

News Release

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Vegetarian vitality for 2003

Resolving to eat less meat in 2003? Get yourself a copy of the *2003 Vegetarian Directory*. It features 34 fully vegetarian eating places offering tempting delights from a variety cultural cuisines including: Indian, Vietnamese, Chinese and Western. The directory also lists additional restaurants with meat-free options, health food stores, food co-ops, organic produce suppliers, natural bakeries, caterers, cooking classes, vacation spots, and bed and breakfasts. It's the annual pocket guide to Toronto's growing vegetarian scene. Best of all, it is free.

Published by the **Toronto Vegetarian Association (TVA)**, the free folded directory is available at many health food stores and restaurants. It can also be ordered by sending a S.A.S.E. to TVA at 2300 Yonge St., Suite 1101, PO Box 2307, Toronto ON M4P 1E4, telephone 416-544-9800. TVA is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1945.

A web version of the directory can be found at www.veg.ca. It features longer descriptions, and many more listings – including another 20 vegetarian eating places. There is also an online **Fast Food Report** (www.veg.ca/noframes/facts/healthy.htm) highlighting what's vegetarian at the chains. Read about the new veggie burgers being offered by McDonald's and Burger King, as well as where to find vegetarian french fries, pizzas, tacos, salads, and more.

According to editor Stephen Leckie, the guide was created to fulfill the growing demand for information on vegetarian options in Toronto. "Over the years, there has been a dramatic increase in interest in vegetarian cuisine. In Toronto there are now over 50 eating places that serve no meat. Fifteen years ago, you would be lucky to find ten." The trend is particularly strong among youth.

People are making the switch to meat-free diets out of concern for their health, animals, and the environment. According to Bonnie Kumer RD, who has a listing in the directory, "a vegetarian diet is associated with much lower rates of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and many other serious ailments. Eating low on the food chain also requires far less of the earth's land, energy and water resources, and spares innocent animals from a life of suffering."

The Toronto Vegetarian Association is a non-profit charitable organization with over 1100 members. In addition to organizing the Annual Vegetarian Food Fair at Harbourfront each September, they put on a number of smaller events throughout the year, publish a regular newsletter, and provide a Resource Centre open to the public.

