

THANK YOU TO MY SISTER **EMS** - WHO GAVE ME A HOME AND MOSTLY ATE MY DESSERTS.  
 MY LOVELY NIECES **FREYA AND TILLY** FOR TASTE TESTING AND BEING EVER HONEST.  
 THANK YOU TO **CRAIG** FOR THE INVALUABLE GROWING KNOWLEDGE AND SUSTAINING WALKS DURING THIS TESTING TIME.  
 AND ALL MY WONDERFUL FRIENDS AND FAMILY FOR THEIR HELP, ADVICE AND ON-GOING AND HUGELY APPRECIATED SUPPORT.  
 FINALLY TO **MALIN** FOR EVERYTHING X  
 - NIKI

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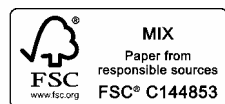
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# About NIKI

Hi, my name is Niki and I'm a plant-based cook and cookbook author. From a really young age I pretty much refused to eat meat! I didn't like the taste at all, and the thought of eating animals just felt wrong to me.

This was definitely a challenge for my poor mum who was left not knowing what to do, especially when I developed a milk intolerance when I was seven.

Of course, back then there weren't the vegan options available like there are today. I ended up eating quite a limited diet, but this all changed when I got in the kitchen and started creating and experimenting with food.

It's been a long journey from then to now. I discovered the joy of eating and creating amazing plant-based food – all focused on natural wholefoods using seasonal ingredients.

So I'm happy to have created a handbook for young people specifically focused on vegan eating throughout the whole year. I've filled it with helpful advice and inspiration about how to cut down on (or cut out) meat and dairy, as well as the latest nutritional information.

Starting in spring, you'll learn how to make amazing vegan food for every season. I've included seasonal tips, from how to grow your own veg to how to make the ultimate vegan food for the party season.

I hope you love this plant-based companion for 365 days of being vegan!

*Niki* +



# Being Vegan through the YEAR

If you are considering becoming vegan or trying a vegan lifestyle, your reasons may be varied: it could be animal welfare, helping the environment, for health reasons, or a combination of all of them.

But what does it actually mean to be vegan? Veganism is a lifestyle that doesn't use anything from animals – so that means no meat, fish and dairy. It also means avoiding anything made from animals like clothes, cosmetics and household items. This can be challenging, especially when you are starting your vegan journey.

## DON'T MISS OUT

Even though there are some amazing plant-based options out there, it can still be hard at times... for example, during birthdays and celebrations when you are with family and friends who may not be vegan. The good news is you don't need to miss out at all – you can make impressive celebration food like cakes and snacks which you'd never know were vegan at all and you and your guests will love!

## EATING SEASONALLY AND LOCALLY

The next thing you might want to do is make steps towards eating seasonally and locally. There are many benefits – it's usually fresher, it's better for the environment as it means fewer food miles, you can support local businesses, and it lets you get creative with seasonal produce.

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**“Veganism is a lifestyle that doesn't use anything from animals”**

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## GROWING YOUR OWN FRUIT, VEG AND HERBS

It might be easy and convenient to buy produce from the supermarket, but it's much more rewarding to plant a tiny seed, take care of it and watch it grow into something deliciously edible. You don't need to miss out if you haven't got any outdoor space – you can grow herbs, lettuce, tomatoes and other vegetables in pots.

## INGREDIENTS

Makes 12 burgers

### For the wedges

2 sweet potatoes  
2 white potatoes  
Big pinch of sea salt  
1 tsp garlic granules  
2 tbsp olive oil

### For the burgers

1 tbsp olive oil  
1 red onion  
3 garlic cloves  
1 red pepper  
½ tsp chilli flakes  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tbsp smoked paprika  
1–2 tbsp harissa paste  
3 tbsp tomato purée or tomato ketchup  
400g black beans drained  
250g cooked Puy lentils (freshly cooked and drained, or a pouch)  
5 tbsp plain flour  
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### To serve

Buns of choice  
Tomatoes  
Tomato salsa (Page 49)  
Gherkins  
Yoghurt/mint dip (4 tbsp yoghurt, shredded mint, pinch salt, squeeze lemon juice)  
Little Gem lettuce leaves

## Harissa bean burgers with sweet potato fries

The perfect family meal – lightly spiced harissa bean burgers with sweet potato fries! I think the best bit about burgers is adding all your favourite toppings – creamy yoghurt mint dip, tomato salsa and gherkins – yum!

### TO MAKE THE WEDGES

1. Pre-heat your oven to 180°C.
2. Cut the sweet potatoes and potatoes into wedges then add to a large roasting pan with the olive oil, salt and garlic powder. Roast for 20 minutes, then turn. Continue to roast for a further 20 minutes or until the veg is cooked and golden brown.

### TO MAKE THE BURGERS

1. Slice the onion, garlic and peppers.
2. Add the oil and onion to a frying pan and cook for 6–8 minutes to soften. Now add the garlic and red pepper and cook for a further 2–3 minutes.
3. Add the spices and stir to combine, cook for a further minute, then set aside.
4. Add the black beans and veg to a food processor along with the harissa and tomato paste. Blitz to a smooth-ish paste.
6. Transfer to a large bowl along with the lentils, flour and salt and pepper. Stir to combine.
7. In a large non-stick frying pan, heat a little oil and spoon a heaped tablespoon of the mixture into the pan and flatten and spread out to a round burger shape.
8. Repeat for each burger. Remember to leave enough room to flip the burgers!
9. Fry for 2–3 minutes each side until lightly brown.
10. Set aside on a plate and repeat with the remaining mixture. Fill the buns with the lettuce leaves, the burgers and your choice of toppings.

