

I went vegan for a week - here's what happened

Last week, I got a little gutsy and did what would likely be a meat and cheese lover's ultimate nightmare: I went vegan and documented it.

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I have moderate gluten and dairy sensitivities and virtually no self-control when it comes to food. Pass the pizza and make it extra cheesy and I'm pretty much my life mantra.

I also live to dig in to a good rack of ribs. It's not a pretty sight, but such is life.

Last week, I got a little gutsy and did what would likely be a meat and cheese lover's ultimate nightmare: I went vegan and documented it. And I was pleasantly surprised.

What I ate

Before I went grocery shopping, I consulted a pro.

Amanda Li, registered dietitian and chef at Georgetown's Wellness Simplified, says the first step to staying healthy and full when eating a vegan diet is properly pairing your proteins. She says she recommends vegans choose two types of protein from the following categories for each meal: grains, nuts and seeds and legumes.

The second aspect, Li says, is to make sure to consume leafy greens, which are high in calcium and iron (among other nu-

trients).

"Eat at least one per day, and I would recommend you eat it cooked, especially if you are a new vegan, because you don't want to have digestive issues when it comes to breaking down the food," she added.

Li says to also remember to add healthy fats to your diet, and for those eating a vegan diet long-term, it's important to take vitamin B and B-12 supplements, or to drink fortified beverages that have these vitamins added. B vitamins are usually attained through eggs and fatty fish, which aren't part of a vegan diet.

I purchased vegetables, legumes, vegan bread, tofu, veggie burgers and some vegan snacks, and tried different combinations throughout the week, always having a bag of nuts and seeds on hand in case I needed to satisfy my second-protein category.

What I wore

I had never paid attention to how many silk blouses, wool sweaters and leather bags I owned. This week, I pushed them all aside and opted for cotton items and a canvas bag.

What products I



Daniel Pereira/photo

IFP reporter Veronica Appia ends her vegan week by digging into a plate of veal and chicken.

changed

I settled for vegan shampoo, conditioner and

body wash, rose-scented spray-on deodorant, a moisturizing face wash,

cruelty-free toothpaste and some plant-based lotions.

I'm wildly impressed by the quality of the vegan products. I normally use purple shampoo with toner to keep the blond bits in my hair from turning brassy, but these sulfate-free vegan products also did the trick (and were much less harsh on the hair).

Sunday night

"Are Doc Martens vegan?" I call to my brother as I frantically search through my shoe collection for a cool-weather alternative to leather or suede.

"How should I know?" he called back.

So we turned to our most trusted friend, Google.

Turns out, yes, Doc Marten does carry vegan boots, and no, mine are not one of those pairs.

Rats.

I go into my basement and dig out a pair of knee-high synthetic boots. They are about half a decade old and a little misshapen with tiny holes in the side and scuffed toes.

Perfect.

Monday

I'm in my bathroom staring at my new deodorant can. Smells different from what I'm used to. A little more plantlike?

I spray it on. And due to an intense fear of smelling really bad all day, I spray on too much.

I stand there with my arms raised, waiting for my deodorant to dry.

Oh, man.

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6:00 pm - Reception

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Date:

Thursday, June 21, 2018

Location:

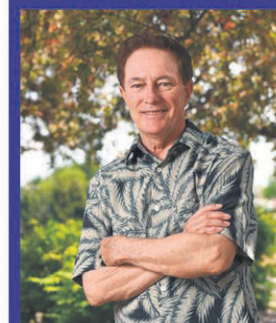
The John Elliott Theatre

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