



**KRIS
HOLECHEK**

The
100 Best
VEGAN
BAKING
Recipes



Amazing
Cookies, Cakes,
Muffins, Pies,
Brownies and
Breads



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Kris Holechek



Ulysses Press

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*To Dad, for teaching me to want more, follow my heart and make it happen
and
To Jim, fabulous husband and best friend: You doin' it right.*

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PREFACE

I was raised in an unconventional home, mostly around my grandparents. My mother's ideas of cooking and baking ended somewhere between the microwave door and premade cookie dough. But my grandmothers—wow, could they bake! I quickly became a baking addict. I didn't wait up on Christmas Eve to sneak a peek at Santa; I waited until the adults went to bed to raid my grandmother's Christmas cookie reserves. Providing delicious food, in the good times and the bad, was how my grandmothers showed their love. Even when times are tough, it doesn't require much to whip together some cookies or a cake, and the joy that it can bring is priceless.

Baking was something I rarely had the chance to do in my parents' house growing up, so it was reserved for special occasions at my aunt's house or trips to see my grandmothers. Once I moved into my own place, my kitchen was never clean again and I'm all the fatter; I mean, better for it! My favorite thing to provide my family and friends is a warm meal and a row of desserts.

When I became vegan, I was driven by the ethics of it, and I went into it with the assumption that the flavors I had grown to love were going to disappear and life would be bland, especially when it came to baking. My mind was filled with visions of oat bran and whole-wheat flour, unappetizing brown blobs that no one would be eager to eat. I couldn't have been more wrong! My husband, Jim, and I always talk about how the food we eat as vegans is much more flavorful and satisfying than the food we ate when we were still courting cow's milk and eggs.

Vegan baking was the first thing I jumped into when we made the change, and I was delighted to find that everything I enjoyed in my egg-eating days was still delicious and, in many cases, even better! Soon, I was in baking overdrive, concocting new creations and adapting old favorites. As cakes, cookies and breads started taking over our house, Jim suggested that I write a book. That book, *The Damn Tasty Vegan Baking Guide*, came out in May of 2007. A year and half later I was invited to compile a new book, which would include my previous recipes, along with a complete update. This expanded the book to over twice the size! The challenge of creating a whole new batch of recipes got the creative juices flowing and soon our house once again turned into a patisserie.

Baking is magical and mysterious. You mix up some basic ingredients, create a moist, sticky substance and it turns into a treat that could pacify the world's biggest cranky pants. Once it is in the oven, it's out of bounds, which can prove scary to some people, especially those who fancy cooking. My primary goal with this book (aside from providing vegan treats that taste great!) is to offer tips and tricks that can shed light on some new methods, to demystify how baking works and to help inspire you to pick up a spatula and make a wowzer of a cake. My other objective is to make this book as approachable as possible. Whether you are a first-time baker or a seasoned flour-slinger, you will find recipes to fit your skill level. Don't be afraid to try something challenging, just be sure to read all of the instructions before starting so there are no surprises. I also made a point to make the ingredients as easy to come by as possible. There are a lot of exotic ingredients that can be fun to bake with, but they aren't necessary. You don't need to run to two co-ops and an Asian grocery store to gather the ingredients for a pie. I tried to keep the ingredients as big-box-grocer-friendly as possible to make your baking prep easy. In addition to this book, there is a whole website devoted to my recipes, complete with pictures of the goodies, tutorials, tips and my blog. Please stop by www.nomnomnomblog.com and check it out!

Baking is my gift to my family. I hope you enjoy these recipes enough to give them to your loved ones, as well. From picky eaters to food snobs, everyone will appreciate these recipes and they'll never know it's vegan!

Happy Baking,
Kris

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VEGAN BAKING: AN INTRODUCTION

Vegan baking means using no animal products. No eggs, no milk or cream, no butter and, for some people, no honey. This also means products that contain these things are out, like commercially made frosting or Cool Whip.

Vegan baking may seem impossible, especially if you are someone who has been subjected to some awful vegan baked goods. But it's not veganism that makes them bad. Think of how many conventional baked goods you have had that were lackluster or downright gross. Dry, crumbly cakes, hard cookies, soggy pies—we've all eaten them. And let's be honest...the first time you ate a vegan baked good, didn't you expect something to taste different, and so it did? A delicious vegan baked good is not about what's in it (or what's not, for that matter), it's about technique and having a well-written recipe to work from.

Baking without animal products may seem like a radical concept, but it's truly not. There are plenty of foods out there that are naturally vegan and no one is the wiser; the recipes are just that good. During WWII when many goods were rationed, women in the U.S. became revolutionary bakers, swapping out animal products for things as far-reaching as salad dressing to continue making baked goods. Vegan baking isn't limited to times of hardship. Many cookbooks, restaurants and companies all have prized recipes that are coincidentally vegan. So I'm not advocating the use of Italian dressing in a cake, because wacky things like that aren't necessary. You can easily cut out the animal products and still have cake that is moist and fluffy, cookies that are soft and chewy, and bread that has a texture and flavor you will savor. But vegan baking is more than just eschewing animal ingredients; it's about understanding what role those ingredients play in the recipe and creating the same structure in a cruelty-free way!

I know baking can be very intimidating to some people. Once you put it in the oven it's hands-off, which can be very scary. Let's break things down to get a better understanding of the components of baking. Having this information under our belts will give us the knowledge we need to kick some serious butt in the kitchen!

A COMMON MISCONCEPTION People often think that vegan baking is inherently healthy. To be clear: It certainly can be, but this book is standard melt-in-your-mouth, creamy, yeasty, frosting-topped fare. This is not health food, and while it would be delicious and quite popular, a diet of vegan baked goods is not advisable.

Vegan baking is, however, cholesterol-free because it is animal-free. Why is it cholesterol-free? Well, cholesterol is created by the liver, so when you consume food that has cholesterol in it, it had to come from someone else's liver. This little factoid makes vegan label-reading a little easier: Anything with cholesterol in it is not vegan. You can do an insta-check to see if a product contains cholesterol and if it does, it saves you time deciphering the list of ingredients.

But, cholesterol aside, vegan baking is just as fatty and sugary as conventional baking—which is what makes it taste so good, even without the eggs and milk!

Before Pancake Batter Came in a Bottle, There Was Flour

Flour is obviously the base for almost all baked goods. There are many kinds of flour, but wheat flour is the standard used in baking. The most common kind is called all-purpose flour, or white flour, which is what is primarily used in this book. White flour is made by stripping away the germ and bran from wheat kernels. This creates the soft, fluffy flour people are most familiar with. This process also strips out much of the wheat's nutritional value, and because we live in a carbohydrate-heavy culture, all-purpose flour is enriched with the nutrients it has lost. Before enriching was a standard practice, some people experienced illnesses related to nutrient-deficiency. During WWII, enriching became standardized in the U.S. and England to help nourish rationed citizens, and it's stuck ever since. All-purpose flour is normally bleached for the sole purpose of making it look whiter. But there is no real visible difference between bleached and unbleached all-purpose flour, and it's just going to get baked, right? Plus, I like to keep my chemical consumption down to a minimum. Thankfully, unbleached all-purpose flour is widely available.

Most grain flours have gluten in them. Gluten is protein, which creates fibers that hold the baked goods together. Some people are allergic to or intolerant of gluten. Because gluten does what it does for baked goods, trying to bake gluten-free can be a challenge. All-purpose flour has a blend of gluten in it that is considered appropriate for, well, all purposes. There are also specific cake and pastry flours that have lower gluten content for lighter baked goods, and higher-gluten flours are also available for bread

doughs. These different flours can be fun to play with, but aren't necessary for any of the recipes in this book.

Besides basic white all-purpose flour, there are many other kinds of wheat flour. For regular baking I often use whole-wheat pastry flour, which is made with less processing so there is still some germ and wheat kernel present in the flour. Another great alternative to all-purpose flour is white whole-wheat flour, which is made from a soft white wheat. It has a softer texture than traditional whole-wheat flour, so you can substitute it in your baking without it being very noticeable.

Our love of wheat flour is quite obvious, but there are many other kinds of flour out there. Spelt is a delicious grain that is a descendant of wheat. It has less gluten than wheat flour, but is not gluten-free. Baked goods made with spelt will often be slightly denser than those made with wheat, but it is a very delicious, slightly nutty grain. When substituting spelt flour for wheat flour, you will need to add an additional 2 tablespoons of flour for each cup of wheat flour the recipe calls for.

I also like to use oat flour. You can buy ground oat flour, or just put some traditional dried oats (not steel-cut) into a food processor and blend until it becomes a course flour. Oat flour is not entirely gluten-free, but is very low in gluten. Oat flour adds a pleasant texture to baked goods, as well as extra fiber and protein. Unlike spelt flour, you cannot completely substitute wheat flour with oat flour when baking because of its low gluten content. Oat flour works best when blended with another flour, like all-purpose.

You might also see self-rising flour at grocery stores. This is basic white flour with chemical agents for leavening already added to it. We will talk about leavening later. I prefer to use regular all-purpose and add my own leavening.

There are endless kinds of flour to bake with. From grains to ground-up beans and legumes, you could use a different flour every day for a month and there would still be more to try. This is just an introduction, but I encourage you to do some research and try blending other flours together, such as buckwheat, rice or garbanzo flour. There are too many textures and flavors in the world to limit yourself to just wheat.

Some of the recipes in this book call for flour to be sifted. To sift flour, you put it in a flour sifter, which looks like a metal canister with a handle and usually a crank. There is a mesh bottom to the canister and your crank the flour through it, breaking up any clumps and incorporating air into the flour. Sifters are incredibly easy to come by and are very inexpensive. Recipes that require flour to be sifted are noted.

Binders, Emulsifiers and the Mysterious Inclusion of Eggs

It's easy to read an omnivorous recipe (meaning a recipe for veggie and meat eaters) and feel odd about replacing the eggs. It can feel as if your baked good is disguised as a cake, but is not quite a real cake. And it's certainly easy to let other people make you feel like your cake isn't really a cake, either. So let's explore the function of eggs in baking and look at some other options that will make sure your cake is as real as they come.

Within a baked good, there are certain elements you'll almost always have: a dry base, something to leaven it (make it rise), some sort of fat and something to bind it. In traditional baked goods, the binder is usually an egg. The binder, or emulsifier, acts as a substance that helps hold the baked good. It provides structure, retains moisture, provides a little leavening and helps determine the crumb (texture) of an item. It also helps give the baked good a shelf life. That's a lot of responsibility for one element to achieve. So why eggs? I have no idea. Who saw an egg and thought, "Wow, this will make my cake taste great"? While I'm not sure how eggs became a baking staple, I will tell you that those folks really stopped short of a world of effective, delicious and cholesterol-free options.

There are many binding options to explore. Once you start playing around and reaping the rewards of your experimentation you will realize that these aren't egg replacers, because the eggs never belonged there in the first place! There are so many different textures in baking, you will also see how having more options, rather than using a



MIX AND MATCH

So you have this kick-ass cookbook with over 100 delicious vegan baking recipes in it, but you know what? Eventually, you'll work through the recipes and start dreaming of something different.

I have good news! You have, in your hands, the ability to create endless amounts of treats using a little creativity. In many recipes, I've given you ideas to get you started: Boston Cream Pie can be Banana Cream Pie, or with a little blue food coloring Red Velvet Cupcakes can become Velvet Elvis Cupcakes. There are so many incredible recipes in this book that you can mix and match, giving you limitless possibilities.

default ingredient, can really fine-tune a recipe. Here is a breakdown of some common egg replacers and how to use them:

EGG REPLACER	EQUIVALENT TO 1 EGG	WORKS BEST IN...
Unsweetened applesauce	1/4 cup	Cakes, bars, quick breads, muffins and cookies
Plain or vanilla soy yogurt	1/4 cup	Cakes, bars, quick breads and muffins
Ground flaxseed	1 tablespoon ground flaxseed plus 3 tablespoons water, whipped up and then left to set for a few minutes (it gets thick like an egg white)	Things that are chewy, such as brownies and cookies, and also yeasted breads, especially sweet ones
Silken tofu	1/4 cup, puréed	Cakes that are slightly dense in texture, pies, quick breads and muffins
Buttermilk	1 teaspoon mild vinegar (white or apple cider) plus enough milk to make 1/4 cup	Cakes, quick breads and muffins; this is a hybrid leavener and binder, making things rise and stay moist
Assorted puréed/shredded fruits or veggies (like canned pumpkin, mashed banana, zucchini, carrots, or pears)	1/4 cup; if your recipe already calls for fruits or veggies, you can typically take out the eggs and add 1 tablespoon of milk per egg to replace the liquid content	Quick breads, muffins, cakes
Ener-G egg replacer	See directions on box	This boxed egg-replacer is not my favorite, but it is easy to find and shelf stable. It is starch-based, so I don't recommend it for things that you want to stay really moist, such as cake.

When you are veganizing a recipe, you might find that you don't even need to pick a binder because there are already elements in the recipe binding it together, like in banana bread or pumpkin cookies. If you play around with the traditional versions of those recipes, you'll just need to add a little more liquid to make up for the lost moisture, as noted above, but it's easy to see that the eggs served no purpose at all!

You'll see throughout the book that I tend to stick to the same few binders. This is not because the other ones are bad, these are just my preferences. As you veganize your own recipes, don't despair if one substitute doesn't work out the first time. Give it a try with another one.

Look at all of these options! Silly omnivores, putting eggs in everything. It's like duct tape: Just because it can fix something doesn't mean it can fix everything. Just because eggs

worked in something doesn't mean they are needed for everything, or frankly, anything! The only reason eggs seem "normal" and applesauce or flaxmeal seems "weird" is simply because it's what we are used to. So if you ever feel like putting a scoop of applesauce in your cookie dough is weird, just reflect on who in the world decided to put ovum in their cookie dough, and your cookies will taste all the sweeter.

To Milk or Not to Milk

As I refined this book, I truly agonized over the way to write about milk. I've seen vegan recipes that assume soy milk instead of milk, and I've seen recipes where milk is in quotes, with recipes calling for "milk." Now let's take a moment to think about coconut milk. No one protests calling that milk. Alternative milks date back hundreds and hundreds of years to different regions of the world, so they aren't a new invention, they are just newly recognized by our Western society. Because of my strong views on the linguistics of eating, I chose to simply use the word "milk." This is a vegan book, so clearly the use of animal milk is unintended. This also holds true in my use of the word "yogurt"; again, yogurt made from animal milk is not welcome here.

There are many different kinds of milk out there. The first one most people default to is soy. It's becoming so prominent that I've actually seen it at interstate gas stations!

COMMON CONVERSIONS

If you find you want to veganize a recipe that doesn't use standard U.S. measurements or you're in a kitchen filled with metric measuring tools, here are some handy conversions:

1 teaspoon	5 milliliters
1 tablespoon	15 milliliters
1 cup	240 milliliters
1 pint (2 cups)	470 milliliters
1 quart (4 cups)	.95 liter
1 gallon (4 quarts)	3.8 liters
1 fluid ounce	30 milliliters / 28 grams
1 ounce	28 grams
1 pound (16 ounces)	454 grams
350°F / 400°F	175°C / 200°C

But it's not the only milk option, and some people have sensitivities to soy. Rice, almond, oat, and hazelnut are all other milks I tried working with in this book. The only thing soy has on any of these other milks is that it has a higher fat content, which can be a bonus in some recipes, but is usually a moot point. I have recommended specific milks where they apply, but otherwise please feel free to use whatever milk you prefer. However, I don't recommend using coconut milk because it has a very high fat content, even in low-fat versions, and so it won't respond in a recipe the way regular milks will.

I normally buy milk in the shelf-stable aseptic boxes. Once opened, they need to be refrigerated, but until then you can stow them away in your pantry. When my husband and I first went vegan, we bought refrigerated soy milk, and the aseptic milks seemed so foreign that I was hesitant to try them. But now I find them to be far superior to the refrigerated versions in both taste and quality of ingredients. They are also wonderful because when your favorite milk is on sale you can stock up without worrying about approaching expiration dates.

Sugars and Sweeteners

What's not vegan about sugar? I mean, it's sweet, yummy and addictive like crack, but it's not that bad. Right? Well, to start with, traditional white sugar is refined with animal bone charcoal filters, so while the animal products aren't actually in it, they are used in its production. Plus, white sugar is bleached, and we want to try to avoid that. Cane sugar, like white sugar, is usually bleached with bone charcoal, but sugar derived from beets usually is not. If you have questions regarding the veganness of your sugar, I suggest contacting the company directly.

There are plenty of delicious sweeteners to use aside from white sugar. The easiest to find are organic sugar and evaporated cane juice. Organic sugar is cane sugar processed without the bone charcoal and bleach. It has a slightly more golden color than white sugar. Evaporated cane juice is made from cane juice that has been dehydrated and crystallized. You can use either of these blonde-colored sweeteners cup for cup when substituting for white sugar.

You can also find darker, less-processed sugars such as demarara, Sucanat or Sugar in the Raw. These are going to have a richer flavor, which is slightly caramelly because they still have some molasses in them.

You can find organic brown and powdered sugars as well. You can make your own brown sugar by mixing 1 tablespoon of molasses into each cup of sugar that you are using. You can freshen up old store-bought brown sugar that has hardened by putting a half

piece of bread in the bag overnight. The brown sugar will absorb the moisture from the bread, and you'll be left with a giant, sweet-smelling crouton in the morning.

There are also many liquid sweeteners. These include agave nectar, maple syrup, brown rice syrup, corn syrup and molasses. With the exception of molasses, they can be pricey and difficult to find. These sweeteners taste great and can be fun to play with in your baking. Err on the side of caution when substituting a liquid sweetener for a dry one, however, as it will shift your recipe's liquid-to-solid ratio. You will have to cut back on the volume of sweetener that you use. Since substitution can be a tricky business, I usually stick to what is written when it comes to liquid versus solid ingredients. There are a couple of recipes in this book that call for liquid sweeteners, but I try to list alternative sweeteners as well. In some recipes I list things like "agave nectar or corn syrup" because corn syrup is cheaper and easier to find.

Sometimes you will see sugar listed with the wet ingredients in a recipe and sometimes you will see it listed with the dry. Why the difference? It depends on the recipe's liquid-to-solid ratio. In recipes like cookies, which have a low amount of liquids, it is used as a wet ingredient to make the liquids more evenly match the dry ingredients in volume. Sugar can naturally retain water and will technically increase the amount of wet ingredients, making it easier to mix in the dry. Combining it with the wet ingredients also helps it break down faster. Sometimes, however, sugar is a dry ingredient and is used to help break up another dry ingredient, like flour or cornstarch. For instance, in most cakes, sugar is used as a dry ingredient to help keep the flour from clumping and to help absorb the liquid ingredients more evenly. In this book, some of the recipes show the wet and dry ingredients separately to make the recipes easier to read. As a rule, though, always read the entire recipe to see what function the sugar serves and to get a feel for the recipe as a whole so there are no surprises once you really get into it.

The Skinny on Fat: Margarine, Shortening and Oil

Butter, butter, butter leaves the bowl! Baking without butter is easy as pie—pie with a flaky, crisp crust, made without any trace of butter at all, in fact. There are some wonderful commercial vegan margarines out there, including Earth Balance, Spectrum Naturals and Willow Run. I normally use Earth Balance, because it is widely available. I understand that finding these margarines is not always that easy, and in smaller towns or little co-op stores, it can be pretty pricey. In developing the recipes in this book, I sought out some "accidentally" vegan margarines to experiment with. While not all margarines are dairy-

free (look for ingredients like whey), there are some commercially made margarines that are. Many of them have hydrogenated oils, but sometimes that's all that is available or affordable. I have experimented with baking with some of these margarines and am happy to report that in my own experiments, everything baked up just as it should have.

There are options out there for vegan shortening, too. Shortening is different from margarine (or butter for that matter) because it has a 100% fat content. It is fully solid at room temperature. Shortening was invented as a cheap vegetable-oil replacement for lard. Most shortenings originally had hydrogenated oils in them, which is what made them solid, but due to health concerns many brands are changing to nonhydrogenated oils and increasing the solid vegetable oils used in production. Shortening can usually be replaced by margarine, but it will affect the texture and sometimes the taste of a baked good. Earth Balance makes a shortening, and if you're in a pinch, good old Crisco is vegan, too. Always be sure that your shortening is room temperature unless otherwise stated, otherwise it will be far too hard to blend with other ingredients.

Oil is another fat used in baking. Oils that can withstand higher temperatures are the ones you want to bake with, so olive oil (except in small amounts in specific recipes) is out. You want to bake with an oil that is light and mild in flavor, such as vegetable or canola oil. It is possible in some recipes to substitute oil for margarine, but again you need to revisit your liquid-to-solid ratios. Margarines are solid at room temperature, whereas oils are not, so you will need less oil than you would margarine. In recipes such as quick breads, you can substitute oil for margarine (1/3 cup oil in place of 1/2 cup margarine) and usually have success, but for things like cookies, I wouldn't recommend it.

The Magical World of Leavening

In baking there are several different leaveners, which are elements that help make your baked goods rise and contribute to their overall structure and texture. Leaveners include baking soda, baking powder and yeast.

Baking Soda and Baking Powder: Separated at Birth?

Many people confuse baking soda and powder for one another, which is understandable. Baking soda is sodium bicarbonate. It is a base that relies on something acidic in your other ingredients to activate it. Sometimes it's something like apple cider vinegar, yogurt or cocoa, and other times it's just milk. This interaction creates carbon dioxide bubbles, which you may notice as soon as you combine the wet and dry ingredients. Baked goods with

COME FLY WITH ME...

The most important things to consider when baking for a package are the moisture content of the item (you want some moisture, but not too much) and how sturdy it is. Something as delicate as Pain au Chocolat isn't the best choice for long-distance travel!

Nothing says lovin' like a care package of baked goods! But what to bake... and how to send it?

You want to pick items that have a longer shelf life and you want to package them in a way that will keep them in one piece. For cookies, I usually opt for a cookie tin, lined with tissue paper and layers of cookies, with additional tissue paper crumpled on top to help cushion them. Muffins and breads can be baked in decorative liners, which you can find at many kitchen supply stores. Bake mini loaves of quick bread, wrap them in colorful cellophane and wrap them in a little bubble wrap. A little creativity and a good dose of padding goes a long way. Your loved ones will appreciate the gesture, and care packages filled with treats are sure to deliver smiles upon receipt!

baking soda must go from being mixed to being baked as quickly as possible so they do not fall flat.

Baking powder has some sodium bicarbonate in it, but it also contains its own acid. These elements come alive with the introduction of wet ingredients. Baking powder comes in two varieties: single-acting and double-acting. Single-acting is your regular store variety. It starts doing its job as soon as it comes in contact with moisture. The double-acting kind reacts partially to moisture and partially to heat, so it can hang out a bit longer before it needs to be baked. I tend to be wary of double-acting baking powder because of the chemical used to delay it: aluminum sulfate. You can, however, purchase baking powder that is labeled as "aluminum free."

So, if they both cause baked goods to rise, why have both? Ah, but there is reasoning for that, too. Baking soda is a hard worker, cranking out all of those little carbon dioxide bubbles, but it can become unstable when baked for long periods of time or at very high temperatures. Baking powder works a little more slowly and has more stability, which is why you often see them paired up, a super duo out to rid the world of flat, dense baked goods.

The Yeast Beast

Yeast can be rather scary if you've never baked with it before, but once you try it you'll wonder why you didn't sooner. It is important to make sure you are using baking yeast when baking. Many a sad story circulates on the internet of someone using nutritional yeast (which is solely a flavoring and nutritional agent) to try to make bread only to have their loaf fall.

Yeast is a bacteria that multiplies and creates carbon dioxide bubbles, which in turn raise your baked goods. The bacteria feed on starch in the food, which is why you will often see yeast "proofed" or activated with warm water and something sweet, like a bit of sugar or molasses. Once all the ingredients are combined, the yeast feeds off of the starch in the flour to multiply and rise. This is why white bread, which has much of the protein stripped out of it and is essentially a starch loaf, will rise more easily than hard wheat.

Yeast comes in two forms: dried (in packets in the baking section or jars in the refrigerated section of the grocery store) or fresh (as a cake, in the refrigerated section of your grocery store, but this is less commonly used). Once you've opened your yeast, whether it is fresh or dried, you should store the extra in the fridge. But always let it come to room temperature prior to using it. Also be sure to check the expiration date on your yeast. Fresh yeast cakes have a very short life, whereas packages can sometimes be kept for up to a year. Old yeast = no rising, so remember to check!

There are different kinds of dried yeast. Traditional yeast, often called "active dried," has larger granules, and you will see that most recipes call for this kind of yeast. It requires at least 1 to 2 hours for rising, so plan ahead. Fast rising, or "rapid-rise" yeast, which has smaller granules, can rise in half the time of traditional yeast, and is a time-saving alternative.

You may wonder who would bother with traditional yeast, then. I typically use traditional yeast when I'm going to be home for the day and can just let my bread rise slowly, or if I'm making a large meal and I need to plan out what time things are going to be done. Being able to give your bread a time slot can be helpful if you are spending the whole day in the kitchen. Fast rising is great when you are low on time. After working all day, I know that I can put together the dough for the Garlic Rolls (page 136) when I get in the door and they will be ready to pop in the oven and bake for dinner about an hour later. Just like how wine tastes different when it's aged, bread tastes different when it rises slowly rather than quickly, but it's all a matter of subtlety and preference. Figure out what suits your baking style and go with it; the results are worth it either way.

Is yeast vegan? This is a question that comes up because yeast is a bacteria, which can die, so technically it is alive. Yeast has no known central nervous system, brain or

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