



**DIAL FOR A VEGAN TIFFIN!**

■ If you live in Mumbai, you can enjoy an organic, purely vegan lunch-box in your office cubicle or living room, thanks to Vegan Bites. Launched in 2011 by Samir Prasad, their daily tiffin menu keeps changing and has a mix of not just Indian but even international cuisines like Italian, Lebanese, Mexican, Burmese, and Thai. Call 7666586430



**Yummy, healthy and clean** (Clockwise from far left) Pizza from The Real Green Cafe; cheesecake from Imagine Cafe, tofu salad from Carrots; and caprese salad from Imagine Cafe  
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



■ DEEPIKA NANDAL

Veganism, the global food phenomenon that intertwines health and ethical practice, is finding its way in India. From cafés to dabbawalas, here are vegan food places that make cruelty-free food accessible.

**Bodhi Greens, Dharamshala**

*Main Street, Dharamkot*  
Started in 2017, at Bodhi Greens, you get an extensive menu comprising Buddha bowls, vegan local *thalis*, quick-bites like *momos* and pancakes, raw desserts and green smoothies. “Dharamshala is a micro cosmopolitan town, where we get to serve people from all over the globe. These travellers help create a vibe of music, art and amazing conversations. It’s not just about great food, but

an experience that lasts a long time,” says owner, Varun Sharma, 23. Apart from the food, the helpful staff, friendly owner, books around the café, and the lovely local atmosphere make it a must-visit.

**Terrassen Café, Hyderabad**

*Road No 4, Banjara Hills, Near Animal Care Clinic*  
Food is not treated with love and respect generally, as everything is commoditised. That’s the reason I wanted to bring in a unique, vegan and healthy menu comprising only honest, unpretentious food,” says Dhanesh Sharma, who started this café three years ago. This place is all about slow-cooked, gluten-free, nutritious food. The menu has cakes, shakes, savoury dishes, and more – all at pocket-

# PLANTER’S PUNCH

These 100% vegan restaurants, give you clean eating on a platter, plus Instagram-worthy plant-based dishes

friendly prices. Apart from its vegan fare, the café hosts author meet-ups, art workshops and poetry sessions.

**The Real Green Café, Pune**  
*Shop No 17, First Floor, The Hub, North Main Road, Koregaon Park*

Aishwarya Viswanath, who switched to a vegan diet way back in 2011, wanted to inspire more people to eat mindfully. She then quit her corporate job to open Pune’s first 100% vegan café three years later. Sample her café’s vegan coffees, shakes, spaghetti with meat balls, pizzas, and the newest addition, American-style cheesecakes.



**CHECK IN: EATERIES WITH A VEGAN-FRIENDLY MENU**

**Greenr Café, Sector-15, Gurugram**

A pleasant ambience, a menu that’s 80% vegan and a work-friendly set-up, this café ticks all the boxes!

**Bread & Chocolate, Auroville, Puducherry**

Interact with like-minded people at this café and bakery that serves vegan versions of cakes, cookies, truffles and savoury dishes like tartines and scramble bowls.

**Farmers’ Café, Bandra (W), Mumbai**

Opt for soy milk coffee, scrambled tofu, vegan pizzas, and more, while chilling with friends at this trendy Pali Hill food spot.

**Roadhouse Café, Greater Kailash 1, Delhi**

This Italian restaurant has a separate menu for vegans that includes artisanal pizzas, desserts, and milkshakes.

“We serve fresh, slow-cooked and wholesome food, as opposed to fast and processed food,” says Aishwarya. “I want the customers to experience an abundance of healthier alternatives without missing out on anything when they turn vegan.”

**Carrots, Bengaluru**

*No 607, First Floor, 80 Feet Road, 6th Block, Koramangala*

This was the first vegan restaurant in Bengaluru, opened in February, 2013. “We were inspired by the idea of bringing in a wide range of delicious vegan food and breaking all the myths about veganism,” says co-owner Susmitha Subbaraju. You’ll be spoilt for choice with their mock meats, desserts (from chocolate mousse to vegan *rasmalai*), cakes, creamy pastas, ice creams, and more. Sign up for their special events: recipe workshops, meditation classes, talk sessions.

**Imagine Café, Mumbai**

*G-61, R-Galleria, Runwal Greens, Mulund*

Mumbai’s first-ever vegan café opened its doors this May, thanks to two passionate vegans Ritwik Roy (29) and Vidhi Shah (25). Their menu involves plant-based versions of Indian, American, Mexican and more cuisines. Try their cheesy quiches, baked mac and cheese and mozzarella sticks. Coming up next: “We’re working on our in-house cheese and butter production that we not only plan to serve at the café, but also deliver to people’s homes. This will definitely encourage more people towards vegan food,” says Vidhi.

**COULD IT BE THAT...**



■ SUNALINI MATHEW

Even though I write on health for a living, I find it difficult to keep track of which chemicals are kind-of harmful, which ones will cause instant death, and which ones scientists say are safe now, only to come clean a few decades later on how they’ve messed up our internal organs.

So I refuse to dye my hair. Also, it is difficult to read the fine print, considering manufacturers really do take that phrase very seriously. Ingredient labels for hair dye should really be in font size 14, considering their target age group.

I’m not alone though. So many women in their 40s and 50s simply don’t care that their hair is turning white. We’re not making a fashion statement. For one, we have too much to do and the thought of ‘wasting time’ colouring one’s hair black does not seem top priority. And really, is it worth adding more chemicals to our bodies?

But I suspect it goes deeper than that. In an ironic generational twist, we live in a world inherited from our children. The body-positive movement wasn’t around when I was growing up. The 80s and 90s were the supermodel and Miss India years, and we all aspired to be leggy and narrow, waif-like.

Millennials have freed us. Over the last few years, it’s become okay to wear shorts with unwaxed legs, don a bikini with stretch marks, go make-up free, not be a size 6, and, if you’re a guy, wear a skirt or jewellery.

They’re redefining what beauty – either male or female – is supposed to look like. (This is of course a problem when, in the office, both the men and women want to use your handcream, and it’s over before you know it.)

Now, this does not make us less vain. We still want to look younger than we are, but in healthier ways. We’d rather exercise, for instance, or eat more antioxidant-rich foods, or try and cut out the excesses. There’s a conversation about internal ageing as well. But it has made us less hateful of our bodies, and more accepting of other people just the way they are.

It’s also made beauty deeper. It’s no longer about putting on foundation or concealing lines; it’s about taking care of the skin so the lines are postponed for as long as possible, in much the same way we make sure we eat enough calcium-rich food to postpone osteoporosis.

Earlier this year, *Vogue*, UK’s Deputy Editor, all lissom and lovely with long, all-white strands said in an article on accepting hair the way it is: “I can’t deny that I like the rebelliousness of silver hair. I like that it’s non-conformist...”. White is no longer associated with a downshift in activity or the ‘Ma syndrome’ that gets women to surrender their lives to their children.

It is about the freedom people have today, to make choices, whether in careers, personal lives, or about their own bodies. It has to do with the identification of ageism as a problem and a whole generation of people saying, ‘We will not be put down or set aside because our hair is whiter than yours’. You decide to go white not because your partner died or you’ve ‘retired’. You decide to go white, because you are happy in your skin.

**HEALTH BYTES**



**Care for your hair**

Fabindia has launched two personal care products, the Charcoal Facewash and Amla Shampoo. Made using the Indian berry or *amla* – a rich source of Vitamin C – the shampoo is made to tackle hair fall by fortifying the root and strengthening hair follicles. It is gentle on the scalp and helps repair damaged hair. The Charcoal Facewash is a combination of green tea and herb extracts, such as liquorice and lemongrass, which help hydrate the skin and unclog pores.



**Smells like teen spirit**

Super Smelly, a brand of personal care products made exclusively for teenagers, has been launched. Their product range includes natural deodorant sprays, deodorant sticks, face washes, shower gels, body butters, moisturisers, and lip balms. They claim to be free of chemicals and harmful additives, and instead have ingredients like witch hazel, tea tree oil, charcoal, aloe vera, and vegetable-based derivatives. Moreover, they have not been tested on animals. The deodorant cans contain no CFC and can be recycled. Safe, natural and environmentally conscious.

**BODY IN MOTION**

# Sit up and listen!

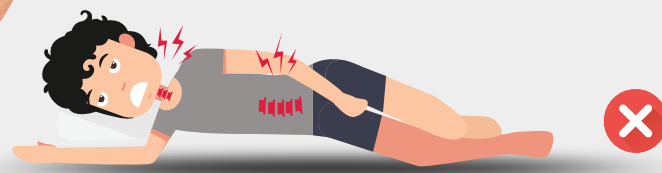
These habits could be ruining your posture – and your happiness



■ VANI B PAHWA

Most of us go through our daily actions unaware of our posture – sitting, standing, walking, or sleeping. Recurring aches, pains and niggles are a constant source of discomfort. Poor posture doesn’t just affect us negatively physically, but also mentally and emotionally. Any pain or muscular stress, especially chronic, is a source of irritation. If allowed long enough, it can even become depressive. Here are a few habits that could cause poor posture.

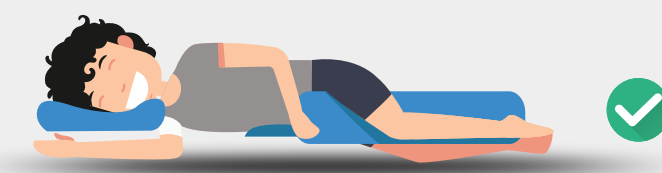
Vani B Pahwa is an ACE-certified Personal Trainer, a certified Cancer Exercise Specialist, a Master Rehab Trainer, a Functional Movement, Barefoot Training Specialist, BarefootRX Rehab Specialist, Foot & Gait Analyst, and a BOSU Personal Trainer.



**Sleeping incorrectly**

If you get up with a sore back, or are getting one for no reason, pay attention to sleeping posture and the sleeping surface. Incorrect sleeping puts undue stress on the spine and all muscle groups alongside it.

**Correct it:** Use a firm mattress that doesn’t give under bodyweight. Flip and rotate it periodically. If sleeping sideways, use a small pillow to support the curve of the neck and one between the legs to help maintain alignment. If lying on your back, a thin pillow below the knees helps similarly.



Look smart Stay fit • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



**Slouching**

You could be slouching sitting or standing. This commonly leads to stress/pain in the neck, shoulder and back muscles, and affects the spine along with the abdominal muscles. **Correct it:** Rotate the shoulder muscles back and down to correct a forward droop. When seated, sit up tall. Place a small cushion between your lower back and the back rest, if needed, to help maintain the natural curve of the spine. Keep your legs relaxed and bent at the knees, both feet resting on the floor (in line with or slightly ahead of the knees). When standing, pull yourself up. Watch out for the forward hip thrust. This usually happens if you thrust your knees back and stand. Place feet evenly on either side or mid-line of the body. Roll the shoulder back and down, with arms resting on the sides of the body.

**Standing with hip thrust to one side**

This impacts the hip muscles, apart from the muscles mentioned above. It also creates a muscular imbalance between the two sides of the body. **Correct it:** Shift body weight from one leg to another periodically, and don’t use one side excessively. It’s easier on the body to stand with a wider gap between the feet. This increases the base of support. Keep the hips squared forward, with body weight evenly distributed on both feet. If leaning against any support (wall, chair) ensure the back is tall and the hips balanced.