



*A self-trained food writer and photographer, Angela Liddon, the woman behind the popular Oh She Glows blog, reveals how going vegan changed her relationship with food for the better – and puts together a crowd-pleasing menu with recipes from her debut cookbook.*

Like many food bloggers, Angela Liddon began to photograph and share her new recipes online as a hobby, at a time when she started to change her eating habits. 'During my mid-twenties I set out to heal my relationship with food after struggling with an eating disorder for over 10 years of my life,' says Angela, who started experimenting with vegan recipes back in 2008 after hearing about all the benefits of a plant-based diet.

'Going vegan wasn't something that I set out to do, but I felt so amazing eating this way I had no reason to go back to my old diet which was filled with low-calorie, nutritionally depleted diet foods. I also learned more about factory farming, and my life-long love for animals took over – it became more than just a diet for me. I found healing through a larger purpose.'

#### Food that pleases

To keep things interesting, Angela challenged herself to create alternatives to animal products and childhood favourite foods, culminating in over 600 vegan recipes on her award-winning blog. 'My goal is to create food that pleases vegans and meat-eaters alike in an approachable way using real, wholefoods ingredients.'

Angela's road to plant-based living also had a favourable impact on her

# Glowing with goodness



husband Eric's eating habits too. 'When Eric and I first met [they were high-school sweethearts], his diet consisted of a lot of junk food and he rarely ate vegetables. However, when I started to cook and change my own eating habits, he always promised to try at least one bite of what I made,' says Angela. 'While he didn't always like everything at first, over time he started to become a more adventurous eater. I think he surprised himself by loving all kinds of new foods and recipes! Now, over six years later, he eats mostly plant-based and enjoys hundreds of new foods. Our only problem now is fighting over leftovers!'

For those looking to try a vegan diet, Angela advises that the best way forward is to ease into it and try a new recipe every week or every few days. 'Pick some quick and easy recipes to begin with, so you don't feel overwhelmed. I always say focus on what you are adding to your diet, such as new foods, recipes or cooking methods, rather than what you are taking away.'

### From bakery to blog

The recipe blog – the name is inspired by a friend's comment on her new-found healthy glow – started out as a hobby while Angela was working full-time as a researcher but feeling unfulfilled with her career. 'I knew deep down that I made the wrong decision career-wise, but I thought it was too late to change after getting my master's degree and spending countless years in college.'

In 2009, Angela took a leap of faith and left the research career she spent seven years studying for. 'I had no plan, but a supportive husband, tons of drive, and a hobby I loved.' She soon set up her own business, Glo Bakery, selling natural and unrefined bread, cookies and cake, and went on to ship her popular Glo Bars all over North America, making 500 handmade bars a week by herself, with Eric helping out when he had time. 'Finally, I felt passionate and in control of my own happiness! I was determined to make this new career work.'

After a couple of years of running the bakery and blogging full-time, Angela closed the online store to pursue her cookbook dreams after being approached by an editor from a major publishing house. In 2014, *The Oh She Glows* cookbook was released in the US and Canada to great acclaim, winning various awards, accolades and appearing on the *New York Times* bestseller list. 'I never would've guessed that this passion would eventually turn into a full-time job, but I'm so glad I chased a dream and kept the faith.'

Last year also saw the birth of Angela and Eric's first child, and with the exception of a



lot of morning sickness in the first trimester, Angela's diet stayed pretty much the same throughout. 'I did have some odd cravings, like cucumbers loaded with vinegar and yellow mustard (weird, right?) and also more normal cravings like potato chips, dill pickles, chocolate, and baked goods.'

So, having suffered from an eating disorder herself, what are Angela's thoughts on bringing up her own daughter? 'We've decided not to label our daughter's diet. My husband isn't a vegan (although he eats largely plant-based), so she will have a mix of both of our diets. When she's older she can decide for herself. I think this will be a great approach!'

● Visit [www.ohsheglows.com](http://www.ohsheglows.com) to find more recipes and inspiration.

### ANGELA'S SPRING DINNER MENU

#### Cream of tomato soup with roasted Italian chickpea croutons ✓

This is a classic cream-based tomato soup, revamped to be good for you and free of animal products. Blending a small amount of soaked cashews into the soup transforms the tomato base into a luxurious, creamy soup, and the sun-dried tomatoes add depth of flavour to the tomato base. And with the crunchy Italian chickpea 'croutons', there are no traditional bread croutons required. Be sure to soak the raw cashews in water the night before (or for at least 3–4 hours), so they are ready when you plan to make the soup.



**Serves 6 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 40 mins**

**For the chickpea croutons:**

425g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
1 tsp grapeseed oil or melted coconut oil  
½ tsp dried oregano  
⅓ tsp cayenne pepper  
1 tsp garlic powder  
¼ tsp onion powder  
¾ tsp fine-grain sea salt or Herbamare

**For the tomato soup:**

1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
1 small to medium yellow onion, diced  
2 large cloves garlic, minced  
75g raw cashews, soaked  
500ml vegetable stock  
793g can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juices  
15g oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained  
3–4 tbsp tomato paste  
½–1 tsp dried oregano  
¾–1 tsp fine-grain sea salt  
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper, plus more as needed  
¼–½ tsp dried thyme

**For serving:**

fresh basil leaves  
olive oil  
freshly ground black pepper

**1** Make the chickpea croutons. Preheat the oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with paper towels. Place the chickpeas on the paper towels and place a couple of paper towels on top. Roll them around until any liquid on them has been absorbed. Discard the paper towels.

**2** Transfer the chickpeas to a large bowl and stir in the grapeseed oil, oregano, cayenne, garlic powder, onion powder and salt. Line the baking sheet with parchment paper and then spread the chickpeas in an even layer on the baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes.

**3** Give the pan a shake from side to side and cook for 15–20 minutes more, watching closely, until the chickpeas are lightly charred and golden. Let cool on the baking sheet for at least 5 minutes. The chickpeas will crisp up as they cool.

**4** Make the tomato soup. In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil over a medium heat.

Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 5–6 minutes, or until the onion is translucent.

**5** In a blender, combine the soaked cashews and the stock, and blend on high speed until creamy and smooth. Add the garlic-onion mixture, tomatoes and their juices, sun-dried tomatoes and tomato paste, and blend on high until smooth.

**6** Pour the tomato mixture into the saucepan in which you cooked the onions and set the pan over medium-high heat. Bring the



CREAM OF TOMATO SOUP  
WITH ROASTED ITALIAN  
CHICKPEA CROUTONS

mixture to a simmer, then stir in the oregano, salt, pepper and thyme, all to taste. Gently simmer over a medium heat, uncovered, for 20–30 minutes, until the flavours have developed.

**7** Ladle the soup into bowls and top each with the chickpea croutons. Garnish with minced fresh basil leaves, a drizzle of olive oil and freshly ground black pepper.

**COOK'S TIP** The chickpeas will lose their crispness in the soup, so be sure to add them just before you sit down to eat – or you can even add them as you eat the soup. If you have leftover chickpeas, make sure they're cool, then put in the freezer. To reheat, simply pop the frozen chickpeas into the oven at 220C/fan 200C/gas 7 for 5 minutes or so, until thawed.

■ PER SERVING 298 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 4.5g, carbs 20.5g, sugars 7.5g, protein 10g, salt 2.4g, fibre 5.5g

## Crowd-pleasing Tex-Mex casserole **V**

Similar to a burrito in a bowl, this casserole is the perfect mix of flavour and comfort. It never ceases to amaze me how a meal with a few simple ingredients like rice, beans, and vegetables can turn out so incredible. While the casserole is good on its own, I find it's even better with a generous amount of toppings like sliced avocado, salsa, corn chips, green onion and cashew cream, so go wild.

**Serves 6 | Prep 30 mins**

**Cook 20 mins + rice cooking time**

**For the Tex-Mex spice blend:**

1 tbsp chilli powder  
1½ tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp smoked sweet paprika or ½ tsp regular paprika  
¼ tsp cayenne pepper, plus more as needed



1¼ tsp fine-grain sea salt  
¼ tsp ground coriander (optional)

For the casserole:

1½ tsp extra-virgin olive oil  
1 red onion, diced  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 orange pepper, diced  
1 red pepper, diced  
1 jalapeño, deseeded, if desired, and diced  
fine-grain sea salt and freshly ground black pepper  
90g fresh or frozen corn  
396g can diced tomatoes, with their juices  
250ml tomato sauce or tomato purée  
120–200g chopped kale leaves or baby spinach  
425g can black beans, drained and rinsed  
500g cooked wild rice blend or brown rice  
50g vegan shredded cheese, such as Veganic  
1–2 handfuls of corn tortilla chips, crushed

Optional toppings:

sliced green onions, salsa, avocado,  
corn chips, cashew cream

**1** Make the Tex-Mex spice blend. In a small bowl, combine the chilli powder, cumin, paprika, cayenne, salt and coriander (if using). Set aside.

**2** Make the casserole. Preheat the oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5. Oil a large 5-litre casserole dish.

**3** In a large wok, heat the oil over a medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, peppers, and jalapeño and sauté for 7–8 minutes, until softened. Season with salt and black pepper.

**4** Stir in the Tex-Mex spice blend, corn, diced tomatoes and their juices, tomato sauce, kale, beans, rice and 25g of the vegan shredded cheese. Sauté for a few minutes and season with more salt and black pepper, if desired.

**5** Pour the mixture into the prepared casserole dish and smooth out the top. Sprinkle the crushed chips over the casserole mixture along with the remaining cheese. Cover with a lid or foil and bake for 15 minutes.

**6** Uncover the casserole dish and cook for 5–10 minutes more, until bubbly and lightly golden around the edges. Scoop the casserole into bowls and add your desired toppings.

**COOK'S TIP** I suggest cooking the rice ahead of time to make this recipe come together much faster. You can even use precooked frozen rice (just thaw it first before using).

■ PER SERVING 352 cals, fat 6.5g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 58g, sugars 16g, protein 13.5g, salt 3.1g, fibre 10g

CROWD-  
PLEASING TEX-  
MEX CASSEROLE



## Chilled chocolate-espresso torte with toasted hazelnut crust V\*

This is a dessert that will win over any chocolate fan. Reminiscent of Nutella, the popular chocolate hazelnut spread, my toasted hazelnut crust is the perfect nutty complement to the rich and creamy chocolate filling. No one will believe this torte is dairy-free and many will go back for seconds despite their best intentions! If you want a show-stopping dessert that will wow a crowd, this is your recipe. Be sure to soak the cashews overnight, or for at least 3–4 hours, so they're ready when you need them.

**Serves 14 | Prep 35 mins + freezing**

For the toasted hazelnut crust:

75g raw hazelnuts  
60ml coconut oil  
3 tbsp maple syrup  
¼ tsp fine-grain sea salt  
50g gluten-free oat flour  
100g gluten-free rolled oats

For the chocolate filling:

225g cashews, soaked  
150ml agave nectar, or 175ml pure maple syrup  
125ml coconut oil  
35g cocoa powder  
60g dark chocolate chips, melted  
2 tsp pure vanilla extract



½ tsp fine-grain sea salt  
½ tsp espresso powder (optional)

shaved chocolate (optional)  
coconut flakes (optional)

**1** Make the toasted hazelnut crust. Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Lightly grease a 23cm pie dish with coconut oil.

**2** In a food processor, process the hazelnuts into a fine crumb with the texture of sand. Add the oil, maple syrup, salt and oat flour and process again until the dough comes together. Finally, add the rolled oats and pulse until the oats are chopped but still have some texture to them. The dough should stick together slightly when pressed between your fingers, but it shouldn't be super-sticky either. If it's too dry, try adding 1 teaspoon of water or processing a bit longer.

**3** With your fingers, crumble the dough evenly over the base of the pie dish. Starting from the middle, press the mixture firmly and evenly into the dish, moving outward and upward along the side of the pie dish. The harder you press the crumbs into the dish, the better the crust will hold together. Poke a few fork holes into the bottom to let steam escape.

**4** Bake the crust, uncovered, for 10–13 minutes, until lightly golden. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool on a rack for 15–20 minutes.

**5** Make the filling. Drain and rinse the cashews. In a high-speed blender, combine the soaked cashews, agave, oil, cocoa powder, melted chocolate, vanilla, salt and espresso powder (if using) and blend on high until the filling is completely smooth. It can take a few minutes of blending to get it smooth, depending on your blender. If the blender needs more liquid to get it going, add a tablespoon of almond milk (or a bit more) to help it along.

**6** Pour the filling into the prepared crust, scooping every last bit out of the blender. Smooth out the top evenly. Garnish with shaved chocolate and/or coconut flakes, if desired.

**7** Place the pie dish on an even surface in the freezer, uncovered. Freeze for a couple of hours, and then cover the dish with foil and freeze overnight, or for a minimum of 4–6 hours, until the pie sets.

**8** Remove the pie from the freezer and let it sit on the counter for 10 minutes before slicing. This pie is meant to be



CHILLED CHOCOLATE-ESPRESSO TORTE WITH TOASTED HAZELNUT CRUST

served frozen. Serve with whipped coconut cream and finely chopped hazelnuts, if desired, but it's fantastic all on its own, too.

**COOK'S TIP** Not in the mood to make a crust? Turn this dessert into freezer fudge by preparing only the chocolate filling. Pour the filling into a 20cm square pan lined with cling film; top with 60g toasted hazelnuts or walnuts, and freeze until solid (about 2 hours). Slice into squares and enjoy straight from the freezer.

■ PER SERVING 373 cals, fat 27g, sat fat 14g, carbs 26.5g, sugars 17g, protein 6g, salt 0.6g, fibre 2.5g

## govegan

**V** You may wish to double-check the ingredients of any chocolate products you buy for this recipe, for subtle milk additions.

## freezeme

❄️ Wrap leftover slices individually in foil and store them in an airtight container in the freezer for 1–1½ weeks.

Recipes adapted from *The Oh She Glows Cookbook* by Angela Liddon (Michael Joseph, £16.99), available from Amazon: [www.tinyurl.com/ohsheglows](http://www.tinyurl.com/ohsheglows).

READER OFFER

## GOODNESS ME

Win a copy of *The Oh She Glows Cookbook* – we have five to give away. See page 71 for details of how to enter.

