

PRESS RELEASE



VEGAN HERITAGE PRESS

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Vegan cookbook spotlights American comfort food

WOODSTOCK, VA— Ohio cookbook author, Tamasin Noyes, is passionate in her belief that vegan food is for everyone, maybe now more than ever.

That's why she wrote her nostalgic and innovative cookbook, *American Vegan Kitchen: Delicious Comfort Food from Blue Plate Specials to Homestyle Favorites*. It is the first vegan cookbook to focus on the way Americans love to eat. It's also the second title to be published by Vegan Heritage Press of Woodstock, Virginia.

"Making vegan versions of great familiar comfort food is easy now," Noyes says, "so I thought it was about time vegan cooking finally comes home to mainstream America."

She explained, "Most of us grew up eating in delis, drive-ins, diners, or neighborhood cafes, so I wanted to bring back the comfort and hominess of those places, but with easy-to-prepare vegan recipes that are delicious to eat. I thought that it would be fun if people could make these comforting, familiar foods at home."

What Is American Cooking?

If America is anything, it's a melting pot, and *American Vegan Kitchen* covers an eclectic range of American foods that reflect our great diversity and independence. Noyes' approach in the kitchen plays up the best aspects of American eateries before the age of stamped-out fast food and elite celebrity chefs.

"I wanted to replicate the kind of food Americans know and love, so I wrote a book that covers the full spectrum of American food, including Mom's home cooking."

Her recipes cover many U.S. regions, from the cafes of San Francisco to the delicatessens of New York; from Chicago-style pizza to New Orleans Po' Boys; from Chinatown pot stickers to southwestern Tex-Mex and Route 66 blue-plate specials. The idea for the book came to her while traveling with her husband, Jim.

"Years ago, my husband and I were vacationing in Vermont. On a whim, we stopped at a local diner in hopes of being able to get something vegan to eat. The place had a beautiful awning and that wonderful retro look. As vegans, we didn't have high hopes of getting a great meal there, but that's exactly what we found. The "menu" was handwritten on a chalkboard with even more specials merely jotted on a piece of paper. They had a large variety of vegan comfort food, both traditional and more contemporary, and it definitely piqued my interest in the core of what American cooking was, and how to reinvent it for vegans and the health-conscious mainstream."

This is the first book by Noyes, an Ohio native and former restaurant cook, who enjoys good wines, old houses, raising orchids, and soap making. She said she had been fantasizing about writing her own cookbook after years of testing recipes for other vegan cookbook authors. The fact is, she has tested for many authors whose books are best-sellers in vegan circles, including Robin Robertson, Isa Chandra Moskowitz, and Terry Hope Romero, as well as some rising stars.

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“Truth is, I’ve really been working on this book my entire life,” she stated. “From baking cookies with my Mom as a child to making last night’s dinner, I am always refining and experimenting. Research for *American Vegan Kitchen* was fun for me, as my interests in cultural development and food development meshed perfectly. My challenge was taking traditional comfort foods and make them vegan, while also making them taste better than the original dishes. These dishes are also nostalgic – blue plate specials, burgers and fries, and mac and “cheese.” They help people connect with good memories from the past, and they’re eating something that’s homey, healthy, and delicious while doing so.”

Vegan Is the New Vegetarian

The demand for new vegan cookbooks exploded in the mid-2000s, when mainstream publishers discovered the popularity of vegan websites and bloggers. This goes a long way to support Noyes’ contention that “Vegan is the new vegetarian.” She says Americans are changing their attitudes about food by educating themselves with the facts on what’s good for them and what harmful to their health.

“Millions of people all over the country are rethinking their diet and its impact on health and the environment. The idea of being vegan was considered fringe not so long ago, but it’s now a familiar term seen in restaurant menus and food product packaging.

“In my early years, I started to cook vegetarian and moved on to macrobiotics for the discipline. I even cooked in a vegetarian restaurant, at the time, and eventually evolved to veganism. It was a natural evolution. I’ve found that the more vegetarians cook and learn, products such as cheese and eggs become easier to eliminate—most people simply feel better when they give them up. It’s a similar progression with omnivores, when they begin to reduce their meat intake”.

Going Vegan Has Never Been Easier

When she’s not cooking, Noyes keeps active on her blog, where she and her subscribers make a subtle statement to cable TV’s Food Network, which they regard as conspicuously “veg-less.” Most Fridays, she veganizes a recipe featured that week and posts it on her blog (www.veganappetite.com). They make the dish for dinner on what has come to be called “Food Network Friday.”

“The idea is to show how easily their recipes can be made without meat, eggs, or dairy,” she explained.

Noyes added that when she first became vegetarian, she felt alone in the Ohio heartland. Cookbooks and ingredients either didn’t exist or were hard to find, and places that served such food were even more scarce. But she says that times have changed in twenty-five years.

“We have finally come full circle,” she concluded, “with a heightened awareness of our health and a healthy distrust of deception in the marketplace.

“Thankfully, modern conveniences have improved the availability of products like soy milk, vegan cheeses and ‘butter’ products; even vegan cold cuts – years ago these didn’t exist. And products like tempeh, tofu and seitan that I used to make myself are now available in health food stores.

“That’s why I wrote this book for everybody – vegans, vegetarians, and people who currently eat meat, but want to cut down, due to health concerns associated with animal foods, or issues of ethics or the environment. I love that cooking is practical (we all have to eat) as well as an art form. Cooking is the most nurturing act we can perform for those we love.”

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“Eating vegan is easy for people now,” Noyes said. “Restaurants have vegetarian and vegan menus and grocery stores continue to expand their veg-friendly sections. We don’t miss out on anything anymore, and have learned to eat a more diverse diet than we did even a few short years ago. I wrote *American Vegan Kitchen* for vegans, but also to intrigue the mainstream into looking and feeling better through eating familiar dishes in a healthy new way.”

Tamasin Noyes is available for interviews. Please contact her by calling Jon Robertson at 540-459-2858. See her blog at www.veganappetite.com. Contact her publisher at www.veganheritagepress.com.