

# vegetarian

## LIVING

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POLENTA TÂTE FLAMBÉE WITH SMOKED TOFU & COURGETTE





*Creative chef and nutritionist Dunja Gulin presents three of her enticing and colourful recipes, guaranteed to make eating healthily a pleasure, not a chore.*

# Naturally delicious



## Polenta tarte flambée

Visually appealing and a song for your taste buds, this dish is crispy and full of summer flavours. The look and texture reminded me of the tarte flambée that I first tried in a small beach restaurant on a German island in the middle of the North Sea. This is my gluten-free and vegan version that I hope you will enjoy!

**Serves 3 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 40 mins**

750ml water  
160g polenta  
100g grated courgette  
50g finely diced onion  
70g finely grated smoked tofu  
2-3 firm tomatoes  
olive oil, for sprinkling and serving  
½ tsp dried basil  
sea salt and crushed black pepper  
fresh basil, to garnish

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Bring the water to a boil, add ½ teaspoon of sea salt and whisk in the polenta. Lower the heat, cover and let cook for 15 minutes. There's no need to stir.
- 2 Lightly salt the grated courgette, let sit for 5 minutes and then squeeze out as much of the water as you can.
- 3 Add the onion, courgette and grated smoked tofu to the cooked polenta and mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- 4 Spoon the polenta mix into a 35 x 25cm oiled casserole dish or baking pan, evening the surface with a spatula or wet hands. Slice the tomatoes into 5mm-thick slices and discard any excess juice and seeds.

Arrange the tomato slices in a single layer over the top and sprinkle with olive oil, salt, dried basil and crushed black pepper to taste.

**5** Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until golden brown and the tomatoes are well baked and sizzling. Let it cool a little, and then slice and serve with fresh basil, a generous splash of olive oil and some mock tomato sauce (see recipe, below) to make this dish more juicy.

**COOK'S TIP** You can make variations on this recipe, topping the polenta with thin slices of courgette, peppers or aubergine instead of tomatoes.

■ PER SERVING 300 cals, fat 9.5g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 44.5g, sugars 5g, protein 9.5g, salt 1g, fibre 4g

## Mock tomato sauce

Why mock when you can have the real thing, you might wonder? Two reasons, really. Firstly, tomatoes are omnipresent and it's nice to mix things up a bit. Secondly, this is a great way of feeding your family with an array of vegetables without them noticing, because this will fool even the pickiest eaters out there! Use carrots when pumpkins are out of season or use both if you can. This is great on pizza, as pasta sauce or dilute it and serve as everyone's favourite 'tomato' soup!

**Makes 650ml**

470g pumpkin, peeled and seeded  
1 medium beetroot, peeled  
1 medium onion, peeled  
2 bay leaves

470ml water  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
3 tbsp olive oil  
½ tsp dried oregano  
¼ tsp crushed black pepper  
1 tbsp umeboshi vinegar or ½ tbsp apple cider vinegar  
sea salt

- 1 Cut the pumpkin into 5cm chunks, chop the beetroot into thin slices and cut the onion into 2cm chunks.
- 2 Place all the vegetables in a pressure cooker, add the bay leaves, water and ¼ teaspoon salt and follow the manufacturer's instructions to bring to high pressure, then pressure cook for about 20 minutes until all the vegetables are very soft. Alternatively, use a heavy-bottomed pot, put on a medium-high heat, cover and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and cook for around 30 minutes. To check if they're done, prick the pumpkin and beetroot with a fork - if there's no resistance, they're ready!
- 3 Now take most of the beetroot slices out as well as half of the cooking liquid (save it for later). Next, blend the vegetables in a food processor or blender briefly, which will produce a thick, orangey mixture. Start adding the remaining beetroot and some of the liquid little by little, and blend until you reach the bright red tomato colour and the consistency of a sauce.
- 4 To finish the sauce, add the garlic, olive oil, oregano, pepper, and the umeboshi vinegar or apple cider vinegar, which will make the sauce taste 'tomatoey'. Season to taste with salt.





POLENTA TARTE FLAMBÉE



## Spicy burgers and wedges ✔

Whenever I make vegan burgers, people bombard me with questions: how come they don't fall apart or soak up oil; how do I achieve the fine crust and the juicy inside; what's the secret ingredient that makes them so tasty? Making a good vegan burger is a tricky business, but this recipe is the answer! As an ideal accompaniment, these baked sweet potato wedges are a much healthier alternative to fries.

**Serves 5 | Prep 25 mins + resting  
Cook 30 mins**

80g vegetable pulp or grated vegetables  
50g finely diced onion  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tsp barbecue spice mix  
¼ tsp sweet paprika  
¼ tsp ground turmeric  
¼ tsp chilli powder  
4 tbsp finely chopped herbs (parsley, chives, etc.)  
575g cooked brown rice, at room temperature  
¾ tsp sea salt  
plain flour, for coating  
sunflower oil, for frying  
pickles, red onion slices and mayonnaise, to serve

**For the sweet potato wedges:**  
2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges  
4 tbsp sunflower oil  
¼ tsp sweet paprika  
½ tsp dried oregano  
sea salt and crushed black pepper

**1** For the burgers, put all the ingredients (except the flour and the oil) in a big bowl. Using your hands, knead the rice into the mixture until everything is well combined and the rice starts becoming sticky. This will prevent the burgers from falling apart or absorbing too much oil. Taste and add more salt and spice if needed – the burgers are usually the spicier part of a meal, so you don't want them to be bland. Allow the mixture to rest for 30 minutes.

**2** With moist hands, start shaping the mixture into small, neat burgers – you should be able to make about 14. Roll each burger in a little flour and set aside.

**3** Meanwhile, fill a deep, heavy-bottomed



PHOTOGRAPHY: WILLIAM BEAVELL



SPICY BURGERS AND WEDGES

...rying pan with 3cm vegetable oil and eat it until the oil starts moving. To all if it's the right temperature, throw small piece of the mixture into the pan: if it immediately starts sizzling, it's ready to go. Deep-fry a couple of burgers at a time, depending on the size of your pan - it should not be overcrowded. When they turn golden brown, remove them from the oil with a slotted spoon and place them

on paper towels. They should be golden with a thin crust and a juicy inside, and should only grease your fingers lightly.  
**4** Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Cook the sweet potatoes in a pan of boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain and dry them well.  
**5** In a small jar, place the remaining ingredients, close and shake, then pour over the wedges until they're

well coated. Line a baking sheet with foil, place a roasting rack on top and arrange the wedges on the rack. Bake in the oven for about 20-25 minutes until browned and crispy.  
**6** Serve the burgers hot with the wedges, pickles, onion slices and mayonnaise.  
 ■ PER SERVING 507 cals, fat 27.5g, sat fat 3.5g, carbs 61g, sugars 8g, protein 5.5g, salt 1.5g, fibre 5g

**govegan**  
 V For a completely vegan meal, make sure you choose a dairy-free mayonnaise to serve with your burgers and wedges.

**Soft-shell veggie tacos** V

I've never bought pre-made tortillas: one glance at the ingredients makes me want to look for organic cornmeal instead! And when I fill homemade tortillas with a nice, spicy filling and take a bite, I understand why so many people prefer tacos to sandwiches!

**Serves 4 | Prep 30 mins + resting  
 Cook 25 mins**

**For the tortillas:**  
 260g fine cornmeal  
 130g spelt flour or unbleached plain flour, plus extra for kneading  
 1 tsp sea salt  
 1 tsp active dry yeast (additive-free)  
 3 tbsp sunflower oil  
 230ml lukewarm water

**For the filling:**  
 320g cooked kidney beans  
 4 tbsp olive oil  
 1 large onion, diced  
 4 cloves garlic, crushed  
 ¼ tsp sea salt  
 1 medium red pepper, diced  
 1 tsp ground cumin  
 ¼ tsp chilli powder, or to taste  
 1 tsp dried oregano  
 2 tbsp soy sauce  
 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar  
 1 tbsp rice or agave syrup  
 200g organic canned corn kernels, drained  
 2 tbsp water  
 30g chopped mixed spring onion and coriander

**1** To make the tortillas, mix all the dry ingredients well in a large bowl, then incorporate the oil. Add enough of the water to get a slightly softer ball of dough. Flour a clean work surface and knead the dough for a couple of minutes, adding flour when needed but keeping the dough soft. Form 2 cylinders out of the dough, cover with a tea towel and let sit in the oven with only the light on (no heat) for at least 15 minutes.  
**2** Take them out and cut each cylinder into 4-5 equal pieces. With a rolling pin, roll out each tortilla to the size of a small dessert plate, and not too thin. Sprinkle with flour to avoid sticking. Remember not to place rolled tortillas on top of each other!  
**3** Place the raw tortilla on a preheated cast-iron or stainless-steel frying pan and allow to cook for about 30 seconds until it begins to puff up with air



SOFT-SHELL VEGGIE TACOS

pockets, then turn and cook for another 30 seconds. Keep the done tortillas covered with a tea towel to keep them warm and from drying out.  
**4** Meanwhile, to make the filling, use a fork to crush 140g cooked kidney beans to get a chunky mash. Set aside. Heat the oil in a frying pan and sauté the onion and garlic with the salt until translucent, then add the diced red pepper, cumin, chilli powder and oregano and continue to sauté for 10 more minutes, stirring occasionally.  
**5** Add the soy sauce, vinegar and syrup and bring to a boil. Add the corn, along with the crushed and remaining whole kidney beans and the water, and combine well over a medium heat. Now, sprinkle over the chopped spring onion and coriander and then taste the filling, adjusting the seasoning if necessary.  
**6** Serve the warm tortillas with the filling evenly divided over them (it should be enough for 6-8 tortillas). Any type of lightly seasoned salad

adds freshness to this dish, but I sometimes serve them garnished with avocado sauce (see below).  
 ■ PER SERVING 734 cals, fat 21.5g, sat fat 3g, carbs 123.5g, sugars 15g, protein 14g, salt 3.1g, fibre 10.5g

**Avocado sauce** V

**1 ripe avocado  
 4 tbsp olive oil  
 2 tbsp umeboshi vinegar (or use soy sauce instead, or sea salt to taste)  
 2 tbsp tahini**

Peel and stone the avocado, then blend along with the olive oil, umeboshi vinegar (or soy sauce or salt) and tahini in a food processor or a blender until smooth. Add a little water if it's very thick. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Adapted recipes and images from *The Vegan Pantry* by Dunja Gulin (Ryland Peters & Small, £16.99).



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**VEGGIE GOODNESS**  
 Buy *The Vegan Pantry* for the special price of £11.99. Turn to page 68 for further details.