

Making meatless meals is no big deal

by Judith Marston

For me, eating meat-red meat has been no problem. Lumping up on veggies, beans and whole grains has been one of my greatest pleasures. Every time I discover a new, beautiful ingredient I feel like some culinary explorer off on another Columbus-style expedition.

My friend Bonnie, though, refused to make meatless meals because she was convinced she'd be up chopping vegetables all day. David Lammiman finished his toilet seat.

Still, surrounded by her supporters with this week's *Chicago Tribune* ad, in the early '70s, Bonnie had decided a vegetable was only something to take out of the freezer and then only to accompany a pork chop or a steak.

It wasn't until I told Bonnie about *Mediterranean Soup* that I persuaded her it was possible to make an easy vegetable soup. *Mediterranean Soup* is not only a wonderful winter warmup, it's a filling fat-free course when you drop the parmesan cheese topping.

Mediterranean Soup

- 6 cups water
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 1/4 1/2 oz. cans stewed tomatoes
- 3 cups fresh or frozen broccoli.

chopped

- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon basil
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes or to taste
- 1 can great northern beans, drained
- 8 ounces uncooked

Instructions

optional: Parmesan Cheese

Cutting out meat isn't a problem, but I do, however, have one major downfall when it comes to good eating: dessert. While I enjoy fruit and eat my fair share of it, even exotica like kiwi and mango can not satisfy any occasional desire for some-

eating smart

guilt-free dessert. The protein-rich tofu is substituted for the fat and cholesterol-laden ingredients in most cream-type pies. If you're just a little bit skeptical about using tofu in a desert, don't be. Tofu has virtually no taste and will take on the taste of whatever's being combined with it (in this case, almost everyone's personal

favorite, semi-sweet chocolate). Even the crust has only one in a tablespoon of added fat in the whole pie!

Serve this scrumptious, easy-to-make pie topped off with a heavy spoonful of Very-Chocolate-To-Whipped Cream. Amazingly, it does taste very much like the real thing.

Chocolate Tofu Pie

- 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted
- 10.02 semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 2 10.5 oz packages Firm Tofu
- 3 tablespoons honey or maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

In small bowl, combine crumbs and melted butter. Press into bottom of 8" pie pan. Bake in preheated 325° oven for 10 minutes. Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler. In blender or food processor, puree tofu with honey,

melted chips and vanilla, just until smooth. Pour into crust and chill overnight or until firm. Serves 6-8.

Very-Chocolate-To-Whipped Cream

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 4 teaspoons tap water
- 1/3 cup boiling water
- 1 cup ice water
- 1 1/2 cups instant nonfat dry milk
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice



Chill a large mixing bowl and egg beater. In a cup, sprinkle gelatin over 4 teaspoons water and allow to stand 3 minutes. Add boiling water and stir until completely dissolved, cool to room temperature. (Stir in over hot water if it begins to set). In the chilled bowl, combine ice water and powdered milk. Beat at high speed for 5 minutes or until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar. Then add oil, vanilla, lemon juice and gelatin mixture and beat 1 more minute. Refrigerate two hours before serving.

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