



a plant on every plate

Top 10 Plant-based Kitchen Basics

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1. Basic Vegetable Broth

To a large stock pot, add:

- 3-5 carrots, peeled and roughly chopped
- 3-4 stalks of celery, washed and roughly chopped
- 2 white or yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 4-5 cloves of garlic, peeled (whole)
- 3 bay leaves
- handful of dried mushrooms
- 1 leek, washed and chopped
- 5-6 sun-dried tomatoes, not packed in oil
- 1 hot chili pepper, de-seeded and roughly chopped

Basic Vegetable Broth

Directions:

Pour water into pot, barely covering the vegetables. Bring to a boil, down to a simmer and allow to cook for about 90 minutes. Strain out the vegetables, cool, and store in freezer.

This is a great broth base for soups, stews, grains, etc. as it allows you ultimate control over the ingredients and adds another layer of immune boosting components.

NOTE: Stay from cruciferous vegetables and adding a lot of stems from the greens as it will add a bitter flavor.

Unless you don't mind your broth turning purple, do not add red onion or purple cabbage to your broth.

2. How to Cut an Onion

- Cut one of the ends of the onion off and place it cut side down on your cutting board. Now, you have a flat surface to work with.
- Next, cut right through, down the middle of the onion. Now you have two equal parts. Peel off the outer most skin of both sides.
- Taking one of the sides of your onion, place the largest side down on the cutting board (this is the inside part of the onion that you have just split open) with the end facing away.
- Now make equal slices down over the dome of the onion, but do not allow your cut to reach all the way up to the top.
- Next, make 2-3 slices through the end facing you, making your way nearly up to the top of the onion.
- Finally, go back to the top of the onion and cut the opposite way and you will have nice, even, diced pieces.

3. How to dry sauté (oil-free)

Allow your pan to heat up over high heat for about 90 seconds. Pour a few droplets of water in the pan, if they sizzle and evaporate, continue to heat and try again. You are looking for the water to form a mercury-like ball and bounce around the pan. This ensures the surface is uniformly heated and the molecules on the surface of the pan are finished expanding and contracting.

Add your vegetables (typically an onion) to the pan and bring the heat down to a medium-high heat. Continually stir and add a tablespoon of water at a time if it begins to stick a little. The onions will begin to caramelize. Now add in garlic (if using), continue to stir for about 30 seconds and add the rest of your vegetables. Only adding enough water to deglaze.

4. How to make your own sweetener

Blending dates or dried apricots and a little bit of hot water quickly turns into a nice paste that keeps well in a sealed container in the refrigerator for a couple of weeks or several months in the freezer.

Pouring the paste into ice cube trays and then popping out individual servings when you need a little sweetness in your tea, home-made “milk”, desserts – whatever your heart desires, is a great alternative to overly processed sugary sweeteners that can cause your blood sugars to soar.

Simply add dates (be sure to pit them), or dried apricots to a blender and drizzle in hot water when the motor is running. A nice thick paste will form. Viola! You have a home-made sweetener full of phyto-nutrients your body recognizes and can use.

5. How to Make Almond Milk

- Always start with raw and unroasted/unsalted almonds.
- Soak almonds 8 hours to overnight. They will will become plump and soft.
- Add the contents to a blender with 2 ½ times the amount of water. Blend until smooth, adding a little more water for a thinner consistency. (If using a high speed blender, allow to go for 3-5 minutes, a few minutes longer for a regular speed.)
- Optional for vanilla or sweetness: scrape a vanilla bean pod (or a teaspoon of extract) and a tablespoon of date paste.
- Pour mixture through a cheese cloth to filter out the almond skins and store in a sealed jar in the refrigerator. Should keep for 3-5 days.

6. How to Make a Cheesy Alfredo Sauce

Soak **raw cashews** for at least one hour, drain and transfer to a blender. Begin on low and slowly drizzle in warm water. Increase the speed of the blender and continue to add water a little bit at a time.

When you reach a thick and creamy consistency, add a little **date paste**, one **garlic clove**, a tablespoon of **nutritional yeast** and a pinch of **salt** and **pepper**. Keep the blender running until all ingredients are well mixed. Taste and adjust flavor to your liking.

This is fantastic with noodles, over a sweet potato, drizzled over vegetables or pizza. Really, the possibilities are limited only to your imagination.

7. How to make your own salad dressings

Salad dressings are either blended or whisked. Because we are not using oil or cream, an emulsion may not always hold (typically for a vinaigrette), so a simple shake or whisk right before you use it again is sometimes needed.

Vinaigrettes are whisked because they contain minced ingredients such as seeds, herbs or maybe even capers. Creamier dressings are blended when they contain nut or seed based creams and need a blender to create a smooth, velvety consistency.



Salad Dressings (con't)

Whole Fats	Acids	Salts	Sweeteners	Spices
Nut or seed butters	Mustard (any type, condiment or spice)	Liquid aminos, soy sauce, tamari, etc.	Dried fruit	Garlic
Nuts or seeds	Citrus juice (fresh from orange, lemon, lime)	Sea or table salt (pinch)	Fruit pastes	Ginger
Avocado	Vinegar (balsamic, champagne, white wine, etc)	Miso paste	Sweet vegetable juices (carrot, beet)	Onion
	Wine	Capers, olives	Maple syrup	Nutritional yeast, herbs, spices

Using the chart above, choose one ingredient from each column and begin to experiment in making your own salad dressing. As you become more comfortable, add more ingredients, remember you can always add water to lessen the potency of your new creation.

Salad Dressings (con't)

Here are a couple of examples of salad dressing using that chart:

Easy Vinaigrette

- 1/3 cup white vinegar
- 3 tablespoons champagne vinegar
- 1 shallot, minced
- 2 ½ tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon of date paste
- 1 ½ teaspoons of tamari
- 2 tablespoons of Italian parsley, minced

Whisk all ingredients well and store in a sealed container (I use a mason jar) in the refrigerator. Shake well again before use.

Salad Dressings (con't)

Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing

1/2 cup tahini paste

1/4 cup water

1 1/2 tablespoon date paste

Juice of one-half lemon

1/2 tablespoon tamari

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes



Add all ingredients to a blender and run it until creamy. Taste and adjust the ingredients to your liking. Add more water to thin it out. If you like it really thick, it makes a great dip and is great for massaging into kale leaves as well.

8. How to Make Parmesan Cheese

- 1 cup raw walnuts
- ¼ cup nutritional yeast flakes (or to taste)
- 1 tablespoon flax meal
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Place all ingredients in a food processor and pulse 6-8 times until you reach a coarse consistency. This makes for a great topping on salads, pizzas, pastas, etc. As a condiment full of fiber and essential fatty acids, this “parmesan” keeps well stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator for months.



9. How to Begin in Your Own Kitchen

Meal planning and batch cooking are nearly one in the same and will undoubtedly save you both time and money. You can begin meal planning on your own by simply copying the following chart on a piece of paper, filling in about half of the days (the other days you will use as leftovers) and writing down the ingredients you'll need to buy on the other side of the sheet. This is what I did when I prepared meals for clients and it was a lifesaver.

One very important piece of advice I tell all of my clients is to stick with only one cookbook or website from which you will gather your recipes for at least a month. This will ensure you use all the ingredients you will buy and you will also learn quickly how to read and assemble a recipe by sticking to a single source.

How to Begin in Your Own Kitchen

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			
Day 7			

How to Begin in Your Own Kitchen

NEED A LITTLE MORE HELP?

Meal Planning

If you need a little more assistance with meal planning, the most robust and user friendly platform I have test driven is the [Forks Meal Planner](#) by [Forks Over Knives](#). It's a 5-day a week plan which allows flexibility if you enjoy dining out. The platform is designed for the busy individual, couple or family on the go!

The first week is free and I encourage you to also give it a whirl.



How to Begin in Your Own Kitchen

NEED A LITTLE MORE HELP?

Cooking Instruction

Need some help getting started in the kitchen?

[STL Veg Girl's Cooking and Nutrition Program](#)

will get you cooking! This 60-day self paced cooking and nutrition instruction program allows you to cook and learn in the comfort and privacy of your own kitchen.

You'll learn how to cook using whole plant foods and you will be taught why those foods are health promoting.

You will learn many different cooking techniques, you will have a knife skills lesson and so much more. Each unit is personally graded by an expert at Rouxbe School of cooking and upon completion you will receive a certificate.



10. Friends, Family and Onward

Making a lifestyle change is not only a big deal for you, but can be for the people in your life as well. When getting together with friends or family for the holidays or social gatherings, offer to bring a dish. Break through that “weird vegan food” thought process guests might have by sharing a dish everyone will recognize.

Here are some crowd pleasers from my website :

[Harvest Blend Cauliflower Rice](#)

[Southwest Black Bean and Kale Quinoa](#)

[White Bean Chili](#)

[Butternut Squash Risotto with Mushrooms and Spinach](#)

[Rosemary Cashew Cream and Quinoa Stuffed Mushrooms](#)

[3-Ingredient Breakfast Cookie](#) (as a dessert)

[Homemade Garlic Hummus](#)

[Jalapeno Poppers](#)



Friends, Family and Onward

If you have adopted a whole food, plant-based diet and have found yourself a few pounds lighter, sleeping better, titrating down on medications or any of the other happy “side-effects” of eating this way, but your healthcare provider is still not on board. Not to worry.

I encourage both you and your practitioner to visit the [Plantrician Project](#). This non-profit organization’s mission is to educate, equip and empower our physicians and healthcare practitioners with knowledge about the indisputable benefits of plant-based nutrition. Take the burden off yourself and point them toward the [tools](#) the Plantrician Project has created for them.

