



SALAD SAMURAI

100 CUTTING-EDGE, ULTRA-HEARTY,
EASY-TO-MAKE **saLaDs**
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE
vegan **TO LOVE**

TERRY HOPE ROMERO

Bestselling coauthor of
VEGANOMICON

LIFELONG BOOKS

PRAISE FOR *VEGAN EATS WORLD*:

“*Vegan Eats World* is a worldwide culinary tour featuring some of the most imaginative vegan dishes I have ever encountered. . . Romero’s inspiration came from almost every corner of the planet. . . . The main lesson to be learned from this cookbook is that plant-based meals need not be bland or uninspired. The international recipes selected for this cookbook are not just healthy choices but also delicious ones. . . . I recommend this cookbook, regardless of whether you are a vegetarian. The recipes are accessible and innovative.”

—*TUCSON CITIZEN*

“Romero plays culinary tour guide on a romp across the globe that sees scores of distinctive dishes filtered through a vegan spyglass. . . . Perhaps the greatest success Romero delivers is in making an interesting variety of vegan recipes accessible to the everyday home cook. Many of these dishes are the kind of thing you’d want to eat just because your palate was feeling curious, not out of adherence to any specific diet.”

—*WILMINGTON STAR-NEWS*

“From vegan-queen Terry Hope Romero . . . [it] takes you around the world to spots as diverse as Jamaica, India, and the Philippines through adapted dishes like a tangy Filipino-inspired tofu and vegetable adobo stew topped with chopped cilantro and bananas.”

—[FORBES.COM](#)

“Jam-packed with 300 delicious recipes. This title takes you on a globetrotting journey to savour the best vegan cuisine the world has to offer. There are some wonderful combinations of ingredients used to create innovative dishes. . . . Terry’s books are always well-written and great value for money and *Vegan Eats World* is no exception.”

—*THE VEGETARIAN*

“Not only are classics re-created but new dishes based on different, vegan ingredients are introduced, with recipes labeled for tier and complexity. . . . [*Vegan Eats World*] is a pick for any who would incorporate vegan dining into a new worldview.”

—*MIDWEST BOOK REVIEW*

“A masterful collection of . . . recipes from all corners of the globe. . . . [Romero has] reinvented delicious ethnic dishes, popular street foods, and take-out so we can eat well while being mindful of a healthy body and healthy planet.”

—*IRVINGTON HERALD*

PRAISE FOR *VIVA VEGAN!*:

“*Viva Vegan!* hits the mark. Celebrating her Venezuelan roots—and Latin culture as a whole—the NYC-based chef has not simply veganized Latin-food. . . . Instead, she presents unique dishes infused with Latin flavors. . . . Thirteen well-organized chapters and recipes cover everything from quintessential condiments to more versions of rice and beans than you ever thought possible.”

—*VEGNEWS*

“In Romero’s kitchen, firm tofu is turned into a chewy, smoky pan-fried ‘vegan stunt-double’ for *chicharrón*, the fried pork rind popular in the Caribbean, while ceviche is reimaged with mushrooms or heart of palms.”

—*NEW YORK DAILY NEWS*

“Loaded with attitude to show that vegan cooking can be an absolute blast and doesn’t have to rely on faux meats and prepackaged cheeses to taste good. . . .”

—*PORTLAND OREGONIAN*

“[Romero] comes to the rescue of cooks whose imagination limits their vegan output, and vegans who would like more Latin dishes on their menus. There is a great selection of dishes that everyone will enjoy. . . . ‘Crepes with Un-Dulce de Leche and Sweet Plantains’ are swoon-worthy. . . . Bottom Line: Would I buy *Viva Vegan!*? Sí.”

—[BLOGCRITICS.ORG](#)

“What sets Romero’s recipes apart from other vegan fare is her reliance on standard kitchen ingredients—not creepy faux meats. . . . Her recipes ultimately rely on fresh ingredients, creating healthier, lighter versions of otherwise traditionally heavy meals.”

—*SACRAMENTO BOOK REVIEW*

PRAISE FOR *VEGANOMICON*:

“Spending time with [Moskowitz’s] cheerfully politicized book feels like hanging out with Grade Paley. She and her cooking partner Terry Hope Romero, are as crude and funny when kibitzing as they are subtle and intuitive when putting together vegan dishes that are full of nonsoggy adult tastes. . . . Do look for an excellent roasted fennel and hazelnut salad, bok choy cooked with crisp shallots and sesame seeds, hot and sour soup with wood ears and napa cabbage and a porcini-wild rice soup they say is ‘perfect for serving your yuppie friends.’”

—*NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW*

“Exuberant and unapologetic. . . . Moskowitz and Romero’s recipes don’t skimp on fat or flavor, and the eclectic collection of dishes is a testament to the authors’ sincere love of cooking and culinary exploration.”

—*SAVEUR*

“[T]his slam-bang effort from vegan chefs Moskowitz and Romero is thorough and robust, making admirable use of every fruit and vegetable under the sun.”

—*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY*

“Full of recipes for which even a carnivore would give up a night of meat.”

—*SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE*

“It’s no shocker that the very same urban chefs who had you inhaling vegan butter-cream frosting during your free time have crafted the next revolution in neo-vegan cuisine.”

—*PHILADELPHIA CITY PAPER*

“*Veganomicon* not only offers tons of mouthwatering ways to put ‘veg’ back into your vegan diet with actual produce but also tutorials that gave me confidence to start improvising on my own.”

—*BUST*

“*Veganomicon* is user-friendly, packed with tips and instructions for a wide range of cooking techniques.”

—*NEW YORK SUN*

“The *Betty Crocker’s Cookbook* of the vegan world. . . . It’s one more step in the quest to prove that vegan food really doesn’t taste like cardboard when you know what you’re doing.”

—*BITCH*

“Seriously good with broad appeal.”

—*WASHINGTON POST*

SALAD SAMURAI

ALSO BY TERRY HOPE ROMERO

Vegan Eats World

Viva Vegan!

WITH ISA CHANDRA MOSKOWITZ

Veganomicon

Vegan Cupcakes Take Over the World

Vegan Cookies Invade Your Cookie Jar

Vegan Pie in the Sky

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TERRY HOPE ROMERO

Da Capo

LIFE
LONG

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Designed by Megan Jones Design

Set in 9 point The Mix by Megan Jones Design

Cataloging-in-Publication data for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

First Da Capo Press edition 2014

ISBN: 978-0-7382-1752-9 (e-book)

Published by Da Capo Press

A Member of the Perseus Books Group

www.dacapopress.com

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TO HUNGRY
16-YEAR-OLD VEGANS
EVERYWHERE
OF ALL AGES



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INTRODUCTION:

A NEW SALAD MANIFESTO (OR, STOP MAKING SALADS THAT SUCK)

“But there’s always the salad.”

If you don’t eat meat (or any animal-derived food), ordering a meal in a nice, if not necessarily accommodating to a vegan palate, restaurant usually drifts to the inevitable rendezvous with a salad. Everyone tucks into steak and potato-flavored mounds of butter. You, however, poke your fork into a morose pile of limp leaves. As a teen vegetarian (and later, adult vegan), countless experiences like this one soured me on ever loving salad. Or actively seeking it out as a meal. Salads just sucked.

But a few cookbooks and decades later, my appetite has shifted increasingly away from cupcakes and casseroles to smoothies, soups, and yes . . . salad. But not the pale mounds of iceberg lathered in bottled dressing or its modern “upscale” accomplice: the pile of tasteless “spring” baby greens glistening in sugary, one-note “balsamic” dreck.

The real salads I crave and eat on a daily basis are hearty, genuine meals! They are true one-bowl wonders, beautiful unions of crunchy fresh vegetables and often fruit, that are always loaded with hearty plant-based proteins, freshly made dressings, and crunchy toppings that gild something much tastier than a lily. Best part yet: something that tastes this good doesn’t even take long to make. Prepare a batch of dressing, chop some veggies, and pack it all up for memorable meals throughout the week.

If you opened this book looking for quiet, demure side salads, I’m afraid you’re outnumbered (just turn to [page 30](#) for no-brainer suggestions for side dishes). These are generously proportioned entrée salads for big appetites! You may even need to buy a few new big bowls to contain these megasalads; no need to unpack the little plates and dainty salad forks.

Why *Salad Samurai*? Because you are the salad samurai, master of your salad-making domain. Don’t worry, you’re not required to live by some kind of vegetable bushido code. The only thing that we (as in all the vegans, vegetarians, and even omnivores in favor of meatless meals) must do is rescue salads from their sucktastic reputation as wimpy fare. *These* are salads to fight over!

PART I

THE SPIN:
THE SALAD
SAMURAI CODE



SALAD SEASONS, SALAD DAYS

SALAD SEASONS, SALAD DAYS: LEAFY GREENS FOR FOUR SEASONS

In our culture, salads are typically associated with relief from cooking during the sweltering days of summer. But a colorful bowl of raw and cooked vegetables, grains, and proteins with the right toppings is a joy any time of year.

I love eating seasonally. I enjoy the hell out of peak produce! Hence, these recipes are organized into seasons. You must savor the plump, aromatic tomatoes of August, the sharp crunch of September apples, and the tender bittersweet glory of spring's first arugula. BUT, don't feel limited by my suggestions; many of these hearty salads are great throughout the year! You'll find your favorites among this recipe escapade of flavors and textures; the [Vanessa Kabocha Salad](#) (page 157) with its red cabbage and 5-spice peanut sauce and the [BBQ Tempeh 'n' Dilly Slaw Bowl](#) (page 107) are year-round habits of mine.

Not surprisingly, summertime salads outnumber all of the seasonal recipes. Summer heat and chill vibes ease us into cooking while savoring all the flavors of the bounty of the season. Hot, muggy weather leaves our palates longing for the sharper, acidic flavors of berries, vinegar, and citrus, or the juicy, water-filled relief of ripe tomatoes and heavy, fragrant peaches picked only yesterday.

But salads form the crux of my way of eating all year-round: as the weather cools, the combination of roasted veggies, still-warm cooked grains, and savory grilled proteins provides the perfect balance of vegetables and protein with less emphasis on filling starches. And hello, there's a world of roasted Brussels sprouts, pumpkin, sweet potato, and other mouthwatering winter veggies that can do serious time as salad accompaniments.

The last chapter, Sweet & Savory, favors bold breakfast palates. I must eat breakfast, but muffins and pancakes are weekend treats; I'd rather start my busy weekdays with nuts, whole grains, minimal added oils and sugars, and abundant fresh fruits, beans, or veggies. This little collection of breakfast salads (and smoothie bowls) is a foray into fresh, high-energy fare that powers me through the morning and well into the afternoon without a tummy rumble or need for a snack. Try them and see! I hope you enjoy the fruits (and veggies and grains) of my labor!

SALAD DAYS: PLANNING A WEEK OF SALADS FOR A DAILY DOSE OF EASY LIVIN'

Hard-core home meal planning—the stock and trade of women's “domestic” magazines—has the best intentions but typically just stresses me out. While I consider myself something of a planner, I prefer to swing like a trapeze artist through my overbooked week rather than plot out every meal.

But if you love the idea of structuring into the workweek some healthy salad meals, here's a barebones guide to customize as needed. I love restaurants and even I get tired of grocery shopping; this guide is forgiving when the last thing you want to do is spend 4 hours after work cooking. Plan a few homemade salads and suddenly you'll have time (and even a little extra money) for the important stuff (video games, long walks holding hands, knitting in a coffee shop, reading more comic books) and for eating your vegetables.

Sunday

Or any day you're roving around the house without a plan. That day at home you sip tea at leisure, listen to podcasts—perhaps the day laundry gets folded instead of balled up and tossed into the dresser drawer. A day you mostly go without pants.

As a general rule for making these salad elements in advance, try to use up the salad components within 5 days. For delicate lettuce and spinach leaves, eat within 2 days. For tougher kale and chopped veggies, 4 days is about their limit.

Creamy dressings are best eaten within 3 days, and vinaigrettes can go for almost a week. Tofu, tempeh, and seitan, once seasoned and cooked, should be eaten within 2 days (if it lasts that long!), but steamed, unseasoned seitan and tempeh can be wrapped up and frozen for up to 2 months!

So, here's the plan:

- Prepare and store beans for salads, such as [Lentils for Salads](#) (page 49).
- Wash, spin, and pack hearty greens such as kale or collards into produce bags, preferably the reusable “green” bags specially designed to remove ethylene gas and keep produce fresh longer than regular plastic bags. Julienne carrots, slice radishes, prepare other firm, juicy root veggies and pop them into sealable glass containers with a little cold water.
- Bake, cool, and pack up crunchy nut toppings and croutons.
- Press tofu and seal tightly in containers. If you have the time, prepare any baked tofu toppings needed for salad recipes.
- Make a hearty salad for dinner. Make extra and pack up your lunchtime tote first before eating your fill (avoid the sog by keeping the dressing on the side to add when you're ready to eat).

Monday morning

Out the door you go, but don't forget the salad you cleverly packed up last night!

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday

As the beginning of the week climbs up that hectic hump, stay as cool as cucumber ranch dressing with dinner salads made with a remix of those ready-to-use ingredients (beans, seasoned tofu or nut croutons, and greens) and fresh veggies, roasted chickpeas, or ready-to-eat proteins you prepped over the weekend. If you're making weeknight dinner salads, make a double batch of your favorite recipe before serving yourself, pack half in a to-go container for the next day's envy-of-everyone lunch.

Thursday OR Friday night

The workweek is (ideally) almost over, and it could be helpful to plan a few tasty bowls to start the next week right. Try planning two to three salads (one for Sunday and one or two more for early in the week) and take those first steps toward building healthful habits. If you have Friday night plans, do your shopping Thursday night!

The weekend!

Work in these helpful salad-building habits at the start of the weekend, or any morning you don't have

to bolt out the door.

- Big shopping trip! Purchase produce, grains, and pantry items.
- Stock up on more green bags or containers for storing ingredients.
- Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning: make a steamy soup or fluffy pancakes. You've eaten enough salad already!

A FEW ONLINE RESOURCES

WWW.AMAZON.COM

Good old Amazon, there for your orders at 3:48 a.m. for multipacks (or monthly subscriptions) of pantry basics such as nutritional yeast, chia seeds, vinegars, chickpea flour, vital wheat gluten flour, and even unroasted cashews. Great for filling in the gaps in your kitchen equipment too (like that tofu press or a big salad spinner!).

WWW.KALUSTYANS.COM

Breathtaking selection of spices, rice, and other ethnic groceries with a focus on Indian and Middle Eastern ingredients: a handy source for za'atar, papadum, garam masala, etc.

WWW.LOCALHARVEST.ORG

Find a local farmers' market or a CSA for peak-season veggies year-round.

WWW.REUSEIT.COM

Endless options for packing your lunch salads in earth-saving, environmentally friendly style.

ROCK! THIS SALAD BOOK

In my quest for universal salad unsuckiness, I wanted to make this book really easy. And it is: you can flip to any recipe and just make it. Go ahead, ignore this section and eat something!

But, if a little advice on how to prepare your salad with grace and style, like a salad samurai, sounds good, then read on.

FIRST OFF: HOW TO USE A RECIPE

It's tempting to rip into a great-looking recipe! It's just cooking, so go for it, right? But to avoid any unexpected roadblocks, the following approach will have you flawlessly mastering any recipe:

1 Read the entire recipe.

2 Read it again, carefully this time. Make notes (mental, paper, smartphone) on what ingredients you think you need. Those ingredients that you're not 100 percent sure you have right now at home.

3 Check and see if you have all those things. Shop for what you don't.

4 Make the salad. Pay attention to anything that can save you time (chop veggies while soba noodles are cooking, etc.).

THE SPIN



Occasionally you'll see a sidebar titled "The Spin." Here you'll find helpful hints about preparing, shopping for uncommon ingredients, serving tips, or other random salad tidbits.

SAMURAI STYLINGS



Notice those swords throughout the book? These "Samurai Stylings" are suggestions on fun variations or ways to shake up the main salad recipe.

RECIPE ICONS

You'll notice two icons near each recipe title, highlighting a few points of interest:



GLUTEN-FREE: Some of these recipes contain no wheat or ingredients containing gluten. But more often, you'll see that easy gluten-free substitutions are possible (e.g., swap gluten-free soba for regular).



RAW READY: Recipe includes additional tips or steps to make the entire salad raw.

BASIC EQUIPMENT

Salads don't require many tools, but a few high-quality basics will make your salad days all the more pleasurable.

Salad Spinner

Bulky and noisy, a **salad spinner** isn't the sexiest gadget in the kitchen, but it's drop-dead gorgeous for washing and drying leafy greens, herbs, and even berries, green beans, or other small veggies. Opt for the largest salad spinner that will fit in your refrigerator and one with a lid that snaps shut to store washed salad greens.

A TONG SONG

Visit Manhattan's Midtown on a weekday during lunch and listen closely: you'll hear the clang of custom entrée salads made to order in the countless soup-and-salad chains that flourish in the ecosystem of the weekday office lunch scene. Walk in and watch a salad chef in action, and you'll see that the secret to a blazing-fast salad is using long-handled metal tongs in one hand and holding on to a big mixing bowl with the other.

Forget about those clumsy wooden salad spoons, or tossing a salad with a fork in each hand. Grab yourself a pair of thrifty, *long-handled metal tongs* and toss and serve salad like a boss.

High-Powered Blender

Blendtec, **Vitamix**, or even a less expensive but powerful knock-off blender will make fast work of nuts and veggies, whipping them into creamy dressings in seconds. Sure, they're pricey, but these blenders end up paying for themselves in the long run if you're a smoothie addict like me. **Old-style blenders** (the kind you need to screw off the base to clean) rarely create the smooth, creamy texture these high-powered devices offer, and most food processors can't even come close.

Big Serving Bowls

In the bad old days of salad, little plates did the job of serving forgettable piles of leaves. The salads in this book are a new breed of real meals: these are bold entrées that require big bowls. Seek out shallow, **dinner-size "pasta" bowls** that can comfortably cradle at least 3 cups of real salad.

Chop, Shred, and Grate

If it takes you more than a minute to dice an average-size carrot, it may be time to reevaluate your knife and even your knife skills. A classic **chef's knife** (or a Japanese **santoku knife**) with a reasonably sharp edge will plow through vegetables faster than any food processor or the old hand-me-down kitchen knife your roommate left behind from your last move. A great knife doesn't have to

cost you more than a movie and popcorn for two, and it will reward you with prepping countless fast and healthy meals. Spend a little and get a lot in return. One of my current favorite knives, a sturdy santoku knife with a solid plastic handle and a fantastic blade that destroys root veggies and tomatoes with ease, is still sharp even a year after I bought it on Amazon for less than \$10.

Regarding grating and shredding, the basic **box grater** still wins. If I need only one or two carrots or beets grated for a salad, why lug out a big heavy food processor with multiple parts to clean? Within minutes a simple handheld grater can destroy vegetables. Drop this gadget into the dishwasher and you're done!

My other go-to shredder is a **Y-shaped julienne peeler**. Unlike the box grater, a Y-shaped peeler produces long, lovely noodle-like shreds of vegetables. While I opt for the box grater if I need shredded vegetables for an ingredient (such as the beet balls or carrot falafel), a Y-shaped peeler is my go-to weapon for stunning salad-worthy shreds, especially for Thai-style papaya salads.

For serious cabbage-slaying, nothing compares to a **mandoline**. Resembling a small, old-fashioned washer board but outfitted with an ultra-sharp blade, nothing turns cabbage (or beets, carrots, or any firm veg) into perfect paper-thin shreds like it. If you love safety or your fingertips, seek out models that come with added safety features.

PRESSING TOFU: A HISTORY

If there's one thing you're going to do to a block of tofu, and one thing only . . . you're just going to press it. Pressing tofu is exactly what it sounds like: apply even pressure to the tofu, remove the water, and change your attitude about this versatile, cheap vegan protein—banish watery, bland tofu forever.

Once the water is gone, tofu eagerly sucks up juicy marinades and has a firmer, toothsome texture. If you're not already using a tofu press, here is how to press it, just like your vegan grandma used to do it.

Slice 1 pound of tofu in half and slice each half again. Slice each remaining piece in half for a total of eight slabs of tofu of equal thickness. Layer a large cutting board with clean tea towels or paper towels. Arrange the tofu slices in a single layer on the towel. Spread another towel over the tofu, and then press another cutting board on top of the towel. Stack a few heavy things on the cutting board: cans, cast-iron pans, 300-page cookbooks, etc. Press tofu for 20 minutes, or up to an hour. Tofu will ooze water, so it's best to arrange this near the sink, propped on a slight angle on the edge of the sink to drain. (Or buy a tofu press and avoid tofu juice altogether!)

THE PORTABLE SALAD

Mixing everything together in a bowl is fine when it's just you, the salad, and your empty, trembling stomach. But using that big messy bowl (or eating directly out of the salad spinner—I've been there) may not be the best approach when serving guests you want to impress, or when bringing along the salad for lunch or a picnic.

LAYERED SALAD

One of my favorite ways to serve salad for nice dinner parties or just casual meals with friends is to layer the undressed ingredients on dinner plates or in bowls. Start with the fluffy greens or shredded veggies, top with more substantial fare (tempeh, beans, sliced apples, etc.), and then scatter dressings and toppings in a visually pleasing way. Be a salad artist! Pour the dressing into little individual serving cups and let your friends sauce up their meals.

SALAD IN A JAR

Once just the domain of food bloggers, packing salads into big wide-mouthed Mason jars is the new old thing. Glass is the ultimate salad vehicle: it keeps in the cold and keeps out weird plastic moisture and old-timey jars give you a rustic foody pioneer vibe.

The secret to salad jar success is to pour a layer of dressing into the jar first. Then “seal” it with a layer of crunchy or firm vegetables (shredded carrot, diced radishes, roasted sweet potatoes) and lastly, top with delicate, easily wilted greens. Come time to eat, either shake the jar or dump it all into a big bowl to cover everything with tasty dressing goodness.

BENTO BOXED

The ultimate in cute! There's a colorful, shiny world of elegant multicompartment lunch boxes. Metal or plastic (BPA-free is all the rage), find one that fits your lifestyle. Start with www.reusit.com for cute lunch containers that will make you the envy of kindergarteners everywhere.

INGREDIENT TALK

Salad ingredients are old friends to most, but here's a primer on a few of the lesser-known constants in this book.

CHIA SEEDS: These tiny seeds have escaped their '80s novelty-pottery roots and are the new darling of the whole foods scene. Packed with fiber and omega-3s, they also have the unique property that when soaked in water, chia seeds create a thick gel that I use to add body (and therefore less oil) to vinaigrettes. Find organic chia seeds in natural food stores.

CHINESE 5-SPICE POWDER: A warming blend of star anise, cinnamon, fennel, cloves, and Sichuan pepper that's amazing on roasted nuts or tofu, and even in dressings. A common find in any market that has a healthy respect for good spices.

COCONUT SUGAR: A rustic sugar made from coconut palm sap, usually organic, sustainable, and vegan. It has a pronounced molasses taste: substitute with organic light brown sugar.

COCONUT WATER: The refreshing water found in the center of fresh coconuts has become insanely popular, and I love using it in vinaigrettes for its subtle texture and mellow flavor. Make sure you're using pure, unflavored, unsweetened coconut water in these recipes. And for heaven's sake don't confuse it with coconut milk (the rich creamy stuff in a can). Coconut water typically comes in paper aseptic packs similar to soy milk packaging.

GINGER, FRESH: I know what you're thinking: "Yeah, I know fresh ginger!" This is just a friendly reminder that freezing chunks of fresh ginger is effortless and prevents the sadness of discovering the lonely, dried-out lump at the bottom of the vegetable bin when you need fresh ginger the most. Scrape the skin off a big section of ginger-root with a spoon (it works great!), cut into 2-inch pieces, wrap tightly in plastic, and freeze. To use, thaw a chunk on the kitchen counter for a few minutes (partially frozen is okay), then mince or grate. Semi-frozen ginger grates up beautifully into fluffy ginger snow, perfect for whisking into dressings and marinades!

LEMONGRASS: Fresh lemongrass is simple to prepare and infuses everything with a beautiful light lemon aroma, so it's worth your time. Strip away the outer papery leaves if the stalk seems very dry and then trim off the top 6 to 7 inches (the slender, dry top of the stalk). Slice the remaining thick stem in half, then slice each half paper-thin. Or roughly dice the stem, throw it in the food processor and pulse into a pulp. Freeze chopped lemongrass and use within 1 month. If fresh stalks aren't an option, look for chopped lemongrass in jars in gourmet or natural markets; while not as aromatic as the fresh stuff, it's the next-best thing (but avoid dried lemongrass; it's tasteless).

LIQUID SMOKE: A totally vegan seasoning liquid infused with real smoke flavor. It's intense so a little will go a long way toward infusing food with rich BBQ flavor without ever hitting the grill. Hickory and mesquite are the two most common "flavors" you'll find in any grocery store.

MÂCHE: A lovely salad green: tender, rounded little leaves with a mild sweet flavor.

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