

## **VEGAN ZERO WASTE IDEAS**

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Here are some ideas for zero-waste meals and snacks featuring creative ways to use what you have in order to reduce food waste. These ideas are meant to provide a quick view of what it could look like to eat in a way that is conscious of food waste each day. Since some of these recipes serve 2 or more people, if you are cooking for 1 you will end up with some leftovers. Save any extra portions in the fridge for the next several days or share them with others.

### ***Breakfast Foods:***

#### **Mushy Berry and Wilted Greens Smoothie**

(1 serving)

1 cup wilted spinach, kale, or other greens  
½-1 cup berries (if using strawberries put the whole thing in, green leaves and all)  
1-2 Tbsp chia seeds (optional)  
½ -1 fresh or frozen banana  
½ cup ice  
½ cup vegan milk or water

Add all to a blender and blend until smooth.

#### **Stale Bread French Toast**

(1 serving)

2 slices of stale bread  
½ cup vegan milk  
1 tsp vanilla  
½ tsp cinnamon  
3 Tbsp cornstarch

Combine milk, vanilla, cinnamon, and cornstarch in a bowl. Dip slices of bread in batter until fully coated. Cook battered bread in an oiled skillet for 2 minutes on each side, until golden brown.

#### **PB Jar Overnight Oats**

(1 serving)

½ cup of rolled oats  
½ cup vegan milk  
Almost empty peanut butter jar  
Toppings or flavors of choice (i.e. banana, chia seeds, cinnamon, cocoa, berries, vanilla, maple syrup etc.)

Add all ingredients to the peanut butter jar. Shake to combine then refrigerate overnight. Enjoy for breakfast in the morning.

### **Date Pit Coffee**

(1 cup of “coffee”)

8-10 date pits

Roast pits on parchment lined baking tray at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Place pits in a coffee grinder or food processor and grind to a fine powder. Prepare like you would normal coffee grounds.

### **Oatmeal**

(1 serving)

½ cup rolled oats

½-¾ cup vegan milk or water

Any toppings or flavors you have on hand (i.e. fruit, cocoa powder, Craisins, chocolate chips, cinnamon, maple syrup, nutritional yeast, grated carrot, steamed spinach, avocado, salsa, etc.)

Prepare oatmeal by combining milk and oats and microwaving for 1½-2 minutes. Top with sweet or savory toppings of choice.

### **Browning Banana Pancakes**

(Makes up to 2 servings)

1 overripe banana, mashed

1 cup flour

2 Tbsp organic sugar

1 Tbsp baking powder

1 tsp cinnamon

¼ tsp salt

¾ cup vegan milk

Combine dry ingredients in a bowl. Add banana, milk, and vanilla and mix until combined. Cook on an oiled pan over medium heat for 3-5 minutes each side.

### ***Lunch or Side Dish Ideas:***

#### **Zero Waste Cauliflower Wings over Sautéed Cauli-Greens**

(Makes up to 2 servings)

1 small head of cauliflower, cut into florets

Leaves and stems of the cauliflower

2 Tbsp oil (divided)

2 Tbsp cornstarch or flour

2 Tbsp hot sauce of choice

Toss cauliflower florets in 2 Tbsp oil and cornstarch or flour. Place on baking tray and cook in oven at 350 degrees for 15-18 minutes or in air fryer at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes. Once cooked, toss cauliflower wings in hot sauce and 1 Tbsp oil.

Slice cauliflower stems into thin strips. Add cauliflower leaves and sliced stems to a skillet with a drizzle of oil and sauté until soft, 5-10 minutes, adding salt and pepper to taste. Serve wings over sautéed leaves and stems.

### **Celery Leaf Salad**

(1 serving)

Leafy tops of 1-2 bulbs of celery

Any other vegetable you have in the fridge (carrots, onion, tomato, cucumber, other greens etc.)

¼ cup Craisins or raisins

¼ cup chopped nuts or seeds

1/3 cup chickpeas or another white bean

Salad dressing of choice

Chop/slice celery leaves and other veggies of choice. Combine all ingredients and toss with dressing.

### **“What’s in My Fridge?” Wrap**

(1 serving)

Hummus, dressing, or other spread of choice

1 large tortilla

Leftover grains

Any veggies you have either cooked or raw, sliced

Leftover beans or tofu

Spread hummus or other sauce/spread on tortilla. Load tortilla with leftovers and roll into a burrito/wrap.

Option: Heat on a skillet until tortilla is crispy and golden.

### **Leftovers Rice Bowl**

(1 serving)

Up to 1 cup white or brown rice, cooked

Any veggies you have in the fridge (cabbage, carrots, peppers, broccoli, etc.)

½ block tofu, cubed

Stir-fry sauce or sauce of choice

Cook rice according to package instructions or used precooked rice from earlier in the week. Coat vegetables and tofu with oil and spices of your choice and roast on a baking tray in the oven

at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes. Combine cooked rice, and roasted veggies and tofu in a bowl, top with sauce, and enjoy!

### **Zero Waste Potato Soup**

(up to 2 servings)

Consider making this soup over the weekend when you may have more time as meal prep for the week.

At least 1 cup veggie scraps (onion and garlic peels, carrot skins, etc.)

1 bay leaf  
2-3 potatoes, cubed  
1 carrot  
1 onion  
1 celery stalk  
2 cloves garlic  
½ tsp salt or to taste  
1 tsp pepper

Boil veggie scraps and bay leaf in 6 cups of water for 30-45 minutes to make broth. Strain broth and set liquid aside.

Dice carrots, onion, celery and garlic and sauté in a large pot until soft, 5-8 minutes. Add potato cubes and broth and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook for 30 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste, then cook for an additional 5-10 minutes.

Option: Add half of the soup to a blender or food processor and purée then add it back to the pot for a creamy potato soup.

### ***Dinner Ideas:***

#### **Wrinkly Pepper Fajitas**

(Makes up to 2 servings)

1-2 wrinkly peppers, sliced  
1 onion, sliced  
1 Tbsp oil  
1 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp cumin  
½ tsp salt or to taste  
½ tsp paprika  
½ tsp garlic powder  
One 14-15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed  
6-8 small flour or corn tortillas

Sauté peppers and onion in oil until soft, 5-8 minutes, then add spices and cook for 2-3 more minutes. Drain and rinse black beans, then add to the skillet with the peppers and onions and warm for 5 more minutes. Serve on tortillas.

### **Zero Waste Pesto Pasta**

(4 servings)

2 cups of carrot, turnip, radish, or beet tops, or wilted greens such as spinach or collards (feel free to use a combination)

¼ cup basil leaves

1/3 cup pine nuts, pumpkin seeds, or other nut or seed (or combination)

3 cloves garlic

1/3 cup nutritional yeast

1/3 cup olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

One package of pasta

Combine all ingredients except pasta in a blender or food processor until smooth. Cook pasta according to package. Serve over pasta and enjoy!

### **Panzanella**

(2 servings with added protein\*, 4-6 servings as a side dish)

½-1 loaf of stale or hard bread

1 onion, sliced

1 tomato, sliced or cubed

1 medium cucumber, sliced

1-2 Tbsp vinegar (balsamic or red wine)

1-2 Tbsp oil

Salt, pepper, herbs to taste

Soak stale bread in 1 Tbsp vinegar and ¼ cup water until soft enough to break into chunks (should be less than 5 minutes). Break bread into bite sized chunks and toss together with sliced vegetables. Dress with oil vinegar, salt, pepper, and herbs to taste.

\*For extra protein, add in one 14-15 ounce can of chickpeas or white beans, drained and rinsed

### **Wilted Greens Pasta**

(Makes up to 2 servings)

2-4 oz pasta of choice

2 cloves garlic, chopped

½-1 cup tomato sauce

Wilted greens (as many as you have)

Leftover beans (optional, if you have them on hand)

Cook pasta as directed on package. Heat tomato sauce in pot with garlic. Add cooked pasta and greens and warm in the sauce for 3-5 minutes.

### **Banana Peel Tacos**

(2 servings)

6 banana peels  
½ onion, diced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced  
2 Tbsp oil  
2 tsp cumin  
1 Tbsp oregano  
1 Tbsp soy sauce  
1 tsp black pepper  
1-2 Tbsp lime juice  
6-8 small tortillas or taco shells  
Taco toppings of choice

Cut off the stem and end of the banana peels and scoop the fibers off of the peel with a spoon. Shred the peel into long strips with a fork.

Sauté onions, garlic, and jalapeno in skillet with oil until soft, 5-7 minutes. Add shredded banana peels and spices to skillet and stir, then add soy sauce and lime juice. Cover and cook on medium to low heat for 30 minutes until banana peels are soft. Add more soy sauce or salt to taste, if needed. Serve in tortillas or taco shells, topped with your favorite taco toppings!

Option: For added protein consider adding black or pinto beans to the tacos or serve with a side of vegetarian refried beans.

### ***Snack Ideas:***

#### **Fruit Leather**

(Makes up to 4 servings)

3 cups mushy but not moldy berries, mango, or other soft fruit (or a combination)  
1 Tbsp chia seeds  
2 Tbsp maple syrup or agave

Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Bake on a parchment lined baking tray at 175 degrees for 4-6 hours.

#### **Veggie Skin Chips**

(1-2 servings)

1½-2 cups of peels of potatoes, beets, carrots, eggplants, etc.  
Drizzle of oil

¼ tsp salt  
½ tsp paprika  
½ tsp black pepper

Place veggie peels on baking tray and drizzle with oil. Add spices and toss peels to evenly coat with oil and spices. Cook in the oven on 300 degrees for 20 minutes or air fry on 300 degrees for 10-12 minutes.

### **Citrus Peel Candy** (8 servings)

2 cups of peels from oranges, lemons, limes, and/or grapefruit  
Water to cover peels  
1 cup water  
1½ -2 cups vegan sugar

Scrape excess pulp/fruit off of peel (the white layer is okay) and slice citrus peels into desired shape and size. Boil peels in a pot with water, then strain. Add peels, 1 cup of water, and sugar to the pot and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 1 hour. Place cooked peels on a wire rack and let sit for 24 hours. After 24 hours roll in more granulated sugar and enjoy!

Note: Save the extra syrup from the pot after removing the peels and use it as a simple syrup for fun cocktails and mocktails!

### **Roasted Pumpkin/Squash Seeds** (4-8 servings)

1-2 cups pumpkin or other gourd-like squash seeds (or as many as you get from seeding the squash)  
1 Tbsp oil  
Salt, pepper, and spices to taste

Thoroughly rinse and clean seeds. Coat in oil and spices. Spread evenly on baking tray and cook for 12-15 minutes at 350 degrees.

### **“All My Avocados Ripened at The Same Time, Now What?” Brownies** (8 servings)

2 ripe or overripe avocados, peeled and pitted  
¾ cup organic sugar (brown sugar, coconut sugar, or other sweetener)  
½ cup cocoa powder  
½ cup flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
¼ tsp salt  
Vegan chocolate chips (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender and pulse until smooth. Pour into a greased 8- x8-inch baking pan (top with chocolate chips if using) and cook at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until knife inserted in the center of the brownies comes out clean.

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