

Plant-Based *Holiday Food Guide*

Ellen Kanner





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I wanted to get you a little something. I hope these plant-based recipes add some sparkle and cheer to your holiday. We need it.

These recipes aim to deliver all the flavor and fun you deserve. They also reveal plant-based swaps that make being vegan easy and yummy.

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Creamy Dill Dip

This dill dip is crazy rich and creamy, thanks to cashews, not dairy. It's six ingredients and five minutes, and some hidden nourishment, with the beans and nuts adding fiber and protein. My husband and students love it. I hope you do, too.



Red Lentil Soup

Red lentils, the cutest and quickest-cooking lentils may be small, but they've got all the protein and fiber of their fellow beans. This easy saffro-scented soup comes with benefits. The mint pesto brightens flavor and mood.



Beet, Celery and Arugula Salad With Brazil Nuts

You are multi-faceted. Your salad should be, too. This one's a party on a platter, a happy combination of seasonal produce, both cooked and raw. Feel free to swap out these vegetables and whole grains for what you have. As I say in my conscious cookery classes and videos, this is about using what you have, and wasting nothing.



Farrotto With Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Broccoli, and Basil

Sun-dried tomatoes, nutritional yeast, not butter and cheese, bring richness and umami to this farro-based spin on risotto (a splash of white wine doesn't hurt, either). Farro is an ancient strain of wheat. It's got great chew, and because it's minimally processed, most gluten-sensitive people can enjoy it, too.



Thanksgiving Kale with Fennel, Cranberries and Walnuts

This is one of my favorite holiday dishes. It's got goodness from greens, but the cranberries and walnuts and sherry make it festive, too. I love it so much, I created two versions, one a quick saute and the other raw.



Bohemian Mushrooms

Easy, yet opulent, this vegan riff on paprikash is an homage to my Bohemian/Romanian/Hungarian ancestors. Mushrooms, with their meaty texture and richness, are a natural substitute for the traditional chicken or pork. Besides, the Czech and Hungarians love their fungi. The flavor comes from the spice they prize above all others — paprika.



Sticky Toffee Pudding

A holiday feast needs a sweet finish, and this sticky toffee pudding, a beloved Brit dessert, delivers. Glad to share this recipe and my very exciting vegan discovery — plain seltzer stands in for eggs in this cake. The sweetness comes naturally, from dates. More sweetness comes from the caramel sauce you pour on top — its pretty sticky, too.



Panforte

Bonus — want to get your holiday baking on? Have I got a confection for you — panforte. It's a Christmas tradition, Italian and artisanal as anything. Rich with chocolate, spices, nuts and dried fruit, it means strong bread. You'll need some arm strength for the stirring, but wow, is it worth it. Serve it in skinny slices, maybe with an espresso or glass of Sambucca. It'll last you well through the holidays and keep you smiling.



Hopping John

Ready for a little good luck? Me, too. So start the new year with hopping john. This simple dish proves yet again how much flavor you can get just from beans and whole grains. It's comforting, satisfying, and soaks up the yuck from any holiday excess. Eaten on New Year's Day, it brings you good luck. Here's to good luck and brighter days.



Sobremesa is a Spanish term meaning the happy, relaxed feeling kindled by sharing a good meal with people you love. This year hasn't delivered much in the way of happiness and relaxation, has it? The day when we can all crowd into the kitchen and around the table and laugh and talk and eat together can't come too soon. Till then, I hope these plant-based tips and recipes offer you a little *sobremesa*. Happy holidays.

With love from my kitchen to yours,
Ellen