



vegan
italian
meal prep



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ITALIAN-INSPIRED VEGAN MEAL PREP

*This meal prep blog features 5 drool-worthy vegan **Italian-inspired recipes** that are perfect for making ahead for the week or for creating an epic Italian feast that your friends and family will love. Make sure to watch the video below for visual references!*

Watch the video on my YouTube channel here! [→](#)



MAMBO ITALIANO

Italian food is without a doubt one of the most popular, globally loved cuisines out there. It's use of simple, fresh ingredients and it's versatility make it one of the most appealing cuisines for a number of dietary preferences, including plant-based eaters!

There are so many incredible vegetarian and vegan-friendly Italian recipes that are not only budget-conscious, but packed with tons of fresh veggies and herbs. This meal prep only scratches the surface of some of the best plant-based Italian dishes with a plant-based spin, but I think you'll love each of them for what they bring to the table (pun-intended)!



WHY SHOULD YOU MEAL PREP?

Meal prepping is a great way to help you save time cooking in the kitchen during the week, it can save you money and prevent you from ordering take out 8 times in a week— which can help your wallet and also with weight loss! Cooking nutritious, balanced meals at home means you know exactly what's going into your food, and you're more likely to eat food that you've lovingly prepared instead of letting it go to waste.

If you're looking for a crowd-pleasing week of nourishing comfort food, this Italian-inspired vegan meal prep will be a game-changer. From crispy yet soft **focaccia bread** to hearty, protein-packed **pumpkin pasta**, to dreamy creamy **tofu Florentine**, this Italian spread will give you tons of food for the week to keep you satisfied and fuelled without breaking the bank, or splurging on calories.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

Here's a quick rundown of the wholesome recipes you'll be prepping:

- **Focaccia:** A gluten-free take on the classic Italian bread, topped with sun-dried tomatoes, olives, rosemary, and a sprinkle of vegan parmesan. Perfect as a side or snack.
- **Pumpkin Pasta Bake:** Creamy rigatoni baked with a rich pumpkin-tofu ricotta sauce, spinach, and melty vegan mozzarella. A cozy, crowd-pleasing dish.
- **Instant Pot Mushroom Risotto:** Creamy Arborio rice cooked to perfection with mushrooms, peas, and Italian herbs. A quick and flavourful dish thanks to the Instant Pot.
- **Vegan Italian Wedding Soup:** A warm and comforting soup featuring vegan sausage "meatballs," tender rice, and spinach in a savoury broth.
- **Tofu Florentine:** Golden tofu filets served with a creamy spinach and garlic sauce, perfect over pasta, rice, or mashed potatoes.

SHOPPING LIST

You'll need a blend of fresh produce, pantry staples, and plant-based protein sources to pull this off. Here's your complete shopping list:

- **Proteins:** 4 mild Italian vegan sausages, 3 blocks extra firm tofu



- **Fresh Produce:** 2 carrots, 2 celery stalks, 1 cup frozen peas, 8 oz cremini mushrooms, 3 onions, 9 cups spinach, 1 lemon, garlic cloves, fresh rosemary
- **Canned Goods:** Pumpkin purée
- **Grains:** jasmine/basmati rice, Arborio rice
- **Pantry Staples:** Olive oil, 2 cans coconut milk, veggie broth, short pasta noodles, nutritional yeast, sundried tomatoes, gluten-free flour, baking powder, salt, sugar, instant yeast or dry active yeast
- **Spices:** dried thyme, dried sage, dried oregano, dried basil, red chili flakes, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, nutmeg

ORDER OF PREP

1. **Prepare the Focaccia dough** and let it rise. While it rises, work on other dishes.
2. **Bake the Focaccia then assemble and bake the Pumpkin Pasta Bake.**
3. **Cook the Mushroom Risotto** using the Instant Pot.
4. **Start the Vegan Italian Wedding Soup.** Bake the sausage "meatballs" while sautéing the vegetables.
5. **Prepare the Tofu Florentine.** Cook tofu and sauce while the soup simmers.

RECIPE #1: FOCACCIA (GLUTEN-FREE)

A gluten-free take on the classic Italian bread, topped with sun-dried tomatoes, olives, rosemary, and a sprinkle of vegan parmesan. Perfect as a side or snack.



Ingredients:

Dough:

- 2 ¼ cups gluten-free flour blend (280g)
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp instant yeast or dry active yeast
- 1¼ cups warm water
- 4 tbsp olive oil

Toppings

- 2 ¼ cups gluten-free flour blend (280g)
- 1 tbsp olive oil (for drizzling the foccacia bread before baking)
- ½ cup sundried tomatoes
- ½ cup olives (green, kalamata)



- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary
- generous pinch of coarse salt
- 2 tbsp vegan parmesan cheese

Instructions:

1. In a small bowl combine warm water with yeast, sugar, and olive oil. Stir to combine, then let it bloom by setting it aside to rest for 5 to 10 minutes (It should start to look foamy on top).
2. In a larger bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and baking powder. Set aside.
3. Pour the yeast mixture over the dry ingredients and gently stir to combine. Your dough should look more like a thick batter (no kneading required!).
4. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap or a dish towel and set it to rise in a warm place for about 45 min to 1 hr. It should rise to be at least 50% bigger in size.
5. During the last few minutes of the rise time, preheat the oven to 375° F (190°C)
6. Line a standard baking sheet (or a 9x9 round cake tin) with parchment paper and drizzle 1 tbsp of olive oil.
7. Pour the batter out onto the baking sheet and gently press out using your fingers or the back of a spatula into an oval or rectangular shape (about 1" to 1½" thick, it will be thicker if you use round pan)
8. Use your fingers to poke several holes in the dough all the way to the bottom of the pan. Brush with olive oil, and press the sun-dried tomatoes and olives into the dough. Sprinkle with fresh minced rosemary, coarse sea salt and grated vegan parmesan cheese.
9. Bake at 375° F for 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and let cool at least 15 to 18 minutes before slicing and eating.

RECIPE #2: PUMPKIN PASTA BAKE

Creamy rigatoni baked with a rich pumpkin-tofu ricotta sauce, spinach, and melty vegan mozzarella. A cozy, crowd-pleasing dish.



Ingredients:

Tofu Ricotta:

- 1 block extra firm tofu
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp dried basil
- Black pepper to taste

Everything Else:

- 10 oz. (300g) rigatoni or short pasta
- 3 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1 cup pumpkin purée
- 1½ cups tofu ricotta



- 1 cup shredded vegan mozzarella, divided
- ½ cup vegan parmesan cheese
- ½ cup full fat canned coconut milk
- ⅓ cup vegetable broth
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 – 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp oregano
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp sea salt
- Pinch of nutmeg

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cook pasta according to box directions.
3. While pasta is cooking, blend all tofu ricotta ingredients together in a food processor until blended and smooth.
4. Next, add 1½ cups of the tofu ricotta, ½ cup of the vegan mozzarella, vegan parmesan, veggie broth, coconut milk and pumpkin purée to a medium bowl and stir until smooth and creamy. If it is thicker than desired, you can thin it out slightly with more cream or broth.
5. Add in onion, garlic and spices and stir to combine.
6. When pasta is cooked, drain and then toss with the spinach to wilt.
7. Add pasta to the pumpkin ricotta mixture and stir well to coat all of the pasta. Pour into a medium-sized rectangular lightly oiled casserole dish and bake for about 15 minutes or until slight bubbling.
8. Sprinkle with the rest of the vegan mozzarella and bake another 5-10 minutes or until cheese is melty.
9. Turn off the oven and turn on the broiler for the remaining 1 to 2 minutes of cook time, watching carefully to ensure it doesn't burn, and let the cheese get golden brown on top for a nice finish.
10. Cool for several minutes before serving. Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

RECIPE #3: INSTANT POT MUSHROOM RISOTTO

Creamy Arborio rice cooked to perfection with mushrooms, peas, and Italian herbs. A quick and flavourful dish thanks to the Instant Pot.



Ingredients:

- 1 cup Arborio rice
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp vegan butter
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups veggie broth



- ¼ cup vegan parmesan cheese shreds
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried basil
- ½ tsp dried sage
- ½ tsp dried rosemary
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- pepper to taste
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 tsp black truffle powder (optional, but great if you can find it)

Instructions:

1. Select the 'sauté' mode and heat the instant pot until it says 'hot'.
2. Add olive oil and butter, then add onions and sauté until softened and translucent.
3. Add the mushrooms and salt and give it a mix and let cook for another 5 to 6 minutes, until reduced in size by about half.
4. Add the garlic, dried herbs and rice and stir to combine, letting it cook for a minute. Add the veggie broth, give it all a good stir and cancel 'sauté'.
5. Close the instant pot lid, select 'pressure cook/manual' for 6 minutes.
6. Then do a natural release for 7 minutes, then finish with a quick release after.
7. Open the lid, stir in the peas, truffle powder and vegan parmesan cheese and give it a mix. Close the lid again and let the instant pot stay on the 'keep warm' setting. Let it sit for 1-3 minutes so that the cheese melts completely.
8. Serve as a side dish or enjoy a big bowl as a hearty main course. Enjoy!

RECIPE #4: VEGAN ITALIAN WEDDING SOUP

A warm and comforting soup featuring vegan sausage "meatballs," tender rice, and spinach in a savoury broth.



Ingredients:

- 4 mild Italian vegan sausages (Beyond Meat)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
- 2 medium celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 3 to 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried Italian herbs, or a small handful of roughly chopped fresh herbs (basil, oregano, and parsley)



- 1 pinch red chili flakes, optional
- 7 to 8 cups vegetable broth, can sub some water out with this
- ½ cup long grain white rice (basmati, jasmine)
- 2 cups spinach
- salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F and line a large baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Squeeze the sausage out of the casing and into a bowl. (Beyond Meat casing is very thin so you might want to just leave it on, it's hardly noticeable) Then take small scoops of the sausage mixture and roll them into 1" balls, and place them on the baking tray. Alternatively you can cut the sausages into small equal pieces and roll them into balls. Place tray in the oven on the middle rack and bake for 12 to 14 minutes, until golden.
3. Meanwhile, heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the onion, celery and carrot and saute for about 6 to 7 minutes, until softened.
4. Add the garlic and saute for 1 minute. Add in the broth, dried herbs and chili flakes, and rice. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil.
5. Once boiling, reduce the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes. Then add in the partially cooked meatballs and continue cooking for another 10 minutes.
6. Stir in the spinach and let it wilt, taste broth and season with salt and pepper as needed.

RECIPE #5: TOFU FLORENTINE

Golden tofu filets served with a creamy spinach and garlic sauce, perfect over pasta, rice, or mashed potatoes.



Ingredients:

Tofu Filets:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 block of firm tofu, pressed and cut into 4 'filets'
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cream Sauce:

- 4 garlic cloves, minced



- 1 cup veggie broth
- 1 cup canned coconut milk
- ½ cup vegan parmesan, grated
- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- 4 cups baby spinach
- ¼ tsp red chili flakes

Instructions:

1. Arrange the tofu on a large cutting board and season one side with salt, pepper, Italian seasoning and garlic powder.
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Fry the tofu for 4 to 6 minutes on each side (seasoning the other side in the pan) until golden brown. You may have to do this in batches depending on the size of your skillet. Remove tofu from the skillet and set aside.
3. Make the sauce: In the same skillet, add minced garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds until fragrant. Pour in veggie broth and scrape the browned bits from the skillet to deglaze. Simmer for 2-3 minutes to reduce a bit. Stir in coconut milk, vegan parmesan cheese, and Dijon mustard. Simmer for 3-5 minutes, allowing the sauce to thicken slightly. Add spinach and cook until wilted, stirring occasionally. Add crushed red pepper flakes if you want a touch of heat.
4. Return the tofu to the skillet and spoon some of the creamy spinach sauce over the top. Simmer for an additional 2-3 minutes to let the tofu absorb the flavours.
5. Stir in lemon juice and garnish with freshly chopped parsley if desired. Serve hot with pasta, rice, or mashed potatoes.