



THE POWER OF PLANTS:

Adventures in Plant-Based Nutrition



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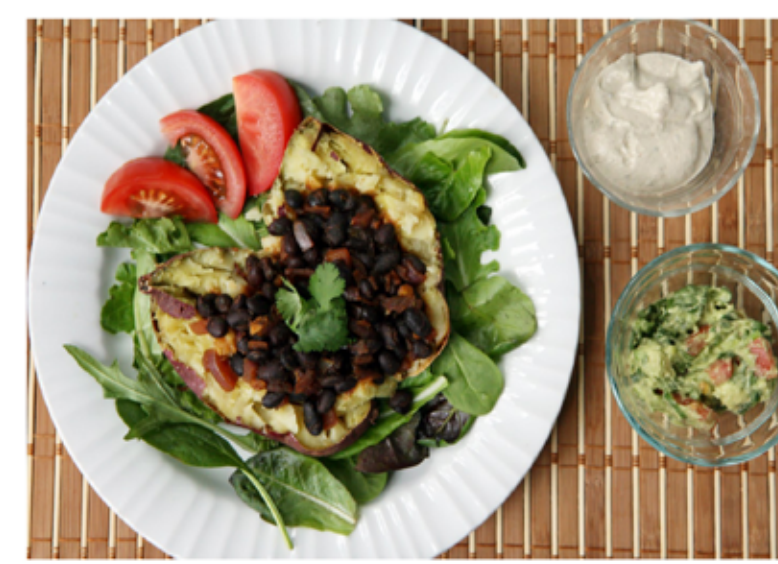
GOING FOR GREEN:

The why and how of adding more leafy greens to your day





They are a good source of calcium, and vitamins C as well as a number of vitamins, minerals and potent phytochemicals that, among other things, help to protect against cataracts and macular degeneration, improve immune function and provide anti-inflammatory benefits. As with many vegetables, some nutrients in greens are destroyed by cooking, but other nutrients become more absorbable, so it's a good idea to eat both cooked and raw greens. (A word of caution if you are on blood thinners such as warfarin or Coumadin...an increased intake of greens can affect how these drugs work in your body, so make sure your doctor is aware of your diet change so s/he can alter your medication if necessary).



- Whatever you're having for dinner, make it on a bed of greens (eg pasta, mashed potatoes, etc) – get good at salads so you can use a variety of greens and it doesn't get boring
- Pre-wash them so you always have some ready and at-hand
- Get into the habit of adding them to whatever you are making – pasta, soup, stirfries, grains, pizza and pesto!
- Grow and eat microgreens (use in salads, as part of Buddha bowls, in smoothies – or anywhere else you might use greens)

How ever you do it, get them in! Summer is also a great time to add more green juices or smoothies to your life. If juicing, make sure you keep them mostly green rather than adding a lot of fruit, which could cause a blood sugar spike. And so I'll leave you with a couple of my favorite juice recipes:

How many greens should I be eating?

Plant-based doctors, dietitians and nutritionists recommend 2-3 servings (meaning 1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked) of greens every day. That is a lot more than many of us are eating! So, what are some easy ways to get more greens in?

- Put some in your breakfast smoothie/add some to your morning savoury oatmeal/ put your tofu scramble on a bed of greens
- Have a big salad for lunch, or add them to soups/wraps/sandwiches;



Emma Levez Larocque is a Registered Holistic Nutritionist and a Certified Plant-Based Chef. She has been vegan for 7 years, and veg for more than 20. She is passionate about sharing the benefits of plant-based eating and living with others, and working to make the planet a kinder, more compassionate place for all who share it.

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One of my favorite things about spring and early summer is that fresh, local greens start to pop up everywhere! The variety and vitality of these beautiful foods is so welcome after a long winter that brings us slightly wilted versions of the same few varieties! To celebrate I thought it would be good to focus this month's article on the power of those leafy greens, and why it's a great idea to try to make sure you're getting them in every day.

What ARE greens, exactly?

What I mean by greens are any and all of those dark green leafy things – everything from kale (all varieties) to collards, salad/mesclun mix, mustard greens, spinach, swiss chard, beet greens, turnip greens, arugula,

dandelion greens...you get the picture! Each of the greens has different nutrients and flavours to offer – for example, spinach is fairly neutral-tasting while arugula is slightly bitter and mustard greens are peppery -- so make sure you switch things up and take advantage of the variety whenever you can.

Why eat them?

You might have heard that dark leafy greens are the most nutrient-dense foods we can eat, and you probably know that that can only be a good thing! Greens are known to provide powerful protection against some of the major chronic diseases that plague western cultures, including diabetes and some cancers, and they are especially associated with a reduced risk for heart attacks and stroke.

Mean Green Juice

- 6 kale leaves
- 1 cucumber
- 4 celery stalks
- 2 green apples
- ½ lemon
- 1 large piece ginger
- Few stalks of mint

Spinach Surprise

- Handful of spinach
- 3 stalks kale
- 2 oranges
- Small handful parsley
- 1 lemon
- 1 cucumber