

How It All Vegan

By Tracy, Boston Mamas Guest Contributor

One of the best gifts I have ever received is a cookbook from a friend called, [How It All Vegan!](#) When my older son was diagnosed with food allergies to milk, eggs, and peanuts, I vowed that he would not have to live without lovely baked goods, puddings, and other treats. I promised him (and myself) that if I couldn't find a safe substitute in the store, I would make it for him.

For a while, this worked. But soon, even a wannabe Food Network host like myself ran out of ways to substitute for certain ingredients (for example, egg "replacers" are only good for recipes with up to 2 eggs). A friend bestowed [How It All Vegan!](#) one year at Christmas, and I am eternally grateful to her for the gift. As one of only two people in the world whom I trust to cook for my son, she was well aware of the dilemma I faced. This book gets a ton of use in our house. I make tofudgsicles in the summer, scrambled tofu "eggs" on the weekend, and vanilla-banana or chocolate "ice cream" almost monthly. Other recipes are great, too.

Today, I share with you two of our all-time favorite recipes: Sinful Chocolate Pudding (which I promise you is one of the best puddings you will ever taste), and Caesar Salad Dressing. For us, these recipes go hand in hand, because you can use the same brick of tofu - yes, tofu - to make both recipes. I indicate my own substitutions (I know, I even fiddle with vegan recipes) with an asterisk.

Caesar Salad Dressing

Serve as you would any Caesar salad. Romaine lettuce, croutons...since I'm not vegan, sometimes I even fry bacon and put it in (Shhh. Don't tell.) Tomato and red onion also make lovely additions.

1/3 cup	soft (silken) or medium tofu
1 1/2 tsp.	Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp.	kelp powder*
1 tbsp.	flaked nutritional yeast**
1/8 tsp.	sugar
2 Tbsp.	lemon juice or vinegar
1 clove	garlic, minced***
1 Tbsp.	flax oil or olive oil
1/4 tsp.	salt
1/4 tsp.	pepper

In a blender or food processor, blend together all the ingredients until smooth and creamy.

* I don't put in kelp powder, and it's fine without it.

** The original recipe calls for 2 tbsp. of Faux Parmesan cheese; a sesame seed and nutritional yeast combo, which is in the book, too. I never have time to make this ahead, so I just cut it to 1 tbsp. n. yeast. This has a cheesy flavor, so it works just fine.

*** I suggest using the smallest clove you can find on the bulb, otherwise, this dressing will be repeating on you for *days*.

Sinful Chocolate Pudding

This recipe has other variations in the book, all of which are scrumptious. The concept behind the recipe is so simple that I've even managed to invent my own autumn version of Apple-Maple Pudding, which I might post another time.

1 cup soft (silken) tofu
¼ cup oil (something like safflower or canola works best)
½ cup maple syrup*
4 Tbsp. cocoa powder
¼ tsp. salt
1 ½ tsp. vanilla extract

In a blender or food processor, blend together all the ingredients until smooth and creamy. Chill well before serving. Makes 4-6 ½ cup servings.

* The original recipe calls for “sweetener.” The authors refer to sweetener for liquids such as maple syrup or liquid honey. Some vegans, however, don't eat honey, so they are very generalist about sweeteners. When they refer to dry sweetener they mean granulate, brown or other crystallized sugars.