the dirty dozen and the clean fifteen 2015

celebrating health, one bite at a time
Hello, dear readers! How are you? I have been seriously missing creating posts for you guys! But we’ve been insanely busy. Doing what? Buying a house! Yup. We did it! I am beyond excited and VERY tired from the emotional ups and downs. What a roller coaster ride. Ultimately, we found a wonderful little cabin on the side of a mountain with 17 acres. I can’t wait to get in there and make it our own! I will be posting some photos at a later date. But for now, I wanted to share with you a very important infographic, created by fellow food blogger, the talented Garrick Dee Tan of Juicing with G!

Last year I published a Dirty Dozen Clean Fifteen article. But you need to check the list each year because things can change! A few years ago, white potatoes were not even on the list. Now, they are one of the most toxic! It is very important to know where your food comes from and even more importantly... what’s in it? Based on an article published by the Pesticide Action Network, approximately 1.5 million people were diagnosed with cancer in 2009. In fact one in five Americans are expected to die from cancer. One of the biggest reasons is PESTICIDES.

Did you know that in 2007, over 5 billion pounds of pesticides was used in the United States alone? These figures have surely increased since then. Children, with their still developing bodies and immune system, are the most vulnerable to these toxins. For adults, the effects can be felt long term because pesticides can accumulate in the body in the process known as bioaccumulation and can lead to diseases like
leukemia, non-Hodgkins lymphoma, brain, breast or prostate cancer. One way of minimizing pesticide exposure at least from the food we eat to know which ones are have the most pesticide residue and which ones have the least. The Environmental Working Group helps us with their annual report called The Dirty Dozen and the Clean Fifteen, which ranks the least and most pesticide residues found on and in fruits and vegetables.

What you’ll see below is Garrick's infographic version of this list that shows not only the dirtiest and cleanest produce but also three additional foods you should be buying organic, namely kale, collard greens and peppers. It also reveals five places outside the grocery store where you can buy organic produce on the cheap so make sure to scroll all the way down! Thanks for sharing, Garrick!
Besides all of the work of getting my first book published and buying our new home, now I am off to Baltimore for four days to see a dental specialist so my mouth can be totally happy again... periodontal issues that have not been resolving are soon to be GONE. So I'll be taking advantage of the “time off” with my honey. See you when I return!

Healthy trails,
Hold onto your tastebuds! Because this casserole is just loaded with flavor. And the best part about it? It is SO EASY to make and has very few ingredients. In fact, the butternut topping is just... butternut squash. Naked and wonderful. Butternut squash has so much flavor all on its own that I really wanted it to stand out in this dish. And stand out it did. I puréed it for this recipe but I think next time I will just mash it because it was rather loose. Mashing would give it more substance, like the traditional mashed potatoes that usually adorn a Shepherd's Pie.

The history Shepherd's Pie dates back to the introduction of potatoes in England. Potatoes were first introduced to Europe in 1520 by the Spanish and were not popular in Britain until the 18th Century. Shepherd's Pie was traditionally made using lamb, while Cottage Pie is made with beef. Both are topped with mashed potatoes and this was probably invented sometime in the 18th Century by frugal peasant housewives looking for creative ways to serve leftover meat to their families. It is generally agreed that Shepherd's Pie originated in the north of England and Scotland where there are large numbers of sheep—hence the name.

Believe it or not, I still have a horde of butternuts in my basement from my garden last year! They are storing well down there. But it was great to be able to use a few of them for this dish. Here is the easy recipe:

**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups lentils
- 5 cups water
- 1 diced onion
- 4 bay leaves
- 1 TBS Spike salt-free seasoning
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 TBS nutritional yeast
- 6-8 cups roasted butternut squash (about 2 medium-sized squash) The measurement here need not be exact. You just want enough to cover the lentils in the casserole dish you will be using.
Directions:

1. Simmer the lentils with the water, onion and spices until all the water is absorbed. I covered mine to start, then removed the lid when the lentils were tender to allow the excess water to cook off.
2. To roast the squash: Preheat oven to 425° F. Slice squash lengthways and scoop out the seeds. Place into a baking dish, cut side down, and roast until tender. A fork should glide easily into the squash when it's done. Mine took about 45 minutes.
3. When it's cool enough to handle, scrape out the flesh of the squash and mash it well.
4. Remove the bay leaves from the lentils, add the nutritional yeast and stir well to combine. Spread the lentils in the bottom of a lightly oiled casserole dish. Top with the mashed squash. Bake for about 30 minutes at 350° F until bubbly.
Serves 6. Enjoy!

LOVE me, don't eat me!

Healthy trails,
I am dedicating this post to my new friend, Janardhan Srinivasan. He’s a cardiologist whom I had the pleasure of meeting at a medical convention here in western North Carolina, called Plant-based Prevention of Disease. Part of a handful of medical doctors who are now armed with the truth about the power of nutritional excellence and its vital role in the prevention of heart disease, Dr. Srinivasan is a true pioneer in his field. Thank you, Janardhan, for all that you do!

The reason for my dedication today is because a couple of days ago, I had a phone call with disturbing news. A dear friend of the family had a heart attack. When I heard this I fell into despair. KNOWING that heart disease is preventable AND reversible, it saddens me when a loved
one falls prey to this insipid, diet-related tragedy. But, of course, “everyone knows” that this is “normal”... “it runs in the family”... and “it’s just a product of aging.” New science proves that these adages are nonsense. **Dietary choices run in the family!** Aging does NOT have to hold hands with chronic disease. But, alas, people are addicted to their foods of choice and continue eating artery-clogging animal products. It is their choice after all. And they have that right. HOWEVER, they also have the right of an **informed** choice. And, sadly, there are too many people who are simply uninformed!

Ultimately I will press forward with this blog’s health-promoting recipes, nutritional articles, my upcoming cookbooks and my own continuing education in the field of nutrition in the hopes that I can help to prevent even ONE more heart attack by sharing my knowledge and delicious, nutrient-rich food creations.

So sorry for the ranting today. I just needed to share with you and THANK YOU for visiting my blog and for taking responsibility for your own health and the health of our planet by the food choices you make. You are creating a difference and an awareness. You rock!

Here is this comforting, popular Punjabi recipe. Traditionally made with ghee and heavy cream, this recipe offers of all the taste with none of those health-stealing ingredients...

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup split black lentils (known as urad dal—find [online here](#) or at Indian markets where it is a lot cheaper!)
- 1½ cups cooked kidney beans (or one 15-oz. can, salt-free)
- 1 large tomato, chopped (or one can diced tomato, salt-free)
- ¼ cup freshly chopped cilantro
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3-4 cloves crushed garlic
- 1 TBS grated ginger
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp [garam masala](#)
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1 cup raw cashews + 1½ cups water
Directions:

1. Rinse the dal and soak overnight. Rinse again until the water runs clear and cook until tender. I used a pressure cooker. This legume takes a LONG time to cook so if you have a pressure cooker, this is the best way to go. Use 2 cups of water and follow your cooker's instructions, using the maximum time allotted for beans. If cooking on the stovetop, use 4 cups water and simmer, covered, until tender. Be prepared to cook for 3 hours or more. Add more water as needed while cooking.
2. Combine the cooked dal with the remaining ingredients, except the cashews, and simmer for 30 minutes to one hour. Alternately, you can use a slow cooker for the final cooking, which is a great way to get a really creamy result.
3. Blend the cashews and water until smooth. Add to the dal and stir well to combine.
4. Garnish with some additional chopped cilantro and a drizzle of cashew milk.
Serve 6. Enjoy!

Healthy trails,
Who wants cake!? Dr. Fuhrman says that most Americans are on the “cake diet”... cupcakes, muffins, bread, pasta, bagels, ... pretty much all the same thing: low nutrient foods in the form of flour, sugar and oil, but just dressed up differently. He's right! And he's got a great sense of humor. If you're a “nutritarian” or just want to get an extremely thorough nutritional education, purchase and watch his 10-DVD collection called The Immersion Excursion. I've watched these videos over and over again. So much great information!

I seldom eat these kinds of “cake diet” foods, but every once in a while, I will make and partake of... CAKE. Like this one. Yes, it has flour (I
used whole spelt flour) but it has no oil and is very low in sugar compared to most desserts. So, if you're going to indulge, at least make sure you're using whole grains and keep it low glycemic. Your body will thank you as well as your taste buds! So, for a special occasion or "just because" I hope you will enjoy this one.

Ingredients:

for the cake:

~ dry

- 3 cups spelt flour (or whole wheat or whole wheat pastry flour)
- 1 ¼ cups coconut sugar or other minimally processed, granulated sweetener
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp sea salt (optional)

~ wet

- ½ cup cocoa powder + ½ cup boiling water
- 2 TBS flax meal + 6 TBS water
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups unsweetened, plant based milk (I used soy)
- 1 cup pear purée (1 large Bosc pear)
- 2 cups chopped pear, stem and seeds removed (1 large Bosc pear, this measurement does not have to be exact)

for the sauce:

- 1 cup pitted, medjool dates, soaked for one hour and drained
- 1 cup water
- 2 TBS cocoa powder
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Lightly grease a bundt pan and set aside.
3. Combine the boiling water with the cocoa powder in an heat proof container of some kind (I used a pyrex measuring cup), stir well until you have a paste, and set aside to cool.
4. Mix the flax meal with the 6 TBS water and set aside for about 10 minutes. It will gel up.
5. Combine all dry ingredients together and mix well to combine.
6. Peel and core one pear and place in a food processor. Pulse until puréed but not liquified (like applesauce consistency).
7. Whisk all the wet ingredients together, except for the chopped pear.
8. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and mix well.
9. Fold in the chopped pear.
10. Pour batter into the bundt pan, spread evenly and bake 40-45 minutes, until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
11. Let cool to room temperature in pan, then invert onto a plate.
12. To make the sauce, blend all sauce ingredients in a high powered blender until smooth.
Serve with drizzled chocolate caramel sauce and vegan whipped cream if you like!
Enjoy!

Healthy trails with a little cake on the side,
Hello, dearest readers! I have been away from you for tooooo long. But, exciting news... my first book is off to the publisher! It's quite a process, let me tell you. So many details! But it's worth all of the effort because I will have a series of beautiful cookbooks to share with you. The first one is loaded with satisfying, nutritious smoothies, some of the recipes being from this blog, and of course many new ones. It will be released some time in May—just in time for summer smoothie madness. Yippee!

On to today's post... If you grew up in an Italian household, like I did, you are no doubt familiar with this rustic, “peasant food” dish. What are peasant foods? They are characteristically comprised of one-dish meals, that use ingredients which are accessible and inexpensive. In
other words, instead of “eating like a king,” these types of dishes would be more suited for peasants. All in favor of peasant food eating say “ayel!” Ayel! Because foods fit for kings and queens are primarily what have caused the rampant rise in chronic diseases of the west. I’ll take a rustic bowl of beans and greens over a rich, artery-clogging meal any day.

Cannellini beans were originally cultivated in Argentina by Italian immigrants and later taken back to Italy, where they are now grown commercially. They contain high levels of protein, essential minerals and fiber while maintaining low levels of fats. Escarole is a lettuce and a member of the chicory family. Like romaine, leaf lettuce and other dark, leafy greens, escarole is a powerhouse of nutrition. It is rich in dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidant compounds.

With minimal ingredients, this dish is so easy to make and is the perfect “Italian greens and beans.” I puréed one of the cans of beans which created a wonderfully, creamy and nutritious soup base. Mangia!

**Ingredients:**

- 1 large head of escarole
- 2 cans no-salt-added cannellini beans
- 1 large, ripe tomato, chopped
- 3-4 cloves garlic, crushed
- ¼-½ tsp red chile flakes (or omit, depending on how hot you prefer it)

**Directions:**

1. Chop the escarole into about 2″ pieces and rinse well.
2. Place in a soup pot with a few tablespoons of water, the garlic and red pepper flakes and simmer until the escarole is soft and wilted. Stir frequently, tossing for even cooking. Add more water if needed to prevent sticking.
3. Blend or purée one can of beans with their liquid.
4. Add the puréed beans, the remaining can of beans, including the liquid from the can, and the tomato to the soup pot.
5. Simmer until heated through.
6. Serve topped with some nutritional yeast if desired.
Serves 3-4. Enjoy!

Healthy trails,
Valentine Recipe Roundup! 12 Healthy Ways To Say “I LOVE YOU!”
Nothing says, “I love you” better than a nutritious meal or dessert, made from the heart, on Valentine's Day! This year, I’ve decided to round up some of the tastiest, prettiest and nutritious recipes for you to explore... some are mine, of course, but I am also happy to share some great ideas from my fellow vegan bloggers. Just click on the photos to be taken to the recipes. Enjoy!
Cranberry Flax Walnut Anytime Cookies from Healthy Girl's Kitchen

Strawberry Shortcake from Helyn's Healthy Kitchen
Cherry Chia Pudding from Quick'n'Healthy
Sweetheart Citrus Salad from The Clean Dish
Raw Beet Ravioli with Macadamia "Cheese" Filling from Helyn's Healthy Kitchen

Strawberry Almond Steamer from the Alkaline Sisters... how gorgeous is that photo?
Raw Chocolate Cake with Raspberries from Chickypea
Raw Rose Pomegranate Dream Cake from Fragrant Vanilla Cake
Valentine Cheesecake from Helyn's Healthy Kitchen

vegan valentine
cheesecake

www.helynskitchen.com

St. Valentine's Day Beet & Grapefruit Salad from Vegelicacy
Pretty in Pink Raspberry Smoothie from Helyn's Healthy Kitchen

Happy Love Day! xoxo,
Greetings, my cherished readers. I realize this post may stir up a hornet's nest of controversy, but with all of the recent media hubbub about this recent measles outbreak, I wanted to try to show both sides of the debate fairly, and perhaps offer some sense of fairness and relief.

Parents who choose not to vaccinate their children (for personal, religious, philosophical or other reasons) are being targeted as irresponsible and uneducated. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I decided I would share with you an article that I found today which has many documented FACTS and which can indeed quell the current witch hunt against those who have chosen not to vaccinate. Choosing to vaccinate (or not) is and should be a personal decision. Please be informed, do your own research and don't be bullied into a herd mentality. And most importantly, maintain a healthy diet, rich in nutrients, to keep you and your family strong against disease.

Here is the article, with its links and references. The title links to the site of the article.

The Disney Measles Outbreak: A Mousetrap of Ignorance

Written By: Sayer Ji, Founder

Disney Measles Outbreak

While the Disney measles outbreak is being blamed on the non-vaccinated, the evidence reveals a failing measles vaccine is behind the outbreak.
The latest stratagem to blame a failing measles vaccine on the non-vaccinated is all over the mainstream media, or should we say the marketing and cheering arm of the vaccine industry and the medical-industrial complex.

Two years ago, while a similar debacle was being played out, I wrote an article titled, “The 2013 Measles Outbreak: A Failing Vaccine, Not A Failure To Vaccinate,” which deconstructed the myth that the minimally- or non-vaccinated were responsible for outbreaks of measles in highly vaccination compliant populations. According to the prevailing propaganda it is fringe religious communities, visitors from countries where measles is common, and vaccine objectors within the United States, that are responsible for the failure of the measles vaccine to confer lasting immunity.

Looking at the rising tide of vaccine resistant infectious outbreaks in the U.S. and abroad — chickenpox, shingles, mumps, whooping cough (pertussis), influenza, HPV (Gardasil), hepatitis B, to name but a few — through the lens of the peer-reviewed and published literature on the topic, it is clear that the vaccines and not those who refuse to subject themselves to them are at the root of the problem. And nowhere is this more clearly evident than in the measles vaccine.

**How do we know this?**

Just a few months ago, a study published in PLoS titled, “Difficulties in eliminating measles and controlling rubella and mumps: a cross-sectional study of a first measles and rubella vaccination and a second measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination,” brought to light the glaring ineffectiveness of two measles vaccines (measles–rubella (MR) or measles–mumps–rubella (MMR) ) in fulfilling their widely claimed promise of preventing outbreaks in highly vaccine compliant populations. We dove deeply into the implications of this study in our article titled, “Why Is China Having Measles Outbreaks When 99% Are Vaccinated?”

Also, as we have explored in a previous article, “Measles: A Rash of Misinformation,” the measles vaccine is not nearly as safe and effective as is widely believed. Measles outbreaks have consistently occurred in highly immunization compliant populations. Here are just a few examples reported in the medical literature:

- **1985, Texas, USA:** According to an article published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 1987, “An outbreak of measles occurred among adolescents in Corpus Christi, Texas, in the spring of 1985, even though vaccination requirements for school attendance had been thoroughly enforced.” They concluded: “We conclude that outbreaks of measles can occur in secondary schools, even when more than 99 percent of the students have been vaccinated and more than 95 percent are immune.”

- **1985, Montana, USA:** According to an article published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* titled, “A persistent outbreak of measles despite appropriate prevention and control measures,” an outbreak of 137 cases of measles occurred in Montana. School records indicated that 98.7% of students were appropriately vaccinated, leading the researchers to conclude: “This outbreak suggests that measles transmission may persist in some settings despite appropriate implementation of the current measles elimination strategy.”

- **1988, Colorado, USA:** According to an article published in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 1991, “early 1988 an outbreak of 84 measles cases occurred at a college in Colorado in which 98 percent of students had documentation of adequate measles immunity … due to an immunization requirement in effect since 1986. They concluded: “…measles outbreaks can occur among highly vaccinated college populations.”

- **1989, Quebec, Canada:** According to an article published in the *Canadian Journal of Public Health* in 1991, a 1989 measles outbreak was “largely attributed to an incomplete vaccination coverage,” but following an extensive review the researchers concluded “Incomplete vaccination coverage is not a valid explanation for the Quebec City measles outbreak.”

- **1991-1992, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:** According to an article published in the journal Revista da Sociedade Brasileira de Medicina Tropical, in a measles outbreak from March 1991 to April 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, 76.4% of those suspected to be infected had received measles vaccine before their first birthday.

- **1992, Cape Town, South Africa:** According to an article published in the *South African Medical Journal* in 1994, “[In] August 1992 an outbreak occurred, with cases reported at many schools in children presumably immunised.” Immunization coverage for measles was found to be 91%, and vaccine efficacy found to be only 79%, leading them to conclude that primary and secondary vaccine failure was a possible explanation for the outbreak.

These six outbreaks are by no means exhaustive of the biomedical literature, but illustrate just how misled the general public is about the effectiveness of measles vaccines, and the CDC’s vaccination agenda in general. No amount of historical ignorance will erase the fact that vaccination does not equal immunization; antigenicity does not equal immunogenicity.

The superstitious and ironically non-evidence-based faith in the infallibility of vaccines speaks volumes as to why the growing movement to
educate the public about the true nature of vaccines is increasingly labeled “anti-vaccine,” when in fact it is pro-vaccine awareness, namely, making the public aware of vaccine failures and the growing plight of the countless vaccine injured around the world.

UNICEF and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation can continue to label those who bring the peer-reviewed ‘evidence’ to the public’s attention as ‘liars’ or ‘child killers, as Bill Gates did in a CNN interview with Dr. Sanjay Gupta. But all this does is to increase the public’s suspicion of the real agenda behind their ostensibly charitable plea to save the poor and the needy from the hell of disease, instead of focusing on improving their most basic living conditions, nutrition, sanitation, refrigeration, etc., and making inroads to reduce the geopolitical violence that is ruining the lives of hundreds of millions.

Measles is a real disease with real adverse health effects, some of which can be life threatening in the already immunocompromised (vaccination representing a major cause of TH1/TH2 imbalances). But it is our immune status, as with all infectious diseases, that determines susceptibility and whether or not a disease will be mild or lethal. You can’t vaccinate away conditions that lead to compromised immunity, nor can you ‘immunize’ folks — especially parents — against the desire to pursue the truth about vaccines. Learn more on our research vaccine database: Health Guide: Vaccine Research.

REFERENCES

Cauliflower-crusted Spinach Pie... vegan, gluten-free and oil-free!
Spinach pie! Oh, my! Yes, it's true. I (you, we) can once again enjoy that marvelous flavor of a traditional Greek spinach pie... minus the butter-laden crust and artery-clogging cheese! Can I do a happy dance now? Because Greek spinach pie, a.k.a spanikopita, was always one of my favorite dishes, prior to switching to whole food, plant-based eating.

What's really unique about this pie is its crust. The cauliflower adds another dimension of nutty, sweet flavor that is truly fabulous. It's not a crispy crust, it's actually pretty soft, but it is easy to slice and portion nonetheless and wonderful to enjoy, knowing that you're getting that extra dose of cruciferous nutrients from the cauliflower. Oh, yeah, babe! Don't let the long list of ingredients scare you off. It's actually pretty easy to make. Without further gushing, here is the recipe...

**Ingredients:**

- **for the crust**
  - 1 small head cauliflower
  - 1-1½ cups blanched almond flour
  - 3 TBS ground flax seeds

- **for the pie filling**
  - 1 medium, sweet onion, diced
  - ½ cup chopped green onion
  - 1 pound frozen, chopped spinach, thawed
  - 1/2 block extra firm tofu, drained and crumbled into cottage cheese-sized pieces.
  - 1 cup unsweetened, plant-based milk (I used soy) + 2 TBS arrowroot or tapioca flour
  - ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
  - 3 TBS psyllium husks (helps the pie set up, don't omit!)
  - 2 TBS nutritional yeast
  - 1 TBS tahini
• ¼ cup fresh chopped parsley
• 1 tsp garlic powder
• 1 tsp ground black pepper
• ½ tsp dried oregano

- topping
  • dash of ground nutmeg and ground black pepper

**Directions:**

1. Prepare your crust first. Preheat oven to 350° F. Rough chop the cauliflower (omit the thick stems) and add it to a food processor. Process/pulse until the cauliflower is pretty well pulverized. Then add the almond flour and the flax and pulse until well combined. Add more flour if the mixture seems too wet. The “dough” will be wet, but should hold together a little when pinched.
2. Lightly oil a deep dish pie plate (a spray oil is best as it minimizes the amount you need).
3. Spoon the crust mixture into the plate and push it up the sides, shaping it into a crust as you go. It will be pretty thick (see photo above).
4. Bake the crust for about 15 minutes, uncovered. Remove and begin on your filling ingredients while the crust is cooling off.
5. In a large sauté pan, water sauté the onions until tender.
6. Add all the remaining ingredients, except the milk and arrowroot powder, and stir well to combine.
7. Place the milk in a separate saucepan over medium heat. Mix the arrowroot powder with 2 TBS of water to form a slurry and add this to the milk, stirring consistently to avoid lumping. When the mixture is almost boiling, take it off the heat and add to the filling mixture, stirring well to combine.
8. Spoon the filling into your crust and press down firmly, forming into a mound. You will have a LOT of filling. It’s okay, your pie will be tall!
9. Top with a little ground nutmeg and/or ground black pepper.
10. Bake for one hour, covered loosely with foil.
11. Let cool to just warm before serving (about 30 minutes). This will ensure that the pie sets up properly.
Opa!

Healthy trails,

Cauliflower-crusted Spinach Pie... vegan, gluten-free and oil-free!
Spinach pie! Oh, my! Yes, it's true. I (you, we) can once again enjoy that marvelous flavor of a traditional Greek spinach pie... minus the butter-laden crust and artery-clogging cheese! Can I do a happy dance now? Because Greek spinach pie, a.k.a spanikopita, was always one of my favorite dishes, prior to switching to whole food, plant-based eating.

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Opa!

Healthy trails,

Cauliflower Crusted Spinach Pie
Prep Time: 30 minutes  
Cook Time: 2 hours  
Total Time: 2 hours, 30 minutes

A plant-based twist on an old favorite!

Ingredients

~ for the crust
- 1 medium head cauliflower
- 1-1½ cups blanched almond flour
- 3 TBS ground flax seeds

~ for the pie filling
- 1 medium, sweet onion, diced
- ½ cup chopped green onion
- 1 pound frozen, chopped spinach, thawed
- 14-oz. block extra firm tofu, drained and crumbled into cottage cheese-sized pieces.
- 1 cup unsweetened, plant-based milk (I used soy) + 2 TBS arrowroot or tapioca flour
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 TBS nutritional yeast
- 1 TBS tahini
- ¼ cup fresh chopped parsley
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- salt to taste (optional! In case you didn't know, lemon juice gives your taste buds a salty nod)

~ topping
- dash of ground nutmeg and ground black pepper

Method

1. Prepare your crust first. Preheat oven to 350° F. Rough chop the cauliflower (omit the thick stems) and add it to a food processor. Process/pulse until the cauliflower is pretty well pulverized. Then add the almond flour and the flax and pulse until well combined. Add more flour if the mixture seems too wet. The “dough” will be wet, but should hold together a little when pinched.
2. Lightly oil a deep dish pie plate (a spray oil is best as it minimizes the amount you need).
3. Spoon the crust mixture into the plate and push it up the sides, shaping it into a crust as you go. It will be pretty thick (see photo above).
4. Bake the crust for about 15 minutes, uncovered. Remove and begin on your filling ingredients while the crust is cooling off.
5. In a large sauté pan, water sauté the onions until tender.
6. Add all the remaining ingredients, except the milk and arrowroot powder, and stir well to combine.
7. Place the milk in a separate saucepan over medium heat. Mix the arrowroot powder with 2 TBS of water to form a slurry and add this to the milk, stirring consistently to avoid lumping. When the mixture is almost boiling, take it off the heat and add to the filling mixture, stirring well to combine.
8. Spoon the filling into your crust and press down firmly, forming into a mound. You will have a LOT of filling. It’s okay, your pie will be tall!
9. Top with a little ground nutmeg and/or ground black pepper.
10. Bake for one hour, covered loosely with foil.
11. Let cool to just warm before serving (about 30 minutes). This will ensure that the pie sets up properly.
Okay all you candy fans out there. If you really gotta have your PayDay fix, then these bars will SATISFY! I’m not a big sweets or candy person myself, but I do enjoy a healthy dessert once in a while. I did use lightly salted peanuts for these but you certainly could use unsalted peanuts as well.

I’ve been wanting to try these out for quite a while and I’m very happy with the outcome. As far as being a true copycat, well, they’re not exactly the same... while the center has a fabulous caramel taste, it’s not sticky and stretchy like caramel. But your teeth and your dentist will thank you! These “candy” bars are fun to make, although it can be a bit tedious pushing all those peanuts onto the logs. If you have children, let them help! I’m sure it would be a fun kitchen project. I realized, halfway through, that using peanut HALVES is much easier than trying to push whole peanuts onto the logs and having them keep falling out.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup pitted medjool dates
- 1½ cup blanched almond flour
- 1 TBS ground flax seeds
- 2 TBS raw cashew butter
- ½ tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2-3 TBS water
- ½ pound lightly-salted, roasted peanuts (Trader Joe’s has some good peanuts that are always fresh and not too salty)
Directions:

1. Place all ingredients, except the water and the peanuts into a food processor and pulse to combine. Add the water, a bit at a time, until you have a thick paste that sticks together well and isn’t too wet. This will be your center.
2. Refrigerate for a few hours. It’s easier to handle when cool.
3. Portion the “dough” and shape into candy bar-sized logs. I used a scant 3 TBS per bar.
4. Press peanut halves into the logs all the way around, and shape into bars.
5. That’s it!
6. Refrigerate in a sealed container or plastic ziplock to store.
Makes 8-10 bars, depending on the size you make them.

Healthy, happy Superbowl watching!

Hello and welcome to my plant-based kitchen! I look forward to sharing many scrumptious and nourishing recipes with you as well as some evidence-based nutritional information. If you see a recipe you like, please share it! Your comments are always welcome.

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50g butter, 2 onions, chopped, 4 carrots, diced, 1 head of celery, chopped, 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped, 200g pack chestnut mushrooms, sliced, 2 bay leaves, 1 tbsp dried thyme, 500g pack dried green lentils (we used merchant gourmet puy lentils), 100ml red wine (optional), 1.7l vegetable stock, 3 tbsp tomato purée, 2kg floury potato, such as king edwards, 85g butter, 100ml milk, 50g cheddar, grated. To make the sauce, heat 50g butter in a pan, then gently fry 2 chopped onions, 4 diced carrots, 1 chopped head of celery and 4 finely chopped garlic cloves for 15 mins until soft and golden. Tu Lentil Shepherd's Pie. Rate it! Ah, comfort food. For several weeks, we've tried to decide on a main dish to bring down to a church Session meeting/dinner this coming week. After some discussion, we decided that we'd go with a shepherd's pie. It seems as though it'll travel well, is pretty much a whole meal all in one pan, and you just bake it up beforehand. There was only one problem. We hadn't made a shepherd's pie in so long, we had trouble deciding what actually went into one. Of course, there was an upside, too. Since we hadn't made a shepherd's pie in years, that meant we had to make up