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Alexandra Jamieson, CHHC, AADP
Vegan chef and holistic nutrition expert



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Living Vegan

FOR

DUMMIES®

by Alexandra Jamieson, CHHC, AADP



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Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Living Vegan For Dummies®

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2009939780

ISBN: 978-0-470-52214-1

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Author

Alexandra Jamieson, CHHC, AADP, has been seen on *Oprah*, *The Final Word*, *30 Days*, and *The National Health Test with Bryant Gumbel*. She even was featured in the award-winning documentary *Super Size Me* (2004).

Why? Because Alex has proven herself to be a wise and profound voice for holistic nutrition and healthy living. In her book, *The Great American Detox Diet* (Rodale, 2005), Alex offers remarkably sane — and tasty — advice on how to detox, live healthfully, and feel fantastic.

Her knowledge of nutrition has been artfully developed through years of both professional and self-study. As the daughter of natural health advocates, Alex crafted a unique personal mission to spread the word about the power of healthy food and the astounding ways in which it can positively transform everyday life. Alex now commands a matchless repertoire of nutritional wisdom and food savvy.

Alex is a professionally trained healthy gourmet chef, having studied at New York City's Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts. She refined her techniques by cooking professionally in Milan, Italy, as well as at a variety of popular New York City restaurants.

In addition, Alex is a certified health and nutrition counselor. She studied with groundbreaking pioneers in the field of nutrition at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, which is accredited by Columbia University's Teacher's College and by the American Association of Drugless Practitioners.

Alex also traveled the world, visiting more than 20 countries while premiering *Super Size Me*, an Oscar-nominated documentary, and acting as a messenger for the power of holistic nutrition and healthy detoxing. Though she readily and ably shares her message with all, her passion is helping professional women enhance their ability to excel and achieve using healthy food as a catalyst.

A healthy and energetic vegan herself, Alex lives in New York City with her family, including her vegan son, Laken, and a lively male cat named Sue.

For more information, please visit www.nutritionforempoweredwomen.com.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my son, Laken, a shining example of a healthy vegan human being. And to everyone considering living as a vegan, or supporting someone who is on this path, I applaud your efforts to make this world a better place, one bite at a time.

Author's Acknowledgments

My heartfelt thanks and acknowledgements to the wonderful folks at Wiley Publishing, Inc. who made this book possible: Copy Editor Jessica Smith, Acquisitions Editor Lindsay Lefevere, Senior Project Editor Chrissy Guthrie, and all the Composition Department folks who helped with the layout and design work. Thanks also to Rachel Nix for the technical review, to Emily Nolan for the recipe testing, and to Patty Santelli for the nutritional analysis.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

Growing up in the wilds of Oregon, my artist/gardener mom and teacher dad taught me many lessons that served me well over the years. I was lucky enough to be raised in a family that saw the connections between fresh food, health, people, the animals and insects, and the earth we lived on. We did eat meat, dairy, eggs, and honey from our beekeeping friends, but I had a solid education in “the web of life 101.” My older brother and I were pretty healthy; we ate lots of fresh food, and we rarely ate out.

My parents canned tomatoes and set aside jars of blackberry jam, and the whole family would spend hours in local u-pick farms gathering hazelnuts or cherries when the season was right.

As I grew up and moved away from home, my eating habits strayed from freshly-made, organic foods to the standard American diet of fast-food, lots of soda with high-fructose corn syrup, regular doses of fried foods, and few fresh fruits or vegetables. By the time I reached my late 20s, I was getting sick and depressed, had frequent migraines, and started gaining weight quickly for the first time in my life. I realized that what I was eating was making me sick and that I had to make a change if I were to be a fully functioning, happy person again.

I went to a holistic doctor who diagnosed me with an underlying *Candida* yeast overgrowth and recommended a sugar- and dairy-free diet to help my body recover. As I read everything the library had to offer on natural foods, the vegan diet, and the realities of health and the food system, I realized that I had caused my own health problems with my diet and discovered that my food choices had a large impact on the world around me.

I started eating vegan, whole foods within a week and immediately started to feel better. My headaches went away, the excess weight melted off, and I was clearheaded and energetic for the first time in years. I took my newfound passion for food and enrolled in a professional chef’s training program at the Natural Gourmet Institute in New York City.

I later realized I wanted to help people discover how to heal their own health problems with good food and dietary choices. Since graduating from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, I have helped countless clients all over the world improve their health by including more plant-based options to their diets.

About This Book

As more people are exposed to the realities of how our food is produced and processed and how it affects our health, eating a vegan diet becomes more popular as a way to follow a healthier, more vibrant path through life. World-class athletes and popular musicians, actors, and artists achieve incredible levels of human fitness and create amazing works of art all while living a vegan life.

This book is for new vegans and the people who love them. It's also for vegetarians who want to make the switch and lifelong carnivores who are curious about what a vegan is and what they eat. This book also can help comfort your friends and family by providing the information to quiet the fears of you wasting away to nothing by "living on lettuce."

Even if you aren't sure a vegan diet is right for you, this book can help you understand the amazing benefits of a plant-based diet. Including more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds is something we're all encouraged to do by the FDA, USDA, and the ADA! Even Mom says so! If you want to improve your health, reduce your health concerns, lose weight, improve your energy and stamina, prolong your life expectancy, protect the environment, and save the lives of countless animals, this book is for you.

Living Vegan For Dummies provides an incredible amount of information that can be useful whether you read it from start to finish or not. Every chapter is written in easy-to-understand language and has distinct parts with helpful references and lots of tips and real-world strategies. The recipes can help you enjoy vegan food even if you aren't a trained chef. And most important, every chapter helps you get closer to a cruelty-free life.

Conventions Used in This Book

Following are a few conventions I've used that you should be aware of:

- ✓ Whenever I introduce you to a new food or term, I put it in *italics*.
- ✓ Keywords in bulleted lists or the action parts in numbered steps appear in **boldface**.
- ✓ Web sites appear in `monofont`.

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that I haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So when using one of these Web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.

What You're Not to Read

For Dummies books are full of useful extras that pop out at you while you're reading. Fun facts and useful sidebars give you inspiration and ammunition for the vegan road ahead. You'll notice this extra information highlighted with gray shaded boxes or Technical Stuff icons throughout the chapters. You can commit these items to memory to remind yourself and others of why this lifestyle is so amazing, or you can skip them and just dive into the information that seems most important to you at the time. Just remember that this extra information is just that — extra. You don't have to read it in order to understand the topic at hand.

Foolish Assumptions

In writing this book, I made a few assumptions about you, the reader:

- ✔ You like to eat food, but you want to stop eating animal products.
- ✔ You like to wear clothes, but you want to stop wearing animal products.
- ✔ You like to wash and pamper your body, but you want to stop using products that contain animal ingredients or products that were tested on animals.
- ✔ When you buy something to use or consume, you often ask yourself or someone else “where did this come from?” or “what is this made of?” or “what am I contributing to when I buy this?”
- ✔ You have cooked a little or none at all, but you know you would like to start making some if not all your own food.
- ✔ You're curious about how to maintain proper health while eating a vegan diet.
- ✔ You aren't afraid to take a risk or be considered “weird” by the rest of society — most cool vegans are a little outside the mainstream, but that's what we like to be!

If these assumptions spoke to you, you found yourself nodding your head while reading this list, or you can easily picture your loved one who wants to become a vegan, you're reading the right book.

How This Book Is Organized

Living Vegan For Dummies is divided into seven parts. Each part covers a different area of vegan living. Read through the description for each part and then go to the chapters that excite you the most. Every part works in conjunction with the others to help you build a vibrant, conscious, and deliciously healthy life.

Part I: “Ve-qan” at the Beginning

Part I lays out what a vegan diet and lifestyle encompasses. It details the reasons people choose to become vegan in the first place and covers the ways in which choosing a vegan diet can lead to better health for yourself and can protect animals and the planet. This part also discusses the ways to make the switch from a vegetarian or omnivorous diet to a healthy, plant-based, vegan diet.

Part II: Building a Healthy Vegan Diet

This part serves as your nutritional guide to creating a healthy meal plan. I show you how to include proper protein, calcium, iron, B12, and other nutrients along with delicious vegan ingredients to ensure a well-rounded diet. An important feature of Part II is the lists of healthy, whole vegan foods. These lists help you choose foods to ensure that you’re getting the nutrition you need while eating a vegan diet.

Part III: Sticking to Your Guns: Staying Vegan

The nuts and bolts of making a vegan diet work for you and your family are found in Part III. Here you can find all sorts of information, including cooking tools you need to buy, tips on how to shop for and store food items, and guidelines for planning your meals for ease and success. This part also includes handy snack and shopping lists as well as ways to cook your old favorite foods in new, vegan ways. Finally it takes you beyond the kitchen to your bathroom and closets to help you find hidden animal ingredients and products that you want to avoid.

Part IV: Tasting Is Believing: Vegan Recipes

This part is where you find delicious, mouthwatering recipes for every part of the day. I include breakfasts for school and workdays, brunch ideas for leisurely weekend meals, smaller side dishes, one-pot meals for the beginner or time-pressed chef, and delicious desserts for everyone. For all these recipes, I call for vegan ingredients and provide you with simple-to-follow instructions.

Part V: Living Vegan in the Real World

In this part, you take your first tentative steps outside of the happy vegan bubble you've created for yourself at home. The chapters here can help you make travel plans to see the rest of the world and remain a happily social vegan bon vivant even if you're the only salad eater at a table full of steak lovers. This part also can help you throw your own vegan parties so you can share your newfound love of cruelty-free food with friends and family.

Part VI: Veganism for All Walks of Life

Read this part to help plan and prepare for those special times in life that may require unique nutritional needs. This part describes how you can manage a healthy pregnancy, raise a fit baby and toddler, feed a growing athlete as well as deal with the special challenges of older vegans. It explains the benefits of a vegan diet for each phase of life and offers sound nutritional advice and strategies for success.

Part VII: The Part of Tens

Commit these lists to memory! The information in this part comes in handy when you're getting grilled by some meathead at a party, and it also offers handy lists that serve every person on the vegan path. In this part, you discover ten reasons for living vegan as well as ten exciting and inspiring ways to take your commitment out of the kitchen and into the great big world. You also receive answers to the most common questions you'll hear as a vegan.

Icons Used in This Book

As you go through the chapters of this book, you'll find the following friendly icons that are designed to draw your attention to different bits of information, from useful tidbits to satisfying trivia. Here's what each of the icons mean:



Be sure to pay attention to the information next to this icon. This advice can help you make good choices and eliminate risks.



When you see this icon, you're sure to find handy bits of guidance that will inspire, help, and ease your way along the vegan path.



Pay close attention to information featuring this icon. It will help you avoid common pitfalls as well as costly mistakes.



This icon points out information where I've gone into the science of things. You don't have to read this info to understand the topic at hand, but it is interesting stuff.

Where to Go from Here

If you aren't sure where to begin your exploration of vegan living, start your journey at the beginning of this book and read every bit until you reach the back cover. On the other hand, if you can't wait to eat great vegan food, skip ahead to the recipes in Chapters 12 through 15 and start cooking!

The great thing about this book is that you can choose the topics that are most important or interesting to you right now and jump into those areas — you don't have to read this book from the beginning for it to work for you. This book covers every area of vegan living, but you don't have to follow the information in order. Skip around, fast-forward, and rewind; do what works best for you. All the information is here for when you need it, in the order that you need it.

Whether you choose to go 100 percent vegan or just integrate several vegan meals a day, Chapters 9 through 11 can help you make better purchases. If you're already shopping in health food stores, you can still find out more about the different labels given to vegan and cruelty-free products as listed in Chapter 7. You can start snacking and eating vegan meals on the fly with the snacking and shopping lists provided in Chapter 9.

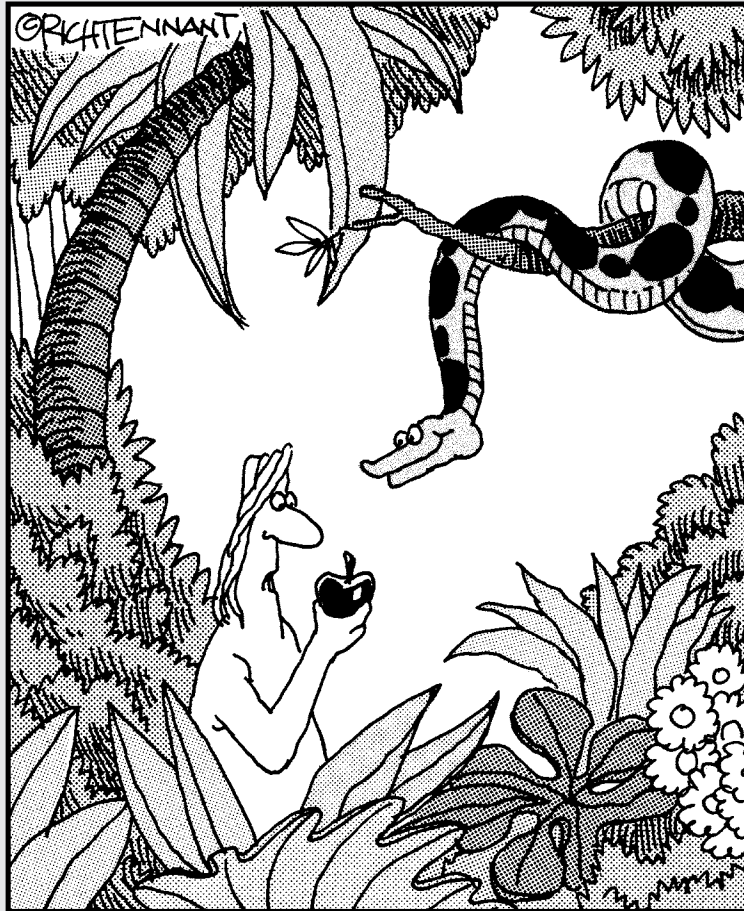
A vegan life is full of fun, passion, and ethical consciousness made real with every meal, purchase, and product. Enjoy the journey of discovery, and take heart knowing that you've committed to one of the most responsible paths available in life! Be well, and here's to your health!

Part I

"Ve-gan" at the Beginning

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"This isn't some sort of fad diet, is it?"

In this part . . .

If your whole life could be drawn on a map, vegan living encompasses not only the roads, intersections, and detours, it's also the inspiration for your journey in the first place. Knowing what you're going to encounter on this trip ensures that you don't end up in the wilderness friendless and starving!

In this part, you can find the basics on what vegan living means. These chapters explain the solid logic of choosing this lifestyle and how to transition to it, including what you can eat and buy, the health and environmental benefits associated with it, and how to make the necessary changes from your current lifestyle.