Vegan Filipino Food

ILLUSTRATED BY
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Vegan Filipino Food

Brought to you by
Food Empowerment Project
Illustrated by
Victoria Lee
Mabuhay

Have you eaten yet? In this booklet you will find recipes for delicious vegan Filipino dishes, along with information on the power of your food choices. Whether you are vegan, vegetarian, or vegan-curious, we want to help you prepare delicious and nutritious meals without harming animals, other humans, yourself, or the Earth!

Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P) created this booklet to share flavors from the Philippine Islands with our Filipino/a/x community and beyond. Erika and Eva, two proud Pinay members of the F.E.P. team, are excited to demonstrate that by adapting traditional recipes and exploring dishes that naturally do not contain animal ingredients, it is possible to eat vegan and still enjoy our favorite comfort foods. We hope to inspire our kababayans to expand our circle of compassion and justice to include non-human animals.

Hand in hand with advocating for animals, F.E.P. also views advocating for farm workers as an essential facet of social justice. Most fruits and vegetables that we eat are picked by farm workers who often suffer from unfair treatment. These issues deeply resonate with Filipino values of community solidarity and land stewardship. Our people have fought for farm worker justice in struggles such as the 1965 California Delano grape strike, started by Larry Itliong, Philip Vera Cruz, and other manongs, and supported by Chicanx allies such as Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta (the co-founders of the United Farm Workers).

Maraming salamat to our talented creative team and to the volunteers who donated recipes and photos! Thank you for partnering with us to carry our people’s traditions of growth, compassion, and respect for the environment into the 21st century. It is an honor to have curated this celebration of our homeland, our ancestors, and our values.

If you enjoy this booklet, please visit veganfilipinofood.com and consider donating your own authentic, homemade food creations. We welcome more recipe ideas from our pamilya to inspire justice and compassion for the animals, the Earth, and people!

Padayon,

Erika and Eva
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What is Veganism?

Veganism in its most basic sense is about trying to minimize suffering in the world by reducing the harm we cause to animals. As you learn more about veganism, you will discover that it also has a big impact on many other areas of our world. Vegans believe we can extend care to other species by not consuming anything derived from nonhuman animals or insects - for instance, by avoiding animal-based “meat,” eggs, milk, fishes and other aquatic life, and honey. The best news is that vegans still enjoy a wide range of delicious and nutritionally vibrant plant-based foods. Being vegan also involves expanding our circle of care to other aspects of our life beyond food and thinking about the opportunities for living compassionately in terms of what we wear, what kinds of products we use, and what kinds of entertainment we support. For example, vegans aim to avoid the use of animal-based products, including leather, fur, wool, silk, or down, and skin- and body-care products or cosmetics that include animal-based ingredients or were tested on animals. Vegans will additionally opt for enjoying the wide range of entertainment and family activities that don’t exploit animals. This means avoiding circuses that use animals, zoos, rodeos, aquariums, and marine parks. While it is impossible to entirely avoid harming other species, vegans aim to reduce and eliminate, as much as possible, their harmful impacts.

The remarkable thing about focusing on the power of your food choices is that it’s a form of activism you can engage in several times a day!

Veganism and Animals

Many people choose veganism because they care deeply about nonhuman animals and don’t want to participate in the suffering and violence that animals experience for the production of food, clothing, cosmetics, and entertainment. We know that we share this wonderful planet with animals, who have rich inner lives and social bonds with one another, including those who live in oceans and lakes. They experience love, joy, frustration, pain, and a whole range of other emotions. Sadly, animals are exploited in a variety of ways (such as farming, product testing, and entertainment) through which they experience bodily violence, psychological torment, and the trauma of repeated separation from their family and friends. For instance, cows in the dairy industry are forcibly impregnated over and over again, go through incredible anguish when their baby calves are taken away from them within a few hours or days of birth, and are milked intensively until they are deemed “spent” and sent to slaughter long before their natural lifespan is up. Animals suffer tremendously so that humans can consume their bodies in many different forms. We believe a primary reason to go vegan is to show compassion and respect for other species by not causing them harm.
The Humane Myth

Have you ever seen products labeled as “humanely raised” or “humanely slaughtered”? Some farms that raise animals for food brand their products with these marketing terms. Consumers concerned with the welfare of animals will often choose products labeled with promises of “humaneness,” but these terms can be confusing and misleading. In reality, nearly all animals raised for food are forcibly reproduced (usually through artificial insemination), separated from their young and other family members, and slaughtered in adolescence. It’s important to know what labels mean and how they are used by the industry to mislead consumers. Here are a couple common examples used by the egg industry: Cage free refers to egg-laying hens who are housed in a building or enclosure without the use of cages. It doesn’t mean they get to live outside or are treated with care and consideration. Free range refers to egg-laying hens who are housed in a building or enclosure with continuous access to outdoors. It’s important to note that the U.S. government does not specify whether hens actually need to spend any time outdoors, just that they have “access,” and, in fact, that access might just be a small opening that leads to a screened-in area where only a limited number of hens can be outdoors. Knowing what labels actually mean can help to dispel the humane myth. If you care about animals and you don’t want to cause them harm, stay away from all animal products. Knowledge is power! Food is power!

Veganism and the Environment

In addition to being compassionate for animals, veganism is also better for the environment. Both large- and small-scale farms that raise animals have profoundly negative consequences on our air, water, and soil quality. Farmed animals contaminate surrounding waterways, killing off huge areas of aquatic life and creating marine dead zones. Air and water contamination pose a major problem as a result of manure disposal, chemical usage, and disposal practices, especially since there are typically no waste treatment facilities for farms.

While pollution is almost everywhere, Black and Brown communities are burdened with a disproportionate number of facilities that fill the air, soil, and water with contaminants negatively affecting the well-being of residents. Their health is also often compromised due to a lack of access to healthy foods in their neighborhoods. Those who work on environmental justice issues refer to these inequities as environmental racism.

Animal agriculture is also highly resource-intensive, demanding extreme levels of water use, land clearing, and deforestation (in the U.S. and around the world). Following a vegan lifestyle isn’t free from environmental impact, but choosing veganism dramatically lowers your carbon footprint and keeps you from contributing to some of the worst forms of environmental degradation and injustice.
Veganism Nutrition and Community Health

Many people of all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds are increasingly choosing veganism for its positive impacts on their individual and community health. There continues to be an increased understanding that foods high in processed and animal-based ingredients are implicated in many of the major diseases and causes of mortality, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. Whole food, plant-based diets are growing in popularity not only for their ability to meet the nutritional needs of humans at all stages of life but also as a way to prevent some of these diet-related diseases. Black and Brown communities and low-income areas are especially prone to experiencing high rates of diet-related diseases due to a lack of access to healthy foods, and we know this access should be a right, not a privilege! This is one reason why it’s an area we work on.

Lactose Normal

The majority of Black, Indigenous, and Brown people (roughly 50 million people in the United States) do not possess the enzyme required to break down dairy foods. Most often referred to as “lactose intolerance” (a term that implies there is something wrong with those who don’t digest the milk of another species), Food Empowerment Project coined the term “lactose normal” to reject the tendency to frame those who do not digest lactose as abnormal. Making high-lactose foods the norm has long been a form of dietary colonization, both in the past as colonial diets were introduced and forcibly replaced non-colonial food traditions, and in the present with the continued non-availability of non-dairy (i.e., dairy alternatives) foods, especially in areas where Black, Indigenous, and Brown people live. Having access to nondairy foods is an important step in decolonizing the diet.

Slaughterhouse and Factory Farm Workers

As if there weren’t enough reasons already to go vegan (for the animals, for the environment, for human health), the plight of those working in animal agriculture adds another compelling reason to not support animal consumption. The human laborers employed by slaughterhouses and factory farms are a highly exploited group, comprised primarily of Black and Brown people, immigrants (both documented and undocumented), and people with felony convictions who, because of discriminatory hiring practices, have trouble finding work elsewhere. Nearly all slaughterhouse and factory farm workers have low incomes and take work in these spaces because they have few or no other options. This work is some of the most dangerous in society, and the speed with which workers have to perform their jobs causes repetitive stress injuries, accidents (sometimes fatal), and psychological harm. Choosing a vegan lifestyle is therefore one way to avoid supporting this particular form of exploitative labor.
Eating on a Budget

We know it’s not always easy for everyone to go vegan, as many people aren’t paid a living wage or may lack access to healthy foods. We advocate supporting living-wage efforts to help everyone afford healthy foods. For people who have the ability to live on a budget, these are some tips to help you eat vegan with limited funds. Buying foods in bulk, where bulk food buying is a possibility, is often cheaper than buying the pre-packaged option. Buying dried beans instead of canned, for instance, and dry grains in larger quantities is usually more cost effective. Community buying can be a great option for purchasing food in larger, discounted quantities, both because it makes it more affordable and because communities can create networks to share the burden of accessing foods that may require some travel to reach. Working out a collaborative buying agreement with others in your community could involve different community members going to different stores to save time, or it could involve buying (online or in-person) a large quantity of grains or dried legumes to be shared. It is unfortunate that farmers’ markets are often held at times when many working people cannot attend and they aren’t always promoted in various languages, but many are increasingly accepting Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits/EBT, and some even have programs that provide accompanying discounts or ways to increase the impact of each dollar spent to offset the costs of farmers’ market purchasing. At a more structural level, more diverse forms of activism oriented around access to healthy foods are needed, where people can grow their own food and businesses like worker-owned cooperatives can flourish, where the money and successes can stay in the community and help that community to thrive.

A More Ethical Veganism

Just because it’s vegan doesn’t mean that it’s cruelty-free! There are many other areas of violence and exploitation to take into consideration in a vegan lifestyle. Grave injustices occur in the treatment of human farm workers and laborers involved in the production of produce and other foods that vegans regularly eat. We know that learning about these issues can help to ensure eating a diet that reflects a commitment to nonviolence, justice, and compassion so we can eat with our ethics.

U.S. Farm Workers and Slavery

Have you ever thought about the people behind the scenes when it comes to the food on your plate? The plight of farm workers (including children) who labor to grow and harvest produce is a core issue in making a more just food system. Farm workers labor under highly exploitative conditions in the United States and around the world to bring produce to market. They earn below-poverty-level wages for their work, are exposed to extreme heat, are forced to live in substandard housing (while many are homeless), are subjected to physical and sexual abuse, and are routinely exposed to agricultural chemicals. Farm workers in the United States have an average life expectancy of 49 years as a result of these conditions. Within the United States, slavery in agriculture is ongoing and involves confinement; forced labor with no pay; psychological, physical, and sexual abuse; and human trafficking. Recent examples of the latter include workers from Mexico and Guatemala enslaved on citrus farms in Florida and the Carolinas; migrant farm workers on tomato farms in Immokalee, Florida; and Haitian farm workers on pea and bean farms in southern Florida.

When possible, choosing organic produce is one way to reduce harm for farm workers, since it eliminates or reduces toxic exposure to pesticides and herbicides. Another powerful way to make a difference is to honor boycotts called by farm workers themselves to stand in solidarity with worker-led labor movements. Connect with F.E.P. through our website and social media to learn more about other ways of fighting for farm workers’ rights.
**Child Labor and Slavery in the Chocolate Industry**

Do you love chocolate? Have you ever wondered where your chocolate was produced? Chocolate is one of those pleasures some people say they simply can’t live without, and luckily there are plenty of chocolate products that are vegan. But cocoa production is a complicated and often highly exploitative endeavor for the humans who work harvesting and processing it. Approximately 70 percent of cocoa produced globally comes from Western Africa (primarily Ghana and the Ivory Coast), where cocoa farms engage in widespread human trafficking, the worst forms of child labor, and slavery. As a result of the secrecy of the cocoa industry in this region and the danger of investigating labor practices, it’s difficult to really know whether any cocoa coming from this region is produced using ethical labor practices. Be sure to check our F.E.P. website for our chocolate list that shows companies we do (many from the Philippines) and do not feel comfortable recommending based on their sourcing and labor practices. For your convenience when shopping, we also have an F.E.P. Chocolate List app available on both iOS and Android.

**An Ongoing Ethical Journey—Food Is Power!**

We know that becoming vegan is an ongoing process of learning and reflecting on how we can live more ethically and compassionately. This involves staying informed and considering the effects of our dietary choices on the animals, humans, and environment around us, and we’re aware that there are always more opportunities for greater ethical considerations. As we mentioned earlier, just because it’s vegan doesn’t mean it’s cruelty-free. Some of our favorite vegan foods further encourage us to think ethically about our everyday food choices. Bananas—the most commonly consumed fruit in the United States—are most often grown and distributed under conditions of extreme injustice involving violent labor practices; corporate ownership and consolidation; environmental devastation; and colonialism, sexism, and racism.

Much coffee production involves child labor, slavery, environmental destruction, and the exploitation of nonhuman animals. Wine production involves the widespread use of farm workers employed precariously and seasonally, and wine often uses animal-based filtration systems in its production. Palm oil, an ingredient in many processed foods, is implicated in the massive destruction of land and forests that are home to Indigenous communities and nonhuman animal species like orangutans.

One of the inspiring things about going vegan is how it can be an ongoing journey of growth, new knowledge, and continued ethical reflection that makes space for understanding how we are connected and accountable to others. Food Empowerment Project is here to help you on your journey by providing information on our website, making recommendations, and constantly working to share resources for how we can all live more ethically through the power of our food choices!
Entrées
“CHICKEN” ADOBO

10 minutes (+35 minutes marinating time)
30 minutes
8 servings

Vinegar and soy sauce are the heart of adobo, and this delicious balance of salty and savory is just one take on what many consider the Philippines unofficial national dish that has many variations throughout the Philippine Islands!

Recipe by Roberto Galera with vegan modification by Chef Evangelina

1 (14 ounces) can Tender Bits or chicken flavored seitan
1½ cups of water
¼ cup cooking oil
¼ cup golden agave
¼ cup Bragg Liquid Aminos (or you can use low-sodium soy sauce)
3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon peppercorns
1 teaspoon dried bay leaves
4 teaspoons Himalayan pink salt
4 garlic cloves, peeled and grated fine

01 Cut the Tender Bits into bite-sized pieces and set aside.
02 Grate the garlic and place in a large glass casserole dish.
03 Pour the Bragg Liquid Aminos over the garlic.
04 Place the Tender Bits into the marinade and make sure it is all covered. Let marinate for a total of 30 minutes. (Stir the Tender Bits after 15 minutes to make sure all is equally marinated.)
05 Put a non-stick pan on the stove and set to medium high heat. When the pan is hot, slowly pour the oil into the pan.
06 Pick up the marinated Tender Bits with a slotted spoon so you do not pick up too much liquid and put in the pan. Brown each piece on all sides. You might have to do this in two batches. Do not overcrowd the Tender Bits or they will steam instead of brown. Once you have browned the first batch, set aside. Add the new batch to brown.
07 When both batches are done, combine the two batches into the pan.
08 Pour the remaining marinade over the Tender Bits in the pan and add the water. Bring to a boil.
09 As the Tender Bits are boiling, add the dried bay leaves, the salt, and the whole peppercorns.
10 Lower to simmer but with enough heat so it is at a low boil for 15 minutes.
11 Add apple cider vinegar and agave. Stir and cook for 5 more minutes.
12 Taste and adjust to your liking. Enjoy!
KARE-KARE
30 minutes 45 minutes 8–12 servings

Kare-Kare is a rich stew with a thick, savory peanut sauce. Traditionally, a Filipinx fiesta is not complete without this delicious dish, but this veganized version is simplified enough to be an everyday dinner.
Recipe by RG Enriquez at astigvegan.com.

1–2 banana blossom buds + water and juice of one lemon for soaking
3 tablespoons oil
4 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed, and minced
1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
A few pinches of sea salt
8 cups of water
2 eggplants, cut into one-inch slices
2 cups vegetable broth or more to taste
4½ tablespoons achuete or annatto powder, mixed and fully dissolved in 2 cups of water
1 cup peanuts, toasted and blended with ¾ cup of water until smooth and creamy
½ cup white rice, toasted and ground to a powder, mixed in ¼ cup water (make sure there are no lumps in the mixture by adding more water if necessary)
1 small bunch of long beans, cut to 2-inch slices, ends removed
2 pieces dried snow fungus, soaked in warm water for 1-3 minutes, base removed, cut into big chunks
1 bundle of baby bok choy, bottom stalk cut off, thoroughly washed
2 tablespoons black bean sauce mixed in 2 tablespoons nori seaweed flakes/powder (as a condiment) (optional)

01 Peel outer layers of banana blossom until you reach the pale yellow, tender bud. Discard outer layers and yellow pistils. Have a large bowl of salt or lemon water nearby. Oil your knife and cutting board to prevent sap from sticking. Cut off the stem and slice bud in half lengthwise. Cut in chunks and immediately submerge the banana blossom in salt/lemon water. Dismantle layers and soak for at least 15 minutes. Discard soaking water and do a final rinse.

02 In a large pot, sauté garlic with oil until fragrant. Follow with onions. Add a few pinches of sea salt and sauté until onions have turned soft and translucent.

03 Add banana blossom, eggplant, water, vegetable broth, and achuete mixture. Mix and cover pot. Simmer until eggplant and banana blossom are tender.

04 Add peanut butter. Simultaneously pour rice mixture while mixing pot with a ladle. Keep mixing until sauce gets smooth and creamy. Simmer for 10 minutes. If sauce gets too thick, add more water one cup at a time until consistency is creamy.

05 Adjust seasoning by adding more vegetable broth or peanut butter to taste.

06 Add long beans, snow fungus, and baby bok choy. Bring to a boil and turn off heat.

07 Serve hot, preferably with rice and black bean sauce on the side.

Substitution Notes:
If you have trouble finding some of the ingredients in this recipe, the following are the most acceptable substitutes:
Banana Blossom - substitute canned, which is ready to use
Peanuts - regular peanut butter
White Rice - toasted rice flour
Dried Snow Fungus - 3 tablespoons textured soy protein
SISIG

20 minutes  35–40 minutes   4 servings

Sisig is a traditional Kapampangan “pulutan,” a dish that goes well with an alcoholic drink. This vegan version tastes just like the original except you can make this in half the time. Top with a vegan fried egg for an authentic sisig experience.
Recipe by RG Enriquez of astigvegan.com.

For the Marinade:

- ½ cup soy sauce
- 3 cloves of garlic, peeled, crushed, and minced
- ¼ cup coconut vinegar
- ¾ tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon whole peppercorns

For the Main Ingredients:

- 7–10 shiitake mushrooms, diced
- 12 oyster mushrooms, diced
- 2 ounces of beech mushrooms, diced
- 1 block firm tofu, diced
- Smoked paprika (optional)

For the Sauté:

- 2 tablespoons refined coconut oil
- ½ tablespoon ginger, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- ½ yellow onion, diced
- 2 chili peppers, or more for an extra kick (you may also save some for garnish)
- ½ tablespoon kalamansi juice, or lemon or lime juice

01 Combine all the main ingredients, except tofu, into the marinade and marinate for 15 minutes. Remove mushrooms and set aside. Save marinade sauce.
02 Heat a pan over high heat and pour oil. Fry tofu on all sides until golden brown. Season with smoked paprika (optional).
03 Lower heat and set aside tofu. Add more oil and sauté garlic, ginger, and onion until onion has become soft and translucent.
04 Add chili pepper, mushroom, tofu, and kalamansi juice. Mix well. Add more marinade sauce if preferred.
05 Cook until sauce has reduced and dried up, about 15–20 minutes. If the sauce has not dried up, drain the remaining sauce. Continue to cook the tofu and mushrooms until there’s no more watery sauce. Adjust seasoning to taste. Turn off heat and serve hot, preferably with rice on the side.

Photo by Erika Galera.
Filipinx-Style Spaghetti

20 minutes 20 minutes 6 servings

Filipinx spaghetti is a Filipinx adaptation of Italian spaghetti that has a distinctively sweet sauce, topped with “hot dogs” and grated cheese. This Philippine comfort food is typically served on special occasions.

Recipe by RG Enriquez of astigvegan.com.

For the “Meat” of the Sauce:
12 ounces extra-firm tofu, frozen overnight or for at least 4 hours, then thawed, then crumbled (using your hands or food processor)
6 vegan hotdogs, thinly sliced
A sprinkle of organic sugar
4–5 tablespoons canola oil

For the Sauce:
5 cloves garlic, peeled, crushed, and minced
1 cup roughly chopped yellow onion
1 cup roughly chopped celery sticks
1 cup roughly chopped carrots
½ cup roughly chopped red bell pepper, seeds removed
Pinch of salt
Pinch of pepper
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish
¼ cup maple syrup (agave or organic sugar works too)
3–4 tablespoons soy sauce
¼ cup non-dairy milk
4 cups tomato sauce

For the Noodles:
¾ pound spaghetti noodles
Medium-sized pot of hot water

For Garnish: (optional)
¼ cup grated vegan cheddar cheese (optional)

01 Heat a medium-sized pan over high heat. Once hot, pour oil until it covers the base of the pan. Wait until oil is very hot. Carefully add crumbled tofu (do not overcrowd the pan, fry in batches if necessary) and fry until tofu is golden brown on all sides. Transfer to a plate.
02 Using the same pan, fry “hot dogs” slices and sprinkle sugar and salt. Fry both sides and turn off heat. Transfer alongside fried tofu.
03 Place onions, celery, bell pepper, and carrots in a food processor and pulse for one minute or until finely minced. Transfer to a bowl.
04 Using the same pan you fried the tofu and “hot dogs” in, sauté garlic until light golden. Follow with finely minced vegetables, salt, and pepper. Stir and cook for 3–5 minutes.
05 Add tomato sauce, tomato paste, sweet relish, soy sauce, maple syrup, and non-dairy milk. Mix well, cover, and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring every minute so sauce won’t stick on the bottom of the pan.
06 Add fried tofu and “hot dogs”. Mix well and if desired, add more salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Turn off heat.
07 Cook spaghetti per package’s direction (usually 1 lb of spaghetti in 4 quarts of boiling pot of water) until pasta is tender. Drain well using a colander.
08 To serve, place sauce over noodles and top with grated vegan cheese. Serve warm.
**PANCIT BIHON**

15 minutes  30 minutes  8 servings

Pancit Bihon is another classic Filipinx noodle dish that is easy to make with simple vegetable ingredients and delicious rice noodles. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of different versions of pancit, but this is one of the most popular crowd pleasers.

Recipe by Maria of @VeganCookingMom.

8 ounces of Pancit Bihon
1½ tablespoons oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 medium onion, minced
½ cup carrots, chopped
1 cup cabbage, chopped
1/3 cup red bell peppers, chopped
½ cup sweet peas, chopped
6 tablespoons soy sauce
3 cups vegetable broth
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
2 stalks green onions, chopped to garnish

01 Sauté garlic and onion in oil until golden brown.
02 Add vegetables and broth. Season with salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Do not overcook vegetables.
03 Remove vegetables from the pan.
04 Cook bihon/noodles in broth/sauce mixture for about 3–5 minutes. Add soy sauce according to your taste.
05 Remove cooked noodles from pan and arrange on a platter.
06 Add cooked vegetables on top of noodles. Put chopped green onions on top as garnishment.

**PINAKBET**

20 minutes  30 minutes  8 servings

Pinakbet or Pakbet is an indigenous mixed vegetable stew from the northern regions of the Philippines that is as flavorful as it is colorful. Try this delicious, hearty dish today and find out why it is a favorite amongst many Filipinx!

Recipe by Maria of @VeganCookingMom.

1½ tablespoons oil
1 medium onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, crushed and minced
2 tablespoons ginger, peeled, and thinly sliced into strips
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
2–3 cups vegetable broth
1 medium Chinese eggplant, quartered
1 medium bittermelon, quartered
7–8 pieces okra
2 cups squash (calabaza or kabocha), quartered
8 pieces sitaw/long beans, ends trimmed and cut into 3-inch lengths
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

01 Sauté garlic and ginger in oil until golden brown. Add onion and tomatoes.
02 Add squash and 2 cups broth. Cook until tender.
03 Add bittermelon and okra. When cooked half-done, add eggplant and long beans. Add more broth to your liking.
04 Season with salt and pepper.
Snacks
Lumpia

30-60 minutes  10-20 minutes  30 pieces

Lumpia is a popular mainstay at Filipino food gatherings and special occasions. Golden, crisp and in a fun, bite-sized, they’re the perfect appetizer or snack!

Recipe by Jennifer Agliam Doria.

Photo by Erika Galera.

2 packages of vegan-friendly lumpia wrappers
1 tablespoon coconut oil (or other neutral tasting oil)
1 pound of minced white mushrooms (or a ground veggie crumble substitute)
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 medium white onion, chopped
1½ cups of mixed vegetables such as green beans, celery, carrots, cabbage, cut julienne
1–2 tablespoons soy sauce or liquid amino acid
Salt and pepper to taste
Coconut oil for frying

01 In a wok or large pot, add oil and sauté the minced mushrooms until fragrant, then set aside.

02 Cook the garlic and onion for two minutes. Add salt and pepper. Add the vegetables and mushrooms and cook for 3–4 minutes. Season with soy sauce.

03 Pour mix in a colander to drain and cool. Meanwhile, prepare the lumpia wrapping station. Have one plate for the peeled lumpia wrappers, one plate for wrapping the lumpia, and one plate for putting the wrapped lumpias on.

04 Gently peel each wrapper and set aside. Place a damp paper towel over the peeled lumpia wrappers to prevent them from drying out while you wrap the lumpias.

05 Take one lumpia wrapper and lay it flat so that the wrapper looks like a diamond. Spoon 1–2 tablespoons of the mixture horizontally in the middle of the wrapper.

06 Pick up the bottom tip of the wrapper and pull it over the mixture. Fold over the left and right sides of the wrapper, then roll the wrapper, making sure all sides are taut enough to shape the lumpia. Be careful not to tear the wrapper.

07 Lay each lumpia on a plate or pan to prepare for frying.

08 In a wok or frying pan, heat up some oil on medium heat. Place the lumpia in the pan with at least half an inch of space between each lumpia making sure you do not overcrowd the pan. Fry each side until golden brown, then let cool and drain on paper towels.

09 Serve with sweet Asian sauce, chili pepper, or vinegar as desired.

Notes:

If you want to fry these later, be sure to put wax paper in between each row of lumpia so that they do not stick. These can be kept in the fridge to fry the next day or in the freezer to cook later (keep in a zip bag, wrapping each layer in wax paper, and lay flat until frozen).
Siopao

40–50 minutes  10 minutes (30 minutes if working in batches)  12 servings

With a sweet and savory “meat” filling and soft and fluffy bread, these steamed, delicious buns are perfect any time of the day!

Recipe by Mabi David and Karla Rey of Me & My Veg Mouth.

For the Filling:

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 cup small button mushrooms, diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 cups green jackfruit
- 1½ cups of water
- 2 tablespoons tapioca flour diluted in ¼ cup of water
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- ¼ cup sugar

For the Dough:

- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 1 tablespoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ⅛ cup oil
- ¾ cup of lukewarm water
- Flour for dusting/kneading

For the Filling:

01 In medium to high heat, fry the mushrooms in oil for about a minute or two. Remove.
02 In the same pan, caramelize onions until translucent and fragrant.
03 Add the jackfruit and keep covered for 3 minutes.
04 In a bowl, mix the water, soy sauce, ketchup, garlic, and sugar. Add into the jackfruit. Boil to further soften the flesh, until most of the water has evaporated. Pull apart using two forks. Add the mushrooms.
05 Add the tapioca flour to thicken the mixture. Set aside and let cool.

For the Dough:

01 In a bowl, combine the first 3 ingredients by creating a well in the middle. Pour the liquids into the well. Mix well and knead for about 10 minutes.
02 Sprinkle flour onto a clean surface. Roll into a log of about 2 inches in diameter. Rest for 5 minutes.
03 Cut into 12 pieces. Use a rolling pin to flatten each piece into a circle (dust the surface with flour as necessary).
04 Put a heaping teaspoon of filling in the middle.
05 Gather the ends towards the middle from one side until you reach the other end closing the filling in. Pinch and twist to seal the ends together on top.

06 Repeat with the remaining dough balls.
07 Put a piece of parchment paper (or use the pop out bottoms of non-stick tart pans as liners).
08 Steam for 10 minutes.
09 Cool/rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Photo by Deborah Svoboda of outoftheshadowsmedia.com.
UKOY

10 minutes        10 minutes        4-6 servings

A new take on a classic Philippine street food. Crispy deep-fried fritters made with various vegetables are the perfect snack or appetizer!

Recipe by Jimel Iglesia of sandoksient.com.

1 cup sweet potato, grated
1 cup carrot, grated
½ cup heart of palm, grated or thinly sliced
1 teaspoon black pepper
2 teaspoons of salt
1 teaspoon annatto powder, for the red color
1 flax egg
1 cup sparkling water
¼ cup flour
1¼ cups cornstarch
2 cups cooking oil

01 In a bowl, combine the sparkling water, flour, cornstarch, flax egg, salt, pepper, and annatto powder.
02 Beat with a whisk until smooth and let sit for 5 minutes.
03 Add in the grated sweet potato, carrot, heart of palm, and mix thoroughly until each strand is coated in the batter.
04 In a deep frying pan, heat oil to 350 degrees F or over medium-high heat.
05 Using a ladle, slowly spoon the mixture into the oil until it forms a round disk. If it starts to separate, keep forming it into a disk with your chosen utensil.
06 Cook on each side for 3-5 minutes or until golden and crispy.
07 Repeat until the batter is gone.
08 Place each fritter onto a towel to drain the excess oil.
09 Serve with toyo’t kalamansi!

Photo by Rezel Kealoha of rezelkealoha.com.
**Champorado**

5 minutes | 35–45 minutes | 4 servings

Champorado is Filipino chocolate rice porridge that is traditionally served for breakfast. This traditional dish is a childhood favorite that can be served hot or cold and pairs wonderfully with salted “fish.”

Recipe by Jimel Iglesia of sandoksient.com.

1 cup of coconut cream
1 cup of glutinous white rice
2–3 cups of water
¼ cup of cocoa powder*
¼ cup of coconut sugar
1 tablespoon of condensed coconut milk

*See F.E.P. Chocolate List for recommended brands

01 Heat a pot over medium high heat.
02 Add in the water, coconut cream, sugar, and whisk.
03 Add in the rice and bring to a boil.
04 Reduce to medium heat and add in the cocoa powder.
05 Occasionally whisk in bits of water to keep a thick porridge-like consistency.
06 Once the rice has cooked, turn off the heat, ladle into a bowl, and garnish with a heaping tablespoon of condensed coconut milk.

**Dilis “Dry Anchovies”**

5 minutes | 35–45 minutes | 4 servings

Dilis is a popular street food in the Philippines that takes readily to vegan adaptations. This Filipino favorite, with its sweet and spicy coating, is often used as a rice topping or simply to snack on with your favorite sarsawan (Filipino dipping sauce).

Recipe by Jimel Iglesia of sandoksient.com.

1 banana blossom
4 sheets of nori, shredded into flakes
2 tablespoons of gochujang or Korean red pepper paste
1 cup cornstarch
1 cup frying oil
2 cups of warm water + ½ cup salt

01 Peel back each layer of the banana blossom until you can find the fronds.
02 Collect all the fronds that are 2+ inches from the banana blossom.
03 Set these in a bowl of heavily salted water for a minimum of 15 minutes.
04 In a bowl, dissolve gochujang paste in ½ cup water, then add the nori and mix thoroughly.
05 After 15 minutes, thoroughly dry the fronds.
06 Coat the fronds in the nori and pepper paste mixture. Dredge them in cornstarch.
07 Shake off any excess cornstarch and repeat until all the fronds are evenly coated.
08 Heat a pan of hot oil over medium-high heat and fry the fronds until golden and crisp.
09 Serve with rice or your favorite sarsawan (Filipino dipping sauce)!

Photo by Emily Lavieri-Scull/@capersandkindness.

Photo by Deborah Svoboda of outoftheshadowsmedia.com.
Dips, Drinks, & Desserts
Cassava Cake

Cassava Cake is a classic Filipinx dessert made from grated cassava. This classic Filipinx treat is the perfect snack or dessert.
Recipe by Madeline Bennett.

Photo by Jennifer Love.

1½ cans coconut milk
1 mashed ripe banana
1 package of shredded cassava (defrosted)

01 Mix all ingredients in bowl or mixer.
02 Line a square baking dish (8x8 or 9x9) with fresh banana leaves.
03 Fill it with the cassava mixture.
04 Bake it at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
05 Let cool before cutting and serving.

Turon

Turon, also known as lumpiyang saging, is a popular snack and street food in the Philippines that has become a Filipinx favorite!
Recipe by Julie Galera.

Photo by Deborah Svoboda of outoftheshadowsmedia.com.

12 small ripe saba bananas, cut lengthwise into two halves
1 cup brown sugar
24 lumpia wrappers
½ cup sweetened jackfruit, sliced into strips

01 Peel bananas and cut lengthwise into two halves. Roll in sugar.
02 Separate wrappers into individual sheets. On a flat working surface, lay wrapper like a diamond. Arrange 1 banana slice in the middle of the diamond and place 2 to 3 jackfruit strips lengthwise on top of the banana slice.
03 Fold bottom pointed end of wrapper over filling. Fold side ends of the sheet inward and roll into a log. Wet the pointed edge of the wrapper to completely seal.
04 Roll sealed spring rolls in sugar.
05 Repeat with the remaining bananas.
06 In a skillet over medium heat, heat about 1-inch deep of oil. Add banana spring rolls seam side down and fry, turning once or twice, for about 3-5 minutes on each side or until crisp and golden brown.
Puto Bumbong Rice Cakes

15 minutes (plus overnight soaking)  10–20 minutes  12–15 servings

Puto Bumbong is a Philippine street food that is traditionally steamed in bamboo tubes and served during the holiday season. This classic treat is easy to become nostalgic for, and this delicious, easy recipe helps take you back.

Recipe by RG Enriquez of astigvegan.com.

1 cup sweet black rice (also known as glutinous black rice)

Water for soaking

2–2½ cups sweet rice flour (also known as glutinous rice flour), plus more

Few pinches sea salt

1 pack (about 14 ounces) fresh grated mature coconut

¼ cup vegan butter or coconut oil

Muscovado sugar as a condiment

Organic brown sugar as a condiment

01 Soak black rice in water overnight.

02 Transfer rice to a food processor or high-speed blender and pour with just enough water to cover the rice.

03 Blend until rice has been powdered and texture is like soft, wet dough.

04 Transfer rice dough to a mixing bowl and add sweet rice flour and salt.

05 Using your hands or spatula, mix well to fully incorporate the flour. You should have a dough that could be formed into logs. If the dough is still too wet and soft, add more sweet rice flour.

06 Using your hands, form dough into small logs. Shape and size don’t have to be precise.

07 Steam for 8–10 minutes in a Bamboo steamer (steel steamer is okay). Alternatively, instead of steaming, you can drop the rice logs in a boiling pot of water. When they float, they’re done.

08 Place rice cake on a bed of fresh grated mature coconut and coat all sides.

09 Brush with vegan butter. You may also use coconut oil.

10 Serve with muscovado and organic brown sugar on top and on the side.
CANTALOUPE DRINK

15 minutes  5 minutes  1 pitcher

A classic Flipin|x beverage with sweet cantaloupe shreds in a rich, creamy liquid that is so refreshingly delicious on hot days.

Recipe by Lhyn Galera.

½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup water plus more for pitcher
1 medium cantaloupe

Optional:
Large splash vanilla extract
Condensed coconut milk
Ice for serving

01 In a small saucepan, combine sugar and water over high heat. Once the water comes to a boil, reduce heat to low. Simmer, stirring often, until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and let cool.

02 Clean the outside of the cantaloupe and cut in half. Use a spoon to remove the seeds and a melon scraper (or fork) to scoop out threads of the cantaloupe into a medium bowl. If you’re using a fork, make long strides in the melon with the fork, about ½ inch deep, and then use a spoon to scrape strands of cantaloupe out. Repeat until melon is completely scraped out.

03 Place the grated cantaloupe flesh into the pitcher and add the cooled syrup. Fill with water.

04 Serve chilled or with crushed ice and, if using, add a splash of vanilla extract or some condensed coconut milk.

Photo by Matt Long.

SARI-SARI TERIYAKI SAUCE

5 minutes  10-15 minutes  3 cups

This condiment can be used as a marinade, glaze, or in any teriyaki dishes! This quick, delicious sauce is a perfect alternative to buying from NutriAsia, a corporation that is hurting workers’ rights.

Recipe by Mabi David and Karla Rey of Me & My Veg Mouth.

½ cup soy sauce
2 cups of water
1-inch ginger
2–3 garlic cloves, peeled

5–7 tablespoons brown sugar
4 tablespoons cornstarch
Sesame seeds, spring onions (optional)

01 In a blender, add soy sauce, water, ginger, garlic, sugar, and cornstarch.

02 Blend until smooth. Taste and adjust.

03 Transfer mixture to pan and heat until thick. (Add more water if it gets too thick.)

04 Remove from heat. Add sesame seeds and spring onions.

Notes:
This sauce freezes well! Just let thaw in the refrigerator overnight before using.

Photo by Deborah Svoboda of outoftheshadowsmedia.com.
This condiment is a staple in most Filipinx homes, and instead of buying yours from a corporation that is hurting workers’ rights, you can support the NutriAsia strikers by making this sweet and tangy sauce at home!

Recipe by Mabi David and Karla Rey of Me & My Veg Mouth.

1 tablespoon oil
2 cloves garlic, peeled, and chopped
½ small onion, diced
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, chopped
3–4 bananas (or roughly 1½ cups), mashed
¼ cup tomato paste
2–4 tablespoons brown sugar
½ cup native vinegar, plain
½ cup of water

01 In a medium sauté pan, heat oil over medium heat.
02 Add the garlic, onion, and ginger. Sauté for 5 minutes, until soft and fragrant.
03 Add the tomato paste and sauté until dark and caramelized. Add mashed bananas and brown sugar. Mix well.
04 Mix in the vinegar and water, and bring to a simmer. Cook until slightly thickened.
05 Turn off heat and let the mixture cool slightly.
06 Transfer the cooled mixture to the bowl of your food processor or blender. Blend until smooth.
07 Keep refrigerated and shake well before using!
Get Involved

Food Empowerment Project is a vegan food justice organization and 501(c)(3) nonprofit that seeks to create a more just and sustainable world by recognizing the power of one’s food choices. We encourage healthy food choices that reflect a more compassionate society by spotlighting the abuse of animals on farms, the depletion of natural resources, unfair working conditions for produce workers, and the unavailability of healthy foods in Black and Brown communities and low-income areas.

By making informed choices, we can prevent injustices against animals, people, and the environment. We also work to discourage negligent corporations from pushing unhealthy foods into low-income areas and empower people to make healthier choices by growing their own fruits and vegetables. In all of our work, F.E.P. seeks specifically to empower those with the fewest resources. For more information on the power of your food choices, getting involved in food justice issues, or volunteering with us, just get in touch!

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- Most of all, our ancestors, who have given us so much and have helped us become the fierce, resilient, and proud people we are today. Your perseverance, strength, and determination remind us every day to keep fighting for justice!

Glossary

Mabuhay - Welcome
Kababayans - Fellow Filipinx, compatriot
Manong - Male elder; the “manong generation” refers to the first large wave of Filipino immigrants to arrive in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s
Maraming salamat - Many thanks
Pamilya - Family
Padayon - Continue, carry on

Cover Art

Here is a list of all of the greenery and fruit that can be found on the cover of this book. The list starts at the top and moves counterclockwise.

- Camichile
- Makahiya
- Atis
- Moringa
- Sugar Cane
- Ampalaya
- Coconut
- Kaymito
- Makahiya
- Jackfruit
- Kalamansi
- Anahaw
- Sampaguita
- Bayabas
- Duhat
- Mango