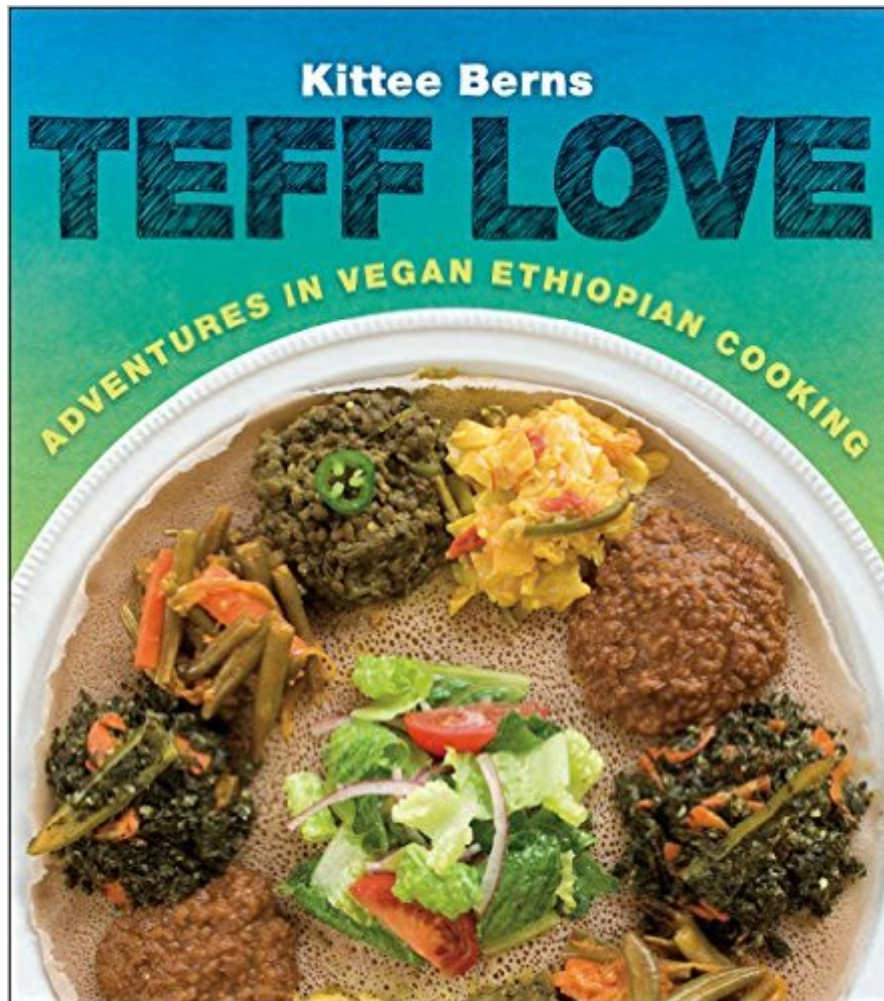


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Teff Love: Adventures In Vegan Ethiopian Cooking



Synopsis

Winner of the VegNews 2015 VEGGIE AWARDS for Cookbook of the Year. Included as a Best Cookbook of 2015 by Powell's Books. Why wait for a trip to your favorite Ethiopian restaurant? Import the delicious flavors of Ethiopia right to your own kitchen! Kittee Berns explains this cuisine through easy to follow recipes, so you can savor authentic Ethiopian food without ever leaving home. Discover how to source and use the tantalizing seasonings and savory ingredients that are the foundation of these unique dishes. Kittee introduces the holy trinity of Ethiopian cooking: a berbere spice blend, injera (the fermented sourdough staple), and ye qimem zeyet, a veganized clarified butter. Armed with these basics, you'll be ready to dazzle your family and friends with many of the popular dishes found on veggie combo platters in restaurants all over North America. From saucy wots, spicy stews, and succulent stir-fries to traditional injera-based dishes and fusion foods that blend these unique seasonings into a range of family favorites, fans of this cuisine will be thrilled. Recipes are almost entirely gluten- and soy-free, or can be made so with easy adaptations. You'll also find tips on tools and equipment to time-saving techniques and menu suggestions. Just pull up a mesob (a traditional woven stand or basket), perch your platter on top, and get ready to party Ethiopian style!

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Customer Reviews

Before Teff Love arrived into my life I had only eaten vegan Ethiopian food once and I loved it. I am a long-time fan of Kittee Berns's blog and website. I bought her first Papa Tofu zine but, regretfully, missed out on my chance to buy her second zine: Papa Tofu Loves Ethiopian Food. I

was desolate and inconsolable. Suddenly, a light at the end of the tunnel. Ms. Berns was going to be published: a Vegan Ethiopian Cookbook! I wasn't chosen to be a tester so I had to wait patiently for its release. Brace yourself because this is going to be a VERY long review. First, I need to address the reviews that lament the use of too many obscure spices or ingredients. Teff Love is a very SPECIALISED book: vegan Ethiopian cookery. Just like authentic Indian cookery, it is nuanced and complex; and some dishes call for hard to get spices. The same way that traditional Thai recipes call for galangal, kaffir limes, etc., Ethiopian cuisine requires specific spices. It is not the fault of the book if it calls for "exotic" ingredients. The author set out to write a book that contains recipes that are commonly served at Ethiopian restaurants and other little known traditional recipes. That needed to be said upfront, but while some spices (awjain, koseret, nigella, fenugreek, cardamom) are called for in SOME recipes, Ms. Berns states that she tried to "make the most obscure ingredients optional whenever possible without compromising flavor." For example, the author introduces the Seasoned Oil recipe (YeQimen Zeyet, p. 25) by writing: "This recipe is quite flexible. Please don't skip it if you can't find some of the ingredients; instead, just omit what you can't find and include what you can| keeping this flavourful oil on hand makes it easy to whip up Ethiopian food whenever your heart desires. I'm confident that once you taste it, you'll want extra in the fridge for spontaneous Ethiopian-themed slumber parties." The Seasoned Oil is simmered for 15 minutes and the most time consuming task is having to mince the onions and grate the garlic and ginger; but you can use your food-processor or use frozen to cut prep time. Once you make the Seasoned Oil you can keep it in the fridge for 3 weeks, or frozen (in ice-cube trays for ease of portioning), for up to two months. I strongly recommend that you take the time to make the Seasoned Oil, it has magical properties and adds so much depth of flavour to recipes. The Seasoned Oil is OPTIONAL in almost every recipe; I only counted 8 recipes that the oil was indeed essential, as it was drizzled on top (porridge for breakfast), used to coat veggie protein balls or was key element in bringing forth a particular flavour profile. It bears repeating: out of 95 recipes, only 8 call exclusively for the use of the Seasoned Oil. Please do not let the spices intimidate or discourage you. The author has kindly responded to a review by giving out suggestions and tips for people who can't source some of the spices and pointing to chapters on Alich Wot (mild golden sauces and stews), Cooked Vegetables and Casseroles, and Cold Vegetables, Salads and Dressings. Most of these recipes are seasoned using easy to find grocery store ingredients like garlic, jalapenos, and ginger. Ms Berns listed a few examples of recipes that use very easy to find ingredients: Ethiopian Style Hummus (leave off the berbere), p. 56 Split Peas in a Mild Sauce, p. 96 White Beans in an Onion-Turmeric

Sauce, p. 97 Tender Red Lentils, p. 98 Hearty Lentils, p. 99 Stewed Cabbage, Potatoes, and Carrots, p. 100 Roasted Butternut Squash in a Mild Sauce, p. 101 Beets and Potatoes in a Mild Sauce, p. 103 Tender Braised Green Beans, p. 117 Hirut's Fasolia, p. 118 Tender Stewed Collard Greens, p. 119 Cabbage in a Golden Tomato sauce, p. 122 Cabbage with Carrots, p. 123 Garlic Jojos, p. 128 Tomato Salad, p. 134 Roasted Beet Salad, p. 135 Tangy Lentil Salad, p. 138 Stir Fried Roasted Eggplant, p. 156 Peanut Tea, p. 172

As the author writes "you can easily make the seasoned oil with whatever spices you do have access to like cloves, ginger, garlic, cinnamon, turmeric, and basil. It will be delicious. The harder to find spices are mostly optional."

That said, I am not a novice cook, but Ethiopian cookery can be overwhelming. It is traditional to serve 3-4 dishes on top of injera. For the time-strapped, the scattered-brained or the neophyte it's hard to cook 4 recipes simultaneously AND make the Seasoned Oil AND the Berbere Paste. I can only offer a humble suggestion, take it easy. Peruse the book at your leisure and pick ONE recipe. The Ye Atakilt Alich (Stewed Cabbage, Potatoes and Carrots in a Mild Sauce) on page 100 is an excellent side dish; PLUS it's baked in the oven. You want a protein dish? The Ye Difein Misser Alich (p. 99 - Hearty Lentils in a Flavorful, Garlic-Ginger Sauce) is easy, tasty and can be served with rice, crusty bread or atop a tortilla- standing in for the injera.

FOR THE TIME-CONSTRAINED: I know it's hard to believe, but this book is full of weeknight, quick meals, but you need to be prepared. The author gives short-cuts and tips such as:

- 1) using the food processor to mince onions. In my experience, they can be kept refrigerated for 2-3 days. I have never tried to freeze them, but I hear it can be done. :) 2) making the Seasoned Oil the week before. Helpful but listed as an optional ingredient for ALL recipes but 8. Can substitute for olive oil. It will be delicious but will lack the depth of taste.
- 3) pressing an entire head of garlic and peeling and grating ginger. If I'm cooking, I grate extra and freeze by the half tablespoonful. That way I dirty the microplane once but make enough for a few recipes.
- 4) pre-boiling your legumes and pulses, draining and storing them separate from the liquid. This easily shaves off 10-30 minutes of bean based recipes.
- 5) pre-cooking veggies (baking beets, sweet potatoes, potatoes, etc) and how to store them.
- 6) If making a feast - Use your oven. There some recipes that are cooked in the oven; thus freeing up valuable stove space and requiring little-to-no supervision.

My tips:

- 1) Read the introduction. Also, read the recipes.
- 2) Plan what you are cooking. If making several dishes at once, I doodle a quick table detailing how much and how each basic ingredient is prepared (garlic, ginger, onion, carrot). I use it as a quick guide so I don't waste time mincing onions, only to find out that 2 recipes called for thinly sliced onions. For

example: recipe A needs 1 cup diced carrots, recipe B 1/2 cup half moon carrots.³) If you are a spice-hot wimp, don't be discouraged. Berbere paste can be made without the cayenne. The Alichu Wot and most of the Cooked Vegetables are mild and you can omit the jalapeños listed in the recipes.⁴) The recipes can be halved (for the single cook) and most of the stews freeze beautifully. Also, they taste even better the next day - making for excellent leftovers. They can be served hot or room temperature; and I have even eaten them cold.

REVIEW: The book starts with an Introduction which covers a brief history of Ethiopia, Ingredients, Kitchen Tools and Equipment, Techniques, Time-Savers and Tips, Cooking for a Crowd, Grocery list. Then the author gets us acquainted with The Holy Trinity: Berbere, Seasoned Oil and Injera (including a recipe for a quick crepe stand-in for injera). Other chapters include: Foundations, Breakfast, Appetisers and Snacks, Spicy Red Sauces (Kay Wot), Mild Golden Sauces (Alichu Wot), Legume-based Smooth Sauces, Cooked Vegetables, Cold Vegetables and Salads, Injera-Based dishes, Stir-fries, Dumplings and Veggie Proteins, and Beverages and Sweets. Most recipes are gluten-free, soy-free, corn-free, nut-free, but packed with flavour. Ethiopian cookery is well known for its abundant use of oil, so in order to cut out calories, I make the Seasoned Oil double strength (use twice the spices) and use less than stated in the recipes. Nutritional information and yield (in cups) is provided for every recipe. Ms Berns has a warm voice and peppers tips throughout the book. The recipes are simple and clear with straightforward and detailed instructions. I have only a couple of gripes: the index is lacking and some recipes are not included under a particular ingredient, making it hard to find the recipe. Granted, I am a sucker for a comprehensive index. Also, the layout could be better. Some recipes are unnecessarily interrupted by the photo inserts.

RECIPES: I have made over 50 recipes (some I have made more than once) and so far have had only one dud: the Teff Sourdough Starter (Ersho). I am sure it's through no fault of the author. I live in the tropics and my starter grew mouldy. I had to throw it out. I am going to try again, because I have no local source of injera and most supply stores don't ship out outside the mainland US. My favourites are (in no particular order): FOUNDATIONS: Soft Uncultured Vegan Cheese (Ayib, p. 36). Easy, creamy and versatile. Can be made nut-free. BREAKFAST: Scrambled Tofu with Ethiopian Spices (Ye Tofu Enkulal Firfir, p.48). It is the best ever! I have made it soy-free by using chickpeas. KAY WOT (spicy red sauces): Red Lentils in a Spicy Tomato Sauce (Ye Misser Wot be timatim, p. 74- I decreased the

amount of berbere and made the Split Pea variation). The Flax Seed Stew (Ye'Ab'Ab' Telba Wot p. 88) was a surprise hit, with a velvety and complex sauce; the heat definitely mellows when it sits. ALICHA (mild golden sauces): standouts are the Split Peas in Mild Sauce (Ye'Ab'Ab' Mater Kik Alicha p.96); the Stewed Cabbage, Potatoes and Carrots in a Mild Sauce (Ye'Ab'Ab' Atakilt Alicha, p. 100); the Tofu Dumplings with Sweet Potatoes in Mild Sauce (p.106). I have not yet made the Ye'Ab'Ab' Shimbira Asa Alicha -Jalapeño Chickpea Cracker Stew or the Okra Stew; but soon!

COOKED VEGETABLES AND CASSEROLES: Ethiopian-style Mac 'n' Cheese, p.126; I have frozen the cashew sauce for quick meals. Garlic Jo-Jos p. 128 AKA Crispy Garlicky Potatoes Baked with Ethiopian Spices; the Stewed, Seasoned Cabbage in Golden Tomato Sauce (Ye'Ab'Ab' tikil gomen be'Ab'Ab' timatim p.121); Tender Collard Greens mixed with Soft Cheese and Seasoned Oil (Ayib be'Ab'Ab' Gomen, p. 124); BOTH Green Bean recipes (Fasoulia, pages 117 & 118).

COLD VEGETABLES & SALADS: Tender Potatoes with Pickled Beets and Onion in a Lime Vinaigrette (Ye'Ab'Ab' Denich Be'Ab'Ab' Kaysir Atakilt, p. 137). A fantastic pop of colour. It's surprising how few ingredients can produce a stunning salad, a visual and taste feast. The Tempeh Salad (p.144), a spicy and creamy salad, is AMAZING. Can be made soy free using chickpeas.

DUMPLINGS AND PROTEIN: the TVP sausage dumplings (p. 159). Since going gluten-free I've had many a vegan meatball fall apart. The ingenious way of keeping the kwas together is something I will adapt with other seasonings.

In short (haha!), the book is well written, with detailed and clear instructions. The recipes are fail-proof because they were meticulously and rigorously tested. It includes nutritional information. It uses whole foods- such as pulses, legumes, vegetables- alongside pantry staples and spices to create flavourful and cheap (yes, cheap! if you forgo the optional spices or specialty ingredients) meals. You will find yourself craving the comforting and flavourful wot and vegetables. For me this book has been a life changer and I have cooked from it at least twice a week. I will incorporate the techniques and spices into my regular rotation. I am in rapture with Teff Love and have been spreading the gospel among my friends. Please, buy it; you aren't going to regret it. I really love this book and want to spread the Teff Love.

Edited to add: I am uploading photos of some recipes I've cooked and enjoyed from Teff Love. Also, I am updating my favourite recipes, as I've discovered a few hidden gems:

BREAKFAST: The Blueberry Cinnamon Sourdough Pancakes are excellent. Fluffy, tangy and easy. You need to make the Teff Sourdough Starter. The Ye'Beqolo Genfo (Cheesy Corn Grits with a Spicy Seasoned Oil) is so comforting, creamy and savoury. The Berbere-Seasoned Oil combo is addicting and add so much

to the porridge. KAY WOT (spicy red sauces): The Ye'Shimbra Asa Wot (Chickpea Flour Crackers in a Spicy Wine Sauce) is sublime. It's slow food at its best. It has a long cooking time, but you are rewarded with a complex, warm, spicy, rich, peppery sauce. If you want to treat yourself (or someone) to a sumptuous meal; make this. COLD VEGETABLES and SALADS: Butecha, Chickpea Fasting Eggs. It's made from chickpea flour and is refreshing and lemony. A very unassuming dish, but packed with flavour.

First of all, I have never written an review before but felt compelled to share how excellent Teff Love is. This cookbook is visually very pleasing with multiple photo inserts of many of the dishes. The set up is functional with foundation recipes at the beginning. The chapters are then divided into different types of Ethiopian cuisine (Kay Wot, Aliche Wot, Shiro, Dumplings, etc) which makes it easy to plan a menu. Kittee has also included sample menus and advice / tips for parties and gatherings. I have absolutely loved everything that I have made so far. I debated about whether it would be worth it to make the foundation recipe ye'qimem zeyet (seasoned oil), but it adds amazing flavor to the dishes. The other recipes I've tried include: Dat'a (spicy green-pepper relish): Delicious. I'm going to make this all the time. I imagine it will be amazing on all sorts of grains and veggies or even as a dip. Ye'misser wot be 'timatim (red lentils in a spicy tomato sauce): Another great dish. It was spicy, savory and had a very authentic flavor. Ye'nech bakela aliche (creamy, garlicky white beans in an onion-tumeric sauce): This recipe was easy to throw together but tasted wonderful. I loved the rich garlic flavor combined with the seasoned oil. Tempeh salad: I know I will make this at least once a week. It reminds me of a combination of a savory waldorf salad and chicken salad. The apples, celery, and tempeh with a spicy sauce are genius. This is going to be a sack lunch staple for me. There are dozens more recipes that I cannot wait to try. You can tell that the author is very passionate and spent a great deal of time to make this cookbook perfect. I really appreciated her writing in depth about the different spices and which ones are optional versus essential for the flavor profile of the dish. I made one trip to a local Ethiopian market and now have all the basics to cook my way through this book. One final note - I have never met or had contact with this author prior to the cookbook release. I emailed her when I received my copy and asked her about the best place to find the specialized ingredients (we both live in Portland). She immediately contacted me with very thoughtful recommendations and even offered to meet me at the market to show me around. How awesome is Kittee?! I have several hundred vegan and non-vegan cookbooks, and Teff Love is in my top few. Highly recommended.

I was a lucky recipe tester for Teff Love and I can tell you the dishes are gorgeous and delicious. I've tried at least 15 of the recipes and love them all. I happen to be a big fan of Ethiopian food, and have dined in many different restaurants in several cities, and the dishes I've made from Teff Love are at least as good or better than anything I've had in a restaurant. The recipes are clear and uncomplicated, though they do require certain Ethiopian seasonings like Berbere and koseret. Once you've collected your spices and made some seasoned oil, you're set for creating a terrific collection of Ethiopian delights. I'm lucky to live in a city with lots of places to buy injira, the Ethiopian flatbread on which the food is served and with which it's eaten, but Kittee provides recipes for injira if you don't have access to store-bought. Everything you need to know about the spices, ingredients and cooking methods is clearly described, and the recipes are easy to follow. I recommend Teff Love if you want to cook delicious Ethiopian food.

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