

7 Day Plant-Based Meal Plan



Why Go Veggie?



Plenty of people are cutting back on meat or taking the plunge and going vegan or vegetarian.

There are lots of reasons for this trend. Many are reducing meat consumption for their health, or because it is more ecological. A simple vegetarian or vegan diet can be extremely economical too. Then there are ethical concerns about eating animals and how they are farmed.

For many though, going veggie is just about enjoying the vitality that plant-based foods have to offer.

My message is that plant-based food is for everyone.

The biggest growth in vegetarian food at the moment is with so-called flexitarians who are cutting back on meat and have regular meat-free days. Events like National Vegetarian Week or Veganuary offer great opportunities to expand their repertoire and experience.

For this reason I have created 7 dishes that anyone can make each day for a week. They are designed to be easy to cook and can be eaten at home or taken to work.



I went to my favourite park the other day to feed the birds. There was a big sign with pictures of white bread, pizza, chips and burgers crossed through and a health warning saying that these foods are bad for the birds.

This was followed by a list of good foods: whole grains, seeds and leafy vegetables—all great plant-based foods. This is more or less what I'm recommending with this book.

I was saddened to see that nearly everyone around me was filling up on processed foods (with the swans looking on jealously now they're banned from such treats).

It's funny that we seem more concerned with the health of the swans, ducks and seagulls than we are about our own health. In reality we are not so different from them—seeds, vegetables and whole grains are better than processed foods for us too!

*5 Reasons to
Eat More
Plant-Based
Foods*





Health & nutrition

When people first start giving up unhealthy food they tend to worry about getting enough protein and energy.

There is nothing unnatural about eating natural food and here's a simple rule you can follow: combine pulses with grains to make a great combination of protein and carbohydrates. This is the basis of plant-based nutrition and creates a hearty feast.

Nuts and seeds can be added too. In fact these are the three central food groups: grains, pulses and seeds/nuts. Mixing 2 or 3 of these groups together makes a protein-full meal.

Pulses were amongst the first cultivated foods and are at the heart of most traditional dishes. Like beans and corn in South America, dhal and rice in India, chickpeas and pitta bread in the Middle East and our very own beans on toast. It was always the plentiful food of the poor. But we are now finding that this diet is not so poor after all.

The only other thing to consider is the oils. We seem to have almost concluded now that all fats are bad for us. But our body needs fat as much as protein. Fat is essential for our cell membranes, nervous system and brain. We also need the essential fatty acids omega-3 and omega-6. Luckily these are present in healthy nuts and seeds. Most of us are deficient in omega-3. It is a very volatile oil that goes off quickly so doesn't tend to be present in foods we buy off the shelf. One of the best sources is linseeds which have 50% omega-3 oil. It's best to grind them fresh at home. Or buy a good quality linseed oil that is stored in the fridge.

Vegetables of course are the ultimate plant-based food. Not only do they provide great taste, colour and nutrition, they are high in fibre and low in calories—so they fill you up and you don't put on weight. With veg you really can eat more and weigh less! They are also packed with antioxidants which are responsible for the bright colours in many fruits and vegetables. These pigments play an important role in plant health. The great news is that they are good for us too.

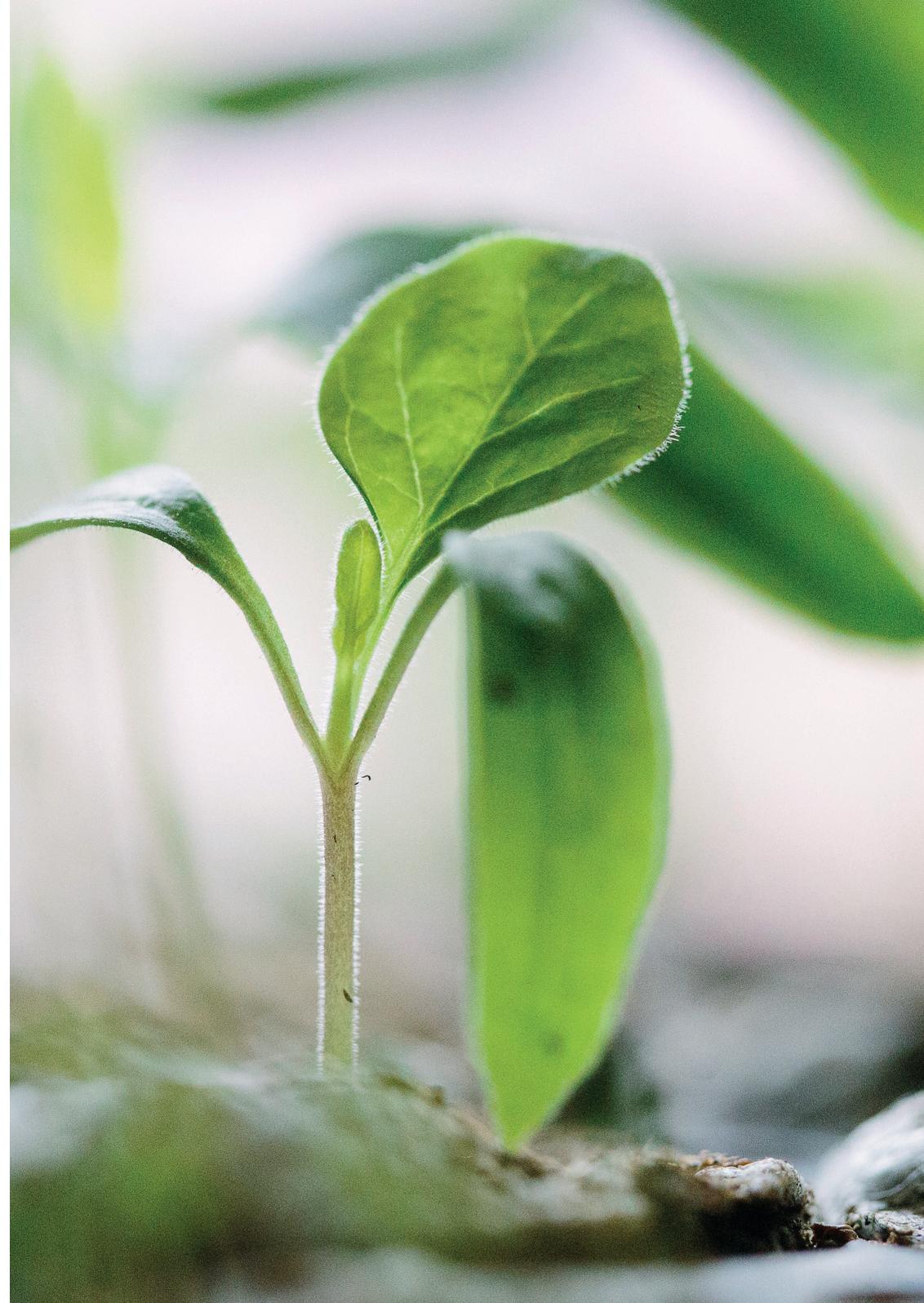
The simple trick is to eat a rainbow of colours which are packed with different types of antioxidants. Green of course is due to the chlorophyll in plants. Chlorophyll is like the plants' blood because it actually creates oxygen.

The amazing thing is that our blood molecules are incredibly similar to chlorophyll except that blood has iron in the centre instead of magnesium.

My tip is to combine vegetables that originate from different parts of the plant. For example combine a potato (root), with spinach (leaf) or asparagus (stem) with pepper or courgette (fruit).

Vegetables and wholefoods contain something else that is not labelled on the packet. This extra something is called 'Prana' in Ayurveda or 'Chi' in Chinese medicine. It is an energy that is in all living things but especially in fresh foods. Think of it as another vitamin our body requires.

Prana/Chi gives us vitality and increases our energy. That is why we can crave something fresh and feel light and alive after eating a salad or piece of fruit.



2

Save the Earth

If you are worried about the environment then eating a more plant-based diet is one of the best things you can do. Pulses are legumes which fertilize the soil by fixing nitrogen and therefore reducing the need for chemicals. After harvesting the beans the remainder of the plant can be returned back into the soil as compost where they release nitrates for next year's crop.

Plants produce about 10 times more food for humans per acre than if they are grown to feed animals. This means less land would be needed to feed a hungry world.

A lot of animal produce now comes from intensive farms. These are like small cities with thousands of animals living in close proximity. These farms demand a huge amount of food and water and produce a tremendous amount of waste.

Plant foods generate that most precious resource of all—air. Not smelly air you'd find around an animal farm where the creatures are caged but freshy oxygenated air that wafts out from all the leaves.

Livestock create more greenhouse gases than our cars and tropical forests are still being cut down to raise beef. We may need our car to go to work and not want to give up our holidays to exotic countries. We still need to heat and light our homes—all of these things increase our carbon footprint. But one thing we can do to help the planet is to change our own diets to a more plant-based one.

Eating plant-based food is the fastest, cheapest and healthiest way to reduce your environmental footprint. And you can start anytime.

3 *Save money*

Wholefoods aren't just better for the environment, they don't cost the earth in another way. There's a misconception that healthy food is expensive. That only the middle-class or rich people can afford it. That people on low incomes have no choice but to eat the cheapest and processed foods from discount supermarkets.

Healthy diets based on pulses, grains and vegetables are very cheap. Lentils, rice and split peas can cost as little as 50p or £1 a kilo. When cooked they double or triple in mass making the real cost less than 50p.

Seasonal vegetables are also great value at around £1-£2 per kilo. We have calculated that these meals work out at about 50p a portion which is cheaper than processed foods like burgers and frozen chips—which cost at least £1 a meal. Takeaway food is more like £3 to £5 a person. So this hearty home cooking can save you a packet.



I have designed this meal plan in a way that allows you to take it to work. This saves you having to buy a sandwich or takeaway which would otherwise cost you £5 plus £2.50 on a hot drink. If you add the purchase of a snack later, then you could be spending £10 a day. This really mounts up over the month to £300.

Remember this is your hard earned cash after tax. With extra savings on groceries my meal plan could give you the equivalent of a £500 monthly or £6,000 annual bonus!

A friend of mine from Cheshire has saved nearly £1,000 a month by making my one-pot recipes, taking it into work the next day along with her own drinks, giving up takeaways and cafe lunches and simplifying her supermarket shopping.



4

Enjoy less stress

Queueing up to purchase takeaway food can be stressful when you have little time for a lunch break. The queue is always longer than you want so you can end up eating your food on the way back to your desk.

With these easy one-pot dishes you can take them to work in a food thermos and just relax.

Walk out of your office, sit on your favourite bench and calmly crack open your lunchbox. Imagine the little mini-break you can soon afford with all the cash you're saving every month by cooking your own lunch.

Food is for sharing, so why not fill up the lunchbox and share it with your favourite pals while you watch the queues at the takeaway. Get your friends in on it too and compare and share what you have made.

5

Be more ethical

The other reason to eat more vegan food is to reduce animal suffering. No one likes intensive animal farms so this is a great way of avoiding it. Even free range animals have to be killed to produce meat, so lots of people want to take themselves out of that food chain.

Health, cost, less stress, environment and animal suffering are all good enough reasons to go more veggie.

Put them all together the case is quite compelling.



Hot Pot Magic

I have created these seven dishes, one for each day of the week. The idea is that they are nutritious, easy to make and without the need to be chained to the kitchen sink all week. Each dish is power packed with vegetables, protein and good oils.

These nutritious dishes are best slow cooked, so you can prepare just a few ingredients and leave it to stew overnight in a slow cooker while you sleep peacefully. Alternatively you can use a pressure cooker for ultra-fast cooking in the morning.

The result is a one-pot stew ready to take to work in a food thermos. Accompany it with a few tasty vegetable sticks and your favourite savoury snacks.

This food will see you through the whole day. It's easy to make plenty, so store some for the evening. Then simply follow my instructions on how to spice it up for a great evening dinner served with freshly cooked vegetables.



4-step daily programme

1. Night Before



3. Lunch



Prepare hot pot

What to do Prepare the vegetables and other ingredients and place them in a slow cooker. Leave to cook overnight.

Time needed 10-15 minutes.

Eat your lunch

What to do Enjoy your lunch with ultra-healthy ingredients.

Time needed Take your time as you watch everyone else rush.

2. Morning



4. Evening



Decant your lunch

What to do Decant a portion into your thermos, place the rest in the fridge for evening. Prepare a small salad or vegetable sticks.

Time needed 5 minutes.

Flavour it into a new dish

What to do Make a tasty main dish by flavouring the stew from earlier. Serve with fresh vegetables.

Time needed 15-20 minutes.

I wanted to make this plan as simple as possible so we based it on the idea of a slow cooker making the stew overnight. The idea to do some preparation in the evening so it is ready in the morning to take to work.

The exact settings on different slow cookers vary. I found that the pulses like the whole mung and adzuki beans took 5 hours on the higher setting and 8 hours on the lower setting. Also the pulses themselves vary—older ones that have been in your cupboard for a while take longer to cook. So if you are new to slow cookers it's a bit like having an AGA cooker... you may need to get used to it.

I practiced during the daytime so I could monitor how long it took and the amount of stock needed. The great thing about the slow cooker is that it doesn't have to be exact. You just have to make sure the pulses are soft and that the stew doesn't completely dry out.

You could of course cook these recipes the normal way on a conventional hob. Or use a pressure cooker which would reduce the cooking time to about 20 minutes.

An alternative to cooking overnight is to start it first thing in the morning so it's ready for lunch. Another option is to let it cook on a low heat all day for an evening meal.

Soaking the beans and lentils overnight (or for at least 6 hours) will also speed up the cooking times. Then they could

be cooked in less than 40 minutes in a normal pan. If you do soak them you will need less cooking water (or stock) than in the recipes.

This plan is just one option how you can use the recipes. The central theme is the idea of cooking once and eating twice from the same dish.



Day 1

1. Night Before

Mung Bean Stew

150 g mung beans	1 carrot <i>sliced</i>
1 ltr vegetable stock	1 small potato <i>peeled & diced</i>
1 bay leaf	1 sweet potato <i>peeled & diced</i>
1 onion <i>sliced</i>	1 stick celery <i>sliced</i>
½ tsp ground turmeric	salt & pepper <i>to taste</i>
2 garlic cloves <i>crushed</i>	

Rinse the mung beans a few times until the water runs clear, then drain. Put all the ingredients into a slow cooker. Leave to cook overnight.

2. Morning

Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle in 1 tablespoon of fresh chopped parsley. Take a portion in a thermos to work. Place the rest in a fresh container and store in the fridge. Chop up some fresh vegetable sticks to go with your stew, with a roll or some crispbread.

3. Lunch

Enjoy your healthy lunch at leisure and watch everyone rush around.

4. Evening Spice up the remaining beans using the recipe below...

Mung Bean Curry

1 onion <i>sliced</i>
2 cloves garlic <i>peeled</i>
1 cm fresh ginger <i>peeled</i>
1 cm fresh turmeric <i>peeled (optional)</i>
1 tbsp coconut oil
½ tsp mustard seeds
pinch ground asafoetida
50 ml vegetable stock
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp ground paprika
½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground turmeric
½ tsp jaggery <i>(optional)</i>
salt & pepper <i>to taste</i>

Mince the garlic and ginger to a paste using a pestle and mortar or electric grinder.

Melt the oil in a pan and add a few of the mustard seeds. When they start to crackle add the remain seeds. Keep your face well away from the pan. Cover the pan and turn off the heat. Allow the seeds to finish crackling. Carefully add a handful of the chopped onion and stir until the oil has cooled down slightly.

Stir in the ground spices. Add the rest of the onion and the garlic/ginger paste. Reheat the pan and fry for a minute or two on a medium heat.

Carefully add the stock and jaggery, cover and simmer for 5-10 minutes. The stock will evaporate and you will left with a delicious curry paste.

Heat up the Mung Bean Stew which you have stored in the fridge.

Stir in the curry paste and simmer for 5 minutes.

Garnish with fresh coriander. Serve with rice and freshly steamed vegetables.

Day 2

1. Night Before

Split Pea Stew

150 g yellow split peas	½ tsp ground turmeric
1 ltr vegetable stock	1 sweet potato <i>peeled & diced</i>
1 bay leaf	1 red onion <i>sliced</i>
1 leek <i>sliced</i>	2 garlic cloves <i>crushed</i>
1 stick celery	½ tsp Himalayan salt

Rinse the split peas a few times until the water runs clear, then drain. Place everything in a slow cooker and cook overnight.

2. Morning

Take a portion in a thermos to work place the rest in a fresh container and store in the fridge.

3. Lunch

Enjoy your healthy lunch at leisure think how much money you are saving.

4. Evening Spice up the remaining split pea stew using the recipe below.

Split Pea Coconut Curry

1 onion *sliced*
 2 cloves garlic *peeled*
 1 cm fresh ginger *peeled*
 1 cm fresh turmeric *peeled (optional)*
 1 tbsp coconut oil
 ½ tsp mustard seeds
 pinch ground asafoetida
 1 tsp ground coriander
 50 ml vegetable stock
 ½ tsp ground cumin
 ½ tsp ground turmeric
 ½ tsp jaggery *(optional)*
 80 g spinach
 1 tin coconut milk
 1 tbsp fresh chopped coriander
 salt & pepper *to taste*

Mince the garlic, ginger and fresh tumeric to a paste using a pestle and mortar or electric grinder.

Melt the oil in a pan and add a few of the mustard seeds. When they start to crackle add the remain seeds. Keep your face well away from the pan. Cover the pan and turn off the heat. Allow the seeds to finish crackling. Carefully add a handful of the chopped onion and stir until the oil has cooled down slightly.

Stir in the ground spices. Add the rest of the onion and the garlic/ginger paste. Reheat the pan and fry for a minute or two on a medium heat.

Carefully add the stock, cover and simmer for 5-10 minutes. The stock will evaporate and you will left with a delicious curry paste.

Add the spinach, jaggery and coconut milk, let it simmer for a minute or two.

Add the Split Pea Stew, mix well and heat through. Garnish with fresh coriander.

Serve with baked/steamed sweet potato and cooked veggies.

Day 3

1. Night Before

- 2 spring onions *finely sliced*
- 100 g broccoli *cut into small florets*
- 1 carrot *diced small*
- 1 tsp grated fresh ginger

Prepare the vegetables for tomorrow's soup and store in the fridge till morning.

2. Morning Follow the recipe to make...

Miso Soup and Tofu

- 1 ltr vegetable stock
- 2 cm kombu seaweed
- 1 tbsp arame seaweed
- 200 g firm tofu *diced small*
- 100 ml miso paste

Bring the vegetable stock to the boil. Add the vegetables you prepared the night before.

Add the kombu seaweed and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the arame seaweed and tofu. Simmer for another 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat. Ladle some of the soup into a separate bowl and dissolve the miso paste into it. Pour the miso mixture back into the soup and mix in.

Decant a large portion into your thermos, store the rest in your fridge for later.

3. Lunch

Enjoy your healthy lunch at leisure. Think of all the Earth's resources you are saving.

4. Evening Make a stir fry with tofu following the recipe.

Tofu Stir Fry

- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 onion *sliced*
- 1 garlic clove *peeled & sliced*
- 1 carrot *cut into sticks*
- 2 sticks celery *cut into strips*
- 1 red pepper *cut into sticks*
- 75 g mushrooms *sliced*
- 100 g mangetout
- 100 g beansprouts
- 250 g marinated tofu *diced*
- 1 tbsp cornflour

Fry the onion and garlic in the coconut oil for a few minutes.

Add the celery and carrot and stir fry over a high heat for about five minutes. Then add the red pepper and stir fry for a few more minutes.

Follow with the mushrooms and mangetout and cook for just a minute or two.

Finally add the beansprouts and stir briefly. Top with the marinated tofu and set aside.

Dissolve the cornflour in a little water and then mix it into the Miso Soup. Stir as you reheat it gently and bring back to the boil. You should have a nice thick sauce.

Serve with the stir fried vegetables and freshly cooked rice.

Day 4

1. Night Before

1 medium onion *chopped* 1 carrot *sliced*
 2 garlic cloves *crushed* 1 celery stick *sliced*
 1 leek *sliced* 100 g mushrooms *chopped*

Prepare the vegetables for tomorrow's soup and store in the fridge until morning.

2. Morning

Vegetable Soup with Quinoa

1 tbsp coconut oil
 1 ltr vegetable stock
 50 g quinoa *rinsed*
 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
 salt & pepper *to taste*

Heat the coconut oil in large pan and gently cook the vegetables prepared the night before, stirring until tender and adding the mushrooms one minute before the end.

Add the stock and quinoa; bring to the boil and then simmer for 15 minutes. Stir in the parsley, season to taste.

Place 1 portion into your thermos and the rest in the fridge for later.

3. Lunch

Enjoy your meal at leisure think how much better you feel already.

4. Evening

Thai Green Curry

½ tsp cumin seeds 2 tbsp lime juice
 ½ tsp black peppercorns 1 tsp coconut sugar
 ½ tsp coriander seeds 3 to 4 tbsp coconut milk (*enough to blend ingredients together*)
 1 stalk lemongrass *sliced*
 1 green chillies *sliced* **FOR CURRY**
 1 shallot *sliced* 2 tbsp of coconut oil
 4 cloves garlic 200 g firm tofu *diced*
 2 cm fresh ginger *sliced* 200 ml coconut milk
 handful fresh coriander *chopped* 2-3 kaffir leaves
 handful fresh basil *chopped* 1 tsp cornflour (*optional*)
 1 tbsp tamari fresh basil leaves

Grind the cumin, coriander and pepper in an electric grinder or by using a pestle and mortar until fine. Place into a strong blender with all the other ingredients except the coconut oil. Add more coconut milk if needed so it forms a paste.

To make the curry Heat the coconut oil in a pan and add the curry paste. Saute for a minute or two. Add the Vegetable Soup with Quinoa from this morning plus the tofu and cook for a few minutes. Add the coconut milk and kaffir leaves and simmer for 5 minutes. Thicken with a little dissolved corn flour if it's a bit runny. Garnish with fresh basil leaves. Serve with rice and steamed vegetables.

Day 5

1. Night Before

Lentil Soup

150 g red lentils *washed*
 1 medium onion *coarsely chopped*
 3 garlic cloves *crushed*
 1 medium carrot *diced*
 1 medium potato *peeled & diced*
 900 ml vegetable stock

Place all of the ingredients into the slow cooker and leave to cook overnight.

2. Morning

Place one portion in your thermos and the rest in the fridge for later.

3. Lunch

Eat at leisure and think of all the good this diet is doing for your health.

4. Evening

Lentil Curry

2 tbsp coconut oil
 1 onion *chopped*
 2 cloves garlic
 ½ tsp ground cumin
 ½ tsp ground turmeric
 1 tsp ground coriander
 2 tsp ground paprika
 1 tsp garam masala
 1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

Then heat the coconut oil in a pan and cook the onion and garlic until soft. Over a very low heat, stir in the ground cumin, turmeric, paprika, coriander and garam masala. Continue cooking for about 30 seconds until it gives off a sweet fragrance.

Stir in the soup from this morning and simmer for 5-10 minutes.

Garnish with fresh coriander.

Season with salt and pepper.

Serve with naan bread and fresh steamed veggies.

Day 6

1. Night Before

Adzuki Bean Stew

100 g adzuki beans
 700 ml vegetable stock
 1 onion finely *chopped*
 1 clove garlic *peeled & finely chopped*
 225 g carrots *diced*

Place all of the ingredients into the slow cooker and leave to cook overnight.

2. Morning

Add the following to finish the stew: 1 tbsp tamari, 2 tbsp tomato puree and 1 tsp mixed herbs. Place a portion into your thermos and the rest in the fridge for later.

3. Lunch

Enjoy your healthy lunch at leisure think of all the Earth's resources you are saving.

4. Evening

Adzuki Bean Cottage Pie

750 g potatoes *peeled & diced*
 50 g cashews
 60 ml water
 1 tsp yeast flakes
 2 tbsp olive oil
 salt & pepper *to taste*

Steam the potatoes until they are soft then drain and mash them. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180° C.

Blend the cashews and water together in a Nutri Bullet or other powerful food blender until really smooth. Add to the potatoes, along with the yeast flakes and olive oil. Mix with a fork. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Put the Adzuki Bean Stew into a casserole dish, spread the mashed potatoes on top. Bake for 20 minutes or until the potatoes are crisp and brown.

Serve with steamed vegetables and salad.

Day 7

1. Night Before

1 medium potato *peeled & diced*
 2 sticks celery *sliced*
 1 carrot *diced*
 100 g swede *peeled & diced*
 100 g cabbage or kale *sliced*
 1 medium leek *sliced*
 1 onion *sliced*

2 garlic cloves *crushed*
 2 medium courgettes *diced*

Prepare these vegetables for tomorrow's soup and store in the fridge until morning.

The potatoes will store better if they are placed in a bowl and covered in cold water. Drain in the morning before use.

2. Morning

Follow the recipe to make...

Vegetable Minestrone

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 3 tbsp water
 1¾ ltr vegetable stock
 400 g tin butter beans *drained & rinsed*
 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
 1 tsp chopped lovage leaves *(optional)*
 1 tbsp chopped fresh basil
 salt & pepper *to taste*

Leaving aside the courgettes, sauté everything prepared the night before in the olive oil and water. Stir and cook for 5 minutes over a medium heat. Add stock and bring to the boil. Simmer for about 10 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Add the courgettes along with the butter beans, lovage and parsley. Bring back to the boil and then lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the basil just before serving.

3. Lunch

Eat the minestrone for lunch.

4. Evening

Make this tomato sauce for the evening for a pasta bolognese.

Vegetable Bolognese

1 tbsp virgin olive oil
 1 onion finely *sliced*
 3 cloves garlic *crushed*
 ½ tsp ground paprika
 ½ tsp mixed herbs
 2 tomatoes *peeled & chopped*
 2 tbsp tomato puree
 handful fresh basil
 ½ tsp jaggery *(optional)*

Gently sauté heat the onion and garlic in the olive oil until softened.
 Add the paprika and mixed herbs.
 Stir in the tomatoes, cover and simmer for about 5 minutes until they begin to break up. Stir in the tomato puree.
 Add the Vegetable Minestrone and reheat.
 Sprinkle with fresh basil and serve with a salad or freshly steamed vegetables and cooked pasta.

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