when you have

been very very large at nearly 25 stone. I would never look in a mirror or even have photographs taken if I could help it. I don't tend to look in mirrors very much now, but my self esteem has rocketed.'

But what do the health experts have to say about a plant-based diet? We spoke to London-based nutritionist Rob Hobson who explained his opinion on a vegan diet.

'I firmly believe if done correctly, a vegan diet can be incredibly healthy – not least because it can provide lots of nutrient-rich, unprocessed foods. If you are following a well-balanced and varied vegan diet, then you should have no problem getting all of the nutrients required for good health.'

He added, 'research shows people following a plant-based diet have healthier lifestyles than their meat-eating counterparts. Not only are they less obese, vegans are also less to fall victim to serious conditions due to the large amount of fibre and antioxidants they get from their diet.'

So there you have it. There's no need to be scared of the V word, it all boils down to what's best for you and what suits your lifestyle. The benefits to yourself and the world are here for all to see, so if you ask us, we think you'll love it. Plus your body and the environment will love you back for making the switch.



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