Vegetarian & Vegan Options
A Guide to Dining at Tufts

Vegetarian

Tufts Dining provides a wide variety of options to meet the diverse needs of vegetarians on campus. From the Tufts Dining annual survey data, we know that 13% of Tufts students identify themselves as vegetarian and 1% are vegan.

& Vegan

All Tufts Dining locations have vegetarian and vegan options. Carmichael and Dewick-MacPhie Dining Centers have the largest selection of vegetarian items. Both have bountiful salad bars with a wide assortment of fresh greens, vegetables, legumes, hummus, tofu, seeds and nuts, fruit, yogurt and salad dressings.
There is always a daily vegetarian soup option along with at least one vegetarian pizza choice. In most cases, our pizza cooks are happy to create pizzas based on a student’s request. Our pizza sauce and dough are vegan and can be made alone or with a vegan “mozzarella” cheese.

**Carmichael’s Vegetarian Options**

Carmichael has its own vegetarian station featuring entrees, organic legumes, organic whole grains and vegetables. Unique to Carmichael is an action station with additional vegetarian choices, many of which can be customized. “Stir-Fry to Order” at Carmichael has broad appeal to vegetarians. Students choose from a variety of vegetables, proteins and sauces to make a customized meal. “Omelets to Order” is also popular with lacto/ovo vegetarians. The Yo-Nola station has a variety of local, organic yogurts and granolas. Soy yogurt is also available.

**Dewick-MacPhie’s Vegetarian Options**

“Beans, Greens & Grains” is the dedicated vegetarian station at Dewick. A minimum of 3 vegetarian entrees are featured (usually at least 1 is vegan) at both lunch and dinner, along with a selection of organic whole grains, organic legumes and vegetables. Other vegetarian items may be found at the “Noodlery” and “Hot Stuff” stations in Dewick, so it is important to always check the menu or read the Food Fact Cards.

**QUESTIONS?**

We work hard to accommodate our students. If you have questions or comments about our services, please contact Julie Lampie, Tufts Dining’s registered dietitian.

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Additional Choices at BOTH Carmichael & Dewick–MacPhie

Calcium-fortified, plain soy milk and enriched organic rice milk are available as vegan options to cow’s milk. Soy yogurt is available in a variety of flavors. All of these products are stored in the specialty refrigerators found at both Carmichael and Dewick.

Most of the dessert options at Carmichael and Dewick are vegetarian, but they’re not marked, so we advise reading the ingredients on the Food Fact Cards or on the Tufts Dining website. Vegan dessert options are limited, but we do have a vegan brownie and a peanut honey oat bar. In addition, sorbet is available when scooped ice cream is served, and there is always whole, fresh, seasonal fruit.

Organic Food

A variety of organic items are offered on the vegetarian lines at Carmichael and Dewick. All grains are whole (brown rice, quinoa, wheat berries, barley, bulgur) and organic. Tofu and all legumes—including edamame (soybeans), lentils, and garbanzo, kidney, pinto and black beans—are also organic. In addition, the whole-wheat pasta and couscous are available on the vegetarian lines is organic. Other organic items in the dining centers include granolas, plain and French vanilla yogurt (additional flavors are in Carmichael), rice milk, natural peanut butter and bean sprouts.

A Note About Frying Oil

Deep-fried foods that may appear to be vegetarian, such as French fries and mozzarella sticks, are fried in oil that may have been used to fry fish or chicken. If vegetarian students are concerned about foods that might be commingled with non-vegetarian foods, we advise choosing deep-fried foods served on the vegetarian lines only.
Food Fact Cards
Carmichael and Dewick post Food Fact Cards for everything served at the vegetarian stations. These cards include nutrient facts, ingredients and allergens. They are labeled either VM (Vegetarian Meatless) or VG (Vegan).

Online Resources
On the Tufts Dining website, http://dining.tufts.edu, we are proud to offer a useful Nutrition Analysis tool that allows you to review menus and access nutrition facts, ingredients and allergens. It covers food being served in Carmichael, Dewick-MacPhie, Hodgdon, Hotung Café, Mugar Café, The Commons, The Tower Café and Brown & Brew. To access this tool, look under “Quick Links” on the left, and click on “Menus.” On the menu screen, click on the dining location you would like to look at. The dining location screen has three meals—breakfast, lunch and dinner—across the top. Next to each meal is a red apple. Click on that apple to get a list of all the menu items served that meal period. Then, you can click on any menu item to access nutrition facts, ingredients and allergens.

Vegetarians Need Variety
Vegetarian diets vary considerably. The key to a healthy vegetarian diet, as with any diet, is to eat a wide variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, whole grains, nuts, seeds and legumes. Skipping meals and loading up on empty-calorie foods may put you at nutritional risk. A well-planned vegetarian diet may provide health benefits, including lower levels of blood cholesterol and blood pressure, which may reduce the risk of heart disease. Vegetarian diets tend to be lower in saturated fat and cholesterol, with higher levels of dietary fiber, magnesium and potassium, vitamins C and E, folate, carotenoids, flavonoids and other phytochemicals. Strict vegetarians and vegans may be deficient in vitamins B₁₂ and D, calcium, zinc and long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, and they may have difficulty getting enough protein and iron. These nutrients are discussed in greater detail on the next panel.
PROTEIN: Plant protein is sufficient in meeting protein needs as long as a variety of plant foods are consumed and energy requirements are satisfied. Proteins are composed of amino acids. Animal foods contain all eight essential amino acids, but plant foods contain fewer. So eating a varied diet provides a complement of amino acids because deficits in one food are made up for by another. Although all plant foods contain some protein, the best sources include legumes and nuts. Soybeans are the only legume that contains complete protein; they are the basis of tofu, tempeh, miso and soy milk. In addition to their high protein content, these foods are mineral rich and cholesterol free. They are also readily available in Tufts Dining Centers.

IRON: Students following a well-balanced vegetarian diet typically consume adequate amounts of iron. In fact, the incidence of iron-deficiency anemia among long-term vegetarians is similar to that for non-vegetarians. Nevertheless, a higher intake of iron is recommended for vegetarians because iron from plant sources is not as well absorbed as the iron in animal foods.

VITAMIN C, readily found in foods and vegetables, can significantly increase iron absorption. For this reason, vegetarians should include a good source of vitamin C at each meal.

Any student with a history of IRON deficiency should consult with Julie Lamey, Tufts Dining’s registered dietitian, to discuss how to make appropriate food choices and minimize risk. Good sources of iron include fortified cereals, nuts, nut butters, enriched bread and pasta, dried fruit, soy foods, legumes and green leafy vegetables.

CALCIUM: Vegans are at risk for not consuming sufficient calcium to meet recommended levels and should consume calcium-fortified foods or take a dietary supplement. Calcium-fortified fruit juices, soy milk, rice milk and breakfast cereals are readily available on campus and can complement the vegan diet. Osteoporosis in foods such as spinach and Swiss chard can reduce calcium absorption, whereas low-oxalate greens such as bok choy, broccoli and kale are good sources of calcium with high bioavailability. Other non-dairy calcium sources include tofu, almonds, sesame seeds and dried beans.

ZINC: The absorption of zinc in vegetarian diets is influenced by the amount of phytates in the food. Many foods rich in zinc, including legumes and whole grains, are also high in phytates. Strict vegetarians who depend on eating large amounts of grain and legumes may want to consider zinc supplementation.

VITAMIN B₂: Whether or not vegetarians are deficient in vitamin B₂ is dependent on the type of diet they follow. Lacto-ovo vegetarians can obtain adequate B₂, from dairy and eggs. For vegetarians, B₂ is available through B₂-fortified foods such as fortified soy and rice beverages, some breakfast cereals and meat analogs or fortified yeast supplements. No unfortified plant source contains a sufficient amount of B₂. A daily supplement may also be taken to meet vitamin B₂ requirements.

VITAMIN D is essential for calcium absorption and bone health. Current research has found vitamin D deficiency to be more widespread than previously known. Salmon and fortified foods, including cow’s milk, soy milk, rice milk and some breakfast cereals, are the major sources of vitamin D in our diet. Vitamin D is also produced when skin is exposed to sunlight, but with Tufts’ northern location, sun exposure is not a reliable year-round source. With recent studies suggesting a strong correlation between low vitamin D and certain diseases, including cancer and cardiovascular disease, we now know the importance of vitamin D. Vitamin D status can be measured through a blood test, and if levels are low, a vitamin D supplement may be prescribed by your physician.

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS (including EPA, DHA and ALA) are important for cardiovascular health. Vegetarians who do not consume fish, eggs or large amounts of algae may be deficient.ALA can be converted to EPA and DHA; therefore, it is recommended that vegetarians consume flaxseed, walnuts, canola oil and soy, all of which are good sources of ALA.