**LifeStyle Newsletter |   
Vegetarian, Vegan, Flexitarian – LPL**

*Must be used with your Advertising Review Team approved letterhead or email signature.*

LPL Compliance Approval # 1-05119695

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# Vegetarian, Vegan, Flexitarian

A fair number of Americans have adopted vegetarian, vegan, and various other versions of plant-based diets only to discover they missed eating meat. A 2020 *Packaged Facts* survey of Americans reported that:1

* 3 percent were vegan (no red/white meat, fish, dairy, or eggs)
* 3 percent were pescatarian (no red/white meat)
* 5 percent were vegetarian (no red/white meat or fish)

It’s notable more than one-third (36 percent) of those surveyed indicated they were flexitarian, which means they primarily eat plant-based meals. However, they also eat red and white meat, fish, and other protein, in moderation.1, 2

**Why are people eating less meat?**

Most Americans (70 percent) choose to eat less meat for health reasons, according to *Gallup* polls. Studies of the world’s Blue Zones – regions with the highest concentrations of centenarians in the world – have found people in these communities tend to consume plant-based diets that, occasionally, include meat. In other words, they are flexitarians. (The longevity of people in Blue Zones is not solely related to diet. They socialize and exercise a lot, too.)3, 4

In *Frontiers of Nutrition*, Emma Derbyshire reviewed the findings of 39 papers studying the effects of flexitarian diets (FDs). She reported, “FDs may have emerging health benefits in relation to weight loss, metabolic health, and diabetes prevention. While most flexitarians presently seem to be female, there is a clear need to communicate the potential health benefits of these diets to males.”5

Many Americans (49 percent) eat less meat because they believe it is better for the environment. While research suggests a whole-food, plant-based diet may be better for the environment, it is not always true, according to *CNBC*. Plant-based diets that include highly-processed meat alternatives or fruits and vegetables imported from other countries may offer limited environmental benefits, reported the *BBC*.6, 7

Another reason Americans gave for flexitarian eating was convenience. When younger family members are pursuing vegan, pescatarian, vegetarian, or flexitarian diets, it’s just easier to plan a meal that everyone can eat.

No matter the reason, many Americans are eating more veggies and it’s having some positive effects.

**Is Jackfruit Good for You?**

What’s the biggest fruit you have ever seen? Prize-winning pumpkins and watermelons can be enormous, but jackfruit trees regularly grow to 80 feet and the fruit they produce often weigh in at 100 pounds.

Jackfruit trees grow in tropical and sub-tropical climates and jackfruit has a chewy texture that makes it a terrific meat substitute. *NPR* reports jackfruit is high in fiber, low in calories, and a great source of vitamins and minerals. Best of all, it has a meaty texture. Find out for yourself with this recipe from *Eating Well*.8, 9, 10

**Jackfruit Barbacoa Burrito Bowls**

*Ingredients*

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup chopped white onion

6 garlic cloves, crushed

1 medium New Mexico chile, stem and seeds removed

1-1/2 cups unsalted vegetable broth

2 cans (20 ounces each) green jackfruit in brine, rinsed and shredded

1 teaspoon chili powder

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1/2 teaspoon ground pepper

1 bay leaf

3 cups hot cooked brown rice

2 cups thinly sliced iceberg lettuce

1-1/3 cups chopped plum tomatoes (about 3 medium)

1 cup unsalted canned black beans, rinsed

1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 lime, quartered

*Directions*

Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion, garlic and chile; cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender and browned, about 6 minutes. Add broth; increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Partially cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook until the chile is tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a blender. Remove center piece of blender lid to allow steam to escape; secure the lid on the blender. Place a clean towel over the opening and process until very smooth, about 45 seconds. (Use caution when blending hot liquids.)

Return the chile sauce to the saucepan; add jackfruit, chili powder, salt, pepper and bay leaf. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, partially cover and cook until slightly thickened, 6 to 8 minutes. Discard the bay leaf.

Place 3/4 cup rice in four shallow bowls. Top each with 3/4 cup jackfruit mixture, 1/2 cup lettuce, 1/3 cup tomatoes, 1/4 cup beans, and 2 tablespoons cilantro. Serve with lime wedges.

**What Do You Know About Cooking Terms?**

During the pandemic, many Americans have channeled their energy into cooking. The *Hunter Food Study*, *‘*Wave Two: America Keeps on Cooking’*,* reported, “Americans are continuing to cook more (51 percent) and bake more (41 percent) than they did at the same time last year. Plus, the vast majority (71 percent) of those who are cooking more intend to continue doing so after the pandemic ends.”12

See what you know about cooking terms by taking this brief quiz, adapted from a *Buzzfeed* quiz:12

1. Three of these are leavening agents, meaning they help dough rise. Which one is not?
   1. Yeast
   2. Olive oil
   3. Egg whites
   4. Baking soda
2. Which of the following is *not* the name of a pepper?
   1. Scotch Bonnet
   2. Bird’s Eye
   3. January King
   4. Serrano
3. Which term describes a parchment wrap used to seal in flavor when cooking meat or fish?
   1. Papillote
   2. **Zimino**
   3. Farfalle
   4. Puff pastry
4. What is coulis?
   1. A meringue made with sugar and egg whites
   2. An emulsion made with garlic and oil
   3. A sauce usually made with a single ingredient
   4. A sauce made with eggs and lemons

**Validation is Important**

Every year, the *American Psychological Association (APA)* conducts a survey to find out how much stress Americans are feeling, what’s causing the stress, and how people are responding to it. As you might expect, stress levels were high during 2020. The pandemic changed every aspect of people’s lives – work, education, exercise, family life, and community interactions.13

The January 2021 *APA* survey found that stress levels were still high. About four-of-five (84 percent) Americans reported they had felt emotions associated with stress – anxiety, sadness, and anger – within the previous two weeks.14

If you’ve been suffering from the pandemic blues, here are a few techniques that may help you cope:

* **Just say no to negative info.** Take a break from news and social media.
* **Count to three.** At the end of the day, maybe during dinner, think of (and share) three positive things that happened during the day.
* **Be kind.** Make time to do something you enjoy. Go for a run. Take a walk. Video chat with a friend. Watch a favorite show. Do it every day.
* **Connect with others.** Call, text, or share a social media post. No matter how you do it, staying in touch helps build emotional resiliency.
* **Check your perspective.** Stress and anxiety often produce negative thinking. Pay attention to your thoughts. When you’re focused on the negative, see if you can turn it around and find the positive.

Keeping your eye on the future can help, too. The vaccine rollout is accelerating. As more people get vaccinated, life is likely to return to a more normal state.

Quiz Answers:

1. B – Olive oil.
2. C – January King.
3. A – Papillote.
4. C – A sauce usually made with a single ingredient.

Sources:

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4 <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/04/11/398325030/eating-to-break-100-longevity-diet-tips-from-the-blue-zones>

5 <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnut.2016.00055/full>

6 <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200211-why-the-vegan-diet-is-not-always-green>

7 <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/09/02/beyond-meat-uses-climate-change-to-market-fake-meat-substitutes-scientists-are-cautious.html>

8 <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2014/05/01/308708000/heres-the-scoop-on-jackfruit-a-ginormous-fruit-to-feed-the-world>

9 <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/what-is-jackfruit-and-is-it-healthy/>

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12 <https://www.buzzfeed.com/sarahaspler/odd-one-out-cooking-quiz?bfsource=bfocompareon>

13 <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2020/report-october>

14 <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2021/02/adults-stress-pandemic>

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