

Australian Vegans

JOURNAL No.5

Travel essentials | Raw food 101 | Fashion | Delicious recipes

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Welcome to Australian Vegans Journal volume 5

It has been another year of progress for the growth of veganism in Australia, thanks to vegans across Australia and beyond. Your tireless efforts in advocating for this compassionate and sustainable lifestyle are bearing fruit...or more vegan burger options; whichever you prefer.

In this volume of AVJ we are doing a bit of a feature on vegan men. Traditionally, we feature vegan women strongly within this publication because they make up the majority of vegans. Women are often under-represented in terms of coverage and recognition despite them doing most of the advocacy work.

In an attempt to increase the numbers of men interested in veganism, we are featuring vegan men from a variety of backgrounds including vegan chefs such as Zacchary Bird, the founder of No Meat May, Ryan Alexander and the founder of V Pets, Vince Law. Vegan men are everywhere and are paving the way for more men to follow.

Also – for the first time – we have a vegan man on the cover. In his feature interview, we talk to Darren Brollo about his vegan journey, his work advocating for animals and his political aspirations.

Of course, we still have articles and interviews with vegan women including an interview with raw vegan chef Julie Mitsios and artist Jo Frederiks talks about her artwork that is heading to the moon!

I hope you enjoy the interviews, articles, reviews and artwork within these pages. As always, we invite you to connect with us via social media and email us with your comments and vegan news.

Until next time,

Kathy Divine
Editor



On the cover:

Darren Brollo, Principal at The Drum Academy,
Animal Justice Party Regional Group Leader Hunter/Newcastle +
Animal Justice Party NSW Lead Senate Candidate
And Indie (dingo/kelpie rescue).

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Activism, Drumming and Politics

An interview with Darren Brollo – Animal Justice Party NSW Lead Senate Candidate

Darren, tell us about your journey into politics. What drew you to politics, and in particular the Animal Justice Party?

I often feel like the most unlikely politician and I never expected to gravitate to this position.

For years, I stood on the frontline of protests fighting for animal rights and environmental protection but now, with the Animal Justice Party, we have a voice in parliament with the power to make tangible and long-lasting change at a legislative level. We have already seen incredible wins in both New South Wales and Victoria. Now it's time for change at a national level.

The AJP was the motivation I needed after years of activism to return with a renewed vigour and a belief that we can do this!

If you are successful in the upcoming Federal elections, you will be representing New South Wales and have an influence on nationwide policy. What is one major issue you want to have greater influence on? What are some of the solutions to that issue you will present at a national level?

There are so many issues. If I had to pick one, I believe the majority of Australians oppose the horrendous 'live export trade', but our Government is not listening.

This issue is close to my heart; it was the catalyst that led my family to veganism back in 1988 after watching an ABC exposé on the live sheep export trade. We were horrified by what we saw and almost overnight, became vegetarian.

In Australia, much of the general public is concerned about climate change and its effect on the Australian environment. Many people also love animals, yet can't make the connection that their non-vegan food choices contradict their stance on environmental issues and animal welfare. How will you tackle this conundrum at a national level if you are voted in? What will this mean for animals across Australia?



www.animaljusticeparty.org

Facebook: @DarrenBrolloAnimalJusticeParty

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Animal agriculture is the leading cause of deforestation and pollution, the primary driver of rainforest destruction, species extinction, habitat loss and greenhouse gas emissions.

We are up against powerful industries with enormous resources and governments that profit largely from animal and environmental exploitation.

If elected, I would push for legislative change providing support for farmers to transition from animal agriculture to plant-based agriculture. I also believe education is key to inspiring change and empowering personal responsibility.

An immediate reduction in animal agriculture and the transition to plant-based alternatives would reduce the number of animals being bred into these horrific industries, in turn reducing suffering and exploitation. Unfortunately, it's going to take time but it's moving in the right direction. I mean, what's the alternative?

You are from Newcastle. Since the 1990's, Newcastle has been known as the birthplace for many Australian indie and rock bands like Silverchair and The Screaming Jets. Newcastle – like much of Australia – is also known for its mining industries including coal and gas. On a broader level, Australian Federal elections almost always revolve around the issue of job security. If mining of non-renewable resources ceases or reduces in Australia, how will the country's economy stay afloat? What are some of the alternatives or solutions Australia needs to consider? How will everyday Australians and the environment benefit?



Our reliance on fossil fuels needs to stop, urgently! With investments into renewable industries, our economy will grow, certainly long term. We can be world leaders in green energy innovations. Winding down the mining industries while developing sustainable clean energy solutions simultaneously will ensure jobs are not lost and opportunities are available to all leaving the fossil fuel industry.

The benefits are incredible – cleaner environment, an end to land clearing, reforestation thus increasing our carbon sequestration. With large scale reduction in animal agriculture, we can see almost instant benefits. Methane is at least 30 times more destructive than CO₂ but remains in the atmosphere for only 12 years as compared to CO₂ which remains in the atmosphere for 100 years. So it's win/win.

Over the years, you've participated in actions as a way to help animals who need our attention and care. Can you talk about one particular action that you feel particularly proud of? Why do you think this action was so successful?

Back in 1995, there was a piggery called Parkville Piggery just outside of Scone, part-owned by Prime Minister Paul Keating. Imagine metal farrowing crates, cold concrete floors covered in excrement, food waste, rats everywhere amongst dead and dying piglets; an absolute hell-hole. A group of activists including Peter Singer, Mark Pearson and Linda Stoner trudged through muddy paddocks on a rainy, no-moon night to arrive at Parkville Piggery. We carefully entered around midnight and chained ourselves to the farrowing crates, each activist chained alongside a sow. These sows were chained with metal collars around their necks, most had painful open sores and ulcers where these tight collars pulled. Soon after, the sows began to trust us and many were nuzzling our hands for treats and some affection. Once workers arrived the police soon followed, and within an hour or two we were arrested and taken to Scone police station for fingerprinting and processing.

A few hours later the media was buzzing. They had received footage exposing the horrendous conditions inside Parkville Piggery. Thirty-three activists had been arrested, all charged with trespass! It wasn't long before the Minister of Agriculture declared a ban on the tethering of sows in New South Wales and all charges were dismissed.

How long have you been vegan for and what drew you to the lifestyle? In 1988 my whole family became vegetarian and within a few years, vegan. Animal rights was solely the reason for our choices however as I've learnt more about the environment and personal health it's been a great benefit on all accounts.

Another part of your life is music. In the late 1990's, you were the drummer in Australian indie band Lo-Tel, which garnered success from the song *Teenager of the Year*. Music and politics can intertwine as music can be used as a platform for building awareness about social or political issues. How has your music career been a platform for your own beliefs and what you want to change in this world?

Most definitely. Throughout the Lo-Tel days, I was able to use that platform to fight for animal rights. I've always taken every opportunity to speak out for the vulnerable, including a music project called Retribution which I started in 1996. More recently I have been re-constructing these tunes. Here's a link to one called *The Battery*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzdvLAZek6M>

Do you have any parting thoughts you'd like to share? Our nutritional needs can be met by consuming foods that are less harmful to animals, kinder to the planet and ultimately better for human health. So, let's choose this over foods that cause harm.

Vote 1 Animal Justice Party.

Interview with

Dr Peter Johnston

*Accredited Practising Dietitian, BA, BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD, FASLM
Victorian Lead Nutrition, Doctors For Nutrition*



Peter, good health is our most precious asset. How long have you been vegan for and what made you decide to go vegan?

I have been vegan for 30 years and vegetarian for 10 years before that. I decided to become vegan after reading the powerful book *Diet for a New America* by John Robbins. The book laid out in great detail the ethical, health and environmental reasons for avoiding all animal foods. I was convinced. John Robbins is famous for having turned his back on the vast fortune from the Baskin-Robbins ice cream empire and becoming vegan.

Why is it so hard for people – with or without underlying health issues – to maintain a healthy diet?

In some ways it is actually quite easy to stick to a healthy whole food plant-based diet as it is simple, delicious and uncomplicated – it is the diet that we evolved to eat. Because it is naturally low in energy density it is hard to over-eat and there is no portion control or calorie counting needed – just eat when you are hungry and stop when you have had enough.

However, we now live in an obesogenic world full of hyper-stimulating, hyper-processed food-like products which are very alluring for many people and are designed to be addictive. Food also has deep cultural and emotional roots so it can be hard to break away from long-standing family and cultural eating patterns. There can be a lot of negative pressure from family and friends and even from health professionals who don't understand the science.

Food can help reverse or treat chronic illness. What are some of the main chronic illnesses you help treat? What are some of the fastest-growing illnesses you've seen during your time as a dietician?

The main issues that I treat are obesity and overweight, cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders and autoimmune diseases. All of these conditions are increasing steadily. Thankfully, the numbers of people discovering the many benefits of whole food plant-based eating are also increasing dramatically.

I also have the great joy of frequently helping healthy expectant or new mothers and their babies/children get off to a fabulous and healthy start to life through being fully plant-based.

In your experience as a practising, accredited vegan dietician, what are some of the positive results you've seen in clients? Do you have a story in particular where the switch to a vegan diet has been life-changing?

I have had the great joy of seeing many people reverse their type-2 diabetes, reverse painful auto-immune conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and lose weight (up to 55 kilos!).

One of my most life-changing stories involves a former work colleague who had health issues after a decade of trying to be low carb, based on advice from a naturopath. A one-hour conversation with her led to her and her husband agreeing with the evidence I presented and both going vegan. Then their adult daughters both went vegan, as did the grandchildren. They are all still eating this way and doing really well! The ripple effects of helping one person can be enormous and multiply the life-changing benefits many times over.

Australia is one of the fastest-growing vegan markets worldwide and Melbourne and Sydney are some of the most vegan-friendly cities in the world. What would your advice be to someone who is considering going vegan? How can they make the change successfully?

I would advise checking in with a whole food plant-based dietitian or GP to ensure you are making the changes appropriately. Some people rush in and can adopt an unbalanced vegan diet which can lead to less than ideal health. This can result in some people mistakenly concluding that veganism isn't for them. Eating a healthy plant-based diet isn't difficult but like any diet it should be appropriately planned.

Many people also switch from a standard Australian diet to a junk food vegan diet. I see quite a few such patients

who are wondering why they are gaining weight, have high cholesterol etc and don't feel particularly well. There is a big difference between vegan and whole food plant-based which is important to understand. In many ways it was easier for me 30 years ago as there were no vegan junk foods and very few processed foods that were vegan. So, by default we were pretty much whole food plant-based. Now, there is a dazzling array of delicious looking processed foods which are vegan but if consumed frequently are likely to lead to weight and health problems.



What are the key health benefits for someone who does decide to go vegan and wants to achieve optimal results?

When a person switches to a healthy plant-based diet, within weeks they will feel better, have more energy, sleep better, have more mental clarity, better productivity and (if overweight) will start to lose kilos. The key is to minimise processed foods and eat a wide range of whole plant foods.

The only regrets I have ever heard from vegans is that they always wish they had started earlier, or been born and bred this way.

www.doctorsfornutrition.org

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My **5** Best Vegan Food Spots in Sydney

By Kathy Divine

Choosing my top 5 vegan restaurants in Sydney is tough because the choices are ever-growing, but it is a great sign that the popularity of eating vegan food is on the rise which is good news all round. My choices here are largely based on having solid gluten-free options as I'm gluten intolerant and I mostly prefer fairly healthy meals that are super tasty. Here are my picks in no particular order:

1. *Loving Hut Cabramatta*

With decades of experience creating delicious vegan food, the chefs at Loving Hut know how to create an incredible dining experience. My favourites here are the laksa, the broken rice BBQ dish and the stir-fry flat rice noodle. The service is friendly and warm and I love the fun of sitting in a booth. And the complimentary tea is lovely too. Loving Hut is a short walk from Cabramatta train station. They also do next-level catering. Loving Hut catered for my Plant-Powered Women Leadership Conference (200 people) and it was the most amazing spread of vegan delights I have ever seen in my life. Loving Hut Bankstown also make amazing food.

www.lovinghutcabramatta.com.au

227 Cabramatta Rd W, Cabramatta 2166



2. *Le Gourmand Foods*

We visited a little piece of France right in the heart of Newtown. I couldn't believe it! We had a croissant with pesto and mozzarella (I brought a friend to try this as it's not gluten-free) and I sampled a macaron (vanilla flavour).

Delicious on both accounts! We are so lucky to have such a high quality vegan bakery at very reasonable prices in Sydney. I can't wait to go back and try all of the other macaron flavours and the crème brûlée!

In addition to their delicious bakery offerings, Le Gourmand Foods also sells all-vegan French vinegars, chocolates and pâté. Also available online.

www.legourmand.com.au

414 King St Newtown 2042



Photo credits: Lila Marvell (croissants) and Vivian Wei (macarons)

3. 121 Springwood

One word: wholesome. If you want to go out but also feel like you're still at home, check out 121 Springwood. Think home-cooked, yummy food and friendly, mum-style customer service. Some of my favourites include their hot chocolate, the maple slice, their cakes; actually all the sweets here are delish. Try the sweet potato pie, the curries and salads, too.

The menu varies daily but there's always one thing in common: consistently delicious food. Yes, technically they are in the Blue Mountains and not Sydney but with many Sydneysiders doing day trips to the mountains, I thought this mention would be appreciated. They also sell fresh organic fruit and vegetables, some bulk foods and vegan grocery items.

www.itwo1store.com.au

121 Macquarie Rd, Springwood 2777



4. Hippocrates Healthy Eatery

Everything at Hippocrates is organic, vegan, gluten-free and sugar free. I found the dishes fresh, tasty and yes, it does feel very healthy. I really like the emphasis on fresh organic produce and the fact that the sauces and dressings are prepared fresh every day. There's a love and dedication to preparing healthy meals here that really shines through from the ingredients, customer service, the flavours and plating of the meals. They really know what they are doing with jackfruit (I'm not a jackfruit fan but their jackfruit dish was really something else.)

www.hippocareteshaltheatery.com

129 Avoca St Randwick 2031 and 317 Bay St Brighton-Le-Sands 2216



5. Green Gourmet St Leonards

Green Gourmet is such a treat! Situated in a convenient location near St Leonards train station, it's a lovely place for family celebrations, special dinners or a quick, delicious lunch.

There are many great menu items, but a notable mention must go to the rose and lemongrass tea. I would literally just come here to drink their tea; so fragrant and pretty. For cold days and nights, the Ma Po Tofu and Eggplant is an excellent choice to warm up. I also love their radish cakes. For dessert, the chocolate fudge brownie is truly delicious. Green Gourmet make a serious effort when it comes to gluten-free options for both main meals and desserts.

<https://greengourmet.myshopify.com>

538 Pacific Highway St Leonards 2065





Interview with Julie Mitsios

Author and Vegan Raw Food Chef

Julie, you've been able to capture the power of fresh fruits and vegetables by becoming a vegan raw food chef and author. Why is the power of fresh fruit and vegetables so important?

Fruits and vegetables are not only an incredible source of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants they also contain dietary fibre; the key to a healthy gut microbiome. In fact, every fruit and vegetable has a different fibre profile and each provide a unique ability to nurture our gut bacteria.

The free radical scavenging benefits of fruits and vegetables are also what make them powerful, beauty-boosting foods. My favourites for their high levels of antioxidants include guava, kiwifruit and berries! It isn't surprising that the research consistently shows that people who are on diets high in fruits and vegetables have lower cardiovascular risk, lower cholesterol and blood pressure and lower risks of certain cancers such as bowel cancer.

Many may turn away from raw vegan food because it might be 'too healthy' for them or 'too difficult' to prepare. How do you make raw vegan food tasty without so much emphasis on the healthy and hard side of things?

Using seasonal produce and simple techniques to start with is a great start. I also recommend starting with recipes that you are already familiar with such as pasta. In raw cuisine, we use zucchini to make pasta which provides the perfect texture for a wonderful sauce such as pesto to go with it.

Let's start in the average Australian kitchen. When it comes to preparing a kitchen for raw vegan cooking, what are the basic fridge and cupboard items that are a must-have?

I love having some key staples that will allow me to make a variety of different dishes. We can definitely keep this simple by having a supply of the following:
For the fridge: zucchini, kale, beetroot, carrot, fennel,

broccoli, mushrooms, cauliflower, cabbage, herbs, avocado and seasonal fruits are a must in my fridge.

For the pantry: nuts and seeds, coconut, dried fruits, olive oil, coconut oil and superfood powders such as spirulina, cacao are a nice addition.

If someone is on a budget, what are the types of ingredients people should start with?

I recommend starting with the basic pantry items listed above minus the superfoods which would just be an optional addition.



Are there many recipes that you can make ahead of time and store for later? What are the best storing methods when it comes to raw vegan cooking?

Yes, many of the recipes can be made ahead of time and simply finished off or dressed as needed. My favourite way of storing food is simply in glass containers. It certainly makes eating healthy during the week a breeze when you have healthy meals prepped in advance.

How does someone ensure the right amount and right combination of nutrients are available in each meal?

The body is very intelligent when it comes to obtaining what it needs from plant-based foods to ensure nutrient absorption is optimised. However, my rule of thumb is to ensure your plate is filled with an abundant variety of seasonal colourful vegetables. Adding two tablespoons of fat in the form of sprouted nuts/seeds or avocado ensures you are eating enough fat. Including hemp seeds (or oil), walnuts and chia seeds ensures you are getting enough omegas. I believe the body will give you signs if you are not eating quite the right amount of nutrients or amount of food. Watch for weak nails, hair and fragile skin as signs that your protein and fat levels may be suboptimal.

What would you recommend to someone who wants to start introducing only some raw vegan meals into their diet each week (not every day)?

I recommend gradually eating raw foods wherever you can and only as much as you are comfortable with. I find eating a raw breakfast to be one of the easiest ways to get started as this can be simply seasonal fruit, smoothies, juices or smoothie bowls.

Do you have any final tips or advice for raw vegan eating and cooking?

Any amount of raw food is going to be beneficial. However, I recommend aiming for 60% raw to feel and see a notable difference. If you simply add a nutrition-packed smoothie or acai bowl to your morning routine and enjoy a rainbow salad for lunch you are already two-thirds of the way there. It really is that simple and just takes a little bit of overnight planning. The more raw foods you add to your diet the better you will feel. Over time, you will learn to be in tune with your body's unique nutritional needs and the degree of raw foods that make you thrive. Taking care of your health is the best insurance you have.



www.earthtotable.com.au
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Interview with

Zacchary Bird

Vegan Cookbook Author and Recipe Developer

Zacchary, where did you learn the skills to create incredible vegan food and vegan versions of non-vegan foods?

After going vegan, I needed to self-teach myself the cooking techniques I'd never needed to use to recreate my favourite familiar dishes because other people weren't doing that for me anymore! It was born out of necessity at the time and now I'm in it for my love of propelling the vegan food space forward into the future.

Your first full-length published book *Vegan Junk Food: A Down & Dirty Cookbook* has received lots of attention, even from New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Adern. Is junk food the ultimate gateway to reach out to non-vegans? Why?

It's definitely one of many! Veganism is not a diet, so there are so many ways to eat as a vegan. By diversifying our voices from the bliss balls and smoothie bowls I was used to seeing when I first made the switch, we can appeal to even wider groups of people as a lifestyle.

Your social media presence has a lot of fun elements to it – dancing and comedic antics. Where did you learn your signature moves and why is it important to make vegan food fun?

Just born fabulous, I guess. If we want people to go vegan and stay vegan, then there's got to be ways to engage with the movement that feels more joyful than constantly



scrolling through statistics and slaughterhouse footage. I like to provide a contrast so that once we show people how and why they should go vegan (which is so important, too), there's someone around to show them how to love being a vegan as well.

Your follow-up book *The Vegan Butcher* received more attention and praise and has been described as “the ultimate science-meets-magic guide to plant-based meat”. What would you say to someone who wants to cook vegan like you, but feels they may lack the skills needed?

Buy the book and you can catch up! It's designed so every chapter takes you from beginner to advanced recipes as you add to your skillset.

Has it been difficult for you to break stereotypes around being vegan and male? Why do you think it's so difficult for men to break away from eating meat and how can society encourage more men to eat vegan?

Toxic masculinity strikes again! It hurts everyone, including men. Your gender identity has absolutely nothing to do with your ethical backbone so I don't entertain these ridiculous stereotypes. Though, if you call me a 'soyboy' I totally am. I'm 100% proud of that.

Photo credits: Zacchary Bird

Interview with
**Lara Young
 and Susan
 McCarthy,**
Co-Founders of VEats

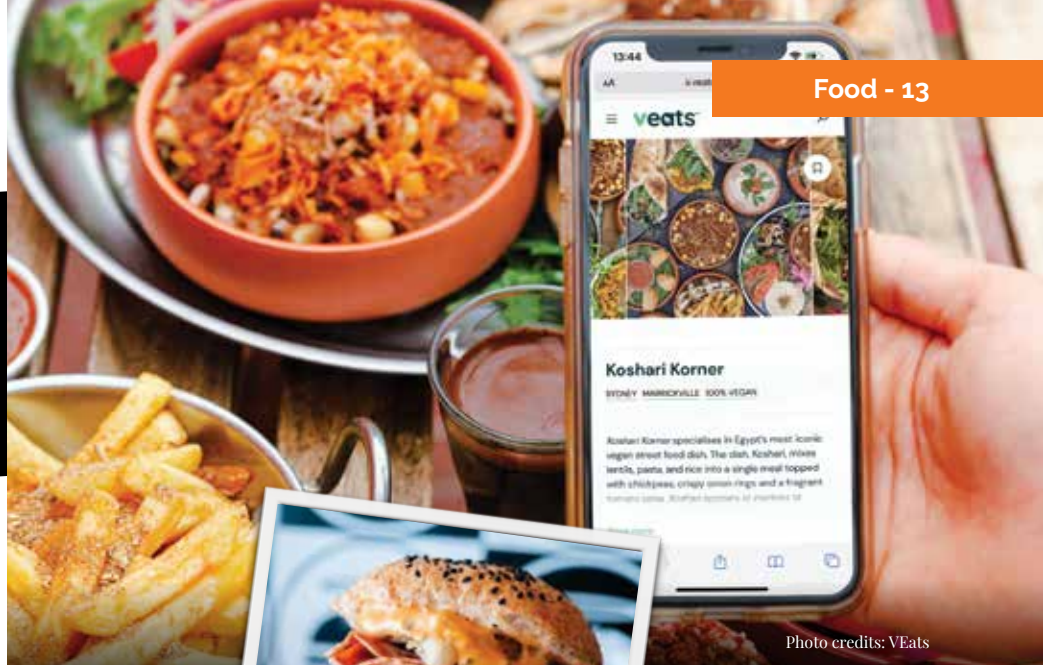


Photo credits: VEats

Lara and Susan, you have recently launched VEats which is an exclusively plant-based platform where customers can explore local businesses offering vegan options. It's the first of its kind in Australia. Where did the idea for VEats come from?

Lara: My journey into plant-based eating started nearly five years ago after I watched the Netflix documentary *What the Health*. Being a massive foodie, I had to learn about a whole new way of eating. The journey wasn't easy and I spent hours and days researching restaurants, checking menus, calling ahead to get them to accommodate me, and trying to veganise food through other delivery platforms. I knew that if it was hard for me, it would be hard for anyone trying to make the transition to plant-based eating. That's when I had the idea for VEats.

How long have you both been vegan for, and how did you both come together as business partners?

Lara: Sue and I have been vegan for almost five years. A mutual colleague introduced us eight years ago when I was looking for someone to manage the marketing side of my digital marketing agency, Take Me Digital. Sue and I instantly clicked and are now not only business partners but best friends.



Yum!

VEats currently has more than 600 directory listings across the Sydney region. Can you tell us about the vegan businesses that are listed and the categories they cover?

Our directory has listings from fully vegan businesses, as well as those offering three or more plant-based options. This includes Bondi's newly opened burger joint Flave, the beloved Gigi Pizzeria in Newtown, and Sydney's iconic vegan burger franchise Soul Burger. You can also find ready-made meals and other vegan food products such as plant-based cheeses and meats.

There are plans to expand VEats within Australia and overseas. Can you elaborate on your plans for the platform going forward?

We're currently focusing on developing an app and are planning a city-by-city expansion starting with high-growth and emerging plant-based markets such as Melbourne, Queensland and Perth. Eventually, we would like to expand globally, initially into the UK with the first cities being Brighton and London.

www.veats.com.au

Facebook: @VEatsAustralia

Instagram: @veats_australia

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On Motherhood: Perspectives of a Lamb Carer

By *Kristy Alger*

My eyes are heavy with sleep. I swear I only closed them minutes ago. Cries in the night call me from my bed, and I struggle to prepare bottles in the dark before tiny hooves thunder into the kitchen. The milk is swiftly drunk, messes are cleaned and lambs who should be milk-drunk begin to leap around the room.

Sitting in the dark, I think of the mothers who bore these lambs into the cold world and why they had to walk away.

It is hard not to feel overwhelmed with emotion when faced with lambs left to die, and sometimes harder still to comprehend how a mother could do this to one of her own.

However, this is not an act of abandonment that occurs from careless or malicious intent.

Maternal “rejection” is more prevalent amongst ewes who are first time mothers. I remember the struggles I experienced as a first-time mother, including undiagnosed post-natal depression, which can disrupt the maternal bond to devastating effect.

Maternal “rejection” is also common in cases of multiple births, when one lamb (or more in cases of triplets) is weaker than their siblings. Here, a mother must make a devastating choice; rear both with a high chance that both will die or choose the one who is most likely to live. It is a choice most of us human parents will never have to make.

The language used to describe such a decision is inherently judgemental. “Abandonment” and “rejection” come attached with such negative connotations, and are even used by those in the animal exploitation industries to justify harms perpetrated in the name of production. The farmer who intervenes is lauded as the saviour of the lamb “rejected” by the heartless mother. This is despite the inevitable trip to the slaughterhouse that awaits the lamb once grown. The mother is a base animal, the human the hero.



We need to be more mindful of the language we use in our advocacy and avoid tropes that are weaponised against other animals by their exploiters. As such I would propose “maternal disruption” rather than “abandonment” or “rejection.” This is for when the maternal bond is disrupted by circumstance, by the demands placed on their bodies through exploitative breeding practices, and by a natural instinct to survive.

As a mother myself, I feel only empathy for those of other species so harshly condemned and exploited, and solidarity with mothers of all kinds.

Catherine M. Dwyer and Alistair B. Lawrence, “Maternal Behaviour in Domestic Sheep (*Ovis aries*): Constancy and Change with Maternal Experience.” *Behaviour* Vol. 137, No. 10 (Oct., 2000), pp. 1391-1413. Brill.

Instagram: @writing_liberation



Interview with
Haans Siver
Sea Shepherd volunteer

Haans, you have volunteered or worked for Sea Shepherd for 12 years. What made you decide to get involved with Sea Shepherd? What did your roles with Sea Shepherd teach you about animal rights?

It's no secret I became vegan for the animals. They were and still are the number one reason for my being. It was not until I was at sea with 30+ amazing people from all over the world that the penny dropped on the connection between animal agriculture and the environment: deforestation, dead zones in the oceans, not to mention the CO2 admissions. I had a lightbulb moment while at sea about how everything is connected but humans seem to be the broken link in the chain. It changed my whole perception of veganism and what it means to me.

What was it about the sea that appealed to you? Why were you drawn to the ocean specifically?

What started my journey to becoming an animal rights activist were the dolphins in Taiji, Japan. I find it hard to put into words, what they do to them. These beautiful, majestic animals are highly intelligent, free to swim anywhere



they want. When I found out about Taiji, it broke my soul. Working for Sea Shepherd gives me the chance to fight for them. I try to be one human who can raise awareness and make a change.

As part of your work to prevent whaling in Antarctic waters, you would take many personal risks and make sacrifices in your everyday life. What makes someone take a personal risk for the sake of animal rights?

When I first joined the ships, the risk was never a thought in my mind. My first campaign was Operation Relentless in 2013-14. We were attacked by the three harpoon ships at the same time. It's 24-hour daylight during the months we are in Antarctica. That year we only had three ships, the Sam Simon, Bob Barker and the Steve Irwin. The Bob and the Steve were sailing next to each other tailing the Nisshin Maru for eight days. The Nisshin is the ship where they process whale meat.

I came up for my midnight watch and we could see on the radar the three harpoon ships heading for us from the stern. As they approached us at full speed, one of the ships passed our bow from the starboard side. The other two crossed our bow from the port side. All three ships were tailing steel cable about 150 metres long with a buoy at the end to hold the cable on the surface of the water. Their tactic was to 'prop foul' us. They circled our two ships trying to get the cable under the bow. As we sailed forward this would make the cable go under the ship and get caught in our props, stopping us dead in our tracks. Every time they missed our ship they would go and do the same to the Bob Barker. The Bob ultimately had a collision with one of the harpoon ships. We put our small boats in to defend our ships while the deck

crew tried cutting the cables. The whole thing was very exhausting, and they circled our ships for nine and a half hours. However, they managed to get us off the Nisshin Maru's trail as she disappeared off our radar.

The next day, all three harpoon ships and their security vessel – the Shonan Maru, the Bob Barker, the Sam Simon, and my ship the Steve Irwin – were all drifting, looking at each other. It was a beautiful sunny day, and the water was like glass. I sat on the bow of the ship and ate my lunch looking at these harpoon ships doing repairs from the collision, while whales were swimming in between the ships.

To see that and the realisation harpooners could not kill any because, let's face it, they would have had an even bigger fight on their hands if they tried. Moments like that make any risk worth it. A lot of people ask me if I got scared during that attack, and my answer is always 'no' because my adrenaline kicks in, and you have to do whatever you can to protect another sentient species. Something I was honoured to do.

In relation to animal rights, what is one moment in your time with Sea Shepherd that you were particularly proud of?

I think that would have to be the day we hauled in netting from the Chinese poaching vessels and there were hundreds of Blue sharks, along with other species; so many we didn't even know what their target catch was. There was one shark that we had cut from the net, and they were laying on our deck. I suddenly saw their fin move and, without thinking, I picked them up from our deck and threw them back into the water. I don't know if they lived or died but I hope I gave



them a fighting chance. If they died then they died in the water where they belong, not on a fisherman's boat with their fins cut off suffocating.

You were on the Ocean Warrior while the documentary *Seaspiracy* was being filmed and you were also part of the longest sea chase in maritime history on the Bob Barker. You were at sea for 147 days. What can you take away from that experience and use it to educate others?

When you have a ship full of people with a passion for the oceans and the animals, you will never be able to beat them down. Passion, patience and persistence will always win. The Operation Icefish campaign opened the doors for us to work with governments in other countries including African countries. We can assist in stopping illegal fishing and poaching by patrolling waters and teaming up with local authorities. I am very proud of that campaign and being at sea for that long has changed my view on life, family and what is important to me. I have become humble in finding what I value; time with family is so important. I have also learned that you should only do the things in life that make you happy. This I take into my job as well. I will never work where I am not happy again and neither should you.

Your focus now is on empowering young vegan women in the animal rights movement and the next generation. Why is it so important to empower women, and what role do they play in particular?

My parents' generation and the generations before have made many mistakes when it comes to health, animals and the planet. My generation are the messengers. We are the ones who have done all the groundwork with research and exposure of the cruelty in industries like factory farming, the fur trade, foie gras, horse urine for IVF, animals in captivity, moon bears,...There are too many to mention. Now that we have exposed these vile industries, it is up to the next generation to stand up against them to make a kinder world.

We have some very loud and strong men in the animal rights movement that it's time for the women to be loud, too. There is a platform there waiting for women to use their voices that we need to take advantage of. The expectation of getting married and having kids is fading as more and more women find their place in society as independent people.

Follow your dreams. When things get tough, learn from it. If you fail, pick yourself up and try again. If it makes you uncomfortable, don't do it. It's your life and no one can take that away from you. I would like to help any young person find their voice and be heard.

Instagram: [@haanssiver](#) ~ Instagram: [@barecravings](#)

Photo credits: Haans Siver



Facts about Chickens

Chickens are one of the most common and widespread domestic animals worldwide.

Without the tireless work by rescue groups such as NSW Hen Rescue, many chickens in Australia would still be living an atrocious existence in the animal-farming industry.

Now more than ever, it is important for chickens to be seen and treated in a new light; of love and sentience.

Chickens are remarkable beings, with their own set of behaviours and individual personalities. So, let's explore some fun facts about these much-loved, feathered beings.

The oldest living companion chicken ever recorded is 16 years old!

Her name is Matilda, and she was unable to produce eggs. A veterinarian believed that Matilda's inability to produce and lay eggs has contributed to her long lifespan.

Hens are very sociable

Just like humans, hens have friends and family groups. So, they are very sociable and they even share experiences and hold affection for one another. Hens also form complex social hierarchies called 'pecking orders'.

Hens are just like human mothers and roosters are just like fathers

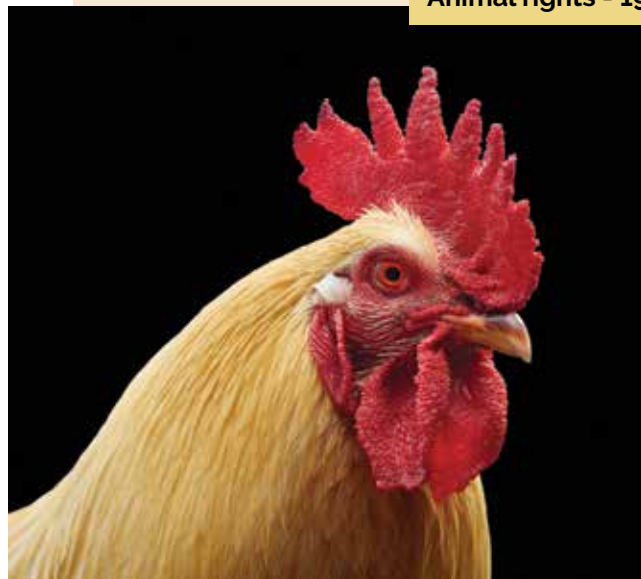
A mother hen will 'cluck' to her babies while they are still in their eggs. This is clever because the chicks can then recognise their mother's voice once they've hatched.

Chickens can recognise 100 faces and see in full-colour

Remarkably, chickens have a well-developed memory. They have a strong ability to recognise faces and can distinguish between about 100 faces. Yes, this includes both human and non-human animal faces. Chickens can also see UV light. How clever!

Just like humans, chickens love watermelon in summer

Watermelon is the perfect treat on a hot, summer's day. Just like for humans, fresh slices of watermelon from the fridge help to keep a chicken's body cool and hydrated. Plus, they love the sweet taste. Sweetcorn is another favourite.



This article was compiled with the assistance of Catherine Kelaher, Founder of NSW Hen Rescue. For further details, visit <https://henrescue.org>.

Photo credits: Leon Gross



Interview with

Emma Håkansson

Founder, Collective Fashion Justice

Emma, why did you decide to start the not-for-profit organisation Collective Fashion Justice?

Collective Fashion Justice exists to create a 'total ethics fashion system'. This means an industry which values the life and wellbeing of all animals, both humans and non-humans, as well as the planet, before profit. Unfortunately, this is far from the reality of fashion today so the organisation has plenty of work ahead.

You are an activist who is passionate about anti-speciesism and collective liberation. Plus, you're a model. What has drawn you to fashion personally? What is the appeal?

I've always loved fashion and seen it as a way of expressing your creativity and part of your identity in a visual way. Fashion, to me and to many, is about identity, culture, belonging, self-exploration, and even activism (you say a lot to the world in how you dress, even if it's unintentional, and some people use this to push important messages!).

My dedication to anti-speciesism and collective liberation more broadly means I'll always work to create a more just world, and I saw that there was a gap in advocacy focused on

the harms of fashion – and so I decided to fill it.

Collective Fashion Justice works towards illuminating the issues within the fashion industry's systems, 'to uproot all three key fashion injustices – against humans, non-humans, and the planet.' Can you identify some examples of these injustices and how has Collective Fashion Justice worked towards disrupting these injustices successfully?

Let's look at the production of a garment which harms all three of these groups – a typical leather jacket. First up, it's very possible that leather came from a cattle ranch standing on deforested Amazonian land – impacting wildlife and biodiversity. That cow – who breathes out potent methane – is treated as a commodity and slaughtered. Then, their skin is tanned with chemicals, often by labourers working in extremely unsafe conditions, and whose communities suffer from tannery pollution. Finally, this leather is sewn and stitched into a jacket, likely by one of the 98% of garment workers who are paid a poverty wage which doesn't cover their basic needs.

Collective Fashion Justice educates both the public and industry on these and similar issues, works to create legislation to prevent this harm, and consults with industry to create much needed shifts.

Likewise, animal fashion supply chains need to change for the sake of animal rights. What are some ways that companies can address the supply chains in their own business with minimum impact to their bottom line?

At Collective Fashion Justice we don't believe there's a 'right' way to use animal-derived materials – these all come from slaughtering supply chains which commodify individuals. Brands need to transition away from using these materials, and we're seeing that as people become more environmentally and ethically minded. Brands that shift to more just materials are rewarded.

We currently live in a time when sustainability on all fronts is crucial. How can the average consumer lead a more sustainable lifestyle through their fashion choices while ensuring a high standard of ethics is maintained?

The number one thing we can all do if we need to buy new clothes, is to ask a lot of questions. Do I really love this? Who made this? What were they paid? What is it made of? Were any animals harmed or killed for this? What's the eco-footprint of it? How can I know I trust this brand? Brands that can't provide answers are generally hiding something for a reason.

According to the Collective Fashion Justice website, '80% of clothes bought on Black Friday are reportedly thrown out'. How can the fast fashion industry change, too?

We desperately need to slow down the fashion industry – a garbage truck worth of clothes heads to landfill every second. We need to legislate for slowness into the industry, we need to vote with our dollar, we need to protest, and we need to show brands that the future of fashion is slow. If they aren't, there won't be a place for them.

We must ensure that we're all making informed decisions based on accurate information, rather than operating on assumptions. The wool industry is a cruel slaughter industry; it's responsible for massive emissions, biodiversity loss and environmental harm. It's an industry with worker exploitation running rife in it, and yet it's one that is supported by our tax dollar. The only way to ensure the public has an accurate view of the wool industry and better, local alternatives to it is through education. Our short film *Willow and Claude* works to do that.

Collective Fashion Justice has consulted with a number of fashion companies like Versace as well as government departments. What is one win you are particularly proud to have been involved in, and why is this win so special for you?

Last year, we helped to write a bill which passed into law in the city of New York. This bill ensures more ethical and sustainable city textile purchases. Our short film *Willow and Claude* won awards at two international film festivals, causing conversations in the fashion industry. Our data on the environmental harms of leather was published in *Vogue Business* which angered the industry and pleased us!



www.collectivefashionjustice.org
 Facebook: @collectivefashionjustice
 Instagram: @collectivefashionjustice
 Twitter: @Co_Fash_Justice

Photo credits: Collective Fashion Justice





Interview with **Justin Mead** Founder, *Vegan Style*

Justin, you are the founder of Vegan Style which offers stylish all-vegan shoes and accessories. Your business started when you learned about the realities of how animals are ‘transformed’. Can you take us through this journey?

I’ve been vegan since 2001 and I’ve always been very aware of the different ways animals are used, whether that’s for food or fashion. In 2009, I travelled through South America, North America and Europe. I discovered new, exciting fashion products that were missing from the Australian market. When I came back home, I started Vegan Style and brought these products to the local market before creating our own in-house brand, Zette.

What drew you to shoes and accessories and why are these clothing items so important when it comes to veganism?

So often we hear veganism being talked about as a diet, but it’s so much more than that. It’s a social justice movement, and it means abstaining from using and exploiting animals; even in the fashion industry. I knew that there was a gap to fill in the market for people who wanted to dress well without harming other living beings.

Vegan fashion has traditionally been perceived as unfashionable. How has vegan fashion transformed in recent years?

People sometimes think vegan fashion means un-dyed linen, canvas shoes and hemp bags, but it’s so much more! If vegan fashion is going to become mainstream, people need to be able to replicate the styles they want to wear, but that are made without cruelty. As leather alternatives have progressed and designers in the space have upped their game, vegan fashion has become much more mainstream in line with growing public demand.

Your in-house label Zette is named after your rescue cat. Tell us about your cat Zette and how did he or she come into your life?

I’ve always loved cats and in 2012 a friend asked me to foster a couple of kittens. My partner and I fell in love with two of the cats and couldn’t bring ourselves to let them go. We adopted both of them, (Su)Zette and Marceau, a brother and sister team. Unfortunately, Marceau developed an untreatable disease and passed away just before his first birthday. However, Zette is still going strong and – according to the vet – in excellent shape for her age! We call her our CMO (Chief Meow Officer).



You have a 'bricks and mortar' shop based in Fitzroy, Melbourne (the heartland of veganism in Melbourne). What is it about Fitzroy that appeals to you as a vegan business owner?

In 1988, I visited Vegie Bar in Brunswick St, Fitzroy, the first vegetarian restaurant I had ever visited. The restaurant is still there and has grown significantly since then. Fitzroy is a wonderful place full of quirky artistic people and places and is an absolute vegan heaven for vegan/vegie eateries and shops. We're lucky to have The Vegan Grocery Store at the end of the street! It's extremely rare to find anywhere that doesn't cater to vegans in this neighbourhood. The suburb has a progressive, diverse and colourful population and it's one of the few Green seats in Australia – Adam Bandt's office is just around the corner.

Sustainability is a hot topic right now. How does vegan leather compare to non-vegan equivalents? How does your business reduce its impact on the environment?

A pair of boots made from PU synthetic leather has a climate footprint seven times smaller than boots made from cow skin. The majority of Zette's shoes are made from a PU that's OEKO-TEX 100 certified for chemical safety and made responsibly in a facility that recycles the material inputs. We also stock 'leathers' made from cork, discarded apple

skins and pineapple leaves. All our packaging is recycled and minimal, with sustainability being a real focus for us.

Being a vegan brand means upholding a standard of ethics. How do you choose other brands that are stocked by Vegan Style? What ethics do they need to uphold?

The brands we invite into our curated selection are brands with the same values as us. This means their shoes are totally vegan – down to the glues and dyes, not just the main materials. They also strive to use materials that are more sustainable than standard synthetics you'd see from fast fashion brands, and they produce their shoes using fair labour. That's all really important to us; ethical means fair and just for all.

Can you recommend a particular style that is popular right now? What would be your vegan fashion advice for 2022?

We love Chelsea boots and the diverse range of these we have. They never really go out of style. 2022 fashion is about sustainability, timeless styles, and playfulness. We encourage people to think about slow fashion and buy what they know they will wear time after time!

www.veganstyle.com.au
 Facebook: @Vegan.Style.Aus
 Instagram: @veganstyleoz

Photo credits: Vegan Style

Stock up on the Best Vegan *Travel-Sized* Essentials

By *Justine de Jonge*

The COVID-19 pandemic put an abrupt pause to all travel, both locally and internationally. Now, we're tentatively moving back out into the world and we're picking our moments when we can travel safely. While many of us are testing the waters, we also need to be equipped with the essentials. Vegan travel-sized essentials are a must when we go back out into the world, even if we're only travelling a short distance from home.

So, what do I need?

If you haven't travelled in a while, chances are you don't have the travel-sized essentials on hand. Once you've decided where you're going, it's time to make an inventory of what you need.

Go slow and start with the basics

How you travel and where you're travelling to will determine what you need. So, the best place to start is the basics. Think of what you use on a daily basis such as toothbrush and toothpaste, brush or a comb, deodorant, face and body cream. When you travel again, the trick is to travel light, and pick those items that are vegan, sustainable and with as minimal impact on our environment as possible. Shopping local from independent vegan makers helps to reduce our impact, too.

Care on the road that's mouth-watering

When oral hygiene is concerned, start by checking out ROCC Naturals. They offer natural and sustainable oral health options including toothpaste and bamboo toothbrushes. There's a 100-gram vegan-certified toothpaste that's infused with B12. This means that you may not have to pack your B12



Photo credits: ROCC Naturals



spray or tablets separately, and the light-weight size means it's easy to pack. All the tubes are biodegradable; the first of its kind in Australia. Grab a starter pack that includes two tubes and two bamboo toothbrushes, and your teeth are ready to hit the road. <https://roccnaturals.com.au>

Your flossing regime won't suffer on the road when you choose Green + Kind. They make a corn-based bioplastic dental floss in teeny travel-friendly bottles and you can also buy refills. <https://greenandkind.com>

Your body will love your travel-sized products, too...

Sukin offers the best range of products when it comes to travel-sized essentials. Their entire range is vegan – made from natural ingredients – and cruelty-free, plus their packaging is recyclable. The Botanical Body Wash comes in a 50ml squeeze tube, and the Super Greens Body Contouring Crème is in a 200ml tube. For the hair, try the Natural Balance Scalp Scrub in a 200ml tube or Natural Balance Shampoo in 50ml. Sukin can be your go-to for travel-sized deodorants as well. <https://sukinnaturals.com.au>



Photo credits: Sukin

If you want to avoid bottles, then think about Shampoo with a Purpose shampoo bars that cater for different hair needs. Plastic-free, organic and vegan, Shampoo with a Purpose make all-in-one shampoo/conditioner bars; equivalent to about six bottles. The bars double up well as a soap bar and you can also purchase a storage tin.

<https://www.shampoowithapurpose.com>



Photo credits: Shampoo With a Purpose

If you're prone to a little attention from mosquitos, then you can get a bottle of A Bit Hippy's Mozzie Spray. The spray is made with a natural elixir that repels mosquitoes without harming them. A Bit Hippy's product range is plant-derived, vegan and non-toxic, including sweet-smelling deodorants. <https://abithippy.com.au>

Another high-quality vegan maker of insect repellent is Warbotanicals. They make a Buzz Off Spray and Cream that are chemical-free. Warbotanicals' vegan, holistic products are best described as nature's pharmacy. <https://www.warbotanicals.com>



Photo credits: Warbotanicals

Keep covered and stay sun-smart

If you want an SPF-50 sunscreen that's also helping an important not-for-profit, then check out the Sea Shepherd Sunbutter Sunscreen. One major impact we have on our ocean's ecosystems is if we use a toxic sunscreen. Sea Shepherd has created this Sunbutter that's water-resistant and made with a reef-safe sunscreen formula. <https://shop.seashepherd.org.au/products>

Keep your hands sanitised and safe

Hand sanitiser is important now more than ever. Choose a sanitiser that's vegan, sustainable and natural like Koala Eco.

They also use Australian essential oils, and are cruelty-free. Koala Eco uses bottles that are made with 100% recycled and recyclable materials. Choose their Koala Eco Hand & Surface Spray. <https://koala.eco>



Photo credits: Koala Eco

The best places to buy your vegan travel-sized essentials

In Australia, the best places to buy your vegan travel-sized essentials are online as well as in-person. In these economically-challenged times, another way to support your local businesses is to buy direct from the maker. If this is not possible, then head to one of the following Aussie vegan retailers to secure what you need before you say bon voyage:

- Five Vegans <https://www.fivevegans.com.au>
- Flora & Fauna <https://www.floraandfauna.com.au>
- The Vegan Grocery Store <https://www.vegangrocerystore.com.au>

One final vegan travel-savvy tip...

While you shop for your essentials, look out for reusable items that can be packed easily into your bag like reusable straws, reusable cups and cutlery.

Many vegan-friendly animal rescue groups now stock their own reusable cups and water bottles. Check the websites of some of your favourite animal rescue groups and choose to buy your reusable cup or bottle from them. Proceeds from your purchase will go towards helping to save and care for more non-human beings.



Interview with

Suli Autagavaia

Author and founder, Suli Writes



Suli, you've been a writer for as long as you can remember. What is it about words that you're drawn to?

I'm an introvert so I write for a reason! Words have the power to plant seeds of change, to shift perspectives. Using the right words at the right time can change someone's reality and that's always front of mind when I am writing – using the right words that water flowers.

According to your website, you are “now finally writing for [yourself] and others who share topics of interest that ignite [your] soul”. What is it about storytelling that is important to your soul?

My soul wants me to write for, about and in the voice of animals. I use human language, the power of words, to tell their stories and take great care, not to undermine their non-human agency. My stories aim to change perceptions and ask critical questions of people, such as why things are the way they are and whether things could or should be different or better.

I write fiction because it provides the distance I need to tackle deeply disturbing topics. It's an emotionally safer way to stay sane and tell a story from the perspective and experiences of non-humans that people don't typically meet or know of.

How can the written word inspire change? Also, was there one moment in your life where words inspired you so you can live the life you lead now? Can you elaborate about that experience?

In the late 90's, I read *Babe: The Tale of the Speaking Meat* by Val Plumwood. The author coined the phrase 'the speaking meat' and the idea that, if animals could speak to us, we'd be horrified by what they say to us. It woke me up.

Animals can't speak. As a child, I knew this to be true but growing up in the Pasifika culture my empathy for animals was buried. However, it would reveal itself whenever I wrote. In high-school, I'd enter writing competitions and win! My stories almost always involved animals as the companion, hero or victim. My writing went underground as an adult, being on the hamster wheel of work and family life. And then the above-mentioned journal articles crossed my path and reignited my animal advocacy life.

You are a Kiwi, born and based in New Zealand. How has your New Zealand heritage shaped your writing and your experience as a writer?

I'd grown up in the Pasifika tradition of mandatory meat dishes at family and cultural events where an adorned rotisserie pig was and remains the star of the table. I grew up pretending not to know. Suppressing my empathy for farm animals in order to participate in my culture created a writer and an outlier – me.

New Zealand is slowly shedding its colonial condition. However, historical injustices still exist in this wee country especially in its number one money-earning industry – dairy. Kiwis love everything dairy which I love to hate because of its human, animal and environmental injustices. This is the context I write within.

You run the Pasifika Vegan 21 Day Challenge, an initiative from the Vegan Society NZ. What is it all about and can you share some success stories from the challenge?

New Zealand's Pasifika peoples are afflicted with diabetes, heart disease, obesity, cancer, stroke and gout in staggering numbers and I believe veganism could be the change they need. It would help reduce the risk of this community's number one killer – heart disease.

The Pasifika Vegan 21 Day Challenge aims to encourage Pasifikas to consider veganism as a different way of eating and living for their health, their families, their communities and the environment. The Challenge guides and empowers participants on their journey with daily veganised Pasifika recipes, a private FB group with mentors and dietetic assistance and vegan cooking tips. From becoming full-time vegans, participating in vegan outreach projects, adding vegan options to the catering menu, to starting up their own plant-based businesses – Challenge graduates have been able to take the learnings of those 21 days into their lives.

As a vegan author and ethical leader who is involved in multiple projects that have been successful in bringing about positive change for humans, animals and the environment do you have any words of advice for anyone wanting to take their first steps into animal advocacy and creative projects?

Firstly, we all have super powers. What's yours? You have the ability within you to create something of value to the vegan/ animal rights cause. If you're great with numbers – do the books for vegan and animal community groups. If you're a master persuader – fundraise. If you enjoy public speaking – present at libraries, schools, universities or if you have an eye for detail – proofread government submissions. We all have something to contribute.

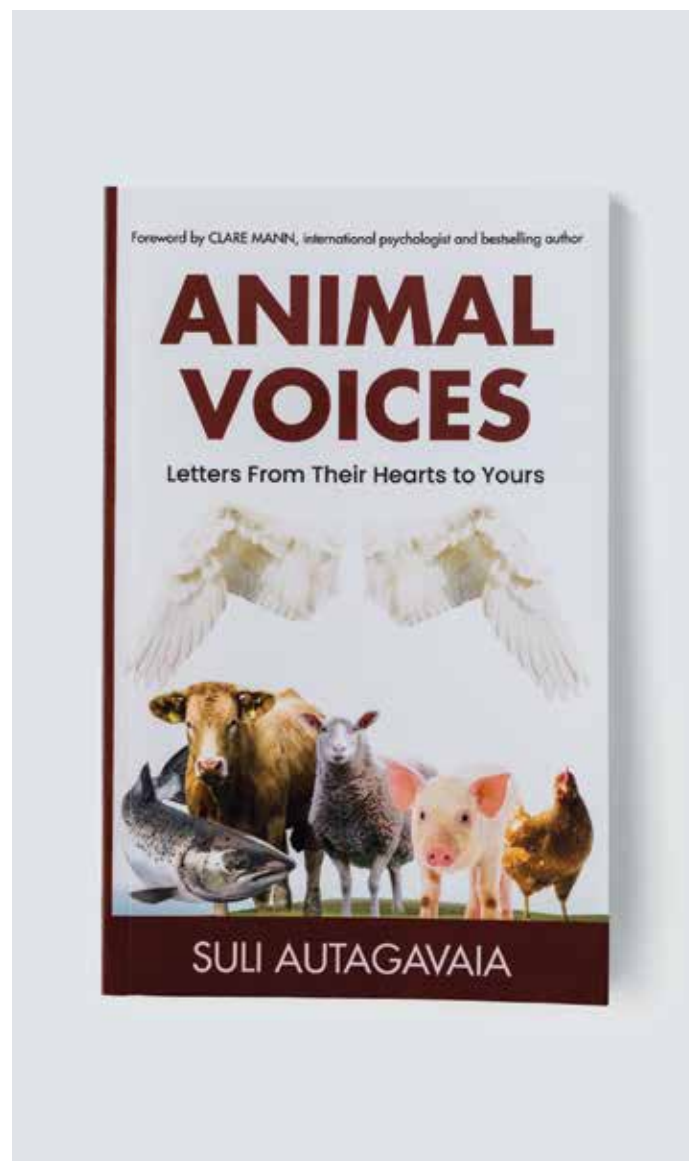
Secondly, what keeps you up at night? What change would you like to see for the animals?

Lastly, now go apply your super powers to help solve or alleviate the thing that upsets, worries or infuriates you.

www.suliwrites.com

Facebook: @suli.autagavaia

Instagram: @suli.autagavaia



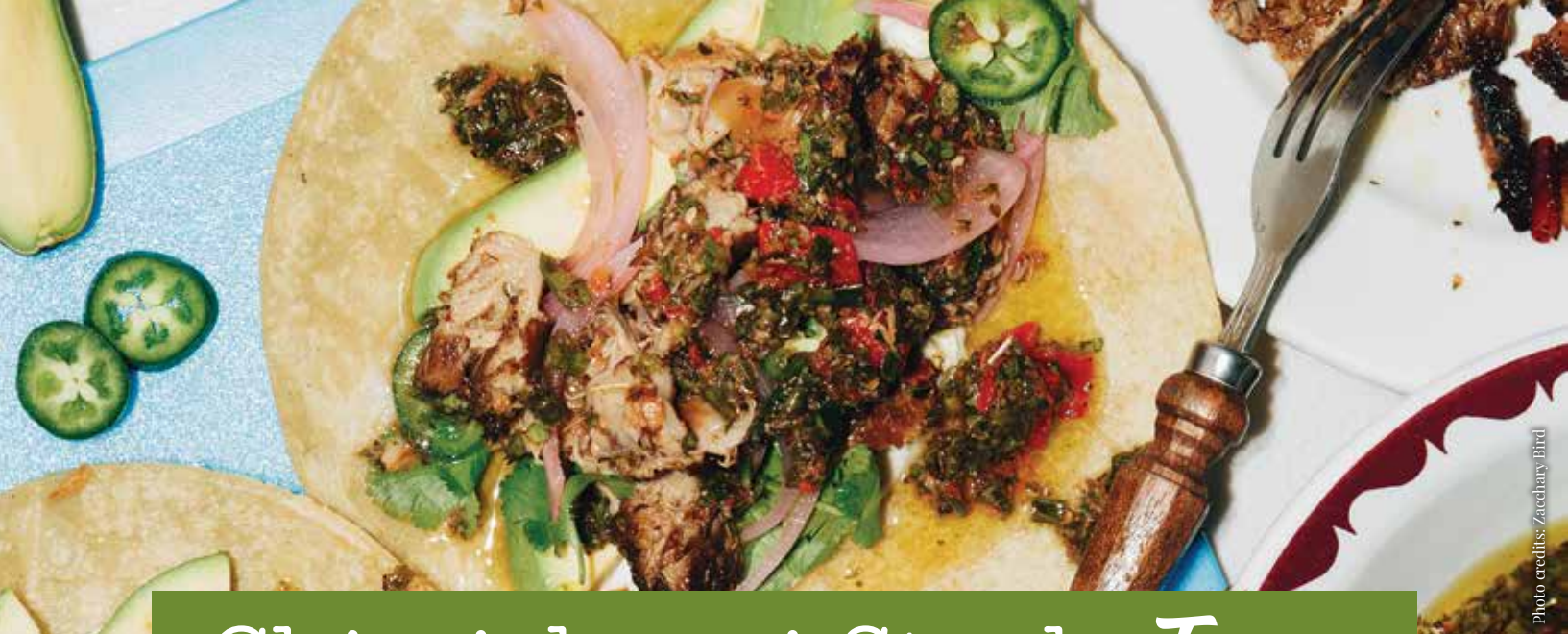


Photo credits: Zacchary Bird

Chimichurri Steak *Tacos*

from The Vegan Butcher ~ By Zacchary Bird

If you've got a beef with mushrooms, you'll thoroughly enjoy crushing them to death via this method. Brutally collapsing them as they cook allows them to sizzle and brown in their own juices, it'll force the umami out – and quickly! By the time you've put together a lovely, fresh herby chimichurri sauce, you can dress the seared mushroom remains with it and bury them in a taco.

Makes 8 tacos

Ingredients

400 g (14 oz) shimeji, oyster, pearl or lion's mane mushrooms (or a mixed medley)
8 small corn tortillas
1 avocado, sliced
1 jalapeno chilli, thinly sliced
Coriander sprigs, to serve
Lime wedges to serve

Pickled Red Onion

1 small red onion, thinly sliced
185 ml (3/4 cup) white vinegar
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon sea salt

Chimichurri Sauce

4 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled
1 long red chilli, chopped
1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
125 ml (1/2 cup) olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
15 g (1/2 cup) finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
1 tablespoon dried oregano
Freshly ground black pepper

To make the pickled red onion, place the onion in a clean jar. Place the vinegar, sugar, salt and 125 ml (1/2 cup) of water in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Once the sugar has dissolved, pour the vinegar mixture into the jar. Set aside on a work surface for one hour to pickle.

To make the chimichurri sauce, mash the garlic, chilli and coarse salt in a mortar and pestle. Mix in the remaining ingredients to complete the chimichurri.

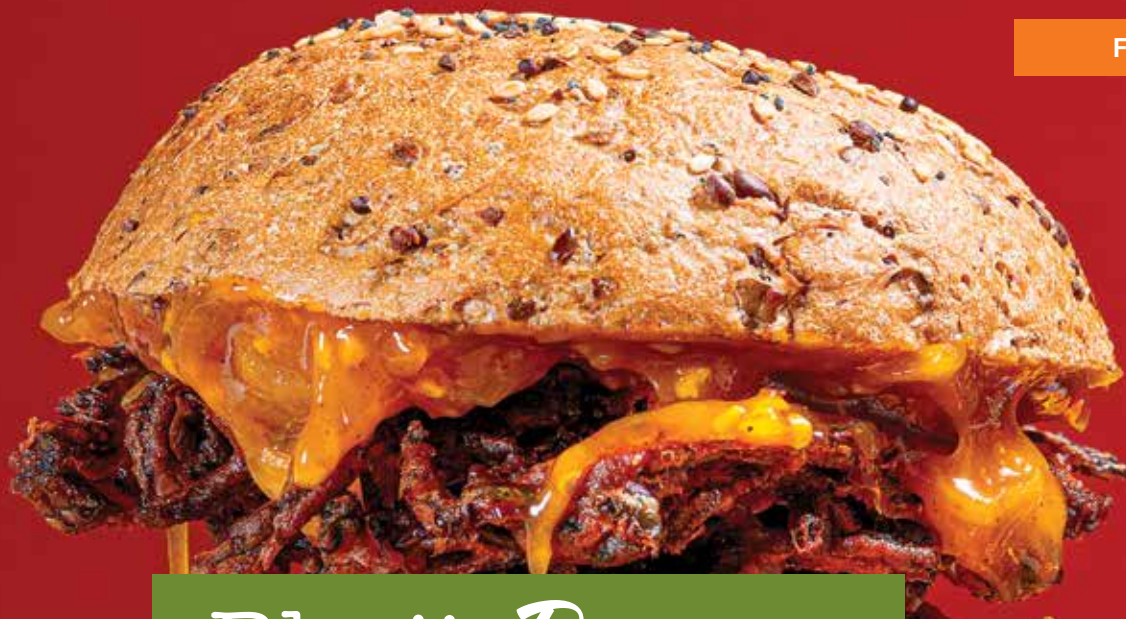
To cook the mushroom steak, use a sandwich press or a hot saucepan with a smaller one to press the mushrooms. Crack salt and pepper over the mushrooms, then press them down to flatten in a hot pan/press. They may emit a screaming noise. Don't worry! They're just very cross with you but will soon get over it. Baste heartily with the chimichurri and cook, pressing occasionally and basting frequently, for ten minutes until beginning to char. Remove from the heat and use a fork to break up if needed.

Microwave the tortillas under a damp cloth in 30-second bursts until warmed. Alternatively, lightly grill.

Divide the mushrooms over the tortillas and drizzle a little chimichurri sauce on top. Add the avocado slices, pickled onion, jalapeno rounds and coriander if you're into it and serve with the lime wedges on the side.

Buen provecho!





Bhaji Burgers

from Vegan Junk Food: A Down & Dirty Cookbook ~ By Zacchary Bird

Serves 4

Ingredients

Canola or vegetable oil, for deep-frying
 2 long green chillies, finely chopped
 Juice of 1 lime
 90 g (3 oz) vegan mayonnaise
 100 g (3½ oz) white cabbage, shredded
 80 g (2¾ oz) red cabbage, shredded
 ½ carrot, grated
 4 fancy seeded burger buns
 150 g (5½ oz) mango chutney

Bhajis

2 onions, thinly sliced and core removed
 6 curry leaves, finely chopped
 1 bunch coriander (cilantro) leaves picked and finely chopped
 1 ½ teaspoons nigella seeds
 ¾ teaspoon sea salt
 ¾ teaspoon ground cumin
 ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
 ½ teaspoon chilli powder
 55 g (2 oz/½ cup) chickpea flour (besan)
 35 g (1¼ oz) rice flour
 60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) freshly squeezed lemon juice
 1 tablespoon olive oil

To make the bhajis, combine the onion, curry leaves, half the coriander, the nigella seeds, salt, cumin, turmeric and chilli powder in a large bowl. Add the chickpea and rice flours and mix well. Pour the lemon juice, olive oil and 3 tablespoons of water over the mixture and stir thoroughly until a thin batter clings to the onion.

Heat the canola oil in a large heavy-based saucepan over high heat. Test if the oil is ready by inserting a wooden skewer or the handle of a wooden spoon into the oil. If it begins to bubble quickly then you're ready to go.

Divide the bhaji mixture into eight portions and group loosely together in the bowl, creating clumps while also leaving small gaps between the onion strands. Use a spatula to lower the bhajis into the oil and fry for 2–3 minutes, until golden brown, flipping regularly to ensure they cook evenly. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel to drain.

Meanwhile, combine the chilli, lime juice and mayonnaise in one bowl and the cabbages and carrot in another bowl. Stir the mayonnaise mixture through the slaw mix along with the remaining coriander.

Slice the buns in half and spread the mango chutney on the top half of each bun. Spoon the slaw onto the other side. Rest two bhajis on top of the chutney-covered bun halves. Press down firmly so the sauces glue everything together.

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NO MEAT MAY

recipes



Blackbean, Zucchini & Corn Fritters

Ingredients:

- 1 can of black beans (400g)
- 1 can of corn kernels (400g)
- 2 zucchinis (grated)
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 1 finely chopped chilli (optional)
- 1 ½ teaspoons cumin powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 ½ cups besan flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil

Method:

1. Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl and let sit for 20 minutes to absorb flavours
2. Heat olive oil in a fry pan over medium to high heat. Form small fritters and cook each side for 5 minutes
3. mid-heat
4. Garnish with fresh herbs and lemon juice.



Fritters in this image have been served with a delicious Sri Lankan Kale Malung



Photo credits: No Meat May

Jackfruit & Chickpea Curry

Ingredients:

1 teaspoon chilli oil
 1 tablespoon red curry paste (we use Kindness Café incredible pastes)
 1 cup cherry tomatoes cut in half
 300g jackfruit (1 can) – squeeze out excess water to ensure meaty texture!
 1 tablespoon soy sauce
 ½ can chickpeas
 1/3 cup water
 1 tablespoon brown sugar
 ½ cup Vietnamese mint



Method:

1. Mix chilli oil with red curry paste in a pan over medium heat (adjust measurements to make more/less hot)
2. Chop cherry tomatoes in half and add to the pan stirring through the curry paste and oil
3. Add the jackfruit and soy sauce and stir through
4. Add the chickpeas, water and sugar and stir well over medium heat for 5 minutes or until chickpeas soften
5. Stir through the Vietnamese mint
6. Serve with rice and enjoy!

Take the No Meat May Challenge

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recipes

Chocolate Pudding with Whipped Cream & Caramel Sauce

Serves 3

Ingredients

pudding

1 ripe banana
1 ripe avocado
¼ cup cocoa powder
½ cup crunchy
Peanut butter
½ cup agave syrup
¼ cup soy milk or
Almond milk
½ cup Soyatoo whipped
Soy cream

Caramel Sauce

7 tablespoons sugar
7 tablespoons water
120ml coconut milk
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

Method

1. Place all pudding ingredients (except the cream) into a food processor and blend until smooth
2. Spoon mixture into glasses or serving bowls and chill for 3 hours
3. When ready to serve, start making caramel sauce. Place sugar and water in a saucepan. Dissolve sugar and let bubble for 2 minutes
4. Add coconut milk and stir until mixed thoroughly. Turn down the heat and simmer for 10 minutes or until thickened
5. Remove from heat and mix in the vanilla extract
6. Take glasses out of fridge and top with whipped cream and caramel sauce. Optional: decorate with chocolate shavings





Cheesecake

Ingredients

Filling

2 tubs of Tofutti Cream Cheese
 1 tub of Tofutti Sour Supreme
 3/4 cup white sugar
 1 teaspoon lemon juice fresh squeezed
 2 tablespoons flour or corn starch
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Base

250g of plain sweet biscuits
 140g vegan margarine, melted

Method

1. Preheat oven to 175 degrees Celsius
2. Put biscuits in a food processor and process until finely crushed
3. Add margarine and process until well combined
4. Using the back of a spoon, press the biscuit mixture firmly over the base and sides of a baking dish
5. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes
6. Blend cream cheese, sour supreme, lemon juice, sugar, flour and vanilla until smooth and creamy
7. Pour into the chilled crust
8. Bake for 50-55 minutes or until centre is set
9. Allow to cool, then put in fridge, covered, for at least 6 hours
10. Decorate with piles of berries or shaved chocolate



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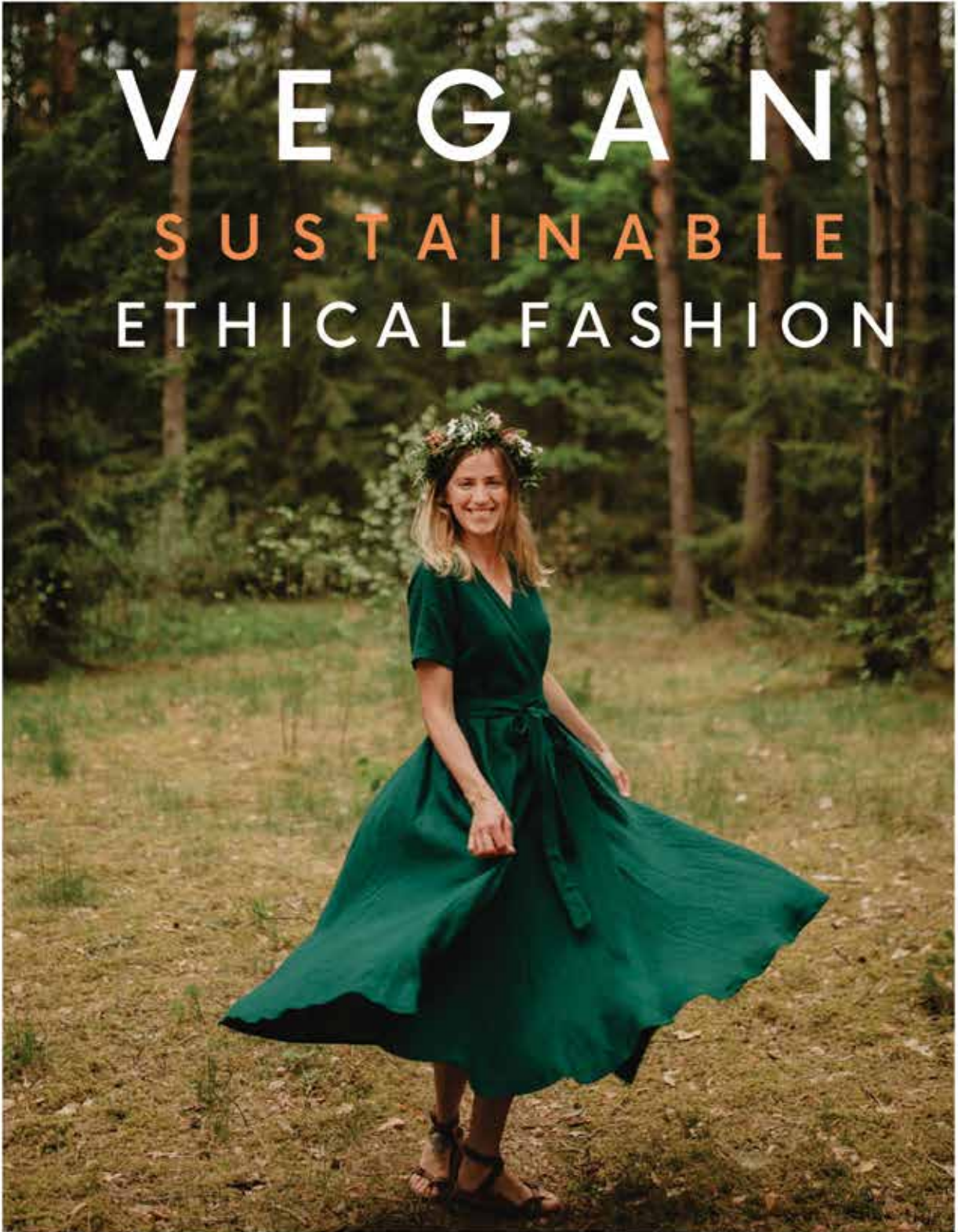
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Palak Mehta

Founder and CEO, VeganFirst.com



“ My vision was always to create a global platform but I wanted to start with India first ”

Palak

Palak, you are a media professional and teacher who went vegan in 2013. What made you decide to go vegan?

My spiritual master Mohanji would keep talking about the atrocities of animal agriculture through heart wrenching videos. He actively promotes veganism and would speak often about the dairy industry. I had already turned vegetarian before I met him, but wasn't aware how calves are brutally separated from their mothers and are denied their mother's milk. I used to think milk was unhealthy, but I wasn't aware that it was unethical too. Soon after I learnt this, I started visiting Gowshalas (cattle shelters) and realised that this was true for India as well. There was no turning back.

You founded VeganFirst.com in 2016 which is India's 'leading publication and solution space for all things vegan'. Plus, you're the CEO. Why did you decide to start a vegan media company in India? Did you see there was a gap in the market in India? Or, were you motivated by other reasons?

When I turned vegan, it was tough to find alternatives, reliable resources, like-minded people and a strong support system. Some folks would talk about it and create awareness but I couldn't see a united representation of veganism in India. So I decided to create awareness amongst non-vegans but also provide a support system for vegans. My vision was always to create a global platform but I wanted to start with India first. Vegan First reaches out to non-vegans and vegans through

content and creates opportunities for networking and support through events such as the Vegan India Conference. Today Vegan First (VeganFirst.com) not only represents the movement in India, but also in the Asia Pacific. We're largely focused on underserved countries as well and are launching vegan events in those countries.

Can you tell us about what the vegan landscape looks like in India? Internationally, India is known to be a vegetarian-friendly country that reveres its cricket stars and Bollywood celebrities but we don't hear much about veganism in India...

Veganism has started to see a larger growth in the last two years. This was very evident from the first Vegan India Conference we did in 2019. For the first time we witnessed industry professionals, journalists, influencers and international speakers taking active interest in this sector in India. And since the COVID outbreak I've only seen it grow. Some of the biggest legacy brands such as ITC are entering the plant-based meat sector while several other start-ups are getting funded more now. Cricket and Bollywood are two things which resonate with the masses in India. Today, ex-cricket team captain Virat Kohli and Bollywood stars such as Anushka Sharma, Ritesh Deshmukh and Genelia Deshmukh are investors or founders of vegan companies. That's very encouraging.

How has VeganFirst.com been able to increase awareness of veganism in India, and how popular is veganism in India now?

I feel the Vegan India Conference was a game changer for the movement. We could reach out to several non-vegan professionals and strengthen the ecosystem. Apart from that, we have been constantly working hard to change the narrative around veganism in India – and to some extent we have noticed a positive change in the perception of people. A lot of our content regularly gets picked up by mainstream media and this year we have been recognised by several professional forums such as BBC Earth, ASSOCHAM and government platforms like FSSAI. It's very heartening to see the sector getting acknowledged.

You were also heavily involved in Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launching a vegan logo to help consumers identify vegan foods. Tell us about how this happened? Was it difficult to get an authority to take this step?

FSSAI invited me to be a part of the task force to create guidelines and a regulatory framework for vegan foods in India and it's been a very gratifying experience. However, this is just the start. Sectors such as fashion, beauty and lifestyle also need a similar framework. There is a long way to go.

The VeganFirst.com website says that 'content is king'. Why is the digital media space so important to VeganFirst.com and in India particularly?



Photo credit: MOHANJI



Photo credit: Vegan First

The accessibility of cheap mobile phones and data in India has made scaling digitally much easier.

You previously mentioned VeganFirst.com hosts the international Vegan India Conference. Can you tell us more about the conference and why is it so important to host an event like this in India?

The Vegan India Conference brings together stakeholders from various sectors such as food tech, manufacturing, government bodies, suppliers, investors and entrepreneurs. Advocates of ethics, animal rights, climate change and health also reach out to institutions, hospitals, schools and colleges through the platform. I see it as an important platform which serves as the backbone of the ecosystem. Veganism is not a 'niche' cause or a fringe movement; it's a moral stance and also a need of the hour.

Do you have any final thoughts or comments you'd like to make?

We're powerful enough to create change – all of us in our own way. Whoever you are, you can make a difference and be a beacon of light for the voiceless.

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Interview with Sunny Satva

Founder of Vegan Africa Fund

My name is Sunny Satva and I identify as a member of the African diaspora. I first visited the motherland when I bought a one-way ticket to Kenya in 2020. Now, I am based in the beautiful coastal city of Mombasa helping African founders with local support and a global vision to scale up their vegan companies.

My vegan journey began when I started eating a plant-based diet in 2015 due to health reasons. In 2017, I became an ethical vegan after quitting a job in an animal-testing research lab. Eating vegan in Kenya and across Africa is easy and, in many regions, it is even a cultural standard. Many areas are agriculturally rich but lack the machinery and infrastructure to preserve the foods produced during the harvest seasons. Africa has 60% of the global potential agricultural land yet imports almost 80% of its food by value because the continent lacks machinery to process raw materials into high-value processed goods or products with a long shelf-life.

In 2021, I made my first angel investment into the first vegan protein producer in Kenya called Vegan Basket. I'm passionate about helping historically underserved founders access capital. I sought out a fund to invest in that would support the vegan future of Africa but nothing like this existed. This drove me to start the Vegan Africa Fund.

I saw dozens of vegan businesses across East Africa that are African-owned and creating incredible products. Companies are producing vegan sausages, cultured coconut yogurt, veggie burgers, cashew cheeze, eco-packaging, and vegan cactus-based leather alternatives at the local level, yet lack the capital to scale to compete with global brands. I created a directory of over 300 African businesses creating these much-needed products. The Vegan Africa Fund invests, making veganism accessible across the fastest-growing continent. We hope to catalyze the African emergence as a global leader in sustainability and veganism.

The majority of vegan products available in major grocery stores

across Africa are foreign and expensive; this leads people to believe that veganism is expensive. Local producers struggle to get their products in every grocery store as they are often producing by hand with limited machinery and distribution networks. The number one barrier that African vegan businesses are experiencing is a lack of funding to expand, and number two is competition from imported vegan items. Local companies must sell to their local consumers yet are increasingly cut off as global brands enter African markets. It is essential to invest in machinery and infrastructure for these businesses to overcome these barriers.

Thirty eight percent of the African population self-identifies as vegan, vegetarian, or flexi/pescatarian. Over 500 million African people are excited to consume plant-centric products, a consumer base of US\$20 billion in food yearly. Investing in African-made vegan products has multi-billion-dollar market potential.

The first venture that I invested in was Vegan Basket on the Kenya coast. The owners are a Kenyan couple who have been vegan for over a decade and wanted to expand their business. In less than a year, we helped them double their kitchen and production capacity, increase their outputs by 10%+ month-over-month for the past six months and expand their menu to include veggie burgers and cashew cheeze for the local market.



Photo credits: Vegan Africa Fund



Photo credit: Vegan Basket

By 2030, I foresee the Vegan Africa Fund holding equity in the leading vegan businesses in each African country. We hope that early investors see a minimum tenfold return on their investment and I hope to drive massive wealth creation for African eco-entrepreneurs. We measure impact by how accessible it is for the average African person to consume plant-based foods. I see Africa emerging as a global leader in veganism and sustainability thanks to VAF.

You can support our mission through the VAF crypto or our NFT sales, found through <https://VAF.one>. I launched the eco-friendly Astral Giraffes collection after meeting a baby giraffe who inspired me. There are less than 70,000 of these gentle giants left in the wild. Giraffes and other large wild animals are threatened by expanding animal agriculture. Purchasing an NFT supports the Vegan Africa Fund mission and conservation efforts. Buying VAF supports the Vegan Africa Fund on the leading edge of creation, tying together crypto and veganism in Africa to create radical social change. I hope you join me on this mission!

<https://vaf.one>

Astral Giraffes: <https://opensea.io/collection/astral-giraffes>

Instagram: @veganafricafund

Facebook: @veganafricafund (Vegan AF)

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Photo credits: Vegan Africa Fund

Love is in the Air

By *Zerin Knight*



““ These romantic words perfectly illustrate the seeds of love that were sown between Kyle Behrend and Kelly Dinham

””

If ever there was a true song about romance, it's in the lyrics of John Paul Young's hit: "Love is in the air, everywhere I look around..." These romantic words perfectly illustrate the seeds of love that were sown between Kyle Behrend and Kelly Dinham, two vegans working on a farmed animal sanctuary where love embraces the heart and soul of every resident and visitor. And it was atop a mountain near the sanctuary that a fairytale romance came into full blossom.

Kelly had known Kyle for years before she started working at Edgar's Mission Farm Sanctuary where Kyle has worked since 2010. "Our love story started years before we began working together, we just didn't know it yet. Having met numerous times over the years, it wasn't until we spent more time in close proximity that sparks began to fly," says Kelly.

Kyle adds that Kelly's work ethic, compassion and kindness made her the perfect person to join the team at

the sanctuary. "...and yes, steal my heart."

The feelings between Kyle and Kelly couldn't be denied but Kyle didn't want to compromise their work relationship. So, he confessed their feelings to Edgar's Mission Founder and Director, Pam Ahern during a return road trip from Melbourne. To his surprise, Pam's smiling response was something along the lines of "yeah duh everyone knows."

Kyle had lived at Edgar's Mission for about eight years before he and Kelly moved into a house in Lancefield together with Kelly's daughter Isabelle.

A year later, on March 22, 2021 Kyle and Kelly embarked on one of their regular mountain hikes. It was atop a mountain in the Grampians, where it could be shouted through the universe for the entire world to hear. Kyle proclaimed his love for Kelly. As the sun rose behind them, he went down on bended knee and the timer on

their camera clicked at the perfect time to record the romantic setting for eternity.

“When she said yes I was just filled with love and awe, being with the person I love watching a breathtaking sunrise...It was the perfect moment.”

Fast forward 11 months to February 21, 2022, the lovers held their wedding ceremony in their favourite place – Mt Macedon.

Kelly’s wedding dress was a two-piece Anna Skoblikova set comprising a lace bodysuit and a light tulle skirt. She had ordered it online and was pleasantly surprised when it arrived, exclaiming that the outfit was more beautiful than she had imagined.

Kelly made a stunning bride, matched by her handsome husband-to-be in his smart attire. The love between them truly shines through in the sublime images captured by vegan couple Christian and Shani from Be Here Be Now Photos and Films.

The intimate wedding included seven human guests along with Kelly’s daughter, 12-year-old Isabelle, and the couple’s three dogs Sookie, Violet and Maggie.

Kyle says celebrant Anthony Cribbes brought the whole ceremony together in the most magical way. Anthony had a prior connection with Edgar’s Mission when he rescued Hamlet, a piglet who was being attacked by pig hunting dogs.

The couple’s friends provided an amazing grazing table for the mountain ceremony where the first wedding photos were taken. Celebrations continued with a second photoshoot at Edgar’s Mission then a delicious dinner of vegan pizza from Red Sparrow topped off with a delicious homemade Vegan Biscoff Cheesecake.

So how does Isabelle feel about Kyle? “She loves Kyle so much and she cried when we told her we got engaged,” says Kelly.

“We have a lot of fun together and Isabelle has been getting into macro photography so we spend time together taking photos in nature which is really lovely. She is a beautiful girl with a huge heart but I am also conscious that it can be challenging for us at times. I came into her life when she was eight years old but we make a good family,” adds Kyle.



Kyle cites part of his wedding vow to describe his feelings for Kelly:

“I love your unbound kindness to others, your constant support and motivation, your laugh, your jokes, your longing for experiences and adventures, and of course your crazy love of cats. To be in love with someone like you and have that love reciprocated is something I am forever grateful for.”

For her part, Kelly considers herself the luckiest person in the whole world. “Kyle is my best friend, soulmate and love of my life. The past four years that we have spent together have been like something out of a fairy tale. I love our beautiful family and the incredible life we’ve built.

So what does the future hold for this loving couple? Not much difference to the amazing life they have built together, says Kyle. A life that makes the world a kinder place for animals, hikes in the mountains, travel and the continued blossoming of their adoration for each other, their animals and Isabelle.

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Ten Years Travelling the Vegan Road...

and Writing about It!

By *Justine de Jonge*

In early December this year, I celebrate my ten-year vegan anniversary.

I vividly remember the day I made the decision to go vegan back in late 2012. One Saturday, I woke up feeling a strong shift within me. I realised I no longer wanted to consume animal products. This was a feeling that was brewing inside me for a few days, but on this Saturday the feeling was stronger than ever.

This was my moment when the sharp pull of personal values and the right thing to do couldn't go unnoticed. It was time to go vegan. However, as a freelance writer, I arrived at a dilemma. "How will I navigate my writing, now?" I found a way to be a vegan writer once I switched the way I lived. I simply did what I did before but from a vegan perspective.



Since becoming vegan, and as a vegan writer for the last ten years, veganism has advanced rapidly. This is especially true in the food and travel industry. Here are some of those key moments.

Vegan cooking is a labour of love and expression

In my first year of travelling the vegan road, I discovered that a lot of cuisines have vegan options. In some cultures, it's customary to have vegan options for religious or other cultural observances. Melbourne is home to a wide range of cuisines and it's easy to eat just about any cuisine here. There are a number of restaurants like Chinese, Indian and Ethiopian where you can order vegan meals easily. In recent years, Italian and Israeli restaurants have emerged with vegan options. Back in 2013, I remember being asked to review a vegetarian cooking class for my website. Yes, they catered for vegans like me. At the class, there was a quote on the wall and part of it read: "Cooking is like love..." If you have love for yourself and other beings, then cooking – especially vegan cooking – is a perfect way to express this.



Travelling vegan overseas has never been easier

I took my first all-vegan holiday overseas with vegan travel company VegVoyages in 2014 to Bali. The company ensures all facets of their trips are vegan – from food to accommodation, visits to ethical animal sanctuaries and more. Since then, I have travelled vegan with this company to Sumatra, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The number of vegan travel companies and vegan travel experiences is rising rapidly. The travel industry is taking notice and companies are re-thinking their approach to travel experiences, especially those involving animals and food. Another case in point – Lonely Planet published its all-vegan travel handbook in 2019.



A vegan lifestyle can now cater to other dietary needs

In 2016, I discovered I had Coeliac Disease. This meant I had to eliminate all gluten from my diet. At the time, this was a little tricky because I also needed to find products that were vegan.



In just five or so years, the rise of vegan gluten-free products has been huge. Vegans who do have a chronic illness, intolerance or allergy can eat with greater confidence now. Australian vegan makers like cheese makers, chocolatiers, chefs and bakers are taking note and adjusting their approach to vegan food development. Dining out is becoming easier too, with the rise of Coeliac Australia-approved restaurants serving vegan options.



Melbourne is the third most vegan-friendly city in the world

You know when veganism is more accepted when your city gets noticed for its vegan-friendly vibe. When I read this news in 2018/2019, I knew that veganism no longer existed on the fringes. Culinary pioneers in Melbourne like Smith & Daughters, Vegie Bar, Lord of the Fries and Shakahari have helped shape veganism to what it looks like in the city today by serving all-vegan options or remaining vegetarian with easily veganisable dishes. Now, Melbourne has vegan innovators like Noo Moo Foods, Woking Amazing, Mister Nice Guy's Bakeshop and Good Love.



Australia is one of the fastest growing vegan markets in the world

In 2019, market research company Euromonitor International found Australia to be the third-fastest growing vegan market in the world. This is thanks to high-quality vegan food and travel experiences. Yet, it's still early days. Some companies purposely avoid using a vegan-friendly message because owners feel this may impact business in a negative way. While Australia is a fast-growing market, the wider – non-vegan – public perception needs to be more accepting. In time, I believe this will come but I hope the time comes sooner rather than later. Animals, the environment and our own wellbeing depend on it.

Photo credits: Justine de Jonge



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Who Would Ever Want To Do It? The Harsh Realities of Food-Based Business

By Vanessa Cullen



Photo credit: Paulius Dragunas on Unsplash

Six months ago, you opened your vegan patisserie. You left your corporate job to start your dream business. Your friends and family told you that your cakes are so good – you should sell them! You held a market stall and always sold out quickly.

You found a small shop with cheap rent, on the outskirts of a thriving foodie area. You purchased second-hand equipment and a DIY fit-out. You commissioned a logo from an online freelancer. You offered cash payment to a casual to assist you in-store. When you announced the opening on your socials, the crowds went wild. Hundreds of people said they would come!

What has happened since has been nothing like the life of passion and cruelty-free creativity you imagined.

Sure, there have still been days when your bakes sell

out quickly. But people have complained on social media about slow service, mistaken orders, cold coffee. Many love your creations but grumble about how expensive your hand-crafted food is compared to mass-produced alternatives.

After busy days you spend the night politely responding to negative reviews, whilst baking for the next day in a shop with unreliable power, on equipment that constantly breaks down. Other days, you throw out loads of unsold stock – there are only so many sweets your family can eat. You plan a day off to celebrate your child's birthday only to receive a text message from your assistant telling you they've taken a job elsewhere.

You find that a large delivery you ordered has arrived water damaged, leaving you short on packaging. A health inspector from Council stops by and asks why your shop isn't registered with Council or approved for food service. You explain that the leasing agent told you no approvals were required, but the inspector sets you straight. They leave you with threats of fines and closure if you don't get

the appropriate approvals and registrations in place immediately.

Your partner is angry that all you do is work and your business is haemorrhaging money. You explain that it will all be ok once you reach scale to buy bulk ingredients at wholesale prices instead of having to pay retail. You haven't been able to pay yourself in the last nine months, let alone make back the setup costs that you borrowed from family. You open your email to find a 'cease and desist' demand from the rightful copyright owner of the logo your freelancer sold you.

You feel so broken. How has your dream come to this?

Every single point in this story has been relayed to me by a food business founder. Many of my clients have come to me suffering these types of scenarios and worse; common realities of food start-up.

To avoid these pitfalls, consider the following:

- Never believe a real estate agent. Invest in getting experienced professional inspection/advice and make your own enquiries directly with Council.
- Rent may be cheap because the building isn't properly maintained, lacks parking and lacks foot traffic.
- Ensure second-hand equipment is bought with warranties and service records. Make sure you know how to check and maintain. Consider leasing options
- Register your business name and trademark. Have your logo designed by an insured local professional. Search for any similar marks online before you pay in full.
- Gain experience in running a food business before you go all in. Enrol in training or work in other people's businesses. Having mentors in the industry is priceless and can mean the difference between your success or failure.
- Good support and education will teach you about wholesale group buying opportunities, margins, pricing, how to factor in all costs (including a proper salary for yourself) and profit. Then you can objectively evaluate if starting a business will be viable. Know what viability looks like and have a realistic plan to break even.
- Most consumers have never run a food business. They don't appreciate key ingredient price increases or that you haven't slept in a week. All they care about is their purchasing experience. Remember this. It's tough but true.

- Don't start until you've saved up enough money to do the basics properly, even if you just produce from home and don't take on premises. Make sure you have a safety net.

Customers of food-based businesses can play a key role, too:

- Take pause before you post an unsolicited review or 'constructive criticism' in public online. You shouldn't accept horrendous service, poor quality and risks to health/safety but making petty complaints is cruel.
- Consider whether you are promoting the vegan movement by complaining about the cost of vegan food? Are you doing a disservice to the movement by disparaging those behind the scenes, trying to build our collective dream?
- It costs so little to be supportive. Everyone wins by being kind.

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Photo credit: DLKR on Unsplash



Jo Frederiks

Artist and Animal Rights Activist

Firstly, Jo, you are a well-known artist whose main medium for activism is art. What drew you to art as a way to communicate animal rights themes?

I felt helpless regarding the enormous harm society inflicts on animals. Hence, I needed to do something about it. This injustice compelled me to empower myself and the movement by creating a strong visual message concerning animal rights. Art can be a potent, long-lasting tool to communicate visually to a wide-reaching audience.

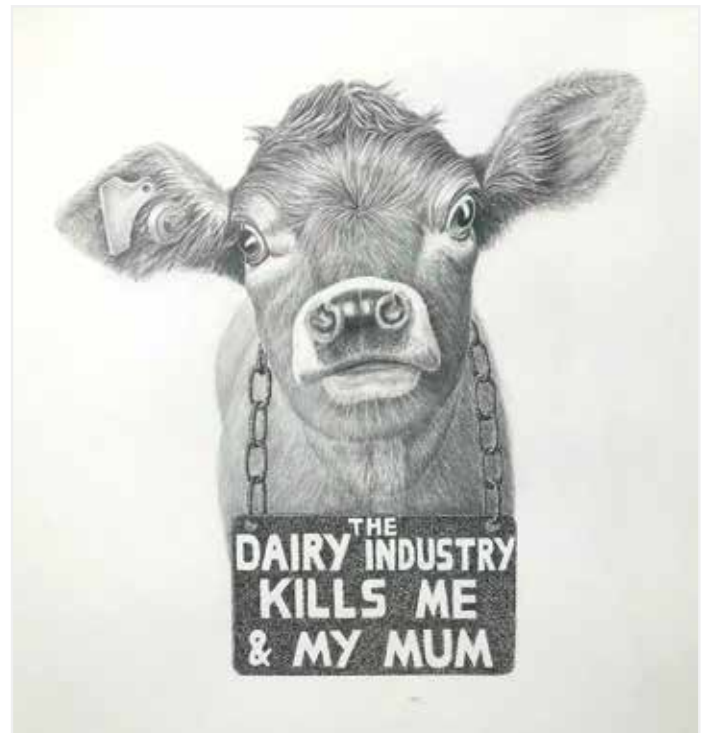
Your work is described as ‘sensitive, exquisite and beautifully detailed’; it brings beings to life. How does a piece of art captivate an audience and make them think about their own life choices?

Most non-vegans will refuse to watch documentaries such as *Earthlings*, undercover videos, graphic photographs, or read articles concerning animal rights. However, they will gaze and ponder artworks depicting similar themes. Art can draw people in and make them question topics they had never considered before – it can be an epiphany for many. Some of my pieces are controversial or considered shocking, use symbolism or humour, or juxtapose the macabre against innocence to thought-provoke and invite conversation.

Your animal rights art documentary with the international TV series Put Some Colour In Your Life has been chosen for the Lunar Codex project, a digital and analogue archive to preserve contemporary creative arts for future generations. This means your work is heading to the moon

on the rocket SpaceX. What do you hope to achieve by having your work preserved in this way?

It means my artwork and its message is preserved for perpetuity – not many artists can claim that. I see it as a symbolic honour. Animal rights art is kept in a time capsule on the pristine lunar surface while the environmental crisis caused by animal agriculture fast-tracks us to climate collapse and the inevitable extinction of humankind.



This achievement is not only a world first for women artists but also for the animal rights movement. Where do you see the role of art in the future when it comes to animal rights and upcoming work from emerging female artists?

I only see it growing and hopefully becoming bolder, more evocative and innovative in truth-telling. The artist's role is to reflect the times, challenge society's boundaries and evoke change. I first joined social media 13 years ago and didn't know any animal rights artists aside from the prolific Sue Coe. Today, I know many. Nowadays, it's lovely to see vegan activism is everywhere on social media!

Do you think future generations will look back at your work with the same eyes as this current generation? Or, do you think people will look back with a sense of disbelief with regards to the way animals are treated now?

I have no doubt generations in decades to come will recoil in disbelief and absolute horror at society's collective indifference to the creatures it belittles. For things as trivial as taste, fashion, entertainment, and other products to be prioritised over the plight of trillions of innocent non-human lives each year is inconceivable. History books of the future will record this injustice as the most shameful, horrific horror story ever told. It's a dire call to action and we must all be more effective and proactive in our advocacy or activism.

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Vegan Storybooks

By Scott Reeve

As a young boy, I loved going to my Grandma's house and digging through her "box of books". My favourite happened to be *Tootle*, the story of a young train learning about life's lessons. One of the illustrations I absorbed myself in was of the little train jumping off the tracks and playing in a field of flowers. It conveyed such a happy, carefree feeling. Could this image I fell in love with as a kid have contributed to my sense of adventure as an adult?

Thirty years later, I decided to "jump off the tracks" and moved from Canada to Taiwan to teach English. As fate would have it, a bookstore opened near my home, containing thousands of used children's books! It was like a dream come true. One day, as I was rummaging through the shelves of books, one cover in particular took my breath away – it was *Tootle*! As I flipped through the pages, waves of memories filled my mind, and when I reached the page of the little train dancing in the field of flowers, I felt tears well up in my eyes. It was like meeting a long-lost friend after 40 years! This profound emotional experience made it clear to me how illustrated storybooks can stay with us for life.

When I became a children's book author, I wanted to create similar memories for young readers through vegan-centered stories and rich, vibrant illustrations. After years of writing, I also discovered that vegan storybooks allow parents and teachers to introduce "heavy" concepts in a light-hearted manner. Imaginative storylines with clever, humorous pictures can make learning about sensitive topics easier, especially when it comes to the killing of animals. They also expand kids' emotional literacy to empathise with all sentient beings, not just humans.

After being exposed to a number of storybooks, we can start to encourage youngsters to create their own vegan stories! This will solidify their ideals even further, empower them with greater confidence, and provide a sense of contribution, especially when sharing with others.

So be sure to stock your home library with lots of vegan storybooks! They will create long-lasting Tootle-like memories for your kids, help them realise the truth about food in a fun way, and advance their compassionate creativity. Our society is in such a "spin" at the moment, a clear path focused on love and kindness is the only way out – and what better way to start kids off in that direction than vegan storybooks.

www.thekindgarden.com





A Creative's Journey with Susie Sierra



My painting, 'Amant' (French for Lover) is about the symbiotic relationship within nature. Sometimes it's easy to forget that we are nature too and this painting always reminds me of that. The imagery was inspired by the Dutch Masters of the 17C, in particular Rachel Ryusch (1664-1750) who was a celebrated painter during a time when few women were recognised for such skills. I love painting in the old master's techniques, using transparent and semi-transparent layers to create a 3 dimensional effect.

Born in Queensland, Australian artist, Susie Sierra was treading the boards as an actor before her creative instincts led her into the world of fine art and beauty.

As an artist, her botanical paintings have been featured in Vogue Living, Belle, Inside Out and many other publications. She has performed in TV, film and repertory theatre in both Australia and the US.

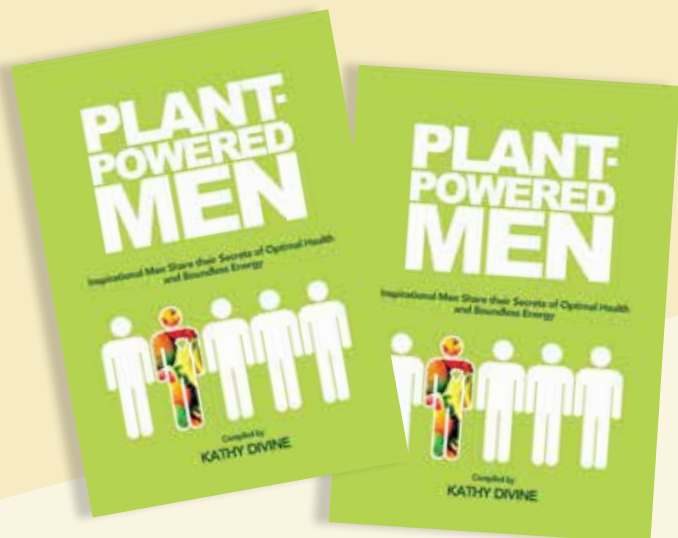
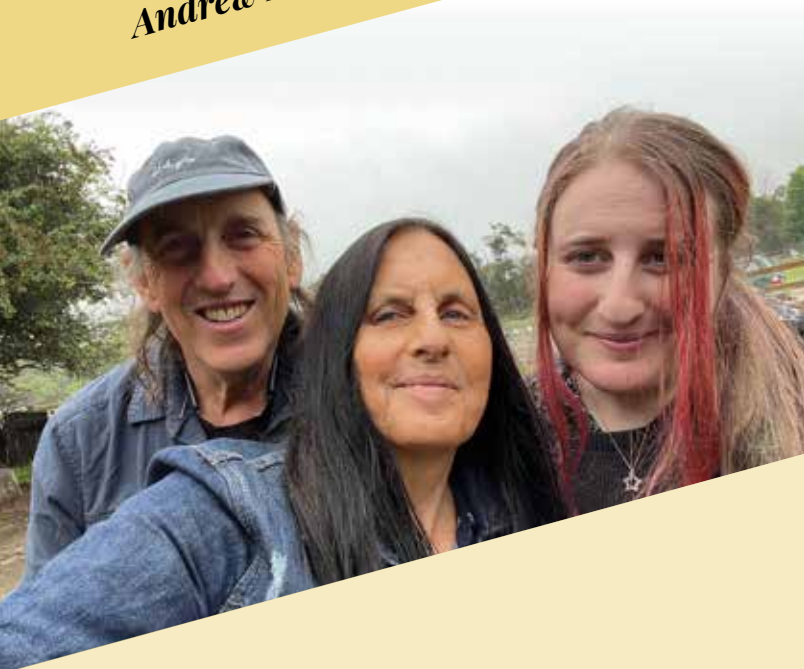
In fact, it was an affinity with botanicals that inspired Susie to develop her own luxury range of face oils. "I love painting nature and I've worked with artist's oils for over 20 years so developing these fragrant, nourishing facial oils into a skincare range was a natural choice for me."

"I was immediately drawn to the fragrance of the oils. They had a powerful effect on my emotions. I knew right away that I wanted to bring this element of emotional transformation into my beauty products," says Sierra.

www.susiesierra.com

Walking the Path of Integrity

Andrew Einspruch



What prompted you to make the shift to a vegan diet? How is it working for you?

I read somewhere once that there were only two reasons not to be vegan: selfishness or ignorance. That really resonates with me. We either choose to eat animal products for selfish reasons, or we eat them because we don't know any better. The more I learned about how animals were treated in the service of feeding humans, the less I wanted to be part of it.

What advice would you give men who are considering the switch to the vegan lifestyle?

Firstly, know that it is easy to do, especially in the age of the Internet. There are tons of resources out there with all kinds of information, recipes and motivators. So you don't have to do it alone, or work it all out yourself. There are so many delicious alternatives to charring a hunk of muscle tissue on a barbie. And if you need something meat-like, there are some very interesting faux meats around. These don't really appeal to me, but they can be a good transition tool.

Second, the whole protein thing has a lot of myth around it. If you eat anything that vaguely resembles a normal, healthy diet, you'll get enough protein. John Robbins, in *Diet for a New America* talks a lot about this. He cites how nutrition researchers studying protein-deficiency have to resort to artifice to create a protein-deficient diet.

Do you feel strong and healthy as a vegan man?

Absolutely. No question. If veganism can work for elite level athletes and body builders, it can work for anyone. I live an active life on a farm of rescued animals. It is long hours with plenty of physical work. My whole family is vegan, and we're doing fine, thank you.

Anything else you would like to add?

The time to change is now. What gives us the right to cause harm and distress to others, and to do it on an industrial scale? Animals are sentient, feeling beings, not fungible commodities. Here at A Place of Peace, we have one of the largest farm animal sanctuaries anywhere. Living with these beautiful cows, sheep, goats and horses who are so intelligent, funny and wise, it makes you wonder how we could ever do them harm.

This is an extract from the book *Plant-Powered Men: Inspiring Men Share Their Secrets of Optimal Health and Boundless Energy*, compiled by Kathy Divine.

Available from www.vegantastic.com (our new online vegan book and magazine store) and major online bookstores.

www.deepeacestrust.com
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Interview with

Vince Law

**Founder,
vpets**

Vince, you are originally from Singapore. When did you get the idea for vpets and what motivated you to start your online business once you moved to Australia in 2011?

I was ordering vegan cat food from veganpet.com.au to Singapore in 2008 but the shipping was more expensive than the products themselves. That made me think about starting a vegan pet food business but I put that idea on hold until after I moved to Australia.

How long have you been vegan for and what inspired you to go vegan?

I was vegetarian from 2009 to 2012. I transitioned to a vegan diet in 2012 because I got tired of lying to myself that cheese was okay.

Like Australia, Singapore is another vegan-friendly destination. Is there an equivalent to vpets in Singapore?

There were a few options to get vegan dog food before I moved to Australia but vegan cat food was not possible at that time. I noticed there is Ami vegan cat food in Singapore now but I have not been able to import Ami products to Australia yet.

You adopted your cat Milo in 2001 when he was a tiny, sick kitten. You mention on the vpets website that 'your animal companions are your greatest teachers'. What did Milo teach you while he was still alive and part of your family? You now have Mini, Coco, Moca and Rocky in your life so what have they taught you, too?

Milo was my first animal companion. He showed me that animals have their own personalities and feelings. He inspired me to stop eating meat because I did not feel good about doing it after I had him in my life. Rocky is my first dog. He used to be hyperactive and loved chasing the cats when he was younger. My three cats are sweet most of the time but Moca can be a very nasty cat when she is upset with me over something I did or did not do.

The rest of them taught me it requires a lot of time and patience to discover someone's quirks and handle them.

There can be some debate about whether or not to feed dogs and cats a vegan diet. What advice would you give to someone who is considering a vegan diet for their furbaby?

Cats and dogs need proper nutrition to be healthy. The key is about supplying the right nutrients and there is no magical nutrient in meat that cannot be replaced either artificially or through non-meat ingredients.

What are your future dreams for vpets?

I would like to be able to ship my products from Melbourne in addition to Sydney. This would reduce the shipping costs and time for customers in Victoria.

www.vpets.com.au

Facebook: @vpetsveganpets

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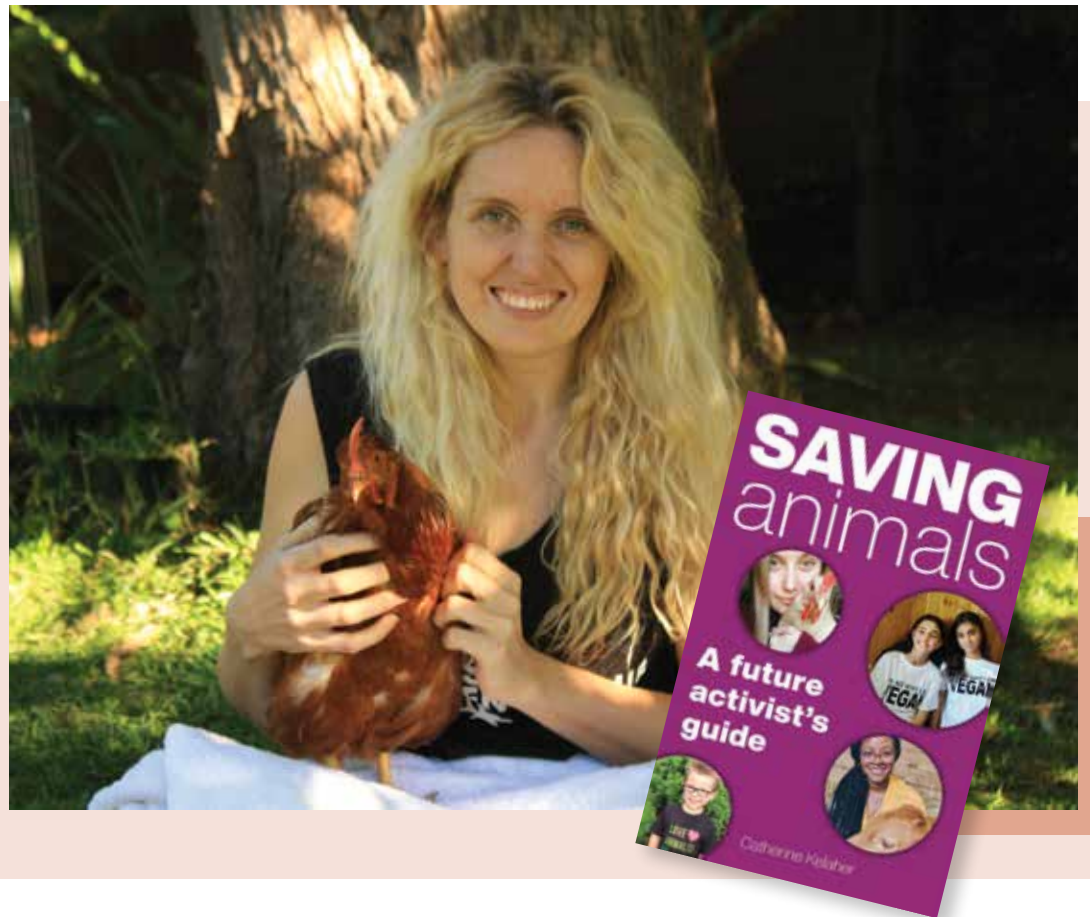
Saving Animals

A Future Activist's Guide

Catherine Kelaher

Book Review by Penny Hall

Catherine Kelaher, from NSW Hen Rescue, has infused *Saving Animals* with a wise and patient love both for all animals, and for the intelligence and compassion of young people. This book offers practical, real-life-tested ideas and inspiration for vegan and aspiring vegan kids and teens. As individuals, as members of families, and as students and community members, readers will grow in their sense of efficacy and power to prompt change for the better.



The book is organised logically and clearly to enable readers to access relevant information easily. With great clarity, Kelaher describes the ethical foundations of veganism, which makes it a great standalone tool for vegan advocacy. There are chapters on negotiating with and responding to others' concerns, criticisms and curiosity, how to educate in fun and appealing ways, how to raise funds, and how to keep all animals – including ourselves – well and safe.

As those who have been actively 'walking the talk', Kelaher and her profile subjects acknowledge the challenges as well as the distinctive joys to be found on the cruelty-free path. Their examples of advocacy and activism provide models for creative, sustainable, behavioural and cultural change, awareness raising, networking and self-care. A frequent theme of the book is that the vegan path (while sometimes

heartbreaking and difficult) is an *expansive* one, giving us increased opportunities and experiences rather than involving deprivation.

The text is beautifully supported with black and white photographs of the author and her human and non-human animal colleagues, as well as by artwork by Jess Henderson. It provides plenty of links to further information to enhance new activists' breadth of knowledge and their capacity to bring veganism to wider, more diverse arenas.

While the intended audience is children and adolescents, *Saving Animals* has enough insights to prompt any of us to learn, do and hope for more.

<https://ashlandcreekpress.com>

Instagram: @veganhen

Instagram: @nswhenrescue

1

Hey I'm Vegan Mineral Sunscreen SPF50+ By Justine de Jonge

As a vegan traveller who has fair skin and gets sunburnt at the mere sight of sun, I appreciate a sunscreen that can tick all the boxes...and more.



Hey I'm Vegan Mineral Sunscreen SPF50+ is the latest sunscreen on the market that's suitable for vegans. The product is the world's first certified 100% vegan and 100% organic mineral sunscreen made right here in Australia. Another reassuring bonus for vegan travellers? Hey I'm Vegan is reef-safe. The product contains zinc oxide which, according to the company, is the only broad spectrum active ingredient. Not only does it block sun, zinc oxide – apparently – heals wounds and boosts the immune system.

As far as its effectiveness as a sunscreen goes, it is a thick cream that spreads firmly yet rubs into the skin efficiently. It doesn't leave a dense stickiness on the skin like some other brands and the skin feels protected. You'll be relieved to know that the smell is neutral, so no overpowering odour like chemical-based sunscreens. After a few hours, Hey I'm Vegan is still doing its job and protecting my skin from strong UV rays on a full sun day.

Hey I'm Vegan comes in a durable, slim-lined recyclable bottle with a screw-top to make application easy. Plus, the size and shape of the bottle fits well in a vegan traveller's toiletry bag. Suffice to say, I can't wait to take it away with me again!



www.heyimvegan.com
Instagram: @heyimveganau

2

ROCC Naturals B12 Toothpaste By Kathy Divine

I'm a big fan of innovation and convenience. So, when I became aware of the launch of a toothpaste by ROCC that has vitamin B12 in it, I was naturally intrigued. What a great idea! It's well known that B12 is well absorbed under the tongue (sublingually), so B12 in toothpaste makes a lot of sense. And there's research to backup the effectiveness of it too, and ROCC have formulated their toothpaste based on the research (2017 American Society for Nutrition study).

So what's it like? It's great! I tried the B12 Mint + Coconut Oil toothpaste. It has a fresh minty taste and I feel good in the knowledge that it's vegan, cruelty free, gluten free and has none of the nasties such as sulphates and parabens. It also comes in a biodegradable tube – the first of its kind in Australia. The tube breaks down in landfill after 6-10 years. Nice one.

ROCC B12 Mint + Coconut oil toothpaste is available nationally in Coles supermarkets.

We 

Product Reviews

By Justine de Jonge
and Kathy Divine



www.roccnaturals.com.au
Instagram: @roccnaturals



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Alive - Plant Based Festival
@aliveplantbasedfestival

Queensland Vegan Markets
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Vegan Advocacy

Vegan for the Animals
@vegan.f.t.a



Check out what these cool vegans are doing on **Instagram** to support and inspire people to adopt small sample of accounts to follow. There are so many excellent accounts. We will share more next time!



Innovators

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