

50 FOR 50

50 PLANT-FORWARD IDEAS FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY



SMART TECHNIQUES

1. Browning isn't just for animal protein! You can develop the same flavorful molecules and aromas with plant-based foods.
2. Toast pasta, rice, or anything that you'll be "soaking" (usually something starchy) in a pan to add an extra layer of flavor.
3. When steaming, think beyond water to infuse foods with complex flavors and aromas.
4. Brine tofu with leftover citrus rinds or pineapple cores for 4-24 hours. Press tofu to extract excess liquid, then sear, fry, or grill. (You can also brine vegetables or even whole heads of cauliflower!)
5. Flavor seitan with beef stock and herbs to lend it savory depth. Cook, shave, and serve with equal parts roast beef for a Philly-style sandwich with less animal protein.
6. Plate differently. Lay smaller slices of meat or fish on top of a dish for big flavor. You'll use less animal protein than centering the meat on the plate.
7. Build umami. Mushroom powder, bonito flakes, seaweed, kombu, and fish sauce elevate the flavor of grains and vegetables.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SUPERSTARS

8. Massage tomato paste into cauliflower. Roast in a 375°F oven until tender but not mushy. Talk about umami! Dip in warm vegan garlic-parsley bagna cauda.
9. For a meaty flavor, cook dried fruit compote with savory ingredients like nuts, garlic, wine, shallots, red chile flakes, and herbs.
10. Add diced shiitakes to fried rice. Fold in kimchi. Top with green onions and a few omelet slivers.
11. Marinate and grill fresh sliced peaches, pineapple, or mango with smoked salt, lime juice, and roasted, ground hot chile powder for a mouth-puckering taste.
12. Use sweet potatoes and winter squash for vibrant hashes and pancakes.



13. Make a Tex-Mex stuffed acorn squash with black beans, lime-chili slaw, tomato, pickled onion, and cashew sauce with cumin and jalapeno.
14. Stuff an avocado with cooked quinoa and farro, pumpkin seeds, capers, cilantro, lime, diced jalapeno, and 2 ounces of tuna.
15. Stir-fry carrots, broccoli, mustard greens, snap peas, and Chinese long beans with a small amount of Lap Cheong (Chinese sausage), almonds, and ginger. Aim for 95% vegetables.

BE A BLENDER

16. Create blended burgers, meatloaf, or meatballs substituting in heritage grains for a portion of the meat. They'll add a nutty flavor and pleasant chew.
17. Stack your usual burger with a heap of grilled vegetables. You can reduce the size of your patty by half while boosting flavor, texture, and color.
18. Replace half the beef, pork, or chicken in a recipe with roasted, chopped mushrooms.
19. Spiralize golden beets into noodles. Serve with blended turkey/lentil Bolognese.
20. For a vegetable boost, combine equal parts cauliflower rice and regular rice when making fried rice.
21. Replace half the meat with plants in Bolognese, stroganoff, Shepherd's pie, paprikash, chili, Sloppy Joes — even lasagna.
22. In a steak salad, pair 2 ounces steak with caramelized cremini mushrooms. Add black garlic salt for extra umami.

SAVORY SAUCES

23. Make an all-vegetable “aioli” to replace the normal egg-based version. Puree cooked carrots + olive oil + herbs + garlic + your favorite spices until smooth. Serve with burgers, fries, and much more.
24. Make an umami-packed vegan tapenade to drizzle over fish, slather on bread, or toss with pasta. Create a rough paste of olives + garlic + capers + parsley + lemon juice, then fold in some extra virgin olive oil.
25. Making plant-based sauces is easy. Place your favorite vegetable into a pot. Add water just to cover and a dash of salt. Bring to a boil, then simmer gently until fork-tender. Transfer the vegetable to a blender (reserve the water). Blend, adding reserved water slowly until desired consistency. Add favorite spices to ramp up the flavor. Broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, beets, and radishes all work great!
26. For tofu stroganoff, replace the classic meat broth- and cream-based sauce with cashew sour cream. The results are creamy, nutty, and pleasingly sour, just like the original version.
27. Love Sriracha? Try harissa! It also boosts flavor, giving foods a powerful punch.
28. Add tahini to vinaigrettes and other dressings.
29. Add black garlic to vegan sauces, marinades, dips, stews, or even spice blends to up the flavor