EAT CLEANER

Live LARGER

ISSUE 29
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THE Vegan Protein ISSUE

How To Eat a High-Protein Diet the Easy & Delicious Way

Welcome

It is only over the past few years that I have become genuinely interested in protein. During my "raw food years" protein was seen within the raw food movement as overhyped and less important than other nutritional considerations. Many believed that our protein needs were around 30g per day, but the truth is, in an ideal world we should be consuming 80g+, if not more.

This is especially true when we are working out and/or during the various stages of menopause. During perimenopause and menopause itself, our body is going through a lot, and we need to give it sufficient protein in order to repair, grow and heal, not just as we go through the various hormonal shifts, but also to create a strong and healthy body for the future.

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When it comes to the topic of vegan protein specifically, many people are not exactly sure how best to meet their protein needs. While most assume that nuts, beans and seeds are good vegan sources of protein, they are not the highest in protein and also nuts and seeds come with a high fat percentage.

For those who are trying to lose weight as well as build muscle or heal, leaner protein sources are the way forward.

So what to eat and how to eat a high protein diet when eating vegan or raw? That's what this issue addresses. There's also some delicious recipes to help you incorporate more vegan protein into your diet.

I think you'll find this issue both practical and reassuring. When used in conjunction with the other resources this month, you will have all you need to up your protein and reach your body goals in a way that is healthy and delicious.

Let's dive in!

Karen

The Ultimate Quick Protein Fix



PROTEIN SMOOTHIE

SERVES 1

This recipe is a great way to bring more protein into your diet – especially valuable if you are working or training hard and want to get your protein intake up with minimal effort.

EQUIPMENT

Blender

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pure water

1 banana – fresh or frozen (as desired)

1-2 scoops of protein powder – whatever brand/flavour you prefer

DIRECTIONS

1. Simply blend all ingredients together until smooth.
2. Add ice and re-blend if you'd like it more chilled.
3. Feel free to add any other ingredients according to your personal dietary needs and/or goals.

★ PLAYSHEET 1

What Do You Like?

On this page you'll find two lists of high-protein vegan foods.

The first list comprises pure, natural vegan foods, while the second is store-bought and processed vegan foods.

To create your own personal list of preferred foods, simply put a X in the relevant box: like, don't like, don't know (because you haven't tried it).

FOOD	LIKE	DON'T LIKE	DON'T KNOW
Almonds			
Amaranth			
Black Beans			
Cashews			
Chia Seeds			
Chickpeas (Garbanzos)			
Edamame Beans			
Flaxseeds			
Hemp Seeds			
Kidney Beans			
Lentils			
Oats			
Peanuts			
Pistachios			
Pumpkin Seeds			
Quinoa			
Sesame Seeds			
Soybeans			
Spirulina			
Sunflower Seeds			

FOOD	LIKE	DON'T LIKE	DON'T KNOW
Pea Milk			
Seitan			
Seitan-based Deli Slices			
Soy Milk			
Tempeh			
Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)			
Tofu			
Vegan Burger Patties			
Vegan Jerky			
Vegan Protein Bars			
Vegan Protein Powder			
Vegan Yogurt (soy-based)			



FEATURE ARTICLE

Vegan Protein:

A COMPLETE BEGINNER'S GUIDE

If you've been vegan for a while - or even if you're just considering the switch - you've probably heard the question: *"But where do you get your protein?"* It's one of the most common things vegans are asked, as if protein is somehow scarce on a plant-based diet. The truth? Protein is abundant in the plant kingdom. You just need to know where to look, how much you really need, and how to make it easy to include in your daily meals.

This guide is your go-to beginner's map to vegan protein: what it really is, why it matters, where to find it naturally, which shop-bought products are worth trying, and how to make it all practical, enjoyable, and delicious.

WHAT PROTEIN REALLY IS (AND ISN'T)

Here's a secret that almost no one talks about: **we don't eat "protein" directly.** What we actually eat are foods containing **amino acids** - the tiny building blocks that our bodies use to *make protein*.

When you eat lentils, tofu, or hemp seeds, your digestive system breaks them down into amino acids. Then, your body reassembles those amino acids into the exact proteins it needs: for your muscles, hormones, enzymes, immune system, hair, skin, nails - basically everything that keeps you alive and thriving.

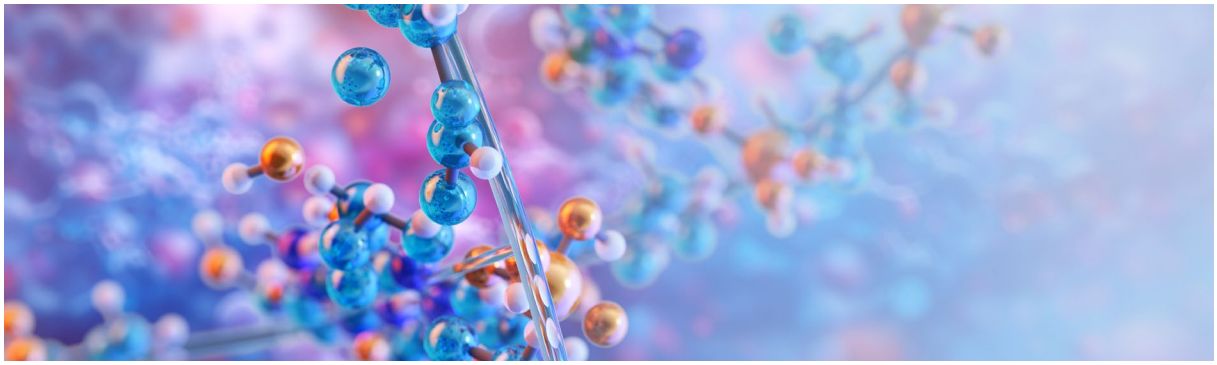
So the real question isn't "Where do you get your protein?" but rather: "Am I eating enough foods that contain the amino acids my body needs?"

WHY PROTEIN MATTERS

Protein is one of the three macronutrients (alongside carbohydrates and fats), and it plays a vital role in:

- **Muscle repair & growth** (whether you're an athlete or just staying active).
- **Hormone production** (keeping your mood, metabolism, and cycles balanced).
- **Enzyme function** (powering every chemical reaction in your body).
- **Immune health** (antibodies are proteins too).
- **Energy & satiety** (protein helps you feel full and stabilises blood sugar).

In short: without protein, nothing in your body works properly.



HOW MUCH PROTEIN DO YOU REALLY NEED?

One of the biggest myths about protein is that you need *huge amounts* of it to be healthy or build muscle. In reality, requirements vary depending on your age, sex, activity level, and goals.

- **General health**: around 0.8g of protein per kilogram of body weight per day.
- **Active individuals/athletes**: 1.2–2.0g/kg body weight per day.

Example: If you weigh 65kg (about 10 stone), you'll need roughly 52g per day for general health - more if you're training hard.

Most vegans easily reach these numbers with a balanced diet of whole foods plus (if desired) some shop-bought protein options like powders or bars.

NATURAL VEGAN PROTEIN SOURCES (RANKED BY PROTEIN CONTENT)

Here are the most protein-rich whole plant foods, ranked from highest to lowest protein content per 100g:

FOOD	PROTEIN (PER 100G)
Spirulina (dried)	57g
Soybeans (dry)	36g
Hemp Seeds	32g
Pumpkin Seeds	30g
Peanuts	26g
Lentils (dry)	25g
Kidney Beans (dry)	24g
Almonds	21g
Black Beans (dry)	21g
Sunflower Seeds	21g
Pistachios	20g
Tempeh	19g
Chickpeas (dry)	19g
Flaxseeds	18g
Sesame Seeds	18g
Cashews	18g
Oats	17g
Chia Seeds	17g
Quinoa (dry)	14g
Amaranth (dry)	14g
Edamame Beans	8g

Side note: Sprouting nuts, beans or seeds has minimal impact on the protein content so are not listed separately here.

Key takeaway: Seitan, spirulina, soybeans, hemp seeds, and pumpkin seeds top the chart. Nuts, beans, and grains are excellent staples for everyday meals.



SHOP-BOUGHT VEGAN PROTEIN OPTIONS (RANKED BY PROTEIN CONTENT)

Convenient and widely available globally, these clean vegan products can help you top up your protein intake:

PRODUCT	PROTEIN (PER 100G OR SERVING)	EXAMPLES
Seitan	75g	
Vegan Protein Powder	70g	Vega, Garden of Life, Sunwarrior
Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)	50g	Bulk brands worldwide
Vegan Jerky	35g	Primal Spirit, Louisville
Seitan-based Deli Slices	25g	Tofurky, Wheaty
Vegan Protein Bars	25g	No Cow, Misfits, Clif
Vegan Burger Patties	20g	Beyond Meat, Impossible
Tempeh (packaged)	19g	Lightlife, Impulse
Tofu (shop-bought firm)	8g	Most supermarkets
Vegan Yogurt (soy-based)	5g	Alpro, Silk
Soy Milk (fortified)	3g	Silk, Alpro
Pea Milk	3g	Ripple, Sproud

Key takeaway: Powders and TVP are the most concentrated. Jerky, bars, and deli slices are mid-range. Everyday items like plant milks and yogurts provide lighter protein boosts.



PROTEIN POWDERS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Protein powders deserve their own spotlight because they are so widely used in the vegan world. They're not essential, but they can be an incredibly convenient way to boost your intake - especially if you're active, busy, or simply want a quick option. They also do provide quite possibly the quickest and easiest way to reach your protein goals every day.

TYPES OF VEGAN PROTEIN POWDERS

- **Pea Protein**: Highly digestible, mild flavour, good amino acid profile.
- **Rice Protein**: Lighter, slightly grainy, often combined with pea for balance.
- **Soy Protein**: Complete amino acid profile, but some avoid soy for personal or health reasons.
- **Hemp Protein**: Rich in fibre and omega-3s; earthy flavour, lower protein percentage.
- **Pumpkin Seed Protein**: Mineral-rich, nutty flavour.
- **Blended Powders**: Many commercial brands combine pea, rice, hemp, and other sources to create a more balanced amino acid profile and smoother texture.

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR

Not all protein powders are created equal. Look at **the ingredients list,** not just the protein number:

- **Protein %**: Aim for 20–30g per serving, with minimal fillers.
- **Sweeteners**: Natural (stevia, monk fruit, coconut sugar) vs artificial (sucralose, aspartame). Choose what works for you.
- **Fillers & Additives**: Some brands bulk powders with gums, thickeners, or cheap starches. Fewer ingredients usually equals better quality.
- **Flavour vs Unflavoured**: Flavoured powders can make smoothies more enjoyable, but unflavoured versions are versatile for baking, soups, and savoury recipes.
- **Digestibility**: If one powder causes bloating, try another source (e.g., pea vs rice vs hemp).

PRO TIP

If you're new to powders, buy single-serve sachets or small tubs first. Everyone's taste and digestion are different - it's worth experimenting to find your perfect match.



MYTH-BUSTING: THE TRUTH ABOUT VEGAN PROTEIN

Myth #1: Vegan diets don't provide enough protein.
Truth: With lentils, beans, tofu, tempeh, nuts, seeds, and whole grains, it's easy to meet or exceed your needs.

Myth #2: You need to combine foods at every meal to get "complete protein."
Truth: This has been disproved. As long as you eat a variety of plant foods across the day, your body gets all the amino acids it needs.

Myth #3: Protein powders are essential.
Truth: They're optional. Many vegans meet their needs through whole foods, though powders can be convenient for athletes or busy lifestyles.

SPOTLIGHT ON SEITAN

Seitan (pronounced *say-tan*) is a vegan protein source than many vegans have not yet tried. Made from wheat gluten, it's incredibly high in protein, has a chewy texture, and can be flavoured. Originally used by Buddhist monks, it's now a staple in vegan kitchens and restaurants worldwide. Personally, I do not like seitan at all, however, that's my personal preference. It's worth a try if you're curious, you might just love it!

Note: Not suitable for those with celiac disease or gluten sensitivity.

SOYBEANS VS. EDAMAME: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

- **Soybeans** are the mature, beige beans used to make tofu, soy milk, tempeh, miso, and more. Protein content: ~36g per 100g (dry).
- **Edamame** are young, green soybeans harvested early. They're sweet, tender, and often eaten straight from the pod. Protein content: ~11g per 100g (cooked).

HOW TO BUILD A PROTEIN-RICH VEGAN PLATE

Here are some simple ways to make sure every meal contains protein:

- **Breakfast**: Oats cooked with soy milk, chia seeds, and a scoop of vegan protein powder.
- **Lunch**: Lentil and quinoa salad with pumpkin seeds and tahini dressing.
- **Snack**: Hummus with oatcakes or a protein bar.
- **Dinner**: Tempeh or tofu stir-fry with brown rice and mixed vegetables.
- **On-the-Go**: A shake with protein powder, plant milk, and frozen fruit.

Aim for a protein source at each meal and snack. It adds up quickly!



CREAMY SUNFLOWER SEED RANCH WRAPS

MAKES 4 WRAPS

These romaine wraps are filled with colourful veg and slathered in a tangy, creamy sunflower seed ranch. It's a raw comfort food recipe with high protein and lots of crunch.

EQUIPMENT

Blender or food processor

Sharp knife + cutting board

INGREDIENTS

4 large romaine lettuce leaves

½ red bell pepper (thinly sliced)

½ carrot (julienned or grated)

¼ cucumber (cut into matchsticks)

2 Tablespoon sunflower seeds (soaked 2+ hours)

2 Tablespoon pure water

1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar

1 teaspoon lemon juice

½ teaspoon garlic powder

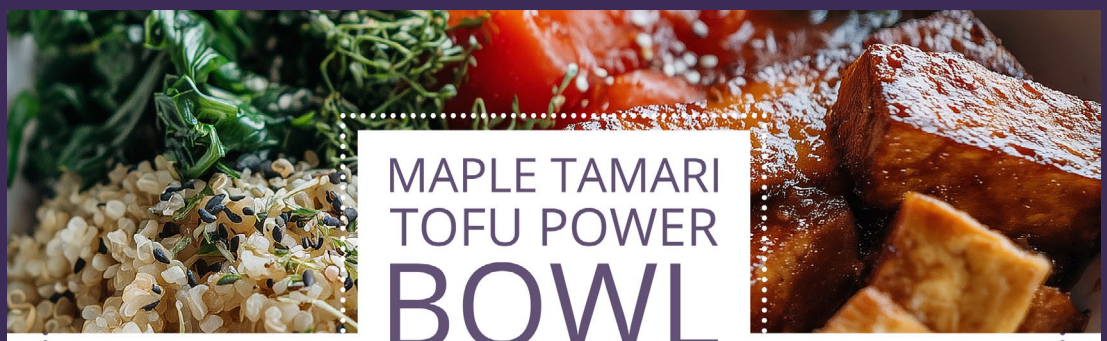
½ teaspoon onion powder

1 teaspoon nutritional yeast (optional)

Healthy salt and black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Blend sunflower seeds with water, vinegar, lemon, garlic powder, onion powder, nutritional yeast, salt, and pepper until creamy.
2. Lay out romaine leaves and fill with sliced vegetables.
3. Drizzle or spread sunflower ranch dressing over the fillings.
4. Roll or fold and enjoy fresh.



MAPLE TAMARI TOFU POWER BOWL

SERVES 2

This vibrant power bowl brings together crispy tofu, roasted veg, and quinoa, finished with a maple-tamari drizzle. It's protein-rich, deeply satisfying and perfect for a nourishing colder-weather meal.

EQUIPMENT

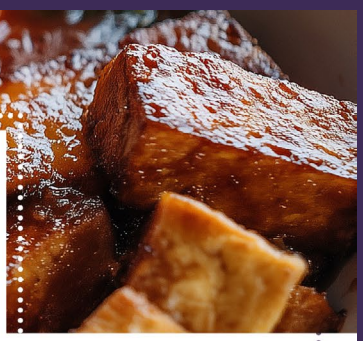
Oven or air fryer
Baking tray or air fryer basket
Mixing bowl
Small saucepan

INGREDIENTS

1 block (approx. 200g) firm tofu (pressed and cubed)
1 Tablespoon tamari
1 Tablespoon maple syrup
1 teaspoon sesame oil
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ cup quinoa (uncooked)
1 cup pure water
1 cup chopped seasonal roasted veg (e.g., sweet potato, beetroot, carrot)
1 cup mixed leafy greens (e.g., kale, rocket/arugula, spinach)
1 Tablespoon tahini (optional, for drizzling)
Sesame seeds, to garnish

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DIRECTIONS



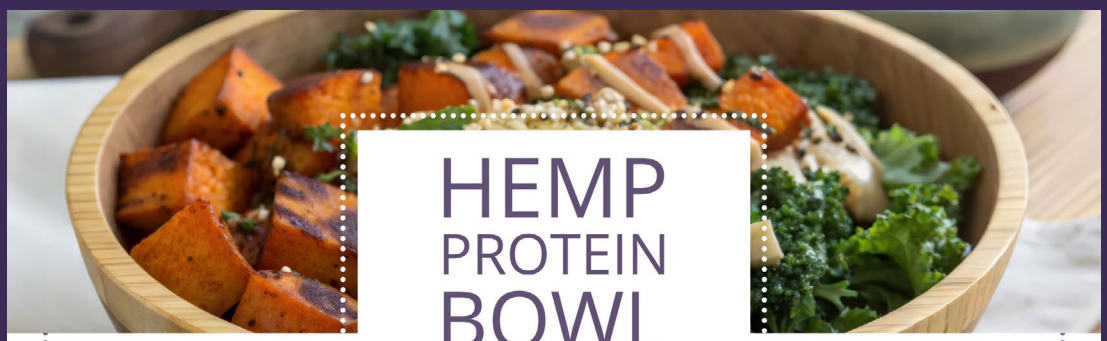


MAPLE TAMARI TOFU POWER BOWL

SERVES 2

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven or air fryer to 200°C. Toss tofu cubes with tamari, maple syrup, sesame oil, and garlic powder. Bake or air fry for 20–25 mins until golden.
2. Cook quinoa: Rinse, then simmer with water for 15 minutes. Fluff with a fork.
3. Roast seasonal veg in oven or air fryer until tender.
4. Assemble bowls: layer quinoa, greens, roasted veg, and tofu. Drizzle with tahini and sprinkle sesame seeds on top.



HEMP PROTEIN BOWL

SERVES 2

This energising green bowl is rich in plant protein from hemp seeds, sprouts and tahini. It's a raw, crunchy, deeply nourishing meal that leaves you feeling light yet satisfied.

EQUIPMENT

Large mixing bowl
Small jar or whisking bowl
Sharp knife + cutting board

INGREDIENTS

2 cups shredded kale
1 cup steamed/roasted sweet potato
1 cup alfalfa or mung bean sprouts
½ avocado (cubed)
¼ cup hemp seeds
1 Tablespoon tahini
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon tamari
Water, to thin
Healthy salt and black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare kale by massaging with a bit of lemon juice to soften, then place in a large bowl.
2. Add sprouts, sweet potato, avocado and hemp seeds.
3. In a small jar or bowl, whisk tahini, lemon juice, vinegar, tamari, water, salt and pepper.
4. Drizzle dressing over the bowl and toss to combine. Serve immediately.



CREAMY CHICKPEA & SPINACH SKILLET

SERVES 2–3

This creamy, garlicky chickpea dish is rich in plant protein and fibre. Served warm and made in one pan, it's a perfect fuss-free dinner for chilly evenings.

EQUIPMENT

Large skillet or frying pan
Wooden spoon
Knife and chopping board

INGREDIENTS

1 Tablespoon olive oil
2 garlic cloves (minced)
1 small red onion (sliced)
1 can chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
½ teaspoon smoked paprika
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ cup coconut milk or oat cream
2 cups baby spinach
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
Healthy salt and black pepper, to taste
Fresh parsley (optional, to serve)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 3–4 mins until soft.
2. Add chickpeas, paprika, and cumin. Stir well and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Pour in coconut milk and simmer gently for 5–7 minutes until slightly thickened.
4. Add spinach and lemon juice, stir until wilted. Season to taste and serve hot with parsley.



LENTIL & MUSHROOM BOLOGNESE

SERVES 3–4

This hearty Bolognese is made with lentils, walnuts, and mushrooms for a meaty texture and deep flavour - high in protein, fibre, and perfect over pasta or courgetti.

EQUIPMENT

Large saucepan or sauté pan
Food processor (optional)
Wooden spoon

INGREDIENTS

1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 small onion (diced)
2 garlic cloves (minced)
1 cup mushrooms (finely chopped or pulsed)
½ cup walnuts (finely chopped or pulsed)
1 cup cooked green or brown lentils
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon thyme
¼ teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)
1.5 cups passata or chopped tomatoes
1 Tablespoon tomato paste
Healthy salt and black pepper, to taste
Fresh basil (optional, to serve)
Cooked pasta or courgetti, to serve

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DIRECTIONS



LENTIL & MUSHROOM BOLOGNESE

SERVES 3–4

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan and sauté onion and garlic until soft.
2. Add mushrooms and walnuts. Cook for 5–6 minutes until moisture evaporates.
3. Stir in lentils, herbs, passata, and tomato paste. Simmer for 10–15 minutes.
4. Season well and serve over your favourite pasta or raw courgetti, with basil on top.



COOKIE DOUGH BITES

MAKES 10–12 BITES

These no-bake bites are pure joy and full of protein. With nut butter, protein powder, and almond flour, they're perfect as a pre- or post-workout snack, or a high-vibe treat any time.

EQUIPMENT

Mixing bowl
Spoon or spatula
Measuring spoons

INGREDIENTS

½ cup almond flour
¼ cup vegan vanilla protein powder
2 Tablespoons almond or peanut butter
1 Tablespoon maple syrup (or more to taste)
1 Tablespoon coconut oil (melted)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch of healthy salt
1–2 Tablespoons raw cacao nibs or mini vegan choc chips

DIRECTIONS

1. In a bowl, combine almond flour, protein powder, salt, and cacao nibs.
2. Add nut butter, maple syrup, coconut oil, and vanilla. Mix until a dough forms.
3. Roll into small balls and chill for 20–30 minutes before serving.



MY CHOSEN PROTEINS & RECIPES

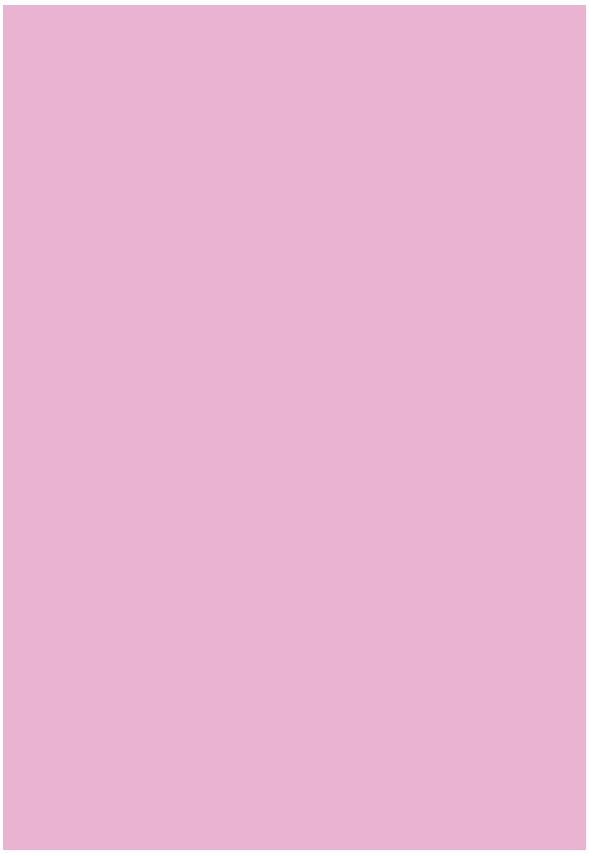
Now that you have a clear backdrop to this conversation, if you want to go ahead and create a high-protein vegan diet for yourself, now's the time to decide which protein-rich foods and, potentially, recipes you'd like to include in your menu plan.

In Playsheet 3 you'll move into the actual menu planning, but for now, it's a great idea to choose some great options for yourself.

I also encourage you, if you want to create a "capsule" for each season, to choose different items for each season so you can mix things up. To get a good variety and also to cover various nutritional bases, I suggest you choose 5-7 different high-protein foods to incorporate in each seasonal plan, including 1-2 seeds, 1-2 nuts, 2 beans/pulses/legumes and protein powder as a starting point. Simply drop your chosen foods and recipes in the relevant boxes below.

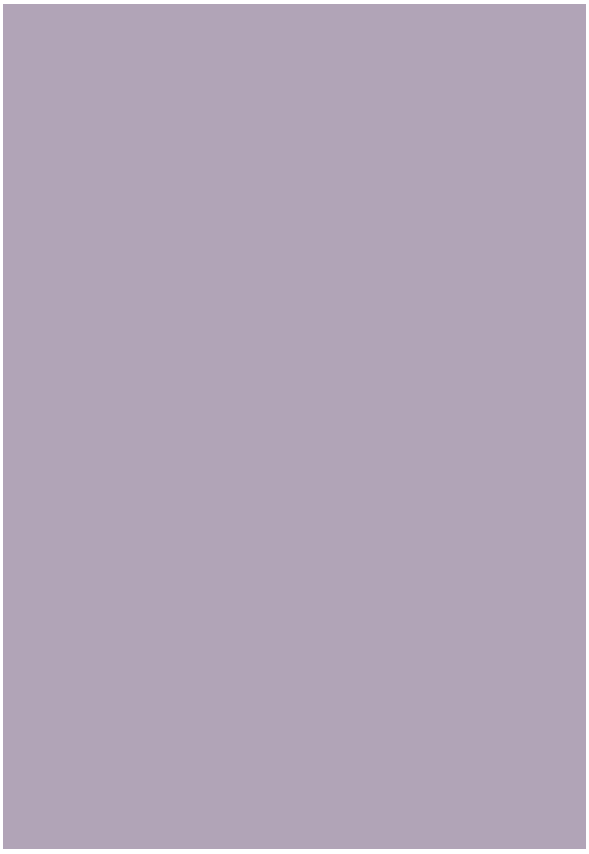
SPRING

SUMMER



AUTUMN

WINTER



★ PLAYSHEET 3



Your High-Protein Menu

Now it's time to create your first – or next - high-protein menu!

INSTRUCTIONS

- Decide how much of your diet you want to comprise of high-protein ingredients/recipes, depending on your health and body goals. For example, if you are trying to lose weight you would want to aim to eat protein at each meal and get your protein up to equate to around 40% of your daily calorie intake.
- Decide which ingredients and recipes are the best fit for your current goals and capture these in the relevant boxes below.
- Once you feel happy with your options, drop them into the menu template on the next page.
- Flesh out your menu plan with lots of green leafy vegetables, salad items and small amounts of fruit as required/desired.

BREAKFAST OPTIONS

LUNCH OPTIONS

EVENING MEAL OPTIONS

PROTEIN SMOOTHIES

SNACKS

DRINKS

Menu Plan

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS/ TREATS	DRINKS
MONDAY					
TUESDAY					
WEDNESDAY					
THURSDAY					
FRIDAY					
SATURDAY					
SUNDAY					