

# 10 Easy Vegetarian Meals PLUS 10 Must-Have Essentials for New Parents



As you may or may not know, depending on how closely you follow this here blog or my Instagram feed, I am pregnant with our 3rd kiddo. As of this writing, I am just about 8 months pregnant. I still cannot believe that we are having a 3rd kid. I know I've mentioned that before but I still cannot believe it. When I was 8 months pregnant with our first kiddo (who is currently 5 1/2), I was so full of excitement and joy. I don't

so much feel that now and not because I don't feel excitement or joy for my kiddos (if you know me at all, you know I probably love my kids a little 'too' much) but because the newborn stage isn't my favorite. The first newborn stage I went through was marked by a 3 month-long bout of postpartum depression. The second newborn stage was actually kind of awesome, if I'm being honest. I knew what to expect in terms of the sheer exhaustion and, you know, the part where you're terrified that if your baby even remotely looks at you weird it means they're sick and/or don't love you. I leaned into it, made a lot of espresso and allowed myself to binge watch a looooooooooooooot of shows (I love you, *Homeland*). But now I've got 2 others kids and, oh yeah, I GAVE ALL MY BABY STUFF AWAY. That's right. I was so certain that we would only be having 2 kids that I sold off or gave away all our baby gear so now we're back to square one. Thus, the impetus for this post.

If there's 2 things I know about preparing for a new baby to enter your life it's that above all else you need to have delicious, ready-to-eat food on hand **AT ALL TIMES** and you need baby gear that helps make your life easier (such as sleep systems, instant swaddles, easy-to-use thermometers and washable rugs). Therefore, I combined these two certainties to present to you this epic post of 'Must Haves' for both food and gear for new parents. If you are about to have a baby, send the link to this post to all your friends and family with an email that reads simply:

Dear Loved Ones,

We're gonna need some help. See all links and items in this blog post (and here's where you'd insert the link to this post).

Love,

Me

Trust me. They will respond. Ultimately, your loved ones will want to help! I hope you enjoy this post. I picked the baby gear items based entirely on items that I have been my 'must haves' for both kiddos and will be for this one save for the amazingness that is the DockATot (which was not yet on the market when our 2 year-old was born) and the Lorena Canal rug, which is also new to the market and has been a life saver for this type A cleaner.



## 10 "MUST HAVES"

for new parents



1. First, the DockATot. DockATot is a multi-functional lounge, co-sleeper, playtime lounge. When Siona, our

oldest was born, we tried every kind of co-sleeping or bassinet on the market (I mean, not really, but it felt like it). Eventually we just gave up on co-sleeping as the co-sleeper we had didn't fit our bed and it only fit on one side of the bed so only one of us truly got to co-sleep. With Eden, we gave up entirely and swaddled her and set her on a pillow in between us (I'm sure you're thinking we are negligent parents for doing so but I'm happy to report that little infant is now a healthy, sassy 2 year-old). Because I was terrified of rolling on top of her, I barely slept when she did. But now the Lord has brought us the DockATot and I am so thrilled for this item to be on the market. For safety reasons, the DockATot is meant to be placed in the middle of the bed, which allows for husband and I to both feel like we are co-sleeping with our newborn. It's made in Europe and designed in Sweden, tested for breathability, hypo allergenic, machine washable and OEKO-TEX certified, which means it was independently tested and certified so you can feel safe knowing the folks at DockATot truly believe in baby safety. Seriously, all that's left is for the folks at DockATot to figure out how it can do my taxes and it would be THE perfect all-encompassing parent tool.





The DockATot

2) Lorena Canal Rugs is also a product I only recently discovered and, honestly, even if you don't have kids, it's an amazing product. First and foremost, you need to know that they are machine washable and can be dried in the clothes dryer. I repeat: THESE RUGS ARE MACHINE WASHABLE! In addition, the colors used in these handmade rugs come from all natural dyes, eco-friendly and contain no VOCs like most carpeting and rugs. And if the fact that all parents can now breathe easily when their kids are handling washable paint around rug wasn't enough, you can also feel good about the purchase of a Lorena Canal rug as proceeds from the sale of their products go towards the Sakula Project, a school the company founded in Haryana, the North of India. Dudes, seriously, it's a win-win.



### Lorena Canal Rugs

3) A Diaper Clutch (one featured is from Skip Hop). My dear friend, Rachel, went off registry when she got me this as a gift when our first baby was born and I'm SO glad she did. This is the item I get all friends who have their first baby. Seriously, I NEVER go off registry but for this one, I do. It's an all in one – carries the diapers, the wipes and is the clean thing you lay your baby down on for a change. I have legit laid this puppy down on the floor of an Anthropologie and changed a baby's diaper on it. We use it to this day. It's come in handy on planes, trains and in automobiles. I can't tell you enough how this has saved our tushes!



4) A GOOD sound machine – I use the same sound machines for drowning out my loud Jersey husband as I do for blocking my confidential conversations with students as a school counselor. I learned my lesson when I bought a ‘cute’ sound machine rather than a functional one when our 2nd kid was born. Though the sound machine was adorable, the actual white noise sound it made sounded like a broken TV. The one pictured is the model I recommend. Therapist grade, baby!



5) An ear thermometer – OK, we have gone through every kind of thermometer possible and an ear thermometer is the best. I learned this when I started supervising a school nurse and she ‘schooled’ me on the best products for adolescent health care. We had received a digital forehead thermometer with the birth of our second baby and, to this day, I still can’t work that thing and husband is convinced it’s always a degree or two off, which counts! And so, I say to you, get thee a good digital ear thermometer and be done with it!



6) A SwaddleME Swaddle – or really ANY swaddle that is user-friendly and doesn't require you constant access to maternity ward nurses who can swaddle a baby in just about anything. I gave up on trying to achieve the perfect swaddle about 2 weeks into the birth of our 1st born and have been in a believer in velcro-based swaddles ever since. Seriously, DO IT.



7) The Backpack Diaper Bag – Oh, you think I give a crap about the latest designer, over-the-shoulder diaper bag? Cause I don't. I started using backpacks as diaper bags when the oldest was 2 (about 3 years ago) and haven't looked back. I started with a standard backpack and then upgraded to a yoga backpack within 6 months. Next thing I know, the market is being saturated with diaper bag backpacks. Now, I'm not saying I STARTED the trend, necessarily. But I'm also not saying I



didn't. Seriously, every time I was out with the kiddos and had the over-the-shoulder bag on and bent down to help my toddler with something, I would knock her in the face. Backpacks do not facilitate the toddler knock out PLUS, they're better for the back.



8) The Wubbanub – I don't know what it is with our babies and Wubbanubs but they love them. Our kids aren't pacifier kids (they're usually done with it by 6 months of age) but as infants, they love the Wubbanubs. I can't point to what it is about them, except they're super cute and harder to lose because they're bigger than a standard pacifier that doesn't come with a plush animal attached to it.



9) A Portable High Chair – Holy cow! Honestly, to this day we do not have one of these and we NEED ONE! We suffer through it as semi-constant roadtrippers and it's a nightmare. Ultimately, we end up sitting the kiddo in her carseat, which

is on top of a table, or one of us ends up with the baby on us the entirety of the meal. #neveragain



10) A Plush Sloth – Do I really need to explain this one? It's a plush sloth! GAH! I want one!



And now for the meals . . .



**Brown Rice Pesto Breakfast Bowl from Jewhungry**



**Freezer to Oven Stuffed Sweet Potatoes from Sweet Peas and Saffron**





**Cheesy Broccoli Kale Pesto Pizza from Peas and Crayons**





**Cold Asian Noodle Salad from Lexi's Clean Kitchen**



**Vegan Red Curry Pumpkin Noodle Soup from Nutmeg Nanny**





**Three-Ingredient Energy Bars from Sheri Silver**



**Skillet Spanakopita from Dessert for Two**



**Italian Chickpea Salad from Iowa Girl Eats**





**Veggie Fajita Enchiladas from Delish Knowledge**



Moroccan Carrot Red Lentil Soup from A Cedar Spoon

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# **Vegan Pasta e Fagioli**





# **Vegan Pasta e Fagioli**

Happy Chanukah, Happy Kwanzaa and a belated Merry Christmas! I hope everyone is having a wonderful holiday season. I am

currently mid-week through the second and last week of my winter break from school (day job is as a high school counselor) and I must admit, staycations in L.A. are pretty awesome. We were originally planning on heading to Ojai for a week during this vacation break but we cancelled our plans last-minute as we are actually moving soon so needed to save that cash money for the move. But, never fear! We live in an amazing city full of extremely expensive family activities so there are a lot of things to do . . . . only we haven't done them because of the aforementioned expensive. Ok, that's not true. We did ice skating one day, which cost so much money it's embarrassing. So aside from the ice skating, we haven't really ventured out much. It's shockingly cold in L.A. this season so we've done a lot of family baking/cooking projects, at-home movie matinees, neighborhood exploring (going to other neighborhoods and taking nice strolls through them) and grocery shopping. Lots and Lots of grocery shopping.







Due to the fact that it's the Chanukah season, we have also eaten our fair share of donuts and fried foods. That is, until

one day last week I decided it was time for some vegetables. I scoured Pinterest for some inspiration and settled on soup. Soup! Yes! It rained 4 days in a row this break (Baruch Hashem) so we were in the mood for something comforting and healthy. Back in my non-kosher days, the soup that would bring me this type of comfort was, no joke, The Olive Garden's Pasta e Fagioli. The perfect combo of vegetables, greasy meat and pasta! It's like a hug for your belly. The traditional Pasta e Fagioli is made with sausage so what's a kosher lady to do? Use soy crumbles and lots of fennel seed, of course! You are welcome to omit soy crumbles and just season your veggies with the seasonings I've listed below or you can also get some vegan sausage meat and use that. I've kosher Pasta e Fagioli with unseasoned soy crumbles and seasoned vegan sausage meat and I actually prefer the unseasoned soy crumbles. Honestly though, both are delicious.





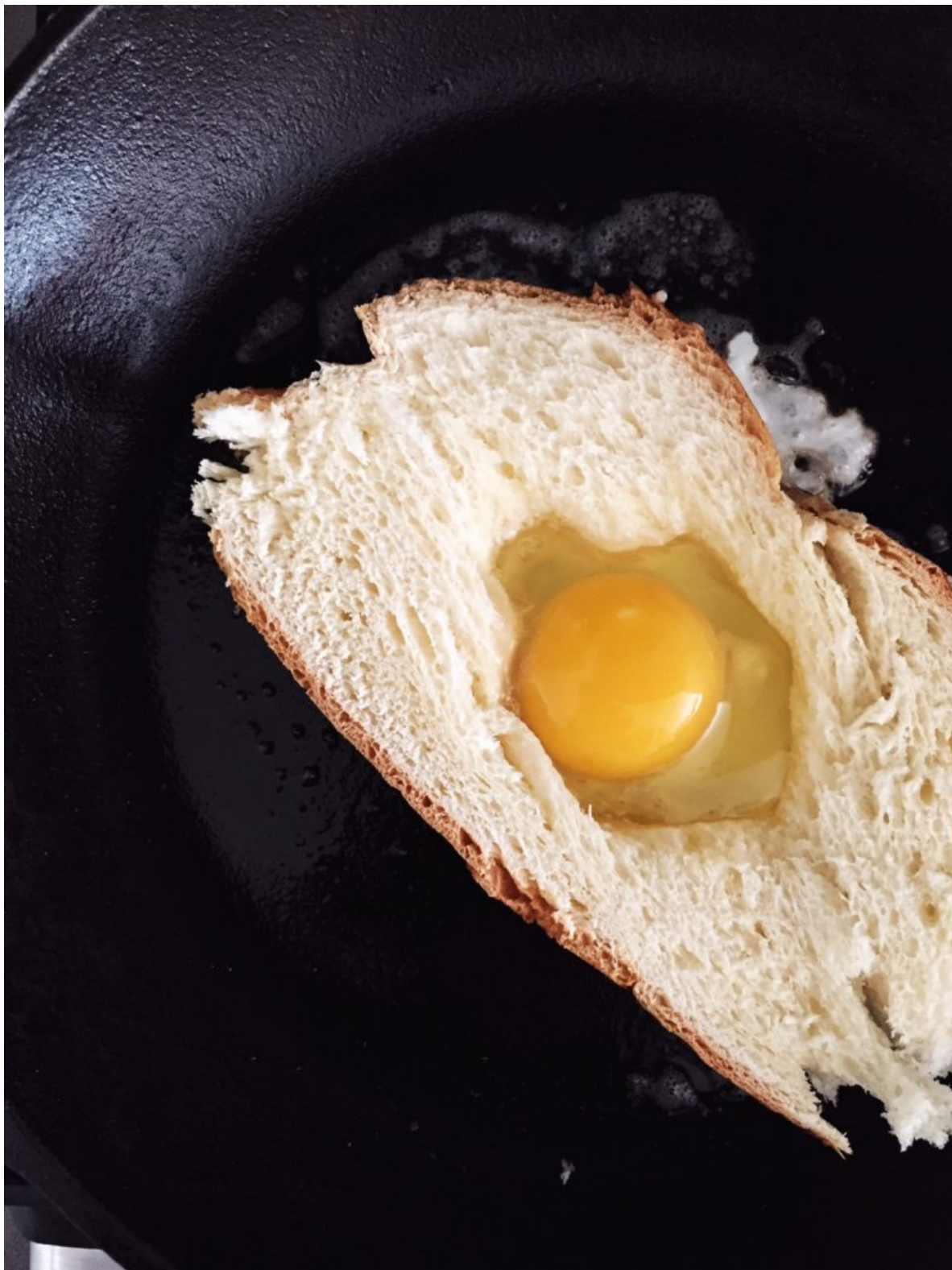


There have been donuts. LOTS and LOTS of donuts.





We did staycation right this Winter Break



We also ate the occasional dreidel toad-in-the-hole.



Whitney Fisch

jewhungry | 4 | 🍷



Added Me



Add Friends



My Friends



I joined Snapchat so that I could do a Snapchat takeover for The Feed Feed. Did you happen to see it? If not, it'll be up on The Feed Feed's site so check it out. But, do not look me up on Snapchat cause I deleted it yesterday. Not for me. No thank you.



## Vegan Pasta e Fagioli

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup ditalini pasta
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 2 cups soy crumbles or soy sausage
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 3 cups veggie broth
- 1 (16-ounce) can tomato sauce



- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 2 tsp dried fennel seed (1 tsp if using Italian-seasoned vegan sausage)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried red pepper flakes
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tbsp black pepper
- 1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15-ounce) can Cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

#### Directions:

1. In a medium pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta according to package instructions; drain well and set aside.
2. Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add soy crumbles/sausage to the skillet and cook until browned, about 3-5 minutes. Make sure to break up the soy sausage crumble as it cooks; set aside once done.
3. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the same stockpot. Stir in garlic, onion, carrots and celery. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes.
4. Next, add the seasonings to the veggies and stir. Cook, stirring occasionally for another 2 to 3 minutes or until the vegetables are tender and the spices are fragrant.
5. Add in vegetable broth, tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, soy crumbles and 1 cup water; taste and add more salt if necessary. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, covered, until vegetables are tender, about 10-15 minutes.
6. Stir in pasta and beans until heated through. Serve while hot!

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# Quick & Easy {kosher} Corn Chowder

*quick & easy*

## Corn Chowder



Team! It's happened! I blogged! I've had these pictures and this recipe for roughly 3 weeks and I finally got my stuff



together enough to churn out this post. One of the reasons, besides lack of time, that I haven't been blogging is that the natural light in my apartment stinks so the pictures I was taking weren't the greatest. It's not like I'm churning out award-winning food photography here, but the pictures I just weren't up to snuff. So the solution? I now take pictures at the window at the end of my floor's hallway. If my elegant, ever-stylish French next door neighbor were to step out her front door during one of my 'photo shoots' (I should mention that my assistant is my 2 year-old) I'm not sure how I'd explain my way out of the situation. Maybe I'll just keep some brie on me and throw it to her, you know, just in case I need back up. Anywho, the word, "poop show" doesn't quite describe the scene of me taking pictures of soup while asking my 2 year-old photography assistant to please hold the cardboard back-drop for mommy cause I really need that light to hit a certain angle. There *might* be a few promises of Sesame Street time throw out to photography assistant from photographer but hey, it gets the job done. Thanks, Big Bird!



My photography assistant. Noticed the kitchen towel. She was great at quick clean ups . . . that she had caused.





Ok, the soup. THE SOUP! This is one of those time-saving, supremely filling recipes that was born out of a need to get vegetables into the kid AND the need for a delicious meal that we can both enjoy. It's actually been cold in LA so this soup



was a warm and comforting friend on a particularly chilly night. The recipe below will net you roughly 5 -6 servings. I had dinner for two nights plus lunch for two days. Also, just to note, I throw smoked paprika into this recipe in an attempt to capture the traditional corn chowder flavor of bacon/ham.

So yes, this recipe is kosher but mainly, it's vegetarian. I have actually had traditional corn chowder made with ham, back in my pre-kosher days. It was good. I cannot tell a lie.

But since going kosher, I feel that smoked paprika has become a close friend in helping me turn dishes traditionally made with ham or bacon and into delightful little kosher (read: vegetarian) dishes. Oh! I also used organic frozen vegetables in this recipe, which are cheaper and ready for use; the perfect solution for a quick and easy weeknight dinner. I hope you enjoy!



## **Quick and Easy {kosher} Corn Chowder:**

### **Ingredients:**

4 tablespoons butter  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
2 cups frozen corn kernels  
1 cup frozen bell peppers  
4 cups vegetable broth  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
1 tbsp kosher salt  
1/2 tbsp freshly ground black pepper  
1/2 tbsp smoked paprika  
1 cup of milk  
1 cup half and half  
1 cup shredded Pepper Jack cheese-optional, for serving

### **Directions:**

1. In a large soup pot, sauté the onions and garlic in the vegetable oil over medium high heat for 5 minutes until the onions are soft.
2. Stir in the bell peppers and corn; season the corn/onion/pepper mixture with a large pinch of salt and pepper. Sprinkle flour evenly over the top and stir to combine. Pour in broth and stir well. Allow this to thicken for 3 or 4 minutes, then reduce heat to low.
3. Stir in milk and half-and-half, then cover and allow to simmer/thicken for 15 minutes or so. Once thicken, add 3/4 cup of the Pepper Jack and stir to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning according to your taste preference. Serve in individual bowls and top with remaining 1/4 cheese.