

Catering for Vegetarians

Food Service



Great menus for your vegan and vegetarian customers

Vegetarian diets are common and increasing. There are a number of reasons why someone chooses to be vegetarian e.g. ethical reasons, religious beliefs, environmental concerns, taste or health.

Catering for vegetarians, and other dietary requirements, can be tricky. Try our tips to make preparing vegetarian meals in community venues a little simpler.

33%

of Australians are reducing their meat consumption

What are the different types of vegetarian and vegan diets?

Vegan

Avoids all animal foods and products including meat, fish, dairy and eggs, also avoid food and drinks made from animal products such as honey, gelatin and certain lollies (some contain colours made from animals or insects).

Lacto Vegetarian

Avoids meat, fish, and eggs, but does consume milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives.

Ovo Vegetarian

Avoids meat, fish and dairy products, but does consume egg and egg products.

Lacto-ovo vegetarian

Avoids meat and fish, but does consume dairy, egg and egg products.

Pescatarian

Avoids meat but still consumes fish and seafood. May or may not eat eggs and dairy.

Plant based (flexitarian)

Not a strict vegetarian but limits their consumption of animal foods and products, with a focus on eating a mostly plant based diet.

One of the easiest ways to find out what your vegetarian customers would like to eat is simply by asking them! Invite customers to suggest vegetarian dishes and recipes they would like included on the menu. This can be done via a suggestion box or by asking customers to complete a brief survey.



Meal swaps

Plan menu items where the bulk of the preparation and ingredients are the same for meals with meat and without, for example:



Burgers

The salads, burger rolls, condiments, cheese can be the same for everyone. Cook up a couple of different patties (e.g. lean beef, chicken and a bean or falafel patty). The bean patty along with the cheese provides protein, iron, calcium, zinc and vitamin B12.

Pizza

Again, the same prep work can be done for all pizzas, just add meat topping for those who want it. Vegetarian customers will still get protein, calcium, and vitamin B12 from the cheese on the pizza.



Sandwiches/rolls

Offer a range of vegetarian fillings such as a variety of salads, cheese, eggs and falafel. For extra variety, offer a range of spreads such as hummus, guacamole or a beetroot relish.



Explore cuisines

A number of international dishes are traditionally vegetarian and are packed full of flavours that your customers will love.



Mexican

- Bean burritos/tacos
- Vegetarian chilli con carne
- Fajita bowl with corn salsa and roasted chickpeas



Mediterranean

- Cous cous with roasted vegetables and feta
- Pasta with napoletana sauce
- Vegetarian lasagne

Asian

- Sushi and rice paper rolls with omelette and vegetables
- Vegetable and noodle soup with a boiled egg
- Vegetable fried rice



Indian

- Dhal curry
- Lentil and chickpea curry
- Eggplant and cauliflower tikka masala

1. Food Frontier, 2019. Hungry for Plant-Based: Australian Consumer Insights. Retrieved from: https://www.foodfrontier.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Hungry-For-Plant-Based-Australian-Consumer-Insights-Oct-2019.pdf#gf_2

2. Vegetarian Nation, 2019. What are the types or levels of vegetarianism? Retrieved from: <https://vegetarian-nation.com/resources/common-questions/types-levels-vegetarian/>