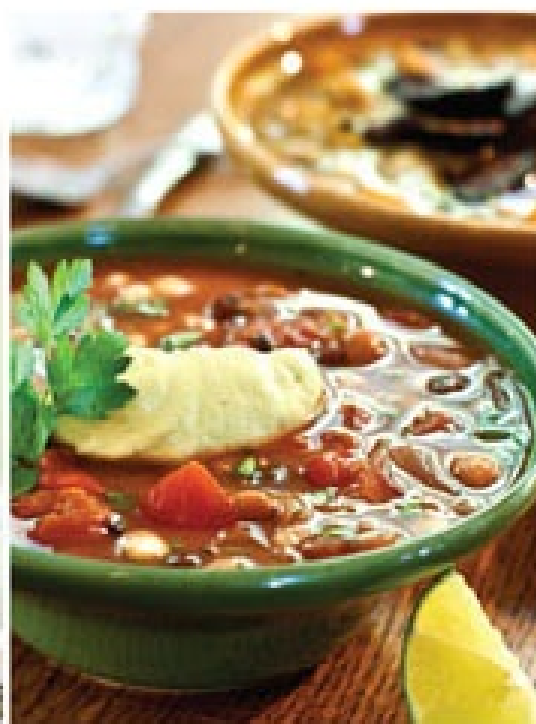
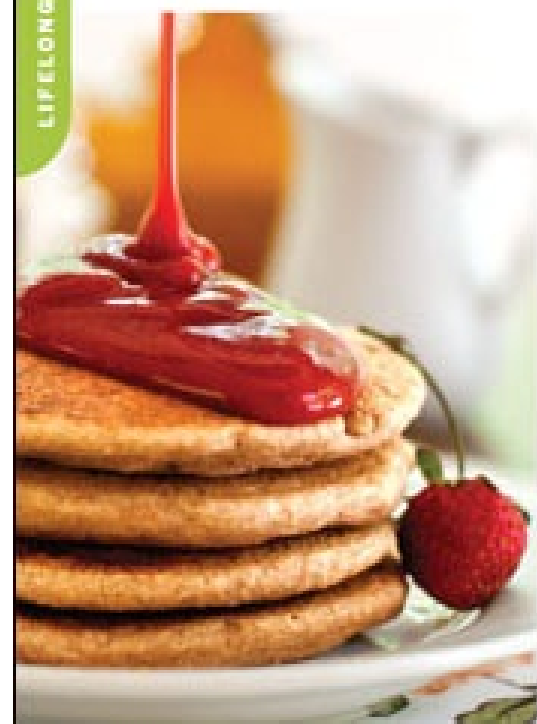


# let them eat vegan!

200  
DELICIOUSLY  
SATISFYING  
PLANT-POWERED  
RECIPES *for*  
the **WHOLE**  
FAMILY

LIFELONG BOOKS



**DREENA BURTON**

AUTHOR OF  
EAT, DRINK & BE VEGAN

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## PRAISE FOR DREENA BURTON

“Combining a simple design with oodles of valuable veggie cooking info and mouth-watering recipes, Burton’s latest cookbook features ‘celebration’ recipes and is every bit as good as her previous books, including the now-classic *The Everyday Vegan* and the impressive follow-up *Vive le Vegan!* . . . Vegan cooking is always a celebration when Burton’s books are in the kitchen.”

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LET THEM EAT  
*Vegan!*

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ALSO BY DREENA BURTON

*The Everyday Vegan*

*Vive le Vegan!*

*Eat, Drink & Be Vegan*

LET THEM EAT

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*Vegan!*



*200 Deliciously Satisfying Plant-Powered Recipes for the Whole Family*

Dreena Burton



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*With love to Charlotte, Bridget, and Hope.*

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# Plant Power: Your Time Has Come

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When I started writing vegan cookbooks and later blogging about my journeys as a plant-powered mom and home cook, *vegan* was still kind of a dirty word—one synonymous with deprivation—and signaled an image of sprouts and a slab of wan tofu. Thankfully, in the past decade or so, veganism has come a long way. I've seen big changes in the food offerings and how we eat. When I first began eating vegan, there were very few substitutes for dairy products and meat and just a few nondairy milks. So we vegans had to be creative with the basics: beans, grains, nuts, seeds, vegetables, and fruit. I continued to create recipes in this framework while noticing more and more vegan convenience foods become available. The surge of animal-free packaged foods was accompanied by a swell of vegan support and excitement: We could have treats and substitutes that were as good as (and sometimes better than) their nonvegan equivalents. For a period of time, attention focused on the processed foods and recipes using refined ingredients and analogues, showing how exceptional "sinful" animal-free foods could be.

But of course, there's always a rub: While these foods might qualify as vegan, they aren't always healthy. I'm not entirely against these foods. I understand that meat and dairy substitutes help people adapt their meals within their cooking comfort zones. Plus, we can all enjoy convenient treats when the bulk of our diet is wholesome. As you'll soon see, I shamelessly enjoy my ice cream! And, our girls enjoy an occasional veggie dog when we have burger night. But, we don't rely on vegan meat and other processed foods for our regular meals. My recipes won't have you veganizing a ground meat-based recipe with veggie ground round, or using vegan sour cream to make an artichoke dip. The tricky thing with processed foods is, because they are so convenient, they can comprise the bulk of the vegan diet, while the real (whole) foods are abandoned.

The reverse should be true. Whole foods, and lower-fat recipes based on plant power, should comprise 90 percent or more of our diet (optimally 100 percent, but I'm a realist and appreciate that most people need a little wiggle room). My own meals are filled with greens and beans, nuts and whole grains, and an abundance of veggies. When I create recipes, they unfold with health in mind and plant-powered foods in practice.

In recent years, I've seen the shift away from vegan junk foods back to the healthier basics. And thanks to greater awareness of veganism in popular culture, we are now seeing folks who would never before have a plate without a piece of meat on it, coming to the table and leaving completely satisfied.

Eating vegan is about so much more than not eating animal foods. We know the importance of choosing whole plant foods, and largely organic and local foods, over highly processed foods. That's the health power of a plant-based diet. Eating a wholefoods vegan diet—with respect for lower-fat recipes featuring colorful, nutrient-dense vegetables and fruit, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds—where it's at. These foods are the basis for delicious, nourishing, and, satisfying meals for everyone at the table—from the pickiest toddler (trust me on this one) to the green smoothie-drinking spouse (trust me on this one, too). When we focus our diet on plant power, we feel better, look better, and want to do better. Before long, we find ourselves getting hooked on healthy foods. And why wouldn't we? When they taste delicious, make us feel good, improve our overall health, and are cruelty free—what's not to love?

Much like the recipes in my previous books, these recipes represent the nutritious (and delicious)

snacks and meals our family eats. These recipes take it a step further, however. Unlike in my previous books, you won't find any white flour here—not even for cakes or cookies. And, while my cooking roots began with the beans, grains, nuts, and veggies basics, I provide more variety than ever before with this book. When I first started eating vegan, I, too, fell in the trap (albeit for a short while) eating too many white-flour-based products such as pasta and bread. Now my recipes eschew white flour, and my cooking overall is more diverse, with a variety of vegetables and leafy greens, plenty of legumes, nuts and seeds, and whole grains. And, while some recipes are on the richer side, many more are lower in fat, so you can eat them every day.

These recipes are the kind of real-food nutritious recipes that everyone is looking for. Whether you are a busy single with a developing career and looking to recharge and renew your energy through a healthier diet, or need wholesome meals to nourish your active family, or have decided that dietary change is critical to sustain your vitality or change some developed health condition—this book will deliver the goods.

Preparing homemade food is also important. When you prepare your meals from whole, plant-based ingredients, you connect with your food. It is important to me that children see that dinner comes from washing, chopping, and cooking. It's equally important that we sit to dinner and take time to enjoy a home-cooked meal (even if it means much squirming, spilled drinks, and sister rivalry). I see the energy and strength our good food gives our children. My children are plant powered—so much that I wouldn't mind a dimmer switch once in a while! And they have come to appreciate how real food tastes. Of course, they still enjoy treats—just like other children—but they have often discarded a lollipop because of its artificial flavorings, in lieu of something tastier and more wholesome.

Over the years, my recipes have highlighted unprocessed and whole-foods ingredients. This book will give you even more—more real-food recipes, plus plenty of allergen-free options specific to wheat, gluten, and soy. When I started baking with whole-grain flours, I branched out beyond wheat and found I often enjoyed the results that alternative flours produced in baked goods. In this book, a lot of my recipes—sweet and savory—are either wheat free or have wheat-free substitutions (for some offer an optional switch back to using wheat flour, for added convenience). Many are gluten free. I also have many soy-free and raw recipes. Although it's been said, “You can't please everyone,” this book truly has a little something for everyone!

Beyond the recipes, this book gives you tips, techniques, notes, and lots of kitchen chatter—because, when I create a recipe I think of the people I can share it with. What might they need to know about the ingredients? Or specific techniques or substitutions? Since I enjoy providing oodles of notes for recipes (and my readers tell me they love them), you'll find lots of my “kitchen talk” throughout the recipes. From basic “Ingredients 411” to “Allergy-Free or Bust!” and “Savvy Subs and Adds” (see [page xx](#) for a full list), you'll find clear notes and suggestions that I learned while making these dishes the first time and again.

I also realize that some of you are looking for help with other aspects of food preparation, such as packed lunches and wheat-free baking tips. There are several informational sections at the front and back of the book: There is an in-depth pantry-meets-glossary—your “Plant-Powered Pantry” on [page xxiii](#) and “Plant-Powered Baking Notes” on [page 170](#). When it comes to family matters, I discuss some of my experiences raising wee ones in “Powering the Vegan Family,” [page 269](#), and give you reams of ideas for packing lunches in “Plant-Powered Lunch Box,” [page 273](#). Finally, if you are trying to eat more nutrient-dense leafy greens, I give you two sections: “Let Them Eat Greens,” [page 27](#)



with ideas on how to select, prep, and include more greens in your meals throughout the day . . . and “Go Green’ with Smoothies,” [page 26](#), to answer just about every question you might have on making delicious green smoothies to energize your day.

One final thing before you flip ahead: See the lists on xviii–xix for a quick-hit list of some specific examples of recipes that can cover your (wheat-free/gluten-free/oil-free/vegan sub-free/real-food-seeking/green-and-bean-loving/taste bud–pleasing) needs.

With all that, my wish is that these recipes entice your taste buds while nourishing your body and mind . . . that you find true favorites within these pages, and that maybe (hopefully) this book becomes well loved and covered with plant-powered splatters and stains! Let them eat vegan!

## Before Strapping On That Apron

### *Read the Recipe First (Please!)*

All too often, the excitement to dive into a new recipe turns into getting ahead of yourself and realizing you don’t have an ingredient, have forgotten to include an ingredient, or have skipped a step. Not only does this make for (usually) a less than fab result, it is most irksome in the moment! Prevent the stress by reading through the recipe at least once before getting going. Seems obvious, but we’ve all been caught scoffing ourselves after realizing we’ve made a flub. Prevent the panic and read before you cook.

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## *So You Need . . . I’ve Got You Covered With . . .*

*Everyday tips for eating more leafy greens?*

“Go Green’ with Smoothies,” [page 26](#), and “Let Them Eat Greens,” [page 279](#)

*A salad with a creamy, rich, oil-free dressing that will convert even the most severe kale nay-sayers?*

Kale-slaw with Curried Almond Dressing

*Creamy dressings, sauces, and desserts that do not use vegan sour cream, cream cheese, or margarines?*

[Chapter 3](#)

*A tasty alternative to Parmesan that is soy free?*

Brazil Nut Parmesan

*A holiday main dish that is not a tofu turkey or any other shaped tofu loaf?*

Winter Veg Chickpea Potpie and Festive Chickpea Tart

*Creative, satisfying, bean recipes?*

Jerk Chickpeas, Moroccan Bean Stew with Sweet Potatoes, Fragrant Kidney Bean Lentil Dal, Smoky Sweet Potato and Black Bean Salad, Thai Chickpea Almond Curry, Yellow Sweet Potato Chickpea Pie with Basil, and so on!

*Veggie burgers that don’t fall apart?*

Nutty Veggie Burgers and Chickpea Pumpkin Seed Burgers . . . for starters!

*Cookies that are healthier, with no white flours, and that are wheat free and gluten free?*

[Chapter 9](#)

*All right, really healthy cookies for your kids, with little or no sugar?*

Wholesome Oat Snackles!, Cocoa Cookie Dough Balls, Pecan Date Nibblers, Breakfast Cookies . . . and more!

*A gluten-free piecrust recipe that is dynamite enough to*

<i>Wheat-free cakes?</i>	<a href="#">Chapter 10</a>
<i>Gluten-free cakes?</i>	<a href="#">Chapter 10</a>
<i>Okay, well how about a sugar-free wheat-free cake?</i>	Sugar-Free Chocolate Cake
<i>Cake frostings that are soy free?</i>	<a href="#">Chapter 10</a>
<i>Cake frostings that are margarine free?</i>	<a href="#">Chapter 10</a>
<i>Luscious ice-cream recipes that are easy and soy free?</i>	<a href="#">Chapter 11</a>
<i>Healthier and lower-fat versions of some of your favorite foods?</i>	Panfried Falafel Patties, Three-Bean Salad, To-Live-For Pecan Pie, Award-Winning Frosted B-rav-nies, Artichoke and White Bean Dip, Classic Caesar Dressing, Whole-Grain Chia Pancakes . . . and more!

Readers of my previous books tell me they love the tips I give with every recipe; some say it’s as if I’m in the kitchen with them, “talking them through the recipe.” That’s exactly what I’ve hoped to do with my recipes—welcome the reader, bring confidence to the process, and make it fun to create delicious vegan food. These recipes are no exception. They might be the most “note heavy” of the bunch!

To clarify some of these notes, I’ve done something new in this book. First, since some tips specific to ingredients apply to more than one recipe (e.g., how to remove vanilla seeds from a vanilla bean), rather than repeat them over and over in several recipes, I’ve added a “Kitchen Buzz” note to that ingredient in the upcoming section “Plant-Powered Pantry.” Whenever there is some chit-chat from me about an ingredient, it will be denoted with “see ‘Plant-Powered Pantry’” in the ingredient listing.

Next, I’ve categorized my recipe ramblings! When I test recipes, I play with scenarios that my readers might be faced with. For instance: if you don’t have a barbecue grill, how can you adjust for oven-baking the eggplant for Creamy Grilled Eggplant Dip . . . or how might you make nut-free substitutions to dig into Mac-oh-geez! . . . or how can you make a recipe more kid-friendly—alternatively—more suited to the grown-ups? I’ve done (most of!) the work for you, and share the fruits of my labor through the notes, which are categorized as:

**Adult-Minded:** I give you suggestions for ingredients and seasonings to use to kick up the flavor profile for mature palates.

**Allergy-Free or Bust!** Most of my recipes are either inherently wheat free or gluten free. But when substitutions can be made for these food allergies—as well as for soy, tree nuts, and peanuts—the substitutions will be noted here (in addition to the ingredient listing).

**If This Apron Could Talk:** If my apron could speak, this is what it would tell you—all the extras I want to share from my own experiences with the recipe, be it a technique, something quirky about an ingredient, how to expedite for quicker fixes—this is my free pass to really get chatty with you!

**Ingredients 411:** Extra information about a particular ingredient in a recipe—when to use less/more, how to treat the ingredient, and any other specific ingredient tips that you might have a question about.

in that recipe.

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**Kid-Friendly:** If you have kiddos, you know that some spices won't fly and some ingredients might bomb. In that case, tweak the recipe by changing one ingredient, or substitute a technique to change the consistency, and make it a hit. I give you plenty of kid-friendly advice along the way, as my own crew have given me ample experimentation!

**Make It More-ish!** Who doesn't want to make a recipe more indulgent or saucier once in a while? This will give you some ideas to do just that!

**Protein Power:** This tip explains when an ingredient such as hemp seeds or beans can enhance a recipe and boost the protein. Also handy for when you're asked, "But where do you get your protein?" for the umpteenth time!

**Savvy Subs and Adds:** When I experiment, I try variations on ingredients within food groups, so you have that flexibility with your own cooking. Sometimes adjustments are needed with the substitutions or additions (e.g., swapping acidic ingredients, flours, nut butters, or leafy greens,) and so I elaborate on these.

**Serving Suggestions:** Readers often want to know, "What sauce, salad, side, or other dish can I couple with this recipe?" Here I give you some of my favorite pairings.

### *Get Prepped*

Don't scamper around the kitchen midrecipe, looking for that new bottle of vanilla or that seldom-used sifter (that you know is in the cupboard somewhere). I'm a hypocrite, because I do this far too often. Every time, it stresses me out! We all have good excuses, but let's face it: It's much easier to get your gear in front of you on the counter—not only the ingredients but your measuring cups, bowls, knives, and other equipment. The next section has a rundown of cooking equipment and other notes that might be handy to get you all set to go.

### *Make the Recipe As Is . . . and Then Play*

It's usually best to get the sense of the original recipe before experimenting and tossing in another few herbs and veggies, or changing a variety of flour. Sometimes we experiment in the moment because we don't have the required ingredient (if so, please read previous suggestion). To get the idea of how the original recipe should taste, first try it as is. I give extra notes and tips throughout each recipe to help you customize for dietary needs or seasoning preferences. Once you've tried it as is, then play around, to see if you like the recipe better with more lemon juice, less nut butter, more nuts, and so forth.

*Note for oil and salt restrictions:* Although it is a good idea to first try the recipe as is, if you have personal restrictions for oil and salt intakes, obviously please adjust the recipes as you need to. Most of my savory recipes use minimal amounts of added oil and just enough salt to round out flavors. The salt and oil can always be further reduced, however, if needed. Similarly, I use reduced amounts of sugar and oils in most of my baked goods, particularly for items such as muffins and cereals. The sweeter goodies are meant to be just that—treats for special occasions. Still, I have tested my head out to give you the most bang for your health buck, using healthier flours that are wheat and gluten-free.

free, and less-refined sweeteners (and less of them). My approach to an enjoyable and healthy plant-based diet is to eat a lot of the good stuff (85 to 90 percent whole grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds), and then you have some wiggle room (pants size included) for healthier indulgences.

## Tools to Get the Cooking Job Done

Okay, got a cute apron? No? Really, yours is stodgy? Come on, splurge on something fun and frivolous already! Unless of course you're a guy. Sure, you may have the stodgy one.

Besides that apron, what do you really need to get cooking? Mostly just your gumption and the ability to cook food, but there are definitely some appliances that make your job a lot easier. These are my “can't live-with-out” tools:

**Blender.** When I say I can't do without a blender, mostly I mean my Rambo-meets-blender, the Blendtec. Before my Blendtec came along, I was doing fine with my regular standing blender and an immersion blender. Then I was introduced to the Blendtec and my world of blending changed. No longer do I burn out motors on immersion and jug blenders. No longer do I curse in the kitchen (fine, that's a lie). But, this high-powered blender deserves a shrine on my countertop, I love it that much. I can take on any monster green smoothie with any combination of chunky (and frozen) fruits and greens, and whizzes up in minutes raw desserts and dressings with nuts. I have joked that it is my fourth child. Our girls know the difference, of course. But they also know not to get in the way of me and my Blendtec. When I'm with that machine, I mean business!

**Food processor.** As much as I worship the power of my blender, I still use and love my food processor. It's just essential for grating vegetables (in larger quantities) and making large batches of dips such as hummus. If you are in the market for a food processor, I recommend one with a bowl that holds at least 12 cups. That way you can manage large batches of food effortlessly.

**Immersion blender.** Before the Blendtec joined our family, I used my immersion blender for quite a lot, including smoothies, dressings, sauces, soups, and more. However, I did expect too much at times and did burn out a motor or two trying to blend raw-food dips (with hard nuts). Still, immersion blenders are very handy for certain applications, most notably soups and dressings. When you need to puree a soup, it is much faster, easier, and cleaner to simply immerse the wand in the pot than to transfer your soup to a standing blender. It is also great for vinaigrettes: It fits perfectly inside a jar or a deep cup, and will whiz up your dressings in just seconds, with very little cleanup. (Takeaway from this: minimal cleanup!)

**Kitchen rasp.** An inexpensive kitchen tool, and one of my favorites. The concept for kitchen rasp grew from a similar tool used in woodworking. They are positively fabulous for grating nutmeg and zesting citrus, and can also be used for grating chocolate, garlic, and ginger.

**Mixer (and ice-cream maker attachment).** I'll confess: I resisted using a mixer for a long time because I always strive to offer recipes that can be made without too much fancy equipment. But, truth is, for certain things, such as frostings and stiffer cookie doughs, a mixer is pretty much essential. Sure, you can work it out yourself with elbow grease, but it makes the process very arduous, time-consuming, and probably so unenjoyable that you won't repeat it. That's not the idea! Cooking and

baking should be at least partially fun. I have a KitchenAid mixer, and the neat thing about the appliance is that an ice-cream maker attachment can be used with the base. The ice-cream bowl attachment sits in your freezer until you're ready to make sweet, luscious ice cream! Then you simply attach the bowl to the base of the mixer, and pop on a paddle attachment, and you're ready to churn. It's a beautiful thing.

Some other necessary items for the kitchen include:

- good knives (chef's knife in particular, and also some smaller sharp and serrated knives)
- heat-resistant spatula(s)
- wire whisk
- measuring cups/spoons (more than one set is useful)
- salad spinner
- grater
- stainless-steel or other quality set of pots and pans
- nonstick frying pan (two are useful, one for savory items such as burgers and other for such things as pancakes; brands with nontoxic coatings are available)
- metal baking pans and dishes (muffin pans, two 8-inch round cake pans, an 8-inch square pan, rimmed baking sheets)
- ovenproof glass/Pyrex bakeware (a few pie plates, a loaf dish, an 8 by 12-inch rectangular baking dish, and larger casserole dishes, preferably with lids)
- springform pan (for cheesecakes and other cakes or pies)
- cooling racks
- cutting boards
- colander and strainers (a fine one for rinsing small grains and sifting baking agents)
- cake and/or cupcake caddy (if needing to transport birthday goodies!)
- parchment paper

## Plant-Powered Pantry and Kitchen Buzz

Transforming how you eat requires more than recipes; some organization and planning is needed. But once you get into the swing of using and buying some new ingredients, it all becomes second nature.

This section gives you a comprehensive rundown of specific ingredients used in these recipes, including explanations of these foods and techniques on how best to use them within my recipes. While not an exhaustive list of foods you might find in any given vegan pantry, most of the core foods are covered.

Readers of my previous books have really enjoyed all the tips I give throughout recipes. Because some tips are applicable to an ingredient and repeat through more than one recipe, I have highlighted tips ("Kitchen Buzz") within specific ingredients here, rather than clutter the recipes with repetitive tips. As you go along, you will find notes in those recipes, with a reminder to "see 'Plant-Powered Pantry.'" This is usually to draw attention to a technical tip or helpful note about an ingredient, such as how to remove vanilla seeds from the bean pod.

**Adzuki beans:** Small, reddish beans with a slightly sweet flavor that digest more easily than other beans. Adzuki beans cook rather quickly (see "Guide to Cooking Beans," [page 285](#)).



**Agar powder:** Also called agar-agar, this powder is derived from seaweed and is used in place of gelatin. It has no flavor, can be easily dissolved in liquid, and gels upon cooling. Agar comes in different forms, including flakes and strands; I use the powdered form. Available in whole food stores, Asian supermarkets, and some grocery stores.

**Agave nectar:** Pronounced “uh-gah-vay,” this is a liquid sweetener made from the juice of the agave cactus plant native to Mexico. It has a mild flavor, more neutral than honey and maple syrup. In general, I prefer pure maple syrup and consider it a healthier sweetener. However, when a more neutral flavor is needed for baking or cooking, I will opt for agave nectar. Available in whole food stores and some groceries.

**Almond meal:** Sometimes referred to as ground almonds, because that’s basically what almond meal is—almonds that have been processed into a fine meal, almost like flour. Most almond meal is made from blanched almonds, with a creamy white color. But some brands are ground from whole unblanched almonds, and so it is flecked with pieces of the tan-colored almond skins.

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**Kitchen Buzz:** You can buy almond meal in your grocery or health food store, but you can also make your own. Place whole almonds in a food processor and pulse until very crumbly—not too long or you will begin to turn into a paste.

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**Annie’s Naturals Goddess Dressing:** A brand of thick, flavorful, all-natural dressing that is tahini based and does not have any added sweeteners.

**Apple cider vinegar:** This light brown vinegar is made from fermented apples, and has a mild fruit taste. Look for organic, unpasteurized apple cider vinegar that has some edible sediment (known as “the mother”) floating at the bottom of the bottle.

**Applesauce:** I keep jars of organic unsweetened applesauce on hand for use in baking. It adds moisture and some sweetness to baked goods, and allows you to use less added fat through oils and butter otherwise. Our children also love applesauce on their toasted waffles, after a slather of almond butter.

**Arrowroot powder:** This tasteless thickener comes from the root of a tropical plant, and substitutes equally for cornstarch. Like cornstarch, it dissolves in liquid then must be brought to a boil to activate as a thickening agent. When dissolved it is cloudy, but turns clear once cooked.

**Artichoke hearts:** This vegetable is the unopened flower and stem of a thistle—who knew?! Most of us are familiar with artichoke hearts, the edible portion at the center of the artichoke. If you are able to find frozen artichokes, they are far superior in flavor and texture to that of canned. Marinated artichokes can sometimes be substituted in recipes, though they absorb a briny flavor from the marinade that might be strong, depending on use (you can always rinse and pat dry marinated artichokes to help remove some of the marinade).

**Balsamic vinegar:** A popular Italian vinegar that has a wonderfully sweet robust flavor and relative mild acidity. Look for organic varieties without sulfites.

**Bananas (fresh and frozen):** It's useful to buy more bananas than you will eat for snacking. Once overripe, they become sweeter and can be used in many desserts, including ice cream, muffins, cookies, and pies. Also, once frozen, they make green smoothies sing (see “Go Green’ with Smoothies,” [page 26](#)).

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**Kitchen Buzz:** Peel and slice overripe bananas in and store in resealable plastic bags or containers in your freezer. Much as you might store batches of seasonal berries for the winter, keep a couple of bags/containers of sliced bananas at the ready for smoothies.

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**Barley (pearl and pot):** This is a grain that many of us grew up with, eaten in soups and stews. Most people are familiar with pearl barley, which is slightly chewy but also slightly creamy. It is a more processed (but not nonnutritious) form of barley whereby the grain has been hulled and polished. This yields an ivory-colored grain that cooks quicker and is also a little less chewy than its unprocessed form. Pot barley is less processed than pearl barley, and while still polished, more of the bran layer is retained. As such, it takes a little longer to cook.

**Barley flakes:** Much as how rolled oats are made from whole oats, barley flakes are made from the whole barley grain. Available in natural foods stores, though rolled oats can typically be substituted.

**Barley flour:** From the barley grain, this flour is light in color and mild in flavor and works well in baking and in combination with other flours. Available in whole foods stores and some grocery stores.

**Beans:** Beans probably need no definition; however, they do need more attention! Rich in protein and fiber, and vitamins and minerals, beans are one of the cornerstones of a healthful vegan diet. Super versatile, they can be made into burgers and dips and sauces and put into stews and soups and casseroles and pastas. Beans are sometimes called legumes, which includes all varieties of peas, beans, and lentils: green peas, red lentils, yellow beans, kidney beans, adzuki beans, chickpeas, split peas, mung beans, and snow peas . . . and so many more! Although I would love to cook all my beans from scratch (see “Guide to Cooking Beans,” [page 285](#)), time does not always permit with three kiddos and a busy schedule. So, I keep canned and dried beans on hand, in varieties that I use frequently (chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, cannellini, and/or navy beans). Look for certified BPA-free canned beans—Eden Organic is one such brand. Because lentils cook quickly without needing presoaking, I generally cook these from scratch, and keep a variety on hand (green, French, red).

**Blackstrap molasses:** A syrup produced during the final stage of boiling sugar cane juice to make sugar. It is dark brown, thick, and has a strong, slightly bitter flavor. Regular molasses can be substituted and is less bitter, although it is not as nutritious. I often use blackstrap molasses in soups and savory dishes, as well as in baking.

**Bouillon cubes:** If you don't make your own or buy packaged stock, vegan cubes are the way to go. I prefer the bouillon cubes for a couple of reasons: (1) it takes up little cupboard space (unlike aseptic packaged stocks), and has a longer shelf life; and (2) I typically prefer the flavor of these cubes

aseptic-packaged brands. I like the Harvest Sun brand of bouillon cubes, but there are other vegetable bouillon cubes that will work well in these recipes.

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**Kitchen Buzz:** For usage, one cube mixed with 2 cups of water equals 2 cups of stock, so you can halve cubes if needed and use with 1 cup of water to yield 1 cup of stock.

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**Brown basmati rice:** Unhulled, thus retaining more fiber, brown basmati rice takes longer to cook than white basmati (see “Guide to Cooking Grains,” [page 283](#)). Brown basmati is light and dry when cooked, not sticky like other varieties. The grain lengthens as it cooks and has a delicate nutty, buttery flavor and an aroma similar to popcorn. Available in health food stores and grocery stores.

**Brown lentils:** These are also called green lentils, and are the most common variety of lentils you see in stores. They are khaki in color, about the size of green peas, but shaped like flat disks. They have a pleasant earthy flavor and cook quickly (about 25 minutes). Like all varieties of lentils, they do not need to be soaked or precooked. Before using lentils, rinse to remove any small stones or particles.

**Brown rice syrup:** A thick, light brown sweetener made from rice; it sometimes also contains barley malt. It is less sweet than honey or sugar, and its sugars are absorbed more slowly in the bloodstream than other sweeteners. Because it is such a thick liquid, it does not always substitute well for maple syrup or agave nectar, but does work as a replacement for other thick sweeteners such as corn syrup and even honey.

**Bulgur:** Wheat kernels that have been first steamed and dried and then cut into smaller pieces for quicker cooking. Cracked wheat resembles bulgur but has not been precooked (steamed/dried), so it takes a little longer to cook. Bulgur is well known as the grain used in the popular tabbouleh salad.

**Cannellini beans:** The Italian name for white kidney beans; these are large, white, oval-shaped beans with a smooth, creamy texture and a nutty flavor. Other white beans such as navy often substitute well for cannellini beans.

**Capers:** The unripened buds of a Mediterranean plant that are pickled in a brine to give them a salty, pungent taste. They are dark olive green, have a small roundish shape, and come in different sizes; the smaller ones can be more expensive and are considered better quality. Rinse and drain capers before using. Widely available in grocery stores.

**Cardamom (ground):** A member of the ginger family, cardamom is ground from the seed that is encased in a cardamom pod. Wonderfully aromatic with a sweet flavor, this spice can be used in both sweet and savory dishes, and is a common ingredient in Indian cuisine. Although the ground form is less flavorful than grinding straight from the seed, it is more readily available.

**Carob:** Available in powder and chip form, carob comes from the pod of a legume-family tree native to the Mediterranean region. It is often used as a substitute for chocolate, although it really doesn't have the same flavor. Carob is sweet, whereas pure chocolate is bitter. But unlike chocolate, carob does not contain caffeine. Carob powder and chips are available in whole foods stores and some



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