

PART-TIME VEG

All the Rage Shirk those feelings of powerlessness over global warming. From within the debate about whether to recycle or whether to drive a hybrid car emerges an easy and impactful way to effect change today. Written by **Kristen Manieri**

MEATLESS MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

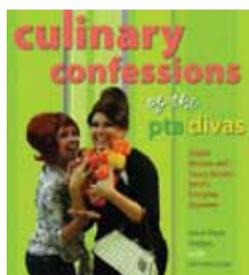


We know it's not headline news to tell you the health benefits of eating less meat and more vegetables. And while most of us know that we need to up our fruit and veggie intake, embracing vegetarianism seems so, well, hard. Going "veg" simply isn't practical or appealing to a lot of modern families. That's okay, our herbivore-hesitant friends; a new trend is sweeping the community that could make even the biggest fruit-phobic family jump on board.

Flexitarianism describes a growing population of people with a loose loyalty to meat-free eating. This semi-vegetarian diet with occasional meat consumption gives me and my family the focus of eating healthier, while allowing the freedom to devour a scrumptious Houston's burger from time to time. While the health benefits of decreased meat and increased roughage are well-known (lower cholesterol, for example), few people realize the environmental impact of going meatless, even for just one meal each week. Hence the motivation behind "Meatless Monday," a national nonprofit on a mission to help reduce American meat consumption by 15 percent. According to Chris Elam, editor of www.MeatlessMonday.com, scientists estimate that if every American lowered meat consumption by just 15 percent (about once a week), greenhouse gases would decrease as much as if we all switched to hybrid cars. Additionally, they project that if we all went meatless on Monday for one year, we would save 12 billion gallons of gasoline and enough water to fill up our bathtubs 22 times each week.

We know you're thinking, "But I've spent the last five years fighting to get my wee one to eat meat. Can this really be healthy for him?" Of course! We'd never steer you wrong. In fact, Dr. Susan Mitchell, licensed nutritionist, Orlando resident and author of three books about healthy eating (www.susanmitchell.org), says, "We are a country where meat at mealtime has always filled more than half the plate." According to Meatless Monday, Americans consume about 8 ounces of meat each day. Wow, that's 45 percent more than the USDA recommends and twice the global average. "Typically, neither kids nor adults eat enough vegetables, particularly now that the CDC recommends five to nine servings per day. Going meatless once or twice a week can be a good way to lower both the weekly grocery bill and the saturated fat in our diet, plus increase consumption of beans, vegetables and whole grains," continues Dr. Mitchell. So, Meatless Monday improves kids' health and lets you take a night off from the protein power struggle. Added bonus!

Flexitarianism: A semi-vegetarian diet focusing on vegetarian food with occasional meat consumption. A self-described flexitarian seeks to decrease meat consumption without eliminating it entirely from his or her diet.



Wondering how you'll get your little monkey to love her legumes?

Pam Brandon, Winter Park resident and co-author of *Culinary Confessions of the PTA Divas*, gathered years of recipes used at PTA meetings, compiling them into one nifty little cookbook packed with helpful tips and crazy cooking confessions. "You have to make your meatless night delicious," says Pam. "That way no one even notices what's missing." We suggest trying a few recipes from her cookbook, such as the Very Veggie Tacos and Japanese Noodle Nosh, proven favorites with her kids.

Struggling with your Monday do-it-yourself veggie feast?

Leave it up to the professionals and trot the "fam" down to one of Orlando's vegetarian eateries. With dishes way beyond salads, these locales will convert even the most committed of carnivores, we swear.



HEARTY VEGAN FOR HIPPIES & HIPSTERS

Tucked into the heart of Orlando's Antiques District on Ivanhoe Drive, **Ethos Vegan Kitchen** presents a menu of fare made entirely without meat, dairy or eggs. Owned by husband and wife team Kelly and Laina Shockley, Ethos is on a mission to show Orlando that eating vegan isn't just for tree huggers. Expect hearty comfort food in an uber-casual setting where hippies and hipsters happily mix.

PARENTS ♥: \$3.50 Sunday brunch mimosas

KIDS ♥: Mini calzones stuffed with faux cheese and fresh veggies
www.ethosvegankitchen.com



HERBIVORE HOTSPOT

Got kids with progressive palates? They'll be sure to appreciate Winter Park's newest herbivore hotspot, **Cafe 118**. With a menu of entirely raw and organic "Living Cuisine," owner (and local dad) Joseph Diaz proves that no one misses the meat, pasta or cheese at his eatery. This chic spot off Park Avenue attracts a foodie crowd ready to dine on meals designed by celebrity raw chef Matthew Kenney.

PARENTS ♥: BYO wine with no corkage fee and guiltless desserts

KIDS ♥: The dairy-free shakes and smoothies, as well as their signature "Lasagna"
www.cafe118.com



MADE WITH LOVE

At downtown's **Loving Hut**, a 100 percent vegan diner, the staff meditates two hours each day to make sure each dish is infused with pure love. We kid you not. Offering lots of easy winners like stir fry, spring rolls, and noodle dishes, the Loving Hut pays homage to a wide variety of Asian cuisines and creates vegan versions of favorites your kids probably already love.

PARENTS ♥: The vegan club sandwich and the fact that kids eat half price on Tuesdays

KIDS ♥: The corn dog made with soy and the yummy fresh juices
www.lovinghut.us



PLANET-LOVING PIZZA

Your meatless night will be a hit when the beef is replaced with pizza! **Pizza Fusion** on West Sand Lake Road kills it with their multigrain crust, organic ingredients and their eco-friendly ways. With a mission to "Save the Earth, One Pizza at a Time," this establishment offers dine-in or home delivery using their signature hybrid cars. They even offer a progressive Organic Kids Club every third Saturday.

PARENTS ♥: Personal "create-your-own" pizzas for the kids

KIDS ♥: TVs playing a constant stream of *Animal Planet*
www.pizzafusion.com

DID YOU KNOW...

September is National Fruit & Veggies "More Matters Month." Get tips for integrating more at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov.



SHINE ON KIDS

A special place for growing hearts, bodies and minds



Our literacy-rich, play-based early childhood program provides children the opportunity to play, explore and imagine their world in a loving environment filled with natural materials. The main emphasis is placed on developing imagination and creative thinking skills. This program is for 3, 4 & 5 year olds and strongly influenced by Waldorf & Yoga.

We value childhood and look forward to nurturing your whole family

Additional programs at Shine On Yoga include: Mommy & Me - Music and Movement, Family Playgroups, Prenatal Yoga, Hatha, Ashtanga and Kundalini Yoga, Alexander Technique, Qigong, Drumming, Vocal Resonance, Meditation, Yoga Immersions, Workshops and More.



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